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**ACI Course 17**  
**The Great Ideas of Buddhism, Part 2**  
**New York, 1999**  
**Taught by Geshe Michael Roach**

**Class 1, part 1**

And so was (unclear)...do you have any...can you hear in the back all right? No. can't hear. How's that? Better? No. Still bad? You want to try without the fan? Sure? We'll try without the fan for a while. If you get hot, let me know, okay? All right. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. We've brought an engineer in from Germany to turn it off (laughter). (laughs) He has a PHD, he'll be okay (laughter). (laughs) (applause) Okay. (laughs) So it's good to see you again. A lot of changes...like to welcome the new ordained people. Some people got married. Probably some people got divorced (laughs) I don't know (laughter) (laughs) Forgot to mention (unclear) and a lot of things like that. (unclear) Can't hear still. Still can't hear.

(student: (unclear))

How's that...better? No. Can you go any further...no? We also brought Madonna's son (unclear)...how's that...better? It's okay? (unclear) Yeah, that's...all the rock stars do that (laughter) (laughs) Okay. All right, so we'll start. So we had a long trip...we got back last night...so spa... a little spacy, but wh...I think, there'll be a...I think you're gonna get a report about it. We went to North Carolina first, did death meditation...that was about two and a half months ago, then went to California and tried to talk this guy into giving some cabins for Arizona and Connecticut...and looks like he will, and then we went to Australia and we taught Bodhisattva vows to about a hundred and fifty people and did business seminars for about three hundred and fifty people and then did Mahamudra in western Australia and then we went to Mongolia and that was a riot. There were about...I don't know, between eight hundred to a thousand people came every night, five nights in a row...it was on national tv, and it was a riot...it was just a riot, and they all mobbed everybody afterwards and it was really cool. But this is the renaissance of Buddhism in Mongolia, I think, and it's starting with that and they're very happy, so, you know...we'll talk, we'll talk more about it later, but they really want Americans to come and help them, especially Dharma trained Americans 'cause they lost it for seventy years and they're very

excited to see Americans who can teach them 'cause they also love English, they want to learn English, so they're very very excited, like thousands and thousands of young people called the television station, and just incredible energy, so you have to think about that. (laughter) Then we went to Ireland and did really nice talks in Dublin and Galway, and I think we started a center there...and we started a center in Mongolia, Australia also, and and that was really beautiful. And it's a very beautiful mixture of their...it's a very interesting mixture of like Catholic, mystic druids, Celtic Buddhism (laughter) (laughs) and it was really really powerful, and they're very excited and so they begged us to come back...we'll do another tour in the fall of Mongolia and Ireland, I think. They just insisted that we go back. So, so it was really beautiful. Then we went to Arizona and we...it looks good for purchasing that land for three year retreat. We had a lot of meetings with developers and financiers and ranchers and cowboys and (laughter) all sorts of things, but in the bottom line is I think it looks good to sign the contract in about a month. Winston's working really hard on it, and some developers from Ireland and Australia have volunteered to come and help there...these are people like who've done like hundred million dollar projects and things like that, so they're very excited and they've volunteered to help us and the building is starting soon and it looks like we'll be able to import yurts from Mongolia and have housing for anybody who wants to come for shorter periods of time. That was a big hurdle that we had, because otherwise it's tens of thousands of dollars and now we can probably accommodate each person for about a thousand dollars. In other words you can have a semi-permanent building for like a thousand dollars. And so that that would accommodate more people and the land is huge...it's about five miles square. And I think it's about the size of Manhattan or something, (laughter), it's something like that, but it's beautiful and there's lots of space, so the idea is that during the three years you could just plop your yurt down and stay there for as long as you want, and and meditate and help with that, so we'll talk more about that as the time goes on, okay? But anyway, that was the trip in a nutshell...I think Christy wrote up a ten page thing that you'll get handed it, and then I think we'll have a separate meeting about Arizona and things like that, but right now we gotta get on to the Diamond Cutter. The only thing I have to say about the rules of the class, which the sergeant has already covered, he really was a drill sergeant, you know (laughter) (laughs), is I'm gonna stick to the rule of miss two...more than two and you're out, okay? So you must have your homework ready when you come into class, you must, you know, prepare your

answers and everything, you must do the quizzes...that includes the people who hang out with me, okay...must do it or you cannot come to class, okay. We don't want a lineage of people who heard a quarter of it or a third of it or a half of it, okay, you have to pass it on completely, and you can't do that if you don't come to class, okay. So must do your homework, if you miss more than two classes you'll have to come back in November, something like that, all right, so we're gonna be strict on that, like last time, okay. We'll be doing, in ten classes we'll be doing about a years worth of work, okay, three cour...five courses, sorry it's about a year and a half, and so necessarily it'll be abbreviated somewhat, and we'll be just touching the main points. I always tell people that...you know, in the Geshe course you spend eighteen years learning these things. Then you take your final exam. I took my final exams right after finishing the first six courses or seven courses...it was a breeze...fifteen hundred people asking you questions, in Tibetan, in seven days of debate and it was easy 'cause everything we've covered in class, okay. So you've done it all in class. What we will cover during this course is the main part of those courses. You'll be getting the main questions in those courses, okay? And that's all that a Geshe remembers two years later, okay, but don't tell them I told you (laughter) all right, okay. The very first course that we're going to work on is...was number six in the fifteen courses, it was the most important one, okay? That was the one on?

(students: (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra)

(b: Diamond Cutter...Sutra), okay, on emptiness. And we'll spend two classes on that. The next one is the most important one, so if you're gonna drop this course at least come to the next class okay, and then you drop it after that, okay. That's one where we'll cover the direct perception of emptiness. Tonight I just want to go over some of the introduction of the (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra) okay? Sutra means "a teaching that was spoken by Lord Buddha", okay. This is a lecture that was given by Lord Buddha, and I want to explain a little bit about why it's called Diamond Cutter, okay? I think actually...save you some time...Say (dorje) (repeat) (chupa) (repeat) (Dorje) (repeat) (chupa) (repeat). By the way, if you've never been to these classes, you just have to know the English, okay? It's nice if you learn the pronunciation...you don't have to. All right. But I just put it here to put a blessing in your mind, and then maybe in a hundred lifetimes you'll start learning Tibetan or something, okay? (laughter) (laughs) Okay. (Dor) means "stone". (Je) means "king". And that's why they call Tsongkapa what?

(student: Je Tsongkapa)

Je Tsongkapa. It means "the Lord, or the King", okay. (Dor je) means "the king of stones", which is, of course, the diamond. Okay. (Chu pa) means "cutter". And the whole thing in Sanscrit, which is good to know, is vajra chedika. (Vajra) means "diamond"...the real pronunciation is (wud dra), okay...(chedika) means "to cut, the cutter". Okay. I'd like to explain three meanings of diamond. This is maybe the most important thing in the eighteen courses that you'll every hear. Okay. How many times do I say that (laughter) anyway...(laughs) I think it maybe it is the most important thing, okay. Diamond has three meanings here, okay. And you should know them. Okay. It's on your homework anyway (laughter) (laughs). The the first one I think is the most important one. If you look around the world for something which is ultimate, okay...think about the idea of ultimate which means "the most of something", right...like the ultimate mistake, or the ultimate credit card bill, or...you see what I mean...think about those things. Ultimate means "the most of something". The highest of something, the shortest of something, the most of something...if you think about it, okay. And and in a sense it's impossible, okay. The idea of ultimate...if it's...there is no ultimate credit card bill. Someone could always spend a dollar more, you see what I mean? There is nobody who is ultimately tall or ultimately short...you could always cut them in half or add an inch...you see what I mean? And and the idea of the most of anything, in the physical world, doesn't really exist. They talk about...what they call...cold zero...absolute zero, okay, but there's not really absolute zero, you can make it colder. You know, and and there's no edge to the universe, you can always go an inch farther, you see what I mean? There's no such thing. If you think about ultimate, try to imagine what ultimate means. Try to imagine something which is the most or the highest of anything and you can't, okay. There is no such thing in the physical world really, okay? We have things which are close, and the best of those in the diamond, okay. If you've studied about gems, which I I did, you study the Mo scale of hardness, or the Knox indentation test, but either way you do it, the diamond is something 'bout ten thousand times harder than the next hardest thing. Okay. The next hardest thing, by the way, is ruby. In other words if you tried to scratch it with something, you couldn't scratch it. Nothing can scratch a diamond. Nothing in the universe can scratch a diamond. Okay. So how do you cut diamonds? You actually take a a diamond and crush it. You can

crush them or you can cleave them, but you can't you can't scratch them, you see what I mean, and you grind it up into a little powder and you put it on a diamond wheel and then you hold the other diamond that you want to make into a diamond down on it really hard, and it starts to burn like red florescent...like if you touch it you get a really bad burn, and you're you're holding it on a steel plate, if you hold it the wrong way it goes through the plate and destroys the plate, 'cause it plate, the steel is like fifty thousand times softer than diamonds, okay, and a few of the little diamond powder pieces are facing up and hit the diamond in the right direction and the diamond cleaves off, like that, but you can't, you can't scratch a diamond with anything, you see what I mean? If we...some diamonds are so hard you just have to throw them out. It's it's kinda cool (laughs) okay. Very frustrating if you bought it...but it's like that in the Diamond business. What's that got to do with emptiness? Okay. The diamond is a metaphor for emptiness. When you see emptiness for the first time, directly, okay, which is a very major event, all right..I'll tell you some of the things you see...we'll talk about it more next class, you must come to the second class, okay? Very important. But in the space of maybe twenty minutes, in deep meditation, you see emptiness directly, okay? That's called (wun sum) When you come out of it...when you come out of that direct perception of emptiness, for the next ten or twelve hours you have extraordinary realizations. You see the day of your own enlightenment, okay? And very typically this is seven lifetimes hence, okay? You understand that you have met the essence body of an enlightened being. Okay. You understand prostrations, you understand offerings, you understand the idea of a thangka, for example, because you've met this being, you see what I mean...and things like ...I mean it's an extraordinary ten hours. You can read other people's minds for four-five hours, something like that...all these extraordinary events happen to you right after you see emptiness directly, and one of...by the way, all of those events are organized into four things called the?

(students: Four Noble Truths)

The Four Noble Truths...okay, mis-named "Noble", somebody translated "arya" by mistake as "noble", okay. There are four groups of realizations that you have. These are called the Four Arya Realizations...arya means "somebody who has seen emptiness directly", okay. So right after you see emptiness, after you come out of that twenty thirty minutes of seeing emptiness directly which you can't describe, okay, but we'll talk about it

(laughs), then you...all these things, you see all these things directly. So the next ten or twelve hours you have these experiences...directly. Okay? During that time you are searching for some metaphor, you know...what is there in my normal life that was like what I saw, you know...I saw ultimate reality. I saw emptiness. What's the closest thing in the world to that...what do you think? It's diamonds, okay. Why? 'Cause diamond is the closest thing in the world to something which is ultimate, okay, which is the most of anything. Why? It's the hardest thing...by about ten thousand times, okay? It's...in other words you could...if you had a ruby against a diamond and and hit them with each other, ten thousand rubies would break before the diamond broke...you see what I mean. So diamond is by far the hardest thing... it's the closest thing in the natural universe to an ultimate. And when you see emptiness directly for the first time, after you come out of that experience, you're groping for some kind of metaphor, you know, you're looking for something to remind you of what you saw, because it was the most profound experience that a human can undergo, okay? And and you're groping for something that you can keep near you and un...and keep remembering what you saw. So like, if you saw it directly, you would come up with diamond and then you would want to be around diamonds, okay...like somehow you would want to be involved with diamonds, okay. And that that would drive your life, like you'd be willing to spend the next fifteen years, you know, working in some office to be around diamonds, just to be close to a diamond so you could remember...for no other reason, just to remember those twenty minutes, you would be willing to work in in some stupid place for eight hours a day just to remember those twenty minutes...for fifteen years of your life...you know what I mean? It's worth it, okay. It's an amazing experience and you have to remember it, okay. That's why this diamond is important. That's why the diamond is in the title, okay. That's the first reason. Okay. Why do we...why do we compare emptiness to a diamond? Because a diamond is something which is ultimate, okay. Second thing. Every object in the universe has its own emptiness, okay. This pen has its emptiness, the chair you're sitting on has its emptiness, the last hair on your left eyebrow has its own emptiness, okay...the last (unclear) you had has its own emptiness, your mind has its own emptiness, New York City has its own emptiness, okay. Emptiness has its own emptiness. All right. Everything has emptiness, okay? But you can't see it. You see, twenty minutes and your life is over. Twenty minutes and you have (dang). (Dang) means "insurance policy". Definite, gonna be out in seven lifetimes, you know, perfectly, absolutely sure...saw the day of

your enlightenment...know what they're gonna call you, what they're not gonna call you, saw directly, okay. All you need to do is see it for twenty minutes and you're sitting there in an ocean of emptinesses, the millions of emptinesses in this room. Every object in this room has its own emptiness. The end of the last hair on your left eyebrow has its own emptiness. And the root has its own, you see what I mean? It's it's endless. And you can't see them. If you could see it for ten twenty minutes, you'd be outta here, you see what I mean. So emptiness is like all around you, emptiness is clear, okay...emptiness is invisible. Normal people cannot see emptiness, okay. You must have some extraordinary preparation to see it, okay. So so it's an interesting thing about diamonds...diamond is so pure that if I put a wall of diamond between me and you that was a hundred feet wide or a mile wide, you wouldn't see it. Diamond is that pure. Now glass...is not pure. Glass has iron in it. You set a pane of glass and look down the end, what do you see? You see green, 'cause iron takes the blue and the yellow and the red...I don't know...anyway green comes out, okay. That's 'cause of impurities in the glass. If you turn the glass this way you can see through it, but if I had a wall of diamonds between you and me that was five miles thick you would still see me perfectly well, okay. It's in...it's so pure that it's invisible, it's totally invisible, okay. And that's the second meaning of diamond, okay. Diamond...emptiness is around you constantly...you don't see it, you can't see it, okay? What is it that lets you see it...by the way, that's why those deities have this third eye here, Lobsang Rumba had one drilled in...you don't have to drill it in...you can get one the old way, okay (laughs), that eye is seeing emptiness...the eye represents seeing emptiness. To see emptiness you have to have an extraordinary amount of virtue, good deeds, okay, like, examples would be like...building a house for your lama, or something like that, or serving sick people for decades, or studying scripture, or helping refugee monks or things like that, you need some kind of extraordinary virtue, you need an excellent, authentic teacher to show you how to do it, you must have great books to learn it from. It's very similar to learning to play concert piano, and it's about that difficult. If you don't spend the time, every day, to prepare yourself to see emptiness...about the same amount of time that a person spends to learn to play at...what's that place?

(student: Carnegie)

Carnegie Hall. Seriously. Then you won't make it. You won't

see it in this lifetime, okay. What if you don't see it? Oh, you just die like everybody else. Okay. Really. You die and there...then in the one mind state, the mind state you're looking at me, you have a certain mind state, you had a certain mind state to get to this class. That's one in millions and millions of mind states. There are millions and millions of other options of mind states and there are millions of other beings that you can see and you can't see, and they have other mind states, okay. You become one of those. Like the odds of being here now are about one in two hundred million or something. Okay. You have that...you've succeeded in getting here, okay. You have that mind state, if you die, you lose it, okay. You have to go to one of the other mind states, animal, insect, bug, anything, it doesn't matter. You will go into another mindstate. There's not a (laughs)...I'll talk about it later...there's not one single shred of evidence that's convincing that the mind stops when the body stops. I got tired of people asking me, "oh you're Buddhist. Can you prove future lives?". I say "you're not Buddhist. You prove to me there are no future lives. I'm tired of it, okay". You prove to me that the mind stops. Oh the body stops. Oh yeah, well, trucks break down so drivers die, right? I mean, it doesn't make any sense at all. Okay. The body stops twitching...that doesn't say anything about the mind. Okay. Forget it. It doesn't convince anything. Two thousand years ago they made this argument and Dharmakirti said, "come on. That's stupid. That doesn't prove anything". Okay. How do you know that the mind stops? You see, you don't know. Oh, the guy stopped talking. Yeah, his machine broke...he can't talk to you. It doesn't prove he's not alive. It doesn't prove he can't think, okay. That's not...that's the only proof western society has actually. And it's dumb. You must go on. It's the only mind state in which you can see emptiness is the one that you have right now. Okay. You have to do it now, okay. You have to try to do it now. If you do it now, everything is taken care of forever. If you don't do it now, you just...you have to come back here a million years, two million years, here this old stuff again...who wants to do those courses all over again (laughter) okay. Okay. The third, third reason emptiness is like diamond. Third reason they use the word "diamond". If you take a diamond...as you've seen on tv, you can cleave diamonds, which means you create a, you create a little notch in them with a lazer, or you find a natural notch and you take a diamond which is fatter or you, you know, and you gen...you go "bok", and you force it in, and it cracks, it cracks, it cleaves, okay. So you can actually smash a diamond into thousands of pieces. The old Debeeres Mine in South Africa are these poor guys who come up

with these big diamonds and ask the appraiser "how much is this worth?", he's say, "that's not diamond. That's just quartz", you know. And it was a diamond and the guy would take a hammer and tap it, you know, and it would fall into pieces, and say "look, it broke, it's not a diamond". The guy would leave, and then he'd pick up all the pieces and throw them under the table (laughs) you know. Anyway, there's lots of diamond stories. (laughter). So you can you can cleave a diamond. In other words, you can separate diamond into tiny parts...we call (dorje segma), it means "tiny tiny pieces of diamond", okay. The nice thing about diamond is that no matter how many times you cut it, each piece of diamond is pure diamond. One hundred percent pure absolute clean perfect diamond. If you smash it down to molecular level, down to single molecules, each molecule is perfect diamond, okay. What's that got to do with emptiness? We said that every object in this room has its own emptiness. The chairs, the people, your hair...you lack of hair has its own emptiness, okay. Each thing has its own emptiness, okay. And they're all one hundred percent equal...emptiness, okay. That's all. You know...what do you call it...content-wise, they're all perfectly, one hundred percent equal. When when an enlightened being sees emptiness and when a normal schmuck like us sees emptiness for the first time, that's one hundred percent perception of emptiness...it's no different at all, okay. The direct perception of emptiness is the same, okay. Nothing can be half emptiness or seventy five percent emptiness, or eighty-five percent emptiness, it's pure, one hundred percent sheer emptiness. Okay. And what that means we'll get into later, okay. But the third point is that, take a diamond, smash it, every piece is one hundred percent diamond, okay. Take all the emptinesses in this room, each one is totally equal, one hundred percent devoid of what?

(student: Self existence)

A self existent thing. What's a self existent thing mean? Do you like this pen? Do you like this pen? Some people do, some people don't, okay. Some people do, some people do. So the goodness of this pen or the badness of this pen is not something that belong to the pen. The pen has no nature of being good or bad from its own side. Okay. That's obvious. You don't need to be a philosopher to understand that, okay? There's no quality in this pen of being a bad pen or a good pen from its own side. You're making it that way, okay. Something about you. Something in your mind is saying, "I like that pen." Something in your mind is saying, "I don't like that pen". Something in your mind

is saying, "I could care less about that pen. I don't know why he's getting into that". (laughter) Okay. I mean, everybody has their own feeling about the pen. The point is, there's no goodness or badness about the pen itself, okay. It's not like it's coated with good and that coating is like is like showing itself to everybody, okay. It's not like that. You are sending something to it. You are imposing something on it. It's just a plain old neutral, innocent pen, and you're thinking "good", or "bad", okay. So the goodness or the badness doesn't come from the pen's own side...that's its emptiness. Okay. That's no big philosophy thing...you don't have to worry about anything...you don't have to go close your eyes real tight and try to see something black but these green or purple spots keep coming up, okay (laughs) it's not like that. It has nothing to do with that, okay. The pen doesn't have its own...it is devoid or empty of any nature of its own as far as being good or bad. That's all. It's empty. Okay. What would be a self existent thing? Oh, a pen which was good from its own side, or a pen which was bad from its own side. By the way, if it were self existently good from its own side, if it had a nature of being good from its own side, then every person who every saw it would say what?

(students: Good pen)

A great pen. Great pen. Okay. If it was bad from its own side, you know, if it was like emanating rays of badness, then everybody who looked at it would say "oh, I hate that pen, I hate that pen". Okay. That's a...if you want to know what a self-existent thing would be like, that's it. Okay. How many self existent things exist?

(student: Two)

(laughs) Zero. (laughter) None, okay. They can't have that, okay. They know...they make a joke in Tibet, they say, "imagine a purple two headed elephant fifty feet high rampaging through this school auditorium at this moment", okay, close your eyes, imagine...Kirim you can imagine rampaging through the...(laughter) the kid, okay, but you can't imagine an elephant like that, right? I mean you can imagine it, but you can't see it really happening, right. That elephant and the goodness of this pen have the same ontological status, they are equally existing, meaning they don't exist at all, okay. Santa Clause, you know, the Tooth Fairy and pens which are good (laughter), no...they all belong to the same status...they have the same status which is zero. Okay. There is no pen which is good,

okay. Where's it coming from ? Your mind. You're imposing something on it, okay? That's all. That's the emptiness of this pen. You don't have to go any farther than that. Okay. That's the emptiness of the pen. And that's a self-existent thing. Next question on your homework...oh, sorry, we finished diamond...three meanings of diamond. Now, why call it (b:"Diamond Cutter")? Like a lot of early translators got lazy and called this book what?

(students: Diamond Sutra)

Diamond Sutra...like, who needs that "cutter", okay? (laughs)

okay. There real name is Vajra Chedika, Diamond Cutter. What's the cut mean? The cut is this. I mean, when you come out of the direct perception of emptiness, and you have seen your own enlightenment, you know, that's a pretty amazing thing, and then you're grappling, you know...what's what's a metaphor for that emptiness, and you come up with diamond, okay...you you know that diamond is the closest thing, you know that you should spend the rest of your life close to diamonds, and and near diamonds, but you al...equally realize something else. It ain't even close. Okay. It's close and no cigar, okay? Like it's very close, it's the closest thing in the universe to emptiness is diamond...how close is it? Not at all. A billion light years away, okay. I mean, ultimate reality, meaning emptiness, and the reality we see here are a zillion miles apart. A zillion miles a part. There are two realities. You are sitting in one of them now. You are swimming in a certain reality right now. You've never touched the other one. It's a million miles that way. You see that one and it's all over. You just see it for twenty minutes and its all over...two vastly different levels of of reality, okay. So you can say, "Oh hey, Michael Roach, what's the closest thing to emptiness that you can think of?" "Diamond". "How close is it?" "Not at all", okay. So in that sense, the diamond is cut, and that's why they call it (b: Diamond Cutter). The idea is that diamond is the closest thing and diamond is vastly inferior to the real thing, the real McCoy, which is ultimate reality. Totally...different level of reality. Totally different. You can understand the emptiness of the pen that I just explained. You have only perceived emptiness intellectually when I get through with that, okay. If you go on and meditate and see it...directly, it's a whole different reality...it's tot...completely different level of reality. You see that reality for twenty minutes, you will be an enlightened being within a certain amount of time. That's all. Okay. It's it's

incredible...you have to try. The reason we're having this class, you have to come outta here saying...I have these people who write me from California every few weeks, "I'm trying, I'm trying", you know, you have to try to see this thing. It's the only thing that can save you, okay. You have to try to see it, okay. That's the purpose of this class. It's really the purpose of the whole...institute...is to get you to see emptiness directly. By the way, to do that you have to be meditating a lot...so it'd be nice to be in a nice quite, super-quiet place, (laughter) okay (laughs) for a while, and that's the whole reason to do this thing in Arizona...no other reason at all. Try to get people into seeing emptiness directly. You must have a quiet place, you must concentrate on it. You have to be locked up and try. Before that you have to have about fifteen courses (laughter) (laughs) okay? All right. So that's why they call it (b: Diamond Cutter), because diamond is close, but it's "cut" or it's inferior by the real thing. Okay. Now a (gak ja). Say (gak ja) (repeat) (gak ja) (repeat). Some people it's easy to remember if they think of "got cha" (laughs) okay. Anyway (gak) means "to stop or deny". When you hang somebody in Tibet, you say (gak) (unclear) okay? (Gak ja) means "the thing to be (gak)ed, the thing to be stopped". Here it means "the thing we deny. The thing we deny". The thing we'd say, "hey stupid, that doesn't exist". Okay. What is it?

(students: (unclear))

A pen which could be good from its own side. By the way, the old translations of Buddhism said "self". They left out "the nature". So everybody went around thinking they shouldn't be themselves. And I don't know whose teeth they were brushing in the morning, but, okay, forget all that, okay. Big mistake, stupid translation. Does this thing have a self? No. It's not a person. Does it have a self-nature? Yes, it does, it's a pen. Does it have a self-nature in and of itself of being good for example? No, it doesn't have that kind of self nature. That's all they meant when they said, "no self", okay, they meant "no nature of its own". No quality of being good or bad of...in and of itself...by itself, okay. That doesn't exist, okay. That's the (gak ja), okay. (Gak ja) means...get this...(gak ja) means "the thing that emptiness is empty of". Got it? If you say my pocket's empty, what is it empty of? Enough money to buy a Michael and Joey's fruit shake. Okay. That would be the (gak ja). You see what I mean? When you speak of emptiness or or voidness, you say, "void of what, empty of what?" You see. His head is totally empty. Empty of what? Brains. (laughter)

(laughs) Okay? All right? What is this empty of. (Gak ja), you see? That's what (gak ja) means. The thing that's not there. Okay? The thing that emptiness is empty of. A thing which could exist from its own side in and of itself, a goodness or badness of this pen which is emanating out to every person so everybody likes it the same. How many of those are there? Zero. They don't exist. They're they same as the Tooth Fairy and Santa Clause and the self-existence of the goodness of this pen, okay? They just don't exist, okay? So why talk about something that doesn't exist, you know? Why don't we talk about Santa Clause instead of spending the whole lecture on Buddhist philosophy? You see? 'Cause they have equal reality, which is zero. You see what I mean? You might as well talk about anything. We had this huge debate in the monastery trying to debate about whether you could describe a thing that doesn't exist. You see, you can't. They're all equal. You could say ten foot purple elephant smashing through this room, twenty foot, thirty foot, thousand foot...it doesn't matter, they're all equally ex...they don't, they don't exist, okay. The thing that this is empty of is a pen that is good from its own side, bad from its own side, that just plain doesn't exist. That's (gak ja). Okay? You have to know that. All the texts say...Shantideva is the most famous one...(tak ba mu la ma re par je, mu me gin my yin, mu ma yin) which means "you can't establish what emptiness means, you can't get to enlightenment in seven lifetimes, unless you know what emptiness is empty of". You see what I mean? What is it that's not there? A pen that could exist from its own side. That's all. Okay. All right. (Gak ja)...let me see...let's do one more okay and then we'll stop...we'll take a break. No one's asked me the famous Mrs. Ribush question (laughter). Who's Mrs. Ribush? There's this brilliant monk named...ex-monk...Nick Nick Ribush who started Wisdom Publications...great Dharma student, last thirty-forty years. I think the main thing he's done is converted a bunch of other people too. But, so I I was giving this lecture in Melbourne and and Mrs. Ribush calls me up...this is his mother, eighty-five years old or something like that...she calls me up..."I have to meet you". So okay, okay. "Tomorrow, at your place". I said, "okay okay". You know, and she comes in and she can hardly walk, and there's this lady carrying her and she sits down and she says "I was at your lecture", you know, and I said "yeah I know". (laughter). She says "I I want to know something about the pen,". I said, I said, "okay, ask me". She says, "you know, you were talking about the goodness of the pen and the badness of the pen. What about the pen itself?" Okay. What about the pen itself? Does the pen itself has a nature of being a pen or not, you see what I mean? Good or bad is easy.

What about "penness"? Does it have a nature of being a pen from its own side...which is to say, would every single living being who ever walked in this room...roach, dog, bird, human, Eskimo from the fourteenth century...would they all look at it and say, "oh, Dry Erase Marker, blue one, medium color". Would they all say that? No. Which means even its penness is something being projected on it by you, okay, otherwise dogs could walk in here and start writing, you know, birds could walk in here and write (laughter) something...you know what I mean, they would recognize it as a writing instrument. You see what I mean. It's not even a writing instrument from its own side. Get it? To a bird or a roach or a dog it's just another cylinder. It's a pretty one. It shines. It's just a pretty black and white cylinder. They can't cognize it as a pen, you know, they can't use it as a pen, they don't see it as a pen. Even its "penness" is something that you are laying on it, okay. Where's that come from?

(student: Karma)

We say karma. That's the meaning of karma, okay. In the past...history of your mind which has never died...get it?...it's been around for a long long time, you helped someone write something, you did something for someone, to give them a pen, supply them with something written, okay, and that put a seed in your mind to see pens, and now in this life...by the way, you think it's natural, right..."oh, all those things are pens. I'm not projecting that. That's coming from the pen." You even call it a pen. You don't say, "oh, nice black and white cylinder, Michael, okay, you say it's a pen...you believe it's a pen from its own side. That's wrong, okay. It's a it's a conditioned thing. You are laying it, you are you are putting it on this cylinder...you're putting pen on this cylinder. If it wasn't that way, and if it was a pen from its own side, then every single being who ever walked in here would say, "hey, let me use that to write a letter". Woof woof...woof. You know, let me write a letter with this thing. It's not true, okay. It's not even a pen from its own side. Okay. You gotta get used to that. Now in the (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra), Lord Buddha says, "and by the way, when you yourself get to an enlightened being, it's all that way". It's all the same, okay, meaning what? When you get to be a Buddha, you know, finally, after all those classes...okay, memorizing all those stupid (dak gyas)...Rinpoche said the best thing about the (dak gye) is that when you get enlightened you don't have to recite any more, you know. (laughter) (laughs). Okay. All right. Okay. Anyway, so after all this work, what's gonna happen to this cylinder? (laughter).

Two cylinders here, okay. Here's one...it's just a plain own cylinder...if you have karma in your mind to see it as a pen, you see it as a pen. Guess what. This one's the same...this cylinder here...it's just the same, okay. You have pretty good karma in your mind, you'll see it as a human arm. You have crappy karma in your mind, you'll see it as a dog's foot. And then you will be a?

(student: Dog)

Dog. This rebirth stuff is serious. It's just perception. They don't make dog bodies out in Nebraska somewhere and stuff minds into them. It's just a perception, okay. Your mind can turn on you in ten seconds. It's called "dying", and and you'll see it differently a minute later...at any moment it can happen. This rebirth stuff is serious...stuff. Very dangerous stuff, okay. It's not that your mind floats around...flop, flop, flop, and then goes to Nebraska and finds the dog body factory and they stuff it in there and sew it real quick or something like that, it's not like that. Your mind shifts slightly...your perception slip...shifts very slightly, and instead of an arm you're seeing a leg, okay; instead of an ear you're seeing an antennae. And then you are a dog, you are an insect. You see, it's very serious, very possible. The thing called "death" itself is just another perception. The thing you're used to see as moving, now you're forced by your old karma to see as not moving. That's called death. It happens in a minute or so. And don't think that you're like exempt from being those other kinds of beings. You're not. It...all it takes is a slight shift in your mind and you are that being, you see what I mean? 'Cause then you see this cylinder differently. What's that got to do with the (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra)? Now that you're ready for dessert...I I mean refreshments, sorry, the point is this. If you could put some really really really pure karma in your mind, okay, mainly in this lifetime your only real shot is tantric practice, okay, if you could put some kind of heavy heavy good karma in your mind, then in this lifetime, before you die, maybe you have a shot to see this as an enlightened being's arm. Okay. That's all. Maybe you have a chance, okay. If you practice very seriously, very hard, the highest practices, you have some chance of seeing this cylinder and this cylinder as something different, you see what I mean? There's nothing human about this cylinder from its own side...I'm...I'm imposing that on this. Okay. If I change the karma in my mind by being very very holy, very good to others, then I might be able to see this thing change before I die...that's what (tantric) al...practice is all about. We're

gonna talk more about it later. That's...you have to try in this lifetime to try to pull it off, okay. What happens then? Your mind is forcing you to see four new things about you, okay? These are called the four bodies of the Buddha. You have to write them down 'cause they're on your homework. Okay. And everybody should know the four bodies of the Buddha. By the way, sometimes it's taught as three...sometimes it's taught as four, when you teach it as three you're really just grouping two of the four into one, okay. So don't get worried about it. I'm gonna teach it to you the more detailed way. All right. But what we're talking about is how you're gonna become a (tantric) enlightened being in this lifetime. You've gotta...you're gonna...four things are gonna happen to this arm and to this mind, okay. Here's the first one. They call them "bodies"...they should have called them "parts" or "body parts", I don't know. Body number one. I I don't like the word "body" much. They should've called it "the four parts of an enlightened being", or something like that. I mean most translators like Thubten Jimpa now is using "part" or something, you see what I mean? Say (ngo wo) (repeat) (nyi ku) (repeat) (ngo wo) (repeat) (nyi ku) (repeat) This is the most important part of an enlightened being and it's the most im...difficult part of an enlightened being. (Ngo wo nyi) means "emptiness", okay. (Ngo wo nyi) is another word for "emptiness". Okay. This whole first part here (ngo wo nyi), means "emptiness". (Ku) means "part" or "body". The part of an enlightened being which is their emptiness. This is the coolest part of an enlightened being. This is the most important part of an enlightened being. Okay. Why? Check this out. The fact that this thing...the fact that this cylinder is not a human arm from its own side, anymore than this is good from its own side...get it, you gotta keep it in mind...this two things are the same, okay. This thing is not good or bad, or even a pen from its own side. This thing is not a human arm from its own side. I'm imposing that on this cylinder. I'm forced to see it as an arm. By whom? Mr. Karma. (laughter), okay? Mr. Karma is twisting this arm so I see this arm as an arm. Mr. Karma is forcing me to see this...by the way, you don't have any choice right now. Your karma was set...you did certain things, you said certain things, you thought certain things...they are imprinted into your mind. You don't have a choice now, okay. You can sit there and say "I wish it wasn't a human arm, but, but it's not gonna change it. Okay. Your karma is forcing you to see this cylinder as a human arm, okay? But there's a potential here...what the potential? It could be a (tantric) angels arm. Why? It's empty. It doesn't have its own nature any more than this is good or bad from its own side.

There's this incredible potential, there's this thing called good luck...what? Thank god, this thing is empty. (laughs) Okay. Thank goodness this thing is empty, okay. If this was an arm from its own side, you'd be stuck forever...until the day it got more wrinkled and died. Okay. But since it's empty, you have a shot, okay. It doesn't have any nature of being an arm from its own side. Okay. It doesn't have any nature from its own side. Everything about it is coming from?

(students: your mind)

Your mind. And your mind is being drive, whipped by karma..."hey, see it this way". Okay. No choice, right now. That's why you have to be good, because then you have different karma set in your mind and you'll see it differently. Okay. But what's our saving grace...what's the only good thing about our present arm? Is it the blood? Is it the bone? Is it the cancer cells probably already running around, getting ready? You know, both my parents were dead by this age. Like I'm just waiting, you know (laughter), okay. What's the only good thing about your arm? What's the only saving grace about your arm? It's empty. It has potential, okay. It's not fixed, it's like an empty screen. If you fix the projector you'll have a nice (tantric) deity's arm, okay. That's the saving grace of your arm. By the way, that's the only thing you can take with you to the bank. It's the only part of you which will still be there when you achieve enlightenment, okay. You won't have the same hair, eyes, brain, nose, ear, foot, anything, but your emptiness you get to take with you all the way. So we call that...what?

(student: Buddha nature)

Buddha nature. Buddha nature. Okay. And all those people who say that Buddha nature is this little guy that's hiding under your fourth rib somewhere, and you just have to scrape off enough skin or something...it's all stupid, okay? Buddha nature means, every piece of you and every piece of your mind and every piece of your body is empty. It doesn't have a nature of being one way or the other...from it's own side. So if you could just clean up your karmic act, you would see it as a (tantric) deity's arm. That's cool. That's its emptiness, okay. And that emptiness you carry all the way to enlightenment, and when you get enlightened, the emptiness of your mind and the emptiness of your body is called? The emptiness body, okay...the emptiness body. Or sometimes they call it the "essence body", okay. That's all. So the most important part of Buddha, the part of a Buddha that

allows him to be a Buddha is their emptiness, okay. That's all. That's the first body of a Buddha...that's the most important one. I always do the most difficult one first because then you'll pay attention to the others. Here's number two. The sergeant's been waving at me...I think he says there's enough orange juice for everybody. Okay. Say (long ku) (repeat) (long ku) (repeat). By the way I'm gonna give you the...shall I give you the...nah. Forget that. Okay. (Long ku) means "the physical body of an enlightened being in their paradise". In their own heaven, okay. Like, it's very cool because to tell you the truth, whatever you are attracted to now, it will be a variance of that you will be. It's very interesting. Like whatever you find physically most attractive in the whole universe, you'll be very close to that, okay. Like if you're attracted to Tara, you'll look a little bit like Tara. If you're attracted to...I don't know...Baywatch ladies (laughter) or something, (laughs), no I'm not kidding, I'm not kidding. You will be the most beautiful thing you can imagine. Okay. Ten times better...billion times better, but it's funny, you will be some kinda take on that. Okay. It's very interesting. Whatever you are most attracted to now, your deity body, the body that you enjoy in some sor some lonely enjoy, the body that you enjoy in your own paradise...we call it the paradise body, okay, that one will be about a billion times better than the most beautiful thing you can imagine right now...the thing you're most attracted to. Okay. You have a seed for it already. You have a certain attraction towards that kind of physical form already. Just be a billion times better...no blood, no guts (laughter), pure light, but you will look like that being, okay. Okay. That's in it's own paradise. Number three. Say (trulku) (repeat) (trulku) (repeat). Sometimes this word is corrupted to (tulku), okay, 'cause people can't say (tra) which is not so bad, okay, you can say (trulku, tulku) doesn't matter. (Trul) means "to emanate". (Trul) means "to emanate". This is the emanation body. What does that mean? One millisecond after you achieve enlightenment you appear in billions of planets as billions of different people and animals to help other people, okay? That's the nature of an enlightened being, okay. One millisecond after your enlightenment...by the way, in the first moment of enlightenment how many bodies do you have? Just three. Okay. One millisecond later you get a (trul ku). (Trul ku) means "the ability in a single moment to project bodies onto billions of planets to help billions of people...all at once". And (tsun gyi druppa) means what? Spontaneously. No conscious thought. You're not even aware of it going on, okay. You just show up on billions of planets. You..bodies...you can also be something inanimate,

trees, bridges, ships, cars, okay? The Buddha has this ability, okay. So you're sitting up in your paradise with your what? Your (long ku), okay, your paradise body, and then you've got all these other forms appearing on billions of planets, okay, to anyone who is ready...that's the catch...okay, first Dalai Lama, (b: Abhidharmakosha) commentary, (b: Ta wan del je), opening pages..."hey, if there's all these (trul kus) around, how come I didn't bump into one?" (laughter) You gotta have enough good karma, and lots of people don't okay? How many (trul kus) around you right now? How many of your friends are in drag (laughter), you know (laughs)...you don't know, okay. I mean everybody in this room could be...I'm not, okay, but everybody in this room could be a (trul ku). Everybody in New York except you or me could be a (trul ku). Okay. You don't know. Okay. But anyway, you got to have a lot of virtue to see a (trul ku). Then there's like...you know Coke Classics, there's a classic (trul ku) okay (laughter), described in the eighth chapter of the (b: Abhisalamkara), that is the physical body of Lord Buddha Shakyamuni who appear in India two and a half thousand years ago. You know, they have thirty-two major marks, eighty minor marks, they have certain set of marks on their body...they have a little thing here, they got Dharma wheels here, they got bump on their head, they got long ears, you see, they...that's called the "classic (trul ku). That shows up on a planet once in every couple thousand years or less, okay. And then there's all the other mini (trul kus), okay, emanation bodies. That could be a car, a dog, the person sitting next to you on the subway that you didn't like this afternoon, all trying to bring you to enlightenment. Okay. All working...they could have been on that subway for twenty years, waiting for you to get on, okay. For them it's nothing. We're talking people who've been enlightened for a billion years. Oh okay, twenty years I gotta wait for Christina to get on the subway...okay. So I can shove her (laughter), you know (laughs)...no, I'm not kidding (laughs). Somebody did it to me this morning. So like, you know, this guy says he's teaching patience and then he gets pissed on within thirty seconds. (laughs). One good shove, you know. Okay. That's all. They're all around you. They're helping you. They're testing you. Okay. You guessed, right? Say

(cut)

(repeat) (yeshe) (repeat) (chu ku) (repeat). (Ye she) means "wisdom"...a lot of Tibetans are named (ye she). (Chu ku) means, like "Dharma body". Dharma body. (Ye she chu ku) means, just simply, "the ultimate wisdom of an enlightened being", okay? The

omniscience of an enlightened being. Enlightened beings have the power to see everything that ever was, everything that ever will be, everything that is now, in the entire universe, in one millisecond. They can see all of them directly, okay. They see all of history that ever was or will be, on every planet in the universe, every second that they're alive...they see it. Okay? This is omniscience. All the thoughts in all the minds of all the beings that ever lived, will live, did live, period. They see it all. Within...that's what makes them so good at helping people. Okay. It's like a goal that we can...strive. By the way, does omniscience imply omnipotence?

(students: No)

No. Whatever those people say, okay...come on, who's killing all these people with cancer. Who's burning little babies in buildings, okay? Who's letting Kosovo go? They, you know, it can't be an enlightened being, can't be a compassionate being...there's no such thing, okay. There is no omnipotent being...in...we don't believe that. Are there omniscient beings?

Of course there are. Are they surrounding you all the time, watching you, trying to help you? Yes. Do they emanate all your friends and...you know, all your enemies too? Yes. Maybe, okay.

Are they very powerful? Yes. Do they have ultimate love for you? Yes. Do they constantly guide you and help you even though you can't see them? Yes. Are they omnipotent? No. Why? Aids, cancer, car accidents, babies dying in fires that didn't have time to be bad yet, okay. It's obvious, okay. So Buddha does not have omnipotence. The Buddha has omniscience, okay. So that's the fourth body, okay? Yeah?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, right right right. We did define it that way. That's called (bam she). (Bam she) means "a useful way of describing it". Technically it's the ability to see everything in the universe at the same time, but what makes omniscience sexy, is that omniscience can decide what's good and what's bad for getting you enlightened, okay? I don't care if omniscient knows every kind of, you know, boll worm...in..bollweivel in the world, and can name them all for me. It doesn't matter. I mean, the function of omniscience is to teach people what's right and what's wrong for getting to be omniscient or enlightened. You see, that's the...the value of omniscience. It's not that..."oh gee, I can tell you the fourteen different kinds of, you know, bugs that live at the bottom of this kind of...I don't care,

okay. But if you say I can come and describe to you in fifteen minutes how to get your rear end into a paradise, you know, what kinds of karma to do and what kinds of karma not to do, well that becomes interesting. That that's all. The main reason to admire or want to be omniscient is that, okay. Please have some refreshments and we'll start in about ten minutes, okay?

(break) (laughs) Thank you. I'd love some.

There's a short schpiel in there about the perfection of giving, you know, what is it to give perfectly, okay. What the perfection of giving is not, is that you give something and it works out great, okay (laughter...that's not it. Frankly, when you do a virtue you can't predict the result fo...in the short term. The apparent result is unpredictable. You give somebody a hundred dollars, they go out, buy a gun, shoot their parents

(laughter) you know, you can't predict the apparent, what we call the apparent result. But you can always predict the ultimate result, okay, which is that if you give, so shall ye get, you know. And that's the result of that. So it's important during an act of giving, Buddha says something like, "there are three elements in an act of giving and do not see them". Okay. There are three parts to an act of giving and do not see them. And we have to discuss what "do not see them" means, okay. But first we hafta figure out what are the three parts. Well, here's the three parts. (Geshe-la whispers...(unclear) notebook...where's his notebook...it's in his mind already...in his mind already, he doesn't need to take notes) Say (jin je) (laughter) (repeat)(jin je) (repeat). (Jin je) means "the person giving the thing. (Jin) means "to give", (je) means "doer". The person giving the thing. So the, the subject in this action. The person who's giving something is called (jin je). Can you see the (jin je) if I give this paper to Venerable Anne, our newest Venerable (laughter)...can you see the person who gives it? Of course you can. I'm standing here. Okay. But can you see me in a self-existent way? Can you see me independent of your own karma forcing you to see me?...the way you see me? By the way, if you think I'm ugly, that's your problem (laughter). I'm not kidding. I'm really not kidding. It's your karma projected onto me. I'm not ugly from my own side, I'm not handsome from my own side. You gotta get used to that. Anyway you perceive, your teacher especially, it's totally your problem (laughter) okay, it's your karma, okay. Anyway, that's what it means not to see the person who's giving, you see what I mean...that's (jin je). That's the emptiness of the element of the giver, okay...and you have to

think about that when you give something, okay. What does it mean in terms of yourself doing the perfection of giving. If you give little pieces of food to birds on the street in New York City, but you are thinking about that emptiness thing and thinking about this arm turning into Manjushri's arm or Tara's arm or Baywatch arm or whatever you're gonna do, okay, if you're if you're concentrating on that it all happens a lot faster.

Okay. So if you give a scrap of food to a sparrow on the street in New York City, but you're concentrating on that emptiness thing of you, the giver, much more powerful, much much more powerful. You have a good chance of getting enlightened soon. You see, that's the perfection of giving as opposed to ignorant giving. 'Cause you're thinking about the emptiness of the person who's giving, okay. Next one. (Jin ngo) Say (jin) (repeat) (ngo) (repeat) (jin ngo) (repeat). (Jin ngo) means "the person to whom you are giving something. (Jin) means "giving", (ngo) means "the person to whom you're giving it". The indirect object, if you will, okay? And again, you give this piece of paper to Ven. Dr. Sikes (laughter), okay, and while you're giving it you think, you know, if I had better karma, I'd be seeing Manjushri. Okay. Now I see a very holy being, but not quite Manjushri. Okay (laughter)...yet. And that's my fault...you see what I mean? Okay. (laughter). No, that's my fault. I don't have the karma yet, you see. I'm projecting a a human being, a normal human being, okay? That's my fault. If I were more pure...if my mind were more pure, I'd be perceiving an enlightened being, okay. So that's the emptiness of the person to whom you're giving something. Say (jin ba) (repeat) (jinba) (repeat). (Jinba) means "the whole act of giving". The fact that Dr. Sikes is there, Venerable Dr. Sikes, the fact that I'm here, the fact that we're into acting, it's not a coincidence...there are no accidents in Buddhism, okay. That event of the giving itself is also empty, okay. The fact that it's happening is a projection of my mind. Okay. The fact that he sat there, the fact that I'm standing here, the fact that I have something to give him, the whole ambience of the thing, is due to my karma, okay. I'm seeing the whole thing happen because of my karma, all right? And that's the emptiness of the act of giving. Now there's one last part. And then we're finished with the easy stuff. Say (jin ja) (repeat) (jin ja) (repeat). (Jin ja) means "the thing that you give", okay...the piece of paper...is the (jin ja). So how many elements of the act of giving do we have? But there's only three. Some scriptures replace any one of the first three with the fourth one that I gave you, okay? So I'm just giving it to you for dessert, all right. Usually just the first three that you see here.

Sometimes different scriptures throw in number four and they skip one of the first three. So it gives you more flexibility on your homework (laughter) okay? So anyway, the (jinja) is the thing that I'm giving to Dr. Sikes, okay. If my karma...it is also empty...if my karma had been different, he would have been Donald Trump, you know, I woulda had a contract that said, "we're moving you into the World Trade Center tomorrow (laughter), okay...something like that. All right. That's all. The emptiness of the paper. Emptiness...this paper's much more valuable, right? It's got the four bodies on it, okay. That's all. Emptiness of the giver, emptiness of the givee, emptiness of the giving and emptiness of the thing you're giving, okay. And if you keep your mind on those while you give something...that's why you can get enlightened giving food to birds, okay. You don't have to save three thousand people on a Titanic in the middle of the Atlantic, or something, okay. They say you can get enlightened giving food to birds. Why? 'Cause if you keep all this stuff in mind, you know...I have to see myself as a normal person 'cause I don't have the good enough karma yet, I have to see him as a normal, beautiful, holy monk because I don't have the karma to see him as Manjushri yet, you know. I have the karma to see myself giving this paper, instead of a million dollars...sorry (laughter) because I don't have the karma yet. That's all...the emptiness of all those things going on. And I met him and he's here and I'm here and I'm giving it to him because of my karma also. Everything is your projection. Everything around you is the same. Yeah?

(student: (unclear))

Oh, it's nothing very logical okay, just sometimes there's, sometimes there's no...nobody...well, most often it replaces the one about the thing being given...for example, in the perfection of patience there's nothing exchanged, you see what I mean? So that...then they say, the guy being patient, the guy you're being patient at, and the act of patience itself. And there's no particular object being exchanged, or somethin...okay, so sometimes they will replace that one, okay. Okay. Last thing. We've been going through...where is that? We've been going through each time at the very end and talking about what?

(students: (unclear))

Huh?

(students: (unclear))

Future of Dharma in America. Future of Buddhism in America. So I think in the last year of reviewing these courses, we have to talk about, how do you teach those courses, you see what I mean? And subjects we've talked about so far were like stuff like what are you going to teach, and who's qualified to teach it, and should you charge or shouldn't you charge, and how're you gonna keep track of your finances, and how you gonna certify that teachers are real, what kind of books are you gonna say are good books and what kinda books are not good books and things like that, and we've been talking about all the details of how to spread a new path in this country, and sooner or later it has to be brought up. You can either do it in a random way, or you can actually sit like this together and say, okay we want our Buddhism to be like this. We want to avoid these mistakes from the old country, we want to enhance these things from the old country, and and we want to keep very precious these ancient wisdom that's been passed down to us by the Tibetans very non-corrupt...you see what I mean? It's very very pure...lineage. So how do we do that? I had one sponsor. I said, "if you give me twenty million dollars I can spread Buddhism all over American". They said, "sounds great. Can you promise me that in a hundred years it won't be like such and such a church", you know. I said "no". They said, "okay, I won't give you the money". (laughs). Anyway, how are you gonna guarantee that this tradition is as pure as it is now a hundred years or two hundred years from now? You see what I mean. This is a big question. You have to plan for it now, before it takes off...it's taking off already...so you have to see how're you gonna keep it pure, how're you gonna spread it from person to person, how're you gonna prevent it from becoming a a doctrine, and and something which keeps people down instead of liberating people, how are the people in this room gonna pass it on and guarantee that in a hundred years or two hundred years you don't have an inquisition, and anyone who's not keeping their book gets burned (laughter), you know, or those who don't keep vow number fourteen like I keep vow number fourteen, ge...get expelled from the church, you know...it'll happen. It...you know, this is the honeymoon, okay. You know, the forces of dogma will come and and and start to assert themselves, okay, how do you prevent that, how do you keep things pure. We've been talking about that every step of the way, and you have to talk about it. And how're you gonna keep Buddhism alive and and flourishing in this country? So I want to address one thing...I'm just gonna read it straight from a piece of paper, which I never do, but I think it's so important that I sat down and wrote it and thought about it for a few weeks

actually, okay. I'm kinda nervous 'cause I've never done this before. Okay. It says, Tantra in America, okay. How you gonna pass Tantra in America...how're you gonna keep it pure. "During this series of talks we have been discussing the future of Buddhism in America and other Western countries; its transmission from Asia, and the focus we would like to see it take in our countries. Since we are approaching the conclusion of the final review of the Buddhist master's study program"...you're gonna be Buddhist masters, okay, "which will be complete in eighteen courses, and because the three-year retreat is soon to begin, and finally because our students as a group have reached what I think is a critical point in these matters"...people are always coming up and me and asking me if you're gonna teach tantra or not, and I haven't okay, and you've never heard me teach tantra in these classes, question is...what's gonna happen. Okay. "I would like to address the future of (tantra) in America. First point is called "Why Practice (Tantra)?" People have asked me if I practice tantra. The answer is "of course"; and I devote a good part of each day to trying to master a wide range of various tantric texts, arts and practices. I properly consider it the primary focus of my practice and my life. In general, the word (tantra) itself means "secret", and normally it should be practiced and taught in a very private way. But because of my role as a public teacher, because so much of what I do is done in the public eye, I think it is necessary for me to discuss openly, in brief, the reason and method for the practice of (tantra), especially as I hope to see it develop in the West. The spread of an improper practice of tantra would be a serious blow to the growth of Buddhism in our countries. Equally so, the failure to properly teach and follow the extraordinary methods of (tantra) would be de...to deny a real chance for ultimate happiness to thousands of Western people. We have committed ourselves as Buddhists to ending pain in the world, as quickly as possible. To do so, we must ourselves become enlightened beings. This can be accomplished either by following the "sutra" or open teachings of Buddhism, or it can be done through the practice of secret or tantric Buddhiam. The standard texts for the sutra method explain that, even after achieving the very high level of real bodhicitta, or the wish for enlightenment, it took Lord Buddha himself over two hundred thousand lifetimes to reach his enlightenment more, okay. After Lord Buddha achieved enlightenment, he taught that this process can be reduced to one lifetime...through the practice of...proper practice of (tantra). So if we are serious as Buddhists about ending the suffering that others and we ourselves must endure daily, it is our sworn responsibility to practice (tantra) and (tantra) in its highest

and most powerful forms, as quickly as we are able." So you know, everybody here says they are here because they want to reach enlightenment. And then supposed to be that you're doing it for other people because you want to save other people from suffering. And thousands and thousands of people are suffering at this moment who weren't suffering five minutes ago, okay? So you've pretty much sworn...I think most of the people here...to the Bodhisattva Vows...you've sworn to do whatever necessary to reach enlightenment as quickly as possible. Which means you...yo...it's not a question of should we practice (tantra) or is it okay to practice (tantra), you have sworn already that you you'll do whatever is necessary as quickly as possible, so there's really no question...you have to, as soon as you are... properly able. "The Forms of (Tantra). What then are the highest forms of (tantra)? (Tantric) practice in general divides into four classes; these are distinguished by going from a greater dependence on outer focus and ritual in the lower classes, up to a general focus on inward practice in the higher. Within the highest of the four classes of (tantra) there are three broad steps of proper preparation, actual practice, and final goal." There's four classes of (tantra). They're basically different from each other because in the lower classes you are more concentrating on rituals, recitation, things like that, and then in the higher classes of (tantra) that shifts into a...more of a a mental or an inward focused practice, okay. "Within the steps of actual practice, there are two important levels: the first in which we undertake to develop a special view of our reality, which is called (kir rim) and the second in which we use this view to work on our subtle spiritual body, which is called (dzog rim). This dual process ends in transforming the mind and body into the state of an enlightened being, a state of total knowledge, purity, compassion, and physical perfection. Work with the subtle spiritual body is itself done in two different ways. These involve a rigorous discipline of practice and study, including intense work with the physical channels throughout the body." I want you to understand a little bit about...working with the channels, okay. I'm not allowed to talk about it, publicly, in detail, but I think I have to...I've been forced to, okay. Here we go. "I would like to clarify this work with the channels briefly here, since it can so easily be misunderstood. In their current condition, certain subtle channels within our bodies are badly choked; this situation is aggravated every time we have a negative thought and especially when we have any kind of misperception about the nature of the world around us, about how things really work." You have certain subtle channels running through your body.

Everytime you get angry, everytime you get jealous, everytime you have wrong desire, they choke a little bit more, okay. What happens when they choke...by the way, the worst thing is to not understand the thing about the pen. Except there's two worse things but I can't tell you because that's (tantra) (laughter), okay. They have to do with how you view your Lama and things like that. Okay. "This continual choking of the channels is in fact what makes our bodies mortal; it is responsible for the aging process, and unless corrected, eventually leads to our physical deaths." Every time you have a negative thought, certain areas of your body are choked. Every time you misperceive reality, which you're doing every second, they get choked. This is what kills you. This is why you die. This is why people die. What if you didn't do that? You wouldn't die, okay. You'd be a (tantric) deity. That's how you get to be a (tantric) deity...and you and you gotta choose one or the other, you don't have any other choice. Okay. Either you clean up your channel act and become a (tantric) deity in this lifetime, or it kills you. And then your mind enters another state and there's millions and millions, it's...I always call it the Moscow Hotel. Biggest...they wanted the biggest one in the world. They didn't care that it's ugly, everything's lousy, but they've got the most rooms in the world, five thousand rooms on the Kremlin, you know, and and dying is like that. You don't know what room you're gonna be in. Only one room is usable to reach enlightenment in one lifetime, okay. Next. "When we work to fix this condition, we are using our defective physical body, our vessels, in effect, to eliminate themselves." Okay? So you're using your body to get rid of your body, okay? "To eliminate, to replace them with the indestructible, perfect form of a (tantric) deity. This is a painstaking and difficult process, requiring an extensive background in Buddhist philosophy and long hard hours of training. It is about as romantic as cleaning a badly clogged toilet, or cutting open a woman's breast in an operation to remove cancer." I mean, someone might say the doctor is interested in this lady's breast. He's trying to cut open and cut out this cancer. I mean, forget it. He's he's have any thought like that, he's totally beyond that thought. He's working with this part of her body, but his mind is to save her life, and he's doing that by removing that part of her body, you see what I mean? It's very interesting. You have to use it to get rid of it, okay. And that's a very interesting process...and difficult. And hard. And it takes a lot of...holiness, okay. All right. "For certain personality types, much of this work is best accomplished through the cooperation of a (tantric) partner, and in fact we are required by our vows in the highest form of

tantra to seek out and undertake this means, in the appropriate circumstances. Then you get into "Appropriate Practice of Tantra". What are the "appropriate circumstances" for the practice of these higher forms of (tantra)? One must first of all complete the proper preparation, and, to put it quite bluntly, this is the entire goal of the eighteen courses of this Institute." Okay? You're getting through the preparation when you finish this six years. I didn't want to tell you that in the third year or you would have quit, okay. "Aside from study, one must internally have developed a true wish to escape from the inevitable suffering of this life, a genuine wish to use the holy Buddhist Dharma to escape from a world which is either pain already or pain waiting to happen, the gradual decay of our bodies and our minds; the loss of everything we have ever worked for, and being torn in the end from everyone we have ever loved." That's what you have to look forward to. Your body will fall apart. Your mind will get more and more stupid as the years go on. You will lose everything you ever went to work for. You will lose everyone you ever loved. That's your choice, okay. It's the reason to practice (tantra). "We must as well have come to see that this suffering will not end with death. Whatever brought us here once can and will bring us here again. There is not a single compelling proof that the mind does not continue on after the functions of your physical body have ended. There are thousands of states of conscious life, from insect to human, which are obvious to us. There are millions more that are not obvious to us. At the moment of death there are literally minnoya...millions of forms of consciousness we can be thrown into, almost all of them are simple chaos and terror. We cannot practice (tantra), we cannot reach total happiness, in any state of mind other than the one we are currently in, and you must lose it." Okay? That's the prospect, okay. You got this window of opportunity. The intelligence that you currently have in your mind and the attraction to holy things is extremely rare, and you must lose it when you die, okay. You...the...you can't...you can't wait to do these things, you hafta as soon as you are ready, you hafta do them, okay. "We must die. We must go on. It can happen any moment of our lives. We must practice (tantra) and we must do so now. We must also be resolved to practice it in the most powerful ways within our capacity. We may not have time to follow lesser paths. Consider finally the fact that a (tantric) disciple who succeeds in this practice becomes, in one fell swoop, a person who can simultaneously reach out to thousands of other suffering people and guide them away from pain." The minute you succeed at your (tantric) practice, you are emanating on other planets. Okay. Billions of other

planets. So that's a added attraction, okay. "Tantra is at present taught in many forms. There are false and very filthy practices, many of which are simply common copulation with a glorified name, that are being taught and spoken about without any authority whatsoever, in various "new age" schools and the like." You can see it in...what do you call it...the thing you get free on the street...learning, learning annex...yeah...learn (tantra), three simple lessons, hundred and forty dollars (laughter), you know, bring light clothing or something, you know. "There are also public forms of (tantric) initiations and teachings, where eminent masters such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama have conveyed the broad principles of (tantra) to large groups of people." Why do they do that? It's secret. Why is His Holiness going to teach ten thousand people the Kalachakra in Indiana? Who he's never met...most of them. "In order to plant the powerful seed in them for secret tantric practices in the future, as well as to combat common misconceptions about tantra."

His Holiness has written books about (tantra) and Khen Rinpoche has released books about (tantra), one of their goals is to put a seed in peoples minds, the other goal is to fight all the dirty information about (tantra), okay? Lastly there are truly secret empowerments and practices which are transmitted, privately, to proven disciples by the extraordinary beings known as Tantric Masters." Okay. So now we gotta get into who's a Tantric Master.

"The success of (tantric) practice depends solely on the proper guidance of a qualified Tantric Master. These are beings who started out like you and me, and who by their intense efforts have been able to reach a completely different level. They are literally on a higher evolutionary plane, as different from a human...as different as a human is from an ant." Okay. To compare a normal person like us and a Tantric Master, you just about comparing the intelligence of an ant to the intelligence of a human. You gotta get used to that idea, okay. That's about the difference between us and them, okay. "Making contact with these beings, learning from them and having them lead us to ultimate happiness, is in fact very similar to an ant trying to relate to a human. Due to the fact that we ourselves are on a much more primitive plane of being, the process of reaching them is very...is first of all very rare, and secondly an often difficult and trying experience." Okay. You've read stories about Milarepa, Marpa...those guys, okay. It's true. All right.

It's very difficult to have a (tantric) teacher and a (tantric) relationship. 'Cause you're like an ant and they're like a human, okay. Trying to understand what they want you to do, and trying to do the right thing and trying not to see them as something other than a (tantric)...it's difficult, okay...it's

not easy. All right. "Imagine a summer meadow covered with marigolds and green grass. At the edge is a great oak tree. Nestled in one of the boughs of the tree is a great honeycomb. There is a human lying out under the tree enjoying the day. He sees the honeycomb, and he sees an ant scurrying around the roots of the tree, in the dirt. Out of great kindness and care for this single ant, he determines to lead it gently up the entire trunk of the tree, to the sweet honey." You gotta get this vision of a guy, a human, sitting under an oak tree, and there's an ant crawling around on the roots. And he's gonna try to get the ant to go up to the top of the tree 'cause there's some honey there, and the ant has no idea what's going on. Okay. That's about where we are when you have a (tantric) teacher, okay? "They're trying to help you and all you feel is...he's taking a single blade of grass and begins to nudge the ant, pushing at his behind with the blade of grass. To the ant this is a very disconcerting and frightening experience, but remember we are talking about a special kind of ant. He has some instinct, he has a seed of faith in him, that says "perhaps something bigger is going on here." Okay, I mean, the idea of a (tantric) disciple is you have some kind of an extraordinary good karma in your mind...I don't understand what's going on a hundred percent, this guy's trying to get me somewhere, I don't completely understand it, but I trust, okay. In (tantra) this is the (cries) most important part. "So he swallows his fear as best he can and accepts the guidance, with occasional lapses of panic where it all gets too high...talking about the ant. In the end he gorges himself in the nectar of immortality. We are just about this far away from the level of the (Tantric) Masters, and to meet them, to learn from them and be guided by them to total happiness within a single lifetime, is just as difficult. Like the ant, our position as a lower form of life prevents us from understanding the actions they do to help us, the pokes they give us on our posteriors. Due to our own set of past actions and thoughts, due to our own set of karmic imprints coloring and actually creating our reality"...the people in Mongolia got it, one thousand people yelling back, (ho san) (laughter) in emptiness. They haven't studied it for seventy years, they've been not allowed to talk about it and man, they got it in one hour. You know, okay. "We often sometimes see the (Tantric) teacher, Master, especially in the beginning, act in a way which we cannot understand or appreciate. This is a common phenomenon in (tantra). We should expect it and learn to move on up the tree despite it. A person may even appear to be a (Tantric) Master to one disciple, and seem to be a normal, ordinary person to another. For those of you who have studied emptiness, this is

also to be expected. We see only what our own level of past good karma allows us to see, and in fact there is nothing quote "out there" except what your past deeds compel you to see."

And there's a famous story and this thing mentions it...Asanga, Master Asanga, 350 AD is practicing in a cave, twelve years he tries to see this (tantric) angel called Maitreya. Twelve years, meditating, praying, reciting mantras, waiting for this guy to show up. Nobody shows up. He gets fed up. He quits. (laughs) He walks down out of the cave. He's on the road going to town. He comes to a crossing and he sees a dead, half-dead dog. It's been run over by a wagon wheel. And it's guts are hanging out and they're rotting, and there's horrible things in it like maggots, and everything else, so, you know, he decides he's gonna help this dog, he's gonna take this dog to the doctor, vet, 350AD, and like he gets down and he starts to stuff the guts back into the body, and then he sees all the maggots and he says, "wait a minute. Now I can't kill the maggots to save the dog, you see. I can't kill these things. I have to, I have to save them too." So he just...he like tries to pick one up and he squashes it, and he says "Oh my God, I can't do that", so he says, you know, "What's the softest part of my body? I'll lick them off the dog." The dog's guts are hanging out, right, and and he (laughs) (laughter) so he closes his eyes, he says "this is too gross to watch." (laughter), and he sticks his tongue out and goes down and down and down and then finally his head hits the ground, and he and he's like "where's the dog"? And then there's Maitreya standing there, you know, and he, so Asanga, you'd think he'd be happy, right? He gets mad. (laughter) (laughs). He says, "I've been sittin' in that cave twelve years, and you show up like this," you know, "what took you so long?" And Maitreya says, "Look I was in the cave sitting next to you. You didn't have the karma to see me. Used to clear your throat when you're reciting, remember used to spit over on the left? I used to be standing there, I had to jump out of the way" (laughter), you know. "And you didn't have compassion. You know, you're this bigshot, Buddhist teacher, and you didn't have compassion. And now you you got it (cries) with the dog", you know, "and and you were willing to save the dog like that, and that's why you're seeing these things", you know, so he takes Maitreya on his shoulders and he runs around town, "I did it", you know. Guess what everybody else sees. Rotten guts hanging out of this dog. This crazy guy is running around town, okay. Who's right? Who's right?

(student: Both of them)

They're both right, okay. Okay. So the town the towns people say this guy is crazy. Is he crazy? I'd like to be crazy like that. Okay. "Potential Abuse of Tantra". This explanation leads us to the question of the potential abuse of (tantra). If things are however you see them, then what's to prevent someone from simply deciding on their own, I'm ready to practice (tantra) when they're not. There is no authentic lineage of (tantra) descended from Lord Buddha which does not say that the disciple must be thoroughly trained long before being led into the mandala, or the secret world of the (tantric Master. The (tantric) teachings repeatedly stress that the disciple must be deeply knowledgeable in each step of the open teachings", which happen to be presented in full in our Institute's courses. "The (tantric) path is not easy. It requires a great knowledge of Buddhist philosophy, a willingness to work long and hard in retreats and other practices, and unshakable confidence in one's (Tantric) Master. It should never be undertaken otherwise, since a failure to practice properly, a loss of faith in (tantra) itself, would set the disciple back many years. This itself would be a grave bad karma for their teacher, also, who quote "falls with the student, like one yak tied to another as the first falls off the cliff."" If you teach (tantra) to someone who's not ready, or if you practice...if you agree to teach it to someone who's not ready, then when they go to hell, you go to hell with them. That's a rule, (laughs) okay? And they say it's like two yaks on a cliff and they're tied together, and one gets pushed off the cliff, the other one goes automatically. Okay. So it's not only wrong for the student to try to study it, it's wrong for the teacher to teach it. "(Tantra) therefore is like fire, with a great potential for good if properly used, and a very destructive power if improperly used, whether this improper use be due to the mistakes of insufficiently trained people with good intentions, the carelessness of people who should know better, or even outright abuse by deluded people. The possibility of such abuse though cannot prevent us from fulfilling the tantric tradition in its highest form, any more than the existence of arsonists implies that we should ban the use of fire. As with fire, abuses can and probably will occur. Our goal then must be to establish procedures which will make it unlikely, thus making...still making the full and proper benefits of (tantra) available to those who can use it to attain ultimate good within their lives. At this Institute, therefore, we have created a formal police to assure that students are properly trained before attempting (tantric) study and practice. "Policy of the Institute". Okay, we're getting to the end, don't

worry...this is the most important thing ever I said. All right. You said that before today...okay. "It is therefore the policy of this Institute that (tantric) teachings will only be granted to students who have successfully completed the entire eighteen courses of its Buddhist Master's program. These eighteen courses are based directly on the five great books of ancient Buddhism, along with the teachings on the Steps of the Path called (lam rim), which constitute the Buddhist master (or geshe) course in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. In Tibet, it was a custom for monks to complete their geshe studies in order to qualify for admission to (tantric) college, and I think this is a wise requirement." In Tibet it's even harder...I didn't tell you. You have to be a Hlarampa Geshe. Two geshes per year out of ten thousand at Sera get a spot in in Gyume Tantric College, okay, so we're not that hard, okay? "The first fifteen courses may be taken optionally by home study (including listening carefully to each tape fully, completing all homework, quizzes, meditation assignments, and final examination). But the final three review courses must be taken either from myself or from one of my directly appointed assistant teachers. In addition to this requirement, the potential student must be examined by myself to determine whether they have sufficiently developed the inner spiritual qualities"...you can imagine some smart guy getting through all the courses, and still being a schmuck (laughter) okay? I mean, you gotta have some kind of mechanism to handle this people, okay. "They must have developed inner spiritual qualities...renunciation, compassion, and faith in the teachings and their teacher before receiving these teachings. In some cases, I may require an additional period of study and practice, along with special tasks for serving other people. Finally, no tantric teachings will be granted to a student who has not actively maintained a book...I call it a six-time book, okay...of vow observation for a period of at least three years." Okay. So you have three years ahead of you. No problem. "Authenticity of the Lineage". I'm gonna read the whole thing...I hope you don't mind is it okay? Yeah. Okay. Oh sit down Sergeant, it's all right. "Authenticity of the Lineage." This is wherein I try to prove that I'm qualified, okay? "The (tantric) teachings have a firm foundation in the word of Lord Buddha, and almost a quarter of the canon of His teachings are dedicated to these methods," that is about twenty thousand pages of the Kangyur. So to say that (tantra) is not authentic or (tantra) is not the word of the Buddha is to deny about a quarter of the whole scriptures...it's about a hundred thousand pages to say that a quarter of them are not valid. (Tantra) is valid. Buddha taught it about a quarter of his life, okay. "The Tengyur, or

collection of early Indian commentaries upon the Buddha's own teachings, contain over a thousand texts on (tantra). And the Tibetan masters themselves have written over fifty thousand commentaries upon these. More than a thousand of these commentaries have already been input on computer by our project," okay. See...(tantric)'s for real. "The tradition as it has come down to us has been real and authentic. Although I am hesitate personally to state my qualifications for granting (tantric) initiations and teachings, I would like to list them here, only for the benefit of those who have asked me to." Many people have come to me and asked me to teach them (tantra), okay? This is my answer, all right. (child making noise in background) Ooh...he's teaching his Mother (tantra) (laughter). "For those who are seriously interested in the possibility of receiving them from myself, I encourage each student of the Institute to be very careful in the selection of their (tantric) teacher, and I tell you quite frankly, that I may not be the proper teacher for your own personal needs. It is crucial though that you do seek a teacher out, that you find them and learn from them as quickly as you can. My training in the theory of (tantra) in this life has been accomplished as follows. Over the last twenty years I have received group tantric initiations from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, from the late...

(crying) from the late Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, senior tutor of the Dalai Lama and holder of the throne of Je Tsongkapa. (crying) From Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, former abbot of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery, and from the late Zong Rinpoche (crying) from the (laughs-crys) who was...who was the (tantric) master of Ganden Monastery. I have received extensive group teachings on (tantra) over the last twenty years from Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin, and more specialized teachings from Genlin...Trinley Topgye, abbot of Gyume Tantric Monastery. I have also received brief...(crys) (tantric)

initiations...instructions from the esteemed Pabongka Rinpoche." It's all a long story, okay (laughs). Bottom line is, they are very much like the pen, okay? And you see them if you work hard enough, okay. (crying) You bring them to you and you don't go to find them, okay? In otherwords you can't go to Dharamsala with fifty dollars and ask for a (tantric) initiation, (laughs) okay, like you have to bring them to you by practicing very very hard, and you won't see them unless you practice hard, okay? Then it says, "you don't have to be a (tantric) mas...you don't have to practice (tantra) if you're part of this Institute," you know, you don't even have to be a Buddhist, as you may have noticed, okay? And I'm not saying everybody in this place has to try to practice (tantra). I'm just saying, unless you're crazy

you should, okay? (laughs). And you have to try as hard as you can and you have to try the most serious practices you can. Okay. So there...I skipped some pages, but anyway, you can read it. Next page says, "while I'm on retreat in Arizona, we will continue to have classes here, and I encourage people who want to learn these things, to finish their eighteen courses, gives you a chance to finish them," okay. And we'll be continue to hold those courses during the time I'm gone, okay. So, even if you only have one or two finished, you can catch up by the time I get out and start teaching these things. That's why I'm saying, okay, and your work is cut out for you. It's not my problem if you don't do it. I'll start a series of (tantric) teachings when I get out...it'll take four or five years cycle...if you're not ready when I get out, you're gonna have to wait, okay? So, your work's cut out for you. Okay. And I don't think you can do all eighteen in the last two months, but you can try (laughter) okay. "In the case of partial completion of a course (meaning more than two absences during that course) the entire course will have to be taken over again." I don't want a spotty lineage. Okay. You gotta take the whole thing over again, okay. There's lots of people here who took three or four courses...classes in each course, or eight or nine...forget it. Oh no, eight or nine's okay. But unless it was eight or nine you have to start over that course over again, okay. There's lot of courses that are not interesting to some people: logic, (lojong), you know, I don't know, philosophy. I'm sorry. You have to take the whole thing, otherwise you won't be ready, okay. You will not get it. And lots of people don't get it, okay. You have to go through the whole thing. There's a reason why Je Tsongkapa designed it that way. You you have to go through all of them, okay? "I urge each of you now to begin the process of planning your study"...also Dr. Taylor's sitting here in Washington D.C. with this big computer that tells me who finished what homework and what classes, okay, and we'll print it out for each person, so you don't have to wonder...did I finish number six or not...you didn't (laughs), all right, but we'll make a list for each person, and and yo your work will be cut out for you. And then we'll design a schedule of classes, in the homes of the assistant teachers, during the time I'm in retreat. Okay. So you'll have a chance to cycle through the whole thing while I'm gone. Again you can take the first fifteen by homestudy, but you have to take the last three from someone who was in the last three, okay? Meaning (unclear). No...(laughs), just kidding. "Also I encourage you to take Bodhisattva Vows and Layman's Vows and we'll be having those ceremonies one more time before I go into retreat. It's very very important to have pratimoksha

vows...ordination or lifetime layman's vows, or at least to be observing the ten precepts." It's also very important...you can not take a (tantric) initiation without Bodhisattva Vows, okay. And then you are granted (tantric) vows. Each one is built on the other. People who say that the lower vows are unnecessary for (tantric) practice are crazy. Je Tsongkapa said they are like what? Do you remember?

(student: Hail)

Hailstorm that rips through parts of valley and ruins all the crops in ten minutes, okay. To have that idea that you don't need the lower vows to take the higher vows is ignorant. Okay. To have the idea also that you shouldn't prioritize your vows is equally ignorant, okay? If you are in a (nong dom), which is what? If you're caught in a...what do they call it?...

(student: Double bind)

It's like a catch twenty-two but there's a better word...

(student: Double bind)

Double bind. Anyway. You got this vow that says do this, and you got this vow that says do that. You must do what the higher...higher vow says. Don't go around saying people that you see who seem to not be keeping their lower vows, but you don't know that they're not keeping a higher vow...they may be the only person in this room keeping their vows, okay. Get it straight. You have to respect your higher vows even at the expense of apparently not keeping your lower vows. Okay. Period. If you don't, you're crazy, all right, and you're corrupt. "Watching one's vows throughout the day you can do very happily with the six-time book and encourage you to do it. In fact it's the only way to get into (tantric) paradise," all right, and it's a...I'll I'll break my (tantric) vow...it's a requirement for all higher tantric initiation. You must keep that book, okay. Might as well start now, okay. "If you get a chance in the next three years, take initiation from Khen Rinpoche. He is in...I'm not being biased, I certain would never be (laughter), he is the greatest living master of (tantra) and sutra in the world today. Period. You guys don't know what you have. They would love to have him back at Sera. There's nobody left at Sera, okay. They think he's crazy just to waste his time on us, you know...he is, he was in (tantric) college as the assistant to the abbot in nineteen...fifty seven?...when I was five years old, you know

what I mean? It's a blessing. Okay. So if you can, try to take it from Khen Rinpoche in the next three years...must try to do. Okay. Last thing it says here...there's always many last things..."the course in (tantra) will be taught both in Arizona and in New York. The course in Arizona will be more intense, we'll go through textual study, we'll go through the various visualizations, then we'll go through mandala construction, tormas construction, then we'll go through fire offerings, how to do a proper (tantric) retreat, and if you survive all that, you'll study (dzog rim), which is working with the channels, okay. And we'll take some time. But the whole course will be just as, I think, organized as this one is, you see what I mean. And that's been lacking I think in the West, you see what I mean. You'll be able to go through...it's not like a weekend initiation...which are great, but it'll be a regular course of study and practice that you have to go through in a very organized way, and rigorous, for four or five years, or something like that...maybe more. We'll see. Last thing it says here, I don't know if you...how many colleges in Sera Monastery?

(students: Two)

What are they?

(students: Sera Je and Sera Me).

Sera Je and Sera Me, okay, I mean it's a famous, that Sera Me's are smarter (laughter), that Sera Je's are (laughter), no just kidding. This is a big rivalry we have okay (laughs), we're from Sera Me, so are you by the way. But people don't know there was a third college at Sera. Ngakpa Dratsang. There was a (tantric) college at Sera. It was totally wiped out for the last month, okay, (crys) not a single monk (crys)...and it's gone and I'd like to revive it, okay? Out in Arizona somewhere (laughs) okay. It was a part of study at Sera. And it's a necessary part of the study, okay. There was a (tantric) college, and it's gone, okay. So I'd like to see that course of study revived. Properly, okay. Okay. Last this is says here...how many last things..."I will continue to teach in New York after the three year retreat. I intend to do two long courses a year here, and during the three years in Arizona, due to Winston's efforts and other people's efforts, there will be, I think, looks like, housing for anyone that wants to come out and be in retreat for a week, or a month, or a year, or whatever you want. We found a way to make very inexpensive places, and we'll have two courses a year there even during the three year retreat of about three

weeks each. Okay. And I'll teach those. So I encourage you to come. It says here that I will accept important messages and questions like "life" questions? by writing in retreat on a very limited basis, and they'll come through John Stilwell, I think. John will be directing the Institute in New York during my absence, if he still wants to. Winston McCullough, with his wife Andrea and son Kieran will be moving to Arizona in the next six months and creating that center there. And Elly van der Pas will be directing the actual retreat as far as caretaking and things like that. And you're very welcome to come and participate at any level that you're able to, okay, and we've kind of overcome all the housing questions and property questions, looks like, okay, you have to pray a little bit for that, okay. That's all I have to say tonight. Next week, next class I'd like to talk more about Buddhism in the West, about the form that Buddhism takes, okay, like do we really have to blow those horns (laughter), you know, or could we just play violins or something...you see what I mean? And we'll talk more about that next class, okay. Thank you for that...we'll do a dedication, okay. Are you ready Phuntsok-la? Oh, one thing before that, I think you've all got a copy of Khen Rinpoche's long-life prayer, Khen Rinpoche's birthday is coming up, July 1

(students: Today)

Today. His legal birthday's today. So we'd like to recite his longlife prayer. This long-life prayer was written by the teacher of the Dalai Lama, Trijang Rinpoche, who was Khen Rinpoche's root guru, okay. Okay. Do you have a copy? There's a special tune to this, which they usually do wrong, so try to listen, okay? Try not to run over me like a tractor, okay, that...the...okay, all right, here we go.

(prayer: Khen Rinpoche's Longlife prayer)

(cut)

**Review Course 17**  
**Class 2, part 1**  
**Transcribed by: Karen Becker**

(prayer: refuge)

We have a meeting ...we have dinner tomorrow at (unclear)

(student: okay)

You're welcome to come if you want to come.

(student: I'd love to)

Okay. Talk to Ora or Elly and his son happens to be here too, which is very good, and then we have a meeting...I have a meeting with Ke Shan who's another diamond dealer on Friday (unclear) the New York diamond.

Noisy. Hello hello...hello, hello. Okay we start. We try to start. Where's the Sergeant when you need him? Okay.

(student: (unclear))

Okay (laughter) whatever. (unclear) Okay we'll start. Tonight is the single most important class of all the classes, no kidding (laughter), okay. Tonight we're gonna discuss the direct perception of emptiness, all right, and that came in the (b: Diamond Cutter) course...it was class number six, so we're into that tonight. And I'm just gonna go from a historical basis, like if you wanted to see emptiness directly, how would it happen. All right. First of all, you need to meet an extraordinary teacher in this life...I mean you've had millions of lifetimes getting ready, okay...seriously, but in this life you have to meet a teacher

(cut)

the right study and it might take something like a thousand hours of study or something, okay, seriously...very serious now...tonight's very serious for one, okay. Secondly you would need to be helping people in general, okay? I mean, you'd have to be serving old people, sick people, needy people, like that, like a good part of your life and a good part of your activity would have to be helping people who need help, okay...and I'm talking about the conditions you need in this life to see emptiness directly, okay. Most importantly, although I don't bring the subject up here, would be serving your Lama. I don't go over that in these courses, that's not a part of these courses, because it would seem self-interested, you see, if I said bring your bank books next week and (laughs) okay, so I'm talking from a theoretical viewpoint, okay. You have to have a Lama, you have to serve that Lama, and I'm talking build them a house, go work for them and support what they're interested in, you know, something like that...I mean, I'm not saying me, I'm saying whoever your Lama would be, if you want to see emptiness directly, you have to put in some big time energy, pretty much devote your life to to that cause, to that purpose, you know.

When I went to see Khen Rinpoche the first time I gave him my bankbook, you know, and he gave it back to me, he said "thank you", you see, you have to do it, and he said, "I don't need it" and he did need it, but he gave it back to me, you know, and it's like that, that's the way it should go, okay. And and you need that kind of commitment to that Lama to see emptiness directly, okay. You have to find your personal Lama and then...I'm your teacher, okay. You have to find your Lama, okay. You have to find a person that you have a connection to and then you have to connect with them and you have to serve them. And the and the karma of that is that you will see emptiness, okay. So, serving others, serving your Lama, studying like crazy, okay, must be meditating regularly, every day, one to two hours, heavy duty meditation. There's a certain platform from which you see emptiness, it's a certain deep kind of meditation...(sum den dum bar nyen do mi cho me). A very specific...out of all the thousands of meditative states, you have to be able to get into that one or you will not see emptiness, okay? In that state...I mean, to describe it generally, your sense objects are shut down...you can't see anything, hear anything, smell anything, taste anything, feel anything. If somebody came in the room and snapped their fingers you wouldn't hear it. If somebody brought pomme frites (laughter) or McDonald's french fries in the room, you wouldn't smell them. Okay. It's...you know what I mean, like that. I mean your concentration's perfect, okay. You need to reach that state to see emptiness directly. It's it's be...you have no hope to see emptiness directly if you are not meditating at that level. You have no hope of reaching that level if you don't do it everyday. If you do do it every day you have some hope of reaching that level, okay? Those are all the preliminaries, okay. Those are the main preliminaries. Now I'd like to talk about the sequence of events that happens just before you see emptiness directly. Okay. We're talking in the few or two or three weeks before you see emptiness directly, okay. You should have been studying a subject called...(chi jedrak). Okay. It's j-e-d, okay. Say (chi) (repeat) (jedrak) (repeat) (chi) (repeat) (jedrak) (repeat). Okay. (Chi) means like "quality" and (jedrak) means "characteristic". And I have to explain that a little bit. By the way, it's generally translated as "generals" and "specifics" or "set" and "subset" and it's a wrong translation. Okay. It's not the point, okay. What's the point? The point is this. (laughs) This gets hard, okay. It's a very very deep, you must learn it...it's not the subject tonight, but you have to at least hear it, okay. Think about the quality called "car". There's a there's a quality "car". Say "car". (repeat) Okay (laughs), It's a quality, you see? It's a quality. Now what things are characteristic of this quality, what things exhibit this quality...Fords, Chevrolets, Toyotas, Nissans, Honda, okay. Those are (chidraks...jedraks), okay. They are the (jedrak) part. (Chi) means "car". I didn't say what?

(students: a car)

"A car". I didn't say "the car". I said "car". Okay. Car is a concept. Car is a picture you have in your mind, okay. And you have to get used to that. Car is just a concept. I didn't say "a car", or "the car" or "the Honda" or "the Chevy" or anything

like that. Car. Okay. You have to get used to that, and you have to think about it deeply, okay. Car. And then you have to think, when you see a Honda or a Ford or a Chevy, what is it that allows you to say "car". What is it in your mind that allows you to recognize it as a car. This is what Buddhist logic is devoted to...Dharmakirti, this is what Master Dharmakirti, this is what...what is car? Okay. And how come you can perceive something as a car. Why do you recognize something as a car, okay. Car. What is car? Okay. And you have to think about that, car, as opposed to a Chevy, a Ford, a car. Okay. Car. Carness as a quality, okay. And you start having extraordinary realizations about this subject, okay. So if you want to see emptiness directly, here's all the things you gotta throw into the stew...into the pot. Gotta be serving your Lama, gotta be serving other people, okay. Gotta be studying your ass off. Gotta be meditating a lot, okay. Should be living in a quiet place where you can concentrate on these things. Okay. And then, on top of all that, you must, you know...how do you say...confront the idea, what is a quality, what is a characteristic of that...what is something which is characteristic of that quality, okay. I don't say "a characteristic". I say something characteristic of that quality, and and you must confront this problem. You have to spend hour after hour after hour worrying about, "why did he get up there and say 'car, car, car, car'. What's the big thing about car?" Okay. Where is car? What's car look like. Where does car stay. Okay? And you must confront these questions. You must cogitate these things. You must if you want to see emptiness directly. Okay. And then what is the relationship between "car" and a particular car. Okay. You must, you must think about it deeply, okay. And if you don't...if you have not done the other things that I mentioned, it'll seem like a ridiculous exercise to you, you see what I mean. If you have done the other things I mentioned, you'll get it. It's like a koan. Okay. It's like some kind of thing, you know, if you've been serving a Lama, if you've been serving the Dharma, if you've been helping poor people, old people, sick people...big time...I'm not talking once in a while. I'm talking most of you day, okay, then when when someone teaches you (chi jedrak) a light goes off. Okay. By the way, just before this you start having amazing realizations about (tak pa mi tak pa)...say (tak pa) (repeat) (mi takpa) (repeat) (takpa mi takpa) (repeat) which is changing things, unchanging things, you know. What does it mean to be a changing thing? What does it mean to be an unchanging thing? Okay. Badly translated as "permanent" and "impermanent". Forget the translation "permanent and impermanent". Okay. There's two levels of impermanence, there's two levels of changing. One is obvious. You take a coffee cup, you drop it, it breaks, that's what we call obvious impermanence or obvious changing nature of the cup, okay. There's a subtle nature of changing that's going on all the time. There's a there'a a subtle flux in which things exist, you know, and if you study this subject deep, deeply, meditate hard, serve your Lama hard, serve other people hard, meditate al...a lot, everyday, devote yourself to that, then you'll start to have some extraordinary realizations about...you'll perceive the subtle impermanence of things which which is just short of perceiving emptiness...it's difficult, okay? You perceive the...the subtle changing nature of things.

It's very difficult...it's a high spiritual state to get to.  
Okay. So you start to go through that, then you realize things about quality, car, okay, then comes the big moment.  
Um...where'd it go. Say (chu chok) (repeat)...by the way, I'm sorry it's so hot, ignore the heat, this is extremely important, this will save your life, okay. Say (chu chok) (repeat) (chu chok) (repeat). (Chu) means "thing" in this case. (Chok) means "the highest", okay, the highest thing in the world. It's a level you reach just before you see emptiness. So we have to say highest thing in the world...for someone who hasn't see emptiness yet (laughs), okay. Once you see emptiness directly, that's a whole higher thing, okay. But in the mean time we'll call this (chu chok). Okay. (Chu chok). (Chu chok) is the final few hours of a thing called (jor lam). (Jor lam) is a whole couple of months...it could go on for a couple months, maybe a year or two, in which you start to understand emptiness intellectually. Like popcorn. I call it popcorn. You know, you've been serving this Lama, you been really had great faith in this person, they've been feeding you Dharma big time, you've been serving sick people, old people, you've been reading heavy, you've been meditating heavy, and then you start to get into (jor lam). (Jor lam) means "path of preparation". Preparation for what? To see emptiness directly, okay. It goes on for a couple months maybe? And you're having all of these...I call it popcorn, you know, dup dup dup...du dup dup dup, you know, in your mind, and you're like "wow, wow, that's impermanence...wow, I get it...that's car, I get it, that's how...yeah, yeah, I understand that, you know, and you're having this thing going on and your concentration is getting better and better as the days go by, because of the virtue of serving this Lama, keeping your morality, meditating well, you you, suddenly you are able to see things you were not able to see before. And it just starts going like that. And it starts to accelerate as the day comes closer, okay? Like every day something's happening, and you're starting to understand things like boom boom boom, okay, then you get to (chu chok). (Chu chok) is the final hour of the path of preparation, okay. And I'll describe it to you. You're standing there, early in the morning, making your Lama the cup of tea he likes to have every morning, let's say it's like nine o'clock, eight-thirty, and you're sitting there and you put a aluminum pot, you fill it up with water, you put it on the stove, you turn on the stove and you stand there watching the pot, you know, it's just another day, you've had some pretty heavy study recently, and you're watching the pot, and then suddenly, something happens to you, okay. You you're looking at the pot and suddenly you realize that you are watching the image of a pot in your mind, okay. For the first time in your life you realize you're watching a image in your mind. This is a (chi)...this is a quality. Okay. You gotta get used to that. There's a thing called "car" and there's a thing called "pot". I'm not saying "a" pot, "the" pot, I'm saying "pot". And you realize all this time you've been watching "pot" and not "a pot" or "the pot" or "the pot out there" or anything like that. You've been watching a mental image of a pot. All the time in your life, up to this moment, you've been looking at things that you thought existed out there on the stove and you realize that you are actually watching an image in your mind. Okay. And it's like boom, okay...like, can it cook water? Of course. It is. It happens to be cooking water every

morning, okay. Is it out there on the stove? No. Where is it? In your mind. It's an image in your mind, okay, and you're sitting there and you realize that the only data you're really getting from the outside is a gleam over here and a black horizontal thing over here...that's the handle, right?...but you realize that all you really ever get as information from the outside...your eye is always going like this, you see. You never see a whole pot... you can't see a whole pot. But you think you're seeing a whole pot, you see what I mean? It's impossible to see a whole pot. You can't watch the right side while you're watching the left side. You can't see a pot unless you see the right and left side. It's impossible what's going on here, okay. You're not seeing a pot. Your eye (fingers snapping: snap snap snap snap) is like that, many milliseconds it's like...flashes...silver color over there...little bit of black stripe over there... (unclear) a bit of a convex thing over there, which is a bubble, right? But really all the eye can see is shapes and colors, shapes and colors. Got some line over there, got a curve over here, got some silver over there, and what happens, the mind says "pot". Okay. Let's be a pot. Actually all you've got is like ten clues. You don't have a pot yet. You can't see a pot...get used to it. Impossible. The human eye can not see a pot. It can't see a pot unless you see enough of the parts of the pot to think pot, and you can't see those many parts at once. You never see the whole pot. Okay. For all you know there could be a cardboard drawing, and the, and there's only this two dimensional thing, but your mind is filling it in quite perfectly. And you have this perfect pot in your mind. It's actually only about a half an inch high, or a quarter of an inch high. And it feels like it's back here, when it happens, you know, you're like...there's this, you know...sensation that you're really watching something back around here, okay, and you're like "wow. I'm not watching a pot. I'm watching my own picture of a pot in my own mind", okay. And you're like stunned, okay. It's a it's a very very high state of realization. You just saw what? Emptiness?

(students: No)

No, it's what we call dependent origination. For the first time in your life, you saw what you've really been doing your whole life with every single object you ever looked at, and for the first time you just caught yourself, and it's like boom, you know, it's like you just got very close to seeing emptiness. You are now on the cusp on seeing emptiness. We can call you the highest normal person in the world. Okay. And and and you could be some schmuck, kid, standing there watching the pot on the stove, but you just became one of the spiritual giants of the universe...seriously, not kidding, okay. You just saw what's really been going on for millions of years in your own mind and you never ever realized it, okay...according to Buddhism. Okay. It's suddenly you're like, "wow. I'm not looking at a pot at all. I'm looking at a picture of a pot in my own mind and that's what I've been calling pot all this time". Okay. A huge realization. You're just standing there, you know. Water's boiling away (laughs) okay. Then you come out of that...it takes maybe, I don't know, five ten minutes, okay, and you you finish the cup of tea, take it upstairs to your Lama, give him the tea,

and then go do your morning practice. So you go to the temple, sit down near this pillar on the right side of the back, okay, sit down there, and you're alone and you're doing your meditation and you go into (sum den dum bar nyen do mi cho me), you go into this special state of meditation which is very...it's samadhi, perfect samadhi, okay. You go into this absolute deep concentration...okay...and then you see emptiness directly. Okay. And you have the experience of seeing emptiness directly, okay. How long does it last? Maybe twenty minutes. What does it feel like? Indescribable, okay. It's a higher reality, okay.

This...everything you've ever seen in your life belongs to what we call level one reality. We call it the reality that's lying to you (kun dzok den pa), okay. Deceptive reality. It's not what it seems, okay, but your mind takes it that way, okay.

Emptiness is a totally different, higher level of reality.

During the direct perception of emptiness you cannot perceive any normal objects. Impossible. Cannot. Okay. So I'll ask you some questions. Can you say to yourself as you're seeing emptiness directly for the first time, "heh heh heh...now I did it", you know? No. Why? I, Michael Roach, is not ultimate reality.

"Did" is not ultimate reality. "It" is not ultimate reality.

(laughter). The sound "I did it" is not ultimate reality.

(laughs) The thought "I did it" is not ultimate reality. These are all normal reality. Okay. You can't have a perception of normal reality during that time, okay. Impossible. Only a direct communion with emptiness, okay, and your mind is just like in it, and it and it stays there, okay. You must be in deep meditation. People who say you see emptiness directly chopping wood or something like that...bullshit. Not true, okay. You must be in deep meditation, okay. And then suddenly, you're in this direct perception of...of emptiness, okay. And that's it. You are watching...your mind takes on the aspect of emptiness...your mind does not become emptiness 'cause it is a changing thing... and emptiness never changes, but it's mirroring emptiness due to the silence of the mind, it's able to mirror emptiness and you are in direct communion with emptiness...your mind has the aspect of emptiness or, in the way a mirror has the aspect of a red, of a red suit that you put in front of it or something like that, okay. And that's all. Your mind is totally calm and it's and it's reflecting emptiness. And you're in the direct perception of emptiness. okay. Then you come down.

Okay. There's a...by the way (sum den dum bar nyen do mi cho me), that meditative level belongs to a different realm. We're in the desire realm, that technically belongs to the form realm, okay. So you have this feeling of descending out of the meditation, okay. It's a it's a actual sensation of descending. Have you been twelve feet off the ground or something? No. Where was your body? Parked in the desire realm. Where was your mind? It reached the form realm, so you do have a sensation of coming down, okay, a brief sensation of coming down. But you're not physically coming down at all, okay. Then you sit there...by the way, that's called (lun sum), that whole process. Say (lun sum) (repeat) (lum sum) (repeat). (Lun sum) means that twenty minutes or thirty minutes that you're in the direct perception of emptiness, okay. By the way, do you know how much time has gone by?

(student: No)

Can't. Why?

(students: (unclear))

The perception of time is a relative perception, okay. It's a it belongs to lower reality. Cannot perceive time itself. You don't know how long you've been there, okay. Glance up at the clock...oh twenty minutes (laughs) Okay. All right. You come out...feeling of coming down, and then for the next like ten hours, extraordinary events happen to you, extraordinary realizations. More than you've had in your whole life or in thousands of lifetimes. In the next ten hours more great spiritual levels will be blasted over than in the thousands of lifetimes before, okay? It's like, in one day, you move a million miles spiritually, okay, and you are blasting one by one over these over these realizations that you never dreamed of, okay, and they're all happening in that one day, okay. I'll give you a list of them okay? And this is in no particular order, okay. All of these realizations can be grouped in...well, I'll tell you later, okay (laughter), okay. Number one. You see your future enlightenment, okay. You know you will be a Buddha, you know how long it will take. Precisely, meaning, very typically, seven more lifetimes. Okay. Very typically. We call it (lan du ma oa), okay, very typically it's gonna take seven more lifetimes and you see it directly. You know that, you see the day of your enlightenment directly, okay, so you've already confirmed something interesting. You've already confirmed directly the existence of future lives. Not by logic, which is how we teach it here, but by direct perception, okay. And you see your own enlightenment which means you've just confirmed the existence of? (laughs) Buddhas. Okay. All right. That's the first and probably the most important realization. Secondly, you realize that you have met the body of the Buddha, meaning, the emptiness you saw was the dharmakaya of the Buddha. You...so in one few seconds of thinking, you realize that you have confirmed the existence of enlightened beings and you've see the dharmakaya directly...you've met an enlightened being directly. You've seen the dharmakaya directly, period. Okay. I should mention a side perception, a (tse ma), a pramana...you realize that you're not crazy, and that's very important. I don't say that as a joke. You realize that what's happening to you on that day is for real, you see. It's a whole separate realization...you see what I mean? It's a whole separate thing that's happening to you. You say, "my god, I'm not only seeing these things, I'm right". You confirm you own wild spiritual realization, okay. That's another one. You can read other peoples minds for the rest of the day, okay. That's not such a big deal according to Buddhism, you can see that before that if you have good concentration. But everybody always sees it at that point. You can read other peoples minds the rest of the day, okay. Not necessarily afterwards, okay, but during that day. Okay. Here's a very important one. Your mind starts searching, scrambling to find something in the normal world that can remind you forever after of what you saw, okay...like your mind is...I don't want to forget this, I don't want to forget this, I don't want to forget this...now wha wha what can remind me, what can remind me of what I saw? Your mind is like scrambling for something to remind

you. And everybody always comes to the same idea. Diamond. Diamond. Okay. The diamond. Vajra. Okay. And always comes to that, because that is the one object in the universe which is an absolute...close to an absolute, okay. It's the hardest thing in the universe. Every person who ever sees emptiness directly realizes that a diamond is the most important object in the in the regular world that can remind you of of what you saw. And you'd be more than willing to spend the rest of your life working in some crummy diamond company just to be close to them. Because it would make sense to spend the rest of your life...even if they didn't pay you...just to be close to them so you could remember, you see what I mean, and and and it wouldn't be a problem to work for twenty years or something in a company without any need for money or any desire to have any money, just to be close to them. You know, you you get this knowledge that you must stay close to them and you must be around them to remind you of what you saw, okay. And and to spend twelve hours a day at this stupid place would be worth it if you only remembered once a week what you saw, you see what I mean...to get up every morning at six, come home at eight, but to be there, and to touch them and to be around them would be worth it, just to remember the twenty minutes...you should never forget the twenty minutes, okay. So that's another important realization. Here's some minor ones. You realize the importance of images of the Buddha. Okay. Your whole relationship to carved images, painted images, thangkas, photographs, drawings changes. Why? It's now not an imaginary thing, this is someone you have met. This ain't a drawing anymore this is a photograph, okay. This is not some pretty thing that Buddhist people draw that they made up or something like that...this is a veronika, a true image of this thing that you saw, you know, and your whole relationship to Buddhist art and images changes, you know, like you would never think of making calendars out of this thing and throwing them in the garbage and stuff like that. It's out of the question. This is now something totally important, you know. Every thangka that was ever painted can be traced back to a person that met that being, and you know it, you see what I mean...now you know it. And you treat 'um that way, you see what I mean, however bad it's been rendered by the most recent artist, okay? You know that it comes from a lineage back to someone who met Tara and and you and you've got that direct understanding of that and you're like blown away, you know, like, oh man now when you see a thangka or a painting, it's like "oh hi, I know you" (laughs) (laughter) okay...you know what I mean? Much different...by the way, you have this refuge vow that you're supposed to take care of thangkas and stuff like that and consider them like the Buddha...now it's like automatic. Another realization...you get down on your face and you make prostrations. Okay. If you've ever seen the Ten Commandments with Charlton Heston, when he meets the burning bush...what does he do? He throws himself on the ground, okay, and the minute you come out...within a few minutes, you throw yourself on the ground. Okay. You do a natural prostration. First time in your life you've ever done a real prostration. This is where prostration comes from. You throw yourself at the feet of the dharmakaya. Okay. It's the only place to be when the dharmakaya walks in the room, is to get your face into the carpet, okay, and and you realize it, and you do. You get down there and you put your face in the carpet, you

know what I mean, and, you know, that's your first prostration really. The others are just practice, all right, and and you're like trembling, like okay, I know who you are now (laughs), down in the carpet, okay. Like that. You have a realization that every single book of Buddhist scripture that was ever written is totally true. Every sentence in every Buddhist scripture is absolutely true. Okay. Like, like up to then, you're like "I like this one, I like this one, this is kinda cool, this is kinda interesting, this not too interesting, I don't believe this one, you know...two hundred thousand Tibetan scriptures, forty-five hundred Indian scriptures, every single word is absolutely correct, okay?"

It it dawns on you, okay, you see it, you see what I mean. And actually you've just seen the contents of all of this, I mean you don't really need to read them any more, okay. You don't need them anymore. You've just realized the contents of the entire Buddhist scriptures. Okay. I mean, you've realized directly the contents of the Buddhist scripture. You don't much need them any more, but you become obsessed with saving, them, okay. They must survive in the world, you know. This is the only written thing in the world which is absolutely true and which gets people to ultimate happiness. And you're like boom, you know, like from that moment on, if you had to spend the rest of your life making sure that not a single page was lost in the world, you'd happily do it, okay. Must be saved. You know, must be preserved. Must be propagated. Must be translated. It becomes an obsession with you, okay, because you you saw that it works, you see what I mean, and you confirmed it. Now frankly, the next realization is a little hard, okay? You realizing that Buddhism is the one true path, okay. Now, I'm a Buddhist monk, it sounds a little self-interested (laughs) okay. It's not. Okay. And I and I say it in front of an audience like you. I don't go out and say it in Christian churches that I speak at. Okay. But on that day, in that twenty minutes you confirm that this path is one hundred percent absolutely accurate, true, it works and it can get people into an enlightened paradise. And you've confirmed it. So you're like blown away, like wow...this stuff has to survive. This stuff has to be spread. This stuff has to be translated. These books have to be preserved, okay...and you're and you adamant about it, okay. One very important realization. First direct experience of bodhicitta, okay...first direct experience of bodhicitta. What's it feel like? You know, bodhicitta you can talk about...I want to save all sentient beings, I love all sentient beings, I would like to take care of all sentient beings, I promise to try to become a Buddha to help all sentient beings...you can talk like that, you can do (sang gye cho dang sang gye chog nam la) and you know, you're saying that. That's a...an expression of the wish that you could develop bodhicitta. Okay. But on that day you have the direct, experiential realization of bodhicitta, okay? What's it feel like? Some kind of a corny thing, okay, corny...clear light coming out of your chest like a big...like this big, okay, this big shaft coming out of your chest, and then...not a direct person, perception of each being in the universe, but a direct perception of the idea of every being in the universe, and this clear light going out to all of them, and a direct knowledge that you will spend the rest of your life, every single moment of your life will be dedicated

to helping other people, especially to realize what you've just seen, you see. The rest of your life, and you see it at that moment. You will not spend a single hour, except in the service of other people, to try to get them to see what you just saw, and you see it directly, okay...and that that's the experience you have. You you realize this thing directly. Okay. And that's the first direct experience of bodhicitta. Later. You see directly the your death, okay...do you see the day of your death and you're sitting on your death bed?...blah blah blah...no. You realize directly your own impermanence in terms of death, you realize that you will, you know, that there's this force that's trying to make you horizontal...and it will (laughs), okay, I mean you have this sort of semi-awareness of this fact, but on that day you're boom, you're sure, okay? Sure of it, okay. There's something else. Oh maybe I'll think of it. Anyway, those are the main ones. Oh. You have this sort of depressing...two depressing realizations. (laughs) okay. A) You have never in your life had a correct perception until you saw emptiness directly...not one. Okay. How many perceptions you have every finger snap?

(students: Sixty five)

Sixty five discreet perceptions during a finger snap. On that day, when you come out of the direct perception of emptiness, you realize that you have never had a correct perception in your life, okay, until the direct perception of emptiness, okay. Sort of depressing. Okay. Question. When you come out of the direct perception of emptiness, are you having a correct perception when you have all these thoughts?

(students: No)

No. Okay. Things don't change that way, okay. In other words when you come out of the direct perception of emptiness, a) you realize you've never had a correct perception, b) you realize you're not having them any more right now either (laughter), since you came down out of the direct perception of emptiness. But what's the big difference?

(students. You know)

You know you're crazy (laughs)(laughter) okay? I don't mean crazy...I'm being, you know. Metaphoric. But but you...it's a big difference between before and after seeing emptiness directly. Now you realize that even though you're now seeing things again as self-existent, as coming from their own side, as having their own nature, you don't believe your own eyes. I always say it's like Jason Tid...is it Jason?...tied to the mast...who went after the golden fleece?

(students: (unclear))

I think it's him.

(students: Ulysses)

Ulysses? I don't know. I don't know. Anyway, they're passing

the land of the Sirens...who's that? Ulysses. Okay. Let's say Ulysses. They're passing the land of the Sirens. Sirens are these foxy ladies that stand at the edge of a dangerous shore and sing these beautiful songs and the sailors always turn left into the land and they crash and they get eaten by the Sirens, or something like that (laughter) so, Ulysses has heard about these Sirens. So he asks his men, "tie me to the mast tight. I'm the Captain, but after you tie me to the mast, don't listen to me anymore. Whatever I say. And put wax in your ears. And row like hell, and never, don't turn into the Sirens, but I want to hear what it sounds like", you know? So he...they tie him up, they put wax in their ears, they go past the Land of the Sirens, and he's like going crazy. He's like "let me go, you know. Untie me, we gotta go see these ladies" (laughs), you know, and your mind is just like that. You realize it at that time, you see? And and you you can't even remember what you saw enough to not do it anymore? (laughter). Okay what I mean? You see what I mean? Like you know what you're seeing is wrong, but you can't stop yourself. By the way, the day you stop yourself completely is just about Nirvana, okay, the last mental affliction is the one that makes you see things as self-existent, okay. So actually, on the day you've finished that, you've reached Nirvana. All right. So that's a long way off. How long?

(students: Seven lifetimes)

Call it seven lifetimes. You see, between...between the moment you come down and seven lifetimes hence when you reach nirvana and enlightenment in this case, you will still see things as self-existent. We call that "illusion" (gyu ma ta bu), that whole seven lifetimes, the way things look to you, is illusion. Because you know they don't exist the way they seem to exist. But you can't do anything about it. You can't change the way you look at them, but you work on it. Don't interrupt me about this on this to...tonight okay? Maybe at the end we'll answer some questions, but we gotta go through this on a certain...intensity, okay? (laughs). So you...so you know that you're not seeing things correctly, and you know they don't exist the way you think they exist, and that's the meaning of "illusion" in Buddhism. It doesn't have any other meaning, okay. Get used to it. I see this crap in books about "dualism"...doesn't mean anything. It's ridiculous, okay. Forget it. What does "dualism" mean? It means, what it really means is "the way things really are and the way things look to be are different" and that's dual...you see what I mean? Does the mind become emptiness in the direct perception of shunyata?

(students: No)

No. Come on. The mind is a changing mental stuff, you know, emptiness is a hundred percent unchanging, negative thing...the mind is a positive thing...that's all just like fairy tales made up by people who have not understand emptiness, haven't see emptiness and they are really hurting people by putting out crap about emptiness when they don't understand it and they haven't see it, okay. So you have to be...about this subject, you gotta be a tough ass and call a spade...that stuff is crap. Okay. It's not true. Okay. The only dualism going on...while

you're in the direct perception of emptiness, are you aware of yourself?

(students: No)

Can't be. So you can't be aware of the distinction between the subject and the object. Does that mean there's no subject?

(student: No)

What...you disappear for twenty minutes? Does that mean there's no object? Emptiness isn't there? Does that mean you become the object? What, you become a negative, permanent thing? Unchanging thi...come on. You know. It's just written by people who don't understand it, okay, and haven't experienced it, okay. So forget all that stuff. Dualism crap and what was the other one? Illusion. So illusion only means that. It doesn't mean this pen doesn't exist. Come up here let me poke your eye out with it, okay. Anyone who thinks that that's what illusion means...you see what I mean? It's not like that. Illusion means "the way it looks after that and the way it really is is different, and you understand that". But you can't stop seeing it that way, and that's illusion, forget everything else. Okay? Okay? That's my tough guy. All right. That's about all I can think of right now, okay. You can take all those realizations and group them into four parts. Some of them relate to suffering. Oh sorry, one more. Okay. Put one more down. You realize on the day you come out of the direct perception of emptiness that you have never done an unselfish thing in your life, okay, period, okay. Even while you sat in the temple and recited prayers, in the back of your mind, every person who has not reached the direct perception of emptiness is thinking, "do they realize I memorized this prayer; is anyone listening, you know; I know it better than he does (laughter), you know, and you're praying for some guy who just died of terrible death of AIDS or something, and you're just worried about whether or not people notice that you know the ritual, and don't say you don't have it. Every being who has not seen emptiness directly is swimming in these thoughts all day long, okay. Incapable of a non-self-interested act. Capable of struggling with you self-interest, you know what I mean? Capable of working against it on principle, you see what I mean? Okay, I really want this cookie. It's the last honey flavored peanut butter cookie in Godstow (laughter), I'm a Buddhist monk...I just taught (tong len)...okay, take it (laughs) you know (laughter)...but in your heart you're like fighting, you know what I mean? And we're all like that, and I and I'm not criticizing, I'm just saying until the day you see emptiness directly you are like that, and on the day you have your first direct perception of bodhicitta and emptiness, you realize you've been doing that your whole life, okay, and and it's a horrible trap that you've been in your whole life, okay? And you can't get out of it until you see emptiness directly. I'll say right now, you can not remove a mental affliction from your mind until the day you see emptiness directly. Period. Okay. Hopeless. Impossible...to remove anger, jealousy, desire, competitiveness, pride, without seeing emptiness directly...it's impossible. Okay. The all the other methods are what we call bandaids, okay. Yeah you can...you can

hold your pride down..you know, get down there, no, you know (laughter) (laughs) okay, for a few minutes, you see what I mean...desires, dislikes of other people, things like that...you can wrestle with them but you cannot destroy them until the the day you see emptiness directly. Impossible. Okay. So what'da you got now? Some of these realizations relate to suffering, like what? Like I saw my death. Like I realized I haven't had a pure thought in my whole life, you know...things like that. Some things relate to the the source of suffering..I have never had a direct perception...correct perception in my whole life, sixty-five times sixty times sixty times twenty four times seven times fifty two times forty-seven (laughter) okay, or six, I don't remember, but that many incorrect perceptions I've had, okay. Like wheth..you could lu...lump these into the source of suffering. I have not been able to do an unselfish act in my whole life, okay. Like these are...suffering. Into suffering you can put that thing about reading other peoples minds. You think it's fun? (laughter), you know. No. Okay. I think it's a god-send that we're protected from it, okay (laughter)...no, it's bad enough to be in your own mind. Probably there's some kind of automatic mechanism that you're not allowed to read other peoples minds until you can take it, okay, so so those go into suffering and where suffering comes from. Then we can say you can see the end. You see what I mean...you saw your own enlightenment. One hundred percent absolute, guaranteed, certain enlightened in seven lifetimes. Do you know what this guy feels like? Do you know what it's like to know? You see what I mean. Then then who's gonna tell you anything? You know what I mean. Who's gonna sell you a vacuum cleaner, or (laughter) you know, who who's gonna sell you on some other idea or or anything else. What do you need from anybody after that moment? You see what I mean. Yo you're not capable after that of of needing almost anything, okay, you saw your own enlightenment, so who's gonna...what interest do you have in any worldly thing after that, you know. Like zero. Nothing. Okay. Who can talk you out of it? Forget it. You know. I had a pramana. I had a (tse ma). That's the meaning of pramana. That's your first real pramana. I had direct correct perception of emptiness, I saw my own enlightenment...what do I need? You know...(ka le jig me), Nagarjuna said, "fearless; totally fearless". Don't need anything in this life anymore, and and know you're going out, know you're on the way out. It's like you've stepped onto a conveyer belt and you are gonna be free in seven lifetimes and you know it, and you're absolutely guaranteed, okay. It's called (gyun chupa). Say (gyun) (repeat) (chupa) (repeat). Stream enterer. I think nowadays it should be called "conveyor belt started" (laughter), seriously...it's exactly that idea. You is on a track that will lead in seven lifetimes to enlightenment, you've seen your enlightenment directly, you know what they will not call you...a add that to the list of realizations. Okay. You know what they will not call you. They will not call you Michael the Buddha, or something like that, okay. There's something extremely important in knowing what they will not call you. You can figure it out later, okay, but within seven lifetimes, you see it, you know it, you're a stream enterer, you don't have any worries...any normal worries, you don't have any kind of problems with other people...serious problems, you're not have any interest in doing bad deeds, nothing, okay, nothing.

Like that. Out. Okay. Guarantee. Can it come faster? Yes. How?

(student: (Tantra))

If the person practices (tantra) they can speed up the process. What's the relation between (tantra) and this perception? It's the...it's the...the battery that drives (tantra), okay. The perception of emptiness. Is it necessary to perceive emptiness directly to have (tantric) experiences? No. Okay. All right. Do you have to be a monk to perceive emptiness directly? Not at all. Okay. Does it help. Yes. (laughs) (laughter), okay. But not necessary, okay...so don't ever think that. Do you have to be a monk to have tantric experiences? No, okay. Does it help? Yes. Okay. But not, but not necessary, not not...it's not like that, okay. Totally qualified, man, woman, anyone who does what I described at the beginning of the class, you can see emptiness directly, you can have all of these things happen to you. So so far we got like suffering, the cause of suffering and how it's gonna stop, okay, and then you see how to do it. Okay. That's when you have all these ideas about Buddhism, you know. Buddhism is absolutely true, the books are absolutely true, the books must survive in this world, I must make that sure none of these books are lost, okay...somebody somewhere will figure them out. Okay. How many people running around the planet at any given time have seen emptiness directly? Take infinity and divide it by seven. Sorry...divide seven by infinity and that gives you the number of people on this planet who have reached that stage at any given time in history, okay. 'Cause that's the odds of seeing emptiness directly, okay.

(cut)

taken take seven and divide it by infinity which is how many past lives you've had and and those are roughly the odds of meeting someone who's seen emptiness directly. And I'm not kidding, okay. So then what do you do? Oh, so those four things...saw the end of it...sorry, saw suffering, saw what's bringing about your suffering, saw the end of suffering, saw the method to get to that end, which includes bodhicitta, okay. What do we call those four things?

(students: Four Arya Truths).

How 'bout we call them the Four Truths of a person who's seen emptiness directly. (laughter) Okay. What's the sanscrit word for a person who's seen emptiness directly?

(student: Arya)

Arya. What's a really stupid translation of arya?

(students: Noble)

Noble. (laughs) (laughter) Okay. Get it? Okay. (laughs) I don't know how this Four Noble Truth thing started, but we gotta stamp it out...it's our responsibility, okay. Nothing to do with noble, you're an arya. What's an arya? In Tibetan, (Pak pa).

Say (pak pa) (repeat). A person who has seen emptiness directly.  
And then you is a totally totally totally different person.  
There's only two people...there's only two kinds of beings in the universe...those who've seen emptiness and those who haven't. Period. That's the only distinction that matters in the universe. Forget man woman old fat young skinny...doesn't matter. The only meaningful distinction in the world is, have you see emptiness directly or not. There's a very tiny group of people over there, and there's billions upon billions of suffering people over there, and they're totally different. Arya means a zillion miles higher. The word "arya" means a zillion miles higher, okay. Totally different level of being. Okay. And never again will they come down to the...to what we call "children" (she ba, so so ke wa), normal person, okay (ter tong), those who see things as self-existent...you see what I mean? Those at totally different level, completely different level. Now you're on a totally totally different level. Guess what. How many jewels are there (unclear)? (laughter) (laughs) How many jewels? (laughter) Three jewels (laughs) okay. Buddha, Dharma, Sangha...Buddha refuge, Dharma refuge, Sangha refuge. You just became two of them, okay. Which two?

(students: Dharma and Sangha)

Sangha, okay, you became one of the few people in the universe who has seen emptiness directly and you just became Dharma, the Dharma refuge is in your mind, the direct perception of emptiness is the Dharma. Okay. Is the ultimate Dharma refuge, okay...which means you just, in twenty minutes, became the thing that every Buddhist in the world is praying to. How's that? Okay. You just became two of the three refuges. Why do they call you refuge now? You can protect people. Okay. You can protect people. People come to you...if they understand what you say, if they try to do what you said, you've protected them in an ultimate way, okay? If they pull it off in this lifetime, then within seven lifetimes they will become a being who is incapable of suffering. Forever, okay. That's protection. Better than...what do you call it?...Irish Spring...whatever (laughter) (laughs) okay. Okay. This is...this is protection. You become two of the Three Jewels, okay, two of the three refuges you become. Have you become the third one yet?

(student: No)

Have you met the third one yet?

(student: Yes)

Yeah. The real Buddha refuge is the emptiness of the Buddha which last week we wer learned is (nyo wa ni ku), dharmakaya, you become...I'm sorry...you perceive directly the emptiness of the Buddha, okay. So you've covered all three refuges. You are two of them, you've met the third one directly, okay, in one swoop. They're either this kind of person, or this kind of person. So now you know what Four Noble Truths means. It's a bad translation of about sixteen different ideas that come to a person who's just seen emptiness directly. Okay. Never forget that. Because that thing is taught very...it's butchered...from

ti...week to week around the world by people teaching the Four Noble Truths, okay. All it means is those realizations that a person has just after they see emptiness directly, okay? Couple more things. Well, I'll tell you a story, so anyway (laughter) that's called (je tok), you'd better know the word, I guess. Say (je tok) (repeat) (je tok) (repeat). (Je tok) means "the aftermath. The aftermath". After what?

(students: Direct perception of emptiness)

Direct perception of emptiness. Those next ten hours or so are called (je tok). They are still part of the path of seeing, which is the term that's used to describe the direct perception of emptiness and the things that happen right after it. Okay. So you are on the path of seeing for say twenty four hours, for the whole day, okay, you're on the path of seeing. It's called...the first part is called what? (Yun som) or (nam shat) and then (je tok). (Je tok) means "the aftermath. And during the aftermath you see the four?"

(students: Arya)

Arya truths directly, in those...all those things I told you can be divided into the Four Arya Truths, okay? Now, next what happens. Get up, leave the temple, maybe bump into your teacher or something like that...you gotta go get a diamond, okay. Take your car, you don't tell anybody, you drive to the nearest town, go find a used car dealer, park there, get out, go up to the guy, "you wanna buy a car"? You need money for a diamond, right? Ya gotta red Firebird, expensive car in those days, and you say, "I'll sell you this for whatever you give me...I need money". So read the guys mind. He says, "huh, this guy's a real fool." (laughter) And he says, "what do you do for a living?" You say, "I'm a dishwasher at a church". You know, and he says...then he's like...ha ha...real fool and then he says, "well, I'll give you a hundred dollars for the car". And you can hear him saying, you know, "I'm cheating the guy, let's see if he goes for it". and then you say "Fine...that'll be fine. I take a hundred dollars". And he gives you a hundred dollars, you say, "Can I have a ride to town", 'cause it's outta town, you know, car dealers are always a little farther out. He says, "okay, I'll take you to town, you know, he's like, tells his assistant, "you know, at least we better give the guy a ride fast, then he won't change his mind". He says, "okay, take this guy to town, drop him off where he wants to go". Okay, go to town, go to a jewelery store, buy a diamond, okay, get the bus back to the church or the temple (laughs), okay, put the diamond in the...go take the diamond, put it on the altar where someone may never notice it, okay, 'cause you see, now you've understood what offering means. First time. A truly selfless offering. You're not buying...what do they call those things?...school boys...school boys, right? (laughter) What's the company? Loo, Loo School Boys. You're not buying Loo School Boys, which happens to be your favorite cookie to offer (laughter) with the full knowledge that they'll be cleaning the altar the next morning (laughter) okay, all right. For the first time you make a true offering, you know, you could burn a hundred dollar bill, whatever, throw the diamond in the ocean, take the diamond, put

it on the altar where somebody may never find it, it's okay. It's a true offering okay...of the closest thing to emptiness, okay. And then the day is finished, I mean, the rest of the day will be all of these amazing things. You'll realize you can perform miracles if you worked on it, okay, like you could change the actual substance of objects, you know, your teacher says could you make that brick into gold, you're like, "why he asking me that?" you know, and then you realize you could if you kept up this meditation, okay. You could perform miracles, things like that. Okay. Technical question...oh by the way, by the next morning you've reached what we call (gom lam), path of habituation. Path of Habituation. You will be on that path for how many lifetimes?

(students: Seven)

Seven. It'll take you seven lifetimes to get used to what?

(students: What you saw.)

What you saw. And especially to what you realized. During those seven lifetimes you will use that information to overcome one by one your?

(students: Mental afflictions)

Mental afflictions. Okay. First the obvious ones, the gross form, and then the less gross forms, and then finally the very subtle forms, ending in the final mental affliction, which is the perception of things as self-existent. And then the seeds for that. And then things won't even appear that way to you any more. Then you've reached enlightenment if you have bodhicitta, okay. And it and it's over. And that that's the whole process, okay. That's the Path of Seeing, that's the direct perception of of emptiness, all right, and that's all you have to say about it. Oh...I...when you see emptiness directly do you remove any mental afflictions?

(student: Yes you do)

You actually technically remove three but two of them are more important. What are they?

(student: Doubt)

Doubt. About Buddhism, okay. Incapable of doubt again. Anyone in the world could come up attack you, say back things about you, say you didn't see emptiness, say blah blah blah blah blah, okay, you know. You cannot have a doubt after that. You cannot doubt a single page of Buddhist scripture again. The way you approach scripture from now on is like...you bow before you look at it, because you know this is the Truth, capital T. You know, and you don't doubt it a single sentence anymore. It's like swimming in this big sea of pure truth for the rest of you life, okay? Cannot have a doubt anymore, impossible, okay, and it doesn't matter what happens to you personally, could never doubt again, right? Direct perception of your enlightenment. Okay. The second mental affliction.

(student: (unclear))

Intellectual belief in what you're seeing around. If somebody came up to you and said, "are you seeing things correctly?", you'd say "no". (laughs) Okay. "You sure"... "un huh". (laughs) okay. All right. So you remove the mental affliction that we call "the intellectual belief that things are self-existent", okay. And you can't have it anymore. (Den dzob kun tak) Impossible. Okay. No matter how many years go by, no matter what happens to you for the rest of your life, you will never again believe that what you're seeing is correct. Okay. Period.

And those two you remove forever. Okay. I'd like to leave it like that. It's an extremely holy subject, okay. It's the most important thing

you can hear out of this mouth. Okay. Practically. And just cook it, okay...don't...ask me questions next class, if you want, okay, but leave it like that. To hear these words you are one in a million. To hear these words stated on this planet, in these days, you are one in a million. You know, if you ever get depressed or have a low self-esteem attack, reflect on that, okay. You are definitely you are very very holy person, sacred being, okay, to hear these things in th in your lifetime spoken for an hour is extraordinary, okay. So enjoy it. And have a nice cold drink, okay and then we'll break up into groups, okay and then we'll have a short talk afterwards. Did you have a question? Oh, small detail. By coincidence I'm sure (laughter) to today is His Holiness' birthday so I'd like to have Elly lead us in Happy Birthday...and did you get the thing? (laughter) There's a huge cake in the back, okay. Which Ora, I think paid for, and god knows where we got the money, but, okay, come on. (laughter). We're gonna do it the American way. Forget these long boring prayers (laughter) Okay. No, with your heart okay. There's one man walking on this planet, he ain't out after your money (laughs) okay, spent his whole life teaching other people, selflessly, you know, made himself sick, made himself old, selflessly teaching other people. Holy things, every hour of his life, okay, for nothing, you know, he's not getting anything out of it except tired, okay. So, be thankful that we have such a being walking on the planet. We are extraordinarily blessed that we have such a being in our world, okay, and you have a very good karma to see this being, so sing Happy Birthday the American way, but in your heart say, you know, please keep alive and keep healthy for a thousand years, okay. 'Cause I need you. We still need you in this world, okay? Here we go. (clears his throat) (laughter)

(prayer: Happy Birthday)

(laughs) applause (laughter). That's great...okay, have a drink, okay. Have something to drink.

(break)

We just talked about the direct perception of emptiness, you smell that it's very important, after the group discussions the purpose here is that we talk about the future of Buddhism in America, and I think tonight, very very briefly, it's incumbent upon us as Dharma people, really to provide atmosphere and the

means by which people can see emptiness directly, see? Twenty minutes experience based on the courses you've already had, you can see your own enlightenment, you see what I mean. You can see your own future lives, everything changes, everything's over...it's like your whole life is over. It's like everything is finished, everything is gone, it's clear that you won't be suffering...much longer, and it's this incredible feeling. So now, the question becomes for people like us, a) how do we make sure that we see it before we die, and then secondly, how do we provide the circumstances for other people to do that? You see what I mean, and so imagine what you need, you see. You need a place where people can meditate quietly, for extended periods of time, okay, they need that. They're gonna need some kind of housing to be there, okay. They're gonna need something to live on, okay, that won't tie up too much of their time or they can't have time to see emptiness, okay...it takes some effort, okay. I mean the whole thing about seeing it probably takes four or five, six hours a day of work, you see what I mean, so they need some kind of em...part time employment or some kinda living, you see what I mean. Next they need good teachers. You know, they need to have a professional Dharma teachers, hopefully who've seen emptiness or are close to seeing emptiness, they need authentic lineage, they need authentic scriptures, they need things in their own language, okay, that they can read to help them reach it...you're not gonna get thousands of people who can read Tibetan and see emptiness directly. It's not gonna happen. You need quickly to provide those materials in English, okay. And then you need opportunities to serve other people and take care of that aspect. You need opportunities to serve the Dharma, etc, okay. So these are all, all the things we talked about seeing emptiness directly, now we gotta talk about the practicality of setting out those conditions for other people. 'Cause guess what would be the karma for you to have those conditions (laughter) (laughs) okay. It's our duty to help other people do it, you see what I mean. It's not enough to have classes like this, you're only fulfilling one of the requirements. You need a place to stay. You need a place to meditate. You need pretty constant exposure to a good teacher. You need to get deeply into the subject. You need all of these causes. You need all of these conditions. So that's the idea...that's where this Institute is going next. Okay. That's where this this organization is going next, and that's to provide now the other requirements that you need, the other conditions you need. So it's not just study anymore, so that's why we're trying to now pump up the thing in Connecticut, Godstow...John and Amber have been spending a lot...Nancy Kieran, a lot of effort to get it going nicely, to get the place...they took out like a thousand square...thousand cubic yards of garbage like in the last two weeks and and stuff like that, and and we're trying to get...supposedly within a year, if we're good, we get the place deeded to us, okay. We're still on probation, okay. So the idea is to start setting up that place to be a place within an hour and a half of New York City that people could go and have all the other conditions they need to see emptiness directly. So, you know, you don't have to call this place Asian Classics Institute anymore. You could say it..."Seeing Emptiness Directness...Directly Institute" (laughter), seriously. That's what we exist for. You gotta keep that in mind, okay. It's not enough to have an organization,

it's not enough to have a non-profit thing, it's not enough to have classes in New York City, you have to have the whole program, for someone to see emptiness directly. So now we have to move on. And and the and the thing in Arizona is also the idea is that we move on to help create the conditions where people...we could take care of people. So we spent...we were out there for two weeks, we had meetings all day long and the idea was, how do you get the physical conditions ready, like a fly-trap (laughter) (laughs) for people to land and see emptiness directly, you see what I mean. And and so we spent a lot of time on that. You gotta have a big enough piece of land for it to be quiet, you gotta have housing for people, you gotta have some kind of livelihood for people that don't have any money, you hafta make it as cheap as possible to live there, yo...the goal there is a hundred dollars to a hundred fifty dollars a we...month...expenses to live there, or free if we can pull it off, okay. But the idea is to try to make it free for people or at worse maybe a hundred dollars a month or a hundred and fifty dollars a month, but but you would get a totally quiet place to meditate, you'd have meditation instruction, you'd have the right kind of food you need, you'd have opportunities to serve poor people...like we're gonna be doing service in Mexico which is forty miles away. We already helping to set up like computer centers...Tibetan input centers in Mexico...for children who are deaf and and handicapped, that don't have legs like teenage boys and stuff like that. So, that's already started. But the idea is that you would have a place to do social service, you'd have a place to learn to meditate, you could stay there for a year or two years to concentrate on trying to seeing emptiness. You'd have the cor...the right scriptures, you'd have the right instructors there, you'd have all the conditions that a person needs...they just come and everything else is taken care of for them, and that's our duty, you see what I mean? The people in this room, especially the people who are working on this, that's what we're here to do, is to provide all the necessary circumstances for a person to see emptiness directly. Okay. it is the most important thing you can do in your life. You have to try. And and it has to become part of our life's purpose to set up the necessary circumstances for anyone in the United States, or you know, now our organization has gotten a little bigger, (laughs) okay, or anyone in the world basically can come. They just show up...hopefully they write us ahead of time, and everything's taken care of. You know...please come and try to see emptiness. Okay. We'll take care of the place, we'll take care of your food, we'll take care of your other needs, you got the instructions, you're gonna have the meditation, everything's... the cushion's there, sit down, okay and here's the social service you need to do and you can help build the buildings, whatever, all the karmic causes you need to see emptiness directly, so get that...that's my hope tonight...get that in your heart. The Tibetans says (sem la jak chu). Say (sem la) (repeat) (jak chu) (repeat). It means "please park it in the depths of your heart". It means put this thought in your mind and let it start growing. As a group we have a responsibility to our clients, all three hundred million of them (laughter) to set up the circumstances...I'm not talking about proselitizing or being missionaries or anything like that, I'm saying a nice quiet place in Arizona and a nice quiet branch in Connecticut, where people

can just write and say "I'd like...I want to try to see emptiness directly". So you say "okay, come, and everything you need is here and we'll take care of you and we'll try to make sure that you've got the best shot you can before you die". 'Cause it takes time. And it's best done while you're rather young. Not to say old people can't see it, okay. But you need the energy. You can't wait, okay. While you have energy you have to try to do it, okay. So I'm just saying, put it in at your heart and we have started the process of creating two physical facilities, one on the east coast, one on the west coast, basically, where people can try to come and see emptiness directly. 'Cause that's the only reason to have these classes, that's the only reason for me to teach for all these years, translate all those things, it all has one goal, you know, you have to try to see emptiness directly. And you and you and you...it's your duty and your responsibility and your pleasure to try to make sure that you help contribute to creating the conditions for other people to do that as well. Totally quiet place, people can sit in meditation, get the right instructions they need, the right teacher, everything, and they can see emptiness directly. Okay, so put that in your mind as a goal. Next week, we don't have class Thursday, by the way, 'cause it's a holiday, Buddhist holiday, we'll meet again next Tuesday. What I'd like to ask is that the various leaders of the various projects that we have and the projects that will be going on throughout the three year retreat, are gonna get up and give a two minute summary of what they do, and the reason I've asked them to do that is that they'll be having long meetings after that and people can just show up and say, "hey I'd like to help you out", okay? And I just want to put in your mind the various projects we have going on, and then think about it. Think about what you might be able to contribute. Okay. All of these are designed to help people see emptiness, okay. It's just a question of which ever one sounds sexy to you. All right. And I'm not forcing you and I'm not pushing you and everything here is free, you know, you know, we work, we'll do it anyway, but it's really fun to think that you're part of the process of creating the conditions for people to see emptiness. It's like some kind of special feeling you get out of it, okay? So here are the various projects that are going on. If I mention your name, you have to have a two-minute propro...speech ready next week. The more interesting it is, the more people will sign up for your project. (laughter) Where's John Brady? He's back there. Very interesting project. He'll be running the Operations Director of ACIP. ACIP is a project to input all the scriptures in the world, so they don't get lost. Okay. There are two hundred thousand incredibly precious Tibetan books. They are being lost as we speak. They were burned by the Chinese, only a few got out. There's a few copies in Russia, a few copies in the old library...they don't even know about it, stuff like that. And we have to try to save them and get them on CDRoms, get them on the internet. They're free. Okay. We have twenty-three hundred finished, we have a hundred and ninety-seven thousand seven hundred to go. Okay. I figure it'll take a hundred and fifty years, okay...so we gotta start, we gotta keep going, we can't stop. We have about three hundred Tibetans working on it right now. Refugees. Mongolia...I just got the numbers today from the television station...they went out to the countryside and did a survey how many people watched the show,

eighty percent of Mongolians watched the (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra). (applause) It was five hundred and fifty thousand people watched each night. Okay. Half a million people each night. So we gotta go back and do some more. Okay. You wanta work on that. I'll do help do that presentation...I'm hoping to stick it on Thomas Wilson, okay, but I know know yet. I have a feeling Janice Braden might help out but I'm not like, putting any pressure on you (laughter). Okay. (laughs). Godstow Retreat Center, John and Nancy are working on that, and you know basically to have within an hour and a half of New York a place where you can go and try to see emptiness directly. Okay. Those of you who have been there it's a hundred acres of beautiful forested property, with a nice home there, and we've gotta build a retreat center. You know. We've gotta get those lime sticks out and (laughs) start building some cabins there. Okay. ACI New York...these classes will go on in small gorilla units in peoples home over the next three years...you have to finish the eighteen courses or you don't get the dessert which is (tantra). And we have to schedule that, we have to arrange that, we have to get that going...John Stilwell will be directing that. We still need help with the classes that are still gonna happen in New York for this year, okay. Extension courses...we're gonna have courses in Ireland, Mongolia, Kathmandu, Bodh Gaya, Goa, Sera Monastery, Santa Cruz, northern California, San Francisco, San Jose. There'll be six-week...two three-week courses in Arizona for the next three years, twice a year. I expect that...we already have like...I expect a few hundred people to go to all the courses in in Asia. We expect about two thousand people a night in Mongolia. We need help with all those things, okay. Those are extension courses. Three Jewels Outreach Center and Free Library...we'd like it to continue. It serves a very beautiful group of people in a very unique way...in a way that you can't get elsewhere in New York, (applause) and and we're gonna have to have a whole separate crew of people to help run both the commercial side and the outreach side. We're talking to Brooks about doing the commercial side, and so if you're interested in that, it serves a lot of people right now. Okay. And I'd I'd I'd like to see it keep going...while I steal Ani Pelma for a retreat. We have a huge program to try to put out all the materials in English, okay. We went through the Tibetan stage, we went through the Tibetan-English hybrid stage, and now we'd like to go across to the English stage, and we'd like to see a a lot of these lectures have been typed in...there's about a thousand people around the world who have offered to help type these talks in the computer. We don't have the staff to feed them tapes and stuff like that, okay. So we need people to do that. We have a thousand people in the correspondence courses. We don't have anyone to help grade the papers. We have hun a hun hundreds of prisoners taking the correspondence courses. We can't handle their the demand. Okay. We don't...we need help producing the courses, we don't charge people who can't pay for them. So everyone calls us (laughs), you know, and we need help. Okay. We don't have any paid staff at this place. We are serving several thousand people, okay, and the staff that we have is is like having breakdowns every day? Okay. So we need we really need help. Okay. And it's a pleasure, you see what I mean? To serve thousands of people like that. Arizona...we'll be building a university out there. A Buddhist University. It

will have Philosophy that you've studied here, it will have Ti  
Tibet traditional medicine, like a a real course...five to ten  
years to become a real Tibetan doctor. Sacred dance, sacred art,  
sacred architecture, college of how to help other people, how to  
do a non-profit organization, how to do a grant-raising, you  
know, fund-raising stuff, how to do the legal stuff, how to how  
to do plumbing, electricity, car repair, how to help alcoholics,  
how to help drug users, how to help prisoners, college of Social  
Service, okay, and then...and what else I forgot? Anyway. Oh.  
Like colleges like that. Oh, a (Tantric) College, how's that?  
And a college of translation. All right. But we have this dream  
there...there'll be a retirement community there,  
okay...seriously...we have a specialist who's gonna build one,  
and that would be like...I don't know, fit maybe like a thousand  
people, with each have their own adobe home, and they get free  
Dharma classes as they're getting old...I'm thinking all of us  
hippies who are reaching our fifties and sixties  
(laughter)...it's not a joke, you know, they gonna need a place  
to go. There'll be a huge demand for it. A spiritually oriented  
retirement community in a nice place where your bones don't hurt  
and where someone can teach you to die right. Very missing  
thing. And those people will appreciate it. And already we have  
people signing up...ex-hippies in their sixties (laughter).  
Okay. So that's Diamond Mountain. It will also serve several  
thousand people in retreat there, and we need help developing it,  
okay...in Arizona. Last project that will be spoken  
about...oh...so that will be Winston. The English program will  
be Ora, the Three Jewels will be Pelma, okay. The extension  
courses will be I-don't-know-who yet...maybe you. We'll see.  
And the rest is covered I spoke about. Last thing we're doing,  
we have a project to teach business people about Buddhism,  
Buddhist ethics and use it to run their corporations more kindly  
and more profitably. I did it for sixteen years in the diamond  
business. We started with fifty thousand dollars, loans...that  
company now does a hundred and twenty-five million dollars in  
sales a year and we did it all on Buddhist, Bodhisattva  
principles. And Forbes magazine came and said, "how did you do  
that" and we did an article about it, and Doubleday called me and  
said we'd do a book it, and now we decide to make like a whole  
institute dedicated to teaching business people how to use  
Buddhist principles without calling it Buddhism in their business  
lives, 'cause we figure if you can make the corporations run in a  
Buddhist way, then something very interesting might happen in  
this country, you see what I mean? If the if the if the  
corporations are running along Bodhisattva vows they would make  
much more money and and they'd be interested I think...you see  
what I mean...I we started to give talks like that...two hundred  
people came after a radio interview in Australia...sold out 8:00  
AM in the morning, two hundred crafty, rough, Australian  
businessmen (laughs) came to learn how to get more rich using  
Bodhisattva principles and they loved it, okay. And then we went  
to the other side of Australia and spoke at the Bar...Emmond-  
Barton Institute...this is a big business institute...no? What's  
it called?

(student: It's in Melbourne)

Melbourne, sorry. Oh. In Perth it was the Western Australian

University Business...School of Business, okay. So then you got these crusty professors and about a hundred and fifty of their students came and we gave a talk about death and business and they called me up the next morning and said, "will you give the commencement speech in 2004 when you get out of retreat...you see what I mean...they loved it. So they really...the corporate people are not stupid. They're they're spiritually minded...they just didn't hear anything that was exciting or made sense yet, and so, imagine what would happen if all the corporations started to get run by...along Bodhisattva principles. Whether you call it Buddhism or not, I don't care. Okay. Anyway. So that'll be given by Ernie Speers who's over there, who will be directing that effort, okay. So I'd like each of you people that I mentioned to have a two-minute speech ready at the end of class, after the group thing next time, and that'll be the talk. And then you listen and hear if there's anything that strikes your fancy, and the motivation should be I would like to help assure that people have the circumstances to see emptiness directly in this lifetime. Because all the cool stuff I mentioned really happens and that's the goal of this whole institute, that's the goal of every class we've ever had here. Is to get people to that state. You have to provide them with a place to meditate, a place to learn these things, good teachings, place to do public service for other people, place to serve the Dharma, and that's the idea. So if you heard something that sounds interesting to you, think about it and it'll be discussed in more detail next Tuesday. Okay. Thank you. That's a very holy class. And we'll do a dedication. Dedicated to everybody to see emptiness directly, all right. Okay. Puntsok-la. You ready?

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: dedication)

**Course 17**

**Class 3**

**Part 1**

**Transcribed by: Karen Becker**

**(prayer: refuge)**

Okay, we'll start. Today's class is a slightly different format.

We're gonna start out by just talking about all the projects we have and all the help we need, especially over the next three years, and that will be in place of the thing I usually give at the end. The reason we're doing it first is that after that we'll talk a break, the usual break, and during the break if you hear a a project that you'd like to get involved with or you'd like to volunteer your time for or, you know, something you'd like to get involved with, then you'll be able to speak to the person that is in charge of that particular project, okay? And after that we'll have a class and then we'll have short sessions with your student teachers, okay...assistant teachers. So we'll be going sort of reverse tonight. And the purpose is two fold...one...well, three- fold, first of all last time we talked about seeing emptiness directly, and that requires a lot of support, meaning you have to have a a good teacher, you have to have materials that you can study, you have to have an opportunity to serve the Dharma and to serve other people who need help, and you have to have a place to meditate and to do your re...it takes a lot of physical support to help a person to study Buddhism and see emptiness directly. That support has been provided to you mostly transparently, you know, we don't charge anything, Leon has offered his temple space for free, we have a excellent Lama, Khen Rinpoche who has passed down all the information to us and who continues to be available for higher initiations and and classes and...so you have all that support system. But the idea is how do we assure that it will be available for other people. And and that's a...by the...incidentally, that's the karma of making sure you have it for yourself, whether you die and come back or or just in in the next few years and decades, you know, will you have a place to to have all those things provided for you, because the vast majority of Americans don't. You know, there's hundreds...there's tens of millions of people in American who would like to be studying something like this and can't. So the question is can we help provide those things for them. What can we do to help them. So I think it's...it's kind of deceptive here because you get everything so easily and so free and and the books are available, the translations are available...that is not generally available

in the United States at all, so the question is, can we help other people do what we did. You know, people ask me, "well, you're you're trying...all your projects are too big, and you're doing to many things" and, but I always think of myself going to India on the bus and getting to Dharamsale and getting off the bus and I didn't know, like I was scared, you know...I didn't know what to do, and some guy took me and took me into the Tibetan Library and said, "okay, this is what you do, and the classes are there," and it's been that way every since. And I always think of the last guy that would't get reached if we didn't do something, you know what I mean? Like, I always think of the guy who came to this class last, the last guy in the link and if we didn't work as hard he wouldn't have heard about the classes...you see what I mean...and he wouldn't be here and I always imagine if I was the last guy. I say, put yourself in the shoes of the last guy in the chain to hear about these classes...you know what I mean, and if we hadn't put out that little bit of extra effort or something, he never would have seen the poster that Ian made, the silly poster, or he never would have heard about the class or how...and I always tell people who say, "I don't want to volunteer" or or "it seems to complicated" or something like that...what if you were the last person, you see what I mean? What if you were the person that didn't hear about it because we didn't make an effort...you see what I mean? And I always think like that...I always try to think like that. So imagine you're the last person in line, and you wouldn't be here unless someone had made some effort...a lot of people...had made some extra effort that they didn't need to make 'cause they were already here and they're okay, you know, so...I'm gonna list some projects...each person's gonna come up and make their own presentation...they're gonna be trying to, each one, is gonna try to make a more persuasive case (laughter) for their project (laughs) than the last one to see if you will sign up for their project. But anything you can do to help is wonderful, you know, even just some small things. It doesn't matter. Somewhere down the line at least is one more person. And then that's very precious to that person...it will be very precious to that person. So don't think...if you can give one afternoon or something that's fine, you know, and that'll be good. This...generally, this organization is run by very few people who are not getting paid and work very very hard, and they need help, okay. The bigger it gets the more they need help. There's thousands of people studying in the extension courses, there are a thousand of people in the correspondence courses, there are five hundred thousand crazy Mongolians in that course, and we need help, okay, we need your...just to come over once in a while

and help out. Even if it's just cooking a soup or something like that, okay? So I'm gonna...I'm standing here for John Stilwell who split for France (laughter) yesterday, because he overworked at Godstow (laughs) and I'm gonna represent him for...well let's make a list of the things we have to do. One is Asian Classics Institute, okay... and then I think maybe we'll do Godstow...Retreat Center, which would be Nancy Kieran...are you ready...where are you...are you ready...okay? That's lucky. And then we'll do...what'd ya wanna do next? How 'bout how 'bout Three Jewels...you ready for that? You're okay? Okay. Three Jewels Outready Center and then John Brady...you ready? Asian Classics Input Project and then I think Enlight...is Ernie here? Not here. Is Winston...Winston standing in for John? Everything's okay. Okay. Enlightened Business Institute (unclear). Then I think I just got Winston, right? Arizona? Diamond Mountain? Which is Arizona. Did I leave anybody out? Oh. Food Fund. All right. Andrea's Food Fund. And then maybe in here I'll say a little bit about Sera Mey Project, okay...okay? So I'll go, I'll go first...I'll try to make it short...oh, yeah, I knew I forgot something. We'll put in here, we'll call it "English Dharma" right now, we don't have a name exactly for that, okay, and we'll try to go...I'll try to go real quickly.

(student: What about Mongolia?)

That's a good question. We'll throw in Mongolia...where should we throw in Mongolia...I'll throw Mongolia in here, okay? Yeah, I'll do that here. Okay. So I'll be the first person to go and then the other people people will go. Asian Classics Institute...the stuff we still need help with...we are still going to have more courses like this during the during the next semester which is in...it begins I think middle of October. We need help bringing the stuff here, setting up the altar, making sure we have a place to hold the classes, helping to clean up afterwards, these are very unromantic...nobody is impressed when you say I helped clean up afterwards and...it's a real test of a bodhisattva. Bodhisattva's come and help clean up afterwards, okay. So that's a very important thing. Help out preparing class materials, things like that. We have included there extension courses, which means courses we hold in other places in the world. In the next six months there'll be extension courses in Northern California, Santa Cruz, they'll be in...where else...Ireland, Mongolia, Nepal, India, Bodh Gaya, Goa, Kathmandu, Southern India, okay. Those will all be courses that will be held, especially for the tour which is taking place over

the millenium, over the New Year, we're gonna need a lot of help.

We anticipate maybe two hundred people ending up at each course and traveling around India right after the computers break down (laughter) (laughs) and so we need a lot of help with that, and that process has already started, they're holding very nice meetings, interesting meetings going on there, so if you'd like to help with that, it's sort of an exciting thing. We'll need help during the course to grade papers, like you become a grader, you travel with us, you help grade other peoples papers and things like that. I think I'll also cover...(unclear), are you doing Correspondence Courses or am I? Are you doing Correspondence Courses? You do Correspondence Courses. Okay. By the way, last time I say nobody's helping with Correspondence Course and the Moore's of course, are doing a lot. Doing the homeworks and the courses, and they're trying to keep up with it but we need more people, and they can they can sort of lead a team if we had more people. Sera Mey, just for your knowledge, okay...Sera Mey Monastery's where Khen Rinpoche was trained. The original monastery was bombed, all the monks were killed or dispersed...a hundred and eight or seven got to South India, started a new monastery, a new Sera Mey Monastery...it's now up to about fifteen hundred monks. We provide, we have a Food Fund that we started twenty-five years ago...it pays for the food of all fifteen hundred monks...they all get free food. And and we built the elementary school there, we built the main temple there, we built the debate ground there, we built a lot of the housing there...these are separate funds that we raise funds to help people there. A lot of the health care there, we bu we put in all of the water systems for fifteen hundred monks, and we built the library, we built the printing press, so, those are on-going projects if you'd like to help with those, that's supporting monks in India, Tibetan monks...refugee monks in India. And that still goes on. Rinpoche just sent over over sixty thousand dollars. Latest installment for the Food Fund and we just sent over...we just got a donation of fifty thousand dollars for...some construction there. So things like that, you know. We help train the Geshe's who will be the next teachers in the West, okay, and and we've produced about 30 Geshe's through our efforts, you see, and now they're all over the world and they're teaching people. So that's the result of that kind of work, okay. In Mongolia, we'll be doing a lot of projects...we we'll have a Dharma Center there. As I said, over half a million people per night watched the teachings on the (b: Diamond Cutter). Eighty percent of the population was tuned in every night, and we'll be going back to do another television series on another sutra in September. You're welcome to come,

help us out...if you're good with karate (laughs) (laughter) no like, we had a...we didn't expect so many people and it was like a crown control thing, and but we need a lot of logistic help there. It's a beautiful, pristine Tibetan Buddhist country. The people are dying for Dharma. We helped set up a a Dharma Center there. People are already coming to it. Some books are being...(b: The Garden) is being serialized in Mongolian in the newspaper, and a lot of different projects going on there to help them. We are cataloging all their Great Books...it'll take about forty years and all these projects have been set in motion there, so if you'd like to help they're very anxious during the three years to have English teachers there, they're very anxious to have Americans who can teach Dharma there in English, and and help out with that. We'll be having a TV show there, we just got funding for it, once a week there'll be...it actually shows twice a week...they give us the second showing for free...but once a week there'll be, what we call "Dharma English" and there'll be 'bout fifteen minutes of Dharma and then some English lessons, and then there'll be interviews with students from New York which we've already filmed a couple of them, and with student other students around the world. And we filmed a couple of those interviews. Ian and Mercedes are in charge of that. And they've got a really fun...they...you see 'cause they want something modern, and they want English, so we're teaching Buddhism from these courses in English with some Mongolian, and then we have like snippets of life of a New York Buddhist, which they're very interested in, you see, and they're very very attracted to that idea of Buddhism because traditionally in Mongolia the lay people were not taught Buddhism...only the monks were taught Buddhism, so they're very very excited...the lay people are very excited...they're taking the courses like crazy, we sent correspondence courses over two years ago and they're just eating them up, so if you want to help with that, that's a that's a big extension course. Ireland is going...very exciting. We went there once just to teach a few people and then they demanded that we come back and if you'd like to come and help with that, that's fine too. Especially if you're of Irish decent..they get very excited. That's all I have about this Institute. Also some helping with the Three Years with setting up the home courses. They'll be in the homes of individual people. I I picture seven to ten courses going on at the same time, five to ten students in each one, and going through the eighteen courses before I get out...okay, so you can have dessert. All right. So, you have to help with...that's also something we need help with too. Okay. I think that's all...any questions about New York and extension courses? Yeah?

(student: Contact is who?)

Oh, contact John Stilwell...do you have John Stilwell's...or we can use the basement number, I guess...475-8935, 212 area code, and it's John Stilwell. Sorry?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, he won't be back till about the middle of July, but you could leave a message there that you're interested. You can come up to me, during the break, if you're interested in in in putting your name on a list for this, okay. And I'll take your name and make sure John gets it. All right. Okay. Any other questions about New York classes and stuff like that? Nope? Okay. So the classes will go on during the three years and they'll be smaller and they'll be led by the student teachers here and I my vision is that they get spread out throughout the burroughs and we have a the registrar down in Washington D.C. is figuring out which of you finished which classes...he made a preliminary report to me on the weekend...and he actually has everybody's grade for every single thing you ever did is in the computer. So he's designing which courses would be most useful for the most people at at the most times...see what I mean...during the three year...yeah?

(student: (unclear))

Okay...that's even better. So raise your hand. Dido will take names for anybody interested in helping out in New York, okay? All right. Yes?

(student: (unclear))

For Sera Mey...who should I say for Sera Mey...Mongolia...I'd say talk to Christy about Mongolia...where's Christy...stand up...she's being very active in coordinating the stuff in Mongolia, so if you have immediate questions about Mongolia and stuff like that, okay? Yeah?

(student: What about India?)

Going to India? If you can help out with India, talk to Ora. She's back there.

(student: (unclear))

Friend Diane. Where's friend Diane? She's right there. She's coordinating all the India. By the way if you have any dreams to come to India about this trip you must tell us now because we have to get special permits and things like that, okay, even if you don't end up going it's okay, but you can't do them later 'cause there's a time time problem there, okay?

(student: What are the dates of the trip?)

Of India? India I believe starts in mid-December, am I right Fran, and goes to the end of January and you're welcome to come to any piece of it.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Up to the end of January 2000.

(student: You have to get on a plane before the 2000 strikes)

(laughs). You can actually pick us up at any point that you like. The general thing is that I'll do Kathmandu first, How Karma Works, I think, and then on the millennium we'll be with His Holiness in Bodh Gaya so if the world blows up at least we're with someone (laughter) with the Dalai Lama in in Bodh Gaya where the Buddha was enlightened,

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, for teachings, yeah, for teachings with His Holiness on Shantideva...Master Shantideva, and then we'll be in...oh and then I'll teach the (b: Diamond Cutter) there in Bodh Gaya, and then we go to Goa for some beach teachings (laughter) and then and then it looks like two very heavy weeks with Geshe Thubten Rinchen who I think may be the greatest living active teacher of the Mind Only School and Madyamika School and he's agreed to teach us. We went last year...he taught five hours a day.

(student: In Tibetan or English?)

In Tibetan and I do a simultaneous translation

(student: (unclear))

In Sera monastery, near Mysore, South India, okay.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, South India's a little more relaxed, okay. So that's a that's a variation and you can pick us up at any point and it's very easy to be there and the monks are very sweet. We'll be staying we'll be...the the course will be held at Sera Monastery, and I there'll probably be a couple of hundred people there...it'll be held in one of the main temples there. In Sera Monastery, which is in South India...end of January.

(student: (unclear))

Oh. It's much better in South India, it's up on the Dekkan plateau, so it's cool. Okay. No problem. (laughter) How many times you heard Indians say that (laughter). Okay. So I think we're...Nancy Kieren is up next, okay.

(student: I just have one small general announcement about this. We made a little form where you put your name, address and what project you would be interested in (unclear) and afterwards (unclear). We'll pass it around now (unclear) take all those at the end, so (unclear).

(student, Nancy Kieran:) Okay, Godstow is a really amazing place. In Connecticut an hour and a half away from the city there's a hundred acres of paradise with a beautiful house. And lot of us have meditated there...Geshe-la's led a lot of fabulous retreats there, and we need a lot of help, it's it's like a major thing. So we need someone who wants to play a major role in Godstow. We have, you know, few people who are playing really major roles, and we need one more person who'll be the Retreat Manager, so, for instance, when Geshe-la does a really big retreat in October, this person will make sure that that retreat...the logistical side of that retreat go really smoothly, and you can imagine what good karma that will be. So that's the Retreat Manager. That Retreat Manager will work with lots of other people and hopefully lots of you who will be cooks and and assistants and registrars, and help paint the house before the retreat, and help host other people and help maintain the property, help maintain the house, help keep the grounds, help do the shopping, do architectural drawings so we can enlarge the meditation space so then after the three year retreat we'll have a bigger space. We need people with cars. We need people to help. I think the programing is kind of creating itself for the next few months because Geshe-la is spending a lot of time there and people are coming to me to do individual retreats. The people doing individual retreats are embarking on a major, you

know, journey, and they need support. So if anyone wants to help support someone doing an individual retreat by doing some shopping for them or cooking for them, that's another thing you can do. But after this kind of sel...cre...you know, self-creation of the program, we're gonna have to do some very determined programming, and I need help with that. In other words, all these eighteen courses, we can do the courses up there on weekends, we could do let's say, two classes a day...watch the videos, take the test...and so we need lots of people to help plan those programs just for like courses. And then we need people to plan group meditation weekends and groups of yoga weekends, and all that kind of stuff. My job is to make it really easy for people to accomplish all of their goals at Godstow. So help me out. Thank you.

(applause)

(student, Nancy Kieran: Now I'm gonna do something really cheap because I'm giving Michael Wick's phone number (laughter) because he doesn't...my kids don't give me my messages. (laughter). And I have testimony to prove that.)

(student: Can you understand? Okay. First I wanted to say that I'm really really shy and this is really really difficult for me to do, but I'll do it. (laughter and applause). Okay. Basically there are three positions that we need at the Three Jewels. Three Jewels is Outreach Center and it houses a library, we have meditation classes, we have computer programs, we do local community outreach, we do prison outreach, we work with hospitals and we also have a project with Sera Mey (unclear) art program. So a picture tells a thousand words, so we'll start off with morning meditation. The nuns are teaching morning meditation and some lay people, seven o'clock every morning and this is something that we would like to see happen and continue, and it's bene benefited many people. Actually, many people sitting here started out in morning meditation. And they're doing very well. So that's our morning meditation project. We just instituted a community, sorry, a computer literacy program and it's a lot of fun. We actually got one grant out and one grant pending and we have four computers and we just got our new e-mail address 'cause we're saving out the old one and it's called omthreejewels, which is really really cool...easy for you to remember. This...the first day we put the computers in the Three Jewels people started using them rapidly. Actually on Sunday people had to wait in line to get on the computer. So it's really taking off. And what we really need is some funding

and someone who, I believe we have maybe two people, who work with computers to help people when they come in just on a resume, and the the mainest program is a typing program that teaches people how to type, so it would really benefit...here we have a Dharma Center, but also you are you are building (unclear) and you're building niches in the community. And that's why we are here...to work with the community. Third we have local outreach programs. The Three Jewels works very nicely with people in the community. We go out, we get calls, we work with...this is a Catholic School on St. Mark's street...this is a job for the Dharma person, a Dharma teacher...to fill this slot. Also we work with the Stein-Allen Museum...they call us to teach there two times a year, and in teaching there people come to class, so you're building many futures. The Three Jewels is not this room in New York City. Actually that that room only is an office, but just imagine that room being like a octopus, with all these tails going out, touching (laughs) touching people in different places. The next project is Prison Outreach. The Prison Outreach Project...oh, it's okay, let's...we can do this. This is people that have come to the Three Jewels throughout the three years. Somehow some of them ended up in class, some of them died, this gentleman came in and he would come to the Three Jewels every Sunday and he came to class and he died. This gentleman actually started, we started teaching, I started teaching him before the inception of the Three Jewels and he did a lot of the painting and he's still around and he still comes to classes. This gentleman visited once and now he's a doctor that rents the office in the back and supports us financially three hundred dollars a month. Sarah and Paul has helped...we get all kinds of people from children to senior citizens coming in and we try to help them. This is Tasha and Daniel, and this old man lives down the block and he's been coming for the last six months and he just comes in and watches a war movie...he's not...he watches the same war movie every day, he's not a Dharma student and Paul Paul and Nigel and all the other boys serve him...he brings pastries but this is his home and I'm very much I'm I'm happy to hand over the project, but one part of me would like to see this continue and see that there's a place for people to come, because we too will need a place when we get older. This is a very very, as Geshe-la said, this is a very very sexy project. We've been doing this for (laughter) (laughs) and believe it or not it is (unclear) is a Buddhist and we've been working together for the last...I've known him for the last five years and we started the project maybe three years ago and he picks me up and takes me to Bedford Hills and we go and we work, or maybe once a month just teach a meditation to to women

prisoners, and actually, one of the women prisoners knew me in class through the correspondence course. She came up and she said "who's that dog barking", you know, (laughter) it must be, we have to we have to talk about the dog, but anyway (laughs)...and I said that was my dog. This project gets us a lot of funding. Actually we were away last retreat and somebody said "send us a proposal for your part...your prison project...haven't heard yet, but this is a major part of how we get money to support the Three Jewels. And the help that we need...that you're gonna be very lucky...you're gonna be walking into relationships that has been established and not only relationships that have been established but you'll also be working with Dharma people. So that's the Prison Project. The next project is...we also do some hospital work and at Stoney Lodge and and this is one of my favorite projects. We haven't gone this year (laughs) but we'll try to do so. Patricia and...who's here with us tonight, and Eileen also is a Dharma student that comes...we go to the hos...Eileen works at a hospital and we visit the hospital, and they said to us "come and teach meditation to the mentally ill kids" and I said, "meditation? How'm I how'm I gonna teach it to them 'cause they're they're just so dumb (?) how am I gonna get them mov...how'm I gonna get their minds to to focus, and I went into retreat and I came out and I said, "that's right, we'll make them dance first." And Patricia...she's back there hiding (laughter) (laughs) and Eileen and myself, we have a whole group of kids and we make them dance, and we dance with them, and the the classes are very unstructured and we dance and then we meditate with them on on the (unclear) or different objects, and then sometimes they would ask about Dharma, and and who are you and what you are doing, so this is another project that can continue, and it doesn't take a very very experienced teacher, it just takes someone who can meditate and has and has patience and who can also work along with other hospital administration, so this is one of the projects that I'd like to see continue. The reason why Three Jewels has to develop all of these projects was that we were looking for a way to be funded. The book store was not doing well, it was very hard for me to sell a Dharma bell for \$50.00 or a mala and and Geshe-la and I talked about it, and actually we got a grant this year, five thousand dollars, which supplied bells and dorjes for you at thirteen, so we we we worked hard..I'm keeping the place, and we developed programs so that we can get funding for it. So that's how we've been running it and this is why all these projects came into being. This is just a bookstore, for those of you who hav who haven't visited, and what is happening here is that they're cateloging CD's in the library.

Now we have a a very small, nice library that has lot of potential but what we really need is great stock for us, so if you knew...if you know someone who can get us some free stock for standing equipment (?) we really can use it, and we have one volunteer who who's been working for the last three days cleaning up all the manual labor, and all of you who have library books, please bring them back. (laughter) It really, it really hurts us 'cause the library is very small, or who has taken items and not returned them, please, we do need them, but this library is being used by...mostly a lot of new people, not people that have been around, but people who are interested in Dharma (unclear) and it is very useful. This is some...this project in India...first I want to say thank you from Sera Mey monks. Last, I think two two semesters ago we...last year we went to Sera, Fran was there, and we took one look at the cushions and we said, "no, you know, these boys can't sit on grass mats" and we made an effort and we collected money for them and before we left Sera we provided them the big cushions, and so I believe it was last semester we had a a disco party but anyway the disco party allowed us to send money over to pay this mandala and detailed the eight auspicious symbols on the wall and what was a stark room is now turning into a beautiful temple. We gave them, and this is from you guys...give yourselves a round of applause (applause)...most of you did this. We also give the guys, the monks...this is them without robes. This is what they look like. And these are the baby ones. And what you have done is that you've them some really...you've given them pride and you've given them joy. You've given them a sense of self in a different way...the a way that they don't know, you've made them very comfortable. And what I would like to see continue before I leave, I'm actually begging for more money...I need a thousand more dollars, so we could finish the school hall...it's not completed. So if anybody's interested in giving me money for this project, 'cause I feel pretty attached to it. I feel like they're all my little sons and somebody has to take the responsibility to fix up a room that is not too pleasant and to make a temple for them. So this is a project that we've been doing on the side, and this is the progress on it of it, and I just wanted to thank you and to let you see what you have done for them. This is our art program and at the Three Jewels we have free art classes, and last semester we ran successfully, last meeting I think there were eight people there, and this semester three people are signed up already to do this course. And what courses like these this kind will do is most of the women that are here are not Dharma students, but it prov...and it provides a sense of unity...you have eight women from eight

different backgrounds coming in to do a class, and the advantage of Three Jewels is very very very very small. But people have to talk to each other when they get there, and they have to...there's no place to go and if you you don't like somebody there there you know you you have to see them, so that the advantage of these classes is that these women bond and after class they have tea...like last Sunday night we had Little Buddha eight people showed up and they were eight strangers and I had to wait till about ten o'clock...you know why? They didn't finish..they weren't finished talking. Movie finished, hour and a half and these people just wanting to talk. So this is what really Three Jewels does for for the community and also if you could help it will help your Dharma practice 'cause you need to practice after you've done the (unclear). And the person behind the scenes of the Three Jewels (laughter) (laughs)...I want you to give him a round of applause (applause)...I I wanna personally thank him for helping me...I remember when I first took my vows and I didn't know any know rituals and I still don't go to the rituals (laughter) (laughs) and, but I learned how to meditate, and he's been very very patient with...I, no, I have to say with all of us...his students, and he's helped, he's helped me to grow, he's given me the the capacity to run all of these projects and many times I I get a little bit frustrated 'cause there's no money and I scream and I yell and I say "what're we gonna do?" but, I've got...I've matured, I I've learned to handle it (laughter) so that's why I know that we need three people, and the reason why we have broken it down into three jobs is that conceivably you could help the Three Jewels maybe fifteen hours a week, and even if it was a volunteer position, I still don't feel like you would be in (unclear), and still do some community work. So I just wanted to thank him personally for that. And last but not least, I you know I I I have a easy time letting go of the Three Jewels and I hope you really help us, but I have a hard time letting go Sharon (?). (laughter) He's gonna stay behind...I made up my mind because he's my dog but he shares many other beings, so he will be the temple dog and people mostly come to see him, and (laughter) (laughs)...from day one (laughs) ever since he's come into my life, so I would you to take care of him when I'm not there, and we need a lot of help and we need people that will help like we're gonna be away...most of the time traveling, and it's really hard to get a schedule of people when we're on the road, but, you know, I'm begging you to to really really come help and I have no fear of what it will become if somebody comes and they have a different way of seeing things or a different way of running things, totally up to you, wants this Dharma, wants this support, to Geluna, the Gelukpa lineage, but

we are begging you for help...we need your help and support.

(applause)

(student: Give the phone number)

(student, Ani Pelma: The phone number, no, wait, okay. We also have a brochure in the back that breaks down...it will be in the back for or you can see me if you are interested and all of the projects are outlined.)

(student, John Brady: My name is John Brady and I am very shy as well (laughter) and Ani Pelma is a hard act to follow (laughter).

I didn't bring any props today but I'll do my best to explain my role with ACIP. I wanted to back up and talk about a book that I read...oh three or four years ago...it was called (b: How the Irish Saved Civilization) and it was written by a gentleman by the name of...actually a historian and a scholar, his name is Thomas Cahill and he explains in great detail the secular invasion of the Circirtian monks filling into what is now Ireland, and Scotland and Great Britain in the fifth-sixth century, and for some strange reason these Celtic-Druidic tribes embraces Christianity and they basically get what Jesus Christ and the whole message of the Catholic Church was preaching at the time, and suddenly this movement occurs, and within two to three hundred years, hundreds or probably several dozen monastic sites begin to develop in Great Britain...some of them very famous - Iona, Lindesfarne, Glendelock, Carroll...tremendous renaissance, and this period of time Latin was basically learned and scribes were probably doing endless translations of Greek and Roman and Catholic texts and in one fell swoop, over a period of two to three hundred years, this gentleman, Mr. Cahill, makes a convincing argument that if it wasn't for the incredible secular movement by these individuals to open up the possibility of the dying civilization of the Greek-Roman and Christian ideals, we would have possibly not be reading some of the...these classic texts. And I really feel that ACIP and the project that Geshe Michael Roach has been doing for the last twelve years parallels, in a significant way, this same almost drastic time...essence of time for us to capture the the sacred Tibetan Buddhist texts and I I really think that we don't have two hundred and fifty years, we maybe have forty years in order to do this extraordinary project. We are responsible to do this. We must rely on ourselves to do this for future generations who will rely on us to give them this lineage and this great gift of of transliteration and translation of of these sacred texts. So

ACIP is very dear to me and I I really, I'm I'm honored to take on this role to to make this possibility happen for our organization. There are I think right now, twenty-eight or thirty transliterations/translation centers around the world who are fastidiously writing and transcribing for us in various texts so I I really think that your help is is central here and there's several layers that that we need to kind of look at from the standpoint of the fundamentals of how to make and sustain ACIP and make it work. Fundraising is number one. We're always kind of looking for money. And that's one of one of my focuses to take on this this opportunity is to find funds for for ACIP's continuation. The other, of course, is the the typical stuff - marketing and public relations and event planning and then other things such as going up to Carmel, NY to Dr. Chan's temple and literally doing photocopies of his texts and his library for days on end. It's it's endless the possibilities for us to continue this this project, so I could use your help, and if if any of you would like to sign up I'll put my number, and please call me, or also contact Bob Chilton who's, you know, the other main player here, not to mention Dr. Taylor in Washington who's been probably the most consistent twenty year veteran of of of this project. So I think that's it.

(applause)

(student: (cut) Lori's tending all these record (laughs) on Geshe Michael. I just wanted to talk for a few minutes about what doesn't quite have a name yet...we're calling it temporarily the "English Propagation Program", and (laughter) what we're trying to do is...Geshe Michael's worked, you know, over the past ten-fifteen years, teaching classes almost every night, translating thousands of pages of Tibetan scripture, more recently writing books in English and we have access to a lot of this material, but a lot of people don't and so what we're trying to do, especially, you know, in the coming months, we're trying to gather together a great effort of people and a lot of people have been working on this already, but, to gather together people who are interested in spreading the teachings of Buddhism in English. The Asian Classics Input Project is working very hard to preserve the teachings in Tibetan but we also really need to gather together all these English materials that, you know, many thousands and millions of people can use and spread them to people in a way that is useful. And, we have a bunch of different projects that have kind of come up if different people are interested...we're over the past few years we have a correspondence course of the formal study courses that have gone

on here and there's over a thousand people who have been taking these classes at home, and we need some help with that, you know, just people who want to help grade the papers of other people who are doing courses, people who want to help make sure these materials are available to other people. We're also trying to put together an archive. There are hundreds of tapes that aren't in the correspondence courses that have been taught over the years on almost any subject, and we want to really make sure it was starting so everything is in one place so everybody will have access to that and if there's any teaching you want to hear or make a course of, you can hear these teachings and but they're there for the whole, you know, future generation to who want to study Dharma in English, so we're making an archive at Godstow and we need a lot of help with that. People who, you know, wanna make a library there, who can help label tapes, who can, you know, just make sure everything's there copy things that aren't there, copy things onto different mediums. We're trying to make a digital and a physical archive. So once it's all in a digital format we can spread things very widely and inexpensively. We have another project where we're actually transcribing these teachings which is, you know, going forward in different ways. One is to make like a Buddhist library that would be online where you could actually read any of the courses...you could search it for different ideas, so if you had a question about how to do your water bowls, you could type in "water bowls" and it would jump to the day in, you know, March 3, 1993, where Geshe Michael taught that in class, you can have a full description online. For any other subject, you could type in a question about a death meditation, a question about meditation in general and the answer would come up online. We're also taking these transcripts and making them into books. There's a couple accomplished writers who are already editing courses that Geshe Michael's taught into books that are...some are in the process of being published, few are being published by Doubleday right now...one on the (b: Diamond Cutter) and business, teaching people how to use the ideas of emptiness and karma in their office place to make more money and be happier. Another book, you know, (b: The Garden) which we're using on the Friday night classes, so we're also making books for...out of the courses, so the wider audience can learn the things that we're learning in class. And we're also working on a website where all of the classes will be online, you can listen to them, watch a video of them, you'll have different study tools, dictionaries, we have somebody who's doing a (unclear) media video project...we wanna have everything on CD's so people can have instead of 18 notebooks you could just have a couple of CD's or you could listen to any of the classes on your

home computer for sixty cents rather than, you know, the money it costs to send out courses, so we need the help with a lot of different things...if you're interested in just any different ways of spreading these teachings in English, we're actually gonna have a meeting this weekend at Godstow that anybody's welcome to come to and it's gonna be this Saturday from 3:30 in the afternoon on into the evening, and also Sunday afternoon from about 1:30 or 2:00 on. Where we're gonna try to get some teams together...people who wanna work on making an archive, working on books, publication, working on editing...we need people who are proof readers, people who are maybe graphic artists who have a few hours a week who want to transcribe, who know about computers, (unclear) website development, who know about video, who...lot of different skills, you know, pretty much anything you do we can use, you know, different skills to help spread these teachings to a wider audience, and people to help manage volunteers. We have over a hundred people around the country, and in Australia and in Ireland and all over who are transcribing tapes, so people who wanna work with the volunteers we have and help, you know, make these teachings reach other people. So, I can I can write my name up here...also if you're interested in coming this weekend, you can just come or if you wanted some more information you could talk to me and then if you want to hear some more specific things about the projects, we're gonna do a whole weekend about it at Godstow.

(applause)

(cut)

(student, Winston Mccullough: So I'd like to talk for a minute about Diamond Mountain which is going to be a a University and Retreat Center, out in Arizona. I'll leave this for a minute and then I've got a couple of more. We settled on the name Diamond Mountain. The contest ended early (laughter), it's kind of funny... about five people, actually individually, came up with the same name, you know, independently, or something very similar, so we're calling it Diamond Mountain. There is more-less a Diamond Mountain out there, on the map. We had a meeting out there a couple of weeks ago with the team who are working very hard on this. It's a great team to be involved with, people are very supportive, there's a lot of good energy. We're making really good progress. We are working out there on fund raising, communications, planning the building for Geshe Michael's Great Retreat fo...that he'll be doing for three years, starting next March in year 2000. We had a special blessing ceremony on the

site out there and what're we're...and we also worked on a master plan for the community out there. This is a really longterm project probably will stand twenty five years actually to get all of the phases up and running...have a community of students, retirement village, other residents, people doing retreats...it might be ten thousand people. There's nine thousand acres in total and this is something that we'll be building up incrementally o...over a couple of decades.)

(cut)

(student, Winston Mccullough): I'll show you where the the site is...if you can...it's a little bit small...let's see...this is Phoenix, southeast of there is Tucson...Tucson has an international airport...it's really convenient to fly in and out of, and then just about an hour drive southeast of Tucson are the Dragoon Mountains and that's where we're gonna be building this center. This is a little bit of what the land looks like out there...it's high mountain kind of climate, about 5000 feet so it's really good for meditating...it's good for living year round and people live there very comfortably and easily and inexpensively in adobe retreat buildings that can be built by ourselves or built very inexpensively so the idea is that to be able to live in a way that we have the time and the resources and lack of some other kind of busy demands so that we can put a lot of time into our practice which may be difficult at times in New York. So tha that's the idea with the lifestyle out there. We're working right now on the real estate contract...we've got that finalized...we're about the sign it. It works..in, basically like this. We're gonna buy a hundred acres of land right now and then over about ten years we'll purchase some incremental parcels so we'll get to about thirty-two hundred acres of land and we can build retreat centers on, for individual treats...retreats or group retreats. We'll have a university center, a business conference center, a retirement village and a lot of room for individuals to come out and build homes for themselves with their families, with friends, like that, so. As soon as we we sign the contract, we want to, in a more formal way, disseminate some more information to a lot of people, so we're gonna have a website turned on in a couple of weeks...Michael Dunn and Ronnie in Ireland have been working a lot on that, and Jennifer and Michael Wick, Elly, to get that up and going...a a separate website for Diamond Mountain. And then Tom Flynn and Elly and others are working on a brochure that we're gonna mail out to thousands of people so we can get enthusiasm and information going out there. Geshe Michael is

going to be beginning his retreat next March and he'll be delivering two sets of public teachings in each year, and the dates are in the in the newsletter. The first teachings will be May 20-June 10 and then and that's of the year 2000, so starting in about nine months, and the next set is are is gonna be December 16 through January 6, so we're very fortunate that we'll still be able to receive teachings from Geshe Michael. So during those three years, to come out for the teachings, there's a there's a whole range of accommodations...there's hotels and B&B's close by, we'll be either on or very close to National Forest, public land out there, so you can camp out there, and then we're also ordering a set of hurts from Mongol from Mongolia, which are really cool and so we'll be able to stay in yurts during the teachings, and we'll probably have at least one of the yurts come to the East Coast and one of the Godstow projects is to set up a yurt up there and see if we can duplicate them. Build a bunch of them and then ship them out there (laughter) so that so that we can live in a in a yurt community...during the teachings and to do some retreats. And then over time, as we raise some more money and if people want to get together some funds individually or some some nice sponsor help comes, we can begin to build some adobe retreat buildings and adobe houses to live in out there. So, fund raising is a really big part of this. We've done a a very good job so far, and there's there's been a lot of generosity just among the students here in, you know, in the room right now. And other of Geshe Michael's students. We've raised the \$200,000 that we need to purchase the first parcel and we're well on on the way to raising all of the money that we need to build the retreat hacienda for the retreat that Geshe Michael is leading. And then we're gonna have more needs financially, so I'd like to thank everyone who's helped with the fundraising or made donations. We're gonna have a a dinner for donors on August 14th which is a Saturday night..it's the weekend that His Holiness is teaching in New York. So if you've made a donation or if you'd like to come to the dinner, and would like to make a donation (laughter) you can do that, and we'll have more details about that. We're we're also gonna set up a a process where all of us can have a an ongoing kind of donation to support ther...Geshe Michael in the retreat, and I encourage everyone to think a little bit about how you'd like to do this in a way that is very comfortable for you, that that you feel good about, that you think is appropriate, and it may be a process where you just donate five dollars a month or you donate fifty dollars or five hundred dollars a month...whatever it is, and I think that, you know, the main purpose to collect karma, to think about the Perfection of

Giving, think about appreciation for what our teacher has done for us, for the teachings that he's given us, the precious gift that we have from studying with Geshe Michael. It's a very good time to be supporting his retreat. So just just to think about that, just to put the, you know, the seed for that in your mind. You can be thinking about the way of doing that you that you think is right, you know, personally for you. And we'll probably have a li...a a very convenient way that we can help with donations just through an automatic monthly kind of contribution, so it's just something something to think about for a little bit later. And then I want to mention a few volunteer opportunities. If people would like to get involved. Most of the...I think most of the long-term help will actually be out in Arizona, so I'll mention that later, but a couple of things that people can help with in New York right away. We're gonna be put putting together a mailing for a brochure, probably in three to four weeks, so if you'd like to get together and get that ready to send out. We need someone who is able to use Microsoft Access software, to create a data base. This is a really important part of the project to support things (unclear) people, so if you'd like to take that on. We're gonna be doing some yurt cloning up in Godstow (laughter) so think about that if you, you know, if you like building and would like to get involved. We have a lot of needs to do web searches and people have done research on safety, living out in Arizona, or informa...getting information about easements on the land and so there's a lot of need to do some web research. There's some specialties...kind of special professional skills that we could really use some help with in New York also, if people have a legal background or accounting background, if people are able to write web programs or write HTML, software or do graphic design...those kinds of things are really helpful also. And then in the longer term, just to plant a seed in your mind, if you're if you're very attracted to being involved in the longer term, out in Arizona at Diamond Mountain, these are these are some some things that we're going to be working on over the next few years. We're gonna building yurts, building adobe homes, setting up solar systems for energy, setting up turbine power with windmills so that we can drill, you know, deep wells, pump up water from the earth for drinking and cleaning and washing and growing gardens out there. We're gonna be building a lot of adobe ourselves, probably put putting together a store of adobe bricks and materials. We're gonna repair fences, we're gonna...let's see...and then, I gue...last thing to mention out there is we're gonna for Geshe Michael's public teachings there's a lot of work to be done so that we can all conveniently be out at the teachings. We need to arrange for

busses to bring people onto the National Forest for the teachings, we need to set up food and water, a safety station, portapotties, things like that, so...that that's basically the project so far. We'll have a lot more information for you and we'll have the website turned on live pretty soon. The way that...I think, you know, a really significant way that you can help us now is if you have friends or friend of friends or someone you know who might be interested in sponsoring the project in a major way, if you can give us leads, people to contact, or if you'd like to, you know, make a first contact and let us follow up with a pr a proposal. Most of the money that we've raised, you know, going forward, I think will be coming from some wealthy sponsors who have a kind of a heartfelt interesting in supporting this project and supporting Geshe Michael. So so that's a, I think, an important way that the the project will progress. So special things happen at mountains sometimes (laughter) and so we, you know, think about this project. We'll have more information. This is a real longterm thing. Begin to think about how you'd like to be involved. Whether it's coming out to the teachings, coming out to do a retreat once or twice during the year...it could be a one week or a one month or a two month retreat, if you'd like to relocate relocate out there, Tucson is a very big convenient city sort of as a jumping off point, to relocate down to Diamond Mountain. It's a really...it'll be a really special place and we're very fortunate that our teacher is giving us the opportunity to help with this so.

(applause)

(student, Winston Mccullough: We're gonna have...the website is under development and so in a couple of weeks, in a couple of weeks we'll have the website address for you and we'll announce it in class.)

(student, Andrea: Hi. My name is Andrea and my mission is to feed Geshe Michael and his six or eight or ten or fifteen people that work with him for (laughter) (laughs) he's only gonna be around for another two and a half months and we need to start collecting food donations right away (Geshe-la laughs in background). I'm gonna have a box in the back of the class and a list of foods that we co we would recommend, but it's really up to you...anything that you would like to bring, preferrably non-perishable foods, boxes of Cheerios, Chinese tea, pasta, beans, you know...you can bring fresh fruits and vegetables too. We'll just have to keep thinking about how to store them. Michael Wick

has offered his kitchen and so we've been cooking there. You can also...if you wanna to cook and then bring food to Michael Wick's apartment, you'd have to talk with, let's see, you'd have to call ahead of time, so you have Michael Wicks number...are you guys available at Michael Wick's...you...there's a phone...do people answer the phone? Dur...during the afternoon? 2:00 to 5:00? If you like want to prepare food and just bring it there so they... and they can heat it up and stuff like that. In case you need inspiration, Geshe Michael said that this idea comes from the (b: Vinaya) so, I don't think Lord Bia...Buddha ever had to cook for himself or, I don't think he had to order food from a restaurant. I think that his disciples took care of him so we'd like to do the same thing. Thank you.)

Just to wrap up...the ideas of food is (laughs), you know, we don't have any paid positions here. We are serving now tens of thousands of people and we're all completely broke and what would be nice...and we don't like money...we're not asking for money, but in the ancient days, people would just bring food for the staff. So the idea is that, you know, you just bring a can of food or or something...don't bring money and I have about ten or fifteen people helping me every day for free. They come...a lot of them take time off their jobs and they come one day a week or two days a week and all of the...we sent out over a million pages of correspondence courses. We've never charged anybody. And and things like that. We're serving about a hundred and fifty prisoners in penitentiaries all over the world, half a million Mongolians are watching the television stuff there...it's stuff like that and we don't have any funding. We don't have any salaries for anybody. So, the idea is to go back to the old system and instead of us coming to your house with a wooden bowl, (laughter) you just bring something to eat and then I can feed all the...my children, who come and help me every day. 'Cause they're very kind of help, they work really hard...some of them work eighteen hours a day for free and I think it would be really cool to to ressurect this ancient idea that that these people who are serving us, that we feed them...you know what I mean? And that's just one meal a day for the next few months and I think that's a good system. Also I'd like to thank Michael Wick for letting us use his apartment at the office (applause) okay, and and Leon also..just to (applause) you know...and that's why we can not charge anything. Leon's place alone, I think, he's lost probably over a hundred thousand dollars in rent in the last three-four years by letting us use it for free and, you know, we should do...I think, I would love to make everything free and just live like that and I think that's the way Dharma should be,

okay? I'd like to ask all these people maybe to come up over here during the break...we're gonna take a break now and then we'll have a class...and if you want to talk to them about what they're working on or or ask questions or, you know, bring your...are they allowed?...I don't know...did you have a question? A few more announcements. Very quickly. There's a flamenco group, a beautiful gypsy flamenco group from Spain that heard about our work two years ago and did a free performance for us. They raised eighteen thousand dollars for the nuns. And that was actually used to buy their first car. (laughter) And some other stuff that they're gonna be using out in Arizona, the the nuns who are gonna be in retreat there. So, now, they're gonna be playing...this, they start tomorrow, a performance in New York and we're gonna take a group there next Wednesday, a week from tomorrow, so if you're interested in coming, they charge...I don't know what they charge per group but we're gonna...I thought it'd be just nice to show support for them. So, who's...are you doing that? You can talk to Ani Pelma and then there'll be theme weekends up at Godstow to discuss these projects and there'll be a special weekend to discuss the Three Jewels for example and a special weekend for Mongolia, and stuff like that, but talk to the person in charge of it and we'll meet you up there. Okay. Please take a nice break.

(break)

Thank you. Okay, we'll start. The course that we are reviewing tonight and Thursday was the...what was it...the eighth course I think and seventh?, okay. And it was dedicated to the Bodhisattva Vows. As you know there's three sets of vows, what we call Pratimoksha vows or they're called Freedom Vows, which, for example for laypeople might mean no killing humans and no stealing a lot of money, and no direct adultery, no lying about your spiritual life, no drinking alcohol or taking drugs...things like that, okay. Those are Pratimoksha vows. The monks vows, nuns vows are all what we call Pratimoksha vows, or freedom vows. That's one of the three sets of vows. Then there's a set of vows called Bodhisattva Vows and then there's a set of vows called (Tantric) or secret vows. Okay. And this class number seven, the course number seven, was dedicated to studying the Bodhisattva Vows. When I was in Ireland, you know, it being a very deeply Catholic country...I've never taught in a deeply religious country of any kind, actually, you know, (laughs), I've taught in America, Australia...you know, no offense, but but they don't have a a deep belief. Irish have a deep belief and and they didn't know any Sanscrit words..I called it Warrior Saints

vows or something like that, which is what Bodhisattva mea...how it translates in Tibetan and I even had a difficulty using the word "vow", I ended up using "list", you know, because the vow...the word vow has so many connotations. For example, when you think vows you think a cloister in medieval Europe and women after being, I don't know, some big scandal then they go into a (laughter)a nunnery and they never come back and they take vows, you know. And if the vows have this kind of connotation of some kind of...how to say...I think the major connotation in English is of some kind of obligation, some kind of restriction, uncomfortable restriction, you know, some kind of controlling your urges and trying not to do what you really want to do, so you see, you know, monks and nuns over-eating 'cause they can't do other things and they get frustrated and they're always like walking around a little shakey and and, you know, hitting the kids this minute they do something (laughs)...not like that at all, okay. You have to think of vows as some kind of a holy list of, you know...I heard Matthew...what's his name?...this great French monk.

(students: (unclear))

Richard. Okay. And he said vows are like wings, you know, yeah, like incred...no, no different guy. Modern Tibetan French monk, who wrote a great book, but anyway. He said, "my vows are like wings", you know, like "when I took vows they gave me the power to fly" (laughter), you know and he sees them as this extraordinary knowledge that was granted to him by the enlightened beings, and you know, out of all the millions of activities that a human being can do...oh, here's a list that'll get you enlightened a lot faster, and here you can have it, you know, and he's like "wow, thank you", you know and then it's like beautiful, and I think the Bodhisattva vows are different because out of the three sets of vows, you're allowed to study Bodhisattva vows in advance of taking them, and you're encouraged to. For example, when you become a fully ordained monk or nun...you're not technically supposed to know a lot about the vows before you take them. You have to have the vows the read about the vows, you see what I mean? When you take (tantric) vows, you're not allowed to study them before you take them, but when you take Bodhisattva vows, you're encouraged to learn them all before you take them, and His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, in Arizona, where he granted them when I was there...you know, all my high school friends came and they're all Christian and they said, "can we take the vows"? and he said, "I'll tell you tomorrow". And he came back the next day and he said, "I think

it's okay", and you know whether you take them formally or not, Bodhisattva vows are some kind of extraordinary way of life. Inside those vows are all the six perfections, okay, all the activities of a Bodhisattva, all the things that these beings do who love others more than themselves, and live their lives, every moment of their lives, for other people are included in the Bodhisattva vows. You know, I always was trying to keep track of how am I doing on giving, how'm I doing on morality, how'm I doing on concentration, not getting angry, blah blah blah and you don't need to do that. If you just keep your vows, your Bodhisattva vows, if you learn them and then if you follow them or track them frequently, you is doing the Six Perfections. You see what I mean. Then you don't have to worry about some separate Six Perfections. This is how you do the Six Perfections. You just keep your Bodhisattva vows. Okay. The vows are given and required as a preliminary to every (tantric) initiation that's given around here, in the highest of the four groups of (tantra), the vows are required before you get (tantric) vows. In the lower groups of (tantra), they are the (tantric) vows. Okay...with some adjustments, okay. So it's very important to have them. So you have thousands of Americans who have taken some (tantric) initiation, almost nobody has known their vows. And if you don't keep them, if you don't look at them every day, they don't do anything. Okay. You you ain't much different before you take vows and after you take vows...it's not like the Abhidharma School says you get some halo or something like that, and then the higher schools says "that's wrong". Okay. It's not like they're gonna change you if you don't know them. They don't do anything, practically, for you if you don't know them and then make an attempt to follow them all the time, okay? So, the idea of course number seven was, and I think it was unique at the time, that you could have a a clear, basic introduction to every single Bodhisattva Vow that you were supposed to be keeping for the last fifteen-twenty years anyway, and we found a beautiful text by a teacher of the tenth Dalai Lama, in Russia, that was advised by Pabongka Rinpoche in two of his books, so we we found a copy, pasted it back together, found pieces all over the place, got the whole thing, translated it, you have, in the in the course, a a short description of every single vow. Why is that important? These vows were collected together from different sutras and different ancient Indian commentaries by Master Asanga and other like Chandragomin, and they are sometimes obscure...like one of them says, "don't profess the opposite", you know. So if you go around and saying, "well, I wonder if I professed the opposite today", (laughter) you know, you have to have an explanation, so in the course you

had a short explanation of each vow. I've put in the in the review course, you still have the explanation of every vow, so this reading's a little longer, okay, 'cause I couldn't bear to get it out and take out some of the vows...it just seems crazy to me, so me and Ora had a fight and I won as usual, (laughter) (laughs) and and you get got all the vows in the reading, okay, and you have to read them and you have to study them. It's a requi...and I break...I'll tell you a secret, okay, in the (tantric) vows, you're required to check these vows, and your (tantric) vows six times a day, (tun druk), okay. (Tun druk) doesn't mean (says vows indistinguishably fast), whew, six times, done, you know. (laughter) (laughs). I used to do it in Perth, Amboy on the bus, just after waking up on the way home, for sixteen years, okay. Then I started checking them which is a lot harder and and and we have a system, you keep a book, you write six vows a day and you check six vows a day and that you check it six times a day, you don't check it twice a day or once a day because it's six times a day, and then this starts to change your life. You know, I have around the world, hundreds, thousands of students, I meet them constantly, on a constant basis, they come into my room, there's only two kinds...one...and they're all the same, I mean the...what they want to talk about is always the same. They...number...student...type one comes in and says, "my practice is lousy, I can't meditate, nothing's going right, I don't feel well, everything seems crazy" and I say, "are you keeping your book?" and they say, "well....no...I did for a couple of weeks when you visited my country and you taught the vows", you know what I mean, and I'm like, I'm like, "just keep your book and go away and stop bothering me", you know, 'cause it keeps you happy, you know. If you are coming to these classes for eighteen courses, they frankly won't change you that much, okay...you must be watching those vows, checking those vows every two hours, period. And then your life will change drastically. Your life will change drastically, because you're changing what? Your mind (laughs), okay, all right, I mean you can be educated about Buddhism but not change your own mind, you see what I mean? Changing your mind is a lot harder than than taking these courses. Theoretically, if you take the courses, you're better at changing your mind. Okay. But you must write down those vows, you must check them. Okay. And that was the goal of teaching the Bodhisattva Vows, okay? Did you have a question?

(student: (unclear))

Oh, we'll talk about it...we'll talk about it. We'll talk about how confession works, okay, and I'll I'll cover that tonight,

okay. So very quickly, and your student leaders will help you, the the basic text for the Bodhisattva Vows study was one by Je Tsongkapa...it's a major text, they considered it so important they put it in the first volume of his teachings and it's called (b: Highway for a Bodhisattva). Okay. And that was the...that and the text by the teacher of the tenth Dalai Lama were the texts that we used for the Bodhisattva Vows. That text has never been translated...you got big pieces of it in your reading, and it tears up the vows apart, it explains everything about the vows. Hopefully somebody will translate it...the whole thing...maybe one of you. Okay. Secondly we had a a the motivation with which you should take the vows, and that's bodhicitta. Okay. Very briefly, I'm not here to give a long talk about bodhicitta, I think the bodhicitta or the, you know, what they call "altruistic attitude" or something like that, which I call "the wish for enlightenment"...I think people are confusing it betwe...confusing kindness and bodhicitta, okay. Kindness is being nice to other people, helping other people, being willing to put yourself out for other people, bodhicitta is a totally different thing. Bodhicitta is "the desire, the intention, the unwavering resolve to become an enlightened being so you can finally help other people", period. Okay. And if that involves being tough on other people, that's fine too. So Bodhisattvas might not be looking like Bodhisattvas at a particular time, okay. Bodhisattva, again, doesn't just mean a nice guy or a super nice guy. It doesn't even mean a compassionate person. By itself. What it means, (tem kye pani sem den che ya na dzo gren, tsan che du) quoting Master Asanga, "Bodhichitta is the desire to wish enlightenment so that you can really help other people", okay.. That's all. You know, so it'd be almost like a single-minded focus on getting yourself enlightened quickly so you can help other people in a major way, okay, and that's it, all right. So that that's the that's the motivation you have to have when you take Bodhisattva vows. Okay. There's two kinds of Bodhisattva vows ceremonies...we covered it in detail in the course, in wa...the first ceremony you commit yourself to thinking like a bodhisattva, you know, "I buy into that theory. I will try to become an enlightened being to help other people, as quickly as I can, and I'll spend the rest of the my life, mainly concentrating on that". Ceremony number two: "I commit myself to the sixty-four vows and accessory commitments", okay, like that's...which is to say, I commit myself to act like a bodhisattva, okay, and in the old days, they used to take two ceremonies and it used to be a year apart, or five years apart, you know, it was a very serious commitment to say, "I agree to think like a Bodhisattva". I agree to live my

life just thinking about what's the fastest way I can get enlightened so I can help other people. Okay. And then ceremony number two would be: "I agree to follow the six perfections by or acting like a Bodhisattva by taking the sixty-four vows and then following them, okay. Like that. Okay. There's a question in your homework that says, "describe Je Tsongkapa's reaction to the idea that practitioners of the secret way do not need to follow the other two sets of vows". This is a very wrong idea that gained popularity in India, I'm sorry, Tibet...and India...where people would say, "I understand about monks vows and laymen's lifetime vows, and I know about all those Bodhisattva vows, but you know, I've graduated. I've moved up to secret teachings, (tantra). I don't need those vows. I don't need to follow those vows. I am now exempt from the lower vows. I'm a higher being. I don't need those vows." Okay. Something like that. And this was an idea that was beginning to gain popularity in Tibet, you know, they would ditch the other two sets of vows and say "all I need to do is concentrate on the third set of vows". First of all, I mean a very interesting thing...if you follow your basic morality vows, the ten, well, in this life, with a pure heart, you can pretty much count on bumping into (Tantric) deities anyway. Without a without an initiation, get it? Okay. If you really with a pure heart, keep the very basic morality of Buddhism, you probably gonna start bumping into these being anyway. On top of that you take Bodhisattva vows, you can speed it up. And then you can't take (tantric) vows unless you're keeping the other two sets of vows, okay? They don't make any sense, they don't mean anything, and between us, the lower vows are included in the (tantric) vows, in the five families of Buddha's vows, okay, the nineteen (laughter) and I'm not supposed to tell you...okay. So to say that you don't need the lower vows to get to the higher vows is just crazy, okay? And that's what...Je Tsongkapa says that idea is like a hail storm that moves through, cross a valley and ruins the crops, cuts them all down, and it's and it's an excellent way to ruin the happiness of of thousands and millions of people in the future. Okay? So if anybody gives you that story, you know what to say now. Okay. Question number four is, "describe the kind of person that can grant the vows of the Bodhisattva". Interesting thing. You don't have to be a monk to give someone Bodhisattva vows. It's better if they are a monk or nun, okay, you don't have to have (tantric) vows, but it's better if they do have (tantric) vows, 'cause then they can guide you further on, okay. And then there are personal qualities that the person should have and those will be covered in your in your breakout section, okay. The kind of person who can take the vows of a bodhisattva...the main

requirement to take the vows successfully is a sort of a predilection in your own mind for compassion, okay. If you were the kind of person that couldn't stand it when they were cutting frogs up in school, at high school biology class...you see what I mean, if you were the kind of person that was throwing away the mousetraps in your mom's house, you know, if you were the kind of person that, you know, cried when you heard about people getting killed in some country on tv, that that's really you have what we call the seed to keep the bodhisattva vows. In other words, you have to have some kind of...you have to be the kind of person that was attracted to spiritual things, you heard about great things, or you heard about meditation...I was reading Dr. Strange comic books, Marvel comic books, and they had a Buddhist monk there, and I just couldn't...wow, Tibet..it's got such good ears, and and those robes, man, you know, and you know, like that, some kind of seeds in your heart that you're just attracted to these things, okay. That's the basic personality type that will be able to be successful in this...bodhisattva vows. There're other requirements listed here and your your your class teachers will go through them. Then we went over the first nine root vows and I think I even...oh, all eighteen root vows on your homework, okay (laughter). Those of you who know the (tun druk) in Tibetan, it starts out (dak to shenmo cho nor mi ter shing, shak kyang mi nyen tekchen pongwa dang, konchok kor trok cho pong ngur mike trok, tsam me nga dang lokta drong sok jom)...can you check them that fast (laughter)...no, then you have to keep a book, okay (laughs) All right. What are they...I mean, I'll give you four just for good luck, okay, and the rest you have to go over with your class leaders, okay, and they're also in the reading. 'Cause you've got all of them in the reading, okay? The first four root bodhisattva vows...by the way, we divided the bodhisattva vows into root vows and secondary vows. The root vows are more important and then secondary vows, and then there are vows relating to the wish for enlightenment, there are vows called the black deeds and white deeds and you can get all that, we don't have time tonight. It takes about ten days full time to teach it to somebody, okay. First vow, (dak to shen mo), it has two parts. The first four vows have two parts each. They're really two vows hiding in each part, okay? (Dak to shen mo) means to "put yourself up and to put other people down", okay? Now if that were the root bodhisattva vow, we're in trouble. Why? When you break a bodhisattva vow, fully, meaning there has to be four conditions there...you have to be happy you broke it, you have to be willing to break it again, you have to not care about what the effects are on other people, you have to think it's a stupid vow anyway, I mean to break a bodhi...root

bodhisattva vow properly, is difficult, okay? But if it were as easy as praising yourself and putting down others, you and me is in trouble. Okay. You cannot reach, said Je Tsongkapa, the first Bodhisattva bhumi if you break a root bodhisattva vow in this lifetime. That's awful strict. That means you can't see emptiness directly with a bodhicitta if you just praise yourself once. I mean I'd be in trouble ten minutes ago. Okay. This is a very specific praising yourself. After much analysis, Je Tsongkapa and the other commentators say, this refers primarily to putting down other religions...other religious teachers, okay, out of a desire for some kind of a sick desire for yourself that that you know, people are attracted to your teaching and that you're some how special, and like that, some competitive feeling, okay. It doesn't mean I can't get up and say, if someone told you emptiness was a green light in your head, that's BS, okay, I have to say that. That's not putting down other religious positions, okay. What I...what this means is to say, you know, something like, all all people in the other religions are stupid, or something like that, or, anyone who goes to that other Dharma center is an idiot, you know...or something like that, or that teacher is not a very good teacher...something like that, out of a desire that that I should be considered the greatest teacher and and people should honor me and and I should get more money for my classes...I wish...and and stuff like that...out of some desire for gain for myself. Now that's sick...you see what I mean? Out of a desire that I should get more money, or I should get more fame to to slander other religious traditions and things like that. That's the first Bodhisattva vow. Okay. First two...praising yourself criticizing others (dak to shen mo). (Cho nor mi ter shing) means...number two...the two parts of number two are, someone else is asking you for material help or for religious teachings and you refuse. Why? There has to be a special motivation here because I don't want my money to get less. Like I have enough to give you, I know you need it, I know you're desperate, you're depending only on me...by the way, this is what it takes to break this vow, okay, you are depending desperately on me. I am your only source, I do have the money you need...I don't need it so much for other things. You begging me for it and because I don't want my bank account to be less, I say no. You know. I want my bank account to maintain a certain level, okay, or you're begging me for certain teachings about something...and I don't want to tell you. Why? I want to be the only person who knows, okay. I don't want anyone to know as much as Michael Roach. Okay. So I don't tell you about what you want to know. That's how you break number two. It's very hard to break it, thank goodness...you see what I mean? They're very

specific ways to break it. See, the Bodhisattva vows are like that. They are very specific. And you have to learn all the nuances of each vow and if you don't study it in the reading and you don't go to a good course on it, you'll go crazy. Don't teach emptiness to others. Yeah. But His Holiness is writing books about it. Is he breaking his vows. That's not what the vow means, man. Go read it. You see what I mean. It's a totally different thing. People have come up to me and said, "you're a bad person" and I say "why", they say, "you're teaching emptiness". I said, "there's no vow against teaching emptiness". "Yeah, yeah, num vow number so and so...it says you can't teach emptiness". Come on, that means you can't teach emptiness to a certain kind of person who's on a Mahayana track who would freak out if you taught it in way number sixteen and would go to a Hinayana track. And that's what it means. And they say, "well, I never heard of that", and I said, "yeah, 'cause you never read the vow". Okay. In other words you have to read the vows carefully or else you'll go around either breaking them or...what's the first cause of breaking your Bodhisattva vows? You don't know what they are (laughs), okay, I mean that's the...easiest way to break them if you never know what they are. There's also people going around bodhi...keeping Bodhisattva vows that aren't there (laughter) okay (laughs), like they they're strictly keep this vow in a certain way thinking that it means one thing when it doesn't have anything to do with that. Okay. That's even almost more funny. Okay. (shenmo cho nor mi ter shing - Shak kyang mi nyen) (Shak kyang mi nyen) means "someone comes to you, you've done something to them, sorry, they've done something to you and they want to come and apologize to you, and they're coming to you in the proper way, respectful way, it's a very solemn moment for them, they are approaching you in a very sincere way, they want to give you a full, honest apology for something they've done to you and you blow them off"...okay. That's very unbodhisattva. Okay. And then you break the vow. Some commentators say this refers to a deep-felt spiritual suggestion, you know, someone comes to you with a deep-felt spiritual suggestion of some kind, like, you know, I saw you do a certain thing and I love you like my brother, and I I just wanted to, you know, give you a suggestion that maybe you wouldn't want to do that, or something, and then you say, "ah, get out of my life", you know. Then you break this Bodhisattva vow...there's two ways of interpreting that that part of that vow. There is a missing part in the (tun druk) that it doesn't mention here which is "to strike another being physically". Okay. So number three has a second part called "striking another being". Like, you have pledged to spend the rest of your life, every moment of it, serving others, every way

you can, and and to lay a finger on another being in anger, okay, in some kind of bad motivation, you know, hatred, anger, then you've broke a root vow. And I I remember like I've punched I punched my brothers...that doesn't count, okay, we had four boys, we had rules...you couldn't punch in the face, you could jump on them, twist them down, wrestle (laughter)...nobody ever hit anybody in the face. That was a rule. We broke windows, doors, (laughter) everything. Chairs, but we couldn't hit each other in the face, you know. And then I remember in college, like really punching a guy once. At...it was at the back of a truck, he fell off the truck, and I never felt so bad in my life, you know. Just the...I didn't really intend to, you know what I mean...it just happened, and he's like down and I'm like, you know, and I have it done to me too, felt worse...no (laughter) (laughs) but just the sensation of striking another living being, and feeling it and having taken...having sworn your existence to serving others and to make contact with them physically in violence, is so against the Bodhisattva principle that you break a root vow when you do it, okay. That's the second half of (shak kyan mi nyen tekchen pongway dang)- (tekchen pongwa)...give up the Mahayana teaching, like, Buddha never taught them, stupid idea, this Bodhisattva thing's too hard, doesn't make sense, okay. The other half of that vow is to teach false Dharma, okay. Oh, Buddha made that rule but it doesn't apply to modern times...I guess he wasn't omniscient, right, or he couldn't see 1999...he could see 1998, but not 1999, something like that. This rule is irrelevant for people. I don't see why the Buddha made that rule. Let's adjust it. Let's change it. Let's say you can drink alcohol at dinner if you only have three glasses. (laughter). Okay. Or something, you know, to adjust an omniscient being's version of what will get you liberated. Okay. To to corrupt the Dharma, okay, to to make it less than what it is. Okay. That's that's teaching false Dharma. To present something as Buddha Dharma which the Buddha never intended, never taught, okay, and to corrupt it for future generations...at a certain point of that process it won't work any more, okay, at a certain point of monkeying around with the Buddha's teachings, it won't function to do what it does, which is to get people to see emptiness directly and get them liberated, okay. If if people in each generation over the last two and half thousand years had monkeyed around with it a little bit...it's that thing where I whisper something in Axel's ear, and then he whispers in your...and by the time you get to the last person...if each person changed one word, it wouldn't work anymore, okay. You can't do that. All right. Cannot...we have two and half thousand years to go in this eon of Buddha Dharma and it's been

okay so far, and don't you don't have to fix it or change it or adjust...I heard people say, I've heard Tibetan Buddhist teachers say, "oh, the hell realms are just a metaphor", you know, "there's no such thing...it just means a bad day". You know...(laughs) I think they're in the hell realms now (laughs) something like that, okay. Not like that...okay. They these things you can not fool around with, okay, you can't change them. All right. You can adjust them for your times in the language and you have to, get it. You have to update the language. Lord Buddha's speech has sixty qualities...quality number one is his ability to adjust his speech for all living beings. He speaks Sanscrit for those who understand Sanscrit, and he speaks Brooklyn to those who understand Brooklyn, okay, and he uses the words that fit those people. He speaks their language, okay. So I would say if you don't adjust the language to the people you're speaking to, then you've corrupted the Dharma, 'cause they can't understand it...you see what I mean? But do you change the information? Never. Okay. Do you change the language to normal English? Yes. Because that's that's what we're here to do is to communicate to people in normal English. Okay. Let me see if anything else...so those are the four...first four root vows, just for good luck, okay. You can read the rest in your in your reading. I'm getting there, Sergeant. Yeah, that's about all, that's about all. There's only two Bodhisattva vows...sorry...that if you break them you really ruined your Bodhisattva vows, okay, and you'll you'll read about it, but one of them is to give up the intention to reach enlightenment for other people, okay, to to give up this ideal of a Bodhisattva, that you...to give up the belief that in this lifetime, you personally are capable of reaching enlightenment to help other people. If you ever think otherwise, you have ruined your Bodhisattva vows. Get it? Okay. You have to have it always in the back of your mind. I've had people in Mongolia come up to me and they say, "my God, you talk as if we could reach this in in in one lifetime", and I'm like "duh". (laughter) That's what you're supposed to think. That's what you're sworn to. And they're like, "yeah, but nobody ever said that". Well, I said that and that's what you're supposed to say (laughs). And that's what you're supposed to do. And you're supposed to have that feeling in your heart. You're sworn to that...okay...you you break your vows when you think otherwise, okay. If you think "oh I couldn't do it" or, you know, "it's not possible" or "he's exaggerating. It's not possible in one lifetime to get to Buddhahood", you know. Then you then mentally you've broken the vow, okay. You must in a in this lifetime at all cost do what ever you can to get enlightened so you can really help other

peo...and you can do it, and it's only, you know, some sort of cultural acretion to think otherwise, okay, it's not true that you can't do it...you can do it. You just need the proper instruction and then you gotta keep your book, okay. And if you ever think otherwise, you've broken the most important of of all the vows. Okay. Mentally you've...you've broken it. Okay? All right. We'll break out into groups...very brief, okay? How long Sergeant...maybe...sorry, okay. Please please get quickly into your group and then we'll start.

**Review course #17**

**Class 4, part 1**

**Transcribed by: Karen Becker**

(cut)

This is a custom of on major holidays to try to act like a Bodhisattva or an arhat for a whole day, so the idea is in the morning you take, you swear, to keep certain vows, like, I won't kill anybody today, I won't steal anything of value, you know, and also, I won't eat after noon and I won't eat meat and and things like that...there're certain...they're easy vows, not such a big deal, and it's a very powerful thing to do, you know, on major holidays. To me this is the most important holiday of the year, it's the day that the Buddha first decided to teach something. He was enlightened for a certain period and didn't want to teach. He stayed in the forest and said, "nobody will get it". And then finally he decided to start teaching. So, it's a very auspicious day to...you dedicate the whole day to watching yourself very carefully, your mind and and what you say and what you do to other people, so it's just like a special day of of watchfulness about your own behavior. And it's a very good custom...to do it, and if you do it enough times it starts to get into your subconscious. Okay? If you get there late, just go home because...please don't ring the bell 'cause we we're on very we're on probation there, we made too much noise, the other owners of the building complained and we have to be very sensitive. All we need is for someone to ring the other owners bell at five in the morning (laughter) and (laughs), you know, so please be considerate. Try to be there by five. If you're waiting out there on the steps at four forty-five 'cause you got there early 'cause you didn't want to be late, try to be quiet. Okay. Pretend you're the homeless person who's shooting up on the steps (laughter), okay, which they seem not to mind. Okay. (laughter) (laughs) All right. Okay. Okay. (laughs) All right. We're doing second part of Bodhisattva Vows. Last week we covered the...well last class we covered the (laughs) all the root vows, whether you remember it or not (laughs). Tonight we're gonna talk about some other issues about the vows and about a few of the special secondary vows. I'd like to get in your mind the role of the vows and what they're supposed to do for you, okay. I think it's important to know the whole evolution of what's supposed to happen here. So I'd say, you know, first you do your past lives...we don't believe that your mind began with the beginning of the physical body. Okay. Due to your past memories you're attracted..you know, you have some attraction to

Bu to a spiritual path in this life. And and different people have different attractions, and and different people have different levels of attraction and different people turn on at different times in their life. Some people it may be when they're fifteen years old, some people maybe when they're thirty. Some people when they're fifty. But it...we call (bak chak sepa) at some point your mind gets attracted to spiritual things. We believe in Buddhism that is because you spent, literally, thousands of years working on it, and if you come into this life and you have any attraction to spiritual things, there's a reason for it, and it's because you've been working on it for a long time. Okay. Then you normally you have some kind of disaster. Okay? This is very desirable. (laughter) Okay. For me my mother died, you know, young. My father died, my brother died, all in the same year. It wakes you up to the nature of this life, you know. You get a wake-up call. I I know very serious Buddhists in their sixties who the the important moment was when they were thirty or twenty-five and and the one I'm thinking of, her daughter was crushed by a truck in while her husband was holding the daughter's hand...and and things like that. You know. Something wakes you up to the fact that you must die, and that there's nothing else in this realm, in the world that we live in, what you have to look forward to is is death, old age, losing the people you love, losing the things you love and and then you begin to question, is there anything I can do about it or is that just inevitable? So so at some point you get a a a wake-up call, all right? Then you need, you know, I guess normally you read some books, right? Or you hear about it in the newspaper, you know...people pick up a book by the Dalai Lama or they're watching TV and they see His Holiness for a few minutes, or I remember reading a comic book...I think it's Dr. Strange or something like that, and he's in a Tibetan cave and he's learning all this great stuff and they got these cool robes and, you know, it just caught my eye, you know what I mean? Then I get to college, my mom's dying of cancer, who never hurt a fly, you know, and and I pick up this Buddhist book about suffering, and I thought "wow, they...at least they are asking the right questions", you know what I mean? So, I think you make your first contact, some kind of loose contact, you know, and then it may take years before it really sinks in. Then you go to your first classes and...I remember my first classes. I think that's why I can appreciate being a student. I remember my first classes...I was very nervous. I remember getting off the bus in India. I remember tried to read my first Tibetan book, not understanding half the words, too many Sanscrit words in there. I remember trying to make the sounds of Tibetans (nga), I

remember walking up the mountain trying to say (nga) (nga) (ng)  
(ng ng) (laughter)...you know, I'd go into class..."it is (nga)"  
they'd go "no, go back home, you know, come back tomorrow", you  
know, and I remember all these things and I remember how  
uncomfortable it was. I remember feeling very uncomfortable when  
people prostrated, you know what I mean, and and how  
uncomfortable that felt to see people do that, and no...I  
remember how weird it was to see a man in in a dress, a red  
dress, and barefoot and things like that, you know. I still  
remember all those things and so those are...you go to your first  
classes and they're they're a little bit...the cultural stuff is  
sticky, you know, hopefully we can smooth that over in the  
future, but their cultural issues where they they doing certain  
things that are unusual for us and they don't mean the same  
thing. To walk around with your head shaved in New York for a  
guy means you're dangerous. For a woman it means you're looking  
for another girl (laughter) (laughs) and you know, and if...and,  
you know, you get called a Hari Krishna when you walk down the  
street and and, you know, it's all cultural things that have  
trouble, and you have trouble with those things, but you overcome  
them, you get to your first classes, I think then you get your  
first intellectual understandings. I mean...understandings. And  
this is, this is where you start to go to more classes, and you  
get the intellectual framework of Buddhism. Okay, I understand  
it's it's not just coming from nowhere...there's a reason why  
people die, there's a reason why people get old, there's a reason  
why the accidents in my life happened, you know, there's some  
kind of intellectual reason why I might be able to get out of  
this problem, and you start to have some understanding of it  
intellectually. You start coming to classes, you do your  
homeworks, you do your quizzes...things like that. Some people  
between this stage and this stage takes a long time. You know,  
they come to their first classes, and and they keep coming, but  
they don't really think, you know, they keep coming 'cause it's,  
they like the people there, they like the feeling of the place,  
but the real intellectual work is going on very slowly. Then  
at some point it it sort of...the the screw turns up and you  
start getting more serious and you start thinking harder and then  
certain realizations start to happen to you, okay. Then you you  
start your first daily practice...I saw an interesting article  
about...when Time Magazine did an article about Buddhism in  
America, they were saying "the interesting thing about Buddhism  
is that people do it in their home and not at church, like it's  
not an hour a week on Sundays at church". I think in almost  
every form of Buddhism that has reached the United States,  
although they're all very different, mostly you're encouraged to

make an altar in your home, make a place in your home where you meditate in the morning, and most Buddhists are considering it like half an hour to an hour and a half every morning is not unusual to be praying or meditating in front of your altar, every morning and that's a big difference. So at some point in your career you start you start doing your daily practice. If you meditate every day, you start to have unusual things start happen to you, like very good things, like if you start meditating regularly you notice that you're better able to focus, you're better able to do your work during the day, office work or whatever you do, you find yourself happier, you find yourself more compassionate towards other people, you find your relationships improving...things like that, they, all this affect the meditation starts to happen to you. Then you hear about vows and we're getting into that. We said last week, last class, when I say "vows", I hesitate to use the word vows. It has so many negative connotations. When you say "vow" to somebody, what you often think of is somebody in Europe in fourteen hundred, you know, they got pregnant out of wedlock, the family wanted to get them out of the picture, they send them to a convent, the child is given away and the woman never comes out, and she's under vows. And...or something like that. There's always this connotation of, in my mind, when I was growing up, people who are frustrated, restricted by their vows, they don't really like their vows or they're struggling against their vows and the vows are like chains that are holding them back from their true nature, and they're struggling their whole life against their real nature, and that was the impression of vows that I had as a young person in this country. You...again, as we said last time, you have to think of vows in a different way. "Vows are like", Matthew Ricard said, "wings". You know, it's a list of things that if you do it, your whole life changes, okay, and you just have to think of it that way. I feel very strongly that before people give vows they should explain what vows do for you. I mean, each of these steps you've been through, you know, up to the vow thing. Each of you has gone through some part of this process and you got here, and a lot of you have finished a lot of courses, so you have the whole intellectual outline of Buddhism very clear in your mind and if you are meditating regularly you are getting some kind of really special changes in your mind from that. But you have to go one more step and think about vows, okay. You have to think about making a commitment to certain kinds of behavior, okay. And these are not like stupid things, like you can't eat ice cream, you can't go see a movie, you know, it's not like that. These are...the Bodhisattva Vows are very powerful vows that all

relate to serving other people and getting into the idea of of devoting your life to other people, making a commitment to devote your life to other people. And then that is a very liberating experience. When you start keeping those vows, your whole world changes, and what I meant to say was, each time you move from one of these steps to the next step, your reality shifts. Okay. And and that's what I want you to appreciate. Each time you go up another step along this ladder, your reality shifts, okay. I'm not saying you have a different attitude about your life, I'm not saying you feel better or worse about other people or something like that. The colors and sounds and the people you meet and the things that happen to you shift another ten degrees, okay. You gotta get used to that, okay? We're talking about changing reality itself. When you move to from here to here, your reality shifts ten degrees. And there are still a certain percentage of people who are in their old reality who don't really understand what you're doing, you see what I mean, 'cause they don't see the world that way. The, we say that the...there's an energy or a power, the closer you get to acting in a spiritual way, the more your reality will shift. And and people who are still down here, you know, who don't have any interest in these things, they literally see the world differently then you, you know. To them the world is a more threatening place, to them you have to be tough, and you have to be aggressive, and you have to watch out for your own interest because the world is dangerous and the world is is is is a competitive place and and you must take care of number one or or you're gonna be taken advantage of or or you won't have enough to eat, or your family won't have a house to stay in or something like that, and as you move up, reality itself changes. As you start to get around here, it's totally shifted around. Your perception of the world is that other people are starting to change all around you. The people around you are actually taking care of you, you know, you start to...as you get higher and higher in the process, you become more and more like a child, and the whole world is taking care of you, and you don't have to worry about a thing, and and it's not a naive thing. Like, I was in business for sixteen years, corporate life, millions and millions of dollars. It's not naive and it's not avoiding the real world. It's the real world starts to change. And and everything starts to work better because you know how to make things work, you see what I mean? And anything you want to accomplish, you can accomplish. And and extraordinary changes around you start to happen. Extraordinary shifts in the reality around you as you move up...and and that's the whole point, you see what I mean, and if this person, meets this person, they they see the world differently, you know. This

person, thinks this person is naive. This person feels sorry for this person (laughter) that they're still struggling, you know, for what? To collect things so you can die with them, you know what I mean? I mean, and and still this person doesn't understand how to get things the right way and this person has more things than they know what to do with. This person has trouble getting rid of all the money and things that people give them. You know what I mean. And and, you know, filling out financial reports to account for all the money they were given, you see what I mean? Stuff like that (laughter). This is...and and it's not any kind of...it's just happening to them because they understand karma and they understand vows, you see what I mean, so what I'm I'm trying to say is this. You have an opportunity with Bodhisattva vows to switch to a whole different reality. It's a whole higher level of seeing the world. If you start acting day by day, hour by hour according to your Bodhisattva vows, you can count on a major shift in the reality around you, and I'm not saying that you'd become different person or like that...the actual reality, the sounds, tastes, physical world around you and your own mind start to change, and and isn't that the whole point, you know...isn't that the whole idea, isn't that why you went on a spiritual path in the first place? You were hoping something like this happens. Okay. So you go through, take your Bodhisattva vows...by the way, you start with Pratimoksha Vows, okay...which you can call Freedom Vows. These are very basic, okay. Agreeing not to kill a human or a fetus, agreeing not to steal any major amount of money, agreeing not to commit adultery with another person's wife or husband, agreeing not to lie about your spiritual life, agreeing not to use drugs or alcohol, okay. I mean basically those five, okay? When you take those five for your life, and then when you start keeping them carefully, your reality shifts another ten degrees. And people who haven't taken them can't appreciate it, you know. You try to explain to them...I've been keeping these five vows now for about three years, and food tastes better, music sounds better, I'm meet nicer people, my finances have changed, you know, and they they can't understand it 'cause they're just in a different reality...they're in a different place. But if you take these vows and keep them, life starts to change. That's the whole idea. By the way, when you get around three hundred and sixty degrees...I guess it's a hundred and eighty, okay...to be eighteen major spiritual levels or something, you're in heaven. You're what they call paradise. We believe you can do it, we can believe you can go there, we don't believe you have to look weird or act any different, to us you might look exactly the same, but your personal experience of reality would be totally

blissful, total totally happy, and you would be surrounded by extraordinary people. And then as we walk through, you might look like a normal person. Okay. So you have to get used to that idea. Each person's perceptions of their reality only depends on how far along this ladder they've gotten, and there is no base reality. There is no standard reality. It's only what each person is seeing. Okay. So, so which way do you want to be is the only question...you can design it. You gotta take your Pratimoksha vows. Then you take Bodhisattva Vows and the idea is just to get a new list of vows, a new list of activities that if you keep these, your reality shifts another ten percent. You get ten percent closer to the opposite of what you grew up with. What you started out in this life with is certain death, certain loss of all the things you've ever owned, certain loss of all the people you've ever met, certain loss of your identity, your mind, your body, everything...that's what you started with, and each time you go up a little bit, it shifts. The reality shifts like that. Everytime you move up the spiritual ladder, you you start to get shifts like that. Okay. Then you take your secret vows. And if you keep them well, if you accomplish the...the whole hundred and eighty degree turn, okay. You're about here when you take your secret vows. You still have friends from high school are back here, not interested in spiritual things at all. But to try to talk to them about what's happening to you is very difficult. You know what I mean. I mean it's a Buddhist principle that no two people see the world the same way exactly, because the world is empty, meaning you only see what you've prepared in your mind. If you've been good to other people, you see the world in a certain way. If you've been bad to other people, you see the world in a different way. So as you move up the vows, you're becoming different from other people. You're seeing the world differently, you're having different experiences, you you might look even strange to them. You probably do actually. Okay (laughter) And by the way I'm not saying it in a way that you say, oh, you poor guy, you know, you never took vows, I did, I'm much better than you, you just don't understand what's happening to me, you know, go away, or something like that, you know...not like that...I'm not saying like that. And you can't never tell that the person that you're looking at is not a fully enlightened being already, okay. Never sure of that. I'm not saying it in a way of judging other people, I'm just saying, if you go through this process, your reality starts to shift in clicks. In in the diamond business we call it "clicks". When you cut a diamond you have clicks, you know...ten degrees, twenty degrees, thirty degrees, it's called a click stop, so your reality's just moving up different clicks

and then it reaches enlightenment, okay. So the trick here is called "six times". Many Americans, many Westerners have taken vows, different sets of vows...some have taken basic morality vows, some have taken ordination vows, many have taken Bodhisattva vows, many have taken secret vows, okay? And then you say, "hey did you notice all those those shifts in in your world when you started to keep them", and they say, "no". And then you say, you know, "can you tell me just how you're keeping them"? And they say, "well, you know, I generally know them and and I try to be a good person". And you say, "no no. I I want to know, are you checking them?" And they say, "what do you mean checking, you know, when I do and I watch and I don't kill people, I I try not to kill people in general", but you say "no. Are you checking them throughout the day, like every two hours or so, do you check them"...and this is a custom in Buddhism. You have to do it. Okay. Whether...whatever vows you have, you're supposed to check them throughout the day. Six times a day by tradition. You stop. You stop what you're doing, wherever you are, whatever time it is. I love the Muslim custom, I love the Hassidic custom...I worked in a Hassidic diamond cutting factory. Every couple of hours, they'd...Moise would stand up and go stand in the corner and he'd and he'd go like this, you know, and they're doing their prayers. And they don't care if the guy's waiting outside with a hundred thousand dollar order of diamonds, the prayers are more important. In the diamond dealer's club in New York, there's a special room for prayer, and when the hour comes, everyone goes in. And that's it. And that's more important than the business...you see what I mean? We're supposed to be doing the same thing, okay. Every two hours or so, six times a day, stop, check your next vow. You must do it. What I'm saying is that it's one thing to take these vows, well, it's one thing to learn them, it's a second thing to take them, but it's a whole different thing to keep them, okay? If you don't keep them then these vows don't do anything. And if you come to eighteen different courses here, and you work your butt off for seven years and learn all this...the details of Buddhist philosophy which are endless, you won't change, okay. It won't change you that much. You must be following some noble code of conduct, you know, and you must be checking yourself every few hours or just to have a general mood where you'd like to be a good person doesn't work because we we come into this world pretty wild, and and you have to have some discipline. You have to be able, every few hours, check your mind, see where your mind is and and check the next vow, you know. Did I lie to anybody in the last two hours, okay. By the way, by tomorrow you won't remember all the lies you told today. Okay. That's just

human nature, you know. Those of you, like me, who go to bed and forgot to check their last two vows, by the next morning you can't remember what happened yesterday, you know. It's gotta be fresh. And unless you change your behavior, your conduct, unless you examine yourself every few hours, you can't expect that Buddhism to do a thing for you. You're just fooling yourself. You can be you can be able to answer every single question on these homeworks and do all the quizzes in Urdu and in Sanscrit and in Tibetan, but if you don't understand the vows, and then take them and then watch them, it won't have any effect on you. And there are...I meet hundreds of Americans every year who can attest to that fact. The i...if you're not, if you don't believe me, I can refer to you to a few of them, you know (laughs) they took vows twenty years ago, they never learned them properly, they don't know exactly what they are, they definitely don't check them hour by hour, and they haven't changed, and nothing's happened to them. And then there's people who do keep them...the the beauty of Bodhisattva vows is you can start out a real schmuck, but if you keep them every few hours, you actually become a beautiful person after a while. You see what I mean? They work. They really work. So it doesn't matter what your original condition is, you know, however you start, it's okay. Just know them, check them and then inevitable you start to change, and what's changing really is the reality around you, and you gotta get into that mode. Then when you take higher vows, everything makes sense. Everything they talk about in the higher teachings makes total sense, totally clear, everything's coming true, all those experiences that you ever read about in Dr. Strange comic books start to happen to you...or the New Testament, or whatever. They all start to actually happen, you know, to you. I was in Ireland and and they were so exciting. The people were keeping their vows and and things were starting to happen to them and they said, "this is exactly what was described in the Bible. It...I thought it would only happen two thousand years ago. I didn't think it could happen nowadays", you know. They, like the idea was that all the amazing things you read in the Bible were only happening two thousand years ago and can't happen now. And that's not true. If you keep these vows, all those extraordinary things that you ever dreamed of will start happening to you. So what I'm trying to say is, this class, tonight, about Bodhisattva Vows is really important. It's the way to go up about another twenty degrees. Automatically. And like exercise, it just requires maintenance on a regular basis. It requires a small amount of effort every couple of hours. It doesn't take more than two minutes to for the exercise of writing down how you did on that vow. In fact, once you get

used to it, you can do it in about ten seconds. But it just has to be done every few hours. And then things change. All the miracles you ever heard about in the Bible start to happen. And it doesn't matter how dumb, spiritually, your mind was when you started, the beauty of the Bodhisattva Vows is that an omniscient being has chosen sixty-four things to concentrate on and if you do it, no matter how bad you are, you start to get incredible. You just have to keep doing it on a regular basis, okay. So it's like, you can go from sixty-four pound weakling to a Arnold Schwarzenager, without the heart attack, okay. You just have to keep them, okay. You just...all you have to do is check them every few hours. Doesn't matter how how grumpy or how uncompassionate your mind is. Understand the vow, check them every few hours, you'll be Mother Theresa in short order. I'm not kidding. That's the power of of this system, okay. Okay. Now we'll go over the actual class. I'm not gonna do much Tibetan 'cause we don't have that much time. Having covered the major vows, we're now discussing some details of how you keep the vows, okay. And I think, the first thing to say is, when you take Pratimoksha or Freedom Vows, they are lifetime vows. When you take the vows, they say (je she tsway par du)...means "until the day I die I will keep these vows". Now Bodhisattva Vows are different. You don't lose them when you die, and the same with (tantric) vows. Okay. Once you take them once, you don't lose them even if you die. You carry them on to you next life. Okay. People have asked me, "well, what's it feel like", you know what I mean? "How do you know when you're six months old in your next life and you're just trying to get the bottle out of your mom's hand, how're you supposed to keep your vows and how do you...do you remember them"? No you don't. Okay. At a certain process, at a certain point in your life, you might be fifteen, you might be twenty, something like that...twenty-five...(bak chak se pa), the the seed reawakens and you start following them, you start keeping them, you start to be exposed to people who are keeping them, you start to meet teachers who know about them, and and that's just a natural process for somebody who's been keeping them.

To to even hear about these holy methods of conducting your life is very rare. It...according to us it takes many many years of effort on your part to have the karma to meet a person who will explain them to you. By the time you've heard the explanation of them, by the time you've taken them, and especially if you're keeping them, we say that you probably won't come out of contact with those people, you see what I mean? If you just keep them in a pretty general way, in a pretty sincere way, you will be taken

care of after you die also, okay. The people will be there, they will bring you up, they will help you, they will be guiding you, you will make contact with it again, and that's an automatic thing for a person who has been sincere in keeping this coat of life...this code of conduct, okay. But you can lose the vows, okay. Now if you can't get rid of them when you die, how can you get rid of them, (laughs) okay. Three different ways. All right. Three different ways. First one is what we call "wrong-views, wrong world views". Okay. I'll give you the classic one. The classic wrong world view is if I hurt another person and if nobody's watching, I can get away with it. There are no repercussions. There is no moral law like gravity in the world. You know, there is no universal law that is for every moral action there is a moral reaction, see what I mean? To say that and to believe that, if I hurt someone else and get away fast enough, nothing will happen to me. You see what I mean? If I can steal money from their room and they don't see me, you know, if I can close my door and do bad things and no one sees me, then then I'm home free. Okay? To believe that, to have that viewpoint deeply held, to commit yourself to that viewpoint, ruins the vow. You will lose the vow, okay. It destroys your vows. Okay. Now some of us have doubts at times, okay, and I think if you think about it by definition, if you ever hurt another living being, you are expressing doubt in this principle. And we do that all day long, you know. We continue to lie, we continue to cheat people, we continue to be irritated at people or to say...now does that constitute giving up this vow. What do you think?

(students: No)

No. I mean, in practice it's an expression...it's like spitting on the principle of moral universal moral principles, but but in your heart you're not like rejecting it, you know. You're saying, "I'm too weak to follow it properly, but I don't reject the principle. I know that every time I...I know intellectually that every time I hurt some living thing, something will come back to me". Now I may be too weak to follow, you know, to reflect that in my own behavior, but, but I don't reject the principle. As long as you don't reject the principle actively, strongly, you don't smash your vows, okay. Je Tsongkapa has an interesting thing in there. Well what if I have a twenty minute attack of wrong-view. Do I lose my vows? You see what I mean? And it like tries to figure out how long does it have to go on for (laughter), you know, and I think the general thing is it would be like weeks or months, you see what I mean. It's not

like...all of us have days when we think the whole world is, you know, terrible and everything doesn't matter what we were doing, and and you don't lose the vows. It's a it's a it has to be an extended period of weeks or months, something like that, where you actively and consciously reject the principle that mo...all actions have their reactions, that all moral actions, good or bad done to other people, somehow comes back to you. Okay. That's the first one. First way to lose your vows forever. Okay. Not forever but until you take them again. By the way, you can take them again in this life. You can take them ten minutes later, okay. It's okay. They will be restored. They will not be as perfect as they were the first time and it does have a in indelible affect on your ability to see emptiness directly, for example, in this life. Okay. It it greatly reduces your changes, but but otherwise you can take them again, okay, and they're okay. They're real bodhisattva vows. Okay. Second way...to actively give up the idea of compassion for other beings, okay. To say, "I formally give up on the idea of bodhicitta". I give up on the idea that I could become some kind of a holy being and be of service to other people. That I I myself could become a Mo...Mother Theresa or a Jesus or a Moses or or a a Manjushri and be of help to other people. To give up on that principle, to say "that's impossible and I reject the idea and I refuse to try to do it myself", which is to give up bodhicitta. Then you then you break your, you break your root vows. You lose the vows, okay. By the way, when you lose one vow you lose all of them, you see what I'm saying. When you lose this vow, you lose all of them, okay. And you you can't just have to take the one over. You have to take all of them over. Okay. You have to get used to that. So the...now these are two very extreme views...by the way, they can't be just a bad day. You have to entertain and hold these viewpoints strongly for weeks or months, you know, and formally in your mind say, "I give up on the principle of trying to reach a high spiritual level so that I can be of help to other people. I I reject the idea, I reject the principle, I refuse to think about it for six more months", you see what I mean? It has to be that strong. Okay. What if you have doubts about these principles? I mean, what if you have honest doubts about the idea of karma. What if it seems to you like certain things can happen outside of the laws of karma. Do you break your bodhisattva vows? No. Okay. Active questioning of the principles of Buddhism is required. Okay? If if you come up against an idea in the teachings that you have trouble with, you're required to not accept it. Okay. And you have to get used to that. You're required to to put it on a shelf. Maitreya says, "let's make a distinction. You don't

reject it actively but you say, for the time being, I can't accept this particular idea...for example future life", okay? I don't have any personal proof, my own perception, of future life. You hear in the National Enquirer that certain guy remembers his uncle's dog from his last life, you know, (laughter) but it it doesn't seem convincing to me, you know what I mean? And I heard Michael Roach's logical arguments, and they don't convince me. They're they're they sound good, they kind of lead me to believe there may be a future life, but I have trouble accepting it undoubtedly, you see what I mean? Without any kind of doubt. And that's honest and that doesn't break your vows, you see what I mean. That's actually keeping your vows. And then you say,"I will shelve that idea for right now". So there's a big difference between active rejection and active doubt. Okay. Doubt is encouraged; rejection is foolish. Okay. Don't reject something you can't see because it might be there. My boss in this huge corporation, I used to go out and beg for some money for the refugee children, and he'd give me like ten thousand dollars, like boom, and then I'd say, "why are you doing this, you're you're not Buddhist, you're Jewish, you're Israeli", you know, and he'd say, "hey, I'm covering my bases", (laughter), you know. (laughs) You know, and, that that's the attitude, you see, you...Maitreya says, "put it on the shelf", you know. Just just say, okay, maybe it's true, I'll get back to you later. I'll come back to that one next year...when we take another course, you know, but right now I'm not ready to buy that. You're supposed to think like that. That's not losing your bodhisattva vows. Bodhisattva vows...ruining them is saying, "I reject actively...there's positively no such thing as a future life". Okay. Then you then you're actually destroying your vows because wha...we got wrong viewpoints, worldviews, strongly held over an extended period of time, decisively held, and then we got losing your compassion for other people. Deciding definitely you will not try to help them by reaching some high spiritual level. Okay? Now, last week we talked about...how many root vows?

(students: Eighteen)

Sixteen?

(students: Eighteen)

Eighteen, okay. By the way, so two of them you can...two out of the eighteen you can break your vows and you lose the vows and you have to take them over again, okay. Now, that leaves sixteen others. What happens if you break those? If you break

them in what we call a major booboo, then you lose your vows, okay. What's a major booboo? Four things have to be present, okay. So we're talking right now...this is question one on your homework, okay? That always gets attention. Four major booboos you have to make. Sorry. Four parts have to be complete for you to make a major booboo that wipes out your vows. Okay. And I'm gonna give them to you now. Those of you who know (tun druk), (gan gu ngo tsa trel me kuntri shi), like that, okay. Here here they are...they're called the four chains, by the way, (kun tri) is an ancient word in the (b: Abhidharma) for "a chain" or something that binds you, okay? (Chu druk ma lokpa - chu druk ma lokpa) means "you'd happily do this thing again", okay. What's the first bodhisattva vow?

(students: Praising yourself)

Of praising your particular...actually it's Mahayana religious tradition, and putting down another religious tradition. Okay. And knowing that it's all false, for example, like like accusing a certain teacher of something and knowing that it's not true but just you want people to admire you and give you money, or or or like that, pay respect to you so you you you maliciously say something about other people...other people's religious traditions. Like this is totally, this is the most wrong thing you can do, okay, in a bodhisattva vow. Now if you did it once, and you caught yourself, you said, "oh, hey stupid, don't do that", because you were checking your book, right? You don't lose your vow. You see? If you, if you say, "I'm sorry I did it", you see. But if you say, "I'd be glad to do it again", that's the first of the four chains. Don't forget all four have to be present for you to blow your vows. So it's it's already hard to do. If you have the slightest bit of compunction about having broken a vow, you don't lose your vows, okay. Je Tsongkapa...guess what he's asking in his commentary? How soon do I have to have the compunction? (laughter) Okay (laughs). Like do I have to be sorry within twenty-four hours or can I be sorry a week later or, you know (laughs) and he he he's not very clear, to tell you the truth, it's it's more like...let's say a few weeks or months you don't retract yourself, okay. You say, still six months later or a few weeks later you're still saying, "yeah, and I'd be happy to do it again". Yeah, I did, I did lie...I did say something malicious about that other Dharma teacher so I could get all the money in town, and I'd love to do it again, you know, if another guy shows up. Okay. Second one. We call (ngo tsa che me...ngo tsa che me) means "two different versions of consideration or shame and I'll explain the

difference, okay. There's two different versions here. (Ngo tsa me pa) means "you have no regret about what you did as far as your own image of yourself", you see. What I mean is, you don't have any pride in your own image. What I mean to say is, you don't have any regrets about it...like if no one else ever knew you committed this thing, but you knew, you'd you'd be able to live with yourself. See what I mean? Is that okay? All right. What's the opposite of that? Which is what we're supposed to aspire to.

(students: shame)

Ea...yeah, shame. We call it shame, but what it what how we define shame in Buddhism is, even if no one else ever knew I did this, I'd be embarrassed to know that Michael Roach did it. Okay. That's called shame. Okay. It's it's avoiding a bad deed because you yourself wouldn't like to think of yourself as being a person that would do that. Okay. It's just some kind of self image you have of yourself and you'd be embarrassed if you looked in the mirror in the morning and said "that guy did this thing". Okay. That's the first one. First half, okay. Second half is, you could care less about the affects of your action on other people. We call that lack of consideration, okay. Like if I break this vow, it will hurt fifty other people, and you're like "I don't care". You know, I could care less about how this is gonna impact on other people. That's called "lack of consideration", okay? If you break one of the eighteen?...root vows, with this attitude, I don't care how I look to myself and I don't care how I look to others, I'm gonna break it anyway. Okay. Then you've got two of the four elements required to blow the vows completely. Now we're already in a situation which is very difficult to attain. I'd be happy to do this terrible thing again. And I also don't care about how I look to myself or how I look to other people, okay. That's already pretty hard...it's getting hard to break this vow, right? It's getting hard to lose your vows. What's number three? (Gang gu...gang gu) means "when you did this bad thing, you felt g...happy, like great pleasure, take pleasure". You don't just break a vow, you're like breaking it with relish. You know, like "heh heh heh, that felt good", you know, okay? "Yeah, I maligned that other Dharma teacher and and I saw those people's faces, and I saw the checkbooks come out for me, and I...boy, I felt great". Okay. That's how it would feel to break the first one, for example. Okay. So, it's already getting to be...you gotta to be almost an evil person I think to to really smash a bodhisattva vow properly, okay. So those are the first three. Okay, what's number four? (Nye mik

mi ta) This is the worst one, by the way. (Nye mik mi ta) means "if someone came up to you and said, 'don't you realize that what you did is a bad thing?', you'd say, "no it's not a bad thing. That's not a bad thing". It's not to consider it wrong, okay. Not to consider what you did wrong. Do you realize that you just broke your first bodhisattva vow, that out of a desire to clean these peoples' pockets out in your class, you were maligning this other religious tradition or this other teacher, and you say, "yeah, I understood that". Okay. "And I don't think there's anything wrong with that", okay. And to believe it...you see what I mean? In your heart. Then you've then you've got the fourth element. When these four elements are present, with any of the root bodhisattva vows, you have destroyed the vows. You must take them over, okay? And you already see how difficult it is...you gotta have all four present, okay? Yeah?

(student, Axel: But to have the presence, the fourth one, that you're don't consider the deed as something wrong)

Yeah

(student, Axel: what's the connection to the other two?)

Say again?

(student, Axel: If you have to...if the fourth one...)

Oh, yeah yeah, I mean Axel points out that by the time you...if you get number four by itself, you're probably gonna cover the other three automatically. Yeah, there's a discussion like that in the scriptures, you know. Pretty much, by the time you get to number four you're probably...oh, you might not consider it bad but you might not feel happy doing it, how's that? You see what I mean. That's conceivable, right? All right. Those Germans. All right (laughs). And this guy...covered all this. I want to talk about one very special vow...yeah?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah...I I didn't catch that...what'd he say?

(student: (unclear))

Oh yeah yeah yeah. Karmically speaking, you know, for example, if you don't believe that a human fetus is a living being, and you and you abort it, karmically speaking it's not as strong.

In other words, if you don't recognize it for what it is, it's less it's less repercussions for you personally. Yeah. Generally that's true. So that's true. There's sort of a paradox here. Okay. All right. There's a very special bodhisattva vow that if I don't talk about it, you might get in trouble. There's a vow that says, "under extraordinary circumstances, you are required to break one of the first seven of the ten basic vows of morality", okay. Now these are three that you commit with your body, which are killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and then four that you commit with your speech, which is lying, divisive talk, harsh talk and then idle talk, okay? So these are seven. So under extraordinary circumstances, for example, a guy runs into your house, Keanu Reeves (laughter), you know, and he's being chased by the agents, (laughter) and these heartless robot beings, and he runs in and he says "you gotta hide me in a closet", you say, "okay, go to that one", you know. And he hides in the closet. And then there's knock on the door, and you open, there's this guy with sunglasses and the wire down the thing (laughter) and he says, "have you see Keanu Reeves?", you know, and he's got a gun, you know, like big lump here, you know and you say, "haven't see him today". Okay. You're required to say "I haven't seen him today". Under special circumstances, okay...that's all. That's all. Now. (laughter) There are (laughs) there are rules about this vow that you have to know, you know...Rinpoche...when we put the vows on a calendar a couple of years ago he was very hesitant to even see this written where where people might be able to misunderstand it. There's a couple of exceptions here, and you have to know the exceptions. Technically speaking, this vow only applies to you if you've been on the bodhisattva path for thousands of years and keeping it well. Technically speaking...I mean, the book says, "millions", okay? But, I'm trying to make it easier (laughter). All right. And so if you're not on a high spiritual level already, you don't have to worry about this vow, okay? All right. It does no, it's doesn't technically apply to you. Now, should you still lie...that's a long question...I'm not gonna get into it, but I just want to say that these this is a very special vow, it's obviously a very dangerous vow if it's abused by people. So, just be aware, it's to be used with caution, it's a very special vow, it's meant for people who are already very very advanced in their practice, and and who can do extraordinary things. Now. Why can't you break the last three? No one's allowed to break the last three for any reason. Why?

(student: 'Cause they're mental)

These are mental. Okay. What's number eight, sorry. Number eight is basically to be unhappy...I'm sorry, (unclear), to be unhappy when somebody else gets something nice. I mean that's basically number eight. You can call it craving...I don't like it so much. It's basically comparing yourself to others. Oh, she gets to do that, but I don't get to do that. I don't like that. Oh, she got a raise, I didn't get a raise, he pays attention to her, doesn't pay attention...I don't like that. Okay. It's basically being unhappy when someone else gets something they want. Okay. Is there any condition under which it would be useful to break this vow?

(student: No)

No. (laughs) Okay. And it's the same with the other two mental vows...ill will, which is the opposite of number eight really...I'm happy you messed up today, you know...oh, did you hear? So and so broke their vows, became a lay person, ruined their life, and you're like "heh heh, oh that's terrible", (laughter) you know, "tell me more", you know, and (laughter), you know what I mean? And Dharma rumors especially. Very sweet subject. Okay. And and to be happy that any other person is having trouble in their life is...there's never a case where where doing this would be beneficial for anybody. Okay. And then the last one, obviously, the wrongviews one...we know, is there ever a case when it'd be beneficial to say, "karma doesn't work"? Okay. No such thing. There's a special case for monks and nuns...ordained people. Okay. You are never allowed to break the sexual misconduct one under any circumstances, period. If you...if if if if you have foresight for the next five thousand years and you see that it happened, right, with Asanga and Vasubandu, Master Asanga and Master Vasubandu, that if this nun were to disrobe and have children, then there would be two great wisemen born. So you should break your vows with this woman or something like that? No such thing. Okay. The commentary says, "you are required to disrobe first". Okay. If you see that this is some great benefit, or some...the classic one in the scripture, this lady's got a gun to her head says, "if you don't make love to me, you monk, I'll shoot myself". He says, "okay, out of compassion, I will, but I gotta disrobe first". Then you go to the altar and you disrobe and you...you do it, okay, but but that's a special case, okay. You can't you can't break that for anything, all right? 'Cause of the effect it would have on the on the Dharma. Okay. Next one. This is a very cool vow called the four points of virtue...I'd like you to do that in your breakout sessions, okay, that's number ni...five.

And number seven I'd like to talk about briefly, okay. Number seven is called the four white deeds and the four black deeds. There are all these extra vows that they don't tell you about when you take your bodhisattva vows, okay. It's not just sixty-four vows, there's another bunch of them, okay...that people never talk about much. I'm gonna go over them briefly. The first white deed...these are called "the the four white deeds and the four black deeds", okay...is "never to speak a lie to any other person, even in jest", even as a joke, okay. Never to lie to another person. The corresponding black deed is "to intentionally deceive your teacher or any other person similar to that", okay, intentionally deceive your teacher in any way, okay. These are opposites. You have to avoid one and you have to try to achieve the other. Okay.

(student: Only the teacher?)

It says "and other holy beings", okay? Number two. The white deed is to try to get other people to aspire to this bodhisattva principle. Hey look, spend your whole life serving other people, every moment of your life. Try to become a holy person and then try to help other people on the path to be happy, okay. That's to try to get other people to do that. The negative one there, the black deed, the corresponding black deed is to "cause another person to regret some good thing they've done", okay. That's like the ultimate black deed you can do. If someone has done something virtuous, and you're like...scoffing at them or trying to convince them that that's not such a good thing to do or something like that, okay. I think most often it happens in modern world called "scoffing", you know, and it's like considered sophisticated to scoff at religious people...in New York especially, you know. Did you hear that Vilma Stana (?) hasn't missed a class in seven years? You're like, "yeah, but she probably didn't get to see all those TV shows", you know. You know, just to scoff at somebody...say, say, "yeah, I can't believe she's so stupid", you know. "She's never gonna get a degree out of this place. Never gonna make any money out of that. (laughter) Why is she doing that", you know...and to scoff. I mean, scoffing is like the ul...it's a very popular modern thing and then you cause a person to regret something good they did. Okay? Number three. Actually number three is why I I went over the black and white ones, 'cause it's my favorite vow of all times, okay. It says, "as you walk around New York City, (laughter), then every person you meet, try to imagine that they could very well be an enlightened being already", okay. Just ea...every time you run into a person, even if it's literal

(laughs) okay, happens in New York, you know...boom! Look at them and they're cursing at you and you say, "now, hold on. Don't yell back. This could be an enlightened being". Okay. Like every particular person you meet, you're like...okay, the odds are small on this one (laughter) (laughs)

(cut)

(laughter) (laughs) okay, but the odds is there, okay, there's always some odds, okay...there's always odds, okay, just remember that. Any particular person you meet...could be...yeah, could be, okay. And then they say, do it with buildings and trees and the sky and the ocean and the Hudson River and everything else. Imagine, hey, if I was in the right frame of mind this place could be the ultimate paradise, you know what I mean? Like, there's nothing to say it's not, okay, maybe I just haven't seen it yet, okay. So as you walk around, even this school, okay...I mean technically speaking, you know, the bodhisattva vows are being described for one of the first times in the United States, in this school. This school is already like a sacred place. Maybe it was a...what do they say, out in Sedona they love this kind of stuff...a vortex (laughter), you know, like, this is an axis. There's a big axis going through this school and maybe this is a holy place, like maybe the Navajo once had hogan here (laughter), so, you know what I mean. And we think...you're supposed to think like that, okay? You're supposed to think like that. If you take this vow, you're supposed to think like that. Meaning, yeah, maybe this is a holy place, disguised as a Public School one sixty-eight or whatever it is, okay. And and you keep this vow by walking around all day long and every time you bump in...you know, every time you see a subway, hey...who knows, maybe it's Manjushri's sun chariot. I'm just not at the level yet. Okay. And and it's a very very healthy vow. It's a very healthy way to think as you walk around New York City. Okay. What's the opposite of that...is, it's a supposed to be a very very evil thing to say something out of anger to a bodhisattva. Now, I remember hearing this vow for this first time. I was sitting in Rinpoche's kitchen, before they built the whole place. There used to be this little tiny house. Rinpoche was in the back bedroom where I lived, and I'm out on the front table there, and I say, "oh Rinpoche"...he was Geshe-la at the time, "how do I know who's a Bodhisattva?" And he says, "you don't", (laughs), you know, anyway. Supposed to be a special bad deed to say something out of anger to a true bodhisattva, someone who's already had a direct experience of actual bodhicitta. Okay. Number four. White deed number four. "Total honesty towards

every person you ever meet". Period. One hundred percent honest with them, okay, mentally and verbally. The mental part is the hardest, okay. One hundred percent honest towards other people. Does this mean one hundred percent frank towards them? (laughter) "Do you like my new dress?" (laughter) you know, (laughs) (laughter)...it doesn't mean that, okay? It does...it's not dishonest to say..."I saw your mother the other day" (laughs) (laughter), okay, you know what I mean? You don't have to say, "that's the ugliest thing I ever saw", okay? (laughter) You're not, that's not part of the vow. What it means is that just, you know, within the normal social thing, you don't insult people directly like that, you know what I mean, but but you just change the subject or get out of it, but you don't like...can't lie, okay...just total...you know what I'm talking about. It's not the dress question. It's the...it's the...you know, "hey, are you gonna show up this weekend and help us out with that?", you say, "oh yeah, sure", you know, and in your mind you're like, "yeah, after I go to the movie, if I have any extra time", you know. Okay. All right. And in your mind you're already...you're not saying what you really think, you see what I mean...what you really intend. And that...then you're being dishonest. Discrepancy between what you know to be true and what your mouth is saying. Okay. That's the definition of a lie in Buddhism, okay. Did you have a question? It's probably the dress question, I bet.

(student: Well, I think you explained it 'cause you used...you didn't use the word (unclear))

Yeah, yeah yeah, like that.

(student: Honesty, not (unclear))

Yeah, like that. Like that. Okay. Last one and...no, that was four, right? Oh, that's the antidote for the black deed of what? "Acting in a devious way towards any anyone". Now, how's that differ from the one...didn't we have one like that? Devious in this case means, and this is very delicate, having any interaction with another person without standing there as you talking to them about what's for dinner and calculating what you can do to help them get enlightened. Now this is a hard one to keep, okay? I'll say it again. Anytime you have any interaction with another person, you are not thinking, "I have a transaction with this person now...I'm having a transaction with this person", you know, "I know that if I'm really nice to Bonnie Moore she will check five thousand more papers (laughter) and

fill five thousand more notebooks". You know. And and to think in any kind of terms about getting something out of them...money food, attention, fame and not be actually standing there and calculating "what's the best thing I can do to get her enlightened the fastest in the next...what's the best thing I can say in the next five minutes to help this person get enlightened", you see what I mean...is breaking this vow. And that's what devious means. Devious means "like to use other people rather than to be calculating in a different way". What's the one thing that I can say to this person in the next few minutes that would help them get enlightened the most. And I'm not saying that you bother your friends with your Buddhism...you know you're not supposed to do that, right? It's not like, "oh please come to class, you know, you gotta learn about samskaras", you know (laughter) and they're like...it's not like that. It's like...it's like...hey, share your coffee with that other guy...you know there's something...that even something small, but something to get them to do a good thing, you see what I mean? Like you...devious in this sense means "not to be calculating what you can do to help them get enlightened". But rather be calculating something else, you know. What can I get out of this person. What can I get out of this relationship. What can I get out of this transaction. Okay. Rather to have this constant calculation in your mind...what's this person need next to get enlightened, you know what I mean? In my best ability, to the best of my knowledge, okay. And it might be something tiny, you know. It might be, "hey, could you hold this flower for me?", you know, and then they touch it, and you think, "okay, heh heh (laughter), got got you in twenty-four lifetimes...you took the flower", you know, and then thinking like that, calculating like that, okay? Those are the four white deeds and the four black deeds. Those are also bodhisattva vows. I'm gonna let you do the rest...let's see...in your breakout sessions, okay. I I personally like the tenth question which is all the things, the conditions that help you break your vows...what do you...and I'm not gonna give you all of them, I'll let your teachers do that, but what do you guess the the first reason why most people break their vows...is?

(students: They don't know what they are.)

They simply never heard them. They went to an initiation for eighteen dollars, the guy flew into town, flew out of town, he rang that bell like crazy, (laughter) and he sprayed all this stuff on them, and he's a personal friend of His Eminence the blah blah blah, and he didn't tell me what vows I took, okay?

that's the best way to break your vows...is just not to know them. Okay. So that's the...did I just break a first bodhisattva vow?

(students: No)

(laughter) Awful close. Okay. (laughs). I'm just kidding, okay? (laughter) (laughs) Okay. I have something to right during the break. (laughter) Okay. Anyway. I didn't mean it, okay, I'm just...if there were such a thing (laughter) okay. Anyway, but not to not...the best way to break your vows is not to not to ever learn them, okay and that's what this class is for, that's why you're here, okay? All right, take a break and then after that we'll do the breakout sessions, okay?

(break)

Heh heh heh. Okay. Very short tonight. We're we're about to enter the season called (yar ne), say (yar ne) (repeat) (Yar ne) is in the ancient Vinaya custom called "the rainy season retreat", and in the old days the monks and nuns during this summer period would actually try to do a a longish, like one to three month retreat, indoors, and I think part of the reason is that you don't want to step on the many bugs that are growing during the rainy season, and stuff...but the the whole idea is that you get a sort of a a quiet summer and you spend a certain time renewing your vows, renewing your relationship with the other monks and nuns and you spend time together and and like that. Then following that is a thing called (gai ye). Say (gai ye). (repeat) By the way (yar ne) means...(yar) means "summer", (ne) means "retreat or to stay". (Gai ye) (ga) means "the restrictions", (ye) means "are opened". (Gai ye). So, in the monastery a guy was shocked, you know, during (gai ye), by good luck, I shut up on (gai ye) and (laughter) (gai ye) is, you can listen to radio, which otherwise you can't, you can play board games...suddenly everybody has a board game available (laughter)...there's this thing called Carom's, you know, that looks like billiards but cheaper, and then people can tell stories and...I remember visiting the former Abbot, very severe former Abbot, and he was on the front porch of his house playing this billiards game with these kids, you know, and I said, "chu la mei sho ne kun de du", which means...he got all red...it means "what're you gonna do if water catches on fire?" (laughter) which is the Tibetan way to say, "if the Abbot's playing games then, you know, the the strictest Abbot in the monastery...ex-Abbot...then what's what about the rest", he said "hey, (Gai

ye)". You know, and and (gai ye) means things are the...people people can play soccer, for example...you're not allowed to play otherwise, stuff like that. So all the...for a week or two weeks, you just...you just...you can't drink alcohol or go see movies or anything like that, but everything is relaxed and people have a good time. And I think the one thing about a Tibetan monastery that that I think distinguishes it from some other traditions that I visited, is this recognition that there's a time to have a good time, you know what I mean, and that there's a time to relax and I think even the ancient (b: Vinaya) principle is, do a kick-ass retreat for one to three months and then know how to relax, you see what I mean? And we've been...the reason for this series of talks after the classes was to talk about the future of Buddhism in America. We haven't instituted yet, proper ways of relaxing...you see what I mean? Like you meet Dharma students who are trying to practice all day long...we personally, the people who work on the classes, we work seven days a week, we work eighteen hours a day on these laptops, and then we do hard meditation, hard study, but but I think what has to happen in America...and I don't know...we have to design a (gai ye), you see what I mean. We have to design into the system in America appropriate ways of relaxing, and letting people let off steam and every great religious tradition has their festivals, you know, like Christmastime, or Easter or things like that, when people, when people can relax and and and, in a spiritual way, (b: Lam Rim Chen)...I'm sorry, the, in Hlisa Festival..."Mon Lam Chen Mo", the "Mon Lam Chen Mo) was instituted by Je Tsongkapa. Je Tsongkapa was a severe Lama and he founded the three great mon Gelukpa monasteries in Hlisa, he was strict and he worked hard, but if you read his biography, he took his vacations too, and he also knew how to relax and in the (Mon Lam Chen Mo), which is a like a three week religious festival in the capitol city, the police force is required to turn over the jails and all the uniforms to these guys called (dup doks) which are monks, and they wear these big shoulder pads, like football pads under here, so they look like that, and then they wear these...they hold these big sticks called (kar wa), and then they run the city for three weeks. And, you know, they're goofballs...these are the goofball monks in the monastery. They get to run this the whole municipality system for three weeks (laughter) and they have a good time. People have festivals, there are religious processions, they put huge paintings on the Potala, like five hundred foot thangkas, people have butter sculpture...you you know, tormas making contests between the great monasteries, the monks get together and debate in public and try to make a good show for the for the people, and

I think...I don't know how it's gonna happen, but I think we have to build into Buddhism in the West a way that in their personal practice, people can take a break. In Sera Monastery, every night, until one or two o'clock, you could hear people walking around the monastery, memorizing their text. But Tuesday is market day, and on Tuesday, nobody recites anything. You know what I mean (laughs), and that's the way it should be, you see. Every scholar, no matter how hard core they are, on Tuesday they relax, you know what I mean...and they have a day that they take their rest, and and on Tuesday night you don't hear anything. You don't hear one guy walking around the monastery. Because they they've also been taught by their Lamas how to take their rest. This is something in the monastery that you get from your what we call your "house teacher", your (gyur gyen). He may not be a scholar, but he's a "mom" and he watches out for you and he makes sure that you don't get too intense also. Like he might order you to go on a a camping trip...they're called (ling ka) and, you know, you go down to the river, you take a tent, you take two days worth of food, and you jump around in the river and play around and then you you sit around and cook food together and you have a potluck, and all the members of your class go and and you relax for two days, and...this is a part of monastery life, it's a part of (b: Vinaya) cycle, so I think we have to institute it on three levels. I don't know how yet, you know, I'm sure Dr. Sykes would be a good consultant (laughter)...maybe he's doing it right now, I think...but on a personal level, how to take proper rest and how to take proper care of yourself 'cause resting is important, you know...how to how to properly take a a rest without endangering your vows, you know what I mean...how to how to take a good, proper relaxation so that you come back fresher. In Master Shantideva's (b: Guide to the Bodhisattva Life) he talks about the need to to take care of yourself and to take care of your mind and your body and the need to relax sometimes. And he says, you know, I think Lama Yeshe said something that Master Shantideva would have said. He said, "if you've been working hard, and you've been studying hard, and you just went to work for eight hours and you come home, don't sit down and meditate, 'cause you won't be able to. Go to a couch, lay down on the couch, make yourself a nice coffee, sit back with your feet up on the ar arm of the couch, and think about helping living beings...as you drink your coffee", you know what I mean? And then...Master Shantideva is saying things very similar, so I think you have to institute a way that individuals as part of their daily practice or weekly practice have a regular time that they can relax and and nice ways of relaxing, like in the monastery, during (gai ye) out come all these birth stories

of the Buddha, you see...they're not studying...they're studying advanced philosophy all year long, then they put those books away and they pull out all the birth stories and some older monk will come and all the little monks will gather around and they'll just sit and tell stories about how Lord Buddha fed himself to the tigress, or you know, and then you go up to your (gyur gyen), your house teacher, and he says, "pick a page" and you close your eyes, and you open the book and they just start the story from there, and they just relax. They know how to relax. And I think it's a problem in Western Buddhism right now that we do we don't have a system yet for personal relaxation during the week. Proper relaxation. Not in excess, okay. And then, some kind of thing that happens on a cyclical basis. In each great religion they are festivals or there are times when you bake a cake, or or you have gifts or...you know what I mean? We have to see what we do about that. I would suggest on the major...there're five or six major Buddhist holidays during the year, and we have to figure out some kind of way of making it fes...festival...festivious...anyway, fun (laughter), okay, and in a proper way. And then on a on a longterm basis, people have to know how to take retreats, how to...I suggest twice a year, long retreats, when you're quiet and you're not talking and you're thinking and you're alone and you're not seeing other people, and I think there has to be this whole thing built into American Buddhism where, on an annual basis, on a monthly basis, on a weekly basis, on a daily basis you are taking your rest in an appropriate way. And it makes you a better Buddhist, you know what I mean. When you get back from doing that, you are actually much healthier, much happier...it doesn't work to try to meditate all day. It doesn't work to try to study philosophy all day. You gotta have some kind of relaxation and I think some kind of exercise built into the thing. In Tibet, they do prostrations. There's a special board, it it's about eight feet long, it's about three feet wide and and you do a a thousand prostrations. And the young monks do their debating...and this also gets your your frustrations out and your and your tension out of your body. I think I think we need some kind of thing that we develop that, you know, the young monks use it for for getting their frustration out, you know, and it's very healthy for them. And then the older monks will be doing prostrations, or at about eight o'clock, every night in Sera Monastery and Drepung, Ganden, the older monks go for a walk. It's called (cham cham do gyen be). (Cham cham) means...it's a very pleasant thing and the older monks, like they might be holding hands and they just...they walking a mile down the road, and they're just looking at the fresh air and talking about things that they want

to work on and and relaxing, and then they come back and they all feel good. They might...actually at Sera it's built into the monastery that you can circle the monastery. There's a special road and you might do twenty rounds. And you see the older older monks... they'll try to do three or they'll try to do five, but the point is they get outside, they get fresh air, they get some exercise, they relax, mentally. Then they go back home and do their tantric rituals and they're fresh and they're doing them very powerfully, and you can hear them, you know, late into the night, doing their tantric stuff, you know, and I think we need to think about that. I don't have any brilliant suggestions. I just know that we have to do it and we're not doing it. And you meet many westerners who are frustrated or (lung)y...they're like tense, their practice is tense, their faces are tense, you know, they're having all these problems because they don't know how to relax in a proper way, so I think we have to think about that as an organization, as a religion, as a...on a national level, on a personal level, we have to figure out how to relax properly. Yeah?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, well down in, down in New Jersey Rinpoche used to give a ten day initiation...he used to give ten day initiation-teachings every year for the first fifteen years and the last day was always goof-off day. And we would go to a local park and the vegetarians would play against the meat-eaters (laughter) - baseball, and Rinpoche was the Umpire and he had the he had the greatest fun, and after we started beating them continually they they stopped doing it. (laughter) So, the...I mean the vegetarians were beating the meat-eaters (laughter). They felt that, you know, you had to eat meat to be strong and we would just wipe them out every year, and then they (laughter) stopped eating...but anyway, yeah, we need something like that. So think about it. I'm just throwing it out as a part of the future of American Buddhism. It's something we have to think about. You see a lot of American Buddhists walking around all tense, and and they don't know how to...their their inability to relax in the ways that are already built into Tibet Tibetan Buddhism, because we don't have those available to us, we just like, three hundred sixty-five days a year, trying to meditate and study eight hours a day and you need to build in some kind of mechanism for people to relax properly. So I'm just...that's one of my ideas about the future of American Buddhism. I think next week I'd like to talk about form of of Buddhism, you know, what form will the music take, what form will the rituals take...things like that,

okay? Okay, we'll do a prayer. You ready Phuntsok-la?

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: dedication)

Okay, good night. Thank you.

## Review Course 17

### Class 5, part 1

Transcribed by: Karen Becker

This class was on...this whole course was on...it was I think it was called "Death and the Realms of Existence" and at the time that I offered the course, Tibetan books on dying were very hot and so I decided I had to put one out also, and anyway. So, the book, the the course had a few parts to it. One was a description of the various places you could go after you die, okay. And we'll talk about that. Another was a description of the bardo, meaning the the time between the time you die and the time you're reborn, you know, what happens to you, and then I think at the end of the course we did a death meditation, you know, how to do a death meditation, so we'll be going through all of those parts during this mini-review. I'd like to talk first about, you know, the various places you can go after you can after you die. This is one of the hardest parts of Buddhism for Americans to listen to because we don't believe in future lives and we instinctually don't believe in future lives. All of your newspapers, magazines, parents, schools, churches, temples, whatever, they are informing you that there are no future lives, you know. Every TV advertisement for Budweiser says "one life to live, drink up now", (laughter) and, you know and you don't, you think that's silly but it actually is a small step towards brain-washing you to believe in your heart that there are...that you do stop when you die. And I had people continuously throughout my career as a western Buddhist and a western Buddhist teacher, I've been challenged to prove that there are future lives, you know, so I got tired of trying to prove them. We had a whole course on it, by the way, which we finished...or did we get to that yet...yeah. Then I decided to turn the tables around, you know, you prove to me that your mind doesn't go on, you see what I mean. I would...people would come up to me and say, "prove that there's a future life", and I'd "hey, you prove to me that there isn't", you know what I mean? And the only proof, and this was a proof that was debated back in India in six fifty AD, is that your body stops moving, okay. That's the only proof there is. That your mind stops. Mind and body are related, but not totally interdependent...you see what I mean? And and so that just means that, for example, if a car breaks down on the highway, then the driver died. You see what I mean. Can you assume that if you see a car on the highway which is broken down, that the driver is no longer alive...who's sitting in the front seat. It's something like that. It's something as weak as that. It sounds silly to you, but that's about the only proof they have in the

West, and the rest is just what I call Mrs. Melvin...what's Mrs. Melvin? This is my first grade teacher, okay, and she told me that my mind stopped when I died and I believed it and I've believed it ever since, for no better reason than that, okay?

When Je Tsongkapa's student was writing a book about future lives he said, "by the way, everybody in Tibet believes in future lives, but I haven't met a Tibetan who could tell me why there should be a future life". It's just their Mrs. Melvin told them that there was future lives, and they can't they don't know why there is either. You see what I mean, and the basic thing is that your mind must go on, okay, the odds are something, okay, in your own mind, if you think about it, the odds are something that you go on, okay. What are the odds. You read this thing in (b: Hamlet, right. He says, "to be or not to be", and I used to think, you know, when I was a kid, "to be or not to be what", you know. What is it. It's to be dead or not to be dead, you see what I mean? He's meaning, should I kill myself or not. He's having a debate with himself about whether to commit suicide. And then he goes through this beautiful soliloquy and then at the end he says, "yeah, I'll kill myself and then maybe I'll start a dream and, oh oh, maybe the dream is worse than this. I won't commit suicide," you know, he (laughter) he decides that ma...essentially he decides that maybe the mind goes on and he he decides that what he knows is better than what he doesn't know about, and he decides not to kill himself, and that's exactly where you mind should be, okay? Like, yeah, maybe I can't prove to you in five minutes that you're gonna go on, but hey, what are the odds that you can happen again if you happened once? It's a hundred percent. Why? 'Cause time is endless. Anything that can happen once in a zillion years, can happen twice in two zillion years. You see what I mean? Time goes on. If you are sitting here once, in this realm, in this world, experiencing these things, do you think it can't happen again? You know, don't don't call a bardo. Say it takes a million years, but you'll be here again, you might have to happen aga...you will happen again. The odds that brought you here, the conditions that brought you here will be repeated. Statistically it's it's a hundred percent odds. Because why? Because you happened once and the space you're dealing with is infinity. So you can happen again. I mean, just statistically, you will happen again, okay.

So how does it happen. Is New York City the only possible realm you can exist in, you know what I mean. What are the different realms there are. No, I mean, people tend to think in the small little town they grew up in, the Tibetans call it the frog in the well syndrome, you know, the frog thinks that this well is the only possible body of water and then somebody comes and explains

the ocean to him and he's like, "ah, come on" and then somebody takes him out of the well and takes him to the edge of the ocean and his mmmm...brain blows up, okay, that's the story of the frog in the well (laughs), you know, he's like, he just couldn't take it, you know, and everybody thinks that their own well is all their is, you know what I mean? And, we have to talk a little bit about how you go to other realms and then we'll talk about the other realms, okay. Those of you who know about the emptiness of the pen which...you know, you're waiting for three year retreats so you don't have to hear about the pen right (laughter), (laughs) okay, it's it's all the pen, okay, it's all the pen. Do you like the pen or not...totally depends on you, it's not part of the pen. It's a projection or a perception on your part. It's not part of the pen to be likeable or unlikeable it's only you, and everybody can accept that. On a deeper level, it's penness...the fact that there's a...that you perceive it as a pen is also coming from you. An animal comes here, they don't see it as a pen, an Eskimo comes here who's never seen a pen...they don't see it as a pen, and then you do see it as a pen. That proves that there's no penness coming or emanating from this stick, okay. It's just whatever your mind forces you to see, okay. The same is true of every object around you, okay, the whole world around you. You recognize chairs from brown rectangles because of some karma you did in the past and therefore you're able to use it as a chair, and enjoy it as a chair, and the same for every single object in this room. Everytime you recognize something it's because your own mind is forcing you to do it in a certain way, based on your passed karma, based on what did in the past. So like another kind of being, you know, like a dog, could come in here. They see the same colors, they see the same shapes. They interpret it completely differently. For them it's a totally different world, and they don't see it as a chair, they don't cognize it as a chair. It has no use for them as a chair, you know, you have to get your butt on there and push it down, your tail doesn't fit right, you know, it doesn't...they don't see it as a chair, you see. So when a dog comes into this same room and looks around, they see it totally different, you know. There's an interesting corner, right down there...where I could peepee, you know...that's really cool, and you know and they they just see the room like that...they see it as a totally different thing. So it's easy to understand, that based on their past karma, the dog and the human in this room are experiencing two different realms. There are two parallel realities going on in this room, okay, at least, and that's easy to understand. You don't have to be a philosopher to understand that. There's an...dog's world

and there's a human's world going on in this room, at the same time, when there's a dog in here, and and they're totally in the same place, they have the same circumference and there are two different beings having two different worlds in this room at the same time. That's easy to understand, okay? You don't, you can accept that easily. And by the way, when you teach this, please teach it this way, you know what I mean. If you say, you know, you hear Buddhist teachers who get up there, "oh you're gonna go to hell. There's a big box you know, and they stuff you in the box and you're burned", and then people are like "come on", you know, it's not convincing, you know what I mean? It's not compelling because it's so foreign, and it's so hard to believe, you know. But this is easy to believe. Get it. There's a dog world going on in this room, there's a human realm going on in this room. Do you think there can't be more than that? Do you think there can't be other kinds of beings in who experience this realm in a different way...you see what I mean? It's it's very naive, it's frog-in-the-well thinking to believe that there's only the two realms that you're aware of in this...even in this room, okay. That's just...that's just naive to think that. That's paro...what they call parochial, right. It's very small minded. Of course this room can be perceived in thousands of ways. Of course, therefore, there can be thousands of different creatures in this room at the same time, some of them are visible to you, some of them are not. And how they experience this realm, or or or this room is as foreign to you as how the dog experiences it. When the dog walks in, really, they're only calculating three or four things. Where's a good place to peepee, (laughter), you know, can anybody in this room give me some food, is there another dog in this room, you know what I mean. They're just evaluating the room...think about it in very primitive terms. They only want three or four things out of this room, and that's how they see the room, and and to think that there's not thousands of other ways to see the room is just, naive, it's foolish, okay? So, when you get reborn as a dog, it's not like there's a...I mean, when people talk to me about rebirth as a dog, when I was a kid, I thought there must be a factory out in Omaha or something, like a secret government factory and they're producing dog bodies, you know, like just carcasses and then they had there's some guy that cuts a ...has a scaple and opens up the back near the back bone and then there's these spirits of dead people flying around the country, like from...usually probably from the east coast to the west coast, and they stand there with big nets and they catch the spirits and they stuff them into dog bodies and they sew it shut real tight and and then the dog becomes alive. You know, you think that.

Or at least you think in your mind, "there's a dog", and your mind enters the dog, or your dog, your mind enters the body of...your spirit or mind enters the body of the dog. That's how you picture it in your mind (dun chi) right...when I, sorry, (dra chi), it's only you've heard about it right, never experienced it, that's what you think of when you think of being born as a dog. You think of...there's already a bo a dog body there and then my mind some how slips in and gets caught there, and can't get out...or something like that, okay? That's completely wrong. That's not how it works, okay. You just start seeing things differently, and then you is a dog (laughter), okay, get used to it. Get used to that. It's not like you become a dog and then you start to see the world differently? Your karma forces you to see your world differently, and that's what makes you a dog. Then you are a dog, okay. You gotta get used to that. It's just a shift in your perception...to believe that there's some government conspiracy to catch spirits and put them into dog bodies is unreal. To say that my perceptions can shift radically within five minutes and this doesn't look like an arm anymore, it looks like a leg...of a dog, is is is the way it really works, okay? You know how much your perceptions are determining even the existence of this pen, okay. Your perceptions are making this pen exist, okay. You don't think the same thing applies to this cylinder that applies to this cylinder...of course it does. How long's it take for the perceptions to shift? About the time it takes to die. How long is that? Couple minutes, okay. At any given time in your life, with a ten minute shift, you'll be in a different realm...you'll be seeing this as something different, okay, and so the question of what are those other realms like, how many are there, what are the odds of going to each one, which are better than others, how can I control the trip, you know, that becomes a very important question if you understand the perception thing. Because of per...your perceptions are determining your reality, it's a very frightening and real prospect that at any moment in your life, ten minutes from now, you could be in that realm. You could be a dog. Why? 'Cause you're seeing things as a dog, okay? Oh that's just seeing things as a dog. Hey, that's what it is to be a dog. Get used to it okay. That's what it is to be a dog. You're only a human now because there's something in your mind forcing you to see these things as humanish things, and that karma's wearing out every time you have a thought. (Snaps fingers) Sixty five in that much time. You just wore (snap) out (snap) hundred (snap) and ninety-five karmas to see me as a human and to see you as a human, okay. And you ain't got that many, and and then one day they wear out and what do we call that?

Death. You used them up, okay. And there's very limited supply in your mind. There's a very limited supply of karma...karmic seeds that are producing this vision of a human realm like a film, like frames in a film. Sixty-five going off every finger snap, and you're using them up like crazy, okay. Your karmic credit card is being blown as we speak. To spend an hour here to watch a person teach Dharma is the most expensive use of your karmic credit card, okay, and by being here an hour, you've gotten one hour older, which means you've used up one more hour of karmic impressions in your mind, and they wear out...they wear out all at once...the karma...the impressions to see the clothes, the impressions to see the face, the arms, the chairs, New York City...they just (snap) they just go du-du-du-du-du-du-schoop (laughter) and then they're done, like that...no, they just blink out, you know they wear you wear out all at once and we call that death. Five minutes later your perceptions are radically different. New karmic seeds are coming up, they could be anything. You don't know what's in your karmic pocket. Normally they're worse, okay, much much worse, okay and you're just seeing things differently. People say "how come people don't remember their past lives?" You have to appreciate the radical difference between your mind five minutes after you die and your mind now. You will be nothing like you are now. Nothing. You won't remember a thing, you know, all the things you struggled your whole life (laughs) to collect, people, honor, you know, things, money, friends, family...they just...you can't remember them five minutes after you died. There's this dim memory, this instincts, you know, I used to like ice cream (laughter) I don't remember...you know, I mean, you can't even think ice cream, okay, no really, the very most powerful imprints created by a whole lifetime of a certain behavior will be will remain with you in a very dim way, a very murky way, and the rest is gone, you know. The whole conscious awareness of this plane of reality is just gone. And and you don't remember much of it at all. How much of your dreams do you remember the next morning. How much of your your dreams do you remember a week later. I mean except for the very very strong ones, and that's exactly the same. Je Tsongkapa in many of his works on dream yoga or, you know...it's very similar, you know. Until the day that you can go into your dreams and study emptiness and meditate on it, in a conscious way, as if it were your waking life, don't expect to be able to remember anything ten minutes after you die, you see what I mean. You have to be on that level which is very hard to get to, where you can walk around in your dreams, be as conscious in your dreams as you are now, do your practice in your dreams, meditate, study, recite things, think about emptiness...the hardest thing,

right...until you can really do that, you don't have much hope in the bardo...of of controlling what's gonna be going on, okay. And how many people in this world, in their lifetime, achieved that kind of mastery over their dreams? The difference between your dream consciousness and your waking consciousness is very similar to the difference between your consciousness as your die and your consciousness ten minutes after you die. If you can't control one, you have little odds of controlling the other. And you just won't remember. And you will be that other creature. And and just the most...the things that you spent most of your life on, there'll be some instincts imprinted on your mind, and the rest is all forgotten, okay, so now it becomes a quite serious question of what are the other realms you can go to. At least we should know the possibilities. Okay. Did you have a question...somebody...yeah?

(student: (unclear))

(laughs) "How do you spend karma." Karma is imprints from your subconscious floating up to your conscious world and coloring what you see and and more deeply, creating what you see. And everytime you see anything, for any length of time, even a microsecond, you've just used up that impression. That impression has what we call "ripened" into the conscious mind and then by experiencing it you use it up. And then it's over, okay, and everytime you spend a minute on this plane of reality you've used up something like...you know...what is this (unclear)...three thousand karmic imprints, you know. You can't grasp how expensive it is karmically to stay in this realm for a minute or an hour, you know, you take it for granted. But that's why people die so quickly, so easily, you know, and the older you get the more it's just unreal, you...I remember John F. Kennedy standing at his...in front of his father's casket, this cute little kid in his shorts and making this gesture...it seemed to be very natural, you know, and then think of he's dead, it's just like that (snap), you know what I mean? And to to live here, to stay alive here is very hard, karmically. To stay alive in in this realm is is very very very expensive, and that's why people die quickly and suddenly, okay, and...that's all. That's the process by which you use up karma. When you use up good karma, the almost...which, by the way, to be a human is to use up a lot of good karma...to come to a class is extremely expensive...karma, okay. It's the most (laughs) expensive karma, okay. And and you use it up. Then there's a process by which only the bad karmas are left, you see what I mean.

(student: (unclear))

Oh, if you can spend bad karmas, it's great. Like one of the Lojong or mental training practices is that, you know, if you're having a problem in your life, you know, you have someone at work you don't like, or you have a relationship that's not going well or you feel sick or something like that, you should be happy that you're using up bad karma, you know. There's a there's a state of mind where you take joy like...there's even a prayer that says, you know, "may this problem go on" (laughter) so I can use up more bad karma and may it double and triple in the in the weeks to come, you know what I mean. So that's all. Yeah. You can use it up. Can you switch karmas and stuff like that...definitely. We talked about it last week in the Friday night class. There's ways to short-circuit bad karmas, there's ways to enhance good karmas, there's ways...and then ultimately the goal is to perpetuate the good karma. There's a kind of, you know, fusion? Is it "fusion or fission", I don't know. They're trying to reach this thing in atomic physics where a teaspoon of water could run New York City because it will run on itself. More energy out than you put in. And Buddhas are doing that. Buddhas have figured out karmically how to get one good deed to run a whole Buddha paradise and not wear out, and there there's a process by which you do that, okay. That's called a perfection. Okay. All right. So I'm gonna review with you the the possible realms which you can die and go to, but please don't think of it as dying and going to, right? Just a shift in your perception. Could happen as easily as the shift in perceptions from this room to the to the room out there when you go for refreshments, remember, okay. The the shift required to perceive this room and then follow that with a perception of that room is no less, or no more...I don't know, anyway, it's just as easy to have a shift from this human realm to an animal realm or worse, okay? It takes the same amount of time to go from this realm...this room to that lobby as it does to go from this whole realm to a different realm, because it's just a shift in your perceptions. You don't walk from this room to that lobby. Your perception shifts, okay. It's the "Matrix" all over again (laughter) (laughs) okay? All right? Your karma...it's really nice movie, you gotta see it, okay. Your karma is feeding you data, it's actually a lot of it is only going on in your mind, and and you're perceiving...you interpret it as going from one room to another but actually you you're not moving in that sense. There's no independent person moving. There's a shift in your perception. "Oh, well then that means nothing's real". Well, you go and take your perception out to the middle of Second

Avenue, stand there in front of a perceived Pakistani driver taxi driver (laughter) and see if your perceived legs break. And you gotta go to a perceived hospital. And it hurts, okay. Yeah, it's all perceptions but it's real...get it? Okay. It's a reality which is created by your perceptions and it hurts. That, you know if it didn't hurt, everything'd be okay. But it does. The fact that it's only perceptions is both your salvation and your doom. Right? The fact that it's just perceptions means, if you are nasty to the people around you and never get your act together as far as compassion, you will make things worse. Your perceptions will get worse and worse. Ultimately...because everything is a perception, you have the opportunity to go to a (tantric) paradise in this lifetime. If you just work on your mind and on your vows, you know what I mean? You have both options are open to you because things are empty. Because things are just your perception. That's your salvation and that's your... what's the opposite?

(students: Damnation. Downfall)

Damnation, yeah (laughs) okay. No really. Everything's empty. If everything was fixed, we'd be in trouble. We'd just die and then there'd be the idea that you just die and everything stops. But that's not the way reality works. Reality works because it's being produced by your perceptions. So, if you take care to garden in your mind and plant nice karmic seeds by keeping your book, (tun druk) six times a day and, you know, you do gardening, consciously gardening, putting the right things in your mental stream so that a month later, six months later, a year later your reality is improving, okay. The fact that the movie "Matrix" came out, the fact that I could see it, the fact that that hundreds of thousands of people could watch a thing that's talking about the possibility that, you know, your mind is creating your reality, is in itself an extraordinary karma. It means we've been having good classes on emptiness. And I'm not kidding. The moving was produced from that. You gotta get used to that, okay? For us, the movie was produced by that, okay? And more and more come out...it's weird. "Truman's World" and stuff like that, okay. Anyway. All right. Yeah?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, she said, "you...I understand the thing that karma wears out and you perceive your death, but aren't you making new good karma all the time?" That's true, but the odds are very very lousy. You make one good karma for every hundred thousand bad

karmas, something like that. Okay. Seriously. In other words the small irritated states of mind throughout the day, which you can read on a person's face, you know, the very few people in the world who are collecting good karma faster than bad karma look like the Dalai Lama or something, you see what I mean? They are shining and the rest of us are going around like, (laughter) and you can read it on a person's face. You don't need to count their good karmas and their bad karmas, you know. The state of your face describes how your karma is being collected. And that's all. Most people are...get older. Most people's faces get worse as they get older. This is a direct result of their thoughts, okay. (Tantr)ically you can explain it with the channels and everytime you have a small irritated thought in this room a little more choking occurs at certain chakras and then that affects specific areas of your face and your body. So actually there's a physical basis for that, and the...if you are aging, what I mean to say, you are collecting bad karma much faster than good karma, okay. It's just a fact. If you reverse that process, you would get younger. And the reason so few people are seen to do it is that very few people do it. Okay. Very few people do it. But (tantr)ic practice is the process of reversing that, and and your body...actually, in the end, it goes from not just younger but it goes to a whole higher plane, physical plane, your whole physical body transforms into some beautiful light and then you're a (tantr)ic deity. The whole idea is to reverse the the...is to reverse the trend...extremely difficult, and only possible if you understand how it works, you see what I mean? Like you can only get into trying to do it if you understand how you can do it. Somebody has to sit there and explain to you about the pen and all that and then about the channels, and then you can say, "oh, I get it. Now let me try". You see what I mean? It's knowle...we say knowledge can defeat everything, you know. All your millions of years of crappy mind can be overcome by a few years of pure knowledge, okay. That's our hope, you kn...that's our only hope...is that knowledge or wisdom...if you understand how this process works, then you can start to reverse it and it works, and it's exciting when it starts, you know, you can observe it. Things happening in your body and your mind and your life and you can just sit there and sit back and watch the fireworks. It's very very extraordinary. Very cool. Very cool process. Okay. Yeah?

(student: Are all negative thoughts bad karma, negative karma?)

She said, "Are all negative thoughts...")

(student: I'm sorry. Selfish thoughts.)

"Are all selfish thoughts bad karma?" Yeah. Basically. I can't think of one that wo...

(student: So from the minute we wake up in the morning and want something for ourselves, this is a hundred thousand (laughs))  
(unclear))

Is it bad to want something for yourself - you gotta be careful about that. Okay. You gotta be careful about that. Buddhism says, "want what you want for yourself but never at the expense of others". Okay. If you want something for yourself...I wanna get enlightened. I would like to have my body start reversing in the aging process. That's a pure thought. That's renunciation. That's close to bodhicitta, you see what I mean. We build on our own hope, and those are reasonable hopes. You wouldn't be here if you didn't hope for something, you wouldn't be in the class if you didn't hope for something, so we say that's a virtue. Say, I wanna get enlightened, you know, I don't wanna go to hell, I don't wanna die, I don't wanna get old, you know, those are pure thoughts. There's no problem with that. Those are not selfish. Where it gets selfish is, "and I'll do anything to anyone else to get it", you know. There's this scene...I saw "Gone With the Wind"...it's really long (laughter) and there's a scene halfway through...what's her name picks up the dirt

(students: Tara. Tara)

Tara. (laughter) (laughs) And she goes, "I'll rebuild"...what was the farm called?

(students: Tara)

Tara...oh sorry...what's her name?

(students: Scarlet)

Oh Scarlet, yeah. So Scarlet like picks up the earth and says,

(student: (unclear))

"I'll rebuild Tara if I have to kill, lie, steal", you know and (laughter) you know, and that...you know, it's not bad to want to rebuild Tara, that's a good thought. But then there's the next thought, you know, to steal, kill, burn...you know, that's the

distinction. Buddhists have to want to be happy. You have to want to reach paradise. It's not selfish to want to do it. Bodhicitta means wanting to do that and then on top of that wanting to do it for other people. So no contradiction. It's very not a Christian idea. The Christian idea is...I mean if I, the way it's been interpreted now...I don't think Christ would say that, but is that you can't want anything for yourself. It's wrong. You know what I mean. That's not...in Buddhism you gotta want to be totally happy and then when you get more mature, you wanna be totally happy so you can teach other people how to do it. That's all. And that's not a bad thing. But to do it at any expense of other people which is what we do do from the morning to the night is...that's bad karma. Yeah. Yeah. It's the difference between the intelligent desire and ignorant desire. Intelligent desire is something like bodhicitta, okay. Yeah?

(student: Can beings in a lower realm collect good karma?)

Good. It's a good question. "Can beings in a lower realm, like insect realm, can they actively collect good karma?" We say almost never, which is why we say that you can't get out of those realms very easily. They tend to perpetuate themselves. Okay.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, once you get down there you stay, for a long long long long time. Until you have an extraordinary life or you use up a hell of a lot of bad karma, and then there's one little tiny karma left from some smile you gave somebody in New York back in nineteen ninety-nine a thousand years ago, and and then that kicks you up to a higher realm. You see what I mean? But normally, once you're down, you stay down for millions of years. Okay.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, to come out...to come up is very brief, very unusual. They say in the scripture (ta re sum shi gyen) which means, "this is the only time I've ever come up", out of the lower realms. And then there's all these commentaries, "it's not technically true", you know, "I've been up above before". And then they say, "yeah, but why did Je Tsongkapa say, "this one and only time?"...(len chig nye pe jo way jen chon di), you know, why does he say "only one time that you ever got this kind of a body"? He says, "well, if you really count the odds, it's like one in jillions, so it

might as well be one", you know what I mean. That's his answer. So anyway, yeah...hard to get out. We gotta go to the realms. No.

(student: (unclear))

(laughs) This is called the "parking space theory" (laughter)  
(laughs) I shouldn't come to class 'cause it's so expensive karmically (laughter), okay. I should go to Starbucks, I guess. It's a lot of karma to drink a nice coffee, but I don't lose as many brownie karmic brownie points as I do as if I go to class, and that's true. Okay. The theory though is that if you come to class, you learn how to make more, you see what I mean...so that's a that's a fallacy. I had a friend who said...it's very hard to find a parking space in the East Village, you know, and he found this perfect one, and he's standing there and he's looking at it, and he says, "I'll leave it", you know, "I'll we'll keep driving around", and I'm like, "why?" And he says, "I don't wanna use up the good karma that would (unclear) (laughter), you know (laughs) and I'm thinking...that's a fallacy, okay. That's a fallacy. If you end up not parking there, you didn't have the karma anyway. Get it? (laughter) Okay. Anyway. Here we go. There are...you know, when I talked about the direct perception of emptiness the other night, I forgot one big realization that you have. And that's that there really are three realms. You really are in a separate area of reality. There really are these things that are described in the (b: Abhidharma) about three different realms. You see that directly during what we call the "aftermath" (je top yeshe)...of the direct experience of emptiness. You understand directly that you do live in a thing called the desire realm. You do directly perceive that there are other realms. You do directly understand that this realm is defective and that to be here you have to be defective. Okay. The proof that any of us is defective is that we're here, okay. If you're in this realm and you're not an emanation of a enlightened being or something like that, you are messed up, okay. Your mind is messed by up definition, you know. You meet nice people, kind people, people you swear are different. Forget it. Anyone in the desire realm is about a half a percent apart. The the nicest person in the desire realm and the worst person in the desire realm are in a very close to the same state of mind, period. You know, you haven't ever met other beings, but if you get to this realm by means of karma and mental affliction, then you are totally messed up, unless you've seen emptiness (laughs) directly or something like that, okay? Seriously. I mean, if you haven't reached that, you are a desire

realm being, your mind is chock full of mental afflictions, your your body is gonna fall apart, your life is gonna fall apart, every relationship you ever had is gonna fall apart, this realm...to get here, you have to be bad. And to be here you have to be bad, okay...I don't wanna make you feel bad or anything (laughter) okay. (laughs) But this is a realm of of total suffering and to get here you have to be defective and this realm doesn't work. It's like a broken car. You can...the reason you're here is that you figured it out, okay. It's just like a broken car. It doesn't work. It will never work. You can't fix it, this realm is is a...what's that thing in the computer where they...it's the recycle bin, you know, (laughter) I mean, this is where they dump all the mindstreams that are not working very well (laughter) and and you if you're here you're you're that kind of being. You perceive this right after you see emptiness, okay. You perceive this really is a defective realm, everyone here is defective, the life here is defective. It's a it's a waste, it's a joke, it's a sad joke, you know. They could (kye mu nye) in Tibetan means "laughing", something to laugh... something to cry and laugh over. You know. Nothing works here and it can't work here. Relationships, the...your job, your your life, your body, you know, it can't. It doesn't work here. It's just broken. The realm is broken and you gotta get out of it (laughs) okay. And the only way is the Buddhist path, to get out of it, okay? Not...nnnnn other traditions don't even tell you where you are, you know. There's a line in the "Matrix"...how's it go..."it's a it's a prison Keno, Keno, Keanu (laughter), you can't feel it, you can't see it, you can't taste it and you're in it", you know, and and the desire realm's like that. We are in the desire realm, okay. It's called (du...du kam).

(silence)

The desire realm has basically five or six sections, sometimes taught as twenty sections. You can go over it in your breakout session, okay. I'm not gonna go over it now, but basically, parallel...six or five or six parallel realities going on at the same time. What? Animal way of seeing this place. Human way of seeing this place. And then a couple of other ways of seeing this place that you can't see them, but they're experiencing this place, okay, like the hell realms. There's a very very, you know, in my mind, unfortunate thing where some Tibetan teachers have been coming to America and say, "oh the hell realms are just a metaphor for a bad day", you know what I mean. Oh, you know what I mean? Like, oh, there's not really any hot hell there's not really any cold hell, it's just...hot hell means when you're

having a bad day. Cold hell means when you're not friendly, or something like that. That's not true at all, okay. There are realms where people just burn, okay, all day, and someone in the Christian tradition saw it and described it, you know what I mean, and that's why you have Dante and things like that. It's someone somewhere saw it. People struggle to say, "oh, some Christian guy must have made it to India and then to Tibet and that's why the Tibetans are talking about the same kind of hells". It's not true. People in different parts of the world in deep meditation have seen or in direct perception of these realms. They can see those realms and they're describing them. You shouldn't think it's like like some historical weird thing that somebody in the Middle East and somebody in Tibet is describing the same hell realms. It's not historical question, it's that certain people have entered deep states of prayer or meditation and seen these places and written down what they saw. And so, you I mean it should almost act as a confirmation process for you...that there do exist these places. And they're horrible. And they go on...the the nature of those realms is that the the perception of time slows down, you know, so what would be five minutes of pain here is hundreds of years there, you see what I mean? Because of the intensity of the pain then the perception of time starts to slow down, so you could be there for a hundred years but it would feel like ten thousand years, you see what I mean, of pain, like that. And they're under that all the time, okay, they just live like that. They can't die. There's a thing about hell realms, you know. People stab you, cut your head, you know, cook you in something, you can't die. You don't have the capacity to die. It'd be all right to die. You can't. Okay. You keep re regenerating your body, okay. Then there's a (suk kam). (Suk) means "form", (suk kam) means "form realm". It's given that name because the beings there have the most beautiful physical bodies of any of the beings who are still suffering, okay. So they are still they're still suffering, but they they do have the most beautiful bodies. They live in some sort of like a temporary paradise and then because they used up their credit card, they usually go to a hell realm after that. We consider reaching those temporary, worldly paradises a big mistake. You get there by doing a meditation in which you sit and watch your breath and be calm for months and months and years and years, okay. You get to the form realm by doing this meditation because you haven't had the opportunity to do gross bad deeds because you're not lying and stealing and committing sexual misconduct 'cause you're in a state of meditation, okay. And it feels great. You know, I saw the courses for watching your breath are booked for the next six

months or year or something, you know what I mean. It's a very pleasant experience. The only karmic result is to take you to a realm called the de...the form realm in which you live as a some kind of a on like a heroin state of mind for a long time and then you always go to the hell realms after that, and so we consider it...in Buddhism, as Lord Buddha taught it, gross error, gross mistake, to watch your mind and try to turn off your thoughts, or to watch your thoughts move through your mind, or simply to only watch your breath as a practice. We consider it a grave mistake.

Grave error. And it's been taught that way throughout the history of Buddhism, okay. People teaching that just haven't studied properly, okay. It's it's very satisfying, it's very pleasant and the results are very terrible...karmically.

Dangerous, okay. So you have to...that's that's how to get to the form realm, okay. It's that kind of meditation. You have a temporary very pleasant experience and then, and then you always go to a hell realm, okay. Yeah.

(student: Can you do good deeds in the form realm?)

"Can you do good deeds in other realms?" They say desire realm is the best because you have a nice recipe of suffering and happiness, you see what I mean. Like, if you're in a hell realm they say you can't do good deeds because you are just in total pain constantly. You can't have a generous thought of,,towards someone else, okay. In the form realm, they say the opposite problem applies. You're too happy to wanna do good deeds, you see what I mean? You're just having too much of a good time. It's supposed to be a really good time. So like, I remember a guy came into my class a couple...ten years ago and he was handsome and successful and he had a good suit on and I I knew he was a movie actor, and I'm like, "what's this guy doing in my class"? Those people don't come to class, you know what I mean. Those people have receptions to go to and and, you know, more interesting things, you know. They're in big demand. People wanna see them. Later I found out he had AIDS. He died with a couple of us standing around him. We took care of him, you know, as he died and, you know...the form realm is like that. You're too happy. You fe..there's just too many things going right so you don't think that you should practice. Okay. So those...generally, it's very difficult to do good deeds in those realms. They don't think to, okay. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. (laughs) Master Vasubandhu in in the (b: Abhidharmakosha)

which is the source of our text tonight teaches breathing meditation only as a way to bring your mind to a state of calm so that you can move to a meaningful object, okay. But in and of itself if you don't take it any further, if it's just watching your breath to get a feeling of calmness, it's a drastic error. It's a very dangerous. If you're able to do it well your whole life and die in some kind of a deadened state of mind, you go to the form realm. And that's just another suffering. To see emptiness directly is a thousand miles away from watching your breath. It's a much...it's a totally different experience. We're aiming for that and that takes hard study, hard practice, thinking your brains out, you know, sitting and meditating deeply for years, you know, and then you reach it, and that gets you out of this realm totally. But to sit and watch your breath is a serious mistake, flatly, okay. There's no basis for it in Buddhist scripture at all, nowhere in the traditional scriptures of India, okay. It was meant to be a warm-up in the first five minutes of your (laughs) (unclear). Now there are higher practices that depend on breathing practices...there are (tantr)ic practices that are deeply rooted in breathing and and that's a whole different story. That's a completely different story, okay. All right. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

I didn't catch you.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah. Oh yeah. Quietude, meaning "shamata" is a perfect state of meditation. You can get it by studying baseball or soccer or music or anything else. It's a state of concentration. All great talented athletes have it, all very talented business people have it, something very close to shamata. Okay. It's the state of total concentration, okay. Vipassana, which is Vipassiana in Sanscrit, is a state of understanding, it's a state of knowledge. The whole word has been misapplied. It doesn't have anything to do with states of meditation. Nothing. Okay. It's described as a state of analytical wisdom which understands the emptiness of its object...has nothing to do, technically, with breathing or meditation per se or like that...it's a totally different thing. It's just been mis...the word has been misused accidentally for something totally different, okay. Vipassana means "a state of knowledge which if linked with perfect concentration allows you to see emptiness directly"...something like that, okay. And and

a foe-destroyer is a person who reaches the highest levels of that, overcomes their tendency to see things as self-existent even in their most

(cut)

okay, that's all. Desire that they overcome is ignorant desire, not not knowledgeable desire. There's a huge distinction. Does the Dalai Lama desire to reach paradise? Of course. Does the Dalai Lama desire that you reach paradise? Of course. Is that something wrong? Of course not. Okay. What makes desire...what makes some desires right and some desires wrong, okay. That's the whole key. If you undertake an action to acquire something without understanding the emptiness of the thing...like...I can get a better pen if I go to a different store and pay more money. That's wrong desire, okay. Now here's right desire. I can get a better and teach you all to have a better pen if I understand that the reason I'm seeing this pen is that I gave away pens in the past to other people. Now if you keep up that state of mind over an extended period of time, you're gonna get your rearend into a (tantr)ic Buddha paradise. You see, 'cause that's knowledge...and that's not desire at all. That's a totally misconception. That's a complete misteaching, okay. Should you want more pens? Of course. Are there pens in a Buddha paradise? If they needed them, they'd be there. Is it wrong to want to be in a pu...Buddha paradise? Of course not. Is it wrong to want to get there yourself? No. Okay. Is it stupid...yeah, I mean you should do it for other people, but, not at all, not at all wrong to want to be there. That's not desire. Desire that you remove in Buddhism only refers to the kind which doesn't understand emptiness. Why? What's wrong with that desire?

(student: (unclear))

It don't work. It doesn't work. It doesn't get you what you want. If if you have the kind of desire that says, "I will take this pen and put it in here so other people can get to it", that's just ignorance...that's the best way to lose you pen. Okay. That's stupid desire. That's the kind you get rid of in Buddhism. But to stand there and say, "hey, the reason I'm seeing this thing tonight is because I was generous to other people in the past and the reason I'm seeing it is that it's empty. Now if it's empty it means that I can see it over and over and over again if I totally release it and give it to anyone who needs it. And then the karma of that will be that I'll be forced to see them for the rest of my life. That's brilliant

desire. And that all Buddhists should have, okay. Get used to it. Get used to it. And your heart tells you that. You don't wanna go to some Buddha paradise where, oh no, I can't eat the ice cream, it would be selfish, you know, you know, that's not what paradise is about. When they paint paintings of paradise, they're not sitting there, you know, unhappy or...they're in a state of bliss, ecstasy, you know. They're having all the things you ever wanted at the same moment. They're getting "ice-cream ecstasy" from every single object, (laughter), you know, from every single object in the Buddha paradise. That's not selfish. That's that's the goal of Buddhism, you know. And then to teach other people how to do it. That's all. Now we gotta move on. Okay. By the way the (du) in desire realm...you're you'll you will treat in your breakout class, okay. Why is it called "desire realm"...maybe that's what's tripping you up. It's called desire realm because our realm runs on a desire for sense objects, like most people in our realm are primarily interested in food and sex. And and the first Dalai Lama explains that the "desire" in "desire realm" refers to that. Most people can't think farther than those two objects, and they will kill you (laughter), there's no future in that, it will kill you, it will certainly kill you. Are they bad, evil, undesirable...not like that. You have to get to a point where you don't need them any...your desires should be higher. You should work for something better, you know. You don't have to just get bliss from two things in the world. You could get bliss from everything if you knew how to do it right, okay. And it's a lot cheaper and easier, okay. Say (suk me kam) (repeat) (suk me kam) (repeat). (Suk me kam) means "the realm where people don't have any physical bodies", okay, "formless realm", in this case meaning "physical bodies". It's just a state where you can take a rebirth where you don't have a physical body, you just have the other four skandas or heaps. You you just basically...you are living in your mind, okay. Where is the formless realm?

(students: (unclear))

It's wherever you died last time (laughs), okay. Like if I died standing here, then my mind would enter the formless realm right here, okay? Do they have a bardo?

(student: Yes)

We say no. Why? The function of the bardo, or the state between death and rebirth, the function of that period is to make it from your current location to your next location. Okay. It's travel

time. It's a subway st...you know, thing. You have to get from one station to the other station. The whole bardo is defined by the time it takes you to get to you next rebirth. That's all. (Suk me kam) when you enter the formless realm, you enter the formless realm wherever you happen to be standing, so there is no bardo. You just take (snap) immediate rebirth in the other...in the other realm. Okay. Like that. So there is no place for the formless realm. Form realm is supposed to be somehow higher than the desire realm and it depends on which geography you're in, okay. I'm not gonna talk about it. People make fun of Buddhist geography. They say, "how naive. They thought there was a big mountain made of emerald and sapphire and other stuff and there was these four continents, and I'm on (Dzambuling) and there's other ones...and, that's...how quaint that Vasubandu thought that was how the world was," you know. If you understand emptiness you don't have to apologize for the Buddhist presentation of the universe, okay. The idea that the moon is here, oh, out there at the end of the Apollo spaceship and the earth here is just one more way to see the world. And a two hundred, three hundred years from now they will consider that incredibly naive. And and get used to that. Every few hundred years somebody discovers a new way to look at the world and the old ones are all dumb. (laughter) Okay. It's all relative, okay, get used to it. Don't think that in nineteen...what was it...seventy something, I was...I remember, that we finally figured out where the moon was or something like that. Don't don't even think like that. It's the same thing as this, okay? We are having a certain conception of the wo...universe and the solar system right now dependent on our past karma. A hundred years from now, five hundred years from now, people will surely have a different perception of the universe, and and the physical solar system and all that, okay. Get...don't be so naive as to think that we've finally discovered the the ultimate answer to as to where the planets are and stuff like that. They change...depending on your perceptions, every few hundred years...and people think there's progress, okay. Now the Dalai Lama can't get up in front of ten thousand people at St. John's and say that, so he has to apologize. He has to say, "well, you know, that was the old days, and, of course those books are...that part of the Buddhist books is just old fashioned", okay (laughter). He has to say that, okay. There's no time to explain emptiness to that many people. All right.

(cut)

We're getting short on time. Let me see if we have anything else. I think it would be...you know, it's tradition to go

through the suffering of each of the realms now. We don't have time, okay. You got a taste for the hell realms. And and I don't wanna go much more into it. I just want you to understand how, with a slight slip in your perceptions you could be there ten minutes from now, okay? And I think you believe it. I think you understand it. If you understand the pen thing, then by by implication you understand the other thing. I don't have to go and try to prove hell to you. You already have a all the theoretical basis you need to accept hell. What I'd like to do...yeah...hang on one sec, okay? I'd like to do is go through the confirmable sufferings of our realm...of the human realm...very briefly, okay. I think when you teach Buddhism to your students in the future, you should emphasize these sufferings. I mean, these are the ones that you can see, taste, feel, the ones that you're undergoing now and these are the ones that we can help people escape. Okay. So I think you should concentrate on them. I don't think until your students are pretty sophisticated, that you should try to force on them hungry ghosts, hell realms...I've seen more people walk out of Buddhism on those issues than anything else. Don't don't push it at the beginning. Later you must go over it because they will go there if you don't tell them about it (laughs) okay? But only when they're ready. You know. (tantr)ic teachings you're supposed to give only when people are ready. Emptiness teachings you're only supposed to give when people are ready. I would say the same in America about realm teachings, you see what I mean? 'Cause you're just gonna alienate people, I think, if you lay too much of this stuff on them..."oh, you're gonna go to hell...there's a guy there with a big hook", you know...and and people don't believe it and then their whole perception of Buddhism gets goes down a notch. It's absolutely true that there are those places. You will go there if you don't take drastic steps now. You must teach people about them, but but I'd say only when they're mentally ready for it, when they have some faith in you, trust in what you say, they understand something about perceptions and emptiness. Then then lead them into the discussion of the hell realms...because they must know about them. But I'd say be careful how you...don't go to work tomorrow and lay hell realm teaching on somebody. They'll just ignore you after that (laughter), you see what I mean? You'll lose them, (laughs) okay. All right. Did you have a question?

(student: (unclear))

Okay. Yeah. Good question. The three realms are all broken. The three realms are all defective. Whichever one you go into

it's the same story, okay. Buddhas go outside of those three realms. They don't experience any of those three realms as their own reality ever after, okay. High bodhisattvas would normally be coming back to the desire realm to finish off their work, okay. So, if you've seen emptiness for directly for example, very typically, you will have seven rebirths in the desire realm, and you know it. You know where they're gonna be...you know in principle you know where there're gonna be, what they're gonna be like, things like that, but normally desire realm. Desire realm's a perfect realm for Buddhism. Just the right combination of suffering and hope. Just the right combination of renunciation and intellect, you see? It's a perfect realm for teaching Buddhism. And New York is like that, I think (laughter). People in New York are talented, sharp and it's a very painful place to be sometimes and so you have that perfect combination of talent, and intellect and pain. And then between all three people get Buddhism, you know...I think it's a perfect place to teach Buddhism. Okay. All right. Here we go. People make fun of New York and New York for all its bad parts, but I think on those three bases it's a perfect place. You have a large population, they are intelligent, they are well-educated and they are suffering greatly, so I think it's a beautiful opportunity for...you know, Chakrasamvara's mandala is supposedly a swiped mandala...he swiped it from an evil being and he replaced all the minds of the beings there. There still have their old physical form, which like monsters, and they say that the worse things get in the world, the more powerful his mandala works, because of that ancient connection to evil, you see what I mean. So...I take New York to be the (laughs) same way. I think it's a beautiful (laughter), no it's a beautiful opportunity, you know...there's enough pain here, there's enough people here and there's certainly enough intellect and talent in New York, you know...people are creative, intelligent, you know...I think it's a perfect place for for teaching Buddhism in detail. Okay. All right. Here we go. These are six sufferings of a human realm given by the first Panchen Lama. You heard it a few weeks ago if you were here at Friday night class. I'd like to repeat them in brief 'cause I know we're getting late and the Sergeant hasn't even been waving at me...I don't know why. Say (nye me) (repeat) (nye me) (repeat) (Nye me) means, literally, "nothing is certain; nothing is fixed". It has a very specific reference here. It's not just that things are uncertain in our life. That's not the point. The point is, especially in person relationship, people can go a hundred and eighty degrees around in about three weeks. And you've see it, okay. The people that you were closest to, the people that you have the most faith in,

the people that you felt the most love for, the...can switch a hundred and eighty degrees in the space of a few weeks, become your worst enemy...I used to...there was a program where I grew up in Arizona where you could ride with the police so you could sympathize with them, and whenever...I went with them a couple of times, and we were called to domestic violence scenes, and they would shake...the police would shake. They'd say, "this is the most dangerous by far". You know, like we would go to bars and stop gun fights and stuff...they didn't bother them. But the thought of going into a house with the husband and wife going at it was frightening 'cause, they said, "you never know what's gonna happen, you know. There's a worse things happen in those places". These are people who love each other enough to vow, to swear on the Holy Bible that they would live together for better or for worse blah blah blah, and and there's something there that can make the whole thing twist around into the greatest hate of all, okay, and that's the first suffering of our mind. This is the first suffering of our realm, the human realm...the worst suffering. Panchen Lama's six sufferings are not physical. They're mental. Okay. I think they're the most powerful of all sufferings. I, if I were gonna teach Buddhism for only half an hour...I did it once in San Francisco, I...Santa Cruz I think...and I didn't go through the six hell realms and blah blah blah. I went through these six 'cause these are much worse (laughs), you know what I mean? The fact that the people you love in a few weeks can be the people you hate the most is one of our sufferings, okay. Is it that they changed? No. What is it that makes you hate them so much later? Your credit card ran out. (laughter) Okay. Get used to it, okay? It's not your fault really, it's not their fault really. They are not a evil person. They are not someone who is a monster hiding behind this beautiful smile the first three weeks. It's not like that. Your karma wears out and then you see them something different and it will continue to happen over and over and over again in your personal relation

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the book, you will continue to have this happen, okay. You meet Dharma teachers this thing called a honeymoon, you know, like a nine month honeymoon with a Dharma teacher. "Oh, I heard Michael Roach speak in Santa Cruz" (laughter) "I've been waiting, I'm gonna move to New York", you know...then they move to New York. Six months later they're like, "I can't believe you're such a schmuck", you know (laughter) and "now I see you for who you really are". That's that's how I really am but (laughter) this

is (laughter) this is your own karma. This is your own karma...the karma to see this sweet Dharma teacher wears out...it happens. It happens in all relationships. Your karma wears out and you see something different. Okay. Unless you work really hard, and if you work really hard it gets sweeter and sweeter and sweeter, but not because of the teacher, okay. Because of you. You're keeping your vows better and better and better. If you keep them very strong, they start to look more and more wonderful, okay? So really it's a decision for you...to make, okay. All right. Number two. Say (ngom mi she) (repeat) (ngom mi she) (repeat). (Ngom mi she) means the..."that we are incapable of being contented". We are incapable of being satisfied, okay. In a work place...I did this okay...I worked for a huge corporation...we started out with two people, three people...they offered me seven...I couldn't get a job. I went to thirty jewelery stores asking if I could work with diamonds...they threw me out. I went to this guy. He needed desperately someone who spoke English, he didn't he wanted to deal with huge companies he didn't speak English, so he's like, I said, "I will scrub the floors, I will clean the windows, I'll clean your shoes...just let me work with diamonds", you know. And he's like "okay. Seven dollars an hour". Princeton graduate, you know, Presidential Scholar. Seven dollars an hour. What is the job? Carry the jewelery from Thirty-fourth Street to Fourty-seventh Street...rain, snow, sleet, hot, can't go on the subway 'cause somebody'll mug you, you know...you got diamonds and gold and you're like...gotta look around you and and for years, in wool suit, you know, walking up and down, and so seven an ho...dollars an hour seems wonderful compared to thirty places that threw you out, you know. And then it's fifteen dollars an hour, then it's twenty dollars an hour, then it's twenty-five dollars an hour, then it's twenty thousand a year, thirty thousand a year, fifty thousand a year, hundred thousand a year, hundred fifty thousand a year, and you're never satisfied. Cannot be satisfied. Each time you get a raise you're thinking about the next raise, okay. It's just suffering. It's amazing that in a certain number of years you can go from seven dollars an hour to the hundred and something and you can't be satisfied, you know...you you can't. Okay. We're incapable of being satisfied. The same in personal relationship. It's the same in Dharma teachings. "Oh, can't believe he won't teach me that", you know (laughter) you know. Seven years of free Dharma classes. "Yeah, but I want that one" (laughter) you know. You know. (laughter). You know what I mean? "Yeah, you can study with me". "Oh thank you," you know. Six weeks later, "no, but I wanna follow you around (unclear)". "Okay". Six weeks later,

"no no, but I wanna be in your room all the time". "Okay." "No no, but I wanna be on the couch with you all the time" (laughter), you know, and it gets...you can't satisfy it. It's in...you can't. It's just your mind. It's your mind setting one more impossible goal that you can't have, you know. It's just your mind. Six months ago you were happy to come to one lecture with ten thousand people there, you know. (laughter). Now you gotta be on the couch, you know what I mean. It's just your mind, okay. It's just your mind. And at some point you have to say, "come on, that's enough, okay" (laughter) all right (laughs). Okay.

(cut)

Say (yang yang) (repeat) (lu ndor) (repeat) (yang yang) (repeat) (lu ndor) (repeat). (Yang yang) means "over and over and over and over again". (Lu ndor) means "give up your body; shed another body", okay. (Dor) means "to junk; throw out". Okay. The irony here, and it's very brief, is that you spend your whole life feeding one mouth, combing one head of hair, making sure one face looks okay in the morning, making sure one body has the nicest blouse or shirt or pants, you know, making sure one body has the nicest shoes, making sure one body doesn't get too hot or too cold or too thirsty or too hungry. Ignoring all the other bodies in the world...basically. You know, once in a while you might offer someone some of you tea or something, okay, but mostly you're obsessed that this head of hair shouldn't be out of place, you know...you wouldn't want to go to class looking like Bob Chilton when he wakes up (laughter), you know, (laughter) okay, like, you know, like, at all costs, your hair must be all right, you see what I mean? And why? Why is your hair more important than the hair next to you? But you live like that, okay. Then after spending all your attention on this particular body your entire life, how do you think you feel when you lose it, you know what I mean...when somebody says, "hey, time to give it up". After thousands of hours of combing and washing and picking and (laughter) plucking and and smearing (laughs) you know, then then naturally you're gonna be incredibly attached to this body, and then when it's time to leave it, you're gonna fight like hell which is the worst thing to do as you die, okay, so it's just...get in the mood of, you know...I think it was Socrates who said, "everytime you have a thought about food or something you put one more chain between your spirit and your body"...you know what I mean? And then when the body dies you feel all this pain, you know what I mean. So, the idea is to just start looking at it as a vehicle and not as something you're

attached to. Okay. Number four. Say (yang yang) (repeat) (nying tsam) (repeat) (jor) (repeat). "Over and over again to have to take on new bodies", okay. Take on new bodies. (Nying tsam jor) means "to take on a new body at the time of birth", okay? Over and over again you're shucking off old bodies, taking on new bodies, okay. They say that if you dedicated one atom of dirt or molecule to your bodies that you've had and then put them all together, it would be larger than the planet...larger than this planet. I think what's particularly useful is sometimes I go into one month retreats...I buy enough food for one month. You know how big that pile is? (laughter), you know. I had like four carts full...I went to this grocery store in Ireland and they said, "going to the islands?" You see, like that means you go camping on one of the islands and it's a it's a month's worth of food and they said, "this is not gonna make it...you're not gonna make it...this is not enough"...you know, I'm like, "come on...four carts...it's five hundred dollars of food...I can't make it?" They said, "no, you won't make it, that's not enough food", you know. And then imagine that times twelve times the number of years you've lived...I mean, they say in Buddhism, once in a while sit down and meditate on on the mountain of food you've processed (laughter) in in your lifetime. You've chewed ton after ton after ton of food...you've pooped ton after ton after ton of food, and the number of bodies you've taken on...if you put them in a huge pile, it would just look like the Himalayas...it'd be larger. You know. Just imagine sometime dead bodies, just stacked up, you know, like that. You you can imagine it easier I think with the food you've eaten...that you've processed. Really...think about it...you know. It's it's disgusting (laughs) in a way, okay, all right. Two more and then we'll give you some more food (laughter).

(cut)

Say (yang yang) (repeat) (to men) (repeat) (gyur) (repeat). (Yang yang) means "over and over again". (To) means "big shot", (men) means...what's the opposite?

(students: small fry)

Small fry. (laughs) Okay. (Gyur). (To) means "high position", (men) means "low position", okay? (Gyur) means "you go back and forth, roller coaster" - your whole life is a big story like that, okay? Like, I lived in corporate life for sixteen years. There's no place better to watch it than that, you know. One bad board meeting and you're three levels down, (laughter), you

know...the boss has a good day with you, you're three levels up. You know, you can go from Supervisor to VP to Manager to Schmuck (laughter) in in a year (laughter) and and it's amazing...it's just extraordinary, you know, to see people...they had a thing in the diamond business, they said, "be good to people on the way up 'cause you meet them on the way down", you know. And (laughs) I've really seen that happen, you know. It's this thing in the diamond business is a pretty small business...I mean there's only like so many diamond buyers in the world and you have to be nice to everybody because next week you might be working for them. You see what I mean. And that's the way it works. And then some people get into a big position and start abusing other people and then inevitably they have to end up working for them and...there's some kind of karmic thing there...it's not in the (b: Wheel of Sharp Weapons), but I'm sure it's (laughter) it should have been, you know, (laughs) there are...the people that you dis...respect are the people that you end up having to work for later and it just goes like that, you whole life is like that, okay? The karma to be the person in charge, the karma to be able to run your own life, the karma to be your own man is temporary and then sooner or later you're working for somebody else, you have to do what they say, you don't like it...it's one of the great sufferings of life, okay? And you go up and down constantly...you can't control it. You can leave that job, you'll be at another job, a worse job, okay? 'Cause the karma doesn't change when you leave your job. Okay. Last one. Say (drok me) (repeat) (drok me) (repeat). (Drok) means "someone to accompany you, like a friend" and (me) means "you don't have any", okay. And that's the maybe the most painful suffering of life is that ultimately you are alone, you are always alone, okay. Think of it as walking down Fifth Avenue, you meet someone for awhile and then they walk uptown and you walk downtown. And your whole life is like that, okay. You make temporary liaisons with other people and then you move on your separate ways and it will continue to be like that, it will always be like that. You are alone, okay. You come in alone, you go out alone. Temporarily you hook up with somebody and then karma will rip you apart, okay. You can't really share it with other people, you can't really go through life with someone else, something, somebody, some karmic event will rip you apart. Ultimately you are alone and that's your condition in the desire realm, okay. Ultimately no one can go with you, come with you, okay. You can have relationships with somebody else, they are always temporary and then you must go your separate ways, and it will always be like that, okay...in the desire realm. Okay. Somebody asked me in Australia, "is there any way to get out of that?", you know,

and I said, "yeah. If you follow your vows carefully, if you keep your commitments properly, if you collect only good karma, then you can be with other people forever, okay. I mean, that's one of the incentives I think for Buddhahood. Yeah. You work with the person you like or someone that you're close to, if you work on your vows, keep your vows purely, reach your goals, you can help each other reach your goals, then...there was a joke in Australia that said, "oh, it's be like Mr. and Mrs. Chakrasamvara". I said, "yeah, it would be like that", okay. You can do that. That's possible, but you'd re really hard work. Really really hard work, okay. So it's possible to overcome each of these sufferings. You don't have to live like that. These are sufferings of this broken realm and you don't have to stay here. If you get to another realm, they work differently. Okay. They don't work on karmic credit cards, they work on karmic fusion. Less karma in, more pleasure out, okay. And they feed it, they feed, they get bigger and bigger, okay...that's the whole point, that's the whole goal. These six sufferings are not inevitable. The opposites are achievable. You just have to understand the Buddhist path and then you have to follow it with your book and other practices. Okay. Take a break and then we'll go into our into our thing.

(break)

Eventually we'd like to have a crew of our people there teaching Buddhism. They want us there, they're asking us to come. They're begging us to send students there. American students like you. They want you there. And hundreds and hundreds of people want to study and they want to learn English while they study Buddhism, so that's their goal...is...is that, okay? So. If you can help it's be nice. If you go then you'll get to know them and you'll probably want to do it, I think. It's a beautiful place. Pristine country...maybe one of the last in the world, I think, okay. All right. Just finishing my book, okay? Okay. Very very brief tonight and then we'll go. The function or the purpose of this series of talks has been to talk about the future of Buddhism in America and then my Australian students say, "why not Australia too?"...but, anyway, in the West, okay. I just want to talk for one minute about the goals of Buddhism, you know. We've talked a lot about how to keep your finances, what books to teach, how to do certain teachings, blah blah blah all these things...I think it'd be worth it just to talk for one minute about the goal of having a Dharma Center or a Dharma organization, you know, why are we having these classes, you know...why does this orgination...organization exist, okay. And

I think it's easy to get distracted by lower goals, like, sometimes you're concerned about how many people come to class, or you're concerned about whether or not people can speak Tibetan language or recite things in Tibetan. Some times you're concerned about, "do you know the four this's the three thats and the five thats" (laughter) (laughs)...someone told me the homework...the quiz for tonight was four fours three threes and one five or something like that (laughter) but (laughs) you know what I mean...and and if you get those will it somehow make you better person or make you feel better or or something like that, you know, what is the goal of these classes and just very briefly, what is the reason to exist as an organization? What's the reason to have classes. Why even start Buddhist path? Why do meditation? Why think at all about Buddhism? What is your goal, you know? And I think it's easy to get distracted by lesser goals, like, is your organization going well as an organization, is...do does everybody know their prayers, you know, is there...do you feel good at the place, you know what I mean, is there a nice community feeling or or something like that. Is your breathing going smoothly (laughs) you know what I mean...no, I mean, these are goals in in various places. Is is your...by the way I don't mean to disparage the breathing practice. It's a very holy sacred practice taught by Master Vasubandu and other people but it's not enough by itself..that's all I'm saying. And then, you know, in some places the you you feel good if you're doing community service, you know...if the organization is feeding poor people or or doing something like that, then, what is the goal, you know. What do we really want? And I think it's important on a organizational level, I think it's important on a national level...what is Buddhism in America supposed to hap...what's supposed to happen. If if Buddhism became successful in America, wha what would happen? What do you want? You know. Do you just want to have a religion or what do you want, you see what I mean? And and do you want to have more mem...people than other religions or or what's the goal, you know. I think it's very very important on a personal level, national level, city level that each Dharma organization keep in mind the only goal which is each person as an individual doing their practice, understanding the main ideas of Buddhism and then actually achieving their own spiritual goals, you know. And it seems to go without saying that that's what we would be here for, but then you tend to get distracted by other things. You know what I mean. So. All I wanted to say was that we have to keep in mind the goal. a) Try to see emptiness directly. Period. b) you know, try to get to a state of real compassion where you really care about other people, you really love other people for

the right reason, you see what I mean...to to help them reach ultimate goals and not just to feed them or to clothe them or things like that, that that would be the reason for existing, and then finally, to reach enlightenment. And I believe that...I have a personal feeling that...when I go around the country and around the world, people are constantly coming to me and saying, "you make it sound like we could actually do this in one lifetime". You know, "you make it sound like like I could change into a (tantr)ic deity in the next few years, you know...nobody ever says that...are you sure this is not just Michael Roach's version of Buddhism?", you know. And it's not, okay. And and that's the goal of Buddhism is to... you know, I get nervous when I talk about, "hey, you could reverse the aging process, you don't have to get old, you don't have to die, that's not true", and then I'm like looking around if anyone's gonna raise their hand, you know (laughs) I get nervous, you know. It's absolutely the truth and it's the only reason we're here. And get used to it, you know. Think about it. We're here to overcome death itself and you're here to actually reverse the process of aging and you're here to reach a totally perfect enlightened realm and body and mind in the next few years, period. That's what we exist for. That's what we are doing, you know what I mean. And and just keep that in mind. That's all. Okay. That's what we're here for and nothing less than that. The other things are nice. It's nice to have refreshments, it's (laughter) nice to talk with each other, you know, it's nice to have a community, it's nice to help other people in a physical way...it's important, but but the goal is that, and don't ever let somebody sell you Buddhism for less than that. Okay. You're here to reverse the mistakes of the desire realm and and to get out and and to actually become a a different creature altogether. And keep that in mind all the time, when you're studying, when you're doing your quizzes...these boring stupid quizzes and homeworks...it's all aimed at that. And as you teach your own students and begin to attract your own students, don't don't sell them less than that and don't be shy to talk about it, you know. That's the goal, that's the real goal. Totally achievable by each person in this room. We have the information. We have the data, you know. All the method is there, you know. You just have to have the courage to practice it, you know, and the vision and don't be satisfied with something less than that, you know...don't be satisfied with going to class because you've met somebody there that you like, or or something like that. You're here for one reason. To change your body into that of an enlightened being, and your mind, and to reach a a sacred, enlightened realm in this lifetime and you can do it. We have

all the practices you need but you gotta have your mind on that  
all the time or it becomes something less than what it is, okay?  
That's all. (laughter) (laughs) We'll do a short prayer.  
(laughs) Okay.

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: dedication)

Okay. Thanks for coming. I know it's very uncomfortable in New  
York at this few months and and I admire that you actually come  
and work so hard and and I thank you for that, okay. All right.

## Review Course 17

### Class 6, part 1

Transcribed by: Karen Becker

Okay, we'll start. First of all I'd really...really like to thank all the people who brought food and people have been coming over every night and cooking for me at Michael Wick's house and there're about fifteen people, volunteers working on any given day and it's been really nice. It's very very much in keeping with the ancient spirit of Buddhism, you know, that the people teaching or helping to arrange the teachings should work for free from their side and then from the people who are benefiting from it from their side that they would offer them something to eat (laughs) okay. So I like it. It's right for both ways, you know, the people doing all the work to help with these classes and all our projects are working for free and then all the, you know, they can have some nice healthy meal...it's very strange to eat three healthy meals in a row, but (laughter) (laughs) but, thank you for that. It's been really really nice. Okay. Tonight we're on the second part of a course called "Death and the Realms of Existence". Last class we talked about the existence of three different realms, and I know when I first heard about them, it sounded like some kind of Buddhist mythology that I didn't believe in, and then, as I got older and as I understood more, I think it's pretty clear in your mind you get the feeling that you may really be in a separate corner of the universe called "the desire realm" and that you really are here, due to your own state of mind, especially as you died in your last life, and that this is what we call a broken realm...it doesn't work, you know. And I think as a Buddhist it's important to come to a point where you admit it. It's actually renunciation, to come to a point where you say, "there's something funny about this realm, there's something inherently defective about this realm", you know, because by now you're thirty forty fifty years old and you've been trying...you've been giving it your best effort to try to find the right recipe for life, you know...should I make more money, should I make less money, should I eat this food, should I not eat this food, should I exercise more, should I not exercise more, should I care about things or not care about things, especially personal relationships, you know...I've tried every different mode and it still doesn't work out, and then, I think, at a certain age you get to this kind of a realization that there may be something inherently defective about this particular world that we live in, which the Buddhists call the "desire realm", and then you have the motivation to really start a spiritual path. And you can count on Buddhism

fixing the problems with this realm, okay? This realm is inherently defective, if you don't take drastic methods outlined in Buddhist paths, it will not change and it does not work the way it is. You will not be happy in this realm. You cannot be. You know, don't...you know...I don't know I'm back of my mind...if I could just have an hour more a day, or if I could just meet different people, or if I could just find an occupation that suits me better, or if I could just get a little more time to exercise, or if I just stopped eating ice-cream and ate more salads, (laughter), you know, then maybe things would straighten out, you know what I mean? No, in the back of you mind it's there all the time, it's like, if I could just make slight adjustments in my life. The point of the desire realm...get used to it...there's no adjustment you can make to make this place work right. It's broken. It can't work right. You have to find a radical method out of here. You see what I mean. And then people say escape from the desire realm, you know, how do you do that, you know. Is it...because when you say escape you you get this idea of going to Alaska, living in an igloo by yourself, or, you know, taking some drug and going up to a different plane, or...or, you know, you always have this idea of some kind of physical I...physical removal of yourself from this realm. It's not like that okay. It's a spiritual, internal process that by the time you're...called the Buddhist path...and by the time you're done with it, the desire realm changes to suit you and it turns into a a Buddha realm, okay. You won't don't have to go to a different geographic area...there is no different geographic area. This room is the animal realm and this room is the human realm at the same time. It...they are two realms that co-exist in the same room and so, samsara, you know...the realm of suffering of which the desire realm is the cornerstone (laughs) okay, and and a Buddha paradise, a (tantr)ic paradise, are occur in the same physical space, okay. It's a radical transformation of your mind and your behavior that will force you to see this as a different place. And I'm not saying it's a question of attitude. It doesn't matter how positively you think about the desire realm. It still won't work, okay. It's not a question of like trying to see it in a nic...find the silver lining in the desire realm...it's not like that, okay. I'm not suggesting that you consciously try to cheer up and try to see things as not being so bad or something like that. They are bad. They are deadly. And and up to the time you die they're miserable. So miserable plus deadly is (laughter) is the desire realm (laughs)...no. And it's...you can't try to see it as a nice place or something. We're not saying that. We're saying change your karma radically. Change your vow keeping radically and

force a change in your perceptions of this realm. And it will just go away. And that's freedom from the desire realm, okay. And you gotta get used to that. Okay. It doesn't help to go live in Arizona in some mountain where nobody will bother you because (laughs) the main person who bothers you is going with you (laughter) okay, (laughs) all right, no really...people have great hopes for Arizona, and I'm like, "calm down, you know, you take your baggage with you wherever you go", okay and it won't be any happier there...within six weeks, okay. You have more conditions for meditating and practicing, but your basic level of happiness is independent of your location, okay. You carry your happiness, whatever level it is, wherever you go, and it doesn't change because you changed your address, okay. You have to follow Buddhism. Okay. I'm gonna let the class teachers go over the first question on the homework where concern...it concerns in the (b: Abhidharma) there's a very beautiful presentation about four different kinds of sustenance in this realm. In other words you can live off of solid food but you can also live off of other things, and this is in the most basic school of Buddhism and then by the time you get to (tantra) these things take on new significance. You know, what is it that makes your body run...is it really food, and what is it about food that makes your body run, and could you do without food, you know. I always say no because I enjoy eating is so much, you know, but...are there others ways to exist beyond food. We'll cover that, okay. And the the roots for that teaching, like all the roots of the highest (tantr)ic system are sitting there in the lowest schools of Buddhism, and you have to realize that Lord Buddha is this mastermind who's setting you up for something ten years from now, fifteen years from now, okay, with (b: Abhidharma)...lowest schools, okay. Then there's a section on the eight different kinds of hot hells. These are the major hells...there're eight hot hells, eight cold hells, there are what we call "secondary hells", there are what we call "near hells" which are in this pla...on our earth, and we'll be covering that in your in your breakout sessions. All I would say about the hell realms is that...we did it in a (tong len) up at Godstow recently. We did a meditation on the hell realm and I think it's it's try to imagine a place...I I said, start out with Kansas...if you've ever driven through Kansas it's like totally flat and all you can see in every direction is the same sky and the same corn fields, so imagine a place like that, the cornfields are not there, the ground turns into steel...without a rivet, you see, just pure, smooth, flat steel stretching to the horizon and then this people milling around on it like in a Fifth Avenue...like thousands of people pushing, shoving, moving in like flows and eddies...you

know what I mean, like how sometimes a whole group of people move one way and then move another way, and then naked. People have no clothes on. And then just the ground starting to heat up to a red heat, like burning steel, like hot steel, and then the idea of millions of naked people that look like you or me...just running, and and screaming and pushing at each other and trying to run to the horizon but there's nothing there except another horizon, you see what I mean...like no possible place to go. Just...but they are compelled to run 'cause they hurt so bad and they're just running. And then they're screaming and they're shoving into each other and and violently pushing each other, trying to go somewhere but there's no place to go, and living like that for years, and being unable to die, okay, it's one of the ne...part of the hell realms is that you can't die. You know, things that would normally kill you, you can't even get killed, you know, if if things got really hot and your feet started to fall apart or something, you wouldn't be able to die anyway. You'd be running on your ankles and on your wrists or something. And you can't die. And that's a nature of a hell realm. So I can describe it...you get a feeling for it. They do exist. These places do exist. There are beings there like that. And all it takes is a slight change in your perceptions to be there, okay, and very very terrible place...so those..and you have a instinct for that...you've been there thousands and thousands of times. People say, young people especially, they say, "death is romantic", you know...what's that guy, Kurt Cobain or you know...it's so romantic to have a nice, beautiful girlfriend and play for Nirvana rock band and and then end your life by taking some heroin or something and and it's a very attractive thing to the X gen...generation X?...gen-X. And they say that. They say, "oh, the great adventure of death. I look forward to it," but they have no idea what...it's really really bad, you know what I mean, it's hopeless after that. To be in this realm is like a very brief vacation and then most of the beings in the world are are in those realms, and it's no...it's no big romantic mystery or anything like that. It's just basic terror and suffering, and deep down inside every human being knows it and that's why you take someone up to a tall building and you get them towards the edge and you hold them by the shoulder and you go like that...and they fight you, you know, there's this internal reflex. It's not a reflex, it's a knowledge subconsciously of what it's gonna be like ten minutes later 'cause you've been through it thousands and thousands and thousands of times. You may not remember it, but you have an instinct for it. That's why people fight to live. When it really comes down to it, only crazy people kill themselves, in a

fit of craziness, and then everyone else is like, "we'll do anything not to die", you know what I mean? And that's because you know what you were in before. You have an instinct for it and that's why you fight death. You will fight it at the at anyone's expense, you don't want to die, you see what I mean. And that's...that's the nature of our of the desire realm. Okay. Really don't wanna go there. I mean...I don't like to talk much about hell realms because I rather...I think positive reinforcement's better. I rather describe a (tantr)ic paradise and inspire you to try to get there. The paradise is...they say the the goal is is total bliss and the path is total bliss. And get used to that, okay. I mean, the Judeo-Christian thing is you have to suffer to get to paradise. The Buddhist thing is you're getting to total ecstasy, and towards the end, the the the exercise is total exercise ecstasy, to get there involves very beautiful, happy, pleasant life and way of living and the whole way to to live as you get closer and closer is more and more pleasant. Your body starts to change. You get younger. Your mind starts to become this beautiful, happy place to live in and you're happy almost all the time, and almost everything makes you happy, and almost everything can send you off into this mood of deep bliss. So, even the path to get there is pleasant and the place you're going to is even better. As you accelerate towards the goal. So I'd rather sell you that than say that...by the way, if you turn around there's this hell realm (laughs) you know. But really you have to have both motivations, okay. There is a hell realm, you can get there easily by making small mistakes in your practice. And you have to be really careful and you have to understand that, okay. Yeah.

(student: I...this question comes up)

Yeah.

(student: My ignorance as in the desire realm is very ignorant (unclear) but I wonder about what Buddhism says about the experience of the near-death experience. I had a near-death experience that was blissful. I mean, I I was dead for moments and what does it...I mean if it's all horror why would I interpret beauty?)

The beginning of the death process you have certain hallucinations. Standard hallucinations...like five standard hallucinations. And the beginning of those hallucinations is some kind of extraordinary feeling of power. What we call "bardo being", a being in a state between death and rebirth, the

beginning of that process is quite pleasant. You can fly, you feel your body's very light, you're relieved from all the pain you used to have, you can understand people's thoughts, you can understand foreign languages, you can pass through solid objects, like that...you ca...you have this clairvoyance for a while and that ends about five minutes later and then the real hallucinations start. So, until you really die you don't get to those. Near-death experiences can involve the start of that process, which can be pleasant. Then about five to ten minutes later as you're really dead, the serious hallucinations begin which are very terrifying and then things get worse, okay. So, yeah, the beginning could feel like that. But but once death has occurred, very terrible, very terrible thing. Yeah?

(student: This desire realm that we live in is inherent in inherently defective realm we live in. We invented it. Are we perfectly (unclear)?)

No. Not perfect. We have a seed for perfection and

(student: (unclear))

I don't know, no, what we say is look at your body...aging, look at all the thoughts in your mind, especially...you know we say you have six standard terrible ways of thinking, twenty others, I mean, jealousy, anger, irritation at other people...I mean there may be perfect beings among us, any percentage of the people around you may be perfect beings masquerading as normal people, okay, but if you are a normal person, the the condition of your body and mind is is is something terrible. It's get it's nature is to get older, more and more sick each year, more more and more weak, less and less energy and the nature of the mind is to constantly have anger, desire, jealousy...at some level all day long...based on your own selfishness. And in a a kind of selfishness that is turned on twenty-four hours a day of wanting to take care...naturally spending most of your time and attention taking care of you own needs and ignoring other people's needs. People are proud if they spend an hour a day at a hospital. That's still twenty-four...twenty-three to one. You see what I mean. And we just don't, we don't...we don't live well either. We have a

(student: What's more important than loving yourself and taking care of yourself?)

Oh we say you have to start with that but the but the bias is so

obvious, you know. I mean, no, you have to take care of yourself but but the relative time you spend on one person as opposed to a few dozens is obvious, you know. That disparity is obvious. And and it's a reflection of our of our natural mental state which is defective, and, but but the purpose to be a Buddhist and the purpose to follow this path is to reach the perfection which you you do have the seed of that perfection in you. Every human being has what we call Buddha nature, meaning "a capacity of becoming a perfect being, perfectly loving, compassionate, and physically perfect being, but this is...to say this is physical perfection, I mean I...I I wouldn't have a bald spot (laughs) and I wouldn't have wrinkly hands and I wouldn't be getting weaker...you know what I mean. It's not. It's really not. We can do...there is a body of light that you can get to and it works better and, you know, it's it's not a nice realm to be in.

(student: How long do I have to wait for the next realm (unclear) coming in the next realm?)

Oh. It comes as quickly as you practice the path.

(student: So it could happen here then.)

We say if you practice (tantra) properly in this lifetime, then before you die everything...you would reach everything. Total perfection, physical and mental perfection...yeah, in a perfect world, okay.

(student: Is that this realm you're talking about...this imperfect realm?)

This realm would then be transformed into a Buddha paradise

(student: Oh, it would be transformed, right?)

For you. Only. Yeah. (laughter) (laughs) No, now people around you might think you're still a schmuck or something, you know (laughs) okay (laughter). No, I mean, they might look at you and say, "he's just as bad as he was ten years ago". And and you can be looking in the mirror and seeing a (tantr)ic deity...you see what I mean? Because you've kept your vows perfect, and then your your realm will change, but they may still see you as a normal person. In fact, they probably they would have to actually, unless they had also followed the path in a very good way, okay. So, that's important to say, okay. All right. We're gonna talk a little bit about a death meditation. I think it's

important to talk about it. There...it was very popular in recent years to talk about death per...meditation and and there were a lot of things come out about the experience of going through death, and I think it became sort of a thing where you thought death meditation was sitting down, closing your eyes and seeing purple lights go by, and then red lights go by, and then yellow lights getting fainter and fainter and then white light and then some kind of clear light and then you do (powa), they say, or (chu...chod) and they snap their fingers and suddenly they're in a Buddha realm. You know, if you can just do it at the right moment of your death process. And this is a very popular teaching. It's been spoken a lot in the United States...more and more. And you have to understand this. When we talk about transforming this realm into a different realm, that has to be done while your mind is lucid. It's a result of years and years of devoted effort and work on your own mind and your own heart in meditation and and then at a...you you can best do it...frankly, in your twenties and thirties or something like that...I mean, while you have energy, while you're mind is sharp, while you're physically able to sit for long periods of meditation, and if you work very hard and if you follow to the letter the instructions of authoritative scriptures and Lamas then you have a change of pulling off a (tantr)ic paradise in this lifetime. If not, then you must enter the death process. You must go through the death process. And it's always chaotic. As your mind starts to break down, as the electrical currents start to go wild, there's a standard set of hallucinations that you have. They are not pleasant. There are very very frightening. Universally frightening. And then you actually have a special kind of pain that you undergo as you die, and this pain is like nothing you've ever felt before, and it's the pain of the moment of death, and it's just a...all the scriptures talk about it, and this is what the normal death process is, okay. Your mind at that point is actually started to break down, okay. It's not working as well as it was before. You're unable to think clearly, you're overcome by waves of fear, emotion, you're...if you think about how upset you'd be if someone came up and cut your finger off, then imagine how upset you'd be if someone come at came up and cut all (laughs) your fingers off, and it's the combined upsetness of having every piece of your body cut off and losing it and on top of that, all the years of care you've taken about your body, you see what I mean. The years of combing the same person's hair, the years of brushing the same person's teeth, the years of looking for clothes to fit this particular body, you know, the years of finding a house for this body to live in and a job for this body to have, and a car

for this body to drive in, and then all of those accumulated desires for this particular body are all being expressed in the moments of death. You are being cheated out of seventy years of intense effort to take care of this body, and you're very upset, okay. I mean, the accumulated affect of worrying about this body minute by minute for seventy years...can you imagine the amount of feeling you...the the internal feeling you have for this body is is unthinkable, you know, and and then to think you're gonna lose it at that moment. We say your mind goes into a special horrible place of like rage, that this body's being destroyed. The one that you combed for fifty years, whatever was left, you know (laughter) and, okay, and then there's this rage that this thing's being taken away from you. And the point is, you don't wanna wait till the last minute to do something about it. You..they say there are teachings that if you do special practices as you die, you maybe have a good chance to change realms at that moment or something like that. In theory this is possible. In practice it's impossible, okay. You are totally upset. You are totally frightened. It's the worst nightmare you've ever had. It's the worst hour of your life that's ever happened and to imagine that you could go into a deep state of meditation, see emptiness that you didn't see in fifty years of lucid thought on on the comfort of your meditation cushion (laughs) you know, it's ridiculous. It's flatly ridiculous. The point of a death meditation has nothing to do with those things, okay. Death meditation is, take care of things now, okay? If you're doing a good death meditation, you are getting your mind into a state where you believe you're going to die tonight, and every moment of your day you act as if you were going to die tonight, okay? That's a Buddhist death meditation. Forget the purple lights. Forget...if it was easy to get to a Buddhist paradise by thinking something as you die, Lord Buddha would have taught that, we'd go around giving coolaid injections to everybody after giving them the instructions and that'd be it because Buddhas love us, they want us to get to paradise, if it was that easy that's all they would do. It doesn't work that way. It just doesn't work that way. It's it's obvious it doesn't work that way or else the Dalai Lama himself would be going around doing Dr. Kavorkian or whatever for people, after giving them the (powa) instructions, you know what I mean? It doesn't work like that at all. You must do death meditation. What is the goal of death meditation? It's not to be able to die with some kind of special lights in your head or something like that. It's that starting tonight, starting now, as you sit on that chair, you begin to get into a special frame of mind. What is that frame of mind? I'm dying tonight, now what do I do, you

see what I mean? And every hour of your conscious life you are examining your activities, you're examining your work, you're examining your state of mind and you're saying, "do I really want to die like this", you see what I mean? You just evaluate your whole life hour by hour, am I ready to die tonight. Is this what I wanna do for my final four hours, you know. Is this what I would be doing if I only had four hours left, and if you start thinking like that all the time, you've mastered Buddhist death meditation. Okay. Then you're ready to study (powa). Okay. Then you're ready to study how to do special death practices, but in the meantime, much more powerful. And I can't describe to you how good it feels to be a good death meditator. It's amazing, you know. Peo people asked His Holiness, "sounds pretty depressing", you know. He says, "hey, no way. It's liberating, okay". Imagine how it would be to live every day as if you're gonna die tonight. Cut all the crap of your life one hundred percent now, you see what I mean? Throw out every possession you have that doesn't immediately serve your physical needs. Just clean out your house. Get rid of it. Move into a small room, you know what I mean. No more rent to pay, no more worries. Have one or two sets of clothes in case you wanna change before you die tonight (laughter), okay...die in a fresh dress, okay, like that. What else do you need, you see what I mean? And it's liberating. You can finally do all the things you wanted to do, okay. I say start with the worldly things. Go parachuting. Try sky hang...hang gliding (laughter), you know, do the scuba trip, you know, tell your boss to go to hell, (laughter), walk out, you know, you don't need any money, you see what I mean. Just just de, I mean...the first, the elementary stages of the death meditation are quite interesting. Yeah, I always wanted to write poetry instead of working in that company. So you just leave at lunch time and you don't come back and you go to the park and write some poems, you know, and it's liberating. I'm not suggesting that you shouldn't have a career or you shouldn't have a job or you should walk out on your wife, or your kids, or your house payments or anything like that. I'm just saying if you do a good death meditation, gradually, inexorable, your life will become an incredible, happy, extraordinary, creative thing. Because your mind is totally freed...what would happen...if you kept this way of thinking up regularly for six months, can you imagine what your life would be like, you know...no more magazines laying around your apartment, no more junk possession...ninety percent of your possessions are junk possessions. You don't use them, you don't look at them...you clean them, you pay for them, you take care of them, you find a place for them to be and you don't even use them and you don't

need them. Just get rid of, you see...if you're in this state of mind, I'm gonna die tonight, think of how many things you'd quit. you know what I mean, all the junk you'd just quit...go into some really beautiful two-hour meditation...'cause that's all that really matters at that point or something like that, but start with all the stuff you always wanted to do. What I'm saying is that if you become a good death meditator, you might wanna go try to learn to dance or play guitar or you know, do all the things you wanted to do, give up the things you don't really love, you're gonna die anyway. So why not die doing the things you wanna do. Then as you get more sophisticated you'll find that those don't make you happy either (laughter), really, and you will quickly get to the Buddhist path, you see what I mean. Then all that illusion that there's a few more things that you wanted to try will be taken care of, you see what I mean? All the stuff you thought you might want to try, do it, you know. Do it. Change your job to what you thought you really wanted. After six months you'll find out it's not and then you'll be able to meditate better, okay. But what I'm saying, it's a very liberating thing. Real death meditation. And we're gonna go over all the steps and the nine reasons and the blah blah blah, but the bottom line is this. Act at every moment as if you were gonna die tonight. Okay. And your Buddhist practice should be just the same way. Streamlined. No crap. No practices which are nice and which don't get you liberated by tonight, okay...I mean, clean up that too. Most people most people's practice is very similar to their apartments (laughter), okay, I mean I'm talking about people who are even practicing, okay, which is only a few, but even those people your practice is junked up with, "oh I I kinda wanted to do this, I'm halfway through reading this, I kinda studied that, I got a little bit of this memorized and I have four meditations that I do but I don't really do any of them". You know what I mean. And if you knew you were gonna meditate to...die tonight, then just cut the crap in your practice also. Get it down to the one or two heavy, intense, karmas that will help you when you die, which frankly is (b: Guru Yoga) and (tantra), or something like that, which are really the same thing, so, you know, clean it down to that. Don't try to do sixty-three different things and you're not doing any of them. You are going to die tonight. Now what what do you want to happen as you die...what's your goal. You know, I have people come to me, "I have thirteen saddhanas I committed to. Which ones should I do. Which twelve should I do", or something like that, you know. You gonna die tonight, I suggest you take a few lines out of your favorite saddhana and meditate on them. Something to do with your root Lama or something and then forget the rest.

You know what I mean. You don't have time. You're gonna die tonight. So, I mean, live every moment as if you're gonna die tonight. Don't wait and say, "Oh, I can't get to that practice" or "I'm not good enough, or I I don't I don't understand that, I'm afraid of that" or something like that. Forget all that. You're gonna die tonight. Be a more thoughtful of that poor slob who's gonna be dying...which is you. You know what I mean? You now are not being fair to him or her. A year from now or two years from now or a week from now, who's sitting on the deathbed dying and it's too late to do anything because you wasted your time. He will curse you. You know what I mean. And you also have to be considerate, you know. He is your future self. She is yourself a year from now. You should be only doing those things which are directly, immediately, powerfully getting you as close as you can to a Buddhist paradise in this lifetime. Or you're not really being fair to them, you see what I mean? So you have to examine...even those people who are practicing have to examine their their motivation for doing the practices they do, how serious are you, or is it just that you like the practice, you see what I mean? Did you really wanna get to a Buddhist paradise or were you more attracted to a new set of clothes or or a new language or or you know, this philosophy that you can impress people with on Thursday nights, okay. You know what I mean. Cut the crap. Get down to the practices that are important to help you if you're gonna die tonight. That's all. And by the way, you will never regret it. And everyday you spend like that is ano...one more incredibly happy day. If you get your life streamlined by a good death meditation, your mind is clear, your heart is clear, you're happy, you're relaxed, and Je Tsongkapa says, "then you can really die right". You know. The only people who go into death right are the people who year after year, day after day, hour after hour have been living as if they were going to die tonight. Because then when it happens, they're like, "ha ha, I knew that was gonna happen". (laughs) You know. I took care of that two years ago, you know (laughs). "I went straight to the teachings that were important and I practiced them and I mastered them. I'm not afraid to die." It's only these people that die well. They die happy. They took everything. They've already achieved what they had to achieve. Okay. Time to go. Relax. To be relaxed, happy, contented in the knowledge that you have practiced perfectly. Only those things which were most important as if you were gonna die tonight for the last few years, then you can die well. That's a real death meditation. Okay. And you hafta try to reach that state of death med...it's not colored lights. Okay. It's not like, "oh, booga booga when you die", you know. It's not like that,

okay. If you practice this way, then as you die you have a real chance. You know what I mean. You have a real chance to do some extraordinary things. Okay. But actually I don't think you will die, okay? That's the whole point. I think when you teach death meditation to your students in the future or this evening, it's important to say, "look, if you lived each day as if you were going to die tonight, you wouldn't die anyway. You would enter into a (tantr)ic paradise in this lifetime." And and it would be a moot point should you look at the red colored light or the purple colored light, okay. There won't be any colored lights 'cause you don't die, okay, and and I can't describe you even if all this Buddhist stuff is BS and even if all this stuff is not true, it's still if you lived your life as if you were gonna die tonight, you can't imagine how pleasant that is after a number of months and years, you know what I mean? To keep living like that every single day for years is extraordinarily pleasant and exciting and creative, okay...you're just totally liberated from all the the heavy weights of all the junk that we carry around, okay, physically and mentally...and emotionally. Totally...you feel like you weigh ten pounds, you know. You feel like you're walking on air on all the time...it's a it's beautiful. It's really cool.

(student: (unclear) the desire realm (unclear))

A..actually you're transforming the desire realm. Okay. When you do a do good death meditation you fi...you finally designed to decide to work on the most important things to help you by tonight, you know, and you go quickly through the perfections quickly into (tantra). And you work hard on it and and then everything is taken care of itself. Yeah. This realm will be transformed...for you. Okay. And everybody else may think you're crazy, okay, and you gotta get used to that, okay. They may not...if they are not doing those things, you will look crazy to them. You gotta...they they say, (ni chen ne pi, ki chen ne lep) means "you'll be expelled from the ranks of men and reach the ranks of dogs" (laughs) meaning, everybody will think you're crazy, okay. And I don't mean you have to sit on the corner and spout mantras and act crazy. I'm not saying that. Just if you gradually divest of unnecessary activities and and possessions, you will look unusual to other people. If you truly try to practice the most important practices and not even deal with less important practices you will also look strange to oth more people, okay, and you have to keep your motivation in mind. Why am I doing this? 'Cause I'm gonna die tonight. I don't have time for that, you know. I respect that, I think it's a good

thing. Lord Buddha taught a), Lord Buddha taught b). B) works faster. Now you guys may have longer to live than me but I'm dying tonight. I have to work on this thing, okay. And and necessarily you will look a little strange to other people in the desire realm. Okay. And and don't forget, and I say it boldly and without embarrassment that anyone who's here in this realm and who is not an emanation of an enlightened being, is messed up, okay? Physically and mentally, okay. You're here...your your presence here proves that you're messed up, okay. In the desire realm. If you've made it to the desire realm, your mind is messed up and your body is messed up and it's gonna break. You know, the body is gonna break down, the mind is still clinging to wrong ideas, wrong possessions, wrong ways of living, and and you if you start to fix yourself in the desire realm you will look strange to the other denizens of the desire realm...by definition. Okay. Does that mean you should disrespect people and act weird or som...I'm not saying that. You have to be more respectful more thoughtful and like that. But but at some point you're...there'll be a disparity between the way you act and the way other people in the desire realm act because all of their actions are crazy, okay. To to to work for fifty years to have...fifty weeks to have two weeks of your own time is is that crazy or what? It's crazy. (laughs) It's just crazy. What, so you can have a washing machine instead of having two sets of clothes that you wash by hand and it only takes you an hour, you know what I mean...it's crazy...it's just crazy. It's it's really crazy. The whole the whole exercise is crazy. You know, to hate other people when they get something good, you know, it's weird. People here are weird (laughter) (unclear) okay (laughs) and you will start to look weird if you've had a...you change yourself. Anyway I'm saying, death meditation is that. It's so sweet, a great death meditation, okay. Two other things I would say. It's important to know how to die right. It's important to know what happens as you die and you should learn that. I think what I'll try to do is hand out a a a document that Khen Rinpoche wrote. It was mostly a result of an interview we did with him...the only inter...the only time he submitted to questions was when he was in a car or a plane and couldn't get away (laughs) and we did it on a plane to India from Germany. And asked him all everything I ever wanted to ask him about dying and he gave beautiful answers and we wrote them out and I'll try to hand that out next time. Okay. It's instructions on what you should do as you die and what you should do for other people that you love who are near you as they die, you know. What you can do for them, and it clears up a lot of misconceptions about the death process, okay. The only other thing I wanted to say about

death and then I think you guys can cover the rest in your breakout classes. There is a real (powa), okay...there is a real death meditation for dying, okay. By the way, the death meditation I covered so far is death meditation for what...

(students and Geshe-la: Living)

And you live like a king, okay, if you really do death meditation every hour of the day, you know, f u to all the other junk of the world, I'm concentrating on the most important things happily and I'm not weighed down by all the other possessions and activities and concerns, your mind is like...feels like cotton candy or something, tastes like that, okay (laughs) and happy, all the time. That's for living, okay, and that's for dying right. But as you enter the death process, there is a meditation you should do, okay. That's found in the (b: Lojong) text. We covered it in the (b: Lojong) class. I didn't make it part of this reading tonight but I'll describe it to you, okay. And you can practice it every time you get sick, or everytime you're having some emotional pain or any kind of problem in a relationship or anything else, okay. Somebody you love leaves you, you know. You find out you have breast cancer. You go home and you just feel depressed all day, okay, you didn't get enough sleep, or you can't sleep. This is good for...it's not amnesia, what'da they call it?

(students: Insomnia)

Insomnia, (laughs) okay. All right. I'm saying for all those moments. Insomnia, depression, you just found out you have (laughs) cancer or HIV or whatever, or or you have some kind of emotional pain...you just lost someone close to you, or someone died or someone walked out on you or something like that, okay. In all of those situations you can use this meditation, which I want you to use when you die, but there are so many other lousy occasions during life you can use it then too and get practice, you see. And this is the ultimate (powa) It's presented in texts of Chekewa, Geshe Chekewa, and and this is a beautiful (b: Lojong), so it's basically this...and he did it on his death bed. It...there's a record of his students standing around like with Socrates and recording what he said as he died, okay, and it's like this. When you die, you'll get to some kind of incredible pain...will start to in your body and that's the pain of dying. And this is a special physical pain that all people have as they die. Bugs have it, cows have it, people have it, fish have it. You can see them as they die, something's going

on...as you watch from the outside. So, meditate very very hard that all the pain of all the people that you can imagine and all the living creatures that you can imagine is sucked into the pain that you're having, okay. So it's a very specific exercise of imagining that you are going to eliminate the pain of the entire world by dying with it. Okay. It's like that movie, the "Exorcist" (laughs) okay, the the priest takes the evil demon inside of him and jumps out the window, okay. It's the same idea. You...as you're dying, when you start to feel that pain, you say, "okay, I'm in for a bad time and I know it. I remember that class back in ninety-nine, okay. At least let me do something useful with this pain and but you can use this for every pain you ever have...emotional, physical, relationships, whatever, okay? Use it all the time when some poop hits the fan...which is usually like once a week, right (laughter) okay (laughs) okay. But focus on the pain that you're having...which is not unreal...it's real, okay, has someone walked out on you in a relationship, to find out you have cancer, to lose your job, something like that...that's pain. Take the pain, make it a a physical thing in your mind like a almost like a ball, okay, in your chest, and then and then pray that all the pain that other people are feeling around you should be sucked into that pain as you experience it. Okay. As you as you're going to experience it. So at least other people shouldn't have the pain that I'm gonna go through, okay. By my feeling this pain may other people's pain be taken away from them and die with me. Okay. And then everybody else in the world is is free from whatever pains they have, okay. Very very holy way to die. Okay. Very very holy way to die. I don't have anything more to say about it than that. Okay. Just do it. Okay. Best way to die. If by chance you find yourself hit by a car tonight as you're on the sidewalk (laughs), you know, people standing around, goggling at you, then remember, you know, we say it's good to practice, okay. In Buddhism you can practice it two times. One, any time you have any kind of disappointment or trouble during the day, just say, okay, I have to go through this kind of pain. Apparently I'm stuck with this kind of pain, so I pray that other people's pain be experienced by me and that they don't have it any more, okay. And just decide, you know. I'm I'm having a bad day. My boss is crazy today. Well at least may I take the all the other bad boss pain that other people are having in Manhattan today and I will stand for all their pain, okay. So just decide. Every time. This is practice for when you die. Very very good practice, okay. If you don't practice it you probably won't be able to do it when you die, okay. Secondly. As you fall asleep, okay, imagine that you're going into a death consciousness, okay.

Imagine as your mind goes into sleep, imagine that your mind is going into the unconscious state of death, okay. And as you go, practice this death meditation...say, okay. Anybody in the world who's dying tonight as I fall asleep, may I take your pain away from you. Okay. As I enter death, okay, I take it away from you, all right. Very important to do that. We say then at the final moments of consciousness in both cases, you imagine that pain as some kind of black thing in your heart and then you blow it off with this burst of light, like burst of golden light and if you...that's very important, okay. You're not supposed to go to sleep with all this pain in your (laughs) heart...you'll have heartburn in the morning, okay. (laughter) Just before you fall off to sleep. Very important. Boom. You know. Big flash like a photo flash and it all that pain is gone...like your pain, their pain in gone and then fall asleep, okay, like that. Very beautiful meditation. The difference between waking consciousness and sleeping consciousness is very similar to the difference between living consciousness and in process of death consciousness, and so, if you practice it night after night, when the time comes it'll be a reaction, it'll be a natural reaction to try to take other people's pain away into your pain as your die, okay. Now, last thing I'll tell you a story about someone who did it and then we'll take a break. Geshe Chekawa is on his death bed. Eleven hundred...something like that...AD...Tibetan Lama, great Lama...he's been teaching this stuff his whole life and he's dying and his students are standing around, you know, "what's happening", you know, and he's dying and he says, "okay, I'm doing it, you know. I'm feeling the pain. His...yeah and I'm trying to take all the pain of all the living beings" And there's this silence, you know. And he's like, "now I'm trying to take the pain of all the hell realms", and there's this silence, you know, and then they say, he says, "now I'm trying to go to the hell realms, I'm trying to send my mind down to the hell realms so I can take care of them in in my next life", you know, and he's like he's like and then there's this long silence he's like, "oh man it's not working", you know (laughs) and they're like, "are you all right?", you know. And he says, "oh it's terrible, you know". And they're like "what's going on?", you know. And he says "I can't do it, it's not working", you know and they're like, "what, you can't get to hell?" He says, "nah, it's not working. Everytime I have that thought to go to hell all I see is these Buddha paradises" (laughter) (laughs), and he's like upset, you know, he's like angry, you know, he's like "I can't believe it. I practiced my whole life and now these paradises and deities and angels coming for me and I can't...so disappointing (laughs) (laughter) and he died like that. He died

saying that, okay. That's actually what will happen, okay. That's actually the the process that (laughs) you go through, okay. The intention of doing that is almost like an instant karma, okay. And I think frankly, and I'm not afraid to talk about it, I think the final act of Christ is very similar and I don't have any embarrassment to say I totally believe it's a it's a beautiful death practice. I believe that, you know, the Christian faith, take away the sins of the world or something like that...I don't believe, we don't believe that you can take on someone else's karma, but the intention to do so and to die that way is the ultimate way to die, you know. If you really want to get your mind into a Buddha paradise as you die, and if you wanna set up your mind to be able to take away the sins of the world by becoming an enlightened being in the future, this is absolutely a perfect way to die. This is a perfect act, you know, of (tong len), on the cross, and that's, you know, you can't read the Tibetan descriptions of how to do it without thinking of that thing. They they almost read the same word for word, you know, so it has to be a (crys) very holy practice that people have done throughout the world, okay. All right. Take a break (laughs).

(break)

Okay, we'll start. It's about a five minute thing...he always says that, right? (laughter) First thing, last Friday morning we took one day Mahayana precepts and a lot of people came up to me and said, "that was really fun", and can we do it more often (laughter), okay. And I also had a really good time, so I think we will do it more often, like there are five or six major Buddhist holidays throughout the year, there are other very holy days like Khen Rinpoche's birthday, or the hol...Dalai Lama's birthday, things like that, so I think we can come up with excuses to do them more often, and and then I wanted to mention and I forgot to mention during the ceremony last Friday that you are therefore empowered to do them yourself, okay? So once you've taken them from somebody else, you are empowered to take them by yourself, and you just do it in front of a Buddha image in your own home with the same rules. Now we went over the vows in great detail during the ceremony last Friday and Winston taped it...I don't know where he went to...he's agreed to hand a copy of the tape over to the Moores, who are here...don't not raise your hands (laughter) okay (laughs)...they're in charge of production of all tapes, like they'll keep a production master and then when you need a copy you can ask them. So I what I suggest is you just get up at 4:30 and turn on the tape, and

(laughter) seriously, and just follow it and do the whole thing, and after you've done that once or twice you'll be able to take them yourself. Hopefully before going into three year retreat I could maybe translate the the text into English, but even without that you can still recite it in Tibetan, it's a holy language. There's a lot of Sanscrit in there which is also a holy language and see...you can actually take them any time you like, okay. So get a hold of that tape...yeah?

(student: It's good to do on Sojong days.)

Good to do on Sojong days...fifteenth and the eighth...and the first and of the Buddhist month, okay. Just wanted to mention two things about two two side projects that are happening in Arizona and I think they apply to what Buddhists can do to help other people, and I think should be maybe a part of American Buddhism as it goes into the future. So these wrap-up talks have been about American Buddhism. I think the first project that we'll be doing there...you know, when we negotiated the contract for the land which will be signed shortly and we do...it looks like we have enough money to buy the first parcel by about one dollar or something (laughter) (laughs). It looks okay. Not sure yet, but it looks okay. We we will be buying a huge u-shaped shaped of property of about, I don't know, four thousand acres or something like that, and then inside of the "u" is a big block of property that's five thousand acres, and if you buy the four, you get the five. And the five belong to the state of Arizona and they are called "state lease lands", and whoever own the property around it gets to own the...gets to rent the land in the middle for a dollar and...ten cents an acre a year. And you are required to run cattle on it and sixty-five percent of the property of that county is state lease land like that. So we were struggling with what to do with this problem, you know, like we would like to have the property 'cause it'll make the place quieter, there'll be a big buffer of about a mile around the meditation cabins and stuff, but what're we gonna do with these cows, you know. There's like two hundred and fifty cows on the property and and we have to take care of them and first we went to the state, we said "do we have to kill them, could we just let them live, you know, and take care of them?" and we're negotiating all of this with the state. And then we went to some like sponsors like Jains...wealthy Jains that I know in the Indian diamond community and asked them would they like to help us keep these cows alive, which is a big thing for them. And then I was thinking of it just as a way to raise funds or something like that, and then we've been having meetings with

these Jain diamond dealers and they've been expressing their passion for this idea, that hey, you Americans, you know, if you get into creating these...they have these special ranches all over India supported by the Jain and the Hindu communities where they just keep animals till they die, and it could be a cow or it could be any other kind of animal and

(cut)

they were so passionate about the idea, like yesterday we had a meeting with the head of the Jain Association of the United States and this is a very powerful diamond dealer and he's so excited about the idea, he says, "you don't even know what you're starting", you know, "you think you're just raising some funds". Think about it, you know. If an American...if if American people get up and start talking about this idea, the whole world looks to America, like all...even in India we're looking...we don't like America but we're looking to America to see what we're supposed to do next, you know. And if and if in America normal American people decide that it's important not to kill these animals, it could start a whole different way of looking at animals and a whole different way of treating animals, and a whole different way about thinking about the question of killing animals for our meat, which I'm not gonna talk about that tonight. There's a big debate about it in Buddhism, traditionally we have eaten meat, I think, based on the fact that when you go out with your begging bowl as a monk, you're not allowed to say, "I don't like eggplant" (laughter), you know, could I just have a little more of the ice cream (laughs) you know (laughter) and, you know, you're supposed to take whatever they put in your bowl and eat it, you know, and that's a tradition, so I think on that basis, we've been eating meat. People ask me "is eating meat a bad deed?". It's not listed in the scriptures as a bad...the Lotus

Sutra does say some heavy things about not eating meat and when you take one-day Mahayana vows you're not allowed to eat meat. Now that's an indication that we think it's something wrong with it. Technically you're not killing when you buy meat. Technically you're buying meat. Un-technically you've contributed to a process of killing and I think almost assuredly you are dealing in stolen goods. (laughter) So I asked a Lama, I said, "if someone offers me a radio, and I know it's been stolen, can I buy it?" And they said, "no". So I said, "well why?" And they said, "'cause that person who owned the radio, it was taken from them forcefully and now it's being offered to you

for sale". So I said, "well what's what about meat, which has been forcefully taken from its owner without their consent I assume, and being offered to me for sale?" So I...this is not in the scriptures. This is Michael Roach's idea, okay, and I'm always honest to you that, you know, in the courses you don't see anything which is Michael Roach's idea, you you know you're getting original readings...we put in all that Tibetan...someday somebody'll notice it's not the same but that's another thing (laughter) (laughs) no, just kidding. (laughter) (laughs) Still waiting to see if anyone reads it, but no, not...really, only original sutras, that's my the about me, okay, but but it would be exciting, you know. We started to get infected about their enthusiasm which we didn't have when we went to them and they're saying, you know, "if American people got this idea, and you saved some cows and you took good care of them until they died a natural death," you know, one cow is killed every minute in the United States...and then we went to the slaughter house, we...every second, sorry...we sent Ian and somebody else to the slaughter house to to try to film the local slaughter house in which these animals would be killed, and they took a lot of gross footage of the meat hanging up, but the cows hanging up, and then the guy said, "come back tomorrow because today we're killing pigs and tomorrow we're killing cows, and we'll show you". And so, there's this crisis the next morning nobody wanted to go you know (laughter) and so Ian goes off with his camera (laughs) you know, and and we're like kind of nervous waiting...we sent Elizabeth with him and Rob figured out a way to do another errand and not go (laughs) (laughter) and and then they came back and said the guy refused to let us in because he said his lawyer advised him that it would not be smart to let us film the thing, but the whole fact that people are hiding it and that you can't film it, and, you know, and that it's something you and I have never seen, you know. I've never seen them do that. I've heard what they do but I've never had the courage to go to one of those places, and and Ian was messed up the whole day (laughs)...he was still upset like two days later just seeing the carcasses hanging up from these hooks and and the blood all over the floor and everything else, so I think I think it'd be an interesting project. I think to get excited about that. We do have a concept in Buddhism called (tse tar). (Tse) means "life", (tar) means "to free life". And it means "buy or or somehow get possession of animals that are about to be killed and then release them and free them, and I think if you...I was sitting in a restaurant in Ireland. There was a aquarium next to me. There were all these lobsters with their things taped, they couldn't like move, they were on all on piled on top of each other, and

suddenly, for a split second, you know, I'm not like a big yogi, but my mind went into their mind for a second and I was thinking how it felt to know you...they have this instinct that you're gonna die and you're in this wrong place, and somehow you can't move like you used to move and that primal fear of that being piled there in this thing and moving against each other and knowing that you're going to die by being boiled, you know...just for a second it came into my mind and then we asked the waitress, you know, "can we buy one of them?" 'cause it was on the ocean side and we thought we'd let it go you know, they said, "no no, we have to ask the owner," you know, so we said, "please ask the owner" 'cause I got this...I obsessed with at least getting one ...it's like eighteen dollars but okay, and they wouldn't sell us one, they wouldn't let us take one, so then I'm like this maybe I can steal one, (laughter) you know, (laughs) and I didn't have the courage, you know, but, anyway, that's a part of what we'd like to do in Arizona. We will be getting with the property, I don't know, two hundred and fifty head of cattle and we'd like to keep them alive and take care of them and just out of the sense of what it's like to be killed. They know they're gonna be killed. When I went to India the very first time I was twenty years old, I'm in an ashram near the Ganges River, and I had this intense dream about watching a cow die and it knew it was gonna die and it had a human voice which made things terrible...it was screaming and they were cutting its throat and it was screaming, and I remember it still vividly and...so I think that's a neat project. I think people we should try to liberate life and free life whenever we can and respect life of all kinds, and I think that will be a nice thing to do. Secondly, part of the Arizona will be a retirement community and the idea that in this country...and I grew up this way, you know...my parents, my step-mother still tells me, "I'm independent. You don't have to take care of me. I don't expect you to take care of me. I'm gonna keep my house..." I said, "come to Arizona", she said, "no no no. I'm independent. I'm have my own house. I'll take care of myself" and there's this thing in America that your parents get to a certain age and they have to fend for themselves or you put them in a nursing home and you...and I I used to be the nursing home liaison for Howell, New Jersey dozens of Kalmik old people would come to me, I would put them in nursing homes for their children, and then it would be this gradual, lonely process of dying, this one was a resort hotel in the nineteen twenties. It had a spiral staircase that goes up like five stories. And so people screaming on the bottom floor...you can hear them...it goes through every story, all night all day and when you walked in there'd be this gauntlet of old people in chairs, reaching out

to just to touch you, you know...just to touch a person that wasn't dying at the moment (laughs), you know, and and the stink in every nursing home of urine and and and and the way that the the underpaid staff really treats them when no one's around, you know what I mean. So I think there's a great man in Australia named Salim Lee, he's been working...we've been watching his idea of building like nursing homes and retirement communities that are Buddhist and where you go and your death is like you get trained how to do a nice death meditation and you practice and you spend your time learning meditations that you can do as you get old and studying some scripture, learning how to chant things...you know, the idea the ancient Indian idea of when you finally get liberated from your job, at sixty-two or whatever, that you kind of cruise into death in a planned, compassionate way, you know, and that and that that would be a good way for us to spend our energy, you know. Like my vision of the place there is that we're studying intensely, we're meditating intensely, you know, we have intense rituals going on and all kinds of (tantr)ic studies there, and I think it'd be a very beautiful part of that to have a community where we're taking care of old people, by about the time we get it ready, it'll be us (laughter) (laughs) okay. And I'm not kidding, you know. It'll take what...ten fifteen years to get it going well and then we'll have a place to go and I think the idea of my generation, the baby boomers who were spiritually minded and didn't save a dime, okay, and social security's used up, okay, it...it's already spent...the stuff I paid in is spent and I think there's gonna be this big crunch, and to have like...our idea is to have very cheap, like maybe a hundred and fifty, two hundred dollars a month housing there, where you have your own beautiful little place, you're not like in one big huge building but they're spread out all over the place and you have your own like adobe meditation house and you have maybe two comfortable rooms and a nice shower and a nice bathroom or something like that, and you can live on the cheap and then you can go up to the temple and study meditation or whatever tai chi you can still do, (laughter) and, seriously, or yoga or something to keep yourself a little strong, and then people there who will take care of you as part of their practice...as an important part of their practice. And then you can study how to die properly and live quietly until you die and I think that'd be a beautiful thing for American Buddhists to start from now, a custom of taking care of animals and old people that can't take care of themselves, okay. So that's a...and we'll be in one of those categories (laughs) okay, unless we practice right. (laughter) So, so I'd like to put that...in Tibetan they say (sem la jak shu) which means "keep it in your

heart as an idea for the future", you know, that's something we could start spending some effort on. Especially I like the retirement community idea, something where you could spend your latter years in a meaningful way. And I see a lot of the people teaching at the university whatever skill they used to know, you know, all my great Lamas have been over the age of fifty-five or sixty, you know, and I think you'll find that the people who come to stay there in a retirement community would be...would also have some incredible talents to give to a place like that and to give, you know, and that's happened in our own organization. Dr. Taylor retired in nineteen eighty-six and I stole him and he's been running the Input Project (laughs) since then, you know. And he's still running it and he has incredible energy, he's like almost...I don't know how old he looks to you, but he's about seventy-five I think or something

(students: Wow)

He's extraordinary, and and that's and and he's still running everything, so you know, I think those people we should embrace them and and make a a relationship which is good for both. So I...think about those two things. Okay. Take it...that American Buddhism should take care of older people in a way that helps them go right, in a nice healthy, spiritual way and then secondly, that, you know, if we played our cards right...the Jain guy yesterday told me, "if you play your cards right, you know, the idea of killing these animals could be a thing of the past, eventually", you know...that if if normal Americans get up and say, "I haven't eaten meat for twenty years and I feel fine", you know...the rancher from whom we're buying the property was just advised by his physician not to eat meat anymore (laughter) and he likes the idea. You know, he's gotten used to it now. And he says, "I don't know why I used to eat eighteen ounce steaks, you know, they killed me. They made me weak, they made me sick, but that's how I grew up. I didn't know any better." So I think it's something we can pull off maybe, okay. (Sem la jak shu). We'll do a mandala, okay. Phuntsok-la.

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: dedication)

Okay, thank you.

## Review Course 17

### Class 7, part 1

Transcribed by: Karen Becker

Okay, we'll start. Tonight in our continued horse race to finish the second five courses, which took like two years, right...we're gonna cover the course about...it was called The Ethical Life and actually it was a...it was one of the five great subjects that a monk studies in the monastery. So typically we spend twelve years on (b: Perfection of Wisdom - Prajnaparamita) and then we spend four years on (b: Madyamika - Middle Way) and then two years on (b: Abhidharma) and two years on (b: Vinaya). And then every winter, three months on Logic. So these are the five subjects that you study for the Geshe program. Vinaya is what we're gonna be talking about tonight and the next class, okay. So it's one of the five great subjects that Geshe study. For this Institute we've added a sixth subject, called (Lam Rim) and (Lojong), which Tibetan monks in the monasteries only get when great Lamas come to teach there. So like, when His Holiness comes to Sera, he'll teach Lojong or Lam Rim. There's no formal course in Lam Rim because it...there wasn't a tradition of Lam Rim in India per se.

Lam Rim's roots are found in those five great books, but as a separate subject, it wasn't taught...except by visiting Lamas. So but in this Institute, so we have six subjects and then (tantra). So, we're gonna cover Vinaya tonight. When I met His Holiness and showed him the correspondence courses and I said we co covering the five great subject, he says, "well, how do you do Vinaya?", you know. Because traditionally you don't teach Vinaya to people who hav...don't have monks vows. So I I'm not allowed to teach you the formal vows of a monk or nun in advance of taking those vows, but what we did do in that course, which he liked, was we take Je Tsongkapa's summary of the Vinaya principles and that we're allowed to talk about and to teach. So for this course, we took the summary of the principles of Vinaya.

And this is mainly from a book by Je Tsongkapa called "The Essence of the Ocean of Vinaya"...meaning, there are hundreds of thousands of pages written about Vinaya...Je Tsongkapa summarizes them in like four pages...which he was very good at. And his presentation is extraordinary. His presentation is so beautiful that every two weeks the monks and nuns who go to sojong...we start sojong by reciting that presentation. So we recite it every two weeks, okay? And it starts out like a guessing game, okay. (Kang la den na de lak gyu, ta ba dron de du be tob, je she de mi nying be nyingpo (unclear) cha ba dang). Okay. That's first verse. (Kang la den na de lak gyu) means "guess what it is"...this is many Tibetan verses start like that. Like, (kang

gyi lo do drub ne du sep) there's a...you start out, you say...and the (b: Abhidharma) starts out like like that...(b: Abhidharmakosha), it's like, "guess who it is who saves all beings", you know, and "guess who it is who" (laughter), so this book starts out like (kang la den na de lak gyu, tu ba dron de du be tob), "guess what it is that if you keep it, takes you with great ease to the City of Liberation?", you know. That's Je Tsongkapa's opening lines, (unclear) identity. (Kang la den ne de lak gyu, tu ba dron de du be tob). Then he says, (de she dim be nyingpo chop) means "it is the essence of the Buddha's teachings. (So so tar drup je pe dang). "It is what we call Vinaya or the pratimoksha vows", okay. So we're gonna be talking about Vinaya. I'm gonna write the word "vinaya" for you. Say (dul wa) (repeat) (dul wa) (repeat). In Sanscrit the word is "vinaya"; in Tibetan the word is (dul wa). (Dul wa) comes from a root in Tibetan meaning "to tame" or "to break a horse". (Dul wa) means "to get a wild horse and ride him until he stops bucking and calm him down", okay. So the Tibetans chose this word to translate the Sanscrit word "vinaya", okay? People have translated Vinaya as "monks vows" or "monks way of life" or something like that. I don't like that translation...because (kim be dom ba dom ba sum, ruk den tom ba ta ma nga), almost half the vows are for laypeople, okay. Half...almost half the pratimoksha was designed for laypeople. So, out of the eight groups of vows, three of them are meant for laypeople, five are meant for people who have renounced the...a family way of life, okay. So, I think you should call it something like "how to lead an ethical life" or something like that. Okay. The Vinaya. Literally, you might want to translate it as "Buddhist discipline" or something. Discipline giving you the feeling of, you know, the unruly student being bitten beaten into submission (laughter) with the Dharma, okay (laughs). (Dul. Dulwa). Okay. (Dulwa) means "to tame a wild horse". Okay. What are you taming? What are you seeking to tame? You know, are you just trying to abuse your students or what? Not like that okay. You are seeking to take the wild horse of your mental afflictions and chill them out. Okay. And that's (dul wa). That's vinaya. Sometimes they say you're also your attraction to your senses, okay. Over-attraction to food, sex, music, things like that, okay...in such a way that it distracts you from your mail goals. Okay. Is it bad to listen to Flamenco for example? No. Okay. Is it bad to listen to it in such a way that you get distracted and don't and die before you finish your (tantric) studies or something? That's...yeah, that's distractive, okay. So, (dul wa) your mental afflictions and (dul wa) your the attraction to your senses, okay? Like learn to put them down to a level where

it doesn't disturb you and, especially when you're in retreat, put them down to a very low level. In...the word in the scriptures is to use the hook of controlling your food intake and your other sense percept...other sensual things, okay...meaning in ancient India when you wanted to tame an elephant, you didn't use a rope like they do with wild horses, they used a actual hook, this big meat hook, you know, like here, and you just grab 'em and sit 'em down, you know and things like that, okay. So, that's the idea is to take your mind and to try to beat it into a a sweet state of mind (laughs) okay? Now "beat" is a little extreme, okay. (Dul wa) is a set of guidelines for people who want to control their mental afflictions, okay, who want to who want to stop their mental afflictions, and these are called the Pratimoksha Vows. I'm gonna write the word for "pratimoksha"...say (so sor) (repeat) (tar pa) (repeat) (so sor) (repeat) (tar pa) (repeat). In Sanscrit the word is "pratimoksha", okay? What's the connection between "vinaya" and "pratimoksha"? What's the distance dis connection between Buddhist ethics and what I call "freedom vows", okay, pratimoksha you can call "freedom vows"? Freedom vows are the content of the Vinaya, okay? If you want to follow the Vinaya way of life, then you have to study pratimoksha vows, you have to study freedom vows. And you have to take the ones that are appropriate for you...the ones that you're are ready to take. Okay. So, the way you live an ethical life in Buddhism is you take vows, and you keep them. Which is a whole different thing. All right. Study, take and then keep, all right? I don't like to call them vows. I gave a long teaching in Ireland, you know, they have such an idea in their mind when you say the word "vow", you see, they're thinking of like...these old Irish nunneries or monasteries and grumpy, repressed (laughter)...grumpy and repressed are the two words that come to mind (laughter), you know, and and constantly having scandles there because they're grumpy and repressed, you know. (laughter) And and and and I didn't even want to use the word "vow". It's more like, there are eighty-four thousand mental afflictions, there are eighty-four thousand wrong ways of expressing yourself that hurt you, okay? Out of those, Lord Buddha took ten and said "these are the most common. These are the ones that are your biggest enemy". Okay. And that's the basis of pratimoksha. What he's trying to say is, "if you concentrate on these ten, you've kinda covered the eighty-four thousand. I'm doing you a favor, like, you don't have to go through eighty...a list of eighty-four thousand vows and try to avoid every one of them, you know. I'm giving you a list of ten that if you get good at these ten, then things will start to change. What's the point of

taking a vow? It's that Lord Buddha, this being who sees...you gotta get used to the idea of an omniscient being. This guy sees every thought you will ever have for the next million years. This guy sees what will happen to you every second of the next million years. This guy knows today, out of a billion possibilities of things to say to you, what's the perfect thing to say to you today, you know what I mean? That's the power of an enlightened being. So, they're trying to save you time. They're trying to give you a list...they say, "concentrate on this list...everything'll work out fine...trust me", you know. "I see nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand years from now you're gonna need this, okay"? And they just know. So, what you're really getting, in my mind, is a list of the most powerful things you can do, you know? It's a very very convenient. It's like somebody saving you fifty years of searching around for what to do. I don't like to call them vows. It's somebody giving you a super list or something...super karma list? Something like that. Ten things, you concentrate on these, everything will be extraordinary. What's the point of taking these vows...what's the point of studying vinaya? (Tar pey dron de du be tob). "You go to the City of Liberation". You know, but they say that about every Buddhist teaching. Come on. You know what I mean. I mean, for me it's not...it when you read a lot of scripture you get kinda bored after a while, 'cause it's everything is the door to liberation. Everything is the most important teaching, you know? And after a while you're just like, "oh, yeah yeah", you know. You're lucky it's not in English yet or you would just be, you know, "yeah yeah. Oh, most important teaching ever. Yeah yeah."

You know. So, I I don't think you can just stop there and say, "oh, you'll get liberated if you practice pratimoksha". I think you have to describe the process, okay. The point is this, your mind...you come into this desire realm...we talked about it last time. This is a broken realm. This realm doesn't work right. It doesn't matter what you do in this realm in normal daily activity, you will suffer, it'll go wrong, relationships will break up, your body will slowly destroy itself from the inside if it doesn't get hit by a car or get cancer...you know what I mean? This is what you have to look forward to...nothing works right here, and and people in millions of people in New York City are struggling to adjust it. If I just could get to Gold's Gym another day a week, then I'd be happy, you know, it's...I like the way you, you know, talk to me, but you got that wart on your left ear, you know. If I could just find a girl that didn't have one, you know, or, you're thinking adjustments, you know. If I could just adjust this or this or this, it's hopeless. Forget

it. The desire realm doesn't work, okay? This realm doesn't work. You got here by having mental afflictions in your mind and having done bad deeds in the past. Okay. That's why you're here. It's like a jail sentence, okay. You're in a broken realm, and it won't work. It doesn't matter what kind of adjustments you make. You think all the people in the New York Times obituaries this morning didn't try to make adjustments, you know...and they died. It doesn't work, okay, and they lost everything. So what's the point of pratimoksha then? It's to remove the cause of th...it's to remove the reason why things don't work, okay? You gotta get used to that. It's to remove the reason why things don't work. You can remove the reason why things don't work and then things will work right. Okay. You can't adjust them from the from the outside, you gotta adjust them from the inside. It doesn't matter if you go to a different gym, it doesn't matter if you take different vitamins, it doesn't matter if you join a yoga club or not, you know...those things don't...doesn't matter if you get a better job or a different wife or a different apartment, it doesn't matter. Those adjustments don't change anything. And it doesn't change anything to go to ACI classes and graduate from seventeen courses and turn in all your homework and and blah blah blah if you don't do something inside. And the whole point of pratimoksha is, these are things that you do inside, okay. So pratimoksha vows are a way to adjust from the inside...your behavior. So you have to learn them...the most powerful karma you can do. You got a free list from Lord Buddha, okay. And then you have to study them so that you understand what the vow is. I mean, most American Buddhists have no idea what their vows are and then a few of them have wrong ideas about what their vows are, okay, so but you have to go and study what your vows are, you have to understand them clearly. You have to understand the (nye me)s...what's a (nye me)?

(students: Exceptions)

(Nye me) means like "exceptions to the vow", you know. "Yeah the vow is that but you're supposed to do this in these circumstances", you know what I mean? Like most people don't even know the basic vow. On top of that you have to know what the exceptions are and you have to know how to prioritize your vows. If a (tantr)ic vow bumps into a pratimoksha vow, what'm I supposed to do? Okay. What am I supposed to do if the (tantr)ic vow says "a" and the pratimoksha says "b" and I have to do them both at the same time, what am I supposed to do. Things like that. What to do when a priority crisis occurs. Okay. And and you have to know, you basically, think about yourselves as

becoming master vow keepers, okay. Like, some people think of themselves as a good tennis player or some people think of themselves as a good piano player, or or a good stock broker or something like that, but everybody in this room should have in the back of their mind that in the next couple of years, I would like to become a master vow keeper. Okay. Like you never heard the word, right, you (laughs), 'cause I just made it up. But (laughter) okay. No but, think of it as your occupation. They say, "what do you do for a living?" "I keep my vows. I'm a vow keeper". Yeah, okay, really. Somebody...there's a scripture we were studying the other day...somebody walking down the street and they say, "hey vowkeeper", you should turn around. (laughter) Okay? You know. And you say, "oh yeah. That's me".

And you think of yourself that way, okay. Like you know your vows well, very well. You know how they work. You know why they're important. You know the exceptions. You know the traps. You know the dangers of, you know, of certain vows. You know, you know them frontwards and backwards and you keep them in your book. okay? There's nothing like that. We had an meeting today, which is why I'm late and I'm sorry, about the Arizona place...it's going really well, Winston and Rob went out on horses for three days to ride the whole place because we've never seen eighty percent of it and we thought there might be a martian landing site or a toxic waste dump (laughter) and we wanted to check, you know (laughs) but I think they'll sign the contract in a week or something and...but I said at the beginning of the meeting, they said, "you wanna say anything?" 'Cause I'm...it's a wonderful project 'cause I don't do anything, and I said, "yeah. I don't want anybody on this board who doesn't keep a book." You know what I mean? 'Cause...once you keep a book, your whole life changes, you know. Once you're a vow keeper, your whole life changes. Then Buddhism becomes something that helps you and works on you. And if you don't, then I don't even wanna be close to you because because you'll screw up at some point, you know what I mean. And not even...it's dangerous to be close to a person who's not keeping their vows or doesn't know their vows, you know. It's just...it's like being near a drunk guy with a knife. You know...like you just don't wanna be around him to clos...you know, I'm...nice to know you and I love you and, you know, come for dinner once in a while, but, you know, they're waving this knife around, you see. And and you wanna be around keeple people who are keeping their vows and you wanna keep your vow...you gotta keep your book, okay? It's useless to study these vows tonight if you're not keeping your book and they'll have no effect on you, okay. There's nothing about studying the vows that's particularly gonna be a huge good karma

immediately, but if you keep keeping them, and knowing them from hour to hour, you go through a process whereby, and I'm not exaggerating, your reality changes about once a year. Okay. You move up in the evolutionary chain, of spiritual stuff. Like you made it to human already, I'm not talking beyond that (laughs) okay...like within the human realm there's different levels of happiness and different levels of spiritual...totally different perceptions of your reality and and if you keep these vows you start moving up through this invisible food chain of spiritual realizations, like keeping these vows, understanding them, you will already start to see a different reality around you. And it's incredible. And people who don't keep their vows...not only is it impossible for them to see that reality. You can't talk to them about it. Like you can sit there and say, "look...I swear to God, keep this pratimoksha stuff for a year...you wouldn't believe what's gonna happen to you" and they'll say, "what's for dinner?" You know, and...see...they don't have (kal wa) we call (kal wa) means "the good karma to even hear about it." They don't get it. They don't only not get it, they don't even hear it, you know. You say, "no no, I was talking about these vows, look, pratimoksha...(so sor tar pa), freedom", you know, and they're like, "but what's for dessert?", you know? And and what I'm saying is that, you will go through different levels. If you start keeping these vows, things around you start to change 'cause you are on your way to liberation, it doesn't happen in a day, and every one of about ten different levels on the way there, your whole reality around you changes. People change, food change, sounds change, events change...extraordinary things starts to happen to you. You will never know, you'll be one of those people that got left behind in in the level (laughs) number one, if you don't keep these vows, if you don't try it you'll never know. And you'll never even get it when someone's describing it in front of a group of people, you'll be like..."god, it's hot in here. Wonder what time he's gonna shut up", you know, and, you know what I mean. And these are indivisible worlds that coexist in this room, some people are in different levels of them and you'll never know if you don't keep your vows. You just will never know...so keep them. I mean, that's...that's what really happens, you know. Your reality starts to go through amazing transformation about once a year, and getting more and more extraordinary, you know, and, but nothing happens if you don't know these vows and you don't keep them. Okay. By the way, to get to Bodhisattva and (tantric) vows, you must have these...some form of these vows, okay. At least keeping the ten virtues. Better if you could take lifetime laymens vows. Okay. And then, even nicer if you can take monks

vows, nuns vows. Do you have to have monks vows and nuns vows to see emptiness directly? Not at all. Okay. Do you have to have monks vows and nuns vows to practice (tantra)? No. Is it an excellent place to be in to see emptiness and to practice (tantra)? Yes. Okay. So I mean it's...it's a great thing, but I don't see it necessarily in the United States that it's gonna have to be like that. You can, if you take layman's vows and keep them sweetly and understand them, and then on top of that take Bodhisattva vows and (tantr)ic vows, you can very very easily reach enlightenment in this lifetime...no problem. You don't have to think...I'm not trying to sell you monks and nuns vows. For those of you who are attracted to it, it's incredible, and and you and it's a great place to be in to get enlightened, but you don't hav, but you should take some kind of pratimoksha commitment even it's not monks and nuns vows...like lifetime layman's vows. Come on. No killing a human. No stealing a lot of money. No stealing another person's wife. No lying about seeing emptiness. And no drinking alcohol. Come on. Is this har...I mean you can't do that for your whole life? And then people tell me, "oh I I do that anyway", I mean "I don't do that anyway" (laughter) okay (laughs). And and no, big difference. Taking a vow and just being that way totally different things, okay. If you are attracted to not doing these five things, it's because your last lifetime worked his or her butt off big time and that's why you have this attraction. If you don't keep...take care of that attraction and if you don't get it stronger and deeper by taking vows, then you'll lose it. You see? That attraction to Buddhism or that attraction to an ethical life already, you don't like to kill, you don't like to lie, you don't like to steal, that didn't come from no where. You worked on it for thousands of years, and that got you here. Now you have to take care of that. That instinct is not an instinct. It was hard work and that's why you got it and other people don't have it maybe. Okay. And then you have to take care of it and then you have to develop it by taking vows. Okay. The karma of, for example, not killing humans because you don't like to...or you didn't have a chance yet, okay, or taking a vow not to kill a human, and and consciously watching it every day and keeping it in a very subtle way, you know, like not even letting a pencil be on the floor 'cause somebody might slip on it. The karma of that is extraordinary. And then, you go through these reality shifts every year or so, okay. Unbelievable things start...all the stuff you ever read about in those Bible stories in Sunday school are true. All those miracles and amazing things happening to people, totally true. They happen to people who keep their vows. Okay. What's that got to do with (so sor tar)?

(So sor) means "individual"; (tar pa) means "freedom". And all the books same the same thing. Why do they call them pra-ti-moksha...prati by the way, means "individual", moksha means "freedom" in Sanscrit. Tibetan is (so sor tar pa). Individual freedom means "people who keep the vows get to freedom." People who don't keep the vows...guess what? They don't get to freedom. It's an individual matter. So they call the vows...what?

(student: Pratimoksha)

Pratimoksha vows. Individual freedom vows. Okay. Those who keep them go to freedom, those who don't don't, okay. I tell you one trick about pratimoksha vows. You have to take them because you...sick of this broken realm. You haf...it has to be in your mind when you take them, okay. When you take them something grows in your body. Some invisible, beautiful energy grows in your body and stays there until the day you die, okay...when you take a pratimoksha vow. But if you don't have the right motivation they never form. You can sit through a ceremony, four hour ceremony, and and hear everything and you can answer (lek so) and and (tro lak), you know, at the right places which is really hard to do, okay, and then you won't get the vows if you don't...if it doesn't occur in your mind...by the way, it only has to occur for like thirty seconds...okay, I mean, it's discussed in the scriptures, you don't have to have this beautiful motivation from the beginning to the end, but you can be thinking, "those robes are pretty cool, I'd like to have those", that's okay for about five minutes. But somewhere during the ceremony you have to think, "I'm fed up with this broken realm and I want out of here", you know, "I want to move to a higher level of of spiritual evolution", you know, "I believe what that guy said in that class and I'm waiting for it to happen, and I understand I have to take vows for that to happen", okay? That has to occur in your mind when you take a vow or it doesn't form in your being. There's a thing called a...what's it called? (Ke che wey gelong...gelong ke che wa) means a "a full full ordained monk who agreed to take the vows and went through the whole ceremony and goes through their whole life wearing robes and does not have vows, okay, because during the ceremony it didn't occur to them once that I'm taking this so I can get out of this realm, okay, this realm of suffering, you know, this realm that doesn't work, okay. So when you take your vows, even if it's just the five lay layman's vows, you have to have this... this has to you have to be thinking of it when you take the vows, okay? This realm doesn't work. The only thing I have to look forward to is getting old, wrinkly, deaf, blind, stupid, what do

you call it...when they lose their memory (laughs) (laughter) (laughs)...senile. Okay. But that's all you have to look forward to, you know. We were discussing today a retirement community out in Arizona, which is a big effort for a forty-five year old and then somebody says, "yeah, but you're gonna have to have a care facility for the people who move out of the retirement community" and I'm like, "oh come on, I didn't want to have to think about that." (laughs) You know. Yeah. You move up through those levels. You know. Apartment in Manhattan, house in New Jersey, (laughs) nursing home (laughter) in Florida and then a care facility in Florida, and then, you know, you know the rest. Okay. So those...that has to be in your mind when you take vows, all right. That's what we're gonna be studying. Okay. That's vinaya. That's what we're doing, okay. People think vinaya is some kind of old fashioned thing, people think it's arcane, people think it has no relevance in the modern world, people think it can never work in the United States...you know, the monks and nuns vows and things like that...that's just because they don't understand the vows. If you understood the vows and you understood how they worked, then you'd just automatically start wanting to keep them and to take them, okay. That's all. And they're beautiful, okay. I'm gonna go through what Je Tsongkapa promises to cover in his little book, okay? There're six categories to study vinaya, okay? And he said, (nwo dang ni rab nyi dang so sor mun sum ki wey den to way gyu ren tse way nam ba du kyi du shen she) which means (nwo) means "first he describes, "what is a pratimoksha vow", okay? "What is it?" What do they do, okay. And then he answers it in his text. He says, (chen ne shi den chep pa le do ba de a...chen ne shi den le do ba) means "the day you decide, as a spiritual practice, in order to get out of this broken realm, that you will never again hurt another living creature, then you are fulfilling the essence of vinaya". And the essence of pratimoksha. So the essence of pratimoksha, (ngo wa) means "to decide, I will never hurt another living being." That's the essence of this kind of vow. Now, Bodhisattva vows are different, they are more like "I will work my butt off to get enlightened so I can help other people". (Tantr)is vows, "I will work my butt off in this life and finish it and get to Buddhahood so I can help other people". But pratimoksha vows, the es the essence or the emphasis is "in order to advance myself spiritually, I swear I will not hurt another living thing." Okay. Period. In any of the forms. (Shen ne shi den do pa...shen ne) means "hurting other beings", which is reflected in the ten non-virtues by how many? Seven, okay? Three physical, four verbal. How do you hurt other people? Kill, steal, sexual misconduct. How do you hurt people verbally?

Lying, slander, harsh talk, idle gossip...idle talk, okay. So, does pratimoksha only cover those seven?

(student: No)

Je Tsongkapa says, "No, (shi dang che pa ne. Shi dang che pa) means "oh, and by the way, you also have to give up the three things that motivate those seven", (laughs) okay, which is the last three of the ten, which is...they call "craving, ill-will wrong view" okay, but I like, for me, craving boils down to being unhappy when other people get something they like, you know. I don't like it when someone else gets something they like. How many times have you thought that today? Maybe once or twice. No, Lord Buddha would say, "I chose it out of eighty-four thousand mental afflictions. You must be having it every five minutes or so". Some slight version of a little bit unhappy that someone else looks good in their dress today, or someone else's Tibetan is better than yours, or, you know, someone else gets to talk to them and you don't or some some version of that has crossed your mind several times in the last five minutes. That's number eight. Unhappy that other people are getting something nice...which is so un-bodhisattva, okay. Number nine. The opposite, which is what? "Be happy when they screw up." "Oh she's wearing that really ugly dress today, heh", you know. (laughs) Okay. Or some version of that, you know what I mean? There's this sick state of mind that we all have, or we wouldn't be in this realm, okay...gotta get used to that. If you are in this realm and you're not a (tantr)is deity or some kind of emanation or like that or someone in disguise basically, then...then you do have these thoughts constantly, you know, like little pleasures taken out of people's problems, okay, and it's just part of our brain that got us to this realm. Okay. And then wrong views which are...I mean, the biggest one is what causes this world, you know. How do you get around in this world? What's the way get what you want in this world? Okay. Only good karma. Nothing else matters and nothing else works. It doesn't matter how smart you are. It doesn't matter if you do the right thing at the right time in the right place. Tha that has nothing to do with anything. It's have you helped other beings in the last half hour. 'Cause that's the only way to get anything. That's the only reason anything ever happens that's good in this world, okay. And not to understand that is the motivation for the first seven, okay? So they say, (she ne shi den che pa le), so someone comes up to you and says, "what's pratimoksha vows?", you say, "avoiding any kind of harm to other living beings and avoiding the kind of thinking that makes you do

that harm". You see what I mean? By saying "avoiding harm to other living beings", you're saying the first seven; by saying "avoiding the kind of mindset that makes you want to hurt other people", the last three, okay. Get used to it. All right. (She ne shi den chu pa...)so that's the (ngo wo. Ngo wo den nye rab bye...rab bye) means "category number two", okay. If you're gonna study vinaya, category number two. This is easy. Hey look. There's just eight ki different kinds of pratimoksha vows. What are they? Well, there's a one-day vow, okay. What's a what's a one-day vow mean? You know, people took a Mahayana one-day vow. That's totally different from this vow. Okay. This is a pra...this is a Hinayana one-day vow. This is like a different vow...we don't take them nowadays, I mean they don't have this custom nowadays. Sometimes we take a one-day vow...that's a totally different thing...that's a Mahayana one-day vow, okay? And people aren't doing this much ba basically it's for the length of one day to avoid eight really bad things, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, you know, special things for the length of a day, okay. One day pratimoksha vows which is not even...I'm not aware that anyone takes them any more in the Tibetan tradition. We take the Mahayana version, okay. (unclear) (Gye yang pama dang...gye yang pama) means...what shall we say..."person who agrees to keep a lifetime vow...layman's vow," okay? So you've got a one-day vow and then you've got a layman's vow, lifetime layman's vow. How many parts? Five. Okay. (Na chi na ga pel je chu yo chu ba dang sang jur da)...hey, wait a minute...the text says you can take one or two or three. Eh...technically speaking, maybe it happened in the past, okay. But the commentators say, "no, you gotta take them all," okay...you really should take them all. Somebody says, "oh, but the Lama said I didn't have to take the alcohol one". Nyulchu Dharmabhadra says, "forget that" (laughter.) You don't even...it's not even a question for people with lifetime layman's vows...why? No Buddhist can drink alcohol. What're you talking about? "We're talking about the Lama said you didn't have to take that one". You can't drink alcohol anyway, okay. Lord Buddha said, (unclear) Rinpoche asked me to say it on Mongolian TV...I think he was setting me up...(laughter) (laughs)...Lord Buddha said, "whosoever drinks the amount of alcohol or serves to another that you could put on the tip of a blade of grass, don't call yourself a Buddhist, okay? I I don't know you." Okay. Quote. And unfortunately, the commentaries say "also it applies to chemical drugs and (laughs) other stuff," okay. (laughs) Does it apply to coffee and tea? No. Okay. Can you take Nyquil Cough Syrup? Yes, if you're not doing it to get drunk (laughter) okay. All right. No, just to clarify. Okay. But anyway, so

five vows. They split that in to male and female. So how many we got so far?

(student: Three)

Three. Okay. Those are the layman's vows. Those are vows that laypeople can take. Okay. Now we get into the...we get into the ordained vows, okay? (Ge tsul pama) means four and five are what you could call "novice monk and novice nun", okay. They keep thirty six...if you split them out it's thirty six different vows, okay, (lang de sul druk), for the rest of their life, okay? And then you have a very...you have a special category for women called an "intermediate nun's vow"...intermediate nun's vow. (Ge lop ma), okay. And and you have (ge long ma) and (ge long pa) meaning "a fully ordained monk; a fully ordained nun", okay. How many we got?

(student: (unclear))

Eight, eight total, okay. Three for lay people. Five for...cause we're splitting out male and female, okay. So, I'll go backwards. Fully ordained monk, fully ordained nun, intermediate nun, novice monk, novice nun, and then on the lay people's vows, lifetime man layman's vows, lifetime woman's layman's vow and then the one-day pratimoksha vow, and that's the eight different kinds, okay. You're getting the short version of Je Tsongkapa's...did you have a question?

(student: Yeah. I thought there was an eight vow (unclear) like the what they call the (unclear))

Okay. There are two other levels called...there's a level called the (rab chung. Rab chung) means "person who has left the homelife", okay. This is not considered one of the pratimoksha commitments. It's called a...I'm sorry, it's not a vow, it's a commitment. So when you say, "how many vows are there?", you say "eight". Well, what about that commitment to leave the homelife? You say, "that's called, technically, a commitment, and it's not considered one of the eight vows", okay? So there's eight vows and and a commitment...and an extra thing, called a "commitment". It's a commitment. Okay. That's where basically you make a decision to leave the homelife, to leave the family life but you haven't yet decided whether to take...you have not taken formally vows yet. So you can be a (rab jung) and not yet be a novice, okay. And that's those kids running around the monastery with robes on. 'Cause you have to be at an age where you can

understand what's going on before you take, for example, full...fully ord...full ordination can not be taken before the age of twenty. (Ni shi ma len je she dun), okay. So you have to be...I like that system, okay? It means that, you may see kids running around Tibetan monasteries. They're what we call (rab jung). They don't have formal vows yet, okay. And then when you reach the age of twenty, you're eligible to make the decision to become a full monk or nun, and I like that system. Don't forget that when this thing started, that'd you'd be about halfway through your life. You see what I mean... by that point. So really I think nowadays...I took vows at almost thirty and I had like, you know, fifteen years of adult life to try everything and I think it's a...it might be better because a lot of times when you take a kid at seven years old and keep him in the monastery until twenty and then make him a (gel), you know, a fully ordained monk, he hasn't had a chance to see all those things. He still thinks they'd be a fun to try, and you know...I don't know about...I think it might be good to take them later, you know. First I kept them for eight years before I took them and I think that's a...maybe a good rule of thumb or something like that. I think it's...I think it may be a good idea to do it that way, but we'll talk about that later, okay. Anyway that's the difference. And there's another commitment one I don't remember what it is...anyone remember? (Rabjung) and something else. Oh. No I don't remember.

(student: (unclear))

No, I don't think so. Anyway. There is a there is a version of the lifetime layman's vow where you can take a celibacy vow on top of the five, but that's not, that's a (tong tsi gin nyen), but I there's another one I don't remember, anyway. (Rab bye da so so wun dzen gye wey da...so so wun dzen) means "where they go through the eight different sets of vows and describe roughly what they are". Okay. So that's where you go through and you identify what the vows are. So now we have three categories in the study of vinaya. What is vinaya? You know. What is pratimoksha? You know. Not hurting other beings and not thinking in a way that would cause you to hurt them. Then you have the divisions, which are eight. And then you have the identification of what's included in each of the eight...roughly. Okay. (Ngo wo dang ni...ngo wo dang ni kye wey ten. So so wen kye wey ten...kye wey ten) means...this is category number four in the study of vinaya, okay. And by the way it doesn't matter if you study vinaya for a hundred years or for half an hour, you still would go through these same categories, just in more detail. The really great commentaries are thousand pages long and they're beautiful.

They really really beautiful, okay. (Kye wey ten) means "who can take vows and who can not), okay. Who can take vows and who can not." And this basically, in the commentary, he's describing, you know, you obviously have to be of a certain age if you take fully ordained monks vows and things like that, but more basically Je Tsongkapa discusses basic personality traits that...or basic things about your...your being that have to be there for you to take a vow, okay? (Ling shing kye pa...ling shing kye pa (unclear)) he's talking about sexual energy, okay? We say that to take up pratimoksha vow and to keep it, you must have a human body (a), (b) that human body must be of a nature that has a a a certain kind of sexual energy, you have to be have a male energy or a female energy. There are other beings who are born as humans who are like neuters or like have lost their sexual identity, physically through...you know, like getting shot in a war or something like that. But but they don't have...they say that the essence of manhood or womanhood...there's an energy in your mind and your body described in the second chapter of the (b: Abhidharmakosha) for example that gives you a sense of resolve, okay. It allows you to make firm decision, okay, and people who lose that through physical accidents or who maybe never had it when they were born are wishy-washy, okay? They can't keep a commitment, they don't have a a firm state of mind or a re resolved state of mind to where they can ma...take a vow and keep the vows, okay? And that's the basic thing. Now there's a psychological side to who can take the vows which is on other continents or in other realms, people don't have enough suffering to think that they should get out of this place, okay? The desire realm is perfect because it's got this perfect mix of ecstasy...I mean, you surf a good wave, see a certain kind of moon or a sunset, see a certain kind of flower, meet a certain kind of child...see the beauty of this realm and then see the horror of this realm, you know, see somebody burned in a car accident. I talked to a policeman today and he's describing, you know, the first time somebody died in his arms while he was...you know, goes...our realm goes from that to that. And so you can get inspired by the beauty and then you can look at the ugliness and say, "I want to remove that". And and that's the kind of people who can take vows, okay? You have to have this this kind of thing. You have to have ability to be resolved. You have to have ability to keep a vow. Take it and keep it and kick butt, you know. I'm keeping this vow. I don't care what anybody says, okay. Like that. It's some kind of energy. It's connected to your sexual identity also...okay? (So so ngo kye wey ten...tong wey gyu den pe ne...tong wey gyu) means "how do you lose these

vows, okay? What makes you lose a pratimoksha vow, okay? (Dom ba tong wey gyu wa ni, la pu chu da shi tu dang che ni tsu dang nel sen jur. Dom ba tong wey gyu wa ni...) there are two ways to lose vows. We call them the normal ways and the special ways. (laughs). Okay. All right. We're talking pratimoksha vows, right? (Tantric) vows, bodhisattva vows, you know how to lose them...I mean you have to really mess up...big time. Because otherwise you keep them even after you die, okay. But pratimoksha vows you lose on the moment you die, okay? (Shri shi shri shi tsaway bardu) in the (b: Vinaya)...until the day I die. Okay. Like that. So there's normal ways to lose your vows and special ways to lose your vows. What are the normal ways to lose your vows? (unclear) lev a pu...lev a pu) means "you give them back, formally, in a ceremony, you know. You go to the Abbot and you say, "I I wanna give them back formally", and you give them back, okay. (Lev a pu da shi te...shi te) means "you die", okay. And then there's some other ones about if you change sexes more than three times or something like that, okay. I'm not going to go into them all right (laughter) but apparently even in ancient India there were cases where people just spontaneously became a man who had been a woman and then you become a fully ordained monk if you'd been a fully ordained nun, but then if you switch back again, you still become a mo...a...the opposite again, but if you keep doing that after a certain amount of time, I guess the energy of the vow can't hold (laughs) it anymore or something (laughter)...I don't know. (Tsen ni chu dang len tsen gyur...tsen ni chu) means "if you have both sexual organs, or...(len tsen gyur) means "if they change more than a certain amount of times, then you lose the vows. Those are the normal ways (laughs) to lose vows, okay (laughs) (laughter) okay? Now we get to the abnormal ways, (laughter) (laughs) No, now there're the special ways to lose vows, okay? Special ways. Special meaning "specific to certain vows". Okay. Like how do you lose a one-day vow?

(students: (unclear))

When when you can see the lines on your hands from the natural light of the sky, the next morning, you have lost the vows, okay. And I told you this story of friends who took a fasting vow for one day. They're sitting there the next morning with a box of cookies, holding their hand out the window (laughter), you know, waiting for the light, you know (laughs)...and then you can eat the cookies, you see. Okay. And then there's special...(nyi she ma len) means...there's special weird cases...you don't have to know about them, okay. Like, if you thought you were twenty but

you weren't twenty and you fin...as long as you thought you were twenty...even if you're still nineteen, you still have the vow. But if your mother says, "hey I lied to you, you know. You were born two years early...before I met your father", or something. And then, then you lose the vow the moment you know. Okay. And there's stuff like that, okay. But you don't have to know. Okay. (Tong wey gyur den (unclear))...category number eight is...am I on number eight?

(student: No)

Six. Sorry. Category number six which is the last one...it's a it's a seni senility thing? Okay. (laughter) It is "senility", right? Is the benefits...the benefits of keeping them, and I already went through it with you, okay. If you're gonna bore people, say "hey you can get to nirvana", you know. I prefer to take'em through the process. Come on. Every six months, every year, if you keep them assiduously, if you really keep a book from hour to hour, you will definitely see changes in your reality. I'm talking your whole reality. Food tastes better. Music sounds better. You feel lighter, stronger, healthier. Amazing...you know, you start to meet amazing people. You get to the point where all the people around you are these amazing, creative, beautiful people and you you...it's not like you bought them or you put an ad in the New York Times or or something like that. Your karma has dro...driven them to you, and and your whole life becomes like a dream. And it gets better and better and sweeter and sweeter the older you get...as opposed to the normal way a life goes, you see what I mean. So, if you keep them, it just gets better every day...things just get better every day. And once you see that process start to happen you will want to keep them, you see. So this idea of "grumpy and repressed"...you don't have to worry about that. That's not what Buddhist vows are about. You start keeping them for six months to a year...carefully...watching your book...it's the b...happiest way to be, you know. You don't...you're just getting everything you ever dreamed of. And you know it, and you know where it's coming from and you're like turned on and you're like, "oh, give me some more vows", you know, (laughs) okay. It's like that. When they become a (te), when they become an obligation, when it feels repressive or grumpy or something like that, then you're not keeping vows, you don't know what vows are...something got messed up there, okay? So it should be, you keep 'em, you realize the effect they have on your mind and then you watch the effect on your reality. And then you're like, "give me more", you know, "hey, where are those Bodhisattva vows?"

Where're those (tantr)ic vows", you know, "I want more of the stuff", you know. And it works. Okay. So, that's my advertisement for pratimoksha vows. At least take lifetime layman's vows. Big difference between keeping them and just keeping them naturally 'cause you're that kind of person, okay. And then, as you can, move up to the other vows. We will have a ceremony...I don't know when it is...it's in the schedule, but we will have a bodhisattva vow ceremony, first half...soon, I think in early August. Then we'll have the second half which is bodhisattva vow ceremony it...towards the end of the fall and somewhere in there we'll squish a lifetime layman's vow ceremony, okay. Ora will say there's no time, but we'll find the time. And then take 'em if you can, okay. Very powerful, they they change you a lot. Question?

(student: Do you have to have refuge)

Yeah, you have to have refuge vows before you take pratimoksha vows, and it's a very beautiful twelve commitments...not hard, I like to do it as a separate class, so I won't give a person refuge vows and I refuse to give a person lifetime layman's vows unless I've bored them for about two hours with the details, 'cause I want you to know what you're taking. You should never a take a vow without knowing what it is because?

(student: You will break it)

You won't be able to keep it (laughs) if you don't know what it is, okay? (laughs). It's crazy. People go out and giving people vows...I think it's very irresponsible actually. Okay. You gotta know what they are or you're gonna break them, okay? So, anyway, we'll be having opportunities to take all those vows, and and, you know, you're required to study them before. I I make you...I'll I'll make you come to a class where you learn them beforehand. If you wanna take pratimoksha...sorry, bodhisattva vows, in the fall, you must start that course now, okay. You must finish that course on the bodhisattva vows. There's a lot of vows there...sixty-four vows plus a lot of other stuff that they never told you about, and that's a whole course, and you can do it at homestudy, but I'd guess it'd take you a month or a month and a half at least, so you should start now 'cause I refuse to give them to people who haven't finished that course...and I won't, okay. You can take the wish in August, early August without taking that course, which is a commitment to think like a bodhisattva, but if you want to take the commitment to act like a bodhisattva, which will happen in November or

something I think, you have to finish that course. You should start during the break...that's I think around August 15th we'll we'll be off so you can start taking them, okay. All right. We'll take a break there. I'm sorry. David Sykes do you have a...Venerable, sorry.

(student Ven David Sykes: My feeble mind needs some clarification.)

Okay.

(student, Ven David Sykes: (unclear) are clearly (unclear) that all phenomem lack inherent existence, you know, that they're all empty...the only thing that "is" is the fact that they lack inherent existence.)

Okay.

(student, Ven David Sykes: The presentation of pratimoksha vows says that yeah no there is this there is this, you know, a cause will then bring about an effect, there is seems to be a (unclear) coming from these causes, that's what a vow...a person who's taking the vows)

Yeah.

(student, Ven. David Sykes: Now in that presentation they then go back over the other side of the lack of inherency of things and say now there are these special cases)

Who said that?

(student, Ven. David Sykes: the special cases with the vows)

Who said that?

(student, Ven David Sykes: you know, especially the (nye me)s, in which, you know)

Oh yeah, okay. Yeah. Yeah.

(student ven David Sykes: in which you don't collect that much ....now clearly}

No, not only you don't collect .... Okay.

(student, Ven. David Sykes: come up, doesn't see to come up, it should be either one way or the other. But the reason why I'm arguing this is because then if we're vow-keepers, there must be

(nye me)s to vow keeping, then maybe then maybe there's a (nye me) to a person, who say, doesn't keep a book, they're still keeping a vow (laughs) (laughter) So there's this point (unclear)

It's impossible...(laughs)...yeah, yeah, yeah.

(student, Ven. David Sykes: You're making it sound like you cannot reach...I mean, are you saying...)

Okay, David's basically saying this. "If these are not self-existent, that means that things don't have any nature of their own, so, for example, a person who's not keeping a book could get the benefits of keeping a vow if reality were different...you see what I mean? And since reality is not fixed, well reality could be screwed up in such a way that people who don't keep their books might get the benefits of keeping their vows. Okay. And that's not a crazy argument, okay. There have been those arguments. Meaning...I think it boils down to this. What makes a good karma a good karma? Is it just because Lord Buddha said so? Or couldn't you ever have a case where doing a good karma would lead to a bad result? Or is that self-existent that a good karma leads to a good result...you see what I mean? Is that is that in the nature of things. And I say "yes". And he said, "but you just said there's no nature of things". You see what I mean? So how can you say that this always leads to this result or something like that, okay. Is that your question?

(student, Ven. David Sykes: But yeah but then the (nye me) thing would not work. Clearly you're gonna be accruing the same kind of karma even if you're crazy and on drugs if you weren't crazy on drugs because it's still holding to this "yeah, karma does seem to have some type of self-existent nature...clearly one cause will create one effect.")

Okay, that's two different questions then.

(student, Ven David Sykes: Okay. Sorry.)

Two different questions. Is karma self-existent...cause and effect self-existent, you know. Is killing always a bad thing and always leads to a bad result? And then the second question, if a vow is self-existently bad then how could there be any exceptions to it, under certain situations. You see what I mean. Like for example...if you go crazy, if a monk goes crazy and breaks a vow, they do not break their vow...you see what I mean?

If you are legally...is that all right...is that what you what?

(student, Ven. David Sykes: No (laughter) If every karma lack an inherent existence, then that means that I am currently living my own reality. Now my reality really ultimately is the alcohol and the guns that I just did to earn non-virtue clearly are not that which is creating the non-virtue. You understand what I'm saying?)

Naw. (laughter) (laughs)

(student, Ven David Sykes: Like the medicine it's not what's getting you better. Clearly, that, I can't use a karmic copout that I'm in a in a wacky state of mind. Ultimately, it's my karma.

Oh okay, let me try again. (laughter) I have to state the question for the microphone, by the way. I hope I get it right. (laughter) If you take a risk on an investment and you get rich, did the risk cause the richness?

(students: No)

Buddhism says, "no way". And, by the way, that's why people who are conservative also get rich sometimes. Let me get there.

(laughter) So, so if things are not what they appear to be and that's why the world suffers, okay...it looks like if you lie you can get a green card. Okay. People come to me all the time, you know, and I say, "no, the lie doesn't cause the green card. You gotta understand that. If you lie and get a green card it's because you've helped someone find a home in the past. If you lie and don't get a green card, it's because you didn't help someone get a home in the past." But either way the lie is gonna give you trouble later. You gotta get that. Lies don't create green cards. No such thing, okay? Why? 'Cause it doesn't always work...duh. Okay. Hang on. I'm getting there

(student, Ven David Sykes: (unclear) don't cause (unclear)

Yeah, ha. (laughter) So I think what he's saying is then "how could alcohol or drugs self-existent cause something bad...you know, okay, how is it that that you would take alcohol and...how could alcohol be inherently (unclear) and always lead to bad results or something like that...because it's not the alcohol...like if you drink alcohol and you get drunk, did the alcohol make you drunk?

(students: No. Yes. Laugh)

He says your karma made you drunk. Are there anybody...is there anybody who can drink alcohol and not get drunk?

(students: yes)

Or people can hold their liquor, okay. There is some karma there, you know, like whether you go crazy or or get drunk or not doesn't seem to depend on the alcohol, it depends on something that happened before the alcohol, but...

(student, Ven. David Sykes: Is there anybody that)

But.

(student, Ven. David Sykes: (unclear) keeping a book.

But. But. No.

(student, Ven. David Sykes: No?)

No they're not. Because that is the cause of them...the bo...keeping their vows is the cause, you see what I mean?

(student, Ven. David Sykes: Clearly (unclear)

It is the, it is the correct world-view cause of getting liberated. That's all.

(student, Ven David Sykes: You are living your vows.)

Huh?

(student, Ven. David Sykes: You are living your vows.)

You can't live your vows without checking them. Impossible.

(student, Ven. David Sykes: Mentally...checking them...memorizing them.

That's all. If you...memorizing is gonna keep them? (laughter)

(student, Ven. David Sykes: Review them)

Devadhatta knew...memorized more scripture than any monk in ancient India. What happened to him? Where is he now? He's in the hell realm...lowest hell realm. Okay. I mean, it it it no, it's like reciting (tun druk) without thinking about it. Twice a day.

(cut)

Anyway (laughter), see you later. (laughter) (laughs) Okay. Okay. Not much to say, just since we're on the subject of vinaya, I've given a lot of thought to Vinaya and what will happen in the United States about vinaya. I think, since we're talking every night about the future of Buddhism in America, then, you know, I think a lot about what will happen with vinaya, what will happen with monks and nuns in the United States, and it's still, I think, not clear. You know, Buddhism's been here about twenty five years...in the United States. I think a lot...there've been maybe I would guess a hundred Americans or two hundred...maybe a little more, maybe three hundred have attempted to take monks or nuns vows. I'd say off the top of my head that most have given them back, okay...more than half maybe...something like that. I can't think of more than ten successful monks, for example, in...who have kept it for more than ten years which is normally considered...you're considered stable after ten years, you see what I mean? So, I think it's a question of (laughter) (laughs) what's going on and and will vinaya make it in the United States, okay, and I I think it will. I think several things have to happen. I don't think it will make it if it goes the way it's been going because you can see it's not making it, you see what I mean? So what's making the difference and what would make the difference? I think first of all a a lot of the Americans who've been ordained haven't gotten an explanation of their vows, so they don't really know what their vows are. I've met monks and nuns who've had no clue what their vows were. Monks have two hundred fifty-three vows, even a novice nun has thirty-six different commitments...vows, and they just never got an explanation of it...proper training. Those few who maybe saw a list of their vows didn't get commentary from qualified Lamas...you know, they didn't know what their vows really were, they got a list of them from some book but they didn't even see what the...they never got what is required, which is an oral transmission of the lineage, so where they really understand their vows. Secondly there's no place for monks and nuns to live in the United States...to speak of. I kept my vows primarily 'cause I was living with Khen Rinpoche for twenty years or something, in the same house. Everytime I got sent on a

business trip it was shaky, you know (laughs) and then I got home (laughs) you know, like I'd be up with the TV fighting with it all night in these hotel rooms, you know, and and, you know, you need the support of what we call a (nye lama), you have to have a monastic mentor who babysits you for ten years you're not allowed to do anything but brush your teeth and go to the bathroom without asking them. That's the rule. So we don't have any of these things. We don't have a place for people to stay. We have no financial support. We have no (ney Lamas). We have no correct...we have no commentary, no explanation of what they're doing. They don't even know their vows and and that's what's been happening in the West. And normally then end up staying with lay people or with their families or or alone in some apartment some place...which is not good. It's it's very difficult to keep your vows then. So, so what do we do, you know? I think one thing is defining what it is to be a monk or a nun. If I ask you what what are the rules for monks and nuns, you know, you'll say three things. They have to be celibate. This is this is a primary thing in people's minds. They say, "oh, they can't have a girlfriend". And then, second one. They have to cut their hair. (laughter). The third one, they have to wear those funny clothes, you know what I mean? And that's about it. You see. And that's...when you say "monk or nun", if you think about it honestly, seventy-five percent of your impre...you know, what you know, is those three things, you know what I mean.

And is that what vinaya is. Is that what being a monk or a nun is all about. And I think there's been this crisis where people equate that with what a monk or a nun is and that's the whole perception of what it means to keep vinaya or to live in a monastery, and that's not at all what the vinaya is. You got a taste tonight of what the vinaya is and what it is to be a monk or a nun. I mean, when you study the two hundred and fifty-three vows of a monk, and you try to keep them, I'd say ninety, well, a certain big percent of them, maybe fifty percent, have to do with not owning, okay? I mean, if you wanna know what it is to be a monk or a nun, in, really in the old days in ancient India when you were walking around with Lord Buddha and he said, "you gotta...if you're gonna hang out with us, you gotta keep these certain basic rules", okay. Like he's walking around India with this group of close disciples, hanging out, studying, you know, eating together, living together and he said, "look, we need basic rules for this 'cause 'cause so and so went to so and so's house and broke the the dishes and this other guy sat down on the chair too hard and broke it and this other guy went to so and so's house and he slobbered all over the place and and this guy got caught peepeeing in the river and ruined the water...these

are rules from the vinaya, you know what I mean? They were...what was happening in ancient India was you had a very attractive or powerful religious teacher teaching a pure path to reach enlightenment. People smelled it. People can smell it. So people started to gather around this person. And then they started to move around together and it became inconvenient, you know. Five's okay, ten's okay, fifteen starts to get to be a hassle. Two and a half thousand people are listening to the (b: Diamond Cutter), or something, you know what I mean? And, you know, they've gotta, at some point you gotta say, "look, you can't spill things on Michael Wick's carpet, okay" (laughter), no, and and we've had the problem at at Leons house we had this problem. It got to be too large, too many people coming, and then basically harming the sponsor, or or inconveniencing the people there and that's where vinaya was invented. So now Lord Buddha says, "okay, up to this time"... there's a thing called (lang je) in the vinaya. (Lang je) means "the incident", (laughter). Every vow from the vinaya has a (lang je). (Lang je) means...somebody sp...I counted the other night. Michael, close your ears. Nine people spilled stuff on his carpet. Glasses, you know, full glasses, okay (laughs)...I stepped in one that didn't get cleaned...anyway, and and then you make a rule. Okay, you can't keep glasses on the floor anymore, just can't do that. That would be a vinaya rule. You see what I mean. So, it's a rule about how do you behave in a group of people trying to devote themselves to study and and practice fulltime...or pretty much fulltime. Then there's a basic set of rules that you can live together in harmony and function as a as a group of people moving around. And that's really what the whole point is. Then there was a commitment not to own things, you know. I'm not allowed, as a monk, to touch money. I'm not allowed to touch a stove. I'm not allowed to prepare food for myself. I'm not allowed to keep food for more than half a day, you know. And the whole principle is then not to own things and not to own other people. And the great beauty of that life and the great freedom you have from not owning anything...I'm only allowed to own two sets of robes. Period. And a bowl...one bowl. And and that's a beautiful way to live. I mean, basically, if you really study the vinaya deeply and you have twenty people hanging out with you all day, you start to understand why the vinaya was invented. You know, it's to handle the interaction of people who have committed themselves to this way of life, and the root of that way of life is simplicity, and not owning other people and not owning many things and the freedom you get from from not owning things, you see what I mean?

And the basic and keeping your life down to simplicity. I mean that's the root of the vinaya and all the vinaya rules...I mean if you read the...if you study the monks vows, many of them are either relating to how people who are moving around in a group of thirty-forty people at, you know, can live together. You you can't hang out the mats when it's raining. That's a vinaya ru...you know...you can't do that. And and when you're assigned to look at keep watch on the mats in case a rainstorm comes, you can't go more than so many feet away from the mats. Now we don't have mats. We don't have monsoons. But we do have Michael Wick's carpet, you know what I mean? And then you have to...the vinaya is a living creature. The vinaya needs to be applied. The last page of the (b: Vinaya Sutra) says, "in future days, future generations, apply these rules with intelligence and creativity to your modern situation that you have there," you know what I mean? You can't let the vinaya free, you know. You can't go around worrying about the mats in the monsoons 'cause that's not where we're at right now, but we have an equal problem. What's that? Michael Wick's carpet. You know. Is it in the vinaya? No. Okay. Should we watch it? Yes. You know what I mean. And and and you have to look at the intent and the that's the last page of the (b: Vinaya Sutra) are an admonition from Lord Buddha: "Look, don't ever forget in future generations, what's the intent of the vinaya, you know. The vinaya is a system so that Dharma brothers and sisters can work and live together and study together and practice together and deal with their sponsors together in a harmonious way and in a... in a way that can get them all enlightened quickly, and and to keep to basic standards so that they have a purity and and happiness together that comes from them". And that's the meaning of the vinaya. So I just think that it hasn't been done that way yet, you know what I mean? The vinaya has not been practiced this way in western countries. It's a bun...it's a small group of guys and women tr...trying to kinda half keep some Tibetan cultural thing that they heard about, not knowing their vows, not knowing the principles behind the vows, you see what I mean? Which are more important that the vows themselves. Why is there a vow like that? What was Lord Buddha trying to do? And are we supposed to stick to the vow or are we supposed to stick to the.. what the intent of this vow is? Is it okay to spill nine drinks on Michael's carpets in one day? As long as you watch out for the mats during the monsoon season (laughter), you see what I mean? And and you have to think. What was the function of the vows. What was the purpose that Lord Buddha had in mind when Lord Buddha created the vinaya. And and I think in coming years that will be the test of the vinaya in the west. And I also

think that don't equate vinaya with...simply with ordination. I mean, we're saying three of the eight sets of vows are for lay people and that whole segment of the vows, I think, has to...you have to pay attention to that. I believe that at least in the next hundred years this will be the first country in history where the majority of the great Lamas are lay people and that's the way it's gonna be. And I believe that Buddhism will be passed on primarily in this country through lay people and that will be the first time in history that that's really happened. I don't believe there will be an elite of monks and nuns who keep all the knowledge, and only they study and only they get to practice and only they get to meditate and you just go to work and send me a check, okay. It's not gonna be like that in America. I...and I like it. I think it's I think the United States is gonna be a very interesting case in history of Buddhism where it'll be passed down..I think, as far as I can see in the in the near future, there will be great monks and nuns, and there should be. And there should be proper monasteries and nunneries and they must know what they're doing. And then on top of that, laypeople have to consider themselves part of the vinaya and they have to take their lifetime laymen's vows and keep them. The greatest Lamas of our lineage, some of them, you can think of Dromten Je, you can think of Drapa Gyensen of the Vajrayogini lineage, you can think of Art Engle (laughter) (laughs) okay, all right. It's not the point. The point is that you take some kind of level of laymen's vows and you keep them. And then you keep them knowing what they do to you, which is they they cause your reality to change, if you keep them well. And then I think we have to work really hard on studying the vinaya and the meaning of the vinaya, and that just hasn't been done, so I I think in this Institute for the monks and nuns who are in this Institute, especially out in Arizona, I think, we have to work really hard on mastering the vinaya. And and then working really hard to make sure it doesn't die by becoming irrelevant, you see what I mean? We have to study the vinaya, study the principles...you're gonna have ov...out there if it happens, the forty year plan is nine thousand people on nine thousand acres and how you gonna keep harmony, you know, what are the rules...how many drinks can you spill on Michael's carpet before you do something, okay. And there'll be rules like that. And it will take great intelligence and great compassion and great foresight and great vision to get it right and not just be lazy and say, "oh, you know, there wasn't any rule about spilling...was it.. iced tea...what's that company...anyway...Arizona Iced Tea on Michael's carpet. There's no rule like that...we don't have to worry about it, you know. That's obviously not the intent...it was...I think we're gonna

hafta study vinaya well, study it deeply, and then apply it to our sangha, you know...to our situation. And, one last example. I mean, this...in the early days when Lord Buddha was walking around with his forty-fifty people hanging around him all the time, and they decided to ta...to wear robes. So what...how did that happen? He said, "I don't want you owning anything". So they said, "well, what're we supposed to wear? My my old jeans are wearing out, you know". And he said, "you can take cloth out of the garbage. You have to pick through other people's garbage and find cloth and then you can sew it together and make robes". And that was the rule. You could not use a piece of cloth that you did not take out of a piece of...somebody's garbage, that they had thrown out. So they got patches on their robes 'cause nobody could find a perfect, you know, twelve foot piece of...this thing is big, okay, and so what do they do now? They go to the local village, they buy a twelve foot piece of cloth and they cut it up (laughter) into patches and then they resew it together so it'll have patches on it, you know. Now I'm not making fun...it's a ho...when I saw Sera Monastery the first time I cried. I didn't cry since my mother died. And I just cried, you know. It's the holiest place in the world and the Tibetans keeping the vinaya, the Tibetan monks, nuns, it is the happiest life in the world. It's the most incredible thing in the world. You can't imagine. This thing got a little confused and I think we hafta work on stuff like...that's all. I'm saying, take that holy, beautiful sacred thing and take it back to the real intent of it and it'll be something that Westerners will want to do. You know what I mean...and I just hope we can have the wisdom to do that, you know, I think we have to have the wisdom to do that, but it's a beautiful way of life and we have to study it and find out how to revive it. I think it's one of those things we have to revive, okay. Vinaya. All right. We'll do a prayer.

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: dedication)



## Review Course 17

### Class 8, part 1

Transcribed by: Karen Becker

(student, John Stilwell) So Geshe Michael is out of town. He'll be back on Thursday. So we have to be able to fill in for him while he's away. And tonight's class is on Vinaya...which I have to admit, I'm a little nervous about 'cause it's not one of my specialities (laughter), but I'll give it a shot, you know. That ethical way of life, you know, it's tricky. So. It's actually, I think, I hope it'll be interesting because tonight it's interesting for several reasons, one of which is the material tonight includes how to behave towards the Lama, you know, how to evaluate a Lama and how to tell if you have a good one or not, so...it's interesting that Geshe Michael absented himself tonight (laughter) (laughs) you know. So we can say anything we want, you know, we can really talk (laughs) and I actually I would encourage you to really be frank and mix it up, you know. I think it's a good opportunity to really...if you have some some things which are bothering you about Lamas, or how or how to relate to a Lama or the Tibetan Buddhist notion of putting a lot of faith in a Lama, or you know, sort of giving it all up to a Lama in terms of, you know, really giving yourself to him after checking him out, all those sorts of thing. Tonight's a prime opportunity to really get into it and I think probably everyone who has spent any time around a Lama has got lots of (laughs) feelings about this subject. So so don't be shy. It's a great opportunity tonight to to really get into it and and maybe see if we can make some progress and get into some some meaty, dirty, interesting conversation (laughs) (laughter). Be fun for me...or maybe not. I don't know. So, in any case, I'll continue a little bit with the first half of the vinaya class. The first half of the vinaya class was the pratimoksha vows, the eight different classes of individual freedom vows, which, I believe they've all been covered...am I am I correct...yeah. Okay. So, in the original vinaya class Geshe Michael spent the first first half of the class talking about the pratimoksha vows and then the second half of the vinaya class a couple of weeks...he actually did (lam rim) study. So I'm not gonna go go into (lam rim) so much because probably you've all heard it a lot and and (lam rim) review was already done in an earlier course. So so I'm gonna recap a little bit on the on the homework questions and the the elements of the vinaya, and then we'll get into this Lama thing, you know, and see how that goes. Main points in terms of studying vinaya, you know, why study vinaya. In the this in the Hinayana system the main reason for studying vinaya is to attain

nirvana by by keeping your vows you can eliminate your mental afflictions and attain nirvana and the vinaya is oriented...keeping, studying the vinaya and keeping the vows detailed in the eight pratimoksha vows, eight sets of pratimoksha vows, that primarily addresses misdeeds of body and speech and not so much of mind. It's bodhisattva vows and highest vows, secret vows, (tantr)ic vows which address misdeeds of mind moreso than the vinaya. They're called individual freedom vows because if you keep them they lead you to freedom, to nirvana. That's the idea. Nirvana, for those of you who don't know, is a complete cessation, a complete removal of all of your bad thoughts, all of you mental afflictions, all of your anything which would ever disturb your mind would be ended. To just to recap what the eight classes of pratimoksha vows are, individual freedom vows are, you have one-day vows, you have lifetime layman's vows, you have lifetime laywoman's vows, you have novice monks vows, you have novice nun's vows, you have intermediate nun's vows, you have full nun's vows and you have full monk's vows. So, once you've got the vows, once you've taken the vows, the study of vinaya covers how you get the vows, how you keep the vows, how you break the vows, and what you do to restore the vows and we can't really go into any of those things because you require ordination to get into the details. So the idea of this course was to give an overview just to understand it from a broader perspective without breaking any of the vows of the of the monks by talking about the details. So. I'm gonna, althought I'm not a Tibetophile myself, and I don't speak Tibetan, I'm going to be diligent and provide all of the Tibetan materials for those of you who do like Tibetan, so when you have...once you do have the individual freedom vows, how do you lose them? What can cause any of the vows to be broken or lost? The first thing is called (la pa pul), you say (la pa pul) (repeat)...come on, (la pa pul) (repeat), all right, (la pa) is "precepts" (pul) is "to offer", it means that you formally give them back. You actually undergo a ceremony, you recite words from a scripture where you official and formally give your vows back...I'm gonna zip through this stuff because it's not really relevant to my life...'cause I'm not a monk, but Dr. Sykes, you might be interested. The second is (shi pu) (repeat), please say (shi pu) (repeat). (Shi) is "dying" and (pu) is "transmigrating". Moving on, ie you died, you lost it. It's pretty straight forward, where you move on to, you know...another matter. Please say (seng nye jung) (repeat) (seng nye jung) (repeat) (Seng) is "sex organ". (Nye) is "two" and (jung) is "if they appear". What does that mean? (laughs) Any guesses. (laughs. No. Okay. That's if you're if you were born with two

sex organs. It has to do with your with your subtle body, with your energetic body, if you were born without a male or female system...

(student: (unclear))

Huh?

(student: Then you can't get ordained.)

Then you can't get ordained in the first place. So what does this mean?

(student: This is if it grows.)

Oh, I'm sorry. That means if it grows afterwards, okay. There you go. As I said, not too relevant to my life, I hope (laughs) (laughter). Okay. So. The next way you get rid of you individual freedom vows (laughter)...what happened there? Yeah. Nothing yet. I hope. Yeah. Please say (len sum gyur) (repeat) (len sum gyur), (repeat) so (len) is "times", (sum) is "three" and (gyur) is "change". This means if you really like surgery and you change your sex three times, okay. Or if you have mystical abilities to change your gender otherwise. Which I presume was the case back in the...thousand years ago. Un huh?

(student: To keep your vows you can only change your sex twice?)

Bingo. You got it. (laughs) You're there, you know. You cha...you can switch genders, feel like you would have rather been the original gender and go back and you're still okay, (laughs).

(student: Right. Yeah. Yeah?)

(student: How many (unclear) (laughter))

Fair enough.

(student: Are you talking about (unclear)?)

No, no, not at all. This these are this is from the scripture from, you know, fifteen hundred years ago where they listed the things which would cause monks and nuns to lose their ordination, and, at the time, as as a result of advanced meditative abilities and other things, it was possible to change gender and things

like that...where a man could change himself into a woman, etc, and so these are just re quickly recapping what the rules of the sutra are for monks and nuns which which outline, "if you do these things, you'll lose your ordination, you'll break your vows". That that's all.

(student: Are you talking about castration?)

It's not it's it's to my knowledge, it's not spe spe

(student: Is this gonna be on the homework?) (laughter)

(laughs) Well, you don't have to explain it. You just have to list it. (laughs) (laughter) It is on the homework. You just have to itemize five things, that's all. No explanation necessary, thankfully. That's why I'm gonna zip through them because I don't have

(student: (unclear) exactly the word, you said (unclear))

On having both sex sexual organs appear on your body. That's how it's it's described.

(student: You mean like male and female?)

Male and female. Yeah. Yeah. This is really gonna be a resilient question, Dr Sykes.

(student, Dr. Sykes: No, I)

Okay. (laughs) We'll pass (laughter). Okay. Please say, (ge tsa che) (repeat) (laughs) (ge tsa che) (laughs) (repeat). You lose your core of virtue. (Ge) is "virtue", (tsa) is "root of" and (che) is "cut". Your core. You cut your root of virtue

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. There you go. Sure. I often wonder if anybody really copies this Tibetan down. I guess they do. (laughs) They do. I don't mean to discourage you from studying Tibetan, by the way. I'm I should keep my (laughs). I really want to get to the Lama stuff so I'm just gonna move through this. Sorry? Huh?

(student: (unclear))

I was afraid somebody was gonna ask me that. (laughs) When it

when you cut when you lose your core of virtue, it means you hold wrong views, Puntsok? Basically you do something really wrong which cuts your basic connection, like believing that karma doesn't exist, believing that...having wrong views about emptiness, that type of thing. That's how you cut your core of virtue. Yeah, Dr. Sykes?

(student, Dr. Sykes: (unclear))

All right. He's gonna pass. Are you guys done with this transparency? Yeah.

(student, Dr. Sykes: Let's go on)

Dr. Sykes is gonna be my nemesis, you know, he's he's making faces at me, he's trying to see if he can unnerve me up here, so, we'll see how we do (laughs), so please say (ne kap) (repeat) (dre bu) (repeat) (hla mi) (repeat) (ne kap dre bu hla mi) (repeat). This is one of the results of keeping your vows. If you keep your vows nicely, then you have two results, and this is the first one. (Ne kup) means "in the short term", (dre bu) means "the result", the (hla) is "deva" or angel, and (mi) is "human". If you keep your vows you have a higher birth. You have a birth as a human or a deva, a an angelic type being, a pleasure being, a being of a higher realm, and the second result of keeping your vows...please say (jang chub) (repeat) (sum) (repeat) (jang chub sum) (repeat). (Sum) is "three" and (jang chub) is "enlightenment", means that you attain one of the three enlightenments. Any ideas what the three enlightenments are? Yeah. Good. It's the two, the at

taining either of...it's called the "total enlightenment" which is Buddhahood or it is attaining the "enlightenment of a listener" or the "enlightenment of the self-made Buddha"...in the Hinayana path they consider nirvana to be enlightenment and the Mahayana path there's a different enlightenment, so between Hinayana and Mahayana enlightenment is not the same thing, and so what is a what is a listener...what is the nirvana of a listener? What is the enlightenment of a listener? It means someone who has listened to the teachings and become enlightened as a result and the self-made Buddha is someone who has not had a teacher teach them and yet they still become enlightened. So now, how is that possible. How is it possible to become enlightened if no one teaches you...isn't that sort of contrary to what's what's taught and to what's said?

(student, Ann Lindsey: You have no teacher in this lifetime but you have had many in previous lives)

Yes, Ann Lindsey points out correctly you have no teacher in that lifetime. You cannot become enlightened unless someone leads you along the way, leads you along the path. And so a self-made Buddha is someone who in their current life, their present life has not had a teacher in person but in their previous lifetimes they've had extensive extensive extensive teachings and so they're very ripe, they've accumulated tremendous amounts of knowledge and progress in their spiritual path and in that lifetime they become enlightened on the nirvana track, meaning they attain nirvana. What is nirvana? Nirvana means that you have a complete cessation of all mental afflictions. Your mind is in a space which is very happy and blissful and nothing bothers it or disturbs it. That's nirvana. The difference with the enlightenment of Mahayana path is that you have the same type of mental happiness or bliss but you have the bodhisattva activity. You have the aspiration to help all beings and so you have countless emanation bodies and form bodies and activities to set out and to undertake assisting all existing beings to eliminate their suffering. So that's the difference between the nirvana enlightenment and the Maha...and the total enlightenment. Yeah Jo Jo?

(student, Jo jo: Does a listener become enlightened by just listening and without practicing meditation?)

So the question was, "does a listener become enlightened only by listening and not by meditating?" Good question. I don't know. Anybody know? Dido? You gotta...you don't know, oh you had a question? Do you know Elly?

(student, Ven. Elly: They're called 'listeners' because they can listen to Mahayana but they can't practice it".

But in terms of becoming enlightened though?

(student, Ven Elly: No, they practice)

Meditated? Meditate practice?

(student, Ven Elly: I think the reason they're called 'listeners' is that (unclear)

So, Elly was saying, "yeah, they...she said they do practice, but

do they have to practice...well, I don't know. I don't think there's a there's a definitive conclusion that they have to practice. Logically speaking, according to the laws of karma, it seems to me they would have to meditate and they would have to practice. Elly pointed out that if you're a listener, you listen to Mahayana but you don't practice it. Is another element of that. Yeah...Arie.

(student, Arie: (unclear))

I'm sorry?

(student, Arie: Other teachings say if you are going to move to other paths, it is done when you are meditating.)

Yeah, Arie was saying that, you know, according to the other teachings, if you are going to move from path to path or level to level, and have any realizations and attainments that it can only happen in deep meditation, so if you're going to attain nirvana, that that would have to happen during meditation. So...I mean I can...we can...logically think it out. I couldn't say from a direct scriptural reference that, yeah, Je Tsongkapa said, da da da da da da, you know, that's a definitive answer. So Nanette was saying, "well, she thought that if you had a lot of virtue you would always have teachers around". And so how karmically would have enough virtue to attain nirvana but not have enough virtue to have a teacher present to lead you there...like that?

(student, Nanette: To see them)

To to see them, yeah. Yeah. You know, you collect karma in relationship to different beings and different objects. And so if you're going to have a teacher around, you're have to collect karma in relationship to a teacher, you know, serving a teacher properly is the karmic cause for having a teacher. It's possible in, you know there's there's so many trillions and trillions and trillions of karma in your mindstream and the permutations of their combination are vast, you know, and do you have enough karmic seeds of a particular type so that they will configure and arise for a particular kind of perception. Well, that will determine your perception, you know. If you have the the the mix of karma to to not see a teacher, than that's what you'll see. That's the only way it could be. So you could at the same time have enough virtue to see yourself as being quite blissed out and happy, but not have the virtue to see someone, or not have the karmic imprints to project a being there who is leading you along

the way, you know. And we're we're gonna talk more about that later actually, you know. What is the karma...what happens karmically when you're around the teacher, you know. Is it a good thing or is it a bad thing, you know? Like that. So. Those are the two the two results of keeping your vows. Now on your homework there's a lot of information about the karmic consequences of keeping your vows or not keeping your vows, and I don't really want to get into it too much...I'm gonna let you guys go over that during the discussion groups, but basically there are three karmic...there are three results of karma, three types of result that karma brings to you, and on your homework it asks you, "what are the correlations of each of the ten non-virtues and each of the three karmic consequences, you know, if you kill, what are the three levels of karmic consequence of killing, okay? The three different types or levels of karmic consequence are, one, that it creates your environment, whatever you do creates your environment. Okay there's an environmental result to a karma. The second is, there's a personal result, you experience something yourself, okay? And the third is that you have a predisposition or a habit which you create in yourself to behave a certain way in the future, okay. So those are the three types of karmic consequence, and so on your homework, and you can talk about it in your discussion groups if you like, on your homework it's, you know, they wanna know what the three different consequences are of each of the ten non-virtues, you know, if you kill, if you steal, if you sexual misconduct, if you lie, etc., okay? Sexual misconduct, for example, just to just to mention it briefly, the environmental result of sexual misconduct...does anybody know?

(students: You live in an unpleasant place)

You live in a stinky place. (laughs). You have a lot of pollution, you have a lot of unpleasant smells, a lot of unpleasant visual sites, like that. What is the...personal result, if you engage in sexual misconduct? What happens to you?

(students: (unclear))

I heard a whispering but missed it.

(students: Difficult relationships)

Yeah, you can't have a relationship, you can't keep a relationship. If you, if you steal love, essentially, you know, if you take someone from another person, then you will not be

able to keep love yourself. You will not be able to keep a relationship yourself. You know, you will have a lot of competition for your mate. Your mate will be easily distracted, wandering, you know, you'll lose your mate...they'll be interested in other people, like that. So, and what is the the sort of the the other consequence, the the the habit that you generate if you do that? Anybody know?

(student: You create jealousy)

You create jealousy? Yeah. That's one idea. Anybody else have any ideas?

(students: (unclear))

Yeah. You you create people around you who are undependable, people who are inconsistent and you have the habit yourself of sort of wandering, you know. There's a lot of inconsistency. Okay. So that's the idea. In in your discussion groups, if you want to you can go through the ten the ten, yeah, Elizabeth?

(student, Elizabeth: (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. It's yeah, so Elizabeth was saying there are three consequences that were talked about before as the result of karma. One is, if you do it...if you do a negative karma strongly, you'll go...really intensely, you you end up in a in a in a really suffering realm like a hell realm. If you do a karma with a medium degree of intensity, you know, you end up in a moderately bad realm, and if you do a a kar...a negative deed with a very light intensity, you know, maybe not even aware that you're doing it, that you know, that you'll have perhaps an animal birth or or suffering human birth. So her question was, how does that fit in, you know...how does that fit in with these three things? It's a different classification. It's a different grouping basically. They basically just say negative karmas have three results in that way and negative karmas have three results in this way, and what you're talking about is just where you're going to, you know, in the future, in future births and what they're talking about here is what happens to you in your future birth. What the result is in your future birth. What it's like in your future birth. Like that, okay. So, there're several pages of this, it's...good luck in the discussion groups and on your homework. (laughter) There are four special qualities to the teachings on enlightenment, the (lam rim) teachings and I'm

just wanna touch on those basely...briefly. If I can find the transparency. Yup. And I'm just gonna put this up here again briefly for the benefit of the Tibetan track people, please say (tem pa) (repeat) (gyel mey) (repeat) (tempa gyel mey) (repeat) So (tempa) is "teachings", (gyel) is "inconsistencies" and (mey) is "none". So there are four special qualities to the teachings, the teachings of the Buddha, teachings on (lam rim) and this is the first of them. And basically what it means is that you realize that all of the teachings of the Buddha are free of any inconsistencies. Now what does that mean? You know, you could say, "now wait a minute. What're you talking about?", you know. In one sutra the Buddha says, "it's this way", and the next sutra the Buddha says, "that's not right. It's the opposite way". Of course there are inconsistencies, of course there are there are there are mistaken things and inaccurate things, you know, the sutras disagree with each other. So what this means is that, in so far as the different sutras and the different teachings were given for specific people and their capacities to lead them and to bring them up to the next level from where they are, there are no inconsistencies. All of the teachings of the Buddha were designed to bring people along the path from where they are to the next level beyond where they are. So while it may appear that there are inconsistencies in the teachings if you look at it at face value, if you interpret it and if you look at the motivation and the purpose behind this teaching, every single teaching is designed to bring people along towards enlightenment from whatever level they're on and in that respect, even though various sutras disagree with each other, each and every teaching of the Buddha has the same specific purpose and is accurate and valid and effective in bringing various classes of beings and people and minds along in their level of understanding. So it's like that. Please say (sum rab) (repeat) (dam par) (repeat) (char) (repeat) (Sum rab dam par char) (repeat). Phuntsok is sitting up here, he's probably like thinking, "ah, he's butchering this Tibetan" (laughs) but, doing my best, Puntsok. (laughs) So (sum rab) is the high speech of the Buddhas. (Dam par) is "personal advice" and (char) is "strikes you". It strikes you. It seems to you...it strikes you. (Dam par) is "personal advice". And it means that all of the su all of the teachings all of the speech of the Buddhas strikes you as personal advice. It doesn't strike you as academic book knowledge, it doesn't strike you as something written for someone else, it doesn't strike you as some intellectual thing to maybe wrap your mind around one day. It strikes you as something which you can use in your life right now and it's immediately and it personally salient to you. You know, it means like "oh. I get

it. In my life this is what I'm supposed to be doing. This is what they're say to be doing in my life right now"...that's that's the idea with that. Please say (gyel) (repeat) (gong) (repeat) (de lak) (repeat) (nyen) (repeat) (Gyel gong de lak nyen) (repeat). (Gyel) is "the victorious Buddhas". (Gong) is "the true intent". (De lak) is "easy happiness". And (nye) is "to find".

(student: (unclear))

The (gyel)? is "victorious Buddhas". Victorious Buddhas. And what this means is is that each and every word and each and every teaching that you hear you feel and you realize is directed at you personally so that you can reach enlightenment. You, you feel that everything that you hear, everything that you study is done for the specific purpose of your reaching enlightenment, and nothing that you study and nothing that you read strikes you as being for any other purpose, okay. Like that. If you pick up a book and you read it...and it's a valid sutra, you know, you'd say, "wow", you know, "this...they're they're teaching me how to get enlightened. This is not something that's irrelevant to my life" Every single sutra that was ever taught you would feel that way. Please say (nye chu) (repeat) (chen poy) (repeat) (yang) (repeat) (se le) (repeat) (sung) (repeat) (Nye chu chen poy yang se le sung). (repeat) Whoops. (unclear) (laughs) (laughter) You do it...Puntsok...I need Puntsok. He's my he's my Tibetan side kick, you know. Whenever there's Tibetan stuff I always ask him to come along, you know (laughs). Now let's try it again. (Nye chu) (repeat) (chen poy) (repeat) (yang) (repeat) (sa le) (repeat) (sung) (repeat). That's perfect for me. Although Puntsok, you know, I know...it's butchered.

(student: Can you move it up a little bit?)

Move it up? Yeah. So (nye chu chen poy) is "a great mistake". What is (yang sa) Puntsok? What is (yang sa)? Oh, I don't know either. He doesn't know and I don't know. Anybody know what (yang sa) means? Any Tibetan experts in the audience? No. All right. It's a mystery one guys. We can do the last two. (Le sung) (Le) is "from" and (sung) is "protected". I was gonna try to bleep over it but I was sure somebody would ask, so (laughs)...I just fess up. Huh? Cliff? That's a good one. So Puntsok said (yang sa), he thinks, means "cliff". That works actually. And what it means is "you're protected from the cliff or the great mistake". And what is that? It means that you're protected from rejecting any of the Buddhas teachings as being

wrong or invalid or useless or inappropriate because of the prior point...that you realize that they all contribute to reaching enlightenment. Okay? So those are the four main points. The four qualities of the teachings.

(student: (unclear))

Repeat...which, what?

(student: (unclear))

What it means? The last one means that you are protected from rejecting any teaching as being irrelevant or useless or not being valid or useful because you realize that every single teaching is directed at you to lead you to enlightenment. Okay. You finish you guys finished with this one? Okay. Now we get into the good stuff. This is the stuff that I like to talk about...is your relationship with your Lama and that is what is an appropriate relationship with a Lama and...are you done...not done, okay. What is an appropriate relationship with a Lama? How do you tell if you have a good Lama? How do you tell if your lama is wacky? How do you tell if your Lama's being way out of line, and, you know, your Lama bugs the crap outta you and what do you do about it, you know, and any other Lama related irritations and questions and and issues that that happen to come up. So. There are ten quali...I'm gonna go through the...nah, I'll talk a little bit first. Basically the first thing that you should realize...let me say it differently. It's important to to understand that everything you experience and everything that you perceive is a function of your mind and your projections. It's a it's a a very important point and it's a big pitfall that many people fall into to think that Lamas are self-existent holy people. That if everyone says so, and if they got their picture on lots of books and if they're the Dalai Lama or Khen Rinpoche or Geshe Michael or any other Lama that they, from their own side, are holy. They are not, okay. The critical point that you all understand. There are beings who perceive His Holiness as quite an evil guy. Okay. He can not be self-existent holy if some beings perceive him as evil and other beings perceive him as holy. Okay. Nor can anyone else. It violates the laws of karma. It violates the laws of emptiness and if you think that teachers, Lamas are self-existent holy, then you don't understand karma and emptiness and it's it and you're gonna get in trouble most likely, particularly if you spend any time around a Lama. So so what'da you do? I mean, what's this what's this what is this whole Lama thing about, you know. Why do you see a

Lama as holy? Any...I mean why...any ideas...why do you see a Lama as holy?

(student: Because of your karma)

'Cause of your karma. Because of your projections. You are projecting the idea the concept that this is a good guy, that this is a holy guy, that this is a special guy, okay. Will you always have that projection? No. Okay. It's entirely feasible that you will see someone as extremely holy for a period of time and you will see them as a royal pain in the butt for a period of time and you will see them as extremely abusive for a pay...period of time. And all those things can be valid perceptions. And will be valid perceptions from you...from your side, for you. Okay. Very important to realize. Very important to understand. There are no self-existent holy beings. How do you get beings to appear holy to you? Goes back to Nanette's question. Why wouldn't you have a holy teacher around? Why wouldn't a being appear holy to you? If I had the karma, if I...if my mind functioned properly, I would be seeing each and every one of you as a holy Lama right now, okay? The simple fact that I am not seeing Elly or Ann or Dr. Sykes as a holy being right now means that I have not done enough virtue and my projections and my perceptions are corrupted and I have negative karmas ripening and I'm seeing people as limited and am experiencing them as limited. Okay. It's a very profound point.

It's a very profound subject. And it's a very important subject. So. How do you get a Lama? How do you get a a holy Lama? How do you have a perception of a holy Lama? You must collect the karma to experience the resultant outcome of perceiving someone as a holy Lama. ie, you must treat a being...or more than one beings, in the proper way karmically to plant karmic seeds which will ripen into the result of a perception of a holy Lama. Okay? That's why you wouldn't have a Lama in your life...because you haven't done enough virtue specifically the karmic virtues needed in relationship to a Lama to create a Lama...to have a perception of a Lama...to be around a Lama. If you're around a Lama, you are using, you are consuming and burning up, vast amounts of virtuous karma. Just being around them. Just seeing them. Just hearing them consumes and uses and finishes vast amounts of virtuous karma, okay. And this is one of the reasons why in the teachings it says, "you must behave properly in relationship to your Lama." You must treat your Lama properly because you collect the karmas in relationship to your Lama...I wanna...let me say it differently. You plant the the karmic seeds to have a Lama from the way you

behave towards your Lama, so if you don't behave properly towards a being that you consider to be holy, then you are not going to plant the karmic seeds to experience someone in the future as a holy being, as a teacher, as a spiritual teacher. Okay? So so that's the idea. It's a little bit tricky perhaps...it's a little bit slippery. Hopefully it's clear. It's a very important point. So

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, Mike?

(student, Mike: You say you are burning up (unclear))

Using using.

(student, Mike: Why not you are getting the chance to burn up negative karma when you are around the Lama?)

So Michael said, "if you're using vast amounts of virtuous karma by being around a Lama, why aren't you consuming vast amounts of negative karma".

(student, Mike: You say. You're saying while you're around a Lama, you you you're using up a lot of negative. I say when you got the chance to be around the Lama, you have the opportunity to use up a lot of negative karma.)

Yeah. So Michael was saying, when you're around a Lama you have the opportunity to to u...to use up or puri...is it purify you mean or...

(student, Michael: Yes)

To purify a lot of negative karma. There's an important distinction that I would make. When you're around a Lama it's not that you are destroying virtuous karma, or it's not that you are burning up virtuous karma. The ripening of virtuous karmic seeds is the perception of the Lama. The fact that you are perceiving a Lama is the manifestation of karma's flowering in your mind and ripening in your mind, second by second, moment by moment, okay? If you perceive a Lama in front of you, that is your virtuous karma ripening and being used up. That's what perceiving a Lama is. So, if you if you want to purify negative karma in relationship to a Lama, you can do that, or you can accumulate a lot of negative karma in a relationship to a Lama.

It just depends on your thoughts and your behavior, you know. It it goes back to an understanding of how things exist and what the nature of perception is and how karma works. You know, you can think of it as a projector. Your mind is the collection of your karmic imprints...not your brain, but your mind stream. Your mind stream is the collection of your karmic imprints. Okay. Your mind is your perception of your mind is the flowering of the karmas in your mind. Your perception of me and everyone around you is the flowering of your karma. It takes trillions and trillions and trillions of discrete karmas flowering at any given moment to construct a reality and and there're vast amounts of karma ripening every millisecond to provide you with enough data to have the perception that you have. You can think of it as a projector, you know. It's a fairly good analogy to think that, you know, your mind is doing the projecting and it's gotta have a lot of stuff that it's projecting out there to create a whole reality, you know, to create all of this, you know...of this...all the data of these six senses, you know...to have to have perception of all that takes a vast amount of karma which is which is ripening and which is going off. So, it's a little slippery. It's a little subtle. Yeah?

(student: (unclear))

I can't hear. I...

(student: (unclear))

Is...question is, is there a way to...yeah, question is, is there a way to shut off your projections and to just witness...if you are witnessing, you are projecting. According to Buddhism the very act of being aware and sentient, the very act of being conscious means that you are having perceptions. If you're having perception of any kind that's a projection, so it's...there's no way to escape that.

(student: (unclear))

It's not a question of the perceiver and the perceiving. It's a question of if you're conscious, you're aware and you're projecting. There's no...without one there is not the other possible. Like that. Yeah?

(student: I have one small thing to say)

Okay.

(student: When you say, "I heard it like that", you're saying if you're around the Dharma you're burning up more)

Not burning up. You keep saying "burning up", you're not burning up, you are using up.

(student: Okay, you're using up...you're using up more karma than you would...)

You...no, I didn't...no nope..I didn't say you're using up more karma, I said you're using up virtuous karma. I said you use a vast amount of virtuous karma to perceive a Lama. If you perceive a Lama, it means that you have in your mind, flowering at that moment, a vast amount of virtuous karma.

(student: That means that it's difficult to see or (unclear), I don't understand...)

It me...think of it this way. If if I see you as Michael, it means I have a mix of karmas flowering in my mind at this moment to perceive you as Michael. Okay. Now if if I have more negative karmas flowering in my mind at this moment, I'll perceive you as a real jerk, okay? If I have more virtuous karmas...

(student, Michael: (unclear))

(laughs) well it would be valid at the moment, it's true.

(laughs) (laughter) Then I felt a different way (laughs)

(laughter). So, so if I have at that moment more virtuous karmas flowering in my mind, I would be perceiving you as a really great guy and the more...if my mind were filled with a tremendous amount of virtuous karmas flowering at that moment, I would be perceiving you as maybe an angel or maybe a teacher, or maybe a holy being...so it's like that. So if I'm perceiving if I'm perceiving a Lama it means in my mind at that moment I have a tremendous amount of virtuous karmas which are flowering and going off and creating that perception. What? Turn it off? Oh. You're done. So so that's what that's my point. Okay. My point is, be aware that if you are perceiving a Lama and if you are spending time around a Lama, the very act of having that perception is consuming...is the expression of virtuous karma ripening and it's getting used up at a very fast rate. Yeah, Debbie.

(student, Debbie: But if you were having such a virtuous thought to regard Michael as a holy teacher you would surely be accumulating virtue at the same time.)

So Debra says, "if you have the virtue in your mind to perceive someone, say Geshe Michael, as a as a holy teacher then surely you would also be accumulating virtue at the same time" No. Lots of people see Geshe Michael as a teacher...or as a holy being one day, and then the next afternoon they're really pissed off at him and they accumulate a tremendous amount of negative karma...stuff like that. Yeah, Marie.

(student, Marie. So how are we to (unclear) causes to see, for example, John Stilwell, as the Lama...)

God forbid, huh? (laughs)

(student, Marie. Or Geshe Michael as the Lama)

So Marie's question is, "how would you create the cause to see me as a Lama", to which I said, "holy smokes" or someone like Geshe Michael as a Lama? It could be anyone, you know. And this is the, this is actually the key to the secret teachings of the Buddha to (tan) to (tantra). Whomever you select to enter into that type of relationship with is it, you know. I mean, essentially we all have to choose at some point to behave virtuously towards one particular individual...three people, or everybody, you know. The point of bodhichitta is is to to choose to try to be virtuous towards everyone. To try to behave well towards everyone. Now frankly in our lives our past karma is causing us to see some people as better than others, you know. My valid perception right now is some of you guys are a lot nicer than others, you know. And some of you know a lot more and some of you are a lot more experienced and some are you are a lot more holy than others, and it's a valid perception and it's the result of of past virtue and past karmas ripening. So normal valid conventional perception makes it easier for us to relate to some people as holy and it gives you a platform or a headstart to relate properly towards them. Okay. If I see Elly as a teacher, as a holy person who knows a lot about meditation, who has a lot of experience, who's very pure, who's very virtuous, it's a lot easier for me to think of her as someone I should treat nicely and kindly and respectfully, okay, as opposed to...(laughter) (laughs) someone else (laughs), save myself, (laughs) as opposed to someone else who I don't respect very much and who I don't think very highly of, it's much harder for me to treat someone I

don't respect very much and don't think very highly of in a pure way, okay? It's very difficult for me to to make offerings to them, to be very kind to them, to be very respectful to them, to help them in any way I possibly can, to go out of the way to do what they say, you know. To do anything I can to further their noble causes. It's very hard for me to do that with somebody who I don't like or somebody I think's just average, okay. So it's like that. The idea is is that you...it...the laws of karma apply to this as everything else. You must plant the appropriate karmic seeds to have the perception in the future of a Lama and you can do that in relationship to various beings, you know. It's easiest to do it with someone you already see as a Lama, okay. That's that's the idea. So, you got a jump...you got a headstart, you're conventional perception is giving you a boost to to make it easier for you to relate to someone and to serve them and to and to do virtue in relationship to them, so it's like that. Now, in (tantra) the point is, well maybe you shouldn't only think about one person that way, you know. And the same is true of the Mahayana, you know, you shouldn't just try to help one person. You should try to relate to this...you should try to relate in this way to everyone so that you can accumulate vast amounts of merit towards everyone. Think about it. If you treated every single person as a holy being, as your Lama, what are you creating the cause for? What karmic seeds are you planting? You're creating the karmic cause to perceive a large number of holy beings in your future, okay. That's the point. That's the long and the short of it, okay? It's like that. Yeah. Okay. Moving right along. So...let's go through the ten qualities of of a Lama, of what a Lama is supposed to be like. So now, I'll say another thing too...not to overload you or talk too much, but so what does it mean if, what does it mean if, you know, you don't like your Lama today, you know. What does it mean if your Lama is pushing your buttons, what does it mean if this guy is just like seems to be really jerking you around, you know? Or lady. What do you do? How do you how do you behave in relationship to that. How do you treat that? What if one day you see the guy as a massively accomplished meditator and the next day you see him as somebody who's really taking advantage, who's really out of it, who's really a big loser, you know. Yeah Marie.

(student, Marie: Well, try to understand it because he's trying to get you to a different level)

One way to look at it is to look at it from his side, which is to say, from his side...well, maybe he's an enlightened being, maybe

he's not. We don't know. If he is an enlightened being, he's trying to bring you up. He's intentionally pushing your buttons and trying to and trying to test you and sort of cause you to flex your muscles with virtue to see if you can exercise patience and restraint and and and virtuous behavior in the face of difficult circumstances and conditions. So that's one way to think about it...of how he is from his side. What about how it is from your side? You know. How would you think about it as to how it is from your side? Yeah.

(student, Ann: It's it's like you can use the Lama as a beautiful mirror for whatever you're seeing out there is a mirror of what he's (unclear))

Right. Yeah. Yeah. So Ann says, you know, "well, if you see your Lama as a jerk, you know, it's because you don't have enough virtue. It's because at that moment you've got karmic seeds ripening to see him as a jerk and it's valid. You see him as a jerk. The point is how do you change that in the future? These are the laws of karma, these are the standard laws of karma, you know. If someone's yelling at you, how do you change it in the future? Do you yell back? No, you know. You treat them nicely, you know. It changes. It changes your environment, it changes your circumstances, it changes things. If you see your Lama as a loser or an incompetent or lacking in having serious character flaws in some way, you have a choice. You say, "okay. I will go find another Lama" or whatever you're gonna say, or you say "all right, I'm gonna behave differently in relationship to him specifically and other people in general to create the karmic causes to see someone pure or more pure in the future, like that. Yeah? Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Valid perception.

(student: (unclear))

Well when you...it's the definition of terms, when you say "correct", it doesn't have a meaning in Buddhism. You have...there's a valid perception...is that what you mean?

(student: (unclear))

That would be self-existent, you mean, when you say "correct" you mean "self-existent"...from his own side?

(student: (unclear))

No, there's nothing that exists in that way. That would mean that there's a self-existent thing. That would mean that somebody...that would mean that if a person from their side was always a jerk or always unpleasant, that everyone that ever came in contact with them, at that moment in time, would perceive them that way, and it doesn't work that way. Everyone's perception is unique to them.

(student: Then why (unclear))

Why don't you just pick anybody and go with it? Well, on some level...

(student: (unclear))

No that's not correct, actually. His his point was that person has a nature and it's a question of me being able to perceive it correctly. And that's actually the opposite of the teachings on emptiness. According to the teachings on emptiness, that person has no nature of their own and we perceive them according to our perception. So

(student: (unclear))

Well, again, it's...you have to study emptiness, saying...yeah.

(student: (unclear) correct teachings)

Valid teachings...accurate teachings.

(student: Accurate teachings.)

Yeah.

(student: So that's what I'm talking...so it has (unclear))

Naw. Naw. The fact...

(student: We don't go kill people because (unclear))

Yeah. If if the Buddhas teachings were self-existently correct, then everyone that ever heard them would think they were correct and there are plenty of people who don't think they're correct.

(student: (unclear) The reason why we don't see them as correct (unclear), just like a (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah. Everyone's perception determines what they can perceive. Yup. It's like that.

(student: (unclear))

So...

(student: (unclear) And then can I see it that way?)

It's im...yeah...it's important that you're able to perceive it properly. Yeah. So I'm gonna leave it at that, so...if you want to talk afterwards we can talk some more afterwards, but we gotta move on. So, going back to the Lama, going back to your relationship to your Lama, to how you see your Lama, how you behave towards your loo your Lama, I mean I could tell you from personal experience, you know, I've spent a lot of time around particular Lama and some other Lamas and it's a pain in the butt often, you know, I mean it's a royal pain in the butt

(cut)

you know, sometimes I see a Lama as being...really way out there, you know, as behaving in a way which is incredibly distasteful to me, or to a way...in a way which I wouldn't never want to behave in, or doing things which I don't like or doing things which I think are very holy, you know, or which I aspire to, and and it's very easy for me to say, "man, this guy is really screwed up", you know? There's some real problems here. There's some real inadequacies here. But if I step back and think about it from a karmic perspective, it's not about him...it's about me, you know. It's about my mind and my projections. If I don't want to see a Lama in some dysfunctional behavior, then I have to clean up my mind, you know. And that's the long and the short of it. And it's a it's it's it's very dangerous to think of a Lama as being self-existent and then thinking that they're doing something right or that they're doing something wrong, you know? To to have attachment to a Lama is ignorance, you know. To want to be around a Lama, to attach yourself to a Lama in an ignorant

way...is very bad, you know. If you understand the nature of perception, if you understand the nature of karma, if you want to serve that Lama, if you want to help that Lama...great.

According to the teachings on emptiness, according to the teachings on karma, all well and good. But having ignorant attachment...those are the basic three poisons which are at the center of the wheel of life, you know. And if you just exhibit them in relationship to a Lama, it's still the three poisons, you know...it's still ignorance. You know. You're just taking your basic ignorance and doing the same old thing over again, you know, in relationship to a holy...what, you know...what you could perceive as and maybe do perceive as a holy object, okay. So when ever you're around a holy being or a Lama, it's critically important that you keep in mind the laws of karma and emptiness. And you are constantly aware of the fact that whatever you are perceiving is a projection of you. Of your karma, your karma ripening, your mental constructs and your projections, okay. And if you don't like what you see, then clean up your own act. Now, having said that, what about valid perception. What about people who do perceive a Lama as being abusive and get hurt? What about all the people who have been hurt by various Lamas of various lineages, traditions, you know, etc. etc. etc., you know.

There's there is the very real issue of valid perception, you know, and if, and if a Lama, if you're a woman and a Lama is hitting on you, and you see a Lama hitting on you, it's a valid perception. It's happening, you know. And what do you do about it, you know. How do you relate to that? You know. How do you think about that. Do you think, "god, I'm so disappointed in this guy, I can't believe this guy's doing this to me. You know, I had such faith in this guy, and now look at him", you know. "he's a schmuck like everybody else, or he's totally disappointed me", or whatever it is you're gonna think, you know. It's extremely important to realize that it's happening based upon your past karma and it's equally important to realize that your perceptions are valid and you must also deal with them on the conventional level. Okay. I know plenty of women who, sort of wanted to do the dance with the Lama to sort of try to interact with them, challenge them, you know, see how close they could get. And I know a woman who ended up...she was, you know, lovely beautiful woman, you know, she ended up getting pregnant from a very, you know, a very high Lama, you know. It's a valid perception for me. It's a valid perception from her. I don't know what the Lama's perception is. He may see her as a consort, you know, or a (tantr)ic angel or a deity or something like that, you know, and she may see him as the same, I have no idea.

But from your side and from my side, we have to be aware of what our valid perceptions are, you know. And if you see a Lama which is...who is misbehaving or her do or or who...a Lama which is doing something which you consider to be conventionally inappropriate, you must address it on a conventional level and you must understand it on a karmic level, which is to say, "man, it's really really disappointing that this Lama is hitting on me and I created this through my past karma, and it's not acceptable that it's happening, and I have to create the causes for it to be different in the future. Okay. Very important. Similarly, you know, if a Lama is...well, I'll leave it at that. Yeah Brooks?

(student, Brooks: (unclear))

Can't hear.

(student, Brooks: (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

(student, Brooks: (unclear))

You're you're exper...so Brook's Brook's point is is if I have really excellent karma, is it possible for me to have the perception that a Lama would never do anything bad towards me or wrong towards me, like that, right? Yeah. I mean, that's what a Buddha is. A Buddha is a being who can not perceive any one doing anything negative negative to them. That's what it means, you know. Again I'll refer to the (thangka) of a popular (thangka) which is painted of Shakyamuni Buddha sitting in meditation in full lotus posture under the tree as he attains enlightenment, and in the (thangka), you know, there's...he's surrounded by all the demons of all the realms, you know, and and enemies and they're throwing swords at him in the (thangka) and weapons of all sorts and shooting arrows and and the weapons turn into flowers and ju...there's just a cloud of flowers around him which fall to the ground. That's the meaning of that (thangka). The meaning of that (thangka) is...the in the...those beings see themselves as trying to do harm. The other being can't see himself being harmed. The two are not think...in inconsistent, you know, and it's the same way with the Lama's behavior. You do not know if a Lama is trying to bring you up or is trying to hurt you. You must try to decide that. You must evaluate it. You must access it. You must not judge them, you must look at it and say, "I'm experiencing this according to my own perceptions, they are experiencing it according to their own perceptions, I do not

know what their perceptions are, I do not know if they're trying to help me or harm me, but from my side, I have to look at it to ascertain whether or not I think this person is trying to help me or harm me and I have to then act based upon my decision. If I perceive the Lama is trying to push my buttons to bring me up, great. I'll stay in a relationship with that Lama. If I perceive the Lama is trying to hurt me, I'm not staying in relationship with that Lama, conventionally speaking. And I will go off and I will create the causes karmically to have a Lama who will treat me sweetly, and purely and nicely. Okay. You know, there there's a saying that if you're ready, the teacher appears.

Well, I mean, it's a bit of a a a, you know, trivial statement, but it's karmically it's true. If you have created the karmic causes, you must have a teacher. You can't escape it. You can't avoid it, okay? Similarly, if you created the karmic causes, you'll get whatever teacher you created, you know. And it and it's not static. It's constantly in flux. Yeah Dr. Sykes.

(student, Dr. Sykes: About a Lama that's clearly in violation of all the vows that you hold dear?)

Well Dr. Sykes question is, "what about a Lama who is clearly in violation of all the vows you hold dear?" I would say that sounds like a conclusion. I would say the first thing that you have to do is go through a process of evaluation. I think you have to try to ascertain what their motivation is, I think you have to try to ascertain what their level of experience is and at what their level of attainment and accomplishment is, and and then I think you have to put it altogether. I think you have to say, "okay. I gotta weigh this against that. It's possible

(student, Dr. Sykes: But where exactly is the line, okay. A Lama (unclear))

You gotta deci...yeah.

(student, Dr. Sykes: The Lama (unclear) running)

Yeah, you gotta decide where the line is...

(student, Dr. Sykes: (unclear) gun running would be a bad thing.)

Yeah. So Dr. Sykes says, "where is the line?" you know. "What if a Lama is gun-running" as an example. You know there's this there's this one of the there's one of the stories...I forget exactly who the characters are, but there's a guy who's a hunter,

you know, and, you know, he goes around shooting sheep. This was in ancient Tibet. And, you know, he goes aro...he's he's a herdsman and, you know, he he tends sheep and and every now and again he shoots one, you know. And and a a a spiritual practitioner sees him and and scorns him and says, "Don't don't you know anything? Are you crazy? Don't you know what kind of karma you're creating? Don't you know what you're doing?" And, you know, another realized being's there, says, you know, "you just made a really big mistake", you know, "he is a massively realized practitioner and you should be so lucky as to be shot by him because he guides the consciousness of those beings to the pure realm after he shoots them". So, you don't know.

(student, Dr. Sykes: But that's...but he can't say that to a person that has a perception. He he's just killed something.)

Yeah. So Dr. Sykes point is, is well you don't know and you can't just let people go around killing. That's true. That's right.

(student, Dr, Sykes: And it sounds that the other person is just trying to legitimize any kind of behavior that they can get away with).

So Dr. Syke's point is is you know, you could just legit...you could go around trying to legitimize any kind of behavior that you think you can get away with if that's the case. Yeah. People try to do that actually. (laughs) It's true. And that's why I'm talking to you. Because you know, we have to use our faculties of critical evaluation to try to evaluate it, and every person is different and every person has their own, you know, their own way of looking at it. Their own way of evaluating it. You know, and you gotta say, "I think this person is incredibly holy and I think they're pushing my buttons and I'm willing to have it happen, because I I feel strongly that it's for my personal spiritual advancement and I really think they're doing it with the sweetest of motivations and the purest of hearts, and in fact, it's a, you know, a Lama that I know said that he would never enter into a relationship with a student...well, let me phrase it differently. He said, for a student to enter into (tantr)ic relationship with a with a vajra master, that student should be willing to die literally for that teacher. That is an appropriate relationship between a vajra disciple and a (tantr)ic master. You must be so convinced in your heart of your teacher's motivation that you would be willing to say, "you know what? I feel with great certainty that if they kill me that it would be

to guide my consciousness to a to a pure realm and I'm okay with that". Now I don't advocate that, mind you...please don't, you know, take it that way, however there is that element, you know. There is an element where you have to say, "okay, I've checked this person out for ten years, for twenty years, you know. I've I've spent, you know, a vast amount of time with them, you know. I've watched them practice, I've watched them study, you know, I've watched them behave towards everyone for all this time, and, you know, I gotta get off the fence, you know. I gotta give it...I gotta say...I gonna take a step back...you get to a point where you yourself feel that you've accumulated enough virtue so that no negative virtue can ripen upon you. Let's put it that way. That's a better way to say it, okay. If you can get to the point where you feel that you have accumulated enough positive virtue and karma so that it's not possible for any kind of major, negative thing will happen to you...at that point it's probably appropriate to place yourself fully in the hands of your spiritual teacher. You know, it's really hard to get to that point and it's a major major amount of harrassment along the way. I can't tell anybody, "look, this is the decision, this is the cut..you know, this is the cutoff point". It's true, and this is what we are talking about, certain people try to use these principles to their to their gain and to their benefit, you know, and try to push the envelope as much as they can. Certain people try to say, "look, I'm self-existent good. Just listen to me", you know. Certain people have ignorant attachment towards a Lama, you know. So it's it's like that, and and it's a pro...it's a real problem, you know, and and we need to understand just what the Lama is. The Lama is our projections, you know, and he will change, he must change, he must be in this constant fluctuating state according to our the karmas ripening in our mind and our perception. So if you are around a Lama, and and the the actual act of perceiving him is consuming your virtuous karma, you gotta generate a massive amount of additional virtuous karma just to continue perceiving a Lama, you know, let alone perceiving one who's holier and holier and holier and holier, okay. It's like that. Yeah Vilma? Yeah.

(student, Vilma: I think we also have to talk about the qualities in assessing a Lama.)

She says, "let's talk about the qualities of assessing a Lama". Here we are. It's time. (laughs) Yeah Michael, what were you gonna say? So, having said all that, how do you check 'em out, how do you evaluate 'em? Sol said it's time to quit. Time for a break. Okay. I'll tell you what. Let's take a break, do the

discussion groups, and then when you come back then we'll go over the...there are ten qual...I think ten qualities...there are ten standard qualities that you use...ten standard benchmarks that you use to es...to evaluate evaluate and assess a Lama, okay. We'll talk after.

(break)

You guys asked how can you tell if a Lama is really qualified or not. How do you know...how do you know...what do you measure your teacher by? What's the what's the benchmark...what's the standard? What do you check? What what what characteristics or attributes do you check about the about your teacher, about the Lama. This is also on your homework. So the first is (dul wa). Please say (dul wa) (repeat) (dul wa) (repeat). Means "discipline". Means he has...he or she...has discipline, he's controlled, they're controlled. What it means is they possess training on ethical living, on morality, it means that they're keeping their three sets of vows...pratimoksha vows, bodhisattva vows and secret vows. So this is the first quality which a a a fully-qualified spiritual teacher should have. Second quality is (shi wa). Please say (shi wa) (repeat) (shi wa) (repeat). It means "peace". They're peaceful. What that refers to is that they have a an exceptional training in meditation and concentration. They can deeply concentrate. They have peace. Please say (nyer shiwa) (repeat) (nyer shiwa) (repeat). It means "really peaceful" (laughter (laughs)). (Nyer) is "really". It means they have...they're completely peaceful. It means they they possess the training on wisdom, they deeply understand wisdom, meaning emptiness, have a deep understanding of emptiness. (Yunten) ...please say (yunten) (repeat) (laughs) (hlakpa) (repeat) (Yunten hlakpa) (repeat). (Yunten) is "spiritual qualities". Spiritual qualities. (Hlakpa) is "excessive". It means they have exceeding qualities. It means, basically, they know a lot more than their students. If you're going to teach someone, you have to know a lot more than they do, so this is what that refers to. You have to have exceeding qualities in the sense that you per...you possess spiritual qualities which are much greater than than those of your your disciple or your student. Please say (tsun che) (repeat) (tsun che) (repeat). Means "has effort", (tsun) is "effort", (che) is "has". He has effort in that he wants to achieve the two goals for himself and everyone else. It means that that person is primarily spending their time and is dedicating their life towards becoming enlightened themselves and teaching other people to become enlightened with the idea to save them from their

suffering. Please say (lung gi) (repeat) (chuk) (repeat) (lung gi chuk) (repeat). Means they are "rich in scripture". (Lung) is "scripture". (Gi) is "in". (Chuk) is "wealth". It means they have deeply studied the three collections of scripture. They are rich in scripture...the vinaya, sutra and the Abhidharma. Please say (de nyi) (repeat) (rabtu) (repeat) (tokpa) (repeat) (De nyi rabtu tokpa) (repeat). (De nyi) is "emptiness". (Rabtu tokpa) is "a great realization". They have a deep realization of suchness, of emptiness. They've had a direct perception of emptiness. Particularly it means that they can explain the relationship between karma, emptiness and morality. You know, in a way that's kind of the holy grail of Buddhist studies. If you can understand the relationship between karma, emptiness and your behavior, ethics, then you have the basis to become fully enlightened. You have the kernel and the key to succeed in your practice. You have the meat of it of it all. Please say (ma ke den) (repeat) (ma ke den) (repeat). (Ma) is "teach". (Ke) is "master". (Den) is "possesses". It means "he's a master teacher." Means he teaches at precisely the appropriate level for his student and at the appropriate speed for his student. He or she teaches. They teach. You know, they they know what you need, they don't teach above you they don't teach below you. Kind of like (b: Goldilocks and the Three Bears). Not too hot...not too cold. (laughter) Just right. Please say (tseway) (repeat) (daknyi) (repeat) (tseway daknyi) (repeat). Means "the image of love". (Tseway) is "love". (Daknyi) is "the embodiment of". He embodies love. This refers to his motivation. You know, is he teaching because he wants the bucks, because he wants the fame, because he wants his face on the cover of a book, because he wants to have people following him around or because he wants to be popular, or is he teaching because he really cares about the people and loves the people and wants their happiness and particularly, yeah...he's just not persuing world...he's not persuing worldly worldly dharmas, worldly motivations. And then finally the tenth quality is please say (kyowa) (repeat) (pa...pang) (repeat) (kyowa pang) (repeat). (Kyowa) is "distaste". And (pang) is "to give it up". It means "he's overcome all distaste for you his students (laughter) (laughs). What that means is, "he doesn't get tired of answering your questions twenty times" (laughs), "doesn't doesn't mind answering the same question over and over and over again". Okay. It means he's he's willing to just do it and do it and do it even though it takes a long time for the student to learn it, they don't quite get it, you know, like that. Doesn't get impatient. He's forgiving when you botch it (laughs). That kinda thing. So so if you look at this...everybody finished

writing the script? No. Okay. So if you look at these ten qualities that we're talking about, you've got someone who is keeping their vows nicely, they meditate nicely, they deeply understand emptiness, they have great spiritual qualities of their own, better than their student, they making a lot of effort, they're dedicating their life to su..their life to spiritual activity, particularly to help other people, prevent their suffering, they have extensive scriptural knowledge, they've had a direct persepthing perception of emptiness, they're a master teacher, they teach exactly to your level, they teach out of love and they have a lot of patience and they repeat themselves a lot. So, can you find somebody like that. Where do you find somebody like that? Can you find somebody like that? In the scriptures it says, "well, frankly, it's kinda hard to find teachers like that". (laughs). You know. And if you can't find teachers like that, well,at least try to find someone who's spending most of their time and most of their activity on spiritual things...as a bare minimum, okay? So that's the idea. So...so this is the authorized scriptural checklist to to to use in checking out your teacher, your spiritual teacher and to see if they have all these qualities or or a lot of these qualities, or enough of these qualities. Like that. Okay? And in the end, you know, as Dr. Sykes said, you know, "how do you know", I mean what's the cutoff point...where whe what is the point at which you say, "they went over the line, or they went too far". you know, and and there's...I just can't be around them anymore, you know...they're not for me. Doesn't work. You know, what is that point. And there is no hard and fast answer, you know. Everyone's mind is different, everyone's capacity is different, and you've all gotta decide on your own. But the main point to realize is is that a a a ho a spiritual teacher is a very powerful karmic object because of their potential to do benefit, all right. So whatever your behavior is around a spiritual teacher, you're planting very powerful karmic seeds...for better or for worse. So, if you have a really hard time behaving yourself around a spiritual teacher, you know, then personally I would suggest that you distance yourself a little bit so you can you know, reign it in and get it under control a little bit because there's no point being around a spiritual teacher if it's only to plant a lot of powerful negative karma which will ripen upon you quickly. Powerful karmas ripen very quickly. So, if you are able to to work with your mind to the point where you don't get pissed off excessively at the teacher, or, you know, where you can do virtue in relationship to a teacher, then, you know, great, be around them. But be very careful, you know. It's very slippery slope, it's very tricky. So like that. And,

yeah, I hope I hope everyone here can, you know, have the perception of having pure teachers, pure holy teachers and to do that, you know, you have to start treating people as if they are your teacher. It's one of the advises of the bodhisattva vows actually...is to...it's one of the one of the actual bodhisattva vows is to see all beings as your Teacher, you know. If you don't do that, you're not keeping your bodhisattva vows. Is to is to train yourself to think that everyone you...that you meet, all day long is trying to teach you a lesson for your benefit and that every single person you encounter is some kind of teacher for you and that they are knowingly, intentionally and consciously engaging with you in the way that they are to teach you something, you know. So, you know, how do you start to accumulate the karma to have spiritual teachers? Keep that bodhisattva vow, you know, and, you know, plant the karmas to to create very holy beings for yourself so...I get very frustrated myself sometimes because it's like, "man, I really hate this", you know, "this is such a pain in the ass. I really wish he weren't like this, you know. I really wish this person wasn't like that, you know. I wish...I should go find somebody better, you know, (laughs)...however, in the end if I ask myself, you know, what do all my other projections look like, you know (laughter) (laughs), am I projecting anything any better anywhere else, you know (laughs)...well, fortunately not (laughs). Yeah, go ahead.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah. So the question is, "what about your loyalty"...this will be...this has to be needs to be the last question because we have to go, so the question is, "what about your loyalty towards your Lama", you know. If you have a Lama, a teacher and other teachers coming to town or or are around, is it okay to to go to their teachings. Should you...are you betraying your Lama in some way? Something like that, you know. No, not at all, you know. If if they're a...I mean in my opinion, if they are a pure teacher, they want you to learn, you know. They want you to advance yourself and, you know, anyway that you can do that, you know, great. All the better. So, you know, perhaps they know enough that they can see your mind, see the stream of your karma, see exactly what's right for your mind and they know that you'll get the most benefit if you study with them that day on that subject as opposed to someone else, but if you don't have that kind of intimate relationship with a teacher, you know, where they are personally saying this is, you know, this is the best thing for you right now, it's, you know, yo...advance

yourself anyway you can, is my opinion, you know. Study wherever you can, and anywhere you can. You know that's why the Buddha taught so many different techniques and so many different ways and so many different levels, because every being's mind is different, you know, and they need different teachings and different presentations and different levels and in different ways, so yeah yeah...study away. Okay. Thank you very much, thank you for the opportunity to accumulate virtue. (applause) See now, I'm glad you rejoiced. Now I get to rejoice in your rejoicing. We're all just like snowballing merit here, you know? (laughter) It's great (laughs).

(cut)

## Review Course 17

### Class 9, Part 1

Transcribed by: Karen Becker

Okay, tonight we're gonna be covering...what course is that?  
(laughter) Ten?

(student: Ten)

Ten. Okay. Courses ten, eleven and twelve were devoted to the (b: Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life) by Master Shantideva and originally in the five year course or seven year course or whatever it was, it ended up taking a year to get through the whole (b: Bodhisattvacharyavatara). Rinpoche took ten years, so it wasn't so bad, all right? (laughter). And we studied a very famous commentary by Gyeltsab Je, one of Je Tsongkapa's...the the primary disciple of Je Tsongkapa, and hasn't been translated yet, but we translated most of it and we went through it for three courses. It's interesting that in the monastery they don't study the (b: Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life) as one of the five great books, but we added it and there was a reason to spend a whole year on it and that was because it's simply one of the greatest books ever written in the history of mankind. It's been translated...I don't know, five six times into English. And I don't think you can read even a bad translation of it and not be impressed by it. It's amazing. And there've been some good translations. So, and His Holiness has given commentary on it...for example, whe...I saw him in Tucson give an extraordinary commentary on the Patience chapter and they're trying very hard to get him back to do the chapter on Wisdom, which is one of the greatest presentations on emptiness ever written. And I think triggered a lot of the teachings that have gone on here since. The ninth chapter is dedicated to how to view your world, and I think as we went through it...I personally and I think a lot of other people, had a profound change in the way they viewed their life and their world. Especially I remember the Halloween night lecture. (laughs) I don't know why, but on Halloween night we got to the heaviest part of the whole book and and it was basically a challenge to the whole western civilization's world view and I think it was so much impressed all of us that we decided to call this whole organization "Worldview". So you know you...we've broken it out I think into fourteen different projects or activities that this Institute does and I think you're gonna get a little booklet about them next week or something, but decided to call the whole thing "Worldview". Why? Because basically the the main reason to study Buddhism is that

there's a difference in the world view, in the entire world view, how you see the world, okay, between our civilization and what Buddhism teaches. The way the world works is described in contradictory manner. And a Buddhist walking into American civilization would say that we just got it wrong. And it and the way we're trying to relate to the world is incorrect...meaning, you know, we relate to the world in a way which will never work and it doesn't matter how hard you try, or how sincere you are, or how loving you are, or how intelligent or sensitive or compassionate you are, if you relate to the world in a certain way, the way that western civilization has taught you, you will suffer, 'cause it doesn't work. It's broken, you know. And the whole concept of our civilization, our whole activity, what people do every day, what people do all day long is just hopeless and it doesn't work and it's like trying to make a car go without a without pistons or something and for millions, hundreds of millions of people to labor from morning to night trying to reach something that doesn't work, in a way that doesn't work, it's just like watching children with razor blades cut themselves, you know. It's like...it's it's sad and it ke...it won't work and yo...I think Master Shantideva in his text...it's interesting, it's supposed to be a book about compassion, but I think what you get at the end is wisdom, and the ninth chapter, the chapter on wisdom is something out of this world and in a way it brings you back to compassion in the best way a person could, you know, which is to say the view, the worldview, the way that you view reality, the way you think things work is so wrong that you hurt yourself all day long. And and from the time you get up until the time you go to bed, all the people in this realm, and especially those who are following the beliefs of western civilization are actually hurting themselves every hour they're awake. Better to go to sleep, okay (laughs)..than to than to continue like that. It'd be better to go to bed actually. 'Cause then you wouldn't hurt yourself so well, you know. And that was the challenge that that Master Shantideva threw out. And that to me, this is the...one of the greatest books ever written, and urge you stick with it. We'll do the first third this class and then when we get to the last of the three review courses, we'll get into the into the meat of the of the (b: Bodhisattvacharyavatara), okay, of the (b: Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life). But I think, get the feeling that, he's going to end up with one of the most extraordinary presentations of emptiness ever given. And he's using it because he's compassionate and he's trying to teach us about what compassion is, and what compassion means, okay. So, I'm gonna start by putting out the structure of the (b:

Bodhisattvacharyavatara), the way he does it. We've talked about the ninth chapter. There's about nine other chapters we have to talk about, okay. First I'll do the name of the book. I'll give you the short name. Say (chun juk) (repeat) (chun juk) (repeat). (Chu..chu) means "activities" and it refers to the things that bodhisattvas do...what bodhisattvas do. We were in Ireland, we were struggling for a word for bodhisattva...we didn't want to freak out all these guys (laughs) and we say...we ended up with "warrior saint" and they liked it, they got it, you know, so (chu) means "the kind of activities they...they do". The kind of things that bodhisattvas do. (Juk) means...in Yiddish it means "roach" and it's what they used to call me in the diamond district (laughter)... "hey Juk", but in Tibetan it means (laughs) (laughter) in Tibetan it means "to enter", okay. Like entering the activities of a bodhisattva. It's been translated as (b: Guide to a Bodhisattva's Way of Life". I like it. I think...you know usually I hate all of the translations, but this one's good, (laughter) okay? Even though I didn't make it up. So (chun juk) The the author is...say (Lopen) (repeat) (shiwa) (repeat) (hla) (repeat). Okay. Good. (Lopen) means "master". A professor from Harvard once complained about my lectures. He said, "you say 'master', you keep repeating the word 'master'", you know, which actually one of our vows okay, we're not supposed to refer to a great Buddhist wiseman as "Shantideva". It's considered improper. You're supposed to say Master Shantideva. Or, "the incomparable, brilliant, fantastic Master Shantideva". Okay? You should get in the habit. (Shiwa) means "peace" or shanti. And (hla) means "god or angel, deva", okay. And his name is "Shantideva"...Master Shantideva. You remember his nickname, right? I like it. (laughs) (laughter) Say (dushe) (repeat) (sumpawa) (repeat). Those of you who are learning Tibetan, when you...when a (den bu) drums...bumps into a (tsa...chen juk) (unclear) secondary suffix, it's a changes almost to a (gyi gu) sound, so if you want your Tibetan to sound better, it's almost like (du shi), okay (du shi) (repeat) (sumpawa) (repeat) (Du shi sumpawa) (repeat). (Du shi) here means "thinks about", (sumpawa) means "three things". The guy who only thinks about three things, okay? And you know the story. But if you don't know the story, I'll tell you very briefly, okay? Master Shantideva in Nalanda Monastery ancient monastery in India, one of the great monasteries of all times, he would sit in his room and lay around on the bed and people would come by to check on him and he'd be sitting there, laying down and not doing anything. And then he also seemed to be quite interested in meal time and as a result of mealtime, he used to go to the bathroom a lot. And he didn't seem to be interested in (laughs) meditating, or studying or

memorizing or reciting or anything else and they got fed up with him in the monastery, and af...you know, he's an embarrassment to Nalanda Monastery. So, they started to call him Mr. Three-Thoughts, (Dushe Sumpawa). Only thinks about sleeping, eating and pooping. (laughter) Okay. In Sanscrit it's "busuku" okay. And he got this name "Busuku". And they they started to call him that and then it got so bad that he was so useless that they decided to try to get him out of the monastery, so they said, they came to his room, you know, and they said, "you know, all of the monks are expected to give a teaching to the assembly every once in a while. We wondered if you'd like to come and give a teaching and if you don't, you know, we kinda don't know if you should stay, eating all our food and stuff", so they they said, "will you come and give and teaching?" And he said, "all right, you know, if you insist I'll come, you know, and I'll I'll teach something", you know. So they laughed and they said, "oh, he's never going to be able to teach anything". And then on the special day that he came to teach, they got the the chapel ready, you know, the assembly hall and they purposely put a a throne which was too high for a person to get up on it. Like we built a throne in New Jersey for His Holiness and for ten years he couldn't get a visa to come, you know, to the United States, and it just sat there, and we never had any stairs to go up to it because...and it's about this high, you see...they made his much higher, Master Shantideva's and and you have to have a separate set of stairs that you wheel up to it...it's like a airplane stairs...and the Lama comes up and gets there...we didn't even have them because His Holiness couldn't get a visa. And we kept asking if he could come and the Government kept saying "no". And then finally, I think it was eighty-one he got his first visa. But, so for Master Shantideva, they just decided to leave it without the stairs and to embarrass him, 'cause he wouldn't even be able to get up on the throne to teach, so on the given day he came in to give a talk and he he made his three prostrations customary to the throne, meaning, you know, the Buddha is much better teacher than I am, and, but I'll, you know, I'll sit there today. And then everyone was waiting, giggling, you know, waiting to see him try to get up on the throne, and then suddenly, he's on top already, you know, and everybody's like "how'd he do that?" (laughter)(laughs) and he's like looking down, and he says, "would you guys like me to teach something you've heard before or something new, you know (laughter), and they're like, "yeah, right, something new" (laughter), and so he says, "all right.

I I wrote this little thing called (b: Bodhisattvachayavatara) and I'd like to teach it to you today". So he starts teaching

this thing, the (b: Bodhisattvacharyavatara), extraordinary, you know, like one of the greatest books every written. And the monks are just freaking out, you know, so they just...unbelievable beautiful poetry...in Sanscrit it's really beautiful poetry, and they're just, they're just...can't believe what...and he's just talking extemporaneously, he's memorized the whole thing in Sanscrit, he's he's teaching it from memory, and they're freaking out and then he gets to the ninth chapter...ninth chapter's really hard, like people throughout history have written explanations of the ninth chapter. You guys gotta really good ninth chapter and we'll do another one in October or November, but he he goes through the...all the fight between the Mind Only School and the and the and the Middle Way School and everybody else's extraordinary teachings, so they're all like really anxious when he gets to this part about emptiness, and everyone's like paying attention, and they're listening, and then he suddenly he starts going off into this stuff that no one can grasp, you know, and then he's slowly rising off the throne, you know (laughs) and then people are...the the great monks in the audience are like going into meditation so they can follow him, you know, and so their minds are like projecting out and following him into the air, and he's like flying up into the air, like everytime he gets to another new subject, he's like getting higher and higher in the sky and most of the monks are just lost already, you know, and they're like "where'd he go, where'd he go" (laughter) and he's just flying, he's just...finally he just disappears like a spot in the sky, you know...he just disappears. And people are like "what did you hear? How many chapters did you hear?" And they say, "it's eight". They say, "no, nine...I heard nine", you know and somebody says "no ten", you know (laughter) and there's this big argument about...they can't even figure out how many chapters there were 'cause half the people couldn't...they couldn't use like clairvoyance to keep up with him, you know what I mean? And then I I I don't know the story...they find him like six months later in...just hanging out near the stupa down in south India like he's a nobody, and they send a big contingent of monks to beg him to come back, you know, and they apologize and for judging him...you know what I mean...and he says, "well, you know, I don't really feel like coming back to your monastery." (laughter) "but I'll tell you what. I left the book in the rafters of my room. I wrote the Sanscrit out and the poetry is all there and if you look in the rafters you can find it", you know. And that's the...that's why we have it, okay...that's why we have the book. Then he wrote another book called (b: Chi shu cham bu chia) which is rarely taught in the monastery. And His

Holiness is teaching it in Bodh Gaya. He's half way through I he...I understand. So that's what we're going to hear for the millenium so that's not a bad way to spend...it's the other great book by Master Shantideva and I think it will be a classic also once it's translated well and and taught. So anyway, that's the story of Master Shantideva. I think what you can learn from it is is not to judge people in this class, your fellow students, you know, I I tend to judge people constantly, you know. I I was on a vacation the last week and I was going through these country towns and seeing these rough tough guys and thinking, "oh, you know, they probably just think about bulldozers all day or something", you know, and then I was reflecting that the rancher who's selling us the property in Arizona turns about to be this extraordinary, spiritual genius, you know, and and then I began thinking, well, maybe I shouldn't judge these guys with the bulldozers, you know, and I think you get the first thing to learn from the (b: Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life) you...is before you open the book, is to reflect that you don't know who's in this class and you don't know what other people are doing. In the monastery in Sera there're these older Geshe's who sit there quietly in the assembly and they don't say anything, and then there's a big debate and they'll get up and you know, those other guys are looking really handsome and they're like, you know, (unclear) and you know, and these guys get up and and they go (laughter), you know, and and they take some position which is indefensible, you know, like they take some silly position and they...this really gun-slinger, hot, forty...thirty-five year old Geshe, you know, defending, you know, and they'll go up and they'll say, "well, you know, is blue a color", you know, and and then the guy will say "of course it's a color". And then they got him already, you know, and then they just...they just wander around and then and then pretty soon you see this checkmate, you know (laughter), and this guy's like...you know, the guys sitting down (laughter) and and then they just...they say, "oh, I just wanted to check", you know. (laughter). And they sit down, real quietly, you know, and everyone's like...(laughter) (laughs), you know, and people do that. I think you reach a certain spiritual level, you start to act like Joe Schmo...and...seriously. I think people reach a certain spiritual level and they just don't care who who knows anymore, and they just look like Joe Schmo, like (Du she Sumpawa). Mr. Three Thoughts. And and they don't care if you think that about them for ten years, twenty years...they don't care. You know, maybe they got enlightened three lifetimes ago. You don't know. And I think the first lesson of the...of this book is the circumstances under which it was first taught, and

and to keep that in mind. Who knows who the people around you are and don't worry about it, you know. You have eighty-four thousand mental afflictions he...up here (laughs) to take care of (laughs) you know, and why double it or triple it by worrying about other people (laughs), you know what I mean? I mean, you have enough to work on the rest of your life, so I think that's the first great lesson for me in this book is is that one, okay? Now I'd like to go through the structure of the book. And I mean anybody in the class. Okay. I don't mean the people who look like they might be Master Shantideva, okay. I'm talking about the people who definitely don't look like (unclear) Master Shantideva. Those are the most dangerous ones. Okay. Ten chapters of the book, okay. And I'm gonna abbreviate the...

(silence)

Say (pen yun) (repeat) (pen yun) (repeat). The first job of every Buddhist author in Mahayana is to try to sell you on the idea of bodhicitta. Is try to sell you that it...on the idea that it would be good for you to be a bodhisattva. So, you know, that's always the way we always start in Buddhism. We try to get you excited about how great it would be to be a bodhisattva. So (pen yun) means "the benefits of being a bodhisattva". That's the first thing that Master Shantideva does. Trys to describe the benefits of it, okay. There's basically two kinds of bodhicitta, or or what you call the "wish for enlightenment". One is...well, there's three, okay? (Bu rang gyi shing ta bu sem kye) means "the bodhicitta which is like sugar cane...they call it sugar cane bodhicitta". And this is like a preliminary feeling that you get. Like you get a little bit...you feel some kind of sympathy for other people or you feel some kind of sweet feeling towards other people and that's like the...why it's called "sugar cane" is that it doesn't have strength. It's not strong like oak. It's like sugar cane. It's hollow on the inside, and it's like you start to get a taste of what it would be like to be a bodhisattva. And that's called "sugar cane bodhicitta". It's not real bodhicitta. Okay. Then you then you have a some kind of a feeling of...how do you say...you have the lead-up to bodhicitta which is all the the feelings of bodhicitta like compassion for other people, love for other people, you start to have feelings of care for other people, okay. And and then you get a what we call like a an elementary bodhicitta, the first basic bodhicitta, is...goes under that second one, okay. And that's where...it's actually a kind of renunciation, okay. It's a kind of disgust with this world. We described the desire realm already. We talked about the desire realm being a broken

place. We talked about the fact that in this world, nothing you can do will help at all, okay. You always have in the back of your mind, that "if I made some adjustments to my life, it would be all right, if I ate better, if I got enough sleep, if I could eliminate two or three people from my world"...you know, "if I could, you know, study a little more, if I had a little more time to meditate, then I'd be all right, or if I could just change this relationship"...it doesn't work. There is no adjustment...forget the idea of adjustment. Right now your mind works on the idea, "if I could make certain adjustments in my life, it would be okay." The point about the desire realm which you are stuck in is that whatever adjustment you make, won't work, okay? The minute you eat those vitamins, the minute you get more sleep, the minute you get a little more income, the minute you change you husband or wife, the new suffering will start again (laughter), and it will be evident in about six weeks. You know what I mean? And that's all. You can't fix this realm. It doesn't work. And bodhicitta is realizing that that applies to everybody else also. That's all. You take your own knowledge of you own crappy situation and then you just turn it around on other people. There's this thing in the back of your mind that says, "if I'm not happy, somebody else must be", you see what I mean? You walk down Fifth Avenue...I used to do it, and you imagine, okay, ten percent, five percent, one percent...somebody's gotta be happy. Somebody in this on this street's gotta be happy, you know. Somebody must be have made all the adjustments necessary and they're actually happy. I just have to find them, you know. And in the back of your mind you have these two ideas. (a) If I could adjust certain things in my life it would be all right. (b) There must be someone who's happy, you know, there's probably somebody who's having a happy marriage or some somewhere", you know what I mean? And the fact is no. Okay. No. It doesn't work. The realm doesn't work. You know, it's not like people aren't trying hard or something like that. The realm doesn't work. It doesn't matter what you do. It won't work out. You see. And then, just to imagine that that's true of every other person around you is some kind of liberating thought. That's bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is renunciation applied by logic to other people. You can't be inside of their mind directly most of the time. But by logic observing their own suffering you decide that they must be suffering as much as I am. Then later especially with the direct perception of emptiness, you have a a the perception of bodhicitta of an arya, okay, of a person who has seen emptiness directly. And this is like some very powerful, direct, immediate, ultimate compassion and love and you have it. And

it's a whole few minutes of some extraordinary, physical reaction in your body and knowledge and vision that you have and then you are a bodhisattva, okay, you have this...an arya bodhisattva, okay, you have this direct experience of ultimate compassion, and that's where I want to start from, okay. Assuming you could get there, which is the subject of this book, you know, assuming you could reach that point where you have this happen to you during meditation, okay, and you have...you will have, if you haven't had already and who knows, okay, you will have or have had this direct experience of bodhicitta. Do you know it when you have it? Yes. Is it something like extraordinary and definable and and you won't question it...you won't say, "maybe I had it maybe I didn't. Let me go ask Michael", you know. It's not like that. You will know when you have it and you have it and it's this extraordinary experience. The first moment of perfect compassion and love for other beings. Okay. And what do you do the rest of your life, you see? The rest of your life, after that experience, you are a real bodhisattva. And then you you...I don't know how to describe...you know, I meet different kinds of people...I I re...worked in business for a long time and we used to go around the world opening offices in different countries and and I would...like when we went to Bangkok we didn't know one person in Bangkok and we're supposed to open this big office, you know...we don't know a single person. Nobody knows Thai, we don't know a single person in Bangkok. I'm supposed to open a twenty-five million dollar office and staff it, you know. And so what do we do? We went to restaurants. We tried to see which waitresses could handle like fourteen orders at once (laughter) and then we stole them (laughs) and even to make the offer was funny 'cause we couldn't speak Thai, so you had to get someone to talk to them and said, "you want to come work for an American company" which most Thais don't like and and then that was another experience, but, or or you'd just find some guy who's a busboy or a or a porter in a hotel but you'd see that he could handle twenty-five things at once and then you you take them, you train them for six months...we'd used to take people from the generals...as the Thai...what's it called...northern...Chang Mai, yeah...I remember one lady, you know...we offer her a job, we say we'll pay you like so many thousand bhat per month or something, forty dollars, and she says "no no no no" and there's a big fight with the translator, you know, and I say "that's all we're giving her", you know. "She she doesn't know anything about diamonds or rubies, you know" and the guy explains and there's another big fight and and then I said, "what's the problem, you know? Everyone get takes that salary?" And she says "she says, it's too much and she refuses to take it". (laughs) (laughter) And

these people...these are the kind of people you'd start with. Then you train them the business and now they run the whole operation. Twenty-five thirty million dollar operation being run by these farm girls from Chang Mai, you know, but you just take them. The human mind is extraordinary. What I mean to say is that having working in a big corporation, what dawned on me is that you could take almost any person from anywhere and train them and the human mind is so extraordinary that if it's challenged and if you give them authority, you know, if you say, "hey look, this whole office is yours. Here's twenty million dollars. I'll be back next year", you know, "try to make it thirty, okay" and they just do it, you know, like anyone. 'Cause the human mind is like that. I mean, what I mean to say is that anybody in this room could probably do the same thing if they got the chance, you see what I mean, if they just someone gave them a chance and trusted them and taught them a little bit and then threw them out into it and let them take their own ri...chances and their own risks and not, you know, just inspire them and make them happy and let them go for it, then the human mind is such that you can do anything. I mean we realized that busboys in restaurants in Thailand can run huge corporate offices, they just never get a chance. You see what I mean? And the same state of mind that can handle four bus bey short bus boy trays can also handle, you know, forty million dollars of orders and juggle them and stuff like that, it's...every mind in this room has the same capacity. Just the human mind is not challenged and so life is boring and this is not listed by Shantideva, okay. I'm making this up (laughter). Life is boring, I mean, you're just not challenged, okay. Frankly, okay. I mean, if if you do finally reach a place where you have enough money to have a place to stay, enough food, enough time, you'll just find that it's miserable anyway, you see what I mean. I mean, it's miserable to work and it's miserable to be freed from work (laughter) okay? Because you find out that out that's it's just miserable to be alive, (laughter) you know, and and it's it's miserable, you know what I mean, and you don't have any real big purpose. I mean, if you didn't have to struggle to make a living and someone fed you and said, "okay, you don't have to work", you'd go crazy, you know. You'd you'd try it, you know, and people just...you just can't do it. And and my...what I'm trying to say is that after you have that experience of bodhisattva, you see clearly, the only way to spend a human life and the only way to challenge, really challenge this human mind. You see what I mean? When you first become a bodhisattva and you see...you have this vision of your future, you can see the whole thing laid out into the future, and you see what they're gonna be doing for the next...what...five hundred

years or so, you know and you see it clearly and you can think and you say, "man", and and you know what you're gonna be doing for the next five hundred years and it is unbelievable, you know what I mean? You're like, "I will spend every waking moment of my time serving other people and doing heavy duty dharma all the time, and I know what I have to do and I know what I'll be doing, I know how to do it, I know most of the details of what I have to do and you have this mission, you know what I mean. And you have this future laid out for you and every single moment of it is the most sweet, holy, sacred use of a human life that you can imagine, you know...and then your whole life is taken care of. It's just extraordinary. You know, that whole feeling of knowing that you have something important to do and that you can do it every moment from here on out. For the rest of your life, that what you will do will be the most holy beneficial thing you can do with human life, and it's a whole different feeling after that. You know what I mean? I'm trying to convey what it would be like to have that feeling of knowing what your life is gonna be and knowing that you, of all people, will be spending it in the most holy, sweet, beneficial way that a human being can spend their time and this whole, you know...most people are working hard because they don't want to face the fact that there's nothing meaningful to do, you know what I mean? Like...period. Okay. Even the people here in this room who are successful and who have found a niche for themselves...great artists, great filmmaker, great businessman, great author, whatever...you're really just trying to keep yourself busy...'cause life is so meaningless and there's so many years left to to burn up (laughs) you know. And what I'm trying to say is, once you get to that realization, bodhicitta, then you, for the first time, you see how to spend human life and it is totally brilliant and beautiful, and every single moment, waking, sleeping...they say standing over the toilet or sitting on it, whichever you are, even that much time is spent, you know, thinking about other people and thinking about the wonderful things you can do to help other people and in an ultimate way, you know. We're not talking feeding people or finding them a place to sleep. We're talking about teaching other people not to die. Or teaching other people to get out of this broken realm and reach a (tantr)ic paradise, you know. In your whole...even when you stand over the toilet or sit on it, okay...your whole life you see clearly ahead of you what you will do and that every single moment will be engrossed in that activity and you can't imagine what it feels like, you know, seriously, to spend a whole life like that, with meaning, something meaningful, because everything else is not meaningful, okay? And that's that's my advertisement for bodhicitta, okay.

That's (pen yun). That's (pen yun). That's...imagine what it feels like to be totally engrossed in every moment, waking or sleeping, in a totally meaningful thing that will help every living being...all the time. Imagine what it would feel like to be like that, okay? And that's that's what a bodhisattva feels like. This book is a instruction manual for people who want to live their life like that, okay? At the beginning you do it artificially, okay? It's called (kun tsok), you know. At the beginning you...it's called (chu pa), you you fake it, you try to act like a bodhisattva, okay, and trying to act like a bodhisattva makes you able to do it later, okay. But at the beginning, it's just reading this little instruction manual, "How to be a Bodhisattva"...Master Shantideva is very kind and Gyeltsab Je too. He starts calling you bodhisattva from the beginning of the book. "Oh you bodhisattvas. Wanna to know how to do it?", you know. And it...really you're not, you see what I mean? And they're being very kind. From the beginning of the book they kin keep calling you bodhisattva, you know, "okay, bodhisattva, here's what you do first. Think about the (pen yun)s of this way of life, spending the rest of you life in something which is ultimately meaningful for other people, which saves them from every form of pain and gets them straight into a (tantr)ic eternal paradise, you know. Hey, how about that for a career." Okay? And that's the advertisement. That's how the book starts and I...you gotta get that feeling. If you study this book, that's what you're trying to reach and you can't imagine how it feels to spend every moment of your life like that, knowing that everything you do is saving people's lives in an infinite way, okay? It's just a whole different level of how to spend you life. And anything less than that is boring. And is not satisfying. And you can smell it and you feel it, especially if you happen to get more than two weeks vacation to think about it, you know. Like the only thing that saves most of us from going insane is that we've managed to keep ourselves busy enough at a job so we don't have to think about it, you know what I mean? But it's meaningless. Everything else is meaningless. To serve others, to spend your whole life serving others in an ultimate way, it's the sexiest thing to do. And it's fun. And it's twenty-four hours a day, you know, and it gets better and better every day, okay. I mean, it starts out fantastic. Gyeltsab Je, Master Shantideva says, "blissed out going to bliss"...that's how he calls it, and the the path is bliss and the result is bliss and it gets better every single day and that's the bodhisattva's way of life. It's just amazing. It's just...like...finally something to do, okay. Number two. Say (shak pa) (repeat) (shak pa) (repeat). (Shak pa) means...(shak

pa) means "to cut wood, to split wood" and by extension it has come to mean "to open your heart and to admit your failings, like to purify yourself of bad deeds, bad karma". (Dikpa shakpa) means "to admit your bad karma openly, like splitting open wood," okay. The reason this chapter is here...this is chapter two...is that we all have mental blinders. You know, horses have those things...I don't know what you call them...blinders? Yeah, and they keep them from seeing what's off to the side because they would freak out, you know, and we all have these inherent obstacles in your mind, meaning...there's a diseased part of your mind that says, "oh, fifty weeks a year of collecting money to spend it for two weeks a year is...makes sense. Okay. That makes sense. You know, to...yeah, ninety-eight percent of the time I give to them, and I get...no sorry, ninety-six percent of the time I give to them and I get four percent back. Good deal, you know. And then (laughter) and then and then you have these blinders that that refuse to admit that this life is a waste, you know...refuse...violently. Somebody gets up and says that, you say, "no no no no no...no no no no no no no", you know, "my life has meaning, you know, I have mean...the my life has meaning. I'm not just going to work and collecting money and gonna die someday and lose everything I'm working for. No there's meaning", you know. (laughter) And and your mind, and your mind doesn't want to to face it, your mind avoids it, you know. Everytime you get close to it your mind...there's something about your mind that says "take care of yourself. Don't think about other people", you know, "you can't give away everything, you'll you'll be in trouble", you know, "it's not a good idea. It's naive. It's fanatical. It..that guy is getting you to act like a cult", you know, and, and no, these things are meaningful and your mind is, your mind is is comfortable with that. You know. It's meaningless but it's comfortable. And and to try to think differently is is painful. And what (shakpa) does, (shakpa) is the process of admitting your own bad karmas. Like, okay, you you had an abortion, or you you hurt somebody bad, or or you you you did something to hurt someone deeply or something like that, and to admit it and to clean them from your mind...stream, and then suddenly you wake up one day...because of the cleansing process, you wake up and say, "you know what? It makes more sense to take care of other people", you see? Just to come to that position in your mind is is extremely difficult. You have all these mental obstacles to reaching that place where you say to yourself, you wake up one morning, and you say, "you know what...it's a lot more fun and a lot more meaningful, and in fact the only meaningful thing to do with my life is to help other people, you know. It's a lot m...it makes a lot more sense to

help others than to spend a whole grubby, grubbing life trying to take care of myself when I'm just gonna be rotting in a couple years anyway. You know what I mean? Just to wake up one morning and have this realization it's...is the result of doing chapter two. Get it? Okay. Like, if you could purify your own mind by admitting the mistakes you've made in the past and getting rid of that bad karma, at some point the hurdle would be low enough that you could make it over it and realize that you should spend your life for other people. Okay. And not for number one. 'Cause number one is a lost case anyway. Okay. And that the best thing you can do for number one is to take care of other people. Okay. That's just...to get to that point is very difficult and it takes a lot of mental purification. It takes a lot of spiritual purification. That's why Master Shantideva puts this as chapter number two, okay. You will never get to compassion unless you get rid of a lot of your old bad karma, okay. Unless you clean a lot of your old bad karma off your mindstream, you will never understand compassion. Compassion will always seem stupid, or naive or fanatical or simple-minded or cultish or something, you know. That whole idea of taking care of other people, not worrying so much about yourself is naive, you know. Try to tell it to half the people in New York. They'll say, "come on. That guy's taking advantage of you. Are you crazy", you know. "He's just trying to get you to donate to his Arizona project or something," you know...okay? And I say...that's the it's it's to be accused of being naive or something like that and to believe it, when you believe it, it's because you have this bad karma...you have old bad karma in your mind. To believe that you have to take care of yourself and not worry about other people is an obstacle and you you have to go to chapter two to get through the rest of the book or you won't be interested in the rest of the book. Okay. Number three. Say (jang sem) (repeat) (sungwa) (repeat) (jang sem) (repeat) (sungwa) (repeat). (Jang sem) is short for "bodhicitta", okay...the wish for enlightenment. (Sung wa) means "obtaining it or getting it", okay? If Chapter Two was getting rid of the negative karma in your mind that keeps you from realizing that taking care of others is the smartest thing you can do and the most exciting thing you can do with your life, then what is...what do you guess number... Chapter Three's about?

(student: (unclear))

It's the opposite. Okay, what's that? It's getting together the good karma that would help you to get bodhicitta also, you see what I mean. So Chapter Two is like how to clean out all the

crap. Chapter Three is how to collect the good energy that you need to get up to bodhicitta, you see what I mean. So it's not just enough to remove all the bad karma old bad karma in your mind, that makes you think selfishly. You have to collect a lot of good karma too, okay. And actually Chapter Three is devoted... although it's called "Obtaining Bodhicitta", it's its main function is all those three things of how to collect good karma. Here we're talking about like (Ganden Hla Gyama), you know, the Je Tsongkapa practice that we learned, or the Seven Limb Puja thing, the seven limb practice...what you got in the seven limbs is a bunch of limbs devoted to cleaning out your negative karmas, especially (shakpa), okay, and then you have a lot of limbs to charging up your battery, you know, collecting enough good karmas to take you over your spiritual obstacles. Okay. So you have a two way process. You're cleaning away the old bad karma and you're charging up your spiritual batteries with new good karma and you need to do both, so Chapter Three is dedicated to the...to to to certain spiritual practices which you do every morning when you warm up for your meditation, they're there, okay...straight from Master Shantideva. Most of them come straight from here, okay. The whole process of making offerings, prostrations, rejoicing, requesting teachings...things like that, those are all found in this chapter. Collecting heavy duty good karma. Okay. Charging your batteries...to try to get up to the point where you realize that the only meaningful thing to do with your life is to help other people, okay? And it feels so good, okay? I mean...you know, when you come out of the hospital, you visited someone you didn't really want to visit, and you feel like a hero, you think that the guard is going to put a medal on your, (laughter) you know...you come out with your head up and your back straight and you just feel so good for like ten minutes, you know, like like you know when you've done something really good, and then imagine how that feels all day long, every minute of the day, to know you're doing the best thing...for everybody, all the time, is is that feeling, okay. Number four. Say (ba yu) (repeat) (ba yu) (repeat) (Bakma) in ancient Tibetan language means "a bride", you know, who was supposed to be this, you know, you know, and she's coming to get married to some guy and you had to move into their house and you become the slave of the family and and whatever the mother-in-law wants...you have to wash all of the dishes forever and (bagma) means like "to stay shy and modest and, you know, don't say anything ever" and (bak yu) came from that word. (Bak yu) means "careful in everything you do", you know, very careful, okay. Mindful. Careful. Call it carefulness. Okay. This refers to not blowing it after you get pretty good compassion, okay. It means like how to watch

yourself that, okay, now I've...he he taught about compassion, I get it, and he's taught the bodhisattva activities, I understand that...what a bodhisattva has to do, and now I have to try to protect that state of mind. I cleaned out my old bad karma, I collected a lot of new good karma, now I've finally reached the place where I halfway sense that it would be important to live for other people". Now take care of that state of mind like a new...like a little baby bonsai plant or something, you know what I mean, like a fresh sprout, you have to protect it and take care of it, and feed it and nurture it...that's (bak yu). That chapter's devoted to methods of prepar...protecting your baby bodhicitta. Okay. Carefulness. It's all a process, right. He doesn't just call it "Six Chapters", six perfections. He doesn't do that. He's got it all designed a different way. What's he leading up to? Chapter nine. That's where he took off, right? All right. Here we go. Chapter five. Say (she shin) (repeat) (she shin) (repeat). (She shin) means "mindfulness", okay? Technically, in the study of meditation, it's the state of mind that watches your mind and rings the bell when you get (jing wa) or (gu pa). What's that?

(students: Agitation and dullness).

Yeah, dullness and agitation...dullness is like, spacing out. (Gu pa) is like thinking about what's for lunch, okay. And (she shin) watches your mind and when he sees you spacing out or thinking about what's for lunch, blows the whistle he goes (whistles), you got a problem here, okay...and then it bring you back, you see what I mean? And then you say, "oh oh yeah, I'm meditating", okay. (laughter) Okay. And (she shin) is the one that catches yourself, okay. Now Master Shantideva names the chapter on the second perfection (she shin). What's the second perfection? Of the six?

(student: Tsultrim)

Yeah, (tsultrim), okay...ethical way of life, okay. The perfection of an ethical way of life, okay. I don't like the word "morality" much. I always think of Billy Graham and can't smoke and can't read certain magazines and stuff like that, you know. I think, to me, ethical way of life means every moment of my day I have to be honest, I can't lie, I ca...you know what I mean...like that. And that's perfection number two is gonna be covered in chapter five under the code word "watching yourself", okay, being mindful. All right. Because that's the main component of of being ethical...is to catch yourself when you

start to lie, okay, or catch yourself when you start to sneak something, or something like that...doing something sneaky, okay. That's (she shin). What happened to perfection number one? What is perfection number one?

(students: Giving)

Giving. A little bit comes in (tsan tsan tsu mo) where you're collecting new good karma, right, like offering and stuff like that, but hey, that's not the only kind of giving. Maybe it comes later. We'll see, okay. Six.

(silence)

Say (su pa) (repeat) (su pa) (repeat). You can call it "patience". When I think of patience, I think of waiting for a bus or a dentist. To me it's like the art of not getting angry. You know...that's too long, but anyway, it's the art of not getting angry, when the time is right. Usually you have about three seconds to pull out your (su pa) and then it's too late, okay? Personally that's what happens to me. I usually remember fifteen minutes later, twenty-five later, okay, but you have about...between the time the person says something and the time you start to respond, you have what, three-four seconds. That's that's the window of opportunity for this perfection. (Su pa) That's it. You have to respond in...you have to catch yourself within three-four seconds. That's all the time you have. It's not very pleasant and it's very destructive. Anger destroys good karma like nothing else in the universe, okay? Ang...a few minutes of anger can destroy years of a relationship and the karma also, good...years of good karma can be destroyed in a few minutes with true anger, okay. (Su pa) And that's perfection number three, okay? Chapter seven...

(silence)

Say (tsundru) (repeat) (tsundru) (repeat). (Tsundru) has been translated as "effort". I like to translate it as "joyful effort". What it boils down to is having a good time doing Dharma, okay. It's it's to get off on doing Dharma and I love to translate it that way and you...I love it if you think of it that way. You know, effort sounds like sweat and grunting to me, okay? (Tsundru) is like giggling and laughing and sharing food and and, you know, going out and doing another Dharma project together and getting excited about, oh, here's another way to do something cool to help people, you know, and just...you know,

bonding with the other people in your group who want to do stuff like that, and working together and and, you know...to me it's like sitting around on Michael Wick's stained carpets, and and talking about our next new thing we can do to help people, you know, and that's what it is, okay. (Tsun dru) is like that. (Tsun dru) is like, "hey man, you know what else we could do", you know, "we could just...let's let's print (b: Diamond Cutter Sutras) and give them away again in Mongolia...yeah yeah, yeah, good idea. Let's get somebody to pay for the cloth too. Yeah yeah yeah", okay (laughter), you know what I mean?" And then you go out and do it and and the feel, the feeling of giving them away...thousands of people rushing up to the stage to get their free (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra), you know, and that whole energy, you know, that's (tsun dru), okay...that pure, happy energy. Happy energy. Okay...is like that. It's not like, "oh, I gotta meditate again, you know, and I gotta do that (dak kye) thing again...oh my god" (laughter) "I don't have enough money for the bus...well they're doing it in New York...I don't have enough money for the subway", you know...okay...anyway. What is the next one? (Sam ten) probably, right? Yeah. Say (sam ten) (repeat) (sam ten) (repeat). Meditation, okay. Meditation. Perfection of meditation. You've gotta have it to see emptiness directly. Period. We've talked about it before. Hour to two hours a day, in deep meditation on a single object, okay. Must have or cannot see emptiness directly, will not escape the desire realm in this life. Your...choice is yours. Okay. Stay in a broken realm that cannot work. Why can't you meditate today? I have something else to do. What? It doesn't matter what. You're dealing with a broken thing. It's not gonna work whatever else you have to do it's not gonna work. And that's an excuse not to meditate, you know what I mean? It's funny. It's it's a it's a sad thing actually, okay. Whatever else you're gonna do doesn't work, it won't bring you what you want, just doesn't work. What do you think causes money, what do you think causes security? Taking care of other people, that's the only thing. If you happen to get any money or security it only came because you did something for other people in the past. It has nothing to do with your current intelligence, your current dealings, your current effort at work...nothing. They're not cause and effect. Okay? No connection between your income and how much you sweat at work. No connection at all. Get used to it, okay. The only source of money is to take care of other people. Okay. And the more you do the more you'll get. Period. That's Buddhist worldview. It clashes with western worldview. Now you gotta choose, okay? Get your name in the New York Times...what page? (laughter) Front page or the obituary, you know? "Founder of

such and such a company" (laughs)...that's all their is. You go straight from the front page to the back page. And that's his story (laughter)...no that's his story. That's the best you can do, you know, be in there twice and, no, it doesn't work. It's wrong. It doesn't work. Okay. Okay. Nine. (Sherab). Sweetest chapter of all, I think. This is where Master Shantideva dukes it out with Indian worldview, you know...what was it...seven hundred AD, something like that, okay. He's duking it out...by the way, the Indian worldview is the same as the western worldview, hasn't change any, ignorance hasn't changed, okay. He's duking it out with those guys that say, "the world is made from a big explosion" or the guys that are saying, "the world is made by this big powerful guy". "Oh, who was he made by...some other big powerful guy?" "I don't know." Okay. Stuff like that. All right. And he dukes it out. He he sets up all these worldviews and there's this big boxing match. It's like watching Mohammed Ali and a bunch of other guys fight it out...or Bruce Lee, you know, and really, it's just like that. It's a it's a war for your mind. Okay. It's a war for your worldview. And he sets up those other worldviews...and they're not wimpy. They're not stupid people. These are sophisticated people. These are sophisticated arguments. And then he stands there and he destroys them one by one. On their terms, okay. He actually addresses each one of their questions and demolishes it and at the end he's the only guy left standing, okay. It's a brilliant...it's a beautiful chapter, okay. It's like, by the time you get to the end of that chapter, you don't have anything else to believe in except that worldview, okay?

(cut)

Say (ngo wa) (repeat) (ngo wa) (repeat). (Ngo wa) means "dedication", okay. Normally at the end of class, we say (ge wa diyi, kye wo kun)...by that time your mind is already on the subway, right? Try to think till the second line, okay, which is (laughs), "by this virtue that I collected during this class, hearing these holy things that nobody ever talks about", you know, "may everyone get a holy (tantr)ic angel's body and mind", you know. Basically that's the prayer. Who wrote it? Nagarjuna, okay. Master Nagarjuna. All right? Direct, from one of his works. We say it every class. That's dedication. Dedication is taking the good karma that you just did and putting it in the karmic bank before you have a chance to blow it by getting irritated on the way out at one of your fellow students. Okay. Because that irritation destroys the good karma. So, actually you consciously at the end of class say, "I did

something good today, I give it away to other people", you know, and then all that energy goes out to other people. It's like invest it...reinvestment. The whole idea of a good Buddhist is reinvesting your good karma. Okay. Reinvestment of good karma. Okay. By the way, there's only ten chapters, right...far as we know. Where did giving go? This is giving, okay. Giving was saved for last and it's extraordinary chapter. In Tibetan monasteries we recite the tenth chapter by itself as a prayer. Just because it's so beautiful, you know. He's like praying that he could turn in his body into rain and fall in the hot hells and help people and stuff like that. He...every woman who's giving birth at this moment, may I take away their pain with this karma that I just collected...stuff like that. Beautiful beautiful over and over like that...hundreds of lines over and over again. He's thinking of every person in the world who's having a problem right at this moment..."may my body turn into what they need and I give it to them", you know. And he's like...extraordinary chapter, last chapter, okay, that's giving, okay. That's the structure of the (b: Bodhisattva's Way of Life). And think about it okay. Think about...I mean, deep down inside, I think, most intelligent people have a...a pretty clear awareness that they...that their life is meaningless, you know, and and they hide it...I think the most talented people hide it by keeping themselves too busy to think about it. And I'm speaking from personal experience, okay?

Like you you hide it, you hide from it by keeping busy. Because to be faced, starkly, with how meaningless your day is is just too much to think about, and so you make sure you have enough appointments so you don't have time to think about it, you know, and...in...what I'm trying to do is imagine a a kind of life where you are literally saving thousands or tens of thousands of people from this broken realm and taking them to some like holy paradise or something, that you could do that and that would be...the most beautiful way to spend your life and the most meaningful way to spend you life, and you don't have to quit your current meaningless job (laughs) to do that, because then it would become a meaningful job, you see. Bodhisattvas hang out wherever they are. It doesn't matter. You can work in a company. You can have a family. You can be a normal person, but you gotta be a bodhisat...you gotta be thinking like a bodhisattva, and you gotta be doing these ten things while you're at your place, whether it's the the your office, or it doesn't matter. Bodhisattvas don't just go around in red suits teaching Dharma all day, you know what I mean. They they work in normal companies, they do normal business, they have normal

relationships with other people, they have meaningful family life, they do everything a normal person does but with a totally different frame of mind. And that's that's a bodhisattva's way of life. I'm not saying you have to change your external life. You probably shouldn't. You have to change your internal life so that it becomes this mission, constantly. You're at work and you are a high, holy, sacred being warrior, you know, carrying out the sacred acts of a bodhisattva in your office in Manhattan and if you think you have to go somewhere else to do it, you don't get it, because there isn't any place else to do it, okay. You have to do it where you are. And and you can be this holy warrior wherever you are, wherever you work, wherever your live, with whomever you are, and that's the whole point of this book. People might not know it. They might call you...(Dushe Sumpawa), right (laughs)...Mr. or Mrs. Three-Thoughts. It doesn't matter, okay. But again, you can do it anywhere and you have to think about it, okay. We'll take a break there...and talk to you later. Okay.

(break)

Okay, we'll start. (laughs) Just very briefly. This series of talks at the end has been about how the Dharma might spread in the west and I wanted to talk very briefly about priorities, okay...the question of priorities. And I think what's happened in the west up to now is that there's been there's been this Dharma center thing happened. It means a Tibetan Lama comes to the United States or someone goes to India and meets a Tibetan Lama and they say, "how would you like to start a Dharma Center?" or they ask the Lama, "can I start a Dharma Center?" and they come back home and they, sometimes they rent a place, sometimes they use their own home and then the Lama says, "I'll live there", or and sometimes they live there and sometimes they don't, sometimes they visit once a year, you know, but anyway, a Dharma Center starts and then there's two or three dedicated people who normally get it started and then they get involved with keeping it going and then comes the question of funding it and and finding people to help out, and things like then, and then the teacher comes and and in the early years in the United States there was this kind of weird thing going on where Lamas were almost like kept captive (laughter) in these Dharma Centers and it was considered...they were considered like improper to to ask for money, you know what I mean? I mean, the Lama was supposed to be like starving all the time (laughter) but their students could have a regular job and make money and then they would give little gifts to the Lama, you know, and the Lama ...it

would be considered impolite if the Lama said, you know, "why can't I have a normal salary" or something like that, I mean, it was considered weird for a...for Khen Rinpochen...we gave him a salary of a hundred and fifteen dollars a month and that was a big deal, you know, and then he was supposed to survive on that and be happy with that because he's a Lama, you know what I mean.

And it was weird. And and then you would go to school and pay thirty thousand dollars for tuition so they could get you to read (b: Peter Pan) (laughter) which one of my students is doing at the most expensive college in the United States...currently.

Okay. And and then there's this weird thing, you know, like it's no problem to pay thirty thousand dollars to read (b: Peter Pan) but this Lama who's teaching you not to die, it was weird to give him more than, you know, enough to live on or just barely live on, and that's still the case at almost every Dharma Center.

It's a kind of slavery or something. I don't know. And the Tibetans said "okay" 'cause they didn't have any money, you know, and and, well, of course, they wanted to spread the Dharma and help people, but but the whole the whole thing was a little bit...I don't know...that that whole thing was weird. I'm not talking about that tonight. I'm talking about something else. (laughter). By the way, the Ganden Tripa, the head of the the throne of Je Tsongkapa was kept captive in the back of a of a factory floor in Manhattan and I used to go and visit him, you know. He he had a curtain around the bed in the back of this huge factory floor, nothing else, you know, and he'd say, "help", you know, and I'd say, "I don't know where", you know...anyway, that's not what I'm talking about tonight (laughter) (laughs). I think they should get a decent, regular salary. I think we should raise funds, pay them fifty-sixty thousand a year like any other full professor and period. You know what I mean. The whole thing...the idea that we should decide that they should live in poverty is weird, you know. That's a whole nother story, I'm not talking about that. (laughter). I'm talking about another thing, it's a whole different thing, which is that this phenomenon happens in the Dharma Center that the people who could do the most good, you know, that if they studied and meditated and practiced, end up trying to run the place. And I call it the FPMT Administrator Syndrome. FPMT is a great organization. Thousands of students. Serving thousands and thousands of people around the world. But as I travel from center to center, the most talented, the most spiritually talented people are often the the directors of the centers, and then their practice goes down the drain. You know, their own practice collapses, you know what I mean. Like you say, "how's your meditation?" They say, "meditation. I haven't had enough time to sleep for three days",

you know. And you say, "well, what are you doing," you know. And they say, "I'm running this center. What do you think I'm doing?", you know, "I gotta I gotta work. See you later". "Gotta run, you know, there's a plumbing problem" or you know...and they spend their time like that. I would like to see...I'd like to suggest that in the west as we start to build more centers...or you can call them churches or temples, it doesn't matter...but as we start to build more places, that it...that the very people who administer things, and that includes this organization, right, such as it is, that those people who administer things shouldn't ever use that as a reason not to do their practice...you see what I mean? There should be a prioritization of your life. Projects are good. We have fourteen major projects. We're helping two thousand refugees, we are saving all the Tibetan books in the world, blah blah blah...but if you don't do you own practice, what does it mean? You see what I mean? If you are the purpose...if you're the person who's in charge of these projects whose goal is the spiritual well-being of all people and your spiritual well-being is no good because you're too busy administering the "spiritual well-being project", then what does it mean...you see what I mean? And I just wanted...that's just my thought about that the people in charge of this organization, or the people in charge of other Dharma Centers and the people who come to be doing the administration of these places, which are normally the most talented people, you know. You have Art Engle out in New Jersey packing books on the weekends when he could be translating any scripture in the world, you know I'm...because these are the people who care, but that their own practice should never take second seat, and and and then as you get to be an administrator and as time goes on you tend to hide behind that. You know, you say, "yeah, I didn't do the homeworks last class. I was administering the last class." But that's...that's no good. I say you have to do both, okay, like if you're up to that point where you're helping to administer a Dharma group, you you should be doing both. What? You should be administering it very well, putting your heart into it, giving it your time and then on top of that you must do your practice and if there comes a (nung dom)...what's a (nung dom)?

(students: (unclear))

A spiritual prioritization conflict, which in the (b: Vinaya) is a very important thing, you know. I'm supposed to go do (so jong) tonight but my (ney Lama) just died, my personal, spiritual tutor has just died, but I am required by the monks vows to go to

this ceremony tonight. Now that's called a (nung dom) in the (b: Vinaya), meaning "two virtues are required of you by the laws of the vinaya at the same time, so what're you gonna do, okay?" You have to drop one and pick the other. That's prioritization. You have to know which one is more important and and I just wanna say in two minutes, that in this organization, whenever it comes down to that that, you know, it's a question between your personal practice and and some other administrative activity, drop the administrative activity. You know. And if that thing doesn't happen, or that thing doesn't get bought or that building doesn't get built, or that stupa doesn't get...that's okay, because the whole purpose of those is for your own spiritual practice. Well, isn't that selfish, you know what I mean? Isn't that wrong to choose your personal practice over all these important Dharma projects? No. Why? Bodhicitta, okay. What is bodhicitta? Bodhicitta is the decision to reach a (tantr)ic paradise yourself quickly as you can so you can really help other people, because right now you're just doing desire realm help, you know what I mean? You're you're a desire realm being doing desire realm help in a broken world, doing broken things, that are all gonna go away anyway. On the other hand, if you if you perfected your practice, then, then you would be in a (tantr)ic paradise and you could teach people how to get there and then they don't need another land purchase or building (laughs), you know what I mean? In the desire realm. Get it? So what I'm saying is that, there's a there's this bad tendency that the most talented people get drawn towards the busy work and and you have to be very strict, if you're one of those people, you have to be very strict as time goes by that you hold the line on your practice, you know, because that's what really helps other beings, is for you to get your rear end into a (tantr)ic paradise before you die. Okay. And the projects will give you the good karma to help, but they can't replace the personal practices necessary. Hours in the morning, or whenever, meditating, keeping your own books strictly, every couple of hours, doing your (tantr)ic retreats...I say twice a year. One and a half months each...something like that. They don't replace those things. You have to do those things, and then the the other stuff will come automatically, you see what I mean? The good karma from doing your practice means the other stuff will automatically get done, but but the the big mistake I see happening in America is the most talented people get wrapped up in Administration, think it's a virtue to break their own practice or not do their own practice, or exhaust themselves so that they can't do their practice and then...that's not how it's supposed to work. It's supposed to be that your practice is so fantastic that, you know,

the sponsor comes up to you and says, "here. Have a million dollars", you know what I mean? And you don't have to go out and struggle like that. It it...what really causes the world to become a pure realm is your personal practice. So to give that up for desire realm good result is is not...doesn't make any sense, you see what I mean? So, I I think in this organization as it grows, teachers especially, have to hold the line. There may be in the early years, not enough doctors to go around for all the sick people, but that doesn't mean that you drop your practice and just help people all day because you're not helping people all day. You you have to have your time that you do your meditation, that you see emptiness directly, that you do your (tantr)ic practices, that you do your retreats, and and that's how you really help people and you have to keep that in mind. Otherwise, just to get exhausted and then to burn out and and drop your personal practice is a mis...that's a mistake. That's not understanding the Dharma, okay. Perfection of giving is perfected when? Have the Buddhas of the past perfected the perfection of giving? Yes or no?

(students: Yes)

(Tak). Yes. (laughs) Okay. Are there any poor people left in the world?

(students: yes)

This is Master Shantideva...you're gonna get it next class I think. I think. Yes there are. Yeah. So they didn't perfect giving, right?

(student: They did)

(Chi che), yeah, no, of course they did, okay? It's a state of mind. Oh, so if it's just a state of mind, I don't have to give real things to real people? (laughter) (laughs) (Chi che) okay. Yeah, you have to go through that debate, okay? In your mind, okay. And that's the debate. Okay. Did they perfect giving? Yes. Are there any poor people left in the world? Yes. So he didn't perfect giving, right? No, that's not what I said. Oh, so the perfection of giving is just a thing in your mind? Right. So I don't have to give real things to real people. No. Okay. That's the debate. You have to go through that, all right. You can't you can't take care of all the...they're endless. The needs are endless, especially in the early years when they're not enough people to go around to teach all the other people, so

you'll just burn out. You have to keep your personal practice because that's how you perfect yourself and become a Buddha and help other people and that's the real meaning of ultimate compassion. That's what real compassion wants to do, and you gotta get used to that. "So it means I should ignore other people?" No. (laughter), okay. You gotta get used to that. All right. No. It doesn't mean that. Okay. Within the capacity that you have, you have to perfectly serve other people and then you then you have perfected the (b: Bodhisattva's Way of Life), to the ultimate that you can without breaking your practice, okay? And that's the...that's all. Okay. Don't get that Administrator Syndrome. I don't like to see it and I've seen very fine people lose themselves that way and then not serve anybody after a few years, okay. All right. The best thing you can do is perfect your own understanding and then perfect your own practice, okay. We'll do a prayer. I think we got...Puntsok...no. Yeah. Don't hide (unclear)

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: dedication)

Review Course 17  
Class 10, part 1  
Transcribed by: Karen Becker

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: refuge)

(silence)

Okay, we'll start. I wanna ask somebody to hand out...this is a little blurb we made about all the projects that we described in class, so it's like fifteen...fourteen-fifteen projects that we're working on and we made it because we had a meeting with Richard Gere's secretary and some other people, we were trying...there's two versions of this. One doesn't have this picture on the front (laughs) and has the real annual budgets which are like a lot of money and this is the one for you guys (laughter) and it has a tiny little budget thing, you know, like you can sponsor a prisoner for a hundred dollars a year to get courses or stuff like that, so we're gonna hand that out to you guys now. Take one or two if you can think of anybody to give it to. It's more or less, you know...I went today...they invited me to go to Princeton, back to Princeton...it was really weird, and they're asking if one of my students could help be on the board of religious life there or something like that, and and it's a good way to show your projects to somebody easily, you know what I mean, so take one, take two, show it around. There's another version that you can show to your rich friends, okay. I usually ask my students...I'm not asking you for money, which I don't do, okay, but if you know some wealthy person then introduce us

somehow, (laughter) you see what I mean. And people have done that, like in Arizona and the lady ended up giving fifty-thousand dollars to the to the project there and stuff like that. You know, that's how we met the...almost all of our sponsors was by somebody said "I know the uncle of so and so", you know, and so, think about it. We support indirectly about two thousand Tibetans refugees and through the different projects and stuff like that, so it's a good thing to help with. So think about if you know a friend of a friend who has any money. Obviously none of us has any, okay (laughter) but, and I don't like to ask my students for money, but if you can think of some friend of a friend who knows somebody, you know what I mean, and we're not shy to approach them. We're not at all shy to ask them, okay. So, some of you...if you want to pass those out. There's some big Lamas in town for His Holiness' teachings, we're trying to get some to come by, maybe on Thursday or Friday, so I encourage you to come on...Thur...we're trying but it they're very very busy, so, but, you know, we're gonna give it a shot. Okay. So I suggest you don't miss Thursday or Friday night. I'm not sure if anyone's coming, but we have a few bites, so...not His Holiness, I can tell you that. (laughter) But (laughs) but anyway, we're trying, okay. Tonight we do the second half of the (b: Bodhisattvacharyavatara). Then on...when is that...Thursday we have a review of the whole review and I like tonight's class. I notice that one of the main subjects is (nyon mong).

(silence)

Say (nyon mong) (repeat) (nyon mong) (repeat) (Nyon mong) has been translated in many funny ways. Some people called it "deluded emotions" or I don't know...illusions or delusions or...it just means "a bad thought", okay. If you're translating a book you might want to say "mental afflictions". I like affliction. Affliction means "something that's bothering you on a steady basis". And the Sanscrit word is "kleisha" and it comes from a root "klish" which means to afflict or to bother somebody, like a a horsefly both...you know, flying around your head and biting you and bother you, okay, so mental affliction's a pretty good translation. It happens in the mind and it bothers you, okay. What's this got to do with the (b: Bodhisattvacharavatara)? We're getting to a section where Gyeltsab Je says in his commentary, "you should kick butt on your mental afflictions and you should get angry at your mental afflictions". So then it became a big debate in Tibet, is this literal or is this figurative, you know. Do they really mean that you should...that there could be a feeling of anger that was beneficial? Or is he saying something else, okay. So...and you often hear people claim that the Buddha said that mental afflictions could be used for something good, you know what I mean, that you could maybe have a spell of anger over your jealousy or something like that and that that would be a good thing. So I'd like to discuss that tonight. And we'll be drawing from Gyeltsab Je's commentary, okay. So first we gotta figure out what is a (nyon mong), okay...what is a mental affliction. By the way, their roll in general is to prevent you from getting to nirvana. Nirvana, you know, some people say you just disappear, some people say it's a restaurant (laughter), what it really is is the permanent end of your (nyon mongs), you don't have any more (nyon mongs), okay...that's all. It

could  
happen tonight, it could happen tomorrow. The day that you  
have  
no more bad thoughts, the day that you are incapable of  
having a  
bad thought, you've reached nirvana. That's the definition  
of  
nirvana, okay. You have to see emptiness directly to achieve  
that. It's impossible without that, okay. But that's a long  
story...I won't go into that...tonight, all right. First I'd  
like to give you the definition of a mental affliction, as it  
appears in your homework. Where is that? The long one is  
(rang  
gyi nye gyi gyal sak kyi sem gyu mashiwar jepay sem jung)  
but, I  
made it short for you guys, okay.

(silence)

Say (sem gyu) (repeat) (mashiwar) (repeat) (jepay) (repeat)  
(sem  
jung) (repeat). (Sem gyu) (repeat) (mashiwar) (repeat)  
(jepay )  
(repeat) (sem jung) (repeat). Okay. (Sem gyu) means "your  
mind", okay. This refers to your mind as a stream...stream  
of  
your mind. (Mashiwar jepay) means "destroys your peace of  
mind".  
Destroys your peace of mind. (Sem jung) means "a mental  
function", okay, part of your mind. In Buddhism we divide  
between the main mind and the mental functions, okay. Main  
mind  
is your raw awareness, the fact that you are conscious at  
all.  
It's sort of what you lose if Mike Tyson hits you real hard,  
okay. I mean, we say then it moves to a lower level, but  
(sem...sol sem), main mind is your general fact that you are  
aware of anything at all. And then mental functions are  
defined  
by functions, okay, like anger, jealousy, desire...things  
like  
that and they are they are defined by that okay. So they  
focus  
on a particular...instead of just being aware of the object  
in a  
raw way, they focus on some detail of the object and so

they're called a mental function, okay? Like jealousy is focusing on someone else's good things, or something like that. Yeah.

(student: What's the difference between (sempa) and (nampa chepa)?)

She asked the difference between (sem pa) and (nam pa che pa).

(Sem pa) is one of the mental functions and it's a basically, most basically it depends on what your school you're in, but (sem

pa) is a mental function and not and it's distinguished from (sem), so (sem, sempa and semchung) are different things.

(Sol sem) or (sem) is "mind"...main mind. Then (sem pa) is "the movement of the mind. The fact that the mind moves to a new object," okay. And then (sem chung) is a mental function. (Semba) is a (sem chung) and not a (sem).

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. And (nam ba chepa) is (sem)...if you divide (sem) it's six

kinds, so the raw awareness of your what you see, the raw awareness of what you hear, like that, okay. So the (nam che)s

are not (sem jung)s. But (sem ba) is a (sem jung) and the (nam

che)s are (sem). Okay. And there's also (yi) and (lo) and you

gotta deal with that. Okay. No, it's interesting in Tibetan there are many words for mind. You know, I studied Russian for a

long time. There's fifty words for dreary (laughter) (laughs)

okay, okay, and in Tibetan it's fifty words for wisdom. You know, light, happiness, virtue...it's funny. Each language has

it's own flavor. (laughter) Okay. So. Anyway. The definition

of a mental affliction is that when you have one you don't feel

happy. It ruins your peace of mind. Okay. So that's

the...that's what they do. That's their function. Okay. I

wanna list for you the six major ones and I think it's

important  
to know your enemy. Okay. By the way, I'm dedicating this  
class  
to the mental afflictions I had this morning and last  
Saturday.  
Okay. That's why we're doing this. Okay. Number one.

(silence)

Say (du chak) (repeat) (du chak) (repeat). (Du chak)  
means...usually it's translated as "desire". Now, this is  
one of  
the six principle mental afflictions. It means that this  
mental  
affliction is circling around in your mind almost every  
minute of  
the day, okay. Desire to me means "uncontrollable urge for  
chocolate ice cream, looking at Playboy magazines", something  
like that. Desire to me means...if somebody said "did you  
have  
desire today", it's almost like "yeah, maybe once or  
something",  
you know. But this is supposed to be something that's  
circling  
around in your mind every few seconds, or every few minutes.  
I  
prefer...when you really study what it's defined as, you  
know,  
which is like (yung we (unclear)) something like that. It's  
really more like, how shall we say, "not wanting to lose  
something and being ignorant about it". So I like to call it  
"ignorantly liking something", okay. Liking something  
ignorantly. Does the Buddha desire that you reach it  
nirvana?  
Yes. Does the Buddha have wishes, desires, hopes? Of  
course.  
So, desire's a tough word, you know. Does the do does the  
Buddha  
have (du chak)? No way. Okay. So (du chak) being the first  
of  
the six main mental afflictions is more like wanting things  
in an  
ignorant way, liking things in an ignorant way. And this  
happens  
every moment of your day. You're doing it all day long.  
What's

the test of whether a desire is a holy desire or an ignorant desire? It boils down to what you would do to get the thing. Okay (laughs). Very simply, okay. The test is that. If you would undertake a non-virtue to get what you want, then you are motivated by ignorant desire. Okay. If you would hurt someone to get what you want, then then you're having (du chak), okay. If you want to achieve something like get people en enlightened, okay, and you would re...and understanding karma you'd refuse to ever do anything wrong to achieve that goal, we would call that kind of desire what?

(student: smart)

(laughs) Bodhicitta, okay? Seriously, okay. So be careful. I mean, you can't say all desires are...the Buddha of course desires to save us, all bodhisattvas desire to see all beings liberated, you know what I mean? This has to be defined as something like "ignorantly liking things". What does it mean to be ignorantly liking things? You have ten dollars, somebody else needs ten dollars, you can give it to them easily, and you don't want to give it to them because you don't want to lose ten dollars. And not to give it to them is ignorance itself because the only way you got ten dollars was what?

(student: Giving it to somebody)

To give it to somebody, so so to refuse to give ten dollars to somebody who needs it and you have it is is (du chak)...is just stupid. It's ignorant. It's blind. It's it's totally wrong because it's the best way to lose money, okay. Simply. Okay. It's just the stupidest thing that you can do if you want money. If you like having money, you must give it, okay. You you

gotta  
get used to that, okay. No money in the world was ever  
created  
by anything but the act of giving...get used to that. There  
is  
not a single red penny in the universe that came into  
existence  
except that you gave something to somebody else. Period.  
There  
is no other kind of money. All other kinds of money are non-  
existent. There's no such thing as self-existent money. No  
such  
thing. So the idea of holding on to your money is the height  
of  
ignorance. It's the best way to lose money. It's the best  
way  
to be poor, okay? And and conversely, giving away your  
money,  
properly, responsibly, thoughtfully, totally without any  
attachment, totally without any hope for reward or something  
like  
that, is frankly the best way to improve the economy (laughs)  
...your economy, okay. Frankly the best way to to have as  
much  
as you ever want forever, okay? You gotta get used to that.  
There...if you believe that there's a dollar that you could  
keep  
by not giving it away, that's a self-existent dollar. That's  
the  
same thing as a two-headed purple forty foot elephant  
rampaging  
through this room right now. Remember him? Okay. (Gak ja)  
The  
non-existent thing. And a dollar that you could keep and and  
not  
give away, and and then that would make you have the  
dollar...that doesn't exist. There's no such thing. Get  
used to  
it, okay. So that's (du chak). You have (du chak) all day  
long.  
All day long, okay. Anytime you do anything that upsets  
your  
peace of mind tow..that relating to getting something, you're  
having (du chak), okay? That's the test. The main test is  
would  
you ever do anything wrong to keep that dollar or get a

dollar,  
because then you you have ignorance...that's a sign of  
ignorance,  
that's a a certain brand of ignorance on your head, you  
know...you have ignorance, okay. Gotta get used to that.  
Second  
one.

(silence)

Say (kong tro) (repeat) (kong tro) (repeat). Technically  
speaking (kong tro) means "anger". In this context, it's the  
opposite of (du chak). What would that be?

(students: Disliking something ignorantly.)

Disliking something ignorantly, okay? And you do that all  
day  
long. Okay. You do that every few seconds. Your mind is is  
slightly irritated, slightly disliking something, slightly  
not  
wanting something to happen, and simultaneously not  
understanding  
why that thing is there. Okay. That's ignorantly disliking  
other things, okay. And this applies to everything that  
happens  
around you during the day that you don't like, okay...and  
you're  
having a mental affliction, okay. It could be not liking the  
perspiration on your arm from the heat in the room, okay. It  
could be not liking the dress that somebody has on. It could  
be,  
you know, being irritated that you have to go somewhere  
tomorrow  
and thinking about it tonight, okay. All of those things are  
(kong tro). Okay. And they're...they only can survive as  
long  
as you misunderstand your world, okay. As long as you  
misunderstand your world you can go on thinking those  
thoughts.  
The minute your understanding of this world gets strong  
enough,  
you won't think those thoughts anymore. They just won't come  
to  
you, okay. You can dislike...does the Buddha dislike  
anything?

(students: Yes)

Of course. People in the hell realms, he's not happy, he'd rather not...he dislikes that condition. That's brilliant. Okay. But does he dislike it in an ignorant way? No. He knows where it came from. He knows how to stop it, okay? And if you really really really believe that all the negative things in your world were coming from you, if every asshole you ever met and you knew it was you, that everything you disliked about anyone is a reflection of your own mind and only that, then how could you go around being irritated all the time, except at yourself maybe, okay. But that's the way it is, okay. There is no negative quality in any other person you have ever met that did not was not created by you. Get used to it, okay. So, if you've ever seen Trijang Rinpoche's face in his older years, he's got this sad smile...I'll never forget it, it's this...like that, you know, it's like how could you keep shooting yourself in the toe, you know. And it's not a hatred and it's not dislike, it's a kind of sadness about the condition that we hurt ourselves more than anyone else could ever hurt us, okay. That's all. And you can be sad about it. Like...the Buddha can experience the... Buddha's have the mental function of compassion or some kind of sweet-sadness about our condition. It doesn't upset their mindstreams in an angry way. They don't get anger. Oh, there's a picture (laughs). That's not quite the one I'm thinking, but he's got this a few pictures of him where he just looks like, "will you stop hurting yourself" (laughs), you know, okay. This is Rinpoche's root Lama...the Dalai Lama's junior tutor,

okay?

Passed away in nineteen eighty-one. So, where does that go...here...thank you...wait. So that's all. That's the second

one. Any kind of dislike or unhappiness that you experience right now is based on ignorance. Down deep in your heart you believe that this person's irritating qualities is belongs to them and it doesn't. It's coming direct from your own past karma. And it's a it's only exists in your mind, okay. You gotta get used to that. And and it make...it changes your whole

perception of your day the more you understand that. Okay. You

just go around everytime you meet someth...somebody who's irritating...everytime somebody hurts you, you're like, what did

I do...what exactly did I do...oh yeah yeah yeah yeah, and then

you figure it out and you deal with it, but you don't get upset.

Okay. It's a different thing. The more strong your wisdom gets

the less upset you can get. Because you understand that you created this thing. And you understand how to stop it, okay. That's number two. (Kong tro).

(silence)

Say (nga gyel) (repeat) (nga gyel) (repeat). (Nga) means "me",

(gyel) means "king". Guess what (nga gyel) means?

(student: Me king.)

Pride, okay. Pride. By the way, there are eighty-four thousand

mental afflictions. These are the top six. So you must be having it most of the time. Okay. If it if it makes it into the

top six it must be part of your mind most of the time. There's

different commentaries on (nga gyel). Sometimes they divide it

into...how many kinds...nine, ten, seven wasn't it...anyway, mainly into nine. There's this beautiful nun out in New Jersey

named Chonyila who translated the text on these, so maybe you could get her to give you a copy someday. And did a nice job on it. Anyway. There're about nine different kinds of pride. Basically it's looking at people who are betting better than you and thinking, well, let's say it's like His Holiness and you say, "he's definitely better than me, but not by much" (laughter) (laughs) okay. Then there's a...below that there's a second kind of pride which is like, "he's better than me but just in that one thing". Okay. And then there's another kind that says, "everybody thinks he's better than me, but he's not, he's the same as me", okay. And then...so basically these are all focused on someone who's truly better than you. Okay. And think and having this real like delusion that you are better than them, okay, or maybe almost as good. Okay. Then there's a kind of pride which is focused on people at your own level, and says, "I'm definitely better than them". Okay. And then there's a third kind of pride that focuses on people who are maybe slightly less than you in some quality and you say, "I'm infinitely better than them in that quality". Okay. So basically pride is focusing on three different levels and having three different delusions about it, okay. (Nga gyel). There's a...there is a (tantr)ic concept about (nga gyel) which is a hundred percent different and there's a beautiful commentary on it by Ngulchu Dharmabhadra which if you ever get a chance you should read. He talks about all nine kinds of pride and then he talks about divine pride and a beautiful commentary. Okay. So. If you ever have the chance. Okay. Number four. The basic function of pride by the way is that you can't learn anything from anybody else. If you really believe that you're better than everybody else, you can't learn anything from anybody else and if you believe in some part of your mind that other people have qualities that you don't have yet, then you can just suck up life-

knowledge from everyone you're around, like you get better every time you meet somebody because you're always observing them to see what they have that you would like to have as far as personal qualities. So you're always improving. The more you can fight your (nga gyel), the more you can learn, okay. Especially Dharma knowledge. You can't learn much if you have (nga gyel). Almost impossible. Okay.

(silence)

Say (ma rikpa) (repeat) (ma rikpa) (repeat) (Ma rikpa) means "ignorance; not understanding your world. Mis"...in fact, I should say it differently. "Misunderstanding your world". Is there a difference between "not understanding your world" and "misunderstanding your world"?

(student: Uh huh.)

Big difference, okay. (b: Abhidharmakosha) says, "the difference between knowledge and ignorance is not the difference between a friend and someone you don't know yet. It's the difference between a friend and an enemy". Okay. So, ignorance is the active opposite of knowledge. It's the the destructive opposite of knowledge. It's a destructive misunderstanding of your world, okay. You can't have any of the other mental afflictions if you have ignorance, okay...sorry...without ignorance, okay. You must have ignorance or you can't have a mental affliction. You must misunderstand your world or you can't have afflic...a mental affliction. There's a couple of other implications here. The final mental affliction that you get rid of...guess what it is.

Just before you reach nirvana...it's this one. In it's most subtle form. Tiny seeds for misunderstanding your world in your mind. And there's a huge debate between all the different Buddhist schools but the one that wins is the one that says, "yeah, that's the last mental affliction you lose and it is a mental affliction". Misunderstanding your world is a mental affliction, okay. There are some schools that say it's not. They say it's responsible for all the mental afflictions, but it's not in itself a mental affliction. Okay. But the higher school of Buddhism says it is, all right. So that's a ultimate mental affliction. With regard to this pen, what would it be? How'd I get this pen?

(student: You gave a pen to somebody).

I gave a pen to somebody, okay. No no no. I bought it.

(students: (unclear))

(laughs) That's wrong view. Get used to it. It's very difficult. Okay. Is it completely different from what your society is telling you? Yes. Does what your society told you so far has it worked? No (laughs), so give it a shot, what'da you got to lose, you know? The best that can happen if you follow what your society says right now is that you can get old and die and lose all the things you sweated for for fifty weeks a year. Okay. That's the promise that your society has...the shining goal that your society has put forward for you. Work for fifty weeks a year so you can have things that you'll lose as soon as you die, you know, and can't use except for two weeks a year, okay. That's the...that is the promise of you society, okay. And they say that this thing came from a plastic factory in a petroleum...we have to fight the Arabs because they control the the oil that this comes from, we can't get it if we don't

protect  
the oil. That's wrong view. Where's this pen come from?

(students: Giving)

It comes from giving a pen, it's that simple. Very difficult,  
okay. It's very difficult to live by, right. The only way this  
pen ever got in this room was because each person who was  
enjoying the use of this pen has done something to help  
another  
person with some writing something writing something, okay.  
That's why this pen got here, that's all. You have to start  
thinking like that, okay. Everything else is ignorance and  
nothing else is true, okay. So is it not true that if you  
have  
enough money and you go to the store, you can get a pen? No  
it's  
not true. Why? You might have a heart attack on the way.  
They  
might be out of pens. Okay. Oh, come on, what's that got to  
do  
with it? It has everything to do with it. We're talking  
about  
what really brings a pen which never fails...you see what I  
mean?

If you give away writing instruments you will always get a  
pen,  
you must get a pen, it's infallible, okay. Karma and  
emptiness  
are infallible. That's where pens come from. It's not from  
money and it's not from going to the store. Get used to it.  
Are  
you telling me that if I never went to the store and I needed  
a  
pen right now, somebody would show up with a pen? Yeah.  
That's  
exactly what I'm saying and it's infallible. It never fails.  
Okay. Get used to it. Go into the store and giving them  
green  
paper is not what makes pens. Get used to it, okay. And you  
can't create more pens by killing people to prevent to to  
to...how do you say... protect your oil supplies or  
something,  
okay. You're just gonna create more suffering, all right.

You  
gotta get used to that. It's very difficult, extremely  
difficult. Until you can think like that you'll never stop  
suffering, all right. Number five.

(silence)

Say (te tsom) (repeat) (te tsom) (repeat). (Te tsom) means  
"doubt", okay. Now you gotta explain this one, okay. Is it  
wrong to doubt Buddhism? No. You've had a quotation from  
Maitreya himself who said what, do you remember? If you're  
not  
sure about some teaching you just heard, like the one I just  
gave  
you about the pen...'cause I saw a couple of faces  
like...(laughter), okay, Maitreya says, "put it on the shelf.  
Just suspend judgement on it. Don't decide correct. Don't  
decide wrong. Don't believe everything even a Buddhist  
teacher  
tells you because you know from the course last December  
that's  
dangerous. Even with the Buddha, okay. Don't believe  
everything  
they tell you until it makes sense to you. But also don't  
reject  
it until you've decided convincing evidence that this is  
wrong,  
okay? If it's something that you can't confirm yet, leave it  
for  
a while. Is that (te tsom)? Is that a mental affliction?

(students: No)

No. Does it like destroy your peace of mind? No. It's  
like,  
okay, Michael Roach said it, could be okay, he's says some  
good  
things but I'm not convinced yet, so I'll just shelve it  
until I  
have more information. That's perfect Buddhist behavior.  
Okay.  
But to say, "oh, that's definitely stupid" is is a mistake.  
Maitreya said, "just leave it for a while and come back to it  
later". Have a shelf called...I have a very fine student in  
North Carolina, he's a physician, he keeps a book of his  
doubts

about Buddhism. He's a brilliant Buddhist scholar. He knows these courses backwards and forwards but he has a book that he keeps of issues that he still has about...he's a devout Buddhist, you know, he would give his life for his Lama, but he's got this, he's still got a little book that he keeps of stuff he's not sure about yet and he, you know, he takes it every time he meets a new Lama, he says, "hey, what what do you think about number fifty-six here" (laughter), you know and (laughs) okay, and I think that's great. That's the way we're supposed to be in Buddhism.

If you weren't that way, then Buddhism would start to become corrupted because everybody would just believe everything that

everybody said, okay, and then there'd be a problem. You must

examine, you must question...must, okay. And so what's (te tsom)? (Te tsom) is "lazy doubt", okay. (Te tsom) is "lazy doubt". Come on. Think for five minutes about it. Decide. Don't sit on the fence, okay. Is your Lama Vajradhara or not?

You know, make up your mind, you know, you just haven't thought

about it, you know. What are the odds of of running into a person with Khen Rinpoche's qualities, okay. What are the odds?

Oh about one in in five hundred million. I'm not kidding. Oh.

So is he a special guy or not? Make up your mind, you know what I

mean? No, I mean think about it for ten minutes and decide.

You

know, and then don't waver, you know. Don't be wimpy. Don't be

half-hearted, you know.

Make up your mind. Lord Buddha, in many scriptures said Khen Rinpoche is a enlightened being. Period. Now decide, okay.

You

can put the evidence...we call it a (che gom), it's called an al

analytical meditation, put the question up in the center stage,  
is he or is he not, you know. And then use all the proof you've  
seen. He watches baseball a lot. Yeah, but he's always doing  
that rosary thing while he's watching baseball and he turns it  
off right in the middle of a important hit, (laughter), you know.

Maybe he's doing something else...nah. He's just watching baseball. Yeah, but he's been teaching four thousand hours in  
the last twenty-six...I don't know, you know, (unclear) yeah, he  
didn't charge anything for anybody either. And then you you  
you like go through this analysis, you know, you debate your own  
wimpy mind and finally just decide, okay, and then stick with  
it,  
okay? So (te tsom) is where you're just too lazy to make up  
your  
mind. Okay. That's that's the bad kind of doubt. That's  
number...that's main mental affliction number five, okay.  
Last  
one.

(silence)

Say (tawa) (repeat) (tawa) (repeat). (Tawa) means  
"worldview".

Okay. In this case it means "the wrong worldview". We were  
thinking what to call all of our projects, you know, we have  
fourteen fifteen different major things going on, so what do  
we  
call it. And we came up with worldview. That's why there's  
worldview on the front of that thing. Worldview means "where  
do  
you really think this pen came from"? That's all. Very  
simple.

Okay. If you had a choice of five things to do to get  
yourself a  
pen, what would you do? I'll give you choices, okay. Borrow  
some money to go buy a pen, you know, steal the one I have  
here  
when I'm not here, when I'm over there, you know...look in

your  
neighbor's purse while they're up there getting refreshments,  
you  
know, look around on the floor see if there's some one on  
that  
somebody dropped or give one to somebody else. You see, if  
you  
picked number five you have correct worldview. That's what  
this  
whole organization and all those projects are for, one thing,  
to  
get people to think like that. Because that's true. Okay.  
And  
the other four are false, Okay. They're not. So ultimately  
they...number six worldview...this in this case is wrong  
worldview. The wrong way of thinking about your world.  
Okay.  
And that's...it actually helps produce all the other ones.  
Now  
there are five different flavors of this. I'm not gonna go  
in  
into it tonight, okay. But they are basically wrong ideas  
about  
about your world, okay. How's that differ from...(marikpa)?  
We  
already had ignorance, right. So what's the difference  
between a  
wrong worldview and ignorance? Wrong worldview is  
technically,  
in this presentation of the main mental afflictions, are  
products  
of your ignorance, okay? They they come from ignorance.  
Ignorance has a very specific meaning in this context of  
misunderstanding yourself, okay. So (marikpa) here,  
ignorance,  
means misunderstanding what you are and then number six is,  
several different versions of wrongviews that come out of  
misunderstanding your world. For example, not believing in  
future lives. Okay. Should you believe in future lives? Do  
you  
believe in future lives? (laughs) Kedrup Je says what? All  
the  
Tibetans believe in future lives. Nobody I've ever met could  
explain to be why there should be a (laughs) future life.  
Okay.  
They believe it 'cause their parents told them that, okay,

and  
that's just a...people don't understand why there should be a  
future life. One of the most serious wrong views is not to  
believe that there...something will go on after you die.  
Otherwise you can't practice Dharma very well, okay. It's  
one of  
the hardest things to believe in, so Maitreya says, "you  
know,  
put up all the evidence for it in your mind and decide that  
probably there is a future life, leave ten percent say maybe  
there's not a future life, but at least leave it like that".  
Don't say "there's no future life", okay. That's all. That  
would be a wrong view. That would be a number six, okay?  
Got  
it? Okay. Now the question comes from Gyeltsab Je. When  
Master  
Shantideva in the (b: Bodhisattvacharyavatara) says "get mad  
at  
your own mental afflictions", you know, "get mad at your own  
jealousy". Get mad at your own desire. Come on. Have some  
(unclear). Have some...I can only think of bad words...have  
some, you know, guts, okay, and and get up there and punch  
them  
up. You say, "I'm tired of you", you know, "I'm fed up with  
you.  
You've been ruining my life for life after life after life  
you've been giving me suffering,", you know, "I'm mad". Holy  
anger, you know. And then when you think of the path and you  
think of your Lama, "I love you, I'll fight for you, I'll do  
anything for you", you know...have this desire, you see. So  
it  
seems like Gyeltsab Je or Master Shantideva is recommending  
mental affliction. And then there's this big debate  
about...did  
he mean it or not, okay? And some Tibetan authors, who are  
critized by Je Tsongkapa and Gyeltsab Je, said, "yeah, he  
meant  
it. You should get angry and you should get...you should  
have  
this overwhelming loyalty to your Lama where you'd even hurt  
somebody else to protect your Lama," okay. You should do  
that.  
And then after you get...as you get closer to enlightenment  
you  
can drop them, okay. After they've performed their function.  
'Cause somewhere in Master Shantideva's writings it sounds

like  
that, okay. Then Gyeltsab Je says, "come on. Don't be a fool."  
Okay. Why? About the anger thing, he says, "yeah, you're supposed to have maybe what you could call a righteous anger but  
it's not a mental affliction" There's no kind of anger quality  
about it. It is not in any way upsetting your peace of mind.  
It  
is peace of mind, you see what I mean? It's like this clarity.  
It's a big difference, okay. It's a clarity which is tired of  
being pushed around. And it and it focuses on the mental afflictions in a very clear way and it's not upset, it's very clear. It's like a parent who's pretending to be upset at their  
child. And just saying "you can't do that", okay "you can't do that". And they're not angry. And their mind is not (sem gyu  
mashiwar jepay sem-jung ma yin)...they're not upset at all. Their mind is totally calm, totally settled, and they're looking  
at their mental afflictions and they're saying, "I'm gonna kick  
your ass", okay? And and they're totally happy, totally peaceful, okay. There is no mental affliction. Get used to that  
idea. No such thing. Yeah.

(student: Almost like indignation (unclear))

Yeah, you could say that. Yeah. Indignation. Dignified indignation. Okay. But just...it's a clarity. It's a clarity  
and it's a it's a power. Like we had it in the (lojong) right,  
(chim chim chim), you know. I'm gonna ---you. You know, and  
and  
but it's a kind of happy power, happy clarity. And there's no  
kind of upset mind, any kind of mental affliction sign there, okay, so he says, forget that idea. When Lamas talk about using

anger to destroy mental afflictions they're not talking about a mental affliction. They're talking about a kind of power, a kind of clarity, okay. Then he says, what about this idea of protecting your Lama, you know. Like, what about this idea of somebody tries to hurt Khen Rinpoche or somebody like that, what're you supposed to do...somebody attacks His Holiness the Dalai Lama..What're you supposed to do about it? If you love them, if you're loyal to them, what should you do? You know, and Gyaltsab Je says, come on. Wake up. Didn't you ever hear about correct view? Okay. Either His Holiness is a Buddha or not, okay. If he is Chenresig Avelokiteshvara the Compassionate Holder of the White Lotus he don't need you to protect him, okay (laughter). He's an enlightened being. If someone tries to attack him he can't be hurt anyway. Could you see someone kill His Holiness? Yes. That's your problem. That's your karma. Okay? Can His Holiness be hurt by somebody else? No. Totally impossible, no such thing, okay. So if your Lama's a a Buddha, they don't need you to take up arms and fight off their enemies, okay, 'cause they don't have and they don't need you, okay. If they're not an enlightened being, well then, they're just experiencing the result of their karma, okay? And you should help them in a happy good way, you know, like help His Holiness run away from Tibet without hurting anybody, you see what I mean.

But but you can never use that kind of loyalty as an excuse for hurting somebody, okay. You get...that's that's just another mental affliction of the kind that caused this problem in the first place. What're you gonna do? Set up the causes for the problem to happen again by protecting your Lama? You know, you gonna hurt someone to save your Lama, you know, that's the

best  
way to cause trouble more, it's the best way to bring more  
trouble, okay? So you just say...that's Gyeltsab Je's  
explanation of those two ideas. They don't need your help  
like  
that. That's just causing more problems, okay? All right.  
They  
start to talk about...there's a question here that says, "why  
is  
it important that the continued existence of a mental  
affliction  
depends on a misperception?" Why is that? See you can't  
have a  
mental affliction unless you don't understand your world,  
okay?  
If you misunderstand your world you can have a mental  
affliction,  
so the clue is that you can get rid of them forever, okay.  
Who  
what the definition of nirvana? Phuntsok is good at that.

(student, Phuntsok: (unclear))

(Nyin drup malupa pangpay so so tango) okay. (Nyin drup)  
means  
"mental affliction obstacle", (malupa) means "every single  
last  
one", (pangpay) means "you get rid of them", but then there's  
this weird thing that says, (so so tango)...through  
individual  
analysis. What do you do...Freudian analysis on it or  
something.  
What do you...what does it mean,"individual analysis"? It  
means  
"through your understanding of the Four Arya Truths after you  
see  
emptiness directly", period. You have to see emptiness  
directly  
to get rid of you mental afflictions. Otherwise, impossible.  
Okay. You can bandaid them, you can't stop them, okay.  
Ninety  
percent of a lot of scriptures is about how to deal with your  
mental afflictions with bandaids, okay. Someone hits you,  
think  
of them as your teacher. That lasts a day or something  
(laughs)

(laughter) okay? All right. Okay. It cannot destroy that thing completely, you can't get rid of anger completely by thinking like that. It helps a lot. If you're a monk and you're attracted to some lady, think of your as as your sister. Okay. It works for a while, all right. But it doesn't get rid of that tendency to think to look at that way. And the only thing that can get rid of it is to see emptiness directly. Okay. That's the only thing. Because only that can destroy your inherent belief that pens come from stores and pay money, okay. That's all. And you'll continue to do what you have to do to get money as long as you believe that. Okay. And you'll continue to do the wrong thing. Until you see emptiness directly. Okay. Have to. I think that's a good place to leave it. I got two more advertisements for you. Oh, so...maybe Thursday, possibly Friday we might have some big Lama here, so...not sure at all. Maybe I'd I'd give it about a twenty-five percent chance, but, I think it'd be worth it. Check it out. You might wanna bring some flowers. If nothing else we'll give them to Lord Buddha, okay? Second thing, oh. His Holiness will be teaching in Bodh Gaya and we're going and I've...there's a committee who's asking people to donate I think it's ten dollars each and they're gonna try to put a million butter lamps there or something like that so that we can start the next thousand years the right way, and that His Holiness will be happy and stuff like that, so if you'd like to help with that...who is that...I think...oh yeah...she raised the (unclear) (laughs) okay...talk to that gentleman there. And it's

a , I think it's a neat project. So they're gonna try to collect enough to offer a lot of butter lamps there. Okay. Is there anything else I'm supposed to announce? No. No. We'll do more later. Okay. Please take a break and then we'll start with your ne...regular classes, okay.

(break)

Okay, we'll start again. Very brief, okay. This is where I tried to talk about the future of Dharma in America, okay and other western countries, I have to say, 'cause all my Australian students hear the tape and they say, "how 'bout us", you know? Oh, one thing I want to announce before I forgot. You know the Sixth Street Temple and all that beautiful place is donated by...without rent, by Leon South. It's probably worth about twenty thousand dollars a month if he rented it and he doesn't. He saves it for us to do our rituals and our and our prayers and things like that. And he never gets thanked and no one ever sees him. He just gets to vacuum and stuff like that (laughs) (laughter) okay. One thing happened recently...one day he his laptop stolen from his room which is in the back of the temple, and we tried to replace that and then recently his Dharma books were stolen. His English books. So I'd like to encourage you guys, and I'll bring one, everybody bring one or two books. All right if you have an extra one, or one that you don't mind to put there, 'cause whatever you put there is gonna be used by somebody anyway, and bring it on Thursday and we'll just surprise him, okay. So bring...try to bring like one really great Dharma book that you have and we won't tell him anything, we'll just put

it  
there. I always have this fantasy about bodhisattva thieves  
who  
break into your house and put money in your wallet and and  
(laughter) (laughs), so we can do something like that, okay.  
So  
don't forget, okay, 'cause I feel really bad, 'cause, you  
know,  
we don't thank him enough and he's been doing this for years  
and  
years. When someone does it so gracefully that you forget  
about  
them after a while, and so I wanna make sure we recognize  
him,  
okay? Okay. Last thing. I was at Princeton today. This  
guy  
calls me...he's the Dean of Religious Life and he says,  
"we've  
been checking you out and and would you, like basically, come  
to  
Princeton University every once in while and be on our Board  
and  
help us serve the students spiritually and stuff like this",  
and  
and then I said, "I'd...I think it's a very valuable thing,  
because I went to school here and there is a sort of a  
problem  
there which is that everyone's so intellectually deep into  
things  
that they don't have any spiritual resources", you know what  
I  
mean. They don't have classes like this, or they don't have  
any  
chance to meditate, or they don't have a Lama to help them or  
something like that. They just have this committees and  
stuff.  
So, so I said "I'd love to but I'm not gonna be  
here" (laughs)  
you know, and so he said, "well, do you have any students who  
could come"?, you know, and then I thought in my mind, I  
said,  
you know, that's why we did the seven year course...was this  
is  
the end...this is six and a half...two thirds years later,  
and  
I'm looking him in the face and I'm like "who could I send",

you  
know, (laughter) and and then I'm thinking, "yeah, I can  
send. I  
have like ten or fifteen people I can send". You know, and  
then  
I I think it it dawned on me at that moment that, yeah, we do  
have ten or fifteen qualified people that have come out of  
these  
courses, you know, as a result of these courses, which you  
don't  
think about 'cause you go to them every day, but no one  
in...very  
few people in the west have been through such a training, may  
maybe none. There's one small group in Hamburg, I think, and  
that's it. So you've had a unique opportunity, and the  
people  
especially who've been here for over four five years, you've  
you've had most of the Geshe course and if you ever get to  
Sera  
Mey and speak Tibetan you'll find out that you could debate.  
I  
mean, there's not anything in my Geshe exams, the seven days  
of  
examinations in front of fifteen hundred monks that wasn't in  
this course. And it was like, piece of cake, you know. And  
you  
have that knowledge now. So all I wanted to say is that,  
don't  
think that you're not qualified. Because you're a westerner

(cut)

and because you don't have a pointed hat, you know, or the  
right  
eyes or I don't know what, but don't think that you're not  
qualified now, you are, especially those of you who have been  
through the whole course. The people who are teaching, you  
know,  
on a normal level in Tibet, have not had as much training as  
you've had, okay. You've had proper training, you've had  
sweet  
lineage initiations and teachings from Khen Rinpoche, you  
have  
all of the blessings, you have all of the knowledge, you've  
been  
through everything, so now you gotta start thinking in terms

of  
helping out with the teaching load, you know, and like  
Phuntsok's  
doing a lot, and and then each one of you should think...I I  
can  
imagine in a three years that there will be ten to fifteen  
people, there'll be somebody in Brooklyn, there'll be  
somebody in  
Queens...there'll be...I would like to see it in people's  
home  
'cause I think that's the sweetest way to do it, and it can  
be  
small groups. I think out in Santa Cruz like for example  
they  
have group of five or six people who meet together, they  
watch  
the video, they eat popcorn I think (laughter) and and you  
know,  
they they learn it, and then they discuss it and they...and I  
that's how we have to do it now. So I you gotta start  
thinking  
in the mode of being a teacher and and you don't have to  
think  
that, "oh, it's just...I'm sort of faking it or something  
like  
that". You're not. Okay. You've had as much training as  
almost  
any of the monks in Sera get. They memorize the books which  
takes them an extra couple (laughs) of years, but, you know,  
the  
normal...what we call (Ling se Geshe), that, which is what I  
am,  
you know, the middle Geshe that comes out of the monastery,  
you've had as much training as they have and and now you have  
to  
start thinking in terms of...like Dvora has a nice group out  
in  
Freehome, and very beautiful group of people, like twenty  
thirty  
people are are are studying the courses, and it's going quite  
well. And I was very happy when I went there, it's like  
amazing,  
you know, and it's like having kids that you didn't know  
about or  
something. (laughter), you know (laughs), and it's like that  
(laughs) you know, and it's beautiful. So you have to start

thinking like that, you know. In the back of your mind, understand that you you are well-trained and you have had the blessings of the lineage through Khen Rinpoche, and you you can't get more than that, what you have. Now you have to start thinking in terms of, "okay. This guy at Princeton says that there's a couple hundred kids interested in Buddhism and they need somebody to help", and you should be...now now comes the time that, you know, all the classes you missed are gonna haunt you, okay (laughs), like okay? No, that's why I kept saying "you can't miss classes", you know. Because they're gonna ask you that question and you'll say, "that was in the course, but, I had a date that night and..." (laughs), you know, okay. 'Cause now you're the lineage holder, so I want to encourage you to...you have to start now thinking in terms of of teaching other people and and helping with that process and I need people to go to Princeton. I need to be able to send people and say, and in my heart know, this person's totally qualified, this person will be, not just a good technically a good teacher but this person is also doing their meditations every day, they're good at doing their book, they're they've they've developed internally also so I have no hesitation to send this person out to to teach at this place and I know they'll do a nice job and you have to get to where...you have to understand that that responsibility is about to come down on your head and that you have to start thinking like this and you have to start thinking in these terms, okay. And it's not some kind of pride or or some kind of egotism, it's not like that. You now have a serious responsibility, you know...somebody invested seven years in you and now you gotta go pay it off, you know. You have to go do something with it or else the lineage ends here which is dumb. That's not why we had

this place, okay? (laughs) So, I want to encourage you to think like that. It's not some kind of egotism, it doesn't have to be, okay, it's really just providing a place. I don't mean being a missionary...we're not allowed to do that. We're not allowed to go door-to-door, you know, "have you heard about (laughs) Buddha" (laughter) (laughs) you know, we're not allowed to do that. I call it "creating access", okay. Big difference between being a missionary and creating access. You know. So there's access to this knowledge if you want it, you know. Here's the address, we don't charge anything, it's a small group, but the knowledge is very pure...the guy at Princeton freaked out when he saw the classes. He's like, "this is unbelievable", you know. He's been running all this Judeo-Christian Muslim Hindu things at Princeton for ten years and he's like "I can't believe you guys are doing this stuff". He was really excited. So, the the idea is that you have to be ready now to help other people and that should be in the back of your mind, okay? It's like...we're at that age, you know. You're not gonna...there's not that many years left in a normal person, okay and you now you have to turn around and help other people and I have to be able to count on you. I have to be able to say, "yeah, I can send you this person and this person and this person". Okay. So now you gotta think...mentally you have to now switch in terms of that you have to switch your mind around and say, "yeah, I I could do that", you know. Have some kind of confidence and and think in terms of

how could you present it to x number of college students if  
you  
if you had to, you know and how would you do it, you know,  
like  
how many times a week, what are they gonna study first, you  
know,  
when am I gonna do it, how am I gonna do it, what'm I gonna  
teach  
first, what're we gonna do second, you know, are we gonna do  
video, audio, are we gonna do classes, are we gonna do  
debate,  
are we gonna meditate, you know, and think about...I want to  
put  
in your mind at this instant the seed that, you know, in six  
months you're gonna have to start thinking this way, of of  
passing it on to other people and and being clever about oh,  
what's the best way to to help the most people. Okay. You  
have  
to start thinking like that. Okay. That's all. Don't  
don't be  
shy about thinking of yourself as a teacher. That's how it's  
always been throughout the history of Buddhism. The student  
got  
to a certain place in the nest and then the teacher kicked  
him  
out. You think I wanted to come to New York (laughs) you  
know,  
(laughter) okay, really. Okay. Last thing in my mind.  
Fifteen  
years I commuted here I didn't spend a single day here, you  
know,  
and there there's a comes a time when they say, "you gotta go  
now", and get ready for that. Okay. Have it in mind. It's  
the  
whole...it's the way it evolves. It's the way it's supposed  
to  
evolve. And there's no reason why it shouldn't...it has to  
happen here. Okay. That's part of the master plan, okay?  
All  
right. We'll do a prayer.

(prayer: short mandala)

(prayer: dedication)



## **Review Course 17**

### **Class 11, part 1**

**Transcribed by: Karen Becker**

Okay, this is review for the final. This is where I go over the questions and you write the numbers down and only study those (laughs) okay (laughter). People ask me why do you bother doing that, you know. I don't want you to...I'm not trying to trick you into failing the exam or something, I'm trying to make sure you know the most important stuff, so I don't mind if you know in advance what's the most important stuff, okay? This will be a normal...just found out...a normal class. Like halfway through we'll take a break and then there'll be groups to go over some of the final exam questions with your group leaders, okay. And the group leaders are gonna get it just before (laughter) (laughs) everyone else does, okay. And then at the end we have some planning to do, okay? All right. No, it looks like Lama Zopa has agreed to teach here tomorrow, it'll be really fantastic but I don't wanna give him a bad impression of our abilities to serve a Lama properly, so, you know, I wanna talk about it at the end of the class and make sure everyone has their assignments to make sure we treat him right, okay? All right. Here we go. First and most important question in my mind is, "explain the three meanings of the word diamond in the title". Of course you know title of the (B: Diamond Cutter Sutra). And the point, as you know, is when you see emptiness directly, you see a higher reality, okay, which you have never seen before, and our reality pales in comparison to that reality. And then as you come down out of that experience, which takes maybe twenty minutes, you search in your mind for something in this reality to remind you of what you saw, and diamond is the closest thing. All people who see emptiness directly, when they come out of it, find the diamond as the closest thing. Why? For three reasons: one) That it is the closest to an ultimate. See, you have perceived ultimate reality, and a diamond is the closest thing to something

which is the most of anything. Like, there's no such thing as the longest thing in the world 'cause you can always add another inch, there's no such thing as the shortest thing in the world 'cause you can always cut it in half. But, there is an ultimate reality, a true ultimate, which is emptiness. Diamond is close to that because diamond is the hardest thing in the natural universe, okay? And so it's, as an idea close to ultimate, it's close, but the day you see emptiness directly you will search for an ultimate, and diamond will come in your mind. And if for the rest of your life you never did anything else, you'd want to be close to diamonds, okay. You'd you'd wanna be somewhere, touching them, looking at them to remember what happened to you for twenty minutes one day. Maybe fifteen years ago, or twenty years ago, but still you'd wanna be near them, touch them, see them, just...and it'd be worth it to go get a job and work there for fifteen-twenty years just to be close to them, and for no other reason, you know...even if they didn't pay you anything. It would well worth it in your mind to remember what happened. You see what I mean? And that's that's the main importance of diamond. First one, okay? Second one) Diamond is totally clear. If you...there's a wall of diamond between me and you and if there was nothing reflecting on it. You couldn't see it, you see, nothing is as pure as diamond. Like glass, if you hold it up this way, it looks clear, but if you hold it on the edge you see green...you can't see through it. That's because it has one like atom of iron for every two thousand atoms of carbon or glass or silica or whatever, and diamond's not like that. Diamond...there could be a wall between me and the exit sign this thick and I could still see the exit sign perfectly. Okay. What's that got to do with emptiness? Every object around you has it's own emptiness. Ultimate truth is not any farther away than your eyebrow or your nose, or, you know, your hand, but you can't see it. Okay. If you could see it for twenty minutes what happens? We've talked about it many times, but basically, you see the day of your own enlightenment, you know how many lifetimes it's gonna take to get there, you meet the dharmakaya of the Buddha directly, you have all these amazing experiences. No one ever, after that, can tell you anything that's interesting. Okay. (laughs) That's it. You know everything. I mean you know everything that matters. You know the contents of the entire Buddhist scriptures...two hundred thousand texts, you know...you can look at them or not look at them, it doesn't matter. You saw them. You saw it...in twenty minutes. Okay. And you know what your future's gonna be, you know what family you're gonna be born into, you know who's gonna do what for you, you you know everything...seven lifetimes...finished. See your

future lives, okay. Read other people's minds for a while, okay. Things like that, but but there's no...by the way, that's the whole point of this whole courses, building something out in Arizona, is to give you all the causes you need to have that happen for twenty minutes. Then it's called (kali jig me), nothing to worry about. You can't...you're never afraid of anything after that. It doesn't matter. No one can hurt you...at all. Impossible. You know what I mean, it's just...you saw it, you know. And you're finished, you know. You're you're on your way out. And there's nothing that any person alive can contribute to you after that. It doesn't matter. You've see what you have to see and and that's the goal of all these classes, you know. All these stupid homeworks, quizzes, you know (laughs) hours and hours of translating, you know, year after year of classes...poor Winston going crazy and Andrea not getting any sleep, building a place out in Arizona...it has only one goal and that's that you can have that twenty minutes happen to you. Okay. Probably you need, at some point, to consider being out in a place like Arizona, where you can be totally quiet for a month or two months or three months, or whatever it takes to do it. And you have to have it on your agenda, in you mind, that, I I want to do that, okay. 'Cause you have to. That's the only reason to have these classes. Rinpoche used to say, "one real incentive for achieving Buddhahood is that you don't have to recite those (dak kye)s anymore" (laughter), and (laughs), it's almost the same for to see emptiness directly you don't need... I mean you'll still love to study these things, but you don't have to anymore, okay. And you can do it, and you have to try. You have to try. You have to do it, okay. All right. Third reason that emptiness is close to diamond or diamond is close to emptiness is that when you...you can't scratch a diamond with anything else in the world, but you can smash them with a hammer. And they split but they don't scratch, okay. Perfect cleavage but can't be scratched. And everytime you smash it all the emptinesses...I'm sorry, all the pieces of diamond are pure diamond. So there's no distinction between the diamond, okay? Like one atom of diamond and the biggest diamond in the world which is the...what was it...the in

(students: Hope)

No, the Hope is a little one (laughter). It's a blue one. Some used car dealer in New Jersey called me up and said, "I have the four hundred and ten carat yellow Zales diamond, flawless, you can you help me sell it? I'm like, "who who are you?" (laughter) And then and then he got this...I think he was in the mafia or

something, I just didn't get into it...but that is the largest cut stone, okay...and, anyway, the the chemicals of that stone and the smallest stone in the world are the same, okay. Perfectly the same. What's that got to do with emptiness? Every emptiness of every object in the world is totally equivalent. There's no difference in all the emptiness in the world, okay? Not the slightest difference between the emptiness of the last hair on your eyebrow and the emptiness of the dharmakaya. There's not a slight, slightest difference. They're totally equal and when you see emptiness directly, you see it as well as a Buddha sees it. You can't see it better than that. You either see one hundred percent direct emptiness or you don't see it. Okay. And nothing is more or less empty than anything else. All things are one hundred percent empty of not of...I'm sorry, of being self-existent. Okay. So all emptiness are equally empty of something that was never there, and you have to get used to that, okay? The did this thing come from a factory...and from trees getting cut down, is that where this stuff came from? You could say that's how it got here, but not why. Okay. Why is what? You have the karma in your mind to perceive these white rectangles as papers to be tested on in a week or two. Okay. You have that karma. There is no final examination in my head. Get, okay? You have the karma to see it as a final examination. Okay. Just get used to that. A final examination in my head which did was not brought into this room by your karma has the same quality as a two-headed forty foot purple elephant raging through this room at this moment. That they have the same... we call "ontological" status. They have the same percentage of existence, which is zero...okay? You brought this to this room, you know, and if you ever look for a final exam that you didn't bring into this room, you'll never find one. You see what I mean? There is no such thing, okay. All the objects around you have been created by you and you are forced to see them by your past karma. "Oh, well great. I'd rather have chocolate chip ice cream than final exam" (laughs)...okay, 'bout the same color, okay...I mean it's got those little black spots on it...there you go (laughter) okay (laughs). Not by will-power okay? The the trick is you cannot do it by will-power. It's being forced on you by your past karma. You want to have ice cream next year this time, stop being bad, okay (laughter), keep your vows, and then next year this'll be something more pleasant (laughs) okay. All right. That's all. That's all there is to it. His Holiness said it today, you can't...he said in Tibetan, "look, you can't just be happy because you wanna be happy. You can't just sit there and say, 'I feel like being happy now'. Oh, hey, what happened? I'm not happy", you know, and he said, "you gotta set

the seeds up, you gotta set the causes up", and then six months, a year, okay...'cause your mind forces you to see what you see. Imputed means "your mind is forcing you to organize this information in a certain way". And that's coming only from your past behavior, and and what you see is what you get, you know what I mean? What you get is what you see? Anyway. You've created it, okay. Everything. So if you don't like it, change it. I used to come home and complain about work. Rinpoche would say, "if you don't like it, then change it", (laughs), you know...he would never listen to me (laughter). Okay. Why is it important to include the word "cutter" in Diamond Cutter? I hate it when people call it the (b: Diamond Sutra). Okay. Cutter means "diamond is close, diamond is important, diamond has meaning, but it's nothing like ultimate reality". Okay. What's the closest thing in the normal world to emptiness? Diamond. How close is it? Nothing. Not at all. Okay. Nothing. Totally different reality. Totality higher level of being and of existence, and if you see it, the quality of that level of existence, if you see it directly for twenty minutes, you see all those other things, you see your future lives...the day of your enlightenment is decided at that moment and you can see it and you know what they'll call you and everything...finished. You know, like the rest of you life is just like waiting, okay. All right. So you have to say "cutter" meaning "diamond is close but not very close". The closest thing but not close at all". How's that. All right. I think the next question concerns (gak ja)...you remember what (gak ja) is. Buddhism says that for you to see emptiness you must understand what a self-existent thing would look like. What's an intrinsically existing thing look like? Okay. It just looks like a piece of paper that was made of a fac...from a factory from trees, etc and that that's and that this paper has come from that, okay. That's not true. Okay. Why? You can cut down trees and build a factory and you might not get paper. That proves that's not the cause. Get it? Okay. But if you supplied paper to someone who needs paper, you must get paper and that's the real cause for paper. You gotta get used to it. I had this very sarcastic, famous journalist in Ireland who was in my class in Ireland and he says, "who...what the hell", you know, "you you implying that you could run a a car without petrol, you could fill it up half way and and get to get to Dublin on that", you know, and and I said, "yeah". And I said, "but how do you get the first half there?" He says, "the petrol". And I said, "why"? See...and he got it, he was like (unclear). He was totally cool. He was a very interesting guy. He got that...why does petrol work now and not a hundred years ago. You see what I mean? What is it about petrol that makes it

run your car halfway to Dublin? You see what I mean. What is it? What's in the petrol that makes it run and why didn't it work a hundred years ago? "Oh, they couldn't figure it out." Okay. I don't know. How come penicillin doesn't work anymore? You gotta think like that, okay? Where is the power of things really coming from? The difference between the Svatantrika that His Holiness was describing today and Madyamika is that they accept that something like paper may not have its own natural existence, okay, but they don't get it with cause and effect. To exist by definition, to exist by nature, to them means that self-existent things must have self-existent results, meaning, "I understand that the paper maybe isn't self-existent, that it's come here through certain causes, but I don't get it why the sun, the rising of the sun doesn't exist from its own side...come on. Five billion people see it everyday. It can't be like this collective perception. It is. Okay. (laughs). You gotta get used to that, okay. They have trouble with cause and effect. That's where they decide that no, this is not my projections, this is not my perceptions, okay. They have trouble when they get to that part, all right? So different schools have different (gak ja)s. But of course you're gonna explain the Prasakgika one, the highest one. Okay. When you get out of the direct perception of emptiness, you have about...I don't know, fifteen to twenty major realizations. Okay. For example. You see the day of your own enlightenment. You see what they will call you and what they won't call you. You see exactly how many lifetimes it will take. You know in a general way, what kind of families you'll be born into, what your circumstances will be financially, what kind of Lamas you will have early in your lifetime take care of you...you see those things directly. You see the dharmakaya of the Buddha directly. Very often you have a direct experience of bodhicitta, okay. And all of these...the first...one of the first direct experiences. All of these things can be grouped into four families of amazing things that have happened to you on that day called the?

(students: Four Arya Truths).

Four Arya Truths, mistranslated in the old days as Noble...nothing to do with noble. It is noble, but that's not the point. Arya means "a person who has seen emptiness directly". That's all. You could call them "the four truths for people who have seen emptiness directly". How's that? Forget the word "noble". Just junk it, okay? So is..the question will be asked of you to put in a few of the realizations, you know. Some schools say fifteen, some schools say sixteen but you got

them all anyway, okay. All right. To me that's probably the most important part of the final exam...is seeing emptiness directly and if one person in this class in the next ten years or the last ten years, saw emptiness directly, it'd be worth all the effort put into the classes. Okay. And that would be, that would be more of a result than...you know, that'd be well worth a hundred or a thousand times that effort, okay. And it's that rare. So, you gotta work really hard, okay? There's this question about this guy...you remember the guy (Tang So Supamawa)...he got...he was sitting out under a tree innocently, the the King's wife showed up, asked him a few questions, the King showed up with his hunters and assumed the worst and staked him down on the ground and started cutting off his limbs starting with his finger joints, and and the...and he used wisdom, he used a perception of emptiness at that point. And I like that example because it addresses a misconception about perception of emptiness. There's this thing like...and I used to try it, when you go to the dentist and they're drilling the hell out of your teeth, you know, just think about emptiness, you know. And I'd go there and they go "rrrrrrrrrr" and you're like "emptiness, emptiness," you know, and then they'd hit the nerve and you're like (noise) (laughter) you know, you know, and I was with Khen Rinpoche, you know and I remembered when they hit his nerve and he goes, "rrrrrrrrrr" (laughter) and he was like...I was afraid he was gonna hit the guy, you know (laughter), he got this (unclear), he was like this, you know (laughter) and I'm like, "okay, it's okay Rinpoche" (laughter), you know, and okay, you supposed to put your mind in some kind of emptiness...forget it. Okay. There's nothing to do with emptiness, okay. You know, the perception of pain at that moment is caused by your past karma. It's being forced on you by your past karma. You can't deny your past karma. You can't say, "Oh, I'll think about emptiness and it won't hurt", you know. By the way, is it possible that someone might have thought about emptiness and it didn't hurt? Yes. Why? Their karma wore out for it to hurt and now their karma is forcing them to see emptiness. Or think about emptiness. That's okay. That's possible. But the thinking about emptiness doesn't self-detain. Impossible. So we had a guy, this guy's getting his fingers cut off, he's thinking about emptiness to help out with this situation...why?

(students: Because he's (unclear))

He's just dealing with the future. Okay. The present is already painful. It's too late to deal with the present, okay? Karma

has ripened, his fingers are getting cut off, it hurts like hell, but he refuses to perpetuate the violence. He says, you know, "keep cutting. It's okay". It's like, he knows where it's coming from. He hurt someone in the past but he's just decided he's not going to perpetuate...and he says in the (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra)...this is Lord Buddha in his past life or something, and he says, "if I had gotten angry...sorry, if I had perceived the King as self-existent, I could have gotten angry, but I didn't", you know, "so I didn't get angry and that's why I'm a Buddha now instead of another schmuck getting his fingers cut off, okay? And he and he says that okay. I...all you can deal with is the future. Future is, this event is empty. Why? I brought my fingers here, he brought his knife here, okay, by my karma, and I brought him here with his knife with my karma, and the event is happening by my karma...the three spheres, the three (unclear) are here because of my action and I'm being forced to see that. And okay, it hurts really bad and it did hurt, but I refuse to get angry and I refuse to see him as self-existent. You can't get angry unless you see him as?

(students: Self-existent)

Self-existent. It's impossible. Anger and an understanding...an active understanding okay...it only last for a few seconds...then you get angry again...an active understanding of that this guy is empty and I could have seen him as massaging my fingers but now I see him as cutting my fingers because of my karma, okay. So he's empty. What I see is my karma and I'm sorry for that but at least I refuse to react again the old way. Break the circle of violence. Is it natural? No. Is it hard to do? Completely. Is it...does it stop samsara? Ab...that's the whole point. Yeah. So then he was able to do the true perfection of patience as opposed to plain old patience. Patience is sitting there and saying, "mom told me in Hlasi in first grade that I shouldn't hurt people", you know...okay, you know. And then, perfection of patience is, "you're empty. I have to see you schmuck because of my bad deeds in the past and I refuse to get angry at you", you know, "you're such a schmuck I refuse to get angry at you", you know...'cause I don't wanna meet you again (laughs), and that's all. And that goes moment to moment at work and with your family (laughs) okay, people like that. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Sorry?

(student: (unclear))

Doesn't work. That's a that's wrong explanation, okay. That's a...I mean the minute you...it's possible to think, like Mahamudra says "watch the emptiness of your mind", so I guess if you got angry you could watch the emptiness of that. Watching the emptiness of your anger would be the exercise of looking at your anger, understanding that every single second of its existence is destroying thousands of good karmas you did in the past for years, you see, and then you blink out of it...you see what I mean? You'd say, oh my god...this is this is, you know, too burning up too much good karma too fast...you know what I mean? To see the emptiness of it would be to perceive its function in in destroying thousands of karma every minute and you'd just...the minute you thought of that you'd pop out of the anger...it wouldn't be worth it to be angry, okay? Yeah.

(student: (Could people not be punished (unclear)))

Why punish people who do bad things, okay? I mean, I don't wanna...you to lose final exam questions, but it's a good question. Okay. You see...somebody comes in and and looks like they're gonna shoot a gun at you...or let's somebody has killed somebody else with a...somebody has threatened somebody else and you have a choice of putting them in prison or leaving them on the street to hurt people, so what do you do? If you if you put them in prison, do you protect the people they would have hurt? Not necessarily, okay. If they have the karma to be hurt, they'll be hurt by a truck instead of this mugger that you put in jail, okay. So does that mean we shouldn't put muggers in jail? No. Okay. Why? Because it's the right thing to to put someone in jail who might hurt somebody. It's the right thing for whom? For you. Okay. It'll make you a Buddha, okay. Will it stop the people from getting hurt? No. Get used to it. Get used to that. That's how things work. Okay. Get used to that. You have to do the right thing. You have to protect people's lives and property, with with all you can. But the result of your actions are basically gonna protect your life and your property. It may or may not help those other people, okay, but you must do it. You gotta get used to that. A lot of people get half way and then they make the grand mistake. Je Tsongkapa calls it "the grand mistake", you know. "Oh, you mean if someone's getting mugged and I try to help them, whether I can help them or not only depends on their karma?" Right. "Well, then why the hell should I help them?" Is that's called the great mistake, you see what I mean? You must help them. "Oh, so so so the guy will

stop mugging them?" No. (laughs) Okay. So you can achieve Buddhahood and then really help them. Okay. Get used to that. What's the proof that going to their aid doesn't help them?

(student: It doesn't always work.)

It doesn't always work. You gotta get used to that. Karma always works. Good karma always works. The karma of helping them always works, meaning you protect your own life and your own...you know what I mean, and then you teach other people how to do it and then no one gets mugged anymore. Okay. that's how the world changes into a paradise. Get used to it. It's hard. But never make the great mistake of thinking "oh it's their karma so I don't have to do anything". Okay. It's their karma so you do have to do something. How's that? Nagarjuna would have said that. Arya Nagarjuna says, "yeah, their karma, that's why you have to do something". Get it. All right (laughs). Okay.

(student: Isn't it really our karma if we see something and (unclear)

That's true too (laughs) okay. Yeah. It is your karma...what you see is your karma. I mean, if you have the pleasure of watching yourself protect someone, that's your karma, to be successful...that's your karma, yeah. But it's their karma to see themselves being protected. How's that? I had this very very sceptical lady in Ireland. And she asked this question, this was the first day, this was one of her first questions. A strong devout Catholic, you know, and at the end of the...and she she asked all this line of questioning about karma, exactly the same line of questioning. At the end she asked the organizer if she could make a testament. Three days later, you know, she gets up and she says, "in eighteen years, I I know why I moved to this city. It was to meet you and hear this", you know, and and "next to my son, this is the most important thing that ever happened to me". It was really weird. It was really cool. 'Cause she got it...about the karma. She got she got that part perfect, and she was like, wow, you know, about the mugger. We talked about the mugger, okay? Why do things change and why do some things in our world cause other things? For example, why does medicine always work or why are some investment strategies always successful? That's a trick question, right? (laughter) If you've ever invested...right, right John? Okay. (laughter) (laughs) Meaning, okay, should you take risks or should you be conservative? Doesn't matter, okay. That's why it...there's this Wall Street Journal joke. On the front page is a guy who

took a risk and lost all his money and he's a fool. A year later he's on the front page for being risky and he's a genius. On the third page there's a story about a guy who's conservative who's a fool. And there's on the fifth page there's a guy who was a conservative and he was a genius. You see what I mean. Whatever they do, if they fail, they're stupid. If they get money, they're a genius. But they did the same thing. You know what I mean. And it doesn't matter whether you take risks or you're conservative. They're just people. It's confirmed, you know. Throw a dart at a dart board, go to an investment adviser and it's the exactly the same rate of return. (laughter), you know.

They had kids...three year olds throwing darts at a dartboard and then went to Goldman-Saks and hired three guys and and they got the same returns, you know (laughs) (laughter) okay. So, that's...it it only depends on whether you've been generous or not. Totally. Okay. Nothing else matters. Nothing else matters, okay? People tell me, "are you telling me that if I had the karma, like...I wouldn't even have to go to work? Like people would just deliver checks to my door?" I said, "yeah, that's the whole idea" (laughs), okay. That's the whole idea. Okay. You might wanna collect the karma before you try it. (laughter) Okay. All right. Let's see here. I like this one. What does Je Tsongkapa...we've we're on to (b: Vinaya) I think, okay. We just finished (b: Diamond Cutter Sutra). What's Je Tsongkapa's reaction to the idea that people who practice (tantra) don't have to respect their other vows? He he he's thinking of the Hlasa valley where it's very hard to grow anything...people ask me, "why are the Tibetans meat eaters?". Hey, you couldn't grow anything else in Tibet, okay. I mean, barley for a few weeks, you know, or something, but suppose you just planted your only barley field for the year and it and it grew like two feet high and then his hail storm...like a Tibetan hail storm with golf balls...thousands of golf balls falling on the field and it just wipes it out in ten minutes...your whole work for the year is just wiped out, you know. And this used to happen in Tibet, regularly. The name for "hail" is (se ra) (laughter) and it was so frequent that on this one mountain that they called the monastery Sera. Okay. And we go to the (Dre pung) guys, which means "rice piles" and say, "do you want us to do our Sera thing on you in the debates tonight", you know, like wipe out the rice? And they'd say, "yeah, but you know, the hail always melts after it sits in the fields for a while" (laughter) you know (laughs) okay. Anyway, he says that idea that that (tantr)ic followers don't have to honor their other vows is as ridiculous and as as crazy and as destructive as that hail storm,

okay. Your (tantr)ic vows are built...it's like the third story of a building. Your pratimoksha vows are the first story, your bodhisattva vows are the second story and your (tantr)ic vows are the third story, period. Okay? You cannot...and and frankly, to tell you, you know, secret, half the (tantr)ic vows are pratimoksha (laughs) vows, okay. No, I mean, they're the same vows, just taken with a different angle, okay, so it's it's just a stupid thing to say. It's a crazy thing to say, okay. There's a very beautiful...oh, I put in this question about...you know, there's a bodhisattva vow that you have to break your one of your seven pratimoksha vows...body or speech, right...not mind, in extraordinary circumstances. Meaning, some guy's running away from a mugger, he he comes into your house, he says, "hide me in the closet", you put him in the closet, somebody bangs on the door and they got this hand behind them and they're like "did you see a little guy running around?" and you say "no". You have to say no. Your bodhisattva vows say say no, okay. Then Je Tsongkapa's commentary says, if you have been a bodhisattva on the bodhisattva path for millions of years and reached a high level of realization, you have to keep this vow. Then you have to keep this vow to the letter. If you're not up to that level, take it easy on this vow, okay. All right? And he also said, "ordained people can never break vow number three for one of these purposes and still be ordained". They have to...in an extraordinary circumstance where you have to make sex with this lady or she'll kill fifty-thousand people (laughter), she has her...finger on the atomic bomb button or something, then you have to properly disrobe (laughs) (laughter) okay...first. Okay. That's a rule. All right. In case it happens to you. (laughter) But otherwise, I mean, I think that vow is very dangerous and you have to be aware of the limitations on that vow, okay. I just don't want you running around and using that vow whenever you feel like it, okay? (laughs) That's one of the vows that people would use when they weren't supposed to, right? Okay. Next question is, Mai Maitreya actually made a comment at one point on what you should do if you hear a Buddhist teaching that you cannot accept at this moment, okay? So you hear some Buddhist teaching and you say, "look, I can't accept that right now". Then, Maitreya said, "look. I hon...I respect that, and you know, that other guy...what's his name? Shakyamuni, he also said, you know, 'question me, and fight with me and debate me but don't believe everything I say until you've figured it out yourself', okay". But Maitreya warns us, he says, "learn how to shelve it for the time being. Don't don't reject it". Okay? The point is, when you reach a Buddhist teaching that you can't handle right now, okay, then don't reject it. Don't say this is

crap. I had a student come up to me about some very high teaching and say "oh that's all crap", you know. Don't say crap, okay. Say "I don't get it right now. Maybe I'm crazy, Maybe you're crazy. I'll leave it for now." And Maitreya says, "put it in a box with your...I had a I have a student in North Carolina...great student who keeps a list of questions they're not sure about yet and then they cross them out, you know, when they get...two years later they hear a good explanation from Geshe So-and-So and they cross it out. And that's what you're supposed to do, okay. Don't go to one extreme and accept everything that a Buddhist teacher says. Nobody wanted that to happen. It would make a bunch of crazy people. That's how Nazi Germany happened, okay? On the other hand, don't say it's crap, you know. Don't decide...just leave it...suspend judgment for now. And put it in a box called "to be answered later", okay. That's what Maitreya says, in in the (b: Uttara Tantra), okay. There's a question about the four white deeds and the four black deeds which are extra commitments to your bodhisattva vows. Now why did I pile them on you when you got sixty-four vows to worry about already? I like number three. To me it's like really incredible, okay. And you have to figure out what it is. Okay. It's basically...(dak pay nga wa)...which means, "to go to go around believing that"...was it "Truman's World or, what's that other guy..."Matrix"...it's amazing that two of them came out in in a year or two, you know...they're not supposed to tell you that much. They're supposed to keep it secret (laughs) you know. I don't know who approved two of those movies in one year. Okay. I mean, they told me that we weren't allowed to talk about it more than once a year. But anyway, the fact that everybody in this audience is already enlightened and I'm the only one who's not, and you're humoring me, so I can become this big teacher and I'm forced to study this stuff again (laughter) okay...ha ha ha, okay, I know you wouldn't do that. Next. You gotta list four typical ways...causes that might make a person break their bodhisattva vows. But I'm most interested in number one which was?

(students: You never learned them.)

You never learned them. Okay (laughs). Just...the case with most westerners that I've met. It's not that they're not nice people and it's not that they don't care about their vows. Nobody ever taught them their vows. Okay. That's the easiest way to break your vows. Do you get...does does the law of karma cut slack on you if you didn't know?

(students: No)

No. (laughs) Okay. Sorry. It's like gravity, you know. "Oh, I didn't know a pen would fall down if I let it go." 'Cause you'd just like...no, it doesn't work that way (laughter), okay? (laughs) It's it's a law, like gravity, okay?

(student: (unclear))

It does have to do with it. Now he caught me. I was waiting for somebody. (laughter) But then there's this story that Khen Rinpoche wouldn't teach us the (tantr)ic vows relating to (b: The Fifty Verses) because he thought that at once we knew them and broke them it'd be worse than if we didn't know them and broke them. I think you're right. Okay. I like the six kinds of suffering according to the first Panchen Lama. You know, there are presentations that go through the hell realms, and there are presentations that go through, you know, the suffering of pretas. We can't see hell realms. We can't see pretas. The the the first Panchen Lama wrote this beautiful description of the six sufferings of life that you can confirm right now. That you've had since you were...that you knew about since you were a teenager, you know. Which is probably the reason why you're here, okay. There were certain lousy stuff going on that you knew already, when you were thirteen or fourteen...you figured it out despite what your parents and your church told you, you figured it out...and that's why you're here probably. Stuff like, first one. (Nge me) means "nothing's fixed. Nothing's certain". Somebody that you think is gonna be your friend turns out to be your worst enemy in three months. Or somebody you think is your enemy turns out to be your best friend in six months. I don't know why it always takes longer..(laughter) but (laughs) okay. So you can't trust anything, okay. Can't trust other people's relationship to you. Okay. You can't. Why? Are people evil? No. Your karma's crappy, okay. And the one you see as beautiful today you'll see as terrible in six months, and that's not your fault and not their fault. It's it's karma. Okay. And that's one of the sufferings, okay. (Ngowo mi shepa) number two. No matter how much money you get, no how much Dharma teachings you get...if you were with His Holiness every day, you'd start teaching...you'd start treating him like a regular person in about three weeks, okay. If you ever get close to His Holiness and you're around his attendants, it's weird, you know, except for the ones who are practicing Dharma very well...you get used to everything and then you want more, you know. And the same applies with everything. Khen Rinpoche is the single,

highest, most qualified Lama in the United States by about a million miles...I'm not being biased, okay. I'm just saying, he graduated from (Tantr)ic college and started running it in nineteen fifty-seven when I was five, you know. He is the only...out of ten thousand monks, he graduated first, (an gyi dam po hlarampa), okay, but you're used to him. You're like "oh yeah yeah...he's having initiation...I'm busy this weekend" (laughter) you know, just 'cause (nwo wo mi shepa), second suffering of the human mind can't be satisfied. Everything special becomes normal, okay. Your mind takes every holy, sacred, special thing and makes it boring and normal within a couple of weeks. Okay. That's it, you know. So anyway. I won't tell you the rest. It's too depressing. (laughter) (laughs), all right. There is number six. (Drok me, drok me) means "no frien...no one can come with you". Okay. You can pretend that you have a wife or a husband or a girlfriend or a close friend or comrade or blah blah blah family, but in the end, look, you die...you come into this life alone, naked, and you leave the same way. And you're that way during the whole life. You have short, dangerous liaisons with people and then you lose them. You know what I mean? You come together for a while, and then karma splits you up again, and that's it, you know. You're on your own, okay. Defeat yourself as you like but you're on your own, okay, and that's one of the sufferings. Does it have to be that way? No. Can there be certain friends, can there be true satisfaction, can there be friends that you can live with forever? Yes. Okay. Somebody asked me in Aus...Bendigo, Australia, they said, "yeah, but can me and my girlfriend get to enlightenment together?" and I said, "yeah. You'll be Mr. and Mrs. Chakrasamvara". And they said, "you're kidding me, right?" And I said, "no. Not at all." Okay. Just pull it off. Okay. No problem. These things don't have to happen. (Tantr)ic deities don't have these problems, and you will be, it's just a question of how long it's gonna take...if you're not already. Okay. What time ya got? Okay. Five more minutes on suffering. There's a question about death meditation...we we next time we had a class on the he...on the different realms of existence, all the different kinds of realms and also we concentrated on the bardo, what happens to you after you die and before you're reborn, how does it feel, what happens, how can you prepare for it. I think the most important thing that came out of that class was your realization which has had...I've run into a few of you...that you are in a different re...you are in a specific realm called the desire realm, okay. Like, until you see you emptiness directly, you don't really believe it. After you see emptiness directly, you have a...one of the realizations is that you are in a place called the desire

realm and it's broken, okay. This realm doesn't work, okay. And that destroys the idea of adjustment, you know. "Oh, if I just ate a little better, if I just gave up Loo Schoolboy chocolate chip cookies", you know, "if I just could get to the gym one more day a week, if I could just do yoga for fifteen minutes more, if I could just find the perfect Mr. or Mrs. B, A, whatever", you know what I mean? The belief that life could be bearable with some kind of adjustment that you haven't made yet is a lie. This realm is broken, can't be fixed this way. No external object can make you happy. Period. Can't, okay. It's not the size of your apartment, or your position at work, or or how whether you exercise or not...irrelevant. This realm is broken. You're doomed. You stay in this realm, nothing can go right. Okay. Period. So, now how do you get to another realm, is it like a subway or...what do they call those things?

(students: (unclear))

Challenger...rocket ship, you know what I mean. No, when I say like this realm is broken, you start looking around, you know. You know, and it's not like that. You practice, you purify your world by keeping your vows, and then in this same physical location you enter your Buddha paradise, okay? And it doesn't look at all like this. So I mean, you move between...from a broken realm to a perfect realm in the same place, okay. It's not just this thing of you have to die or you have to go somewhere else or...it's not like that, okay. Is this a perfect realm already and I don't understand it? Yeah, right, and cancer is just sprinkled around for fun, you know (laughter). It's (laughs)...no, it's not like that, okay. It's not like that. That's a lie also. That's misinformation. It's not that you're a Buddha already and this Buddha realm already and you just didn't see it or something like that. Forget that. Very specifically, you have to take vows, you have to learn them, you have to keep them from hour to hour and you have to change your world by doing that, and it's a job and then it will change, and your body will change too. Your body will get lighter, stronger, happier, every year that goes by, better and better and then finally just changing to a different kind of body, and your mind is keeping up the same speed. And then you're out. Then you're in a different realm. Okay. In the same place. But but as it stands now, this realm is unfixable. Any information you have outside of this class for fixing your life is false. It's a lie. Get used to it, okay. Outside of keeping vows, outside of changing your behavior towards other people, and knowingly thinking about emptiness and how karma plays itself out in the

world due to what you did in the past, except for that everything else is a lie. Nothing works, okay? That's that investment strategy stupidity thing. The all those adjustments don't work. The whole information supplied to you by every newspaper and magazine in this country is wrong. Get used to it, okay. It's just wrong. It doesn't work, okay. Sorry. Okay. Maybe wired, but I...(laughter). I think it's important to know the lifetime layman's vows, because I believe that Buddhism will probably spread in this country mostly through laypeople. There will be great monks and nuns, there will be great teachers who are monks and nuns...I think, I think America, from the way I see the potential, it's gonna be passed down through lay people, and the layman's vows are gonna be very important and I think you should know them correctly, be able to describe them correctly, and I think you should start thinking about giving them to people, okay? Which you can once you've had them, okay. And and you have to put that in your thing about think about it, okay. That that you should turn on other people as soon as possible, especially to the book thing. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

There's a small ceremony and I'll teach it to you some time if you want, okay. I think it should be ninety-five percent explaining the vows, three percent taking them and then two percent be happy at the end, and (laughter) no, and that's it, you know. I'm afraid most of the time it's ninety-five percent giving them, no explanation and five percent of confusion at the end. (laughter), okay. Okay. You're gonna have to know some of the basic correlations. Correlations means "expected results from certain behavior", okay. Like why do people have backaches and if someone...if you have a student in the future who says comes to you and says "I have backaches, what should I do?", then what're you gonna tell them? What's the karma that causes backaches. What's the karma that causes depression, anxiety, fears, you know...if you really want to be a good Buddhist teacher in America I think you have to study the books on karma and see what are the specific actions that people did in the past to create, for example, depression. And then you can really help people, you know. You don't even have to charge them anything. Like you just turn them onto the karmic way to fix emotional problems and physical problems and they work, okay. So I think you should know some of the, what we call "the correlations". Should know the ten qualities of a qualified Lama, okay. I think should be the first thing you teach somebody. We had it in course number one, it came up again later

in the course...at the end of the vinaya course, okay? But I think it's really really good to turn especially new people on, to the definition of a qualified Lama. Ten qualities that a qualified Lama should have, okay. Last question that I will ask you about...yes, that's a hard one...okay. I didn't give you all the questions, all right, but you can try to suck 'em out of your class leaders, all right. What really protects you when you take refuge, how do you take refuge and when I give refuge vows, which you can also do and you should start doing, okay...when I give refuge vows I try to get people not to think like they're switching icons...like like you used to bow down to this guy on this cross but now you have to bow down to this guy with crossed legs, okay (laughter), you know what I mean? And instead of that picture it's this picture. And now you're a better person, you know what I mean? And that's just a...that's not all...like I have loyalty thing when I got to Dharmasala I was already a strong Christian and I was like "I'm not bowing to Geshe Dhargye..no way, that's...ten commandment number one" (laughter), you know. You know what I mean? And I had all these weird doubts about everything going on there like it was demon worship or something you know, and I wasn't gonna bow down because I remember that vow, you know, that ten commandments, you know. By the way "graven image" means when you take refuge, you're not taking refuge in a picture, okay. Picture of Lord Buddha can't do anything for you period. Lord Buddha can't do anything for you, get used to that, okay. I mean the story of Lord Buddha sitting in his home, their place was attacked by outsiders, and people holding onto his robes are (unclear), you know, begging him for refuge, okay. If he couldn't help them, then you can forget it that he's gonna magically show up when you're having a bad day and help you (laughter), (laughs) okay. It doesn't work. So what's the use of (Namo Buddhaya, Namo Dharmaya, Namo Sanghaya) (laughter), you know what I mean? So what's the use of that? How does that protect you? Okay. And then you have to understand refuge. You have to understand...forget the word refuge. It's "protection", okay? What is protection? Your knowledge of emptiness and karma, period. All three of the Three Jewels as opposed to Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, okay...big difference. There's Buddha, there's Dharma, there's Sangha. Then there's Buddha Jewel, Dharma Jewel, Sangha Jewel. These are not at all the same, okay. What is the Buddha Jewel? What's the Buddha? The Buddha is this guy walking around two and a half thousand years ago in Bodhi Gaya. Okay. What's the Buddha Jewel? The Dharmakaya, the emptiness of the Buddha, okay? The blankness about the Buddha that allows those three other bodies to exist which is really handy, okay. So what's the Sanga Jewel?

People who have seen emptiness directly, okay. What's the Dharma Jewel? Seeing emptiness directly. Do we have a theme here (laughter) okay...really. That's all they can protect you, okay. Protection...when you're at work and the guy's attacking you or you're with one of your fellow students or anything else, and they're starting to say something bad to you, take refuge. What's refuge? Your mind goes through the following process, okay. This this person is empty, you know. Probably somebody enjoys what they're saying right now. I don't. Okay. But how I feel about it only depends on my karma, you know. They could be praising me at this moment if I'd had better karma, okay, and probably there's people who feel a certain way about me that if they heard what this person is saying at this moment they'd be very happy, okay. I'm not. Okay. So, the reason I have to see them as a bad is my own karma. I understand that. The reason I have to hear these words coming out of their mouths right now is my own karma. I understand that. So above all I refuse to speak. You know. Above all I refuse to answer, okay. Because I don't want to meet them again. This is the way...I always say you can eliminate people at work. You don't have to use the Post Office method, which is a gun (laughs) okay? And Master Shantideva said it clearly. He said, "practice the perfection of patience. Underst"...which means you do it with understanding their emptiness. And then kiss them goodbye. He says, "go to them one by one and say," you know, "shake their hands, it's been good knowing you, (laughter), you're gonna get transferred within three months", you know (laughter) and and they're like, "how do you know that?" You say, "'cause I'm being patient with you". (laughter) You know. You know what I mean? And it works. I swear to God. I had eight hundred people in my company. I had a hundred and fifty people in my department and we all had a fantastic time, you know. The lousy ones got weeded out one by one by Mr. Karma, by refusing to get angry, refusing to respond to people...what people said, okay. And then you just eliminate them by doing that, okay. What's the...what do you call that...extrapolate it into the future, I mean, first you get rid of the biggest asshole at work, and then you work on the medium ones and then even the people who irritate you a little bit and then they're all gone. Well, what what happens after that?

(cut)

No, they start transforming completely, I mean, slowly, one by one, they start to shade into (tantr)ic deities, okay. Does it happen all in one day? No. Do they turn into a (tantr)ic deity on Sunday and they're always like that after that? No. They

shade in and out as towards the...as you get towards the end, you know, you swear they're a (tantr)ic deity on Monday, and bbby Tuesday they look like a totally normal person. And then Friday they're like shading back again, 'cause it's Friday (laughs) you know, and then...you know what I mean? And it starts shading back and forth and getting a little...and then and then finally you start to see them that way most of the time, and you your karma's forcing you to see it and you understand why, and it's it's it's okay, and then there's this thing where they won't admit it, 'cause you don't have enough karma to have them to admit it, so it goes on for another few months, you know, and they're like "no no, I'm not, I'm just a normal person", you know. And you say, "no no. I see like this sometimes". They say, "no no, I don't know what you're talking about", you know. (laughter) And then sooner or later their karma gets so sweet that they just say, "okya, you caught me", you know (laughter) (laughs), you know...see there he is (laughter) Okay, but that's the whole...Rome wasn't built in a day...and you keep you vows, learn your vows, keep them every two hours, and then this stuff starts happening to you. Definitely. And that's why you're here. Okay? And oh it's so nice, okay. So do that. Take a break. And then we'll do our groups for a while. And then we have to talk about plans for tomorrow. Okay.

(break)

Okay. We will start. I've waited twenty years to get Lama Zopa trapped and we did it, it looks like, so I wanna make sure it goes off right. So. Number one. Amber is doing the stage and general decorating, am I right? Where is she? I have to have blood vows, (laughter), right? Okay. So the...stage...including that seat in Leon's house.

(student, Amber: Yeah)

Okay.

(student, Amber: (unclear))

And you can take, please take the carpets out of my room. I got some new ones that are going into three year retreat. I want him to walk on them. From from the steps to the throne, but not on the steps 'cause he'll fall down, okay. Very inauspicious.

(student, Amber: (unclear))

Huh?

(student, Amber: (unclear))

I don't mind if you load'em up. Yes. That's fine. It'll feel like (laughter) the Heaven of the Thirty Three. Okay. So who's bringing the carpet?

(student: Michael Wick's (unclear) the carpet)

Wick. He's not here, right.

(students: Yeah)

Oh, (laughs) okay. Michael Wick's gonna make sure we get the place early and go home late, right? It's very embarrassing when you're locked out and Lama Zopa shows up. Okay. Margie okay on the car? Okay. Margie's gonna bring her big black Lincoln which is working this week, okay. What time, Petra? 'Cause she's coming from work?

(student, Petra: Yes, I (unclear))

Okay, so I don't have to worry about it. Sound's good.

(student, Petra. I'll bring (unclear))

Yeah, you bring in...you come in Margie's car like you and Roger and Lama Zopa and then we'll pay the taxi fare for the other people. Do you have any money? You need money? And then I'll reimburse you, okay. Fran Diane is gonna...where's Fran Diane?. Six hundred dollar check from MSTC, six hundred dollar check for Lama Zopa, okay? Charge it to whatever account's not broke. (laughter) (laughs) As if there was one. (laughter) Okay. So, we got that. Fran D. Fran's got the moola. Somebody have a swastika throne cover seat? Great. Okay. You got that. (laughter) I mean (unclear) okay, all right. Everybody bring everybody bring as many people as they like, okay. I'd like the place full, okay. So bring as many people as you like. It'll be too hot and it'll be sweaty...by the way, anybody can do a fan for him, on him, the cool thing...who's gonna do that? Who? Okay. Fran. Not not to make him, you know, not to blow him away, but (laughter) (laughs). We got flowers. That's that's Elly, right? So you have a hundred dollar budget for that and Fran will reinburse you...ha ha. Okay. And and you're working on that too, right (unclear) (laughter) Okay. You guys got any

other great ideas of something nice?

(student: (unclear))

When he comes in? Oh by the way. When they come in there should be a gauntlet of people all the way to the door, like you should spread out of you have to, but the custom is that he walks through the two rows, and you can either hold incense or hold some flowers, okay. So who's gonna arrange this gauntlet? You already have a job. Geraldo's pretty good at that...okay. How about Geraldo and Christina? Okay. Gauntlet crew. Yeah. We need a (rrrrrr). I think it'd be more fun if he came in alone.

(students: (unclear))

Tea lights?

(student: Christmas lights. He loves Christmas lights)

Christmas lights. Who's got Christmas lights? Who wants to do the Christmas lights? Rob you wanna do lights in general? If you can't get Christmas lights, get...okay, buy some or do some tealights, doesn't matter. Okay. If you need money talk to Fran-Diane. Ha ha. Okay. Rob, Rob's got the light. Somebody's gotta do this altar properly and not like a smorgasbord (laughter), okay. Nah. I mean, not too crowded, okay and all nice, spread out where he can see it, okay, you got that? You got that.

(student: (unclear))

Actually it's not so bad. I'd say just fill it. Maybe do it like a horseshoe.

(student: He likes a lot of water bowls)

He likes a lot of water bowls.

(student: Big glassfulls)

Big glassfulls. Okay. Shamis has got the, you got the sound? Okay. Shamis is gonna do an extra boom bang job on the sound, probably have Neil Young when he comes in (laughter). Everybody at the end should have a kata, or as many as we can. I have a bunch in my room. Who wants to....

(student: I can bring them over (unclear))

You already have a job. Who wants to do...okay, they're in the like third or fourth drawer. If you just take them all, I don't care, okay? So Kopec. And then hand them out to people. They you you offer them at the end, okay, with a nice envelope...how's gonna bring envelopes? Not those cheap little white ones. Some really fancy ones from Kate's Papereria. Who's doing that? Sure? Bring like a hundred and...just no, just little ones that people can make offering, okay. And then bring something, okay. Bring bring a dollar, bring five dollars, it doesn't matter, but it's just bring something, okay. And then we think it's bad luck to put an empty envelope...I mean a blank...no, I mean like write something on the front like "please live forever", or something like that, okay. Anybody got any other suggestions that I didn't think of? Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Oh yeah, I'd like to...can you take care of that? Okay. We're gonna do the the eight great arhats from ancient India and Lord Buddha across the top, okay, but, by the way, you must ask Leon properly, 'cause I...he's very sensitive, so I don't wanna, you know...okay. All right. Okay. He doesn't mind at all. 'Cause those were a gift from Sera, but it'd be really nice to have them, and then try to keep that order, if you can, especially Lord Buddha in the middle. That's the main thing. Okay. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Sorry?

(student: (unclear))

It's illegal for to have anything from (unclear) a Lama like that, so, heh heh.

(student: (unclear))

I don't think when he's here. Okay. We can talk about that, but generally it's not allowed to...to give something to a lesser Lama when his...huh?

(student: (unclear))

I don't mind. That's great. Yeah. That's fine. Okay. Any

other...by the way, when he gets seated and he's ready to go, then watch and we all have to do nice prostrations, okay. And at the end we have to do all the proper prayers. Are you up for that Puntsok? Are you gonna be here? So, mandala, all that stuff, okay? Okay, so Puntsok has got the...don't make it so low we can't follow (laughter), (laughs).

(student: (unclear))

Say again?

(student: We could also do his longlife prayer.)

Yeah, why not? Do you have it? Do you have a longlife prayer for...do you wanna reproduce it?

(students: It's a little tricky to sing...do you know the tune? I used to know the tune. (laughter))

Could we just recite it? Say again?

(students: (unclear) Oh yes, this is (unclear). There's a Tibetan...there's a really nice)

How 'bout we just recite the English? Yeah, here's one here. But...okay. Can you...who's gonna reproduce it? Can you reproduce it? You already got a job.

(students: (unclear))

Okay. Work it out with Debbie Bye. She'll help you. Spread the virtue. Don't be a (snort snort) virtue hog. Longlife prayer. And then Puntsok you gotta be ready with that, okay? All right. Anything else. Anybody else have any ideas? John?

(student, John: (unclear))

All the prayers that we might say. Can you guys do that? I mean, just the mandala and the Sang gye chu dang tso kyi chok nam la, and the Gewa diyi at the end, okay.

(student: (unclear))

Sorry?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Who's working on that? You guys wanna be involved with that? Help make the mandala offering? At the beginning? Okay. So we need like four people. That's two. Okay. Who's the other two? Christina. Anybody else.

(student: Marie)

Where's Marie. (unclear) Okay. Ha ha, we got it already. Okay these three and Christina. So, the first person who offers the mandala on a plate, you guys work it out between you, okay. Next person offers body which is a image of the Buddha. Next offering is speech which is the scripture and then mind, which is the stupa...try to find a little stupa. And you always turn it towards yourself first and touch it and then you turn it around and offer it and then you offer the kata and then usually they put it over your neck and then you...you get it back and you put it back on the tray. So somebody, who's a we need a fifth person to stand there with a tray. Who wants to be the tray? Yeah? How about Kelly? Okay. Yeah. Stand there with a tray. Okay. We need another person to collect it from the thing. Okay, I think Elly. Oh, Jay, Okay. So you got the finished tray, you got the beginning tray, and you four guys are doing the offerings of things. And you can fight over who's gonna spill the mandala.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, (laughs) glue it back, okay. Yeah. By the way, the way they really do it in the monastery, tell you the truth, they turn a mandala plate over, they get four short votive candles and they glue 'em and then they have a larger candle in the middle and that's all. They don't do the rings and all that. Okay. And it should have a silk thing tied to it that goes, you flap over your

(student: Yeah, and you bring (unclear))

So just a long beautiful piece of cloth on a mandala plate with four candles stuck to it, like a birthday cake, those...you know, like that high and that thick and then one in the middle, five. Mt. Meru and the four continents. Okay. Got it. You take...those candles are about that high and about that thick. And then you take a manda...a regular mandala plate and you turn it upside down so that the opening's at the bottom and then you just stick them on there...like you can drip the wax and you...that's the four continents, then you have one in the middle. And then you have some kind of silk cloth coming off of

it that's about this long and the person offers it throws the cloth over their left shoulder and then offers it, okay, like that. And then he'll take it and he'll give it to the person who's got the closing tray, I should say, okay. I'm sure we'll do it very confusedly. (laughter). Sorry?

(student: (unclear))

Oh okay, good. All right. Okay. (laughs) Sorry?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, add the long mandala offering to the papers that people get, okay. We need to do the long mandala offering. Anybody think of anything else? Sorry?

(student: What time are we going to do it?)

Oh, I think Lama Zopa's schedule is...all the high high Lamas are...they run on their own time, (laughs) so...you know, that's their right, so I'd be here at I'd be here at seven, and you know be ready to stay late, and I don't want people leaving. If you're gonna chicken out and...if you're gonna wimp out then don't come, okay (laughter). Just tell you family you're gonna be late, okay. He likes to...when he gets into it it could be a long time, okay. All right. Yeah. But it's very disrespectful to leave, okay. So, just decide however long it takes. It's a...by the way, why am I doing this? I can't think of a Lama who has contributed more to the happiness of westerners directly than Lama Zopa, period. By about a degree of a thousand, you know what I mean. So, you know, this is a huge chance. So, you know, who else has put their whole life into building hundreds and hundreds of, you know...over a hundred centers and serving people all over the world. You you won't find anyone who's done that for westerners, you know what I mean. And this is a big chance of your life. Yeah.

(student: What (unclear) what language does he speak?)

He'll be speak...I never heard him speak, but I hear he speaks English, so..and very deliberately, okay (laughter), yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Oh, great idea. Who can...what does he like to drink when he teaches?

(student: (milk milk tea and (unclear))

Okay, and what kind of tea...caffeine tea?

(student: Black tea))

Caffeine tea? Who can do that? Jay? Okay, so it has to be a... in a thermos, hot. Does he add the milk later or put it in? Okay. Big. In case he goes on for a long time. And then a beautiful cup and they like the kind of cup with a cover on it, yeah. Okay. When we prepared the Ling Rinpoche, the senior tutor, we put these fake grapes on the...next to the cup

(students: oh oh)

And then he was looking at them (laughs) and then he (laughter) finally he...(laughter) (laughs). So bring some real grapes or something (laughter). All right Jay? Are we up for that? Something like little fruits or something, you know, in case he (unclear). Okay. All right. I heard he likes flowers so bring flowers. Bring some little offering, okay. It doesn't have to be a big deal, but something. Don't come empty handed, very bad, and we'll give katas to probably I have fifty or twenty, I don't know. But we'll see.

(student: (unclear))

Oh, somebody can iron them. They're kind of grungy. Who wants to do that? Okay, then you'll coordinate with...who's the kata person? Gail. They...it takes about a minute or two each and I don't have an iron there. I've never used one. Sorry?

(student: (unclear))

Oh, that's be a great idea. Who wants to take pictures? Can we do the video, is Kevin up to the video...okay. And yeah, okay. Maybe two people take pictures would be nice. Okay. All right. That'd be nice to have. Okay. Oh, yeah yeah. You need to bring a lot more tape than with me. He goes late. I heard that. I've never been, okay. Okay. To close up. I wanted to thank all the people who helped with the class. When we first started this school, Ani Pelma and me in the basement in Hell's Kitchen with six chairs and two dogs, it was lonely. We couldn't get any help for anything. And like Margie would come and help and a few other people, but it was really hard and then when we got to

Sixth Street more and more people started helping. I think now we have about forty to fifty almost full-time people working for free on fifteen different major projects around the world, and it's unbelievable. Like I I don't know of any other place where that many people are putting in that much quality time, you know, and it would be very hard for me to even...I can't go through all the names anymore. I used to at the end of a class...I used to go through all the names. It's hopeless. Okay. It's just almost everybody is doing some kind of amazing thing, and it's just amazing. Like, a lot of projects now go on, Three Jewels, stuff like that, I don't even know about it. You know, and hundreds of people get benefitted and it's just fantastic, it's just fantastic. I you can't even imagine all the stuff that's going on. Almost everybody in this room is doing something...major thing, so, I just thank you for that, first thing. I wanted to thank all the people who led the...who who taught the second part of the class. That'd be Ani Pelma...you can save your applause for the end. Ani Elly, Winston, Roy, Fran Diane, Margie, Vilma...you still haven't missed a class? Very few. Never missed a class...oh, don't say, okay (laughter). Mark Miniverni, Elizabeth, Ani Chodrin, Brooks, Michael Wicks and Nancy Kiernan. Like amazing. And (applause) yeah. (laughs) And it it's my hope, I mean, John and I talked about, we'll there'll be a schedule and those people and a few other people will be giving keeping the courses going aft...in two thousand and beyond, okay...spread out throughout the city, like underground cells (laughter), that's my dream, okay. And we will also be having a meeting at Godstow with all those people probably late October, I think, and talking about how to plan that so...maybe tomorrow I'll announce the date. Is that okay? It'll be a weekend at Godstow and we'll just plan how we take over the city. All right (laughs) okay. I wanted to thank John Stilwell especially for (applause). You gotta come down John, sorry. Yo, you. You Stilwell. Okay. We we heard that John was too cheap...I mean, couldn't get a copy of this book (laughter) (laughs) and we wanted to offer it. This is Rinpoche's newest book on seeing bodhicitta. Okay. So. John'll be running this place during the three year retreat, so this is just to sweeten his day before he starts to work. (applause) (laughs) I'd like to also thank John for teaching the classes. They were very...people were very happy.

(student, John: (unclear))

Huh?

(student, John: (unclear))

No (laughter) I was relaxing. This is the way it's supposed to work. Okay. I think the last, I mean, there's too many people to thank and I can't thank everybody, but there's one person especially who sweated out this course besides the students, and where would we be without the Sarge? (applause) (laughs) We got two gifts for the Sarge. This is one...I wish I could get you to do it again so I don't have to worry about it. Ready. (One little nun). Is gonna get a big thing. Ready. Where's your thing? (unclear)

(student, nun: I just I just wanted to thank him personally and I think to all of you a lot of time we show up and it's like a paradise here and there's maybe seven people behind the scenes, working on the altar, cleaning the floor, he's many times at the Three Jewels trying to get brochures for new people to come and there's about twelve things that really go on before you come and you sit down and work and the place is all pretty, and he's working really hard, so we would really like to thank you and all of the requests that you get from some students going through the boxes and needing (laughs) homeworks and quizzes all at the same time...we really appreciate it and we would like to (unclear) (applause). We have we have a a mandala offering from Geshe Michael and the store has given you a cushion and some little goodies. (unclear) (applause))

Okay, that's all. So you...do a , do some retreat, if you can during September, okay. If not, those of you who haven't taken bodhisattva vows you gotta knock off that course...this is the right time to do it, class number seven, if you wanna take them...probably be later in the year, like November or maybe February but you have to knock that off now. Other people should do their respective things okay, but don't waste the time, okay. At least go over the courses. It drives me crazy when people show up at Sixth Street and say "I don't know what to do", you know. After seventeen courses, you know, five thousand pages to read, you know, and knock off some of the courses you haven't finished, you know. I have that (tantr)ic teaching carrot is out there and you have to knock off the eighteen courses, okay. So that's all on your head. That's all up to you. I can't do anything else. Okay. You have to finish...you have those courses...the Moore's can give you whatever you need, you just knock 'em off, okay. Then you can help other people with it, okay. So thank you for making me do this because it's good for me and we'll do a mandala offering, yeah, okay. (applause)

(prayer: long mandala)

(prayer: short mandala)

(silence) (laughter)

One sec. Okay. One sec...I forgot some things. I forgot a few people and I can't stand to not mention them. Margie who shows up every single night (applause) even when I don't show up. I don't think...and then Amber who did the altar (applause) okay. These are just the people I know about. I don't know if you know that the readings take probably forty hours a week of work and that's being done with no pay by Ora, okay (applause), Kristy helps with that (applause). People think they hang around me all the time and get to have...talk with me all the time. They have to make an appointment about three months ahead...seriously, to talk to me and they work like eighteen hours a day, they get over stressed, they start crying half the time, and they really really work hard for you guys. So you should thank them sometime. Okay. (applause) And I...that's a...I just wanted to do those people. Michael Wick...(applause) okay (laughs). Rinpoche named his car (chu be ta) which means "public horse" and he never refuses anyone, I mean, it's every single day he's doing something for somebody and he's let us use his house and we've ruined it but he still lets us use it. Kevin who did the video (applause). Somebody came to me today at the teachings, it happens every time...almost every day, they like crying, they get down on their knees, they grab me, they say, "I got the video for such and such that you did two years ago and you don't know me and it saved my life" and that's Kevin's idea and Kevin's been filming them all. Okay. (applause). Shamis who does the video...I'm sorry, the audio so well (applause) and his assistant, Edward something something something the fourteenth, who's others name is Ted, okay (laughs) (applause). Rob and Ian who do countless running around the city especially to pick up the readings and stuff like that, okay (applause). I think I got everybody for this class...I don't know. I probably forgot ten people. I'm very sorry. But anyway, you get the point. Okay. If you're gotta catch a a bus or a train, just go, okay. Don't worry. This takes a while. So, if you're tired and you gotta get home, don't be shy, okay.

(student: I just wanted to mention. For the people who are going to be grading final exams, now that I've dug through the boxes that I have, it turns out that I do have the answer key

(unclear), so if you're gonna be grading finals, come meet me in the back and I'll give you a copy (unclear). And one last thing, on your way out you'll notice a table set up with t-shirts for sale. The money the proceeds for those shirts are going directly to (unclear).

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