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**DAILY PRACTICE COURSE SERIES 10**

**JE TSONGKHAPA'S MANTRA  
(RAW TRANSCRIPT)**

**presented by Geshe Michael Roach**

Godstow Retreat  
December 1998- Jan 1999

Geshe Michael Roach  
Je Tsongkapa Mantra  
Godstow Retreat Center  
December 1998 – Jan 1999

Class 1.

Heart Sutra (Tibetan)

Okay, I wanted to tell you a little bit about what kind of retreat we're doing and then a little more about the schedule.

Many people ... you know, when you take a tantric initiation like Vajrayogini, one of the commitments you make is to do ... in the case of Vajrayogini four (Tibetan), four tantric retreats. And they involve doing mantras. And then I had many people ask me how to do a (Tibetan – lerung ?) you know. And then ... that's a long story and it takes a lot of training. I think ... I think as most tantric subjects should ... I really think it's good to study them with your tantric master, the one who gave you your vows, the one who gave you your initiation, you know, because there's a special purpose for initiation.

Initiation involves giving permission to do certain practices. And then ... and then after, that the person who initiated you should tell you how to do those practices. And then they should baby sit you through the practices, and ... That's the way generally tantra should be taught. (Tibetan) means by word of mouth, meaning, you know, from a lama to one or two of their students and, and then ... you know, in the old days it took many, many years before people would give you an initiation. They would have to know you for ten, fifteen, twenty years and then only after that they would give you initiation and then after that they would take care of your tantric needs, you know.

Ah ... and then I don't, you know, how to say ... I don't feel qualified first of all and then secondly, I don't feel that I could teach tantra to 50 people at once or something like that. I don't think it's... you know, ... I can't do it.

So I figured the best compromise is to do a very similar retreat, in the sutra way. And then you would gain all of the ... you would gain a lot of experience on how to do your (Tibetan) and then when you were ready to do your (Tibetan) you would have a lot of ... already you'd know a lot about how to succeed at them, you know, what I mean. You wouldn't need too much information beyond that to do your successful tantric retreats. Those retreats require about five to six weeks of time ... properly, I think, to do a hundred thousand mantras. And, you know, I didn't do them for ten years or something after Rinpoche gave us initiation and I didn't really think it would be so successful. The only

long retreat I ever did before that was ten days with Goenka and I was in Dharamsala. The Dalai Lama forced us to go to this retreat. He closed the Tibetan library. He brought all the monks down from Namgyal monastery. This is in 1975 or something and told us we had to do this retreat with this Burmese master. And then when he walked in the room we were all disappointed. He was this short, chubby guy with a towel around his waist, and ... we didn't ... you know, we were sort of rebelling against the idea. And then they locked us in the library for ten days with him. And the women slept in one big room and the men slept in another. And we meditated, I don't know, many, many hours per day. And he won't let you move and after a certain point he won't let you talk. And no mail, no reading, no music, no nothing; and it was wonderful. It was fantastic. It was a great first retreat. It was really, really good.

Then Khen Rinpoche was describing these tantric retreats as having to recite mantras all day and I frankly didn't think it would be very useful for me, because I didn't think you could concentrate while you're talking. I mean, they teach you that also right? So to me it didn't make much sense and I didn't think it would work very well and I wasn't attracted to it much. But out of respect for Rinpoche and out of respect for the practice, you know, for the lineage, when I had a chance then I did my first (Tibetan).

He actually went to India to be Abbot of Sera Mey and I figured, well, now I don't have classes and I have time. And so I went up in the room next to his room and did a very strict (Tibetan). And Geshe Lobsang Gyatso made food and I didn't go out of the room for the whole time except to pee pee upstairs there. And it was wonderful. I mean, it was incredible. It was totally fantastic, and all these wonderful things happened. And I learned a lot. And then I went on to do ... I did maybe, I don't know, eight or nine retreats, like ten retreats like that. I think it's good now trying to do it twice a year or something.

So then I gained experience and I talked to a lot of lamas ... and I thought it would be useful for you to do a mantra retreat, an open mantra retreat. Meaning a sutra; it's not a tantric retreat. But I thought important that that you went through all the formalities that you'll have to go through when you do your (Tibetan).

And then ... the thing about retreats is that you gain a lot of experience, you pick up experience each time you do a long retreat you get more and more experience. And then they become more and more familiar and more and more deep because you know what to expect. I think half the scary thing about retreat is that you don't know what to expect. If you're American you don't know quite what's going to happen if somebody locks you up for ten days or a month. And you get a little nervous about it or something.

So I thought just to do a ... sort of a dry run retreat for your (Tibetan) and then it's my hope that you go on this year or next year to do some of your (Tibetan) retreats, those of you who have that commitment. It's very, very, very wonderful. And it changes everything And I was wrong when I thought it was dumb, as so often happens. They're

incredible. You should really try to do them, okay.

So I'm just going to try to give you a background in the next ten days about how to do them and then I'm hoping you will go do them. Go to Khen Rinpoche, get the proper instructions for tantric part of it and ... or the one who ... or some other lama who has given you your initiation. And then do them and it would be really nice.

So here are the elements. And I'll ... we're going to spend about half an hour, forty-five minutes. I'll describe to you some things about doing the retreat like this. So you don't have to sit nicely or anything, okay (laughs).

You want to turn out the lights just a little bit? Then we'll take a break, then we'll do just an evening meditation of about forty-five minutes. And then we'll try to get to bed early. I know a lot of people travelled today or yesterday. I know a lot of people went to work today. I know a lot of people drove here which is in itself a little stressful, okay.

And we'll follow the general procedure in a retreat which is you go in slowly, you get deeper and deeper each day. More and more strict each day. Then you peak out, you know, halfway through you're at the deepest point, and then after a few days you start to come out. So the idea, they say in scripture to go like a ... pouring water out of a pitcher. It starts out a small stream and then it gets bigger, like that. And then you peak out somewhere in the middle. My experience is that seventy percent you have a depression, seventy to seventy-five percent, and then you come out easy, okay.

And it's very bad to start the night you get here doing eighteen hours a day. And it's very bad to do eighteen hours a day and then the next day go to work. So you have to ... you go like that and then you go like that. See, that's the idea of any kind of (Tibetan) retreat. All the texts say that.

Pabongka Rinpoche wrote a beautiful text on how to do your Vajrayogini retreats and you should study that, it's important. A lot of what we will do here will be an open version, or non secret version of some of those practices, okay.

Some comments about the schedule. And I'd like to make a few changes with the schedule. Fran tried very hard to pin me down on things and there'll be adjustments as we go, okay.

On Sunday, tomorrow, 7.00am there's supposed to be a morning meal. I strongly urge you not to eat a full meal, okay. Juice, something very light, toast if you need, but I urge you very much not to eat a ... you know, the kind of breakfast I had this morning. And so ... and generally, tea and coffee you should start getting off of them now, okay. And in a retreat you'd start to get off of them and then maybe after three or four days you wouldn't have them any more, okay. If you're a real coffee addict or tea addict then give yourself

four, five days to get off, okay. Otherwise you get headaches, okay. If you get a headache that might be one of those things, okay. Seriously, if you've been drinking coffee everyday for years or tea everyday for years you get a little headache from that.

Eleven o'clock tomorrow I think good time to cover the windows? Ah, no we'll do it tomorrow. Will you be ready?

At least by the next day. Then at least by Monday, okay. Monday eleven, all right? Is that all right?

When you're on a strict retreat you cover the windows, okay. So you can't see out. All right. And then you just go into your own world there, all right.

(Student question)

Yeah, I'm thinking (Tibetan) on Monday, eleven, okay. So you'll be responsible for covering your own windows in your own place, okay. Generally leave enough for light, okay. It should be something that leaves you light ... this is too clear, this stuff here is too much. Should be a little darker, like butcher paper, some light paper or something like that. It's okay to leave it if it's above eye level, like if you have a window that keeps going up. It's okay to leave it open at the top. So you get some light and it's good to be able to see the sky but not cars and people, all right. So it's good if you can leave a little at the top, you can see the sky if you're on your bed or something like that. And the stars, that's a good thing. To see the sky and the stars is good but to see people or trees or deer or whatever walking around is not good, okay.

We won't be going outdoors after ... you can go outdoors tomorrow and then Monday afternoon we'll be closing the place. And then I'll show you how to close the retreat place properly. There's a special marker you put out. You have to prepare it ahead of time. There's a certain ceremony you do, there's a tormas that you need to do that.

After that, this will be, let me see ... Well, I'll go back to the tormas. Two o'clock tomorrow we'll make offering tormas. In a (Tibetan) retreat you would make one at the beginning and then you would supplement it every day. And offerings are very important when you are in retreat, so we'll be taking a lot of time to do offerings.

Mmm ... and then seven o'clock tomorrow we'll be doing (Tibetan) which is a tormas for preventing obstacles, okay. And teach you how ... those are not secret, secret tormas, okay. I won't show you how to make Vajrayogini tormas, that you will have to learn from your teacher. But I want you to get the feeling of how to mush them together, how to get them into generally the right shape ... you know, like that. And then there are details that I won't teach you that are secret, that you have to learn from your tantric teacher, okay.

Student

Yeah

(Student question)

We'll make them at 7.00am, okay. And we'll put them up and close the house at 5.00pm (Tibetan) okay.

There's a special ... sorry, you can make a mark at 5.00pm on Monday, you have to stop talking, all right.

So I'll give you tomorrow and another half day, all right. And I mean really stop talking; like no sign language, no notes. Notes is the same as talking, okay. And just generally not, you know, ... there's ... I've been in retreats with people who ended up talking with their hands and ... you know, it's the same thing, you know. The point is not to have any contact with anybody after that point, okay. Except the Being you're meditating on, okay.

(Student question)

Yeah. I don't mind if you talk openly in the next day and a half. Get into it gradually, okay.

And if you're on the work crew, I appreciate it if you didn't talk too loud, okay. I mean, I know you have to talk but try to talk quietly, okay. I mean, the work crew can talk during the ... you have to talk I think, as little as possible, but I mean don't burn the dinner or anything like that, okay (laughter) (laughs).

There's a special ceremony for blessing your seat. And a ceremony for blessing your mala, your rosary. Everybody should have a rosary. If you don't then let us know. Let Fran know, okay. Maybe we can get some emergency malas.

Monday is (Tibetan). I'd like to do (Tibetan) at 7.00. Rinpoche is pretty strict about starting at the same time every place in the world, so we'll start at 7.00. During dinner at six o'clock, I'd like Fran if you could choose some people to prepare the offerings and stuff, during, you know, while the other people are enjoying dinner, okay.

Then (Tibetan) on Tuesday at 11.00 to 5.00 is just rest, okay. After that I think they're not doing (Tibetan), okay. We did this at midnight one night in my room ... twelve people there

(Student question)

11.00 and ... yeah that's it. That's it for our working. From then on it's just meditating.

11.00 ... No, no (Tibetan) on Tuesday. Yeah. Yeah. Monday's the last day of (Tibetan). So Tuesday and Wednesday's (Tibetan) are just rest periods.

And (Tibetan) on Tuesday is an error, okay. So just cross it out. It's the day before, it's on Monday, okay. And she begged me to look at it and I didn't look at it, so it's no reflection on Fran. I scribbled it on the back of a napkin and threw it at her at midnight one night.

That's all about the schedule. Don't be shy to sleep during the rest periods, just conk out, okay. Don't ... it's not unpatriotic, you'll need it (laughs), okay. When we did it with Goenka-ji we just lay down on the floor there and conked out, and that's fine, okay. So don't be shy about it.

We'll talk a lot about lung, wind problems that happen, especially during a mantra retreat. And we'll be talking about signs. How you know when you're getting lung, okay. When you get a real good case of lung you can hardly breathe, and it's real fun, okay. Right after that you run around, take your clothes off (laughter) (laughs), so hopefully we'll catch you between those two, okay. That's gotta be Sykes, okay (laughter).

Okay, then I'll go through ... we'll go through a little bit about the general retreat instructions. These are on page one of your ... these are just general thoughts that I've come to realise during the last few years.

Number one is just generally in a deep retreat don't even read books, okay. People ask me can you read Dharma books. It's ... Dharma book is somewhere between not reading and talking. It's better if you prepare before the retreat what you need to know. And then don't even read Dharma books during the retreat. It lowers the intensity. The point of this kind of retreat is to get some intensity going, okay.. And there's certain ... you get some kind of advantages out of the intensity. And the intensity's a little dangerous in the sense that you might get a little – what do you call it – wacky or something like that. But generally, intensity is what you're working for. You want the intensity. So don't read anything. Don't read newspapers, don't read the boxes – cereal boxes are very popular during retreat (laughter) - I memorised a few. It's the same as talking, okay. So just avoid written material.

Sykes, do you have a question?

(Student question)

If you have to do ... by the way, of course if you have to do your, you know, tundruk and your daily stuff, that's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking even if there's an instruction book about it or something like that, you can't do it, you know.

Not everybody here has tundruk.

(Student question)

No. I wouldn't do it. Everybody should be doing the same practice. So you should finish your other stuff on your off-hours, okay. We won't be doing tundra or other things together.

(Student question)

Yeah. Or as you like. However you usually do it, but you can't do it during these meditation sessions, okay.

By the way (Tibetan) is seven o'clock on Monday. If you haven't had Vajrayogini initiation then you can't come. And you get extra rest time or something, okay. If you have had Vajrayogini initiation you are welcome to come, okay. Well you have to come actually.

Number two: Long mantra retreat ... you're not going to have a big problem with this, but you tend to ... because you're doing the mantra all day long, your lips get chapped and you might want to get some chapstick or something, okay.

Number three: Loose baggy clothes and, you know, like maybe two or three changes to get you through the whole ten days without any washing, okay. We don't have any washing right? No. Okay. So everyone'll be a yogi. I mean, you can wash your body but not your clothes, okay. Unless you want to wash something in the shower and stick it up. But I don't advise it. You shouldn't do any other work during a (Tibetan) or during a ... During a heavy retreat someone should be taking care of all that stuff, okay. You shouldn't be doing anything else except meditating and resting, okay.

Use the layer method for meditating. So the point is you should stay warm enough but not too warm. If it gets too warm you get sleepy, okay. So you know, ... personally when I meditate I get warm so I take off this, and I go down to this. And I think that's better. But you shouldn't catch a cold. Catching a cold is a big enemy of a retreat. It ruins a retreat. You slurp, you cough, other people can't meditate. If you have a real attack of some kind of cold or coughing, please leave the room, okay. Please go to another part of the house. That way, okay. Please try to keep the two doors closed, 'cos macaroni smells are really distracting when you're meditating.

I think you should get ... by the way later ... automatic thing. Those door closer things, for these two doors ... those push things, hydraulic thing ... they close the door when you go through.

(Student question)

You know, what I mean? For these two doors.

Okay. If you're doing a retreat by yourself you should have a first aid kit, and there's a list of stuff there, okay. Just so you don't have to go outside. It's good to have some aspirin even if you never take aspirin. I take aspirin maybe once every three years or something like that. But it's good to have during your retreat, okay.

Number six: Very important to have sleeping tablets. I have never taken one in my life but I've had students ... there's a certain point you get during a deep retreat, I don't know if you'll get there in ten days, when you can't sleep, okay. If you find that you can't sleep for one night or something like that, then the next night take a sleeping pill, okay, 'cos if you go two or three nights without sleeping you'll have to stop your retreat, okay. That means you have a wind problem. It's very, very common. It happens to maybe a quarter of the people who do retreats. And it's better to just knock it out right away. So don't be a hero, you know.

Like after one night of not sleeping, then the next night take a sleeping pill.

And I've had students in retreat who ... that worked very nicely for them. And I've had other students who ... not my students ... but I've observed other students who refused to do anything and then they ended up going to a hospital for a shot, or running around naked and stuff like that, okay. So that's a rule. If you go one night without sleep the next night ... if you can't sleep for one whole night then next night take some kind of pill, okay.

If it goes on for a couple of days or something like that, talk to Fran Perello. Then you have to lighten your retreat. It means you have to start working in the kitchen ... Don't feel bad, don't think like you're a bad person or something like that. Don't go on a guilt trip about it.

Just say, okay, I have to lighten it up a little bit. Then you can cut some vegetables in the kitchen, stuff like that. But in general try to live on the edge a little bit, okay. I mean, in general, don't think in your mind that you can get out of this okay (laughter) okay, okay. I mean, just be a little bit tough on yourself and you'll get a lot more out of it. Sometimes it won't be comfortable.

I mean, there was a girl in Goenka's class. I remember, she had very bad back pain and one day she just broke down and cried. It was totally quiet for ten days except for this one incident. She was the only person who couldn't do it. And he's very strict. He just says forget it, you can't move, you can't leave, you know. And it works.

So you can do it all right. And if you get a little lungie or start having some wild dreams or something, don't worry. Just do it, okay. Otherwise you'll never get into a deep retreat. And if you do get into a deep retreat a lot of things will happen that you've never experienced, and it's very good. It's a very good for you. It's sometimes a little, you

know, what do you call it? It's a little disorienting sometimes. But the whole point is to get you down intensely into your mind, okay.

Yeah?

(Student question)

No, no, no, we have over the counter stuff, okay

(Student question)

Fran Perella. It's a sleepy time or something.

(Student question)

It's like (?) or something. We're not talking heavy drugs or anything like that. I'm just talking like ... in fact, in a ... Tibetans use butter. We drink butter. (Laughter) And it works. No, it works. Drink melted butter. And you might want to try that first, like with ... you do some yoghurt with a lot of melted butter in it.

Yeah.

(Student question)

Yeah

(Student question)

If you're going ... no, try not to cry. And if you do want to have any kind of incident, go outside (laughs), okay No, no, I'm talking if people have to move a lot or sneeze a lot or, you know, if you catch a cold. Then please be considerate of the other people. It must be totally silent in here, okay. And after we take your position you're not going to move, okay. So ...

By the way we'll start that in about two days too. So, you know, for a day and a half, you can move around a little bit and stuff like that. But after we close the place and you take your position you're not going to move after that, okay. And I won't go on...you can't meditate for more than about forty-five minutes, meaningfully, in that position. And I'm not going to do three hours of sitting, okay. 'Cos I don't think ... you just start spacing out, you know, it doesn't matter who you are. So, and in fact a mantra retreat, a lot of you will end up doing that, that's okay. You know what I mean? But I'm talking any major, like standing up and walking around, you know.

Mantra retreat is a little noisier, okay. 'Cos everybody'll be ... you'll be muttering under

your breath and other people can hear you and that's all right, okay. So this is not as ... it's not like ... where you're sitting one-pointed on a single ... you will be one-pointed.

The nice thing about mantra retreat is you're doing a mantra, you're moving, you're doing the gom, you're doing like visualisations. And it's not as hard on your body as other kinds of retreats, okay. So it's okay to be ... you know, you can shift your rosary to another hand, or you can move like that, or you know, that's okay.

Very good to keep a journal. You know, personally I found it very, very useful to keep a journal. You have never been quiet for ten days in a row. You've never had that much time to think. And it's very ... you come out with very beautiful dreams. Your dreams start to get very beautiful. Your whole inner consciousness wakens up. And towards the end you start having some really beautiful ideas about how you want to change your life, okay. So throw out the twenty-five percent of the ones that you're never going to do and then write down the other ones.

And I found that just before you come out of retreat we'll take ... we'll stop like half a day before and you examine your life, you see. Part of the point of a retreat is to plan for the four months before your next retreat, you know. What are you going to do differently? And what I mean is after ten days of meditating you can think straighter and you get these inspirations about your life. And sometimes they're very, very exciting and different and unexpected.

And personally, I found that if you go with it, it works out great. You know, like all the great changes in my life have occurred at the end of retreats. You know, like I did radical changes in my life, you know, got a different job, or moved, or, you know, just totally changed something in my life. They've all been after being in that consciousness for a while. And you can trust it, okay.

And then a week later you'll think you're crazy. But don't believe it, okay. You know, what I mean? Like you'll get some great ideas about what to do with your life towards the end.

It's normally more in a month's retreat but you might have some insights towards the end of this retreat. It normally takes about fourteen days to get into a retreat; deep one. So you're not going to make it in this retreat but you'll get close. And then, you know, think about it and keep a diary of what you're thinking and what thoughts you have and read them later. You'll come up with some nice ideas for your life, okay,

Food is ... don't overeat but eat enough. If you find yourself getting lungie; if your hand starts to shake, if you get a feeling like anxiety or fear in your chest, if you find it hard to breathe like you have a walnut in your chest or something like that, or you feel afraid or something like that or a little dizzy or something like that, then eat a little more, okay. If you find yourself getting sleepy or drowsy, then eat a little bit less. So the food is like a throttle for your wind and be careful, okay.

Sugar, coffee, tea, sweets - even in the form of fruits I think sometimes - can make you lungie. I think the list is on the next page. Soda is a disaster. Sweets and caffeine are a disaster. Carbohydrates, like eating too much bread or stuff like that makes me lungie. Now, each person gets lungie from different things and you have to study your body and see what it is. If you get a little lungie and a little high, that's okay. You want to be there but if it gets to be some kind of a pain in your chest, or some kind of feeling of fear or anxiety or something like that then you should turn up the food a little bit, okay. And make sure you sleep enough.

Protein's really good. Oily stuff is good. Cheese is usually good, okay. Anything with oil in it is ... will bring you down. It combats lung, okay. Nuts are really good if you're having lung problem, okay. Avoid juices that have a lot of sugar. There's a lot of juices on the market, if you read the label it says corn syrup, you know, ... those will hurt you, okay. Better not to drink that kind.

Fresh vegetables, especially green are very good, okay. Milk has different effects on different people. I think most people find that it causes phlegm or it hurts your meditation. So at a certain point in this ... if you drink a lot of milk normally you might want to start going to more water or stuff like that, okay. Normally it'll give you ... it's called yama in Tibetan, and it congestion up here in your sinuses and here and here, okay.

If you're in a long retreat you might want to switch to other forms of milk like rice milk or something like that. Soy milk is beans, beans are bad, okay. Beans give you wind, okay, in all sorts of places (laughs) so, you know, generally be easy on the beans and remember that soy milk is another form of beans. You have to study what you're eating, okay. But you also need the protein so you have to regulate it, okay. You have to be wise. Sometimes milk is quite good for people on retreat. It brings them down a little bit, okay.

Avoid garlic, onions, stuff like that, okay. It's good not to eat food which is too spicy, okay.

And then it's very good to have someone else cook for you and you don't even think about it.

You don't have to think about anything. This in the ancient texts on Vajrayogini is called (Tibetan) which means, this whole section is called ... in the text this is called (Tibetan) means take care of your eating, you know. Get your eating ... (Tibetan) means regulate it to the right level. You know, not too much, not too little, not too lungie, not too ... you know. And it's very delicate thing and everybody's body is different. So you have to study it.

If you can then cut back on your eating, okay. Until you get lungie and then eat a little more, okay.

We'll go about another five minutes and then we'll take a break.

If you can meditate in a place which has been blessed by holy beings and things like that. Rinpoche asked us to do a fire offering here to bless the place. It was like last ... I forget, spring. April. We had a huge battle with the local spirits, literally. But we did it. And Rinpoche was very happy and he said, okay, now the place is blessed. And we had a Heart Sutra retreat here. That's like a very powerful antidote to obstacles. So this place has been blessed pretty well.

I think that the previous owner who built the house was the founder of UNICEF. He saved ... I think estimates are he saved five million children or something like that. So I think there's really good karma in this house. So you should ... it's a good house to meditate in, it's a good place to meditate in .

Try to get all that junk ... I mean don't junk up the place. Keep it neat, okay. That's very important. Don't read the books in the library and stuff like that. Don't even look at them, okay. Don't read anything.

Generally when you're meditating it's good to unplug all the electricity and stuff like that. I think you'll find in the long run if you can, it's good to find a place that doesn't have electricity in it. It has some subtle effect on you. I'm not a new age person, but I definitely noticed it in different places. In Arizona we're planning not even to have solar electricity or anything. Just a natural light and things like that is better, okay.

Don't talk to anyone at all. Don't see anyone if possible okay. We're on page three.

Stay indoors the entire time. By the way, you can read this for the next day and a half, okay (laughter)

Learn how to do protection practices. We'll cover that tomorrow.

Number four: Take your time on your cushion and use this opportunity to get it right, okay. Like now you've got ten days to see what works for you. And experiment with it, you know. I found a place where, you know, I tried over and over different things. Try different variations. I think most people don't deal with their calves and ankles well enough. Like they get the butt right and then don't do the calves and ankles right. So work on that. Find something which is extremely comfortable and which spreads your weight over the whole platform of your body, because you'll find that one part of your butt starts to hurt or something like that. And it doesn't happen if you find a way to spread the weight over your whole body that's touching the ground, okay.

If you have trouble sitting, for god's sake sit in a chair. There's no point to being a hero.

There's absolutely no benefit to hurting yourself. You know, I've had students who tried to do certain practices and ended up crippling themselves. They use a cane now. This is ridiculous, okay. Don't do something that would hurt you. Just sit ... find a way to sit that's comfortable. If you have to stretch your legs out, you know, ask the ... beg the forgiveness of the holy images and stick your legs out (laughs) okay, you know, what I mean. But it's not at all the point to hurt yourself or, you know, ... if it hurts too much you're obviously going to concentrate on your body and stop thinking about your meditation. So if you have to sit in a chair, for goodness sake bring in a chair. If you have to stick your legs out, do so. But do it at the beginning of the session, okay.

(Student question)

Yeah

I think generally whatever medicine you're doing don't change it, okay. You'll just ... something weird might happen. You know, whatever you're normally taking, take it, okay.

Yeah

(Student question)

If your legs fall asleep, I mean, my experience quite frankly is it's a little disorienting and just let them fall asleep. It's very nice. It hurts for a while. No, then it sort of prickles for a while and then it's nothing. And once you get past the discomfort of it it's very good for meditation, you know, what I mean. I personally haven't found anything wrong with it. You just let it fall asleep, you know.

And I guess somebody'll tell you that it hurts your blood vessels or something, I don't know. But for me it's like a blessing 'cos then you can sit for another hour and nothing ... There's a little bit of discomfort as it's falling asleep and then after that you don't notice it anymore.

And it's very important not to ... there's a pain threshold you go through, you know. It hurts for a while and gets worse and worse. Refuse to move. Just refuse. Tell your body, you know, this time I'm serious, you know. And two minutes later it will stop hurting, you know, thirty seconds later. Always remember it's always thirty seconds after you decide to move that it would have stopped hurting. Seriously. You'll always find that, okay. So if it falls asleep, let it fall asleep, okay.

By the way, when you're doing a mantra retreat, by def ... you're always going like this a little bit and that's, okay. It's not like you have to go like this or ... And that's the nature of a mantra retreat. It's different from a sitting retreat.

When you're in a very long retreat I've found it ... sometimes you might want to lean

against something, although generally that's very bad, okay. I don't think this kind of retreat will hurt you that much, okay. But if you do a long retreat I found it useful to put a couch behind me and if I have to do a couple of extra hours of mantras, I might lean on it, okay.

Don't write letters or make phone calls. Make all your phone calls ... I don't know. You can't make phone calls, okay. Just forget it.

There's a certain schedule of the sessions that's in a real (Tibetan) and we'll do something very similar, okay. So (Tibetan) that's in the (Tibetan) it describes the sessions and we're going to do something similar. So normally you should have one session before sunrise, another session before noon, another session before sunset and another session after sunset.

Now if you're doing your retreat in the summer that can be a real pain. If you're doing retreat in the winter you don't get any time to meditate, you know. So you have to kind of judge that but we'll follow this schedule here.

If you're in a long retreat it's good to do some kind of yoga or something like that. If you're in a short retreat I think some kind of quiet yoga or something like that is okay, all right. Or walking or stretching or something like that is fine, during the rest times

Many short sessions are better than long ones. The early Sakyas who first started the Vajrayogini lineage, brought it to Tibet, had a custom of twelve minute meditation sessions. Very intense twelve minute meditation sessions, stuff like that. So don't feel like you have to sit for an hour and a half. It's better to have short ones frequent, frequent short ones at the beginning, okay.

Once you get into posture stop moving. Learn what you're going to do before you start, okay.

Okay, we're going to spend some time on that, on the practice. So you're going to get a specific practice and you're going to learn it.

Each one of you will get a book like this. This is Khen Rinpoche's presentation of this meditation. He taught it twenty years ago, twenty-five year ago and we put his lecture into a book. So it's the first half of this book is how to do this meditation. I'd like everybody to get it tonight.

(Student question)

You got it already. Go ahead and read that for two days okay. And fine ... beautiful. Read it as many times as you can. And especially the meditation about the nectar coming in and out 'cos that'll be a big part of the meditation, so ... It's a very, very fine commentary that Khen Rinpoche gave on this practice, okay. So read that.

When you do long retreats it's good to clear up your life before, like any fights you're having with somebody, resolve them. You know, take care of your teeth; that's important. I'm just talking long retreats now. If you're going to do a six month retreat or something like that. Take care of your physical health before like whatever ... you know, if you have a tooth problem or something like that. I had students who had wisdom tooth problems. You know, schedule like two months before you go on retreat have them ripped out, you know, like that. Take care of all that stuff before you do a long retreat.

This retreat is sort of a lead up to the three-year retreat. We're going in January to try and negotiate with these people who own the property. If we can get a big enough piece of property, then while some people are in three-year retreat, I can see other people doing shorter retreats like a year or six months or three months or one month or two weeks. And I had sort of an idea for time sharing, like the apartments in Mexico that people do. And people could ... if we get the property that we're looking at then people could start building smaller retreat places a little bit farther away from the one in which the three-year retreat people will be. And then I could see people sharing them for, time sharing them or something like that. Somebody could go out for a month and then somebody else could go out for a month or something like that. And I think that would be really, really cool okay.

So the idea, part of the idea of this is to get you in the mood for starting to do longer retreats.

I see Godstow personally as a place for mainly weekend or ten-day retreats but ... for stressed out people in New York City and I think it will develop into that very sweetly, you know. I think it will become a real outlet for people to do short term retreats from New York City. To have a hundred acres within two hours of New York City is impossible. And we have it. So I'd like to develop this place more like that. And then long term retreats like a month to three-years I'd like to maybe concentrate on in Arizona because I think it would be more quiet, much more wild, which is sort of the way it's supposed to be.

And there are people here who are training for their three-year retreat. They'll be staying downstairs. Please don't come downstairs. Please don't knock on the door. They'll be going outside to do special practices. If you're working here and if you are going outside ... I don't know if you're cooks or something like that, please don't go past the lakes, okay. Like try to stay this side of the lakes, okay.

(Student question)

That's okay. Until that day. Until Tuesday.

(Student question)

Yeah (Tibetan) is okay outside. But after a certain point you guys won't be going. Most of

you won't be going outside of the house, okay. But keep that area ... that area's very tight. That area has to be very tight, so please don't try to go downstairs or bang on the door, okay.

If you go crazy, go that way (laughter) okay, all right.

It's very good to do some kind of great virtue before you go into retreat, okay. So in general before you do a (Tibetan) or something like that, do like a month before start planning some extraordinary good deed that you can do to help other people or something very special, you know. Teach a bunch of courses or get a bunch of books finished or do something at Sera Mey to help the monks or things like that. Do some hospice work specially or something like that. Do some kind of big virtue just before that. That's very powerful.

Please don't try to do other practices while you're doing this. I mean, do your required practices by yourself, on your own time, during the breaks, okay. But please don't try to do anything else here, okay. I mean, don't take this time during the next ten days to try to do anything else, okay. I know some of you brought some work from your office, stuff like that. Just forget it, okay. Don't do anything else, all right. Work on this practice and just be aware that you're not going to be doing anything else, okay.

We'll talk about doing offerings and it's very important that you do the offerings very well every day while you're in retreat.

In addition to not talking, try not to ... you know, just try not to relate to other people. There's these rules in other retreat centres, you can't look at anybody or stuff like that. I don't mean like that, but don't, you know, try not to communicate even non-verbally, okay. You're here by yourself. I mean, ideally you would be here by yourself. We don't have forty rooms here but try not to communicate with other people.

Try to keep your whole mind here. Don't do any kind of sexual activity at all, okay. That's important. And it keeps your energy very strong, okay.

Try not to eat too much. There's a temptation here 'cos the cooks are so good. And you can ruin your retreat that way.

I think lastly the best way to ruin a retreat ... you'll get onto some kind of thing about somebody you don't like, you know. Like that's a demon, okay. I've had it happen many times so I'm just telling you. All your emotions become more intense, so any problem you're having with somebody, you'll start having fantasies about it, you know. You'll start deciding how much you hate them and how bad they hurt you and how you're going to get them when you get out and stuff like that. Just forget it. That's a demon and that's not true.

And, you see, whatever kind of state of mind you go in with everything gets enhanced.

The bad side gets enhanced and the good side gets enhanced. So try to ride with the good side, okay. Like you'll have more intense feelings about the people you love and you'll have more intense feelings about people you don't like. If you want to ruin two or three days of meditation start thinking about someone you don't like, you know. It ruins it. It's called (Tibetan). It's in Nagarjuna's list of five meditation problems. And it will ruin your meditation immediately, so just forget it. Try to ride with the good side, okay, although it'll be difficult, like that.

So take now a ten minute break and then we'll do a short meditation. Then I want you to rest tonight nicely and that'll be good for tomorrow, okay. Take a short break.

(Student question)

We'll talk about it.

(Student question)

Huh? We'll talk about it.

(Student question)

Couple of other things. Just a few short things. Somebody (laughs), people ask me questions. Should you keep doing your book? Yes (laughs). If you don't say anything or do anything will you still have something to write? (Laughter) Oh, a lot (laughs). You'll think all these horrible thoughts. Don't be disturbed. In meditation the bad parts get intense and the good parts get intense. So don't be disturbed, you know. You start thinking about murdering your mother or something, don't worry about it. Just don't do it afterwards, okay. But it's very common and everything gets more intense. So don't worry about that, all right.

Somebody told me, asked me, what did they ask me? If you get wind does it effect your bowel movements? (Laughs) (laughter) Yeah. Your pee pee changes, and actually the way Tibetan doctors ... I translated for Yeshe Dhonden for a while and Tenzin Chudak, both the Dalai Lama's doctors. It gets more bubbly and frothy and that's one of the indications. It starts to get very, very light and it bubbles like beer or something like that, okay. If you sit for a long time you'll get constipated, okay. So don't worry about that. If you find it hard to poo poo that's normal. If it comes out like rocks and it never did before like that, don't worry about it, it's normal. It's a little uncomfortable. It doesn't ... it isn't any problem, okay, like that. It's good to know these things, all right.

What were some other questions? I've forgotten. That's about it. Okay. Huh? No, okay.

(Student question)

You mean have trouble breathing?

(Student question)

There's two kinds of not breathing. I mean, one is a ... if your breathing gets really good; if the out-breath and the in-breath start to equalise, heartbeats and stuff like that, that's very good. If you start hearing your heart beat and it gets really loud that's good, although it probably won't happen so much in a mantra retreat.

It's important during a mantra retreat ... when you're doing a mantra retreat you're going om ah ah (sucks in breath) om ah ah ah (sucks in breath) om ah ah ... When you keep sucking your breath like that it's more likely to get some wind, okay. So you have to be careful to get all the air out. At the end of the mantra you know, you go (Tibetan) and get all the air out, and make sure the air is out. And then try not to suck it in too fast, 'cos if you keep going (sucks in breath) you know, it'll build up wind.

Is wind something that happens in your lungs? No. It's a spiritual wind that's connected to the physical wind. They're not the same thing at all. So if your spiritual winds get disturbed, your physical winds start to get disturbed. And if your physical winds are disturbed your spiritual winds start to get disturbed. So they're connected to each other but they're not the same thing. But one can give you the idea about how the other is doing. If your pee pee gets a lot of wind in it, if you fart a lot- ... that's another thing I forgot to tell you, okay. That's normal, okay, to have gas. It's a sign that you're building up a little wind, okay. That's okay. A little bit further than that it starts to hurt your chest and then you should try to take it more easy, like rest longer, eat a little bit more food. If it gets to be a pain in your chest then actually skip a session or two. It's okay, all right.

I wanted to just to welcome all the people who came, who travelled here. There's Ian and Giselle, you want to ... We met them in Australia. We had a really good time with them. They came to the Diamond Cutter then they went back home. They have a centre and they did the Diamond Cutter there and it was really cool. And we had a really good time with them. They flew in this morning at 6.00am, so they're going to be really good tomorrow (laughter).

SIDE B

Ali ... where's? Came from Italy. She's in the masters program there, very good seven years program for Buddhism there.

Debbie Bye came from Australia. We met her in Melbourne and she came to the Diamond

Cutter there and she's old-time Dharma student from Melbourne. Helped start the centre there.

Petra and Kelly. Petra helps run the FPMT organisation, like a hundred Dharma centres, thousands of students, and a good disciple and a good attendant to Lama Zopa. And Kelly's also helped out a lot in those centres. I forgot what you're doing now, like forest (laughter), I think a forest ranger or something like that, okay.

-?- came here from Canada. Hi. Welcome. And Dito and Axel have been around for a while. They came in from Germany and they're going to be around for a while helping. We stole Axel from Ford Corporation in Germany. So that's all.

Any other ... Did anyone have any more questions and by the way, tomorrow, anybody who wants to have a talk before we stop talking ... private talk ... and all of those people that I promised a private talk tonight. We'll start them at eleven o'clock tomorrow, okay. So talk to Ora. We can do private talks from let's say like eleven to one I think and then I'll do my cheerios in there somewhere, okay. And then if it doesn't finish we'll do more in the afternoon, okay. But I ... after Monday we won't do any. I won't be talking either, okay. So try to think of whatever you can, all right.

So I'd like to ... tonight we'll do a short meditation, and ... Yeah?

(Student question)

Probably, okay.

We'll just do a classic warm up.

You're not getting sleepy there (laughter). We'll do like a classic warm up. I'm not going to be very long 'cos I know people traveled today and... What we'll be doing during the retreat is Ganden Hla Gyema, a very, very powerful guru yoga text practice centred on lama, on your lama in the form of Je Tsongkapa, okay. And we'll be doing the preliminaries of that now.

The normal preliminaries and then a very short Lam Rim Namdok okay, Guru yoga. It is the most famous one for our lineage, okay. There's even special books written about it. Chrissie just got finished ... we got ... they were shipped to us on disc from Sera Mey. It's like two hundred commentaries on this by the great lamas of our lineage and it's incredible. So it's a very important practice for our lineage and it's good that you have it. In the middle of it there's a non-secret mantra of Je Tsongkapa, and that's what we'll be reciting here during the next ten days.

So now we'll just do the preliminaries and a brief visualisation and then it'll get deeper and deeper as we go.

End of recording

**Meditation Module**  
**Je Tsongkhapa Mantra**  
**Class One**  
**RAW TRANSCRIPT**

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Geshe Michael Roach  
Je Tsongkapa Mantra  
Godstow Retreat Center  
26/12/98 – 3/1/99

Class 2

Mandala  
Refuge

Well, today we'll go over, we'll start to go over the practice that we're doing, okay. It's very important to get it straight what you're going to do during a retreat. I think not many westerners get to do a retreat and then when they start a retreat they don't know what to do. Or they just make up something as they go or something like that. They don't get really good instructions. Then you don't get as much benefit out of it. I think you know lots of people who have done retreats like that.

So we're going over the practice that we're going to be doing, okay, and the mantra we're going to be doing.

The practice is called Ganden Hlagyama. Let me see ... do we have those copies? Everybody had the copy? The title is Lama Neljor.

Say Lama Neljoe Ganden Hlagyama.

Lama means lama, okay [laughs]. Literally lama means 'higher', like lama mepa means 'no higher'. Neljor means, ... Oh, and lama is the translation of the Sanskrit word guru. And I like the word guru. Guru is ... comes from a root called {gu} and there's a process called (verdi) which means the 'ew' changes to 'our' so it becomes 'grou'. And then when it reaches the western languages u changes to v, so the word guru is the root of the word gravity or grave, meaning serious or heavy and in Sanskrit it means heavy in both senses, like, not a light-weight but a heavy-weight, okay. So the word guru directly means like some kind of very heavy being, or something like that. Translated in Tibetan they used the word for a very high being, okay. So that's lama.

A lama is about as necessary for this as a piano teacher is for learning piano. I really like that example nowadays. To become almost a concert pianist, to think that you can do it on your own is about the same as thinking you could do a practice like this without some instruction or a lama or something like that. It's just ... it's not very likely. I suppose it's possible some Mozart comes along and ... but you know, very unlikely, okay.

Ganden is the name of a Buddha paradise. It's like a staging ground for Buddhas who come to this world, all right. And this Buddha, Shakyamuni, that came here was there

before, and then when he left he appointed a ... what do you call it, like a regent or someone to take care of it while he was gone. And that's Maitreya.

So you see in the thangka ... that's a thangka of this practice, by the way. And you see up above is Ganden paradise and then Maitreya's ... I think, I can't see it very well, but Maitreya's in the palace there. And this ... you're inviting Je Tsongkapa and his two disciples to come from the heart of Maitreya here. So Maitreya's like holding that place and then when Maitreya's time comes he'll be coming from Ganden paradise.

There's another ganden which is in this world, in samsara, in the desire realm and that's another story. I'm sorry, outside the form realm, anyway in samsara. And there's a ... so you might get confused. In the Abhidharma you might see a thing called ganden but it's a different one. This one, the paradise one which is enlightened is called the ganden {Tibetan}.

Hlagyama ... {hla} in this case, {hla} can mean a lot of things; {hla} can mean worldly spirit, like a powerful worldly spirit who is still suffering. And you can get born there if you do certain kinds of spaced out meditations, but don't hurt anybody. Those are called hlas. And then {hla} can mean an enlightened being. So {hla} has two totally different meanings. I use the word angel for the one and worldly deity or something for the other; worldly god or something like that. I don't like the word deity so much myself personally because it always refers in English to the supreme being and I have a problem with that. A lot of people don't like 'angel' because they see, you know, little cupids and stuff like that. But I don't think we have another word. Maybe we'll find another word or something.

{Gyama}; {gya} means a hundred and all the commentaries are careful to say it's just a word for a lot. So you could translate it as a zillion or million or thousand or something. You need to find a word in English that gives you the meaning of a lot. I don't think a hundred does it. People have used mass or things like that. That's okay. Okay, or host, but host to me is again a Christian word for the bread and the wine and all that, so I ... and hostess on an aeroplane, okay.

And this is how the ... So it's called Ganden Hlagyama. The {ma} is a feminine ending that's used to name a book. Like they'll take the first line or the first few words and then they'll call it {ma}. Like {Tibetan} and the feminine ending makes it a noun. Like the prayer of the Ganden Hlagyama, 'cos Ganden Hlagyama is the first few syllables of the prayer. And then the feminine is important because it means wisdom. Like lam rim chenmo has a feminine ending on it, okay. Heart Sutra has a feminine ending on it that can never be translated into English very well; bhagavati is part of its name. Okay, all right.

{Ganden hla-gyay gungyi tukka ne}, means "from the heart of the protector or the master of ganden", 'tushita' in Sanskrit. 'Tush' in Sanskrit has a totally different meaning. It

means to enjoy yourself, okay [laughter], 'tush', 'tosh' these are all roots that mean to have a good time. {Ganden}; {ga} means "pleasure or happiness", all right.

So out of the heart of the main angel or holy being in tushita; {rabkar shosar pungdray chunzin tser}. {Rabkar} means "very, very white"; {shosar} means "like fresh curds". And I like to translate it as pure white snow because you don't go to a model in America who's got nice white skin and say your skin reminds me of Danene yoghurt, you know, [laughs]. You know what I mean. That's not the word ... you have to find a word in your own language which expresses purity and whiteness, okay. But the idea is like what we think of when we think of snow, okay.

{Pungdray}; {pung} is the verb for "piling up", like {pungpo} means "the five skandhas or the five heaps".

{Pungdray chunzin tser}; {chunzin} means "water-holder", which means the poeticism for clouds; {tser} means "on top of them". So you see a cloud coming out of Maitreya's heart and then you see Je Tsongkapa and his two ... they're called his two spiritual sons, okay.

{Chu-kyi gyalpo kun-kyen losang drak}; {chu-kyi gyalpo} means lord of the ... "King of the Dharma". {Kun-kyen} means "omniscient"; Losang Drakpa is the name that Je Tsongkapa was given when he was made a novice monk by one of the Kamarpas. He was actually ordained by one of the heads of the Kagyu sect. And he trained very heavily in the Kagyu teachings as a child. He started his career at three or something like that. We're translating his biography now, it's very beautiful. He trained in many like -?- Kagyu lineage which would be the practices of Naropa and things like that. He had already mastered them by the time he was fifteen, okay, like that.

{Sedang chepa nendir sheksu sol}; {sedang chepa} means "along with your spiritual sons", meaning on his left from our point of view, on that side, is Gyeltseb Je. Gyeltseb Je was one of his main disciples, first holder of his throne after he passed. "Gyaltseb" means "a regent, he who holds the throne"; {sab} means "like a substitute"; {gyal} means "king". So Gyaltseb. On Je Tsongkapa's own right side. It's always on Je Tsongkapa's own right side. And when you read ... if you ever read books about Tibetan art in Tibetan, it's all from the point of view of the figure himself. So when they say on Je Tsongkapa's right, they're talking about on our left. So if he stretched out his right hand he would touch Gyaltseb Je. That's his right hand man, okay. And then on his left is Kedrup Je.

Gyaltseb Je mostly ... most famous I think in Tibetan monasteries nowadays for his explanation of the Bodhisattvacharyavattara which you studied. And you studied his commentary. And then for his explanation of logic. And then Kedrup Je on the left, very famous for his explanations of emptiness and for his explanations of tantra, although they covered all of the subjects. So when you do that prayer {Tibetan} there's a prayer that you do, which I'll teach you sometime {Tibetan}. So that's a prayer that reflects their

specialities. Meaning Gyaltseb Je's a master of logic and Kedrup Je is sort of a tantric master. Kedrup Je was the second holder of his throne and was younger than the other two.

That's the first ... so what's happening in the first line, and this is what your visualisations going to start. You know, you're going to sit down, you're going to go ... you're going to do your ... you always do your other preliminaries first, okay. So there's the {Tibetan} which is the six preliminary practices and then there's the {Tibetan} which is the seven-part practice, okay.

This book, Ganden Hlgyama, is the ultimate {Tibetan} . This is what the Gelukpas use for seven limb puja they call it sometimes or something like that. And 'limb' is a bad translation of part, okay, seven part puja or something like that. It's not like a tree with limbs or anything like that. It just means seven parts.

You do your other {Tibetan} first; you clean up your environment, you do your altar, you do your prostrations, you fix your seat, you get your posture right. Like all that comes before. Then you start counting your breaths all right. So that's a typical warm up. And that {Tibetan} has been since the beginning of Buddhism. In the Kangyur you can find books on the six practices taught by Lord Buddha.

So you go through those preliminaries first. You clean up your room, you get your seat ready, you do your prostrations, do your altar just before that. And then you do your offerings. And then you sit down and you start your breath, okay, start your breath meditation.

Again, breath meditation has become ... it was a means and not a goal. And I think in some traditions it seems to have become a goal in itself. It's taught in the Abhidharma by Vasubandhu, Master Vasubandhu just for the purposes of calming your mind down and not as a practice to spend your whole life on or something like that, because it doesn't have any virtuous content per se. So there's a point where you're first learning to meditate where you learn to breathe as a preliminary to meditation. Then there's a point in tantra, a million years later, where breath again becomes important for a different reason. And that's a whole another story. That's a whole practice of working on your channels with your breath process. And that's something you shouldn't do until you've been well trained in it by a good lama, okay. People tried to do it from reading books and they actually went crazy. It's dumb. And you hurt yourself. You know, just ... you can learn to do it from a good lama in a nice way. And it's like learning piano. That's like trying to shoot a gun without ever having seen one, you know what I mean. It's something you shouldn't try until someone teaches you how to do it.

Okay that's ... So what does it mean, you know? There's a very beautiful section in Muchen Dharmabhadra's collected works. We took this book, there were questions and

answers that his students gave him. And it was like two hundred and fifty questions and we split them all up so we had to read them all one by one to catalogue them in the computer the right way, 'cos you can't put Abhidharma mixed up with tantra and stuff like that. So we cut them out one by one, we read them one by one. And there's this question somebody asks him. What's the point of trying to visualise deities coming from some place, you know. How many miles away is ganden? And, you know, how long does it take them to get here? And how do they know you want them here? And like that.

And then he says, you know, it's more or less just for people to feel comfortable because it's not like that at all. It's not like they're located somewhere in space, you know, up towards Pluto or something, and then you ask them to come and then Maitreya's heart has to open and then they come out on these clouds; he says it's not like that.

And if you've studied Madhyamika, you've studied emptiness, I think you can and you should think of it as a different way. If you're a Tibetan yak herder, although we met some pretty amazing ones in Mongolia, you know, it's okay to think that he's living somewhere in the sky and this cloud comes down and like that. And that's okay to visualise it that way. But as you do it try to appreciate what's really going on. I mean, where is Tushita and where are the hot hells? They are right here, you know. And if your karma was ... you know now because of the pen and the water chunpa, the water thing, the glass of water, right? This could just as well be a hot hell. This could just as well be a paradise. And due to our own mistakes we are seeing it as samsara. This room right here we are seeing as samsara. Due to our own lack of knowledge we are forced to see this place as a lousy realm where nothing works.

This is actually a defective realm, it should have been recalled, you know [laughs] you know. It doesn't work, nothing works here, you know what I mean, you can try really hard. It won't work, you know. I mean, you can try external things, get more exercise, get more sleep, eat well, you know, be nice, whatever. It won't work. It still doesn't work, you know. Nothing will work 'cos your body will still get old and die. It's a realm that's broken. And it doesn't work right. It can't work right.

You have to destroy it or you have to move out of it by means of wisdom. By means of keeping your vows and understanding it and then it just transforms. Does it transform all in one day? No. If you keep your vows really well and if emptiness is true, which it is, then it slowly starts to change and things get better and better. And maybe you don't even notice it 'cos you're living in it, you see what I mean. You don't remember how bad it was three years ago or something like that. Or you don't remember how hopeless it was three years ago because now this is normal for you. And then it gets better and better and better and then finally you start seeing maybe one deity and then, you know, two and then four, you know, and then something else changes and things happen like ... and then you're in ganden if that keeps up.

So you have to ... imagining a being coming from ganden or tushita and having it really happen, are very close. Having the karma to hear someone talking about ganden and then to try to visualise somebody coming from ganden, which could happen sitting next to you. The person next to you could be coming out of ganden, see what I mean. Imagining it and then having it happen are very close to each other. And they assist each other, you see what I mean. Like thinking about it over and over again, pretending over and over again that it's happening creates the karma to make it happen. It's very interesting. This is {Tibetan} that is the practice of {Tibetan}; {Tibetan} nickname is {Tibetan}, means the yoga of make believe. The yoga of imagining, imagination, fantasising. So by fantasising about it over and over again, that creates the karma to make it happen. Very interesting. So it's not just some foolish exercise to try to imagine Maitreya. Try to imagine Maitreya, okay.

So when you start the practice, every session work very hard on imagining this incredibly beautiful bodhisattva, you know; long beautiful black hair, beautiful face, sixteen year old body, okay, and you know, dressed in a loin cloth, silk-like top and jewels all over the place and still looking simple. Still looking like not ... doesn't look like the Rockettes or something [laughs] you know what I mean. Like, still looking very natural. Like very unassuming, very modest, like His Holiness. Imagine His Holiness dressed up like that, sixteen years old. And just totally blissed out.

And work very hard on imagining their mind state. Try to imagine what it would be like to be sitting next to this person, you know. They're just like, extraordinary. They don't have any hang ups at all. They don't have any jealousy. They don't know what the word jealousy means. If you said you had a problem with jealousy they'd say ... We translated it for CNN television, they threw questions at His Holiness to try to trip Him up. They said, 'We saw you at a Paris fashion show', and He said, 'Yes.' And they said, 'What did you think when those girls were walking down the runway?' And He says, 'I don't know, I think the fashion industry's okay but all that expense, maybe they could use the money for something else,' you know. He didn't even catch the question. You know what I mean. You know, he didn't ... it went over His head. He thought they were talking about the fashion industry or having shows or something like that. He didn't even get the, 'Did you have desire for this lady' or something. He didn't even understand the question, you know. And if you met Maitreya and you asked what's jealousy, he'd just ... like he wouldn't ... try to imagine a person like that. Try to imagine sitting next to a person like that.

And so you picture this Being. And go through the whole process. It's not dumb, okay. You can picture them in the sky, it's okay. Up in the sky somewhere and there's Tushita heaven and there's this Being there in this beautiful, beautiful palace. Crystal palace. And supposedly every part of that is like, if you walk on the ground it feels like rubber or something. It's made of lapis, pure lapis, but your karma is that lapis is soft and not like a rock, you know. But it has all the other qualities of lapis. And then, you know, there's this holy being, beautiful holy being there and out of this being's heart comes Je Tsongkapa and

his two students, okay. So imagine it, okay.

And then try to get Je Tsongkapa's body right. And you can read the commentary by Khen Rinpoche. They make him really sweet, it's like pictures of Jesus, okay. We have real pictures of Je Tsongkapa. It's on the cover of that ... as you walk in from the garage there's one. I don't know if we have one here. Oh, yeah. That's a real ... pretty much a real likeness. That was made during his lifetime. It was destroyed in about 1960. The only likeness of Je Tsongkapa. He had a big nose. He was called {Tibetan}. His enemies called him 'big nose from the east'. And I think he was short and he had big ears. Those ears are a little I think exaggerated because Buddhas are supposed to have big ears. But he was not a wimpy person. I mean, he didn't look like that frankly. He has a very strong face and a very strong character, like very sort of beautiful eyes, you know, like doe eyes. And then very strong nose and very strong face and powerful, very powerful.

Second verse: So you're inviting them to come and that's all and don't think ... and try to imagine it very well. It has a ... it leaves a karmic bakchak in your mind and then some day you'll meet them, okay.

The second verse is: {Dun-gyi namkar sertri penday teng}.

You imagine a throne. I don't see ... are there lions under there? I don't know. I always used to wonder what a lion throne was, you know, like ... It's a big disc held on the backs of four lions, okay. So it's supported on their backs and they're sitting there holding it up.

Okay. {Sertri} means "imagine it like jewels, and everything like that, beautiful". {Pen}, {pema} means "lotus", so there's this huge flower on top ... that is the throne ... the platform of the throne. And then {dawa}, is a huge moon. Like you take the moon out of the sky and lay it down, and it's soft to sit on, okay, like that.

Then on top of that, {jetsun lama gyepay dzumkar chen}. The important point here is that Je Tsongkapa is very pleased to come, very, very happy. You asked, he came. And the minute you ask mentally they come, okay. You can't see them right away, but you have to believe they came, okay. And you have to believe they are very happy to be with you.

{daklo denpay sunam shingchok tu,  
tenpa gyechir kalgyar shuksu sol.}

It says please stay with me for a hundred eons, meaning billion years, okay. Somebody should have translated it as billion years or something. {Tenpa gyechir} means "to keep the teaching going in this planet", and {sunam shing chik} means "to get enlightened you have to have an object of heavy karma". You have to have someone to relate to who is very heavy karma. Like if you're nice to a dog for a hundred years or you're nice to you lama it's a big difference. It's not that dogs are less valuable than lamas but from your

point of view you can collect a lot more karma than that.

I was looking at all the westerners who've done really well I think , like I was thinking about Mathieu Ricard. I don't know if you know him, he's a Kagyu monk but he served his lama, unbelievable, like fifteen years. And then when his lama passed away he wrote out his whole collected works. He spent years, fifteen volumes and published them, you know. So now he's walking around France. Every time the Dalai Lama comes he gets to translate for Him. He just put out a book, discussions with his father who's a famous philosopher in France. It hits the number one thing, best seller in France like in a few weeks, you know.

Or the lady in Australia who did some long retreats, and was very devoted to her lama. And then she wrote this little book and it just suddenly hit the charts in Australia. And then you see these people like who ... Jeffrey Hopkins served his lama very well; Robert Thurman. People ... I don't know, there's some kind of interaction happening there. You know what I mean. You see the people who are really successful, seem to be successful in their practice and it seems to always relate to having spent years and years serving some lama somewhere. There seems to be an obvious connection between that. It's heavy karma to find a lama and serve a lama.

This, by the way, is asking them to stay. When we do our normal warm up it's after ... it's at the end of the ... right after asking for teaching. In this particular version, it's done here because it's natural, you're asking them to come and then you're asking them to stay.

The commentaries say you can also think of your Dharma friends there. You know, people around you who effect you well, okay.

The next verse is a praise of Je Tsongkapa and the prostration, okay, the part where we do the prostration. When we do our warm up, first you invite the lama and then I ask you to think of some kind of great qualities of the lama that you would like to have or something like that, okay. If you don't see so many great qualities then try to imagine some, okay.

And in this verse they're covering Je Tsongkapa's body, speech and mind; qualities of physical activities, verbal activities , mental activities. And then they're hiding Je Tsongkapa's name in here, all right.

{Shejay kyunkun jelway lodru tuk}. {Shejay kyun kun} means "all knowable things." {Jelway} is a very unusual word meaning to weigh or to judge. Here it means your mind has the capacity to meet them. There's a {jel} with a different spelling that means to meet, but anyway your mind has the ability to understand all ... every knowable thing. Meaning you're omniscient.

{Lodru tuk} means "that's your state of wisdom and that describes your mind"; {tuk}

means “mind”. These are sometimes called the three diamonds; {kusum tuk} - body, speech, mind - sometimes the three secrets {Tibetan}, okay. {Lodru tuk}, so that’s your ... your mind knows all things.

{Kelsang naway gyengyur lekshe sung}. {Kelsang} means - common Tibetan name, {Kelsang} - and it means people who have the right virtue, okay. So like, Je Tsongkapa could come into this room right now and start delivering a lecture and some people would be bored, some people would be thinking about something else, some people would be very excited about it; and that’s {Kelsang}. {Kelsang} means you have the virtue to hear what’s going on. You know, you could go into a room and explain tantra and then the people who don’t have {Kelsang} will go out and just practice something less than that. You know what I mean. It depends on your gelwa, so {Kelsang} means ... gelwa, means past virtue, imprints from your past virtues, okay.

So, {kelsang naway gyengur}; {gyengur} means ... what do you call them? Earrings, “diamond earrings”. So they’re talking about Je Tsongkapa’s words are like diamond earrings if you have {kel}. Like they make you really foxy. Meaning you understand them, you get them and then you get to wear them around. Meaning you get to do something with them, okay.

{Lekshe sung}, means “the good thing’s you’ve said”. In there is hidden the word sang, {kelsang}. So, so far you’ve got two parts of Je Tsongkapa’s ordination name, {losang}; {sumatti} in Sanskrit, good mind, holy mind, pure mind.. That’s why so many people are named Lobsang, okay. It comes from Je Tsongkapa’s name. It’s very auspicious to name somebody from the name of Je Tsongkapa. That’s why so many people who are in the Gelukpa lineage are called Lobsang, okay.

{Drakpay pelgyi hlammer dzepay ku}; {drakpay pelgyi}, means “when people see your body and they see how you act with it”. Like when His Holiness ... just the way His Holiness walks around. When you meet His Holiness He looks like He’s twelve feet tall, you know. That’s a quality of His karma. And then ... He just moves through a crowd and people are looking at Him, and people can’t stop looking at Him. And that’s called {drakpay pel}.

{Drakpa} means ... kirti in Sanskrit means like Dharmakirti or Chandrakirti, means “fame or well known” or something like that. So that’s the second part of Je Tsongkapa’s ordination name; Lobsang Drakpa.

{Hlammer} means like His Holiness. {Hlammer} means like “blazing” or something like that, but you ... when He walks through a crowd it is obvious who He is or where He is, it’s like metaphorically He’s blazing or shining.

{Tongtu drenpe dunden la chaktsel}; {tongtu dren}, means just to look at you, like if you

see His Holiness in a crowd, if you look ... you know, you can never get close to Him, right and you're like ... and you catch sight of Him, it's extremely good karma. Like suddenly all these bakchaks are put in your mind, okay. Then you go to a lecture and you hear Him say a few things or if you meet Him and you hear Him say a few sentences, that's a big {bakchak}. And then {drenpa} means, if you sit at home on your couch and think about the time you met Him and what He looked like or what He said, that's called {drenpa}.

So all of those are good karma for you. Very heavy good karma. Just to catch sight of this person or just to catch a few words or just to think of them at home, is very powerful good karma, okay. So I bow down to you. That's {chaktsel}, that's the bow down part of the preliminaries, okay.

The next verse is offerings, okay. And here you go through the classic offerings that we put forth in the bowls, okay. And here you can learn it, all right. And you should do it every morning. It's important to do it every morning.

{Yi-ong}, means "beautiful"; {chuyan natsok}, that's a code word for ... {chuyun} means "holy water", like beautiful holy sacred water, okay. And that represents the first two bowls, okay. So the first two bowls are ... the first bowl would be for washing feet, washing the feet of the holy being, okay. When you set out the water bowls, okay. And the images that they are a great king. It's like in the Middle East or in India that the first thing they do when they come to your home is you wash their feet and then offer them something to drink, okay. So those are called {chuyan}; the first two bowls are called water, holy water.

{Metog} is in the next bowl. You put some rice and then you put some flowers, okay.

{Tishim dukpu} {Tishim dukpu} means "incense". It's easy to remember that one because it should be in the middle, it should be the fourth one, the fourth bowl and two sticks of incense coming out, okay.

{Dukpu nangsels}; {nangsels} means "a lamp", like a beautiful lamp. And then you put in the next bowl, the fifth bowl, you put some kind of light.

{Drichab} means "perfumed water that you're smearing on their body". Like ointment or something like that. So if you ... it's like ...

I'm sorry, {argum} is "drinking water" is the first one, okay. {Parping} is "washing their feet". {Pupe} is "flowers"; {dupe} is "incense"; {tipe} is "a lamp"; {gande} is the "perfumed water" and then {nude} is {lavidya} means "eating something", offer them something to eat.

Here they don't have the food they just say {sok} which means "and so on" because he ran out of syllables.

Who wrote this? There's a big debate about it. People say it's by Je Tsongkapa. It's obviously not by Je Tsongkapa because he wouldn't write a book, you know, in praise of himself, or something like that. It's very frustrating 'cos we needed to catalogue it in our database. And we were embarrassed that we didn't know who wrote it. And different people have different theories, you know. There's an idea about who wrote it down the first time but then we finally went to the world's greatest textual scholar, Jean Smith. It was embarrassing 'cos he's a Sakya and we're Gelukpas, you know and [laughs, laughter] and who wrote that? He says, 'Don't ask me. You're getting into very heavy stuff. Don't ask me that question. That's a long ...' It's like you can't ask me that question, meaning, you know, it's like some incredible source of this. Very interesting. It's like the most common Gelukpa prayer and we don't really know who wrote it, okay. I mean, there's different stories about it, okay. Maybe it came from somewhere else I think is the point.

{Ngusham yitrul}. {Ngusham yitrul} means "things really set out"; offerings that you've set out. And {yitrul} means "anything you can imagine", that's where you fill up the sky with flowers and stuff like that, which would be Samantabhadra's offering, okay.

{Chutrin} means "clouds of offerings". I mean, you can cover the whole sky at this point with offerings.

{Gyatso di sunam shingchok kyela chupar bol}; so then you do offerings to them.

{Shingchok} means ... {shing} means "a field". And the point is if you plant your karmic seeds in them you get more return for your money, return on investment. People have mistranslated {shing}, high-tone {shing}, as "tree". Offering tree and stuff like that, which is a boo-boo, okay.

Next verse. And by the way, we'll do the verses before each session. There's a custom to rush through this thing in ten seconds and then go on to your next thing as fast as you can recite it. {Tibetan} like that ... we'll try to stop after each verse and visualise it, okay.

{Gangshik tokme dune sakpa yi}; means "whatever bad karmas I've collected from the beginning of time, beginningless time", {tokme dune}. This is the {tokme} in Asanga, meaning no beginning. {Asan} means untouchable, meaning there is no beginning. Your mind has no beginning. So you've been collecting bad deeds, you know. You have imprints from the past of ignorance that ultimately cause you to do bad deeds. And those were caused by imprints before that, and those were caused by imprints before that and there's no beginning. So, a lot of bad karma in your pocket.

We've talked about it in the wheel of life. You have limitless {Tibetan} second, un-triggered karma, unripened karma. Karma waiting to happen, waiting to come back. And

then these {chupa sipa} which is number ten, link number ten, which is triggered karma. Loaded, armed karma. And then there's {Tibetan} those two mental afflictions just before that that trigger it.

So that the point of enlightenment is that you ... you go into an enlightened state with lots of bad karmas in your head, but they'll never be triggered. If it were not the case we'd be in trouble. To try to remove billions of years of bad karma is pretty much impossible. The point is to make sure it never goes off, see what I mean. And that's the exercise. An Arya is on the way out because they've learned how to un-activate or not activate their bad karmas, okay.

{Lu-ngak yisum mige chigyidang}; whatever bad deeds I've done in body, speech and mind.

{Kyepar dompa sumgyi mitun chok}; and especially what ever I've done to break my three sets of vows, okay. Which are what? Pratimoksha vows. Bodhisattva vows. And Tantric vows.

{Nyingne gyupa drakpa sosor shak}; from the bottom of my heart, with extreme regret of an intelligent Buddhist, who knows what's going to happen if they don't clean it out. I want to purify, I want to admit them. Admitting is like the most powerful way to get rid of them actually. To admit that you have them is the first step. But not to have guilt, okay. Not to have ... guilt to me means something that paralyzes you. Admitting, to me, means something that empowers you. Like, okay now I know I did those things, so how do I stop it, you know what I mean, like that. And that's again the normal warm up that we do.

Okay. Last one.

{Nyikmay dundir mangtu drupla tsun}; {nyikmay dundir, nyikmay} means "the crap at the bottom of something", okay. So like if you have a cup of tea and all the grinds go down to the bottom or something like that or anything, you know, but all the dirty stuff that goes down to the bottom of something is called {nyikmay}. And these are called the {nyikmay} eon. This is the {nyikmay} eon. Lifespans are very short, people don't care about Dharma much, you know, these are ... people have a lot of desires that can never be satisfied. This is called the time of {nyikmay}, the bad days, okay.

{Nyikmay dundir mangtu drupla tsun}: {drupla tsun} means ... {drupla tsun} means, you know, "these are really lousy times as far as Dharma's concerned, but you, Je Tsongkapa, spent your whole life in the pursuit of knowledge". {Mangtu drupla tsun} means "you really tried hard". And if you read his biography, I mean, he literally walked from East Tibet to Central Tibet at the age of fifteen or something like that, on his own, to try to find knowledge. He stopped at every little monastery and talked to the monks there and debated and took teachings from those lamas. By the time he got to Lhasa he was this extraordinary

being. But he ... it would be like somebody walking through each of the fifty states of the United States to try to find someone who could teach them. And he did that at the age of fifteen. He just took off and did that. He worked very hard and even late in his life he would continue to take teachings from his students, you know. If he had a student who was really good at ... like Rendawa, Sakya Rendawa became Je Tsongkapa's student. But then Je Tsongkapa would learn from him what he knew that he had learned from other teachers. So he never stopped learning his whole life.

{Chugye pangpe delnjor dunyu je}; {chugye pangpe} means "he gave up the eight worldly thoughts" like; being upset when you don't get something, being happy when someone praises you, too much. You don't have to get too excited or too sad about anything 'cos you're getting exactly what you deserve, you know what I mean. So there's no point to be very ... like to hope that you're going to get something that you probably can't get. The karma's just not there. And to get all excited about something that you did get is no big deal because your karma was there. So there's no point to get very excited or very sad about anything. If you don't like it then change your karma. That's all.

You shouldn't have too high expectations 'cos you ... you're at a certain karmic level and you know what the level is. So don't hope for too much. You know from your book what you're doing. So, what do you expect something to happen outside the laws of karma [laughs] you know what I mean.. I mean, from your own book you know what you're doing. So is God going to break the laws of karma for you and make sure you get more money or make sure you meet this person? It doesn't work like that. So why get excited about it or so depressed about it? You get exactly what your behaviour dictates.

And you can look at your book and say, you know, does this person deserve a million dollars? Does this person deserve to never to have a backache or something like that? You know what I mean. Or never have anyone say anything bad to them? Does the person described in my book deserve to meet happy people all day long? Meaning, have you been happy to everyone else all day long. So why get upset or excited about it? If you don't like it then change it. Fix your book. That's {chugye}, that's the eight worldly dharmas, okay. To get worried or upset or excited ... karma works relentlessly, gives you exactly what you've put in.

{Gunpo kyukyi labchen dzepa (laughs)}; {labchen} is a beautiful word, {lab} means it's the word in Tibetan for a "tidal wave or a big wave in the ocean". And {labchen} means "you can do Dharma work which is helpful for people, and then you can do Dharma work which is extremely helpful". Meaning it's like finding kinds of Dharma activity that have very intense repercussions over a long period of time, you see what I mean. Like you can do ... when you get to be a good Dharma student it doesn't become a question of whether you're going to do something virtuous or non-virtuous. It becomes a question of which virtuous thing is more powerful to do 'cos you have a choice about three virtuous things to do during the day. So which is going to be more powerful? Which one ... There's certain

Dharma activities like teaching or helping spread Dharma or working on a Dharma place like Fran's been doing here, that have very powerful repercussions karmically. If you do this karma you get a billion percent return on your investment, if you do this good karma, it's a hundred.

So {labchen} means, "Je Tsongkapa knew very well the best ways to create tremendous good karma". He wrote ten thousand pages of scripture. Those of you who were in Sera Mey - and we spent four or five hours a day, six hours a day, learning one of his smallest books. And we got through half of it in a month. We got through ... I think in scripture it would be about twenty pages in a month of intense teachings. I mean, I have photographs of people coming out of that class ... [laughs] intense, incredibly intense. Imagine, we studied one-five hundredth of what he wrote, in a month like that. So I mean, much less understand it. To write it? To write ten thousand pages like that in ... he didn't live that long, sixty-something, you know. Didn't start writing until he was in his ... I don't know, his thirties. So how did he do that? Okay, you got to ask that. But he chose that as the way to effect the most people.

{Dakchak sampa takpe yirang ngo}: means you can get ten per cent of his virtue by just understanding what he did and you can swipe ten per cent of his virtue by being happy about it, just be happy about it.

I think Je Tsongkapa's teachings will have the greatest effect on the west. They are not very well ... they haven't spread much yet, except in the form of the Dalai Lama. But I believe personally that Je Tsongkapa's teachings will ultimately ... I believe they're most appropriate for most westerners, I don't say everybody. But rational normal people who can think and appreciate a good explanation or something, I don't think you can do better than Je Tsongkapa. And I think that eventually that will become very widespread in the United States. Like the whole courses we've done are based on Je Tsongkapa's writings. And thousands of people are ordering them who never heard of anything. You know, they just saw it and they like it and they ... I think Je Tsongkapa because he's so clear and detailed and logical that it will appeal to western people. So I think he was setting up something up to spread in the west countries.

Did I say that was the last one? We'll do two more verses, okay, and then we'll meditate a little bit.

The next is a beautiful ... very metaphorical.

{Jetsun lama dampa kyenam kyi} means "you holy lamas", okay, high holy lamas. And there's a whole explanation of that in the opening pages of "the Three Principal Paths", which you can check sometime. Why do they call them high, why do they call them holy?

{Chukuy kala kyentsey chunzin trik}; they're comparing the sky to the dharmakaya, which

is the emptiness of an enlightened being.

{Kyentsey}; {kyen} means “knowledge”, {tsey} means “love”. And we’ll talk about it later. I’ll explain the mantra to you later today and we’ll be talking about those qualities of {kyen tsey}.

Say {kyen ... tsey ... -?- ... den}: knowledge, love, power, you have ... {den}. We’ll talk about that. It’s important when you do the mantra. You have to be thinking about that, {kyentsey -?- den}.

Here’s two of them. {Kyentsey chunzin trik}; {chunzin} means “clouds”, {trik} means ... it’s a beautiful word, it means “overcast” or something like that, {trikpa}, in this case. So they’re comparing Je Tsongkapa’s and all of the lamas’ minds to the Dharmakaya, to the sky. So imagine it like the sky. And then out of this sky comes these clouds of ... form these clouds of love and knowledge {Tibetan} okay. {Kyentsey}. Okay.

So first there’s this empty Dharmakaya and then love and knowledge clouds start to form in the sky. {Tibetan} {Jitar tsampay} is the punch line. What do you call it? Anyway. {Jitar tsampay} means “as they are ready”. It means as they are fit, meaning, you can only get the amount of teachings that you’re ready to get, okay.

There’s this famous debate in the opening pages of the first Dalai Lama’s Abhidharma commentary and it says, what’s wrong with the Buddhas? They’re not very compassionate because they don’t show in all times and all places and teach everyone. They just teach a few people and then run away. You know, and then he says {jitar tsampay}, you know, it’s not the Buddha’s fault, it’s your fault. You know, Buddha’s always there like the sun, but certain lotuses only open at night [laughs]. You know what I mean. Like, that’s your ... The lotus has to be ready and the sun has to be ready at the same time. It’s not the sun’s fault that the lotus is not ready to open. Certain flowers are not ready to open yet. And certain people aren’t ready to hear Dharma yet, you know. And you can put Dharma on TV twenty-four hours a day, probably wouldn’t get any ratings at all. You know what I mean. People just not ready for it. They don’t want it yet. They’re not ready for it. It takes a lot of virtue just to be ready to hear Dharma, okay.

So {jitar tsampay} is sort of the catch. It’s sort of a sad ... to me it’s a very sad phrase, {jitar tsampay} means only as much as you can handle.

{Duljay dzinma} (laughs); {dzinma} means ... I think it’s the ‘vasu’ in Vasubandhu, but {dzinma} means “the one who holds, the mother who holds”. Meaning the earth that holds all her treasures, like that. So it’s a metaphor for earth. So they’re comparing students to the earth, to the planet. And then they’re comparing teachers to the Dharmakaya, to the sky. And then the love and compassion, the compassion and the knowledge of the teachers forms clouds in the sky .

And then, {sabgye chukyi charpa aptu sol} means “please let the Dharma rain down on us”. Okay, it’s like, you know, please shower Dharma down on us. Let the clouds drop rain on us, okay.

There’s a verb in Tibetan called {apa}, you know {Tibetan} which is the waterfall or water stream in the glass of water teaching. That teaching is called {Tibetan} which means the waterfall or a stream of water.

It’s cool in Tibetan that there’s an active verb which means {apa}; {apa} means “to cause rain to fall”. Like a rain maker will ‘{apa} the rain’. There’s a verb called ‘to rain it’. Please rain us. You know, meaning that people in Tibet had the power to make the clouds send down rain, okay, like that. Rain it. Rain it today? Like you call somebody, could you rain it today, you know, [laughter] like that. That’s {apa}. It’s a beautiful verb. We don’t have it in English.

Okay, page eight.

And again, page seven is, you know, is asking for dharma teachings. And not just from teachers but from the people around you, from inanimate objects, you know, break your leg on something and you learn a lot, okay. And you’re asking every day for Dharma teachings. And they may not come in the way you expect. They may come from somebody who bothers you. I mean, if I was really kind, and you had a mental affliction and if I was really kind, and I didn’t care so much of what you thought of me, then I would do something bad to you, just to help you. You see what I mean. I mean, I don’t personally have the strength to do that ‘cos I like people to like me. So, I mean, even when I should correct somebody, I’m like ... I avoid it ‘cos I don’t like them to hate me, you know. But I think really good lamas like Khen Rinpoche, out of love for you they see if they can get you angry or upset you or something like that, you know what I mean, ‘cos they want to help you. If you really had a kind person as a teacher then they would try to find out your weaknesses and then they would try to trigger them so you could watch yourself, you know what I mean.

So you’re also asking for Dharma teachings from all the people in your life who bother you and cause you problems. So please try to upset me today, okay. Please try to make me jealous today [laughs], okay. And so if you pray for that in the morning and then it happens in the afternoon, you can’t complain. Yeah?

Student: (Unclear)

Yeah.

Student: (Unclear)

I think they just trigger it lightly [laughs] [laughter], you know, I don't know. But it's very famous. Marpa did it to Milarepa, you know, poor guy. Build me a house and then, no, I don't like it. Tear it down and build me another one. But I think they have a very profound ability to find your weaknesses 'cos they ... In fact, I would say that they ... [laughs] I would say that the ... what do you call it ... the process or the interaction with a lama is working well when that's happening. I mean, you should take it as a compliment. That the interaction is going well if ... and even if they're not intending to do it. You see, it doesn't mean they have to ... If you have the virtue you will see them doing that because it's helpful, it helps you. So I would say that your guru yoga is going well if it seems like the lama is picking on you or something like that, you know what I mean. And they might not even want to do it. They may be totally oblivious to what's going on from their side. But if you have the good karma then you would see them as actually hurting you or attacking you or trying to bother you or something like that. You know what I mean. And that's a very common, what do you call it? It's a common interaction, it's a sign of the process is going well because then you'll get stronger and you'll be able to purify yourself.

So the last one is a dedication.

{Dakki ji-nye sakpay gewa di}; whatever virtue I've done ... We'd normally do this after the meditation, okay. So after the whole practice we go, {gewa diyi kyewo kun}, same thing, okay.

Whatever good karma I've collected. {Tending drowa kunla gangpen dang}; may I use it to help the teachings and people.

{Kyepar jetsun losang drakpa yi, Tenpay nyingpo ringdu selje shok}.

This is a prayer that you somehow play a part in spreading the worldview of Je Tsongkapa in your culture, in your civilisation. And I think we're in a unique place to do so. You know, we're in a country of three hundred million people who are relatively well educated. They are materially comfortable; they can think well; they are free to follow any religion they want. So you have like a big fat Dharma opportunity, you know, and then you've got Losang Drakpa, Je Tsongkapa's teachings which are very persuasive, very logical, very well thought out, very compelling. So, you know, this is a prayer at the end that you can say, can I play some part in bringing this worldview to the west. It's perfect. It's a perfect prayer.

What worldview? I mean, it's that thing that you could bring Maitreya from ganden paradise. Not by using your credit card, you know what I mean. Not by the ways that we think you can make things happen, but by just keeping your vows. That by understanding emptiness and by keeping your vows you could change the world and your own being.

And that people don't have to live like this. It's like the ultimate social justice; that you could make everybody in the world have enough to eat, and enough money, and mentally be happy all day long. That this worldview does that in a way that money and other external factors can't do. Vitamins and cosmetics and exercise. You know, it can bring people all those things they're hoping for without external causes. But internally, which is really how it happens, because things are empty.

So that worldview, that you can change the world ... You know, I grew up in the '60s, we worked against the Vietnam war, went to jail, you know, then went to work with -?- for social justice. And this is actually a much more sophisticated and effective form of the same thing. You can give everybody everything they want by following this worldview.

So, you know, at the end you dedicate it to spreading that worldview, okay.

All right. We'll do some meditation. Then we'll do the mantra later, okay.

But that's the foundation for the practice that you'll be doing during this retreat, okay. Actually, I think maybe get up for five, ten minutes and stretch, okay, and then come back. Have something to drink.

Okay, we'll start.

By Je Tsongkapa's time in Tibet nobody was doing any prayers in Sanskrit that I'm aware of. And Je Tsongkapa himself is working off a translation often. You'll often see him, those of you who studied {Tibetan} in Sera. He would say, I like this translation better than this translation or something like that. Meaning he was working mainly from translations or he knew his audience was working from translations. So I think it would be kind of auspicious to do it in English this time, although I really encourage you to do it, to learn it in Tibetan. I think it's good to leave about a half hour a day to memorise things in Tibetan if you can. And this is probably the first thing you should memorise actually and then go on to the Heart Sutra or something like that. And {Tibetan} and then fifty other things. But anyway, ...

We'll try it in English just 'cos I think it might have more effect on your mind during this retreat. Okay. Then we'll stop after each verse and visualise what's going on. And this is going to be your practice for the next ten days, so get it right. Later on we won't be reciting it perhaps so often. So, you should recite it until you get good at it. And then at a certain point I think recitation becomes a disturbance. You see what I mean. And they also tell you that in the scriptures. So we'll recite it for a few days and then after that it'll be automatic, right? Okay.

So we'll recite the first verse. Are you ready?

*Please come to me  
Lobsang Drakpa,  
King of the Dharma, who knows all things,  
Come with your sons, riding upon  
The tops of clouds  
Like mountains of pure white snow;  
Come,  
Come from the heart  
Of the Lord of a Thousand Angels  
Living in the Heaven of Bliss.*

Try to visualise that, and then we'll start the second verse. You have to get Maitreya, like a really beautiful Maitreya, okay. And then his heart has to open up, they say like a crystal door. And then clouds coming out. Then on the tops of the clouds, Je Tsongkapa and his two students.

Okay, we'll do the next verse.

*Sit in the air  
In front of me,  
On a throne with cushions  
Of the moon, and the lotus;  
Set on the backs of lions.  
My holy lama,  
With pure white smile,  
Happy with me,  
I ask you to stay  
For a million years  
To spread the teachings:  
Stay, for there is no-one  
Higher than you  
With whom I may make merit  
By goodness of my faith.*

This is where you ask them to stay, okay. And throw in all your Dharma friends and people who influence you well, whether they are Buddhists or not. Even could be a Rottweiler or something.

Okay next verse.

*Your mind  
Is knowledge  
That wraps around*

*The entire mass  
Of knowable things.*

*Your words  
Are jewels  
Of good explanation  
That we the fortunate  
Wear on our ears.*

*Your body  
Shines forth  
Shines with brightness  
Shines with a glory  
The world will see.*

*I bow to you.  
Just to see You  
Just to hear You  
Just to think of You  
Brings great things.*

This part you try to think of good qualities of this lama. We can't see all of them or else we would be them. So imagine them. You know what I mean.

Okay, we'll do the next verse.

*I make in my mind  
And place here as well  
An ocean of gifts  
That could cover the sky:  
Presents to please  
All of Your senses,  
Every different color of flower,  
Sweetest fragrant incense,  
Lamps of light, perfumes  
Upon Your body,  
And other gifts as well,  
Do I offer You,  
There is no higher  
With whom I may make merit.*

Then let your imagination go wild, okay. And also offer the best parts of your practice, things you'd like to do this week, you can offer those; futures.

Okay, we'll do the next one.

*From deep within my heart,  
I am sorry, deeply,  
And openly confess  
One by one  
The harm that I have done  
My acts or words or thoughts;  
Any and every wrong  
Kept with me from time  
With no beginning;  
Especially what I may have done  
Against any one  
Of the three different kinds  
Of vows.*

Then try to think of something specific, okay. Just one real thing, recently, today or yesterday, is better than a lot of fuzzy guilt about something you don't remember, okay.

Okay, next one.

*Here in the age  
Of degeneration  
You made every effort  
To gain great learning;  
You threw away  
The eight worldly thoughts  
And so made use  
Of your leisure and fortune.*

*Saviour, we rejoice  
We are glad, happy deep inside,  
For what you have done,  
So good and powerful.*

Rejoice in other people's good deeds and then your own also; good to ... something specific that you've done in the last day or so. The easy good deeds are something external like help set up this retreat. And the hard good deeds are something internal like worked on your jealousy or something.

Okay next verse.

*Holy lamas high,  
Wrap the sky of your Dharma bodies  
In massive clouds  
Of knowledge and love  
And let them pour  
Upon the earth  
Of your disciples,  
As we are ready,  
A shower of rain,  
The teachings  
Deep and wide.*

Okay next verse.

*May any goodness  
I have done  
With this my prayer  
Be a help to the teachings  
And to every living being.*

*I make a special prayer too  
That for many years to come  
I may carry forth  
The Light,  
The essence of the Word,  
The teachings of Je Tsongkapa.*

Okay, take a short break and stretch, but don't stand up, okay. Give you three, four minute stretch and then we'll do a normal meditation.

And those are the parts that we normally do every time we meditate. When we go through those, it's the same thing, based on that. Huh?

Student: (Unclear)

Now we're going to do a real meditation, that's just the warm up. And your body will start to hurt a little bit, takes about ten days to get really comfortable [laughs, laughter] and then you have to go back to work. So just don't worry about it, it hurts a little bit. Don't worry about it.

**The Four Powers  
Class Two  
RAW TRANSCRIPT**

PAGE 21

Geshe Michael Roach  
Je Tsongkapa Mantra  
Godstow Retreat Center  
26/12/98 – 3/1/99

### Class 3

We'll do a mandala, okay.

[prayer: short mandala]

[prayer: refuge]

[prayer: refuge]

[prayer: refuge]

Making offerings during retreat is very important. I mean, more important than other times. So normally when you're doing a long retreat it would be good to every morning, like half hour, forty-five minutes and make the altar. You know, spend a lot of time on the altar and make it really beautiful and it's a custom, especially in retreat to take the time to do that. So if you're doing four sessions in retreat the first session might be forty-five minutes of offerings and twenty minutes of meditation or something, okay [laughs]. It's important during retreat especially.

So today we'll be making tormas. I'm not going to teach you any kind of secret torma or anything like that. You have to get that instruction from your tantric lama. But we'll be making a simple torma offering cake. In tantra it's called a {kandra chidor} and it's like a general all-purpose torma, all right. So I'll ... we'll just get the general shape right and how to make it. And then we'll be making tonight what's called a {gek tor} {Gek tor} is ... {gek} means "obstacles to your retreat" and {tor} means you make an offering to local spirits and things like that to prevent obstacles during your retreat.

So we'll start with a like a {chik dor}, like a general all-purpose torma today and then we'll do tonight a {gek tor}. And when you do the torma, the general torma, it should be made of what are called white substances; like honey, sometimes sugar, white milk, white flour, and butter is considered a holy substance. And a lot of this comes from ... I don't know if you know the story, but Lord Buddha was trying to meditate according to sort like an ascetic way of life, like just trying to see how long he could go hurting his body basically, and not really meditating on anything with content. And he did that for years in the forest after he ran away from his palace with his friends, five friends – four friends – five ... and {kong nga dengar} and it didn't work, but he like held out to the end and he refused to eat any solid foods and he was living off little things.

And then finally he was sitting in meditation and I don't remember whether he got enlightened first or afterwards. Anyway, some lady ... I think it was after he got enlightened. He gives up that way of life mentally, he gets enlightened and then the first

thing that happens is this woman comes and appears and offers him a bowl of, I think it's yoghurt. A ... ha?

[student: [unclear]]

Rice food. Anyway ... White substances. And then this is like auspicious for making tormas. So tormas should have these white ... they're called the {karpos} white substances, okay. So the normal ingredients are some kind of flour. In Tibet they might use tsampa. Rinpoche likes to use 'wonder bread', okay. I mean, He says the cheaper and whiter it is the better [laughs] [laughter], you know, like the kind that turns into paper in your mouth. That's really good for making tormas, okay. And then there'll be milk, then there'll be clarified butter; ghee. When you clarify butter try to use ... I think it's the sweet kind that's not good because it burns easily. The salty kind is better. Like they sell two kinds in the stores. The sweet kind tends to burn and after it burns you can't light it after that. Okay, so if you ... and then normally you should boil it for maybe forty-five minutes or something and then it will start to separate and the whey will go down to the {nyikmay}, will go down to the bottom. And then the rest will be clarified butter and there'll be a little foam on the top. So the idea is to get the foam off, pour the rest through a strainer, pretty fine strainer, into a jar or something. And then throw out the rest that when you get down to the ... it looks like tofu at the bottom or something. A little bit more goeey, then ... and you throw that out. Then what you have left over will burn nicely in butter lamps. And that's what you need to make tormas. The butter has two functions in the torma; one is as part of the ingredients and one is you normally paint the torma afterwards, okay, with the clarified butter. If you're doing other kinds of retreats, you put coloring in the paint, a certain coloring. But we're not going to do that. Then you put also honey inside and also some kind of sacred substance. So we'll be giving you a little drop of something that you have to throw in just before you start finalising it, okay.

And then there's a thing called {kargyen}; {kargyen} means ornamentation that you put on the outside and that has different meanings. So I'll teach you how to do it, but we're not going to go much into the meaning, okay. Then it's a custom to leave a little ball of the torma offering to the side, some of the dough. And then you make these little tormalettes [laughs] okay, like that tall. And I'll show you how to make them. And then during retreat you have a option of either making a new torma everyday ... I mean, a real torma takes about seven hours to make. The real tormas for a Vajrayogini ... they take about seven hours. So the lamas have made this custom where you take a little piece of the original torma and you save it in the freezer. And then every day you take a piece and put it on the torma plate and that represents a new torma. Okay. If you're really lazy you can use cookies or stuff like that. But I think we'll make a nice torma and we'll make the tormalettes, okay. And then you plan for how many days you're going to be in retreat. So if it's a ten-day retreat you make ten of these little ... they look like pyramids and you keep them off to the side, like in a refrigerator is good. And then every day, in the morning, you take one and you add it to the plate. Okay. It's also a nice way of keeping count of how

many days you're in retreat. And it feels kind of neat as you see them pile up at the bottom of the torma.

If you're in a two month retreat or something, you know, then you know that you're deep in the retreat {laughter} somewhere, if not from your state of mind then [laughter] from how many little tormas there are [laughs], okay. But it gives you a feeling that, you know, you're making progress or something, so we'll do that.

And then the torma tonight will be for {gek tor} and then when we close the boundaries, which will be tomorrow evening, you use the {gek tor} and each person will make their own {gek tor}. And each person will offer their own {gek tor} to prevent local spirits ... basically you're creating a lot of energy in someone else's air space. And it's like, please don't mind. And that's what a {gek tor} is for. And that's how we'll do it. When you make ... after you make the torma you can go put it on your own altar. So each room will have three, four, five tormas on the altar. And then you have to feed it every day with a little torma, okay. So the day after tomorrow you have to bring one of those little tormas. I hope we have refrigerator space ... couple of hundred ... they're about this big. Oh, we can keep them outside. Frozen is fine. Maybe somewhere where the animals won't get to them.

And in the instruction books on tormas they say keep them in a place, sometimes called a {dor kang}, which means like a little ... on your altar, a little glass box so that mice won't get to it. Like if you're doing a retreat in Arizona or the out ... Bendigo or something, and wallabies might attack or something [laughter] then you keep it locked up, 'cos it's very distracting when you're meditating to have mice ... You'll find that they love altars and they start crashing things and breaking things and leaving poop on your altar. So the idea is to keep them out of range, out of reach of those critters, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, up high somewhere.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. Okay, all right. Okay, so get ready. I don't know, how many people have worked with dough? I don't know.

[student: [unclear]]

Like most people. Like, the trick with dough is don't add too much milk, okay. I mean,

don't add too much liquid. If you add too much liquid you can't go back [laughter]  
[laughs], okay, unless your friend has got extra bread or something. But the trick is to be  
very, very conservative on the liquid, okay. So the first job is to take about ... start with  
half the bread, okay. And ... I'll show you.

I suggest you don't use the end piece, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Ah, two, I think.

Then you take this and break it into little pieces like about that big and throw it ... Huh?

[student: [unclear]]

I can ... you can use the ... don't use the end piece, okay, it won't work. So you just take  
off little pieces about that big ... you know, in the monastery we use a chop knife, but if  
you don't know how to use one you'll probably cut your fingers off. So just break off little  
pieces. You're going to have to do the whole loaf, so do half the loaf now, okay ... That's  
fine.

Where's Elizabeth?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah.

[student: [unclear]]

Too fine.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. I want her to help other people.

[student: [unclear]]

Okay. Who?

[student: [unclear]]

Who's they?

[student: [unclear]]

Ora's right here.

You don't need ... I don't think you need a spoon and all that. We're going to mix it up with your hands, okay. By the way, your hands are supposed to be totally, absolutely clean, okay. I forgot to tell you that.. No, you're really supposed to go in and wash. That's why I took a shower and shave ...

[Laughs]

There's what it ... Can you see? That's about the size, okay. Who! By the way, if you drop something don't put it back in [laughter], okay. No, the idea is that it is totally pure, okay.

It's also good to have an apron on when you do this but ... [laughter]. Apron. Like a full length apron is really useful.

Let me try this one. It's going to be an offering to Je Tsongkapa, so, you know, think about it while you're doing it.

At the end of the retreat it's good to put the tormas some place holy. They say like a body of water is very good. Throw it into a body of water like a lake. We have a pond. Put it up in a tree is okay. And then in the morning everybody should spend time on the altar, okay, don't like ... typically one person in the room starts doing it all. You know, take time and do the offerings, very important, in the morning. Take like half an hour. Make it really nice. Clean it off. Polish the bowls even if they're already clean, you know what I mean.

We'll be passing some honey around. Take out about two good teaspoons and spread it on the bread, okay. I mean, two generous spoons, okay. Too much is not good 'cos then the tormas tend to ... they get fungus on them towards the end of your retreat.

[student: [unclear]]

Too much honey is not good. I mean, I'm just speaking practically, they start to turn green half way through the retreat [laughs]. Unless you're doing Green Tara it seems kind of ... [laughs]

[Laughter]

You can use the ends are okay. I mean, you don't have to cut the crust off. If you didn't use it it's okay, your tormas'll just be wimpy.

[student: [unclear]]

Two big gollops. Okay. See if you can get some on your neighbour. Okay. Then one teaspoon of this ... okay, this is generally called {dutsi} or amrita. Okay. Nectar, deathlessness. Special stuff. You can use special pills. It depends on what your torma is. There's different kinds of special pills. Okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Just one teaspoon of the amrita. If you have a pill, you put the pill itself in. Okay, then you start to add milk.. I suggest you have your friend pour the milk and you mush, okay. 'Cos you can't do both 'cos your hands get all mushky, okay. So, and then pour the milk in really slow. If you put in too much milk you can't take it out and then the torma won't stand up, okay. But what you want to do is you want to make a very stiff dough like silly putty.

[student: [unclear]]

No, you don't have to pour things in order

[laughter]

You're going to need half the milk for this evening, okay. And you won't need more than half this container of milk, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

We need a little more milk. If you don't know how to knead dough, put your body into it, put your weight down on it and it goes a lot faster. If you want to see ... the consistency should be like that, okay. And you have to mush in all the pieces, okay, keep going until you mush in all the pieces.

[student: [unclear]]

You gotta put your weight into it, okay. You'll do a lot better if you get your weight in it, like Axel. Otherwise it's hard, otherwise. You gotta keep flopping it. Do you know what I mean? You keep going like this and flopping it.

[student: [unclear]]

Oh, okay. That's good. Yeah, little more, you gotta get all the lumps out 'cos after a few days they'll dry out and they'll fall off ... [laughter].

When you finish the first half, then take a little bit of the wax paper 'cos it'll dry out, and wrap it up in that. And then do the second half, okay, all right.

[student: [unclear]]

No. It's all for now.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, yeah.

Your mom didn't teach you how to make bread?

[student: [unclear]]

That's really good. Yeah.

[student: [unclear]]

I think Kinzo was the closest with it. Little bit wet. A touch wet, yeah. You gotta mush it more.

[student: mush it more]

Yeah. All right, it's a little bit too wet. More bread. Can't be sticky, okay. Shouldn't be sticky. Shouldn't be sticky. This is pretty good. A little bit wet. This is great. Axel's is great.

[student: [unclear]].

Yeah. It's a little bit dry but it's just about right. This is the closest one.

[laughs]

She looks like a tortured artist; I see it in my mind, I must bring it to life ... [laughs]

[laughter]

Don't forget on the second half you need honey. You need another dollop of honey on the second half, don't forget the honey.

[student: [unclear]]

Bit it'll start to ... it'll start get squat, it'll start to squat. You know, it'll go whoo ... you got to be a little harder.

[student: but if we knead it a little more it'll probably [unclear]]

Not much.

I don't know. Who's got the {dutsi}? Let me see. Don't throw it. One teaspoon, okay. Too dry, way too dry. By the way, when it's too dry you got to add milk immediately, okay. Or else you can't ... it won't ... you got to add milk immediately and start kneading like crazy. This is perfect. See how it does that ... something ...

Yeah.

When you finish the first half do the second half.

[student: [unclear]]

Can I give everyone some tea or something. Let's give them something to drink. I'm gonna ask Elizabeth if she can come and help me. You know, she's good at teaching them how to do it, the shape, yeah. Like juice or something. Did you get the straws? Straws? You have straws? Bring some and show me and I'll tell you what are a good size. You need like a Worcestershire top and a ketchup top. And then we need like a pen top.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah.

[student: [unclear]]

And then one about the size of a ... She didn't buy straws so we need something like a pen top or something cut off. So that we can blow it out.

[student: [unclear]]

Huh?

Just one cone shaped mommy with two cone shapes on the side. With the four petals. And that's all. And then ten pyramids on the side.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah and ten pyramids. Ten little additions. Those are later tonight. You see how it feels? It has this bounce to it. Vilma, go like that. You feel how it's got kinda of a bounce to it [laughs].

[student: [unclear]]

You should see momos if you make them too wet. They stick to the roller. If you make them too dry they crack open

[student: they crack open]

Oh God ... Rinpoche used to beat me up so often.

[student: [unclear]]

It's okay, you got to just knead the hell out of it. It needs a bit more milk and some [unclear]. But you just have to put your weight into it, put your back into it, lean into it.

[student: [unclear]]

Just a tiny bit. Little more, little more, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Then you put your whole weight onto it.

[student: [unclear]]

That's it. That's it. That's it. It's a lot easier and it doesn't hurt your hand.

[student: [unclear]]

It makes it lighter. That's good. Now you got to keep it wrapped up or it will get dry out.

[student: [unclear]]

Those we can set out for the animals. The birds appreciate it on a day like ... when the snow is covering the grass.

Okay. So make two equal balls. Okay, watch. You guys ready? Take one ball. Elizabeth's going to help the people in the back 'cos she's done it a lot of times, okay. So we're going to make a cone out of one whole ball. Okay, that's for Je Tsongkapa, the main one.

So you go like that and you work it into a cone, okay. You make it into a cone. A {kawi}. And then you start fixing it up at the bottom. And you can let the weight of it just ... the weight of it will carry it down, you see. This is how you ... when you find out if you put too much or not enough. If it's too dry it'll start to crack.

[student: [unclear]]

Okay, that's coming later. We should've put in a spoonful of ghee but we forgot. Normally you throw in a spoonful of ghee. [laughter] But we're going to put it on the outside ... [laughter] we're going to put it on the outside.

[laughter]

Okay, something like that. If you made it too wet, make it a little bit longer 'cos it's going to collapse. It's gonna shorten itself [laughs]. And the head should be a little bit rounded like that. Basic torma. When you get close to that shape ... you want to show them?

[student: [unclear]]

Get somebody ... get another one. How to do the [unclear]. Okay, when you get close to the end like that, then you're going to snip off pieces from the four sides, okay. So like these three fingers, okay, they go like that, okay, and set it down. You've got to take a chunk out of each of the four sides. And then you gotta fix the bottom. The bottom can come in a little bit, it tapers in a little bit. Should be about this big.

[student: [unclear]]

All four, four chunks out of the bottom. You pinch them off with your three fingers; your thumb and your first two fingers. And then you fix the bottom back. So the bottom can taper in a little bit. It's okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Pretty good, pretty good, a little fat, but pretty good. A little bit longer. By the way, there's like twenty different kinds of tormas, so you know, ... more.

[student: [unclear]]

Mercedes' looks pretty good. Hold yours up. Mercedes looks good, okay. Little chubby. Little chubby. Little thinner. Try to get it straight, you see what I mean? It's like sinking in and going up. See the difference? Little bit thinner. Go like this and it'll make the side straight. This one's pretty good. Little chubby in the bottom [laughs]. Work out the cracks now because they'll expand during the week. Shouldn't have any cracks in it. If you see any white spots try to ... We're going to paint them but it doesn't help. We paint them with ghee afterwards. If there's a big crack it's not going to help.

Debbie Bye's is pretty good, in the back. That's good. Folds in the dough are like dangerous, they're not fatal, okay. A little more angle. Hold them ... if you don't get the

shape, hold it up like this, upside down. [laughs]

[student: [unclear]]

If you made the dough too wet, you'll know now [laughs] [laughter].

[student: [unclear]]

Too stubby [laughter] That's okay. Little more pointy at the top. Michael [unclear] is pretty good, a little chubby, but pretty good. Dito's is really good. Marie Placide's is great.

[student: [unclear]]

If you have trouble then put it upside down like that. That's pretty cool. Patricia's got it now, a little chubby but it's okay.

[student: [unclear]]

No, just hold it upside down and go like this and squeeze it a little bit.

[student: [unclear]]

Hold it upside down.

[student: [unclear]]

Sorry?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. That's it. That's better. But support it like that. Support it at the bottom. Put you hands ... fingers up ... yeah, that's it ... and then roll it. That's great. [laughs] a little more. Ann's has come out, Ann's is okay now. Nancy's really good. Kelly's is good. Charlie's is good. Joel's is good. Al's is too wet [laughs] you're going to have to go for a squat one, okay. Andrew's is great. This is great. This is a little chubby. Start like this at the top and work down. Yeah. Mercedes's looks good now.

If it has a little taper at the bottom like that it's good, see ... See there's a little ... that's where you pinch the stuff off. It's a little bit of a ... Yours is good. Is it going to stay up? Okay, ready for step two? Take that little piece that you pinched. No, you don't ... You keep them separate. Those four pieces are separate, okay. This is going to be a flower petal. And it gets attached to the side about here. And I'll show you how to make it.

They'll just ... make them a little chubbier. It's like petals, it'll be petals on the four directions, okay, and it's like that, it's triangular at the bottom. You see? This is the outside and this is the side that's going to stick to the torma.

And this is the outside. And if you look here it ... when you look down from the top it's going to look like a petal sticking out. Like a lotus petal, okay. Like that. And the bottom is like tapered, like a 'v'; so it goes from the 'v' up to that and then this is going to be stuck on the edge of the torma. So when you look down from the top you'll see a ... like a circular thing like that. Okay. It should look like, I don't know, like a turbine coming off a jet, the back of a jet. Right.

[student: [unclear]]

I think start triangular and then work it out, okay, like that at the top.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. And then it's going to be attached right about here. You've got to make sure it's like ... like the line between the piece and the torma is that you get it really in there, 'cos they'll start to fall off halfway through your retreat.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. It's really good to use a piece ... a little bit of milk and run your thumb along it like that and it'll join.

[student: [unclear]]

When you get to the second one you might want to put it on your ... you put it on the plate, okay. Okay, like that. Then you put on the other three. If you have a small plate like this put it in the back ... don't put it right in the centre, put it towards the back a bit 'cos you're going to have to fit two smaller ones side by side. Got it?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. Yeah. If you pinched it right, you got the shape is half way finished already. Like about half way up, yeah. And then you start adding the other ones. I think you're going to need some milk on it. [laughs] This is for Je Tsongkapa. He's very [unclear].

[student: [unclear]]

He can be pretty. He has such big brown eyes and then he screamed at you.

Mercedes, let me see. Hold it up. Mercedes is really good, check it out, hold it up higher. If it won't stick use lots of milk.

(sings / midnight at the oasis...)

[laughs] I'm going to have to look at him for ten nights. Winston's looks pretty good.

[student: [unclear]]

Hold it up, Winston. Hold it up, hold it up.

[student: [unclear]]

No, but it's nice. I mean, it looks good to me.

[student: [unclear]]

I think make two more and then we'll make the ten things tonight.

[student: [unclear]]

I think, because I forgot. You know, [unclear].

[Private conversation]

When you finish that split the rest into two equal balls and make two more cone tomas, but we're not going to make the four petals on them. So this becomes one cone and this becomes one cone, the other half, okay, two more cones.

[laughs] Huh? It's okay. The next one will look better. Yeah, that's nice. Do they look pretty similar. No, try and make them broader.

[student: [unclear]]

Longer maybe.

[sings / midnight at the oasis]

Gyaltseb Je and Kedrup Je.

[private conversation]

Then with the other half you make two small ones like that, okay. And leave some space in

front 'cos that's where the ten are going to go, okay. We're going to do the ten tormallettes tonight, okay. All right. So leave a little platform here in front. And put the directions of the petals, like the ... you know, one facing towards you, okay. All right. This one will be for Gyaltseb Je, this one for Je Tsongkapa, this one for Kedrup Je.

[sings / midnight at the oasis, sing your camel to bed]

[student: [unclear]]

Relax.

[private conversation]

[student: [unclear]]

I think you go to [unclear] torma hell or something. [laughs] They make you make tormas all day.

[student: [unclear]]

Somebody sits on them.

[laughter]

[private conversation]

Okay, if you're done. Don't worry, don't worry. Don't rush. Don't worry. If we start the next step then people can help you. You just take one of these paint brushes, okay, and dip it in the ghee and paint the torma, okay. And be generous, okay, lots. It's like an offering and it keeps them from drying out also. And it's important to do it before they start to dry out.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, it's great, you're so great. And then put lots of butter on it. If it drips down and makes a little pool here that's okay. Don't be cheap. Put lots of it on it. And it'll start to dry and add some more and make it thick. Okay. If it starts to collect on the dish don't worry. It's okay. We have more brushes? We got eight brushes going around so just be patient and a brush will reach you.

[student: [unclear]]

If the butter collects in those little lotus petals that's fine, don't worry, it's good. We're

almost done. Don't be shy with the butter, okay. Dump a lot of butter on there. Don't be shy with the butter.

[student: [unclear]]

No, I like them like that. I remember the tormas. Okay. I like them, I like the smell of it.

[student: [unclear]]

[private conversation]

Okay, I think we're ready for the next step. Last step. Last step. Okay. Take the other plate, all right. Put one piece of cheese ... Now, in Tibet they use animal fat and ice. You mould it in a bowl of ice with your fingers for like an hour. And Rinpoche likes this method, okay. Or they might use wax and butter. Okay, but this is ... this is ... Rinpoche likes to use this in the States. Then you take ... you start with this. You need to find a bottle cap, okay, that's about this big. And the point is that half way up the torma there'll be this round like moon looking thing stuck on the torma here and then there'll be one stuck up here, okay. And the one up here will be smaller and then you use, like a Worcestershire top.

And if you're making it really extensive you have three or four and then you have all these decorations at the bottom. We're not going to ... that takes like six, seven, eight, hours, so ... so you take that and then you ... It's like a cookie cutter, and you go like that ... and then that thing ... sometimes it won't come out, so you try like that, okay. Then if you get desperate you take that toothpick [laughs] and without destroying the shape, you know, you work it out. Okay, so then you make a ... all right? Then, let me see. Then you break off a toothpick, like about a third of it. Okay, you should use the round toothpicks, they work better. Okay. You want to hold it up while I do it ... careful, whoa. Okay, then you ... This is called a {kargyen} by the way; {kar} means "white", {gyen} means "ornament".

You might want to have somebody hold the back. You pull it up about there and then you just spear it onto it in the middle. And then leave a little bit of the toothpick sticking out, like just a little knob of the toothpick sticking out. Okay. And don't forget you gotta leave room for another one up here. Okay. All right. So try to ... Here's the ... here's the big cap that we'll pass around. Look, I should have made more of it.

[student: [unclear]]

[private conversation]

Then you take the other half of the toothpick. Break off some of it. Okay, like that.

[student: [unclear]]

And then make three of the little ones, so we'll put one each of the little ones on this. If you want to send a mission to the kitchen and find some more bottle tops and stuff that's okay. If somebody wants to go and someone's almost done.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, one big one, three small ones.

[student: [unclear]]

Don't press the toothpick all the way in. Leave a small knob hanging out, okay. Half is too much, half is too much, like a third.

[student: [unclear]]

[private conversation]

Yeah, the point goes in, the broken part goes out.

[private conversation]

Now you got that ugly toothpick hanging out so we make a little tab to cover it. And we got macaroni sticks here for you. I usually use plastic straw but we didn't have any so .. So you stick this ...stick it down in the cheese, try to blow the thing out. It doesn't go ... Then you can push it out with a toothpick, okay. It works if you have a straw. Yeah. You see it's a little knob like that and then you put it over the end of the toothpick hanging out and it should cover it, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

[private conversation]

[student: [unclear]]

[cut]

Quit loafing around and get going [laughs].

[private conversation]

Do your thing, we need to do the same things. Two piles. One loaf per person. Mush the

whole loaf, okay. Like today. I suggest you do it in two halves like earlier today. You need to do the whole life. One loaf per person. Okay. This is the easy one. Is the butter still on, the ghee?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. I forgot. We have to put a little dollop in each torma. We have to put a dollop in each torma.

[student: [unclear]]

As you make them. That's okay, that's liquid enough, yeah. That's fine. We need that holy tea, is that still there? Just add more to it but don't lose that because that's the basis.

[student: [unclear]]

Add what? So long as there's one atom in there. Yeah. And more toothpicks. Each person will need three toothpicks on top of the toothpicks they already have.

In the monastery they serve ... during the big debates they serve rice with butter floating on it and they have to run, you know, and they slip on the one that the guy spilled before and I've seen them dump whole things like that on people's robes and heads and ... it's the grossest thing. You got to sit through the whole night with all the ... your robes are soaked with this mush, you know.

[student: they probably do it on purpose, just to ...]

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

[student: just like, oh, that one needs some junk on them.]

The guys are a real test of wills.

Grab the centre and flop it up towards yourself. And then smush it down with your ... the heels of your hands. Yeah, like that. Squish it. It's a lot easier. Otherwise your fingers get tired. I made millions of momos.

[student: [unclear]]

Pretty much.

[student: [unclear]]

[private conversation]

Okay, medium one. Just make a plain, cone torma, okay, one single cone torma. No petals with the medium one. Just make one big torma. Okay. This torma goes on this plate, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Fran Perillo ... We could offer them on the steps, the stone steps, right, if we have little fire there it's okay. They're little. On the patio. It's too small, too small. Did everybody make the medium one? Finish with the medium one? No, you want me to wait a while? Okay.

[laughter]

That's a good one. All right, if you've finished your medium one you can paint it okay. Yeah. Okay. And then two {kargyens}; two {kargyens} on the medium one. Okay.

[student: [unclear]]

One big, one small. Huh?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, with the dot on the end.

[private conversation]

Yeah. But it has to be well boiled. It has to be well boiled. It has to be real ghee, 'cos it's got to burn. Are you ready? Let me do one.

[private conversation]

I'd like to give them something to drink. Anything. Hot chocolate. Sugar free. Okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Holy dough. I thought all dough was holy. [laughter]

[student: [unclear]]

[private conversation]

Take the small one and divide it into five pieces, five equal pieces. This is a test. You don't have to be an engineer from Germany to ... Keep going until you get to a sideless particle [laughs].

[student: [unclear]]

We'll establish whether external ... objects exists according to the ...?

Then make ten pyramids like that, okay, three sided pyramids, okay. It's actually got four sides, okay. A base and three sides... equilateral, totally straight, forty-six and a half degree angle, okay. Just a pyramid with three sides, I mean, a base and three sides. Okay. A tetrahedron. A tetrahedron. [laughs] You got to make ten of those, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

And you can keep them on the plate with the other one. On the white plastic plate. Yeah, yeah. Huh?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, they gotta get painted, so don't worry, you can dump them in the butter. So put them on the white plastic plate with the other guy.

[private conversation]

Okay, make some kind of mark on it, because you have to know that it's yours, okay, on the top. Put your initials on it or something. Put your initials on it or something Write on it. Put your name on this light plate. Then put your ten pyramids on this plate, okay. They have to be separated from the other torma. Just get your hands gooey, it's okay. Paint the pyramids. Put them on this plate. Okay.

[private conversation]

Last torma. Ready? Grand finale. Are you guys still going?

[student: [unclear]]

Okay, you kinda gotta pay attention now, okay. Ready? Take the last one and split it in half. It should be the only one you have left actually [laughs] [laughter]. Then take the larger half [laughs], now make three cone torma out of half. Three small cones, all the same size. Okay. So just split that half into three balls and make little tiny cone torma, okay. This goes on your ceramic plate. Take one. Does everybody have one done?

Looks like a wallaby torma [laughs].

Very simple, okay. Watch. Three pinches, these three fingers, okay. And you hold it like that, you pinch and then you turn it over and put it right here. And nothing fancy. Nothing fancy. Like that. Just three sides, yeah, okay. Lotus petals but very simple ... whoa, come back ... it landed on the plate, okay. And then smooth out the bottom, but they don't have to be as fancy as that, just three ...

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, just three.

[student: [unclear]]

yeah, and make them all the same, all three the same. All three of the tormas the same.

[private conversation]

Okay, they go in a row, okay, towards the back of the plate. You see, towards the back of the plate. Right. So three in a row towards the back of the plate. Okay.

[student: [unclear]]

No, it's not the big one, the big one went on the plastic plate, right.

[student: [unclear]]

This has to be on its own plate. On a plate by itself, okay. It should be a ceramic plate 'cos there's going to be some fire on this one okay.

[private conversation]

Three like this, okay. Not painted yet. Don't paint them yet.

[private conversation]

You guys ready for the last ... ready? Take the last piece. Take the last piece. Make a small piece out of it and a bigger piece. Like I'd say ... what is it, a third and two-thirds, how's that. Okay. A third and two-thirds from the last piece. Then drop the smaller one for now, you don't need it. Take the big one, divide that into three pieces, we're Gelukpa,

yeah, three equal pieces. Cut off a third and then take the two-thirds. We're going to work with the two-thirds, okay. Or the four-sixths, David says. Keep the two-thirds, drop the one third. Okay, everybody got the two-thirds? Two-thirds. Three equal parts.

Okay, we're going to make butter lamp mushrooms. Okay, so you take one of those three pieces, okay and look, you make a little fat cylinder. It's not a pen. Okay, like a little chubby cylinder like that. Okay, okay, this is from the three equal pieces, this is one of the three equal pieces. Of the half, of the second half.

[laughter]

[student: [unclear]]

You should have two other small pieces like this left and then like the last third of the last piece left, right. Now you squeeze it like that in the middle, and you make like a little goblet, okay, like a base on the bottom, the base is smaller than the top is ... yeah, the top is bigger like a goblet, or like a mushroom. It should look like that. And you should actually be able to put some stuff in the inside here. Yeah. We're going to fill it up with butter. But we're going to make a wick before that. Like a little goblet, okay. Yeah, and it's going to sit like that. Okay. Okay, you want to show me some? Not too big, okay, Ian, that's a little bit too big. Too big, yeah. That's good. Ken did good. Nancy's is a little too big. Yeah. Patricia's is great. Okay, hold it up. That's fine. Okay. It's called a {ting}. {Ting}. Yeah, that's fine, Mercedes' is fine. Winston's is good.

[student: [unclear]]

Hang on. You got three.

[private conversation]

They're going to go in front of the three like that, okay. They're going to go in front of the others. And leave a little space in front, you're going to need that for something else. Okay.

Fran Pirello. They're going to need some place to store these and they're going to take one each day and put it on their altar. Yeah. Okay. They can be frozen, you know, they don't ... it doesn't matter. But in their rooms is better maybe, they'll get lost. Do you have any surround-wrap? Okay, maybe cover them with that. Okay. I think surround-wrap's better, they can see them. See, went from Mind Only to play dough.

[laughter]

The missing link.

[student: [unclear]]

[private conversation]

Okay. Every ... are you done with those three goblets? No.

[student: [unclear]]

Okay, they're not quite done with that. Okay, last thing, okay, you got that ... you should have one piece left. Divide it into three.

[laughter]

Three equal parts [laughs].

This one you roll out like this. Watch. Like a worm. This is the third, okay, this is one of the thirds. It should be about like that, in your hand it should be like that. This is a special offering to a kind of {yidak}, to a kind of preta. It's called {Tibetan} something like that.

You ready? This is fun. Take it in your left hand, okay. Close your hand, close your fingers, not too tight. Press down on this and then form it around in a little bit of a ... like a petal or something like that. And then there should be a little bit sticking out. Press that in towards your arm, like that, okay. Got it. Then unwrap your hands and it should look just like that. It should look like that. And then you set them like logs in front of the three goblets, okay. So there should be three of these dudes, okay. Just stack them like that. Can you hold that up?

[student: [unclear]]

You see, you just stack them here in the front, it's okay, like that. There'll be three of them.

Last thing. We have to make wicks for the little goblet things. And everyone has to take a cotton ball ... so take one cotton ball out. Then each person's going to need three toothpicks. So make sure you have a toothpick, make sure you have three toothpicks. The real thing takes about eight hours.

[student: [unclear]]

One day is good because it'll just dry out but you got to do it like, maybe a day or before you go on retreat because it's tiring to stand there for eight hours and do it. No, you can

do it, you can have somebody to help you but it's better to have your own hands on it.

Okay, cut off a quarter of the toothpick. Break off a quarter. However your goblet is you're gonna have to be able to stick it in and the top is going to have to be well above the goblet. So it depends how deep you made your goblet. The toothpick is going to have to be stuck down into the goblet like a wick. And the top is going to have to come up above because it's going to be filled with butter. If the top's down too low it won't burn, okay. So depends on how deep you made your goblet. Now you gotta get some cotton onto the wick. I'm gonna show you how to do it. Put the fat part out like that. You're going to start from the bottom of the wick. And you gotta have a cotton ball in the other hand. If you don't have a cotton ball ... where are they?

[student: [unclear]]

Break a quarter off. You should have three-quarters of a toothpick left. Okay. This is a little tricky, you have to watch, okay. Are you ready? You have to fluff out some of the cotton like that, okay, like that. Just gently pull out the cotton.. That's it. Okay. And then you get the very end of it like that. With just a little bit sticking out, then you take the toothpick and you start rolling and you keep pulling back on the cotton so it doesn't get balled up, you see. You keep pulling back and rolling. You make like ... then you flip it ... Watch. Then you turn it around and then you just work your way on up. It's kinda hard the first time. But you keep wrapping it around like cotton candy or taffy. When you're making one for a butter lamp if they're too thick, they're really gross. They don't burn well, they make a lot of smoke. You'll learn. Okay, but when you're making one for a torma it doesn't much matter. If it's too thick it's all right. If it's too thin it won't burn very well. When you get to the end of the toothpick, pull out a little more ... and you see, like that and then make a little ... and then twist it like that. And there'll be a nice wick, okay. It takes practice, okay. You're probably going to get a big ball on it somewhere. You can pull it off and try it again if you get a big ball. But make sure there's enough at the top. People normally put too much at the bottom and not enough at the top and then it won't burn very long. One layer, okay. Like that.

[student: [unclear]]

I don't think it will burn too well. Huh?

[student: [unclear]]

This is the end of the toothpick and this is the other end of the toothpick and I've got some extra ... It's nice to have some extra fluffing up there, it helps it burn. I'm using about three-quarters of the toothpick but this is top of the toothpick, it's going up way beyond

the top of the toothpick, okay. Yeah, don't be shy with the cotton. If there's not enough cotton it won't keep burning. That's probably okay. Yeah, and then stick it down in the goblet, okay. Like that. If a lot of it's sticking up that's good, okay. But it should be kind of ... It shouldn't be falling over. Then we're going to paint everything. And when you get to the cup, you're going to dump in some extra butter. And you gotta make sure, this is very important, make sure you get the top of the wick with some butter. If this doesn't get wet with butter it won't burn very well. So you should have some kind of liquid butter, not too hard. But this top part of the wick sticking up has to be buttered well or it won't burn. You'll be sitting there all day trying to get it to go but it won't go, okay. So you can do that on all three goblets and then start painting everything. And then fill in the goblets with some ghee. This is where you find out if they did the ghee right. If they didn't do the ghee right, it won't burn [laughs]. It has to be ... all the water has to be out of the ghee. We'll find out, okay. Paint everything. Paint the tormas, paint the goblets, paint the handy ... what do you guys call those things? This is better. That's a little too ... ah no, it's fine. It'll burn kind of dirty but that's ... it's all right. Oh no, it's all right. But you have to dispose of it where a person ... it's like holy substance now, shouldn't be somewhere where somebody would step on it. Animals shouldn't eat it. Okay. Could throw it in the lake, it's okay, the pond.

[end of tape]

**Meditation Module**  
**The Four Powers**  
**Class Three**  
**RAW TRANSCRIPT**

Geshe Michael Roach  
Je Tsongkapa Mantra  
Godstow Retreat Center  
26/12/98 – 3/1/99

Class 4

[Prayer: short mandala]

[Prayer: refuge]

[Prayer: refuge]

[Prayer: refuge]

Okay, we'll start. Today it'll be, in the morning [laughs] ... it's okay, it'll be two parts. We'll talk a little bit about the mantra that you're going to recite and then we'll take a break after a meditation. And then we'll talk about protection, like how to do the tormas, what they do to protect you. We'll make protection markers. Teach you about how to make what's called a protection circle. And then later on in the day you'll start cutting out the paper for your windows and closing them up, okay. And I'll explain about that, all right. So you're going to need your book with the Ganden Hlagyama.

[student: [unclear]]

Fran asked what time silence will start. That will be after we put up the protection markers; that'll be about six, something like that.

We're on page ten, okay. It's good to know the meaning of the mantra you're doing even if it's Sanskrit, okay. I mean, there's ... people say it has its own holy meaning and you don't need to know the meaning, but it's not like that. It does have its own holy meaning whether you know the meaning, but it has more holy meaning if you do know the meaning. Okay, so this particular mantra is written in Tibetan and we'll go over the meaning of it, okay. And you have to think about it while you say it. Later we'll go over the visualisation that you'll be doing while you do the mantra, but right now we'll go over the meaning of the mantra, okay.

Say: {mikme tseway terchen chenresik  
Drime kyenpay wangpo jampel yang,  
Dupung malu jomdze sangway dak,  
Gangchen kepay tsuk-gyen tsongkapa,  
Losang drakpay shabla solwa deb.}

Okay. That was a lung, okay {laughs} meaning you got the oral transmission. I received it from Khen Rinpoche and also the abbot of Sera Mey who started Sera Mey in India. And he gave a very sweet teaching on it to me and [unclear] for a couple of days.

Mikme means ... And you should know his name, is Nawang {Tekchok} and he's pretty much responsible for getting Sera Mey started in India, okay. And he's still alive, and maybe we can meet him in January, okay.

Mikme is a very strange word. Mikme in logic means "invisible" or "imperceptible". Here it means you don't see anything, okay. And it's describing a kind of love. There are three kinds of love described in the scriptures. This kind is one that when it looks at a person and loves them, it sees their emptiness also, okay. So "doesn't see anything" means it doesn't see any self existence. So as you are loving a person, as you have compassion for some sentient being, you're aware at the same time that they're totally empty. And that you could ... because your arm is empty it could be a paw or a hand or Manjushri's arm. And same goes for them, the people that you are loving, okay. And that's the ultimate form of love. So that love is wanting them to be happy, it's wanting them to be free of suffering, but it's also understanding their emptiness, which is how they get free of suffering. So it's a very ... it's an informed love. And it's the best kind of love because it really understands how the object of your compassion could be made into an enlightened being through your efforts. So it's a special kind of love.

It doesn't necessarily mean that at the time you're seeing them you see their emptiness directly, because only an enlightened being can see emptiness and normal reality at the same time. But it means intellectually you are understanding their emptiness as you love them. So, it's understanding clearly the potential that everyone around you could become an enlightened being because they're empty. So as you love them, you know, you're not thinking, oh, this poor guy needs some food or this poor guy needs a place to stay. You're thinking, this guy is empty and I'll love them and then if they learn how to be an enlightened being, if I could impart that to them, then they could be an enlightened being. And they wouldn't have to worry about food or a place to stay or any other problems, okay. So at that same time you are aware of their emptiness.

{Mikme.} {Tsewang}, means "love"; {ter} means ... {ter} you can translate into English as "gold mine" or something like that, okay. Meaning it has exactly those connotations when you say, you know, 'this is a gold mine of information' or 'this is a gold mine of opportunity' or it means a big deposit of anything. Normally it's used for silver mines, gold mines, turquoise mines, okay

{Terchen}, means "great treasure"; {chenresik} means "Avolakiteshvara", okay. People mistranslate the name. {Chen} means "eyes"; {sik} means "to look"; {re} means, you know, like, when you're in love with somebody and you're like ... [laughs] you know, like you're just infatuated with them, it's like infatuated eyes. It's like, you know, like can't take their eyes off of you or something like that It's like this very, very ... it's this way of looking at somebody that you're in love with them. Okay, and that's how Avolakiteshvara ... that's what the name means, Avolakiteshvara, like looks at you with eyes of love, or

something like that.

If you read it a different way, {re} means cloth or rag and I've seen people translate it as 'rag eyes' or something like that. That's very wrong, okay.

{Drime} means "immaculate". {Drima} means a "smell or impurity". {Drime} means immaculate. In this case it refers to knowledge and what it means is knowledge that does not see things as self-existent. In the case of an enlightened being it also means they removed both of the obstacles. Meaning they can see all things in the universe and they removed all negativities, so you can take it either way.

{Kyenpay} means "knowledge"; {wangpo} means like "king or lord" or something like that.

{Jampel yang} means "Manjushri". Manjugosha and Manjushri are the same thing. You can either say {jampel yang} or you can say {jamp yang} or you can say {jampel}, okay. It's all the same thing, they're all the same person.

{Jamp} means "gentle" and {pel} means "glory" and {yang} means "voice". So {manju} means "gentle", {shri} means "glory", {gosha} means "voice". So it's "speaks with a gentle voice of knowledge" or something like that. Speaks softly and carries a big stick of Wisdom, something like that, okay, [laughs] all right.

{Dupung}; this {du} means "demons or devils or bad thoughts", negativities. {Pung} means "an armed force", like marines, airforce, navy, infantry, okay {Pungshi}; in ancient India, you had to have your charioteer, your elephantiers, your archers, your infantry, okay. Those are the four {pungs}. So {pung} means a big army; {dupung} means "army of negative beings or thoughts".

{Malu} means "to the last man". {Malu} means to the last man or ... it means all, completely, entirely.

{Jom} means "smash or defeat". You know it in the word [drakchom], arhat.

{dze} means "who has done that".

{Sangway dak} means the "lord of secrets" and it refers to Vajradhara, which is the form that Lord Buddha takes to teach tantra, okay, so that's the ... if you met the Buddha and the Buddha was teaching you tantra they would look like Vajradhara. That's what {sangway dak} means.

{Gangchen}; {gang} means ... those of you who know Tibetan {gang} without the {sa} means "for or what or how or when", but if you add the {sa} it changes to "snow". So

that's a word for snow. It's a synonym for {kawa} . So sometimes they say {kawa chen}, sometimes they say {gangchen}, okay.

{Chen} means “having that”. So {gangchen} means “the snowy lands”. It's the ... the Sanskrit for that is Himalaya, okay [laughs]. {gangchen}

{Kepay} means “great thinkers or wise men”.

{Tsuk-gyen} means “the top of your head” right here, this ... you know, right at the top, the very tip-top of your head. {Tsuk-gyen} means “ornament for the top of the head”. You could say crowning jewel okay, {tsuk-gyen}. But really it has a slightly different meaning which is that in Asia, to put your feet on someone's head is the ultimate insult. And if you were going to humble yourself before someone you would touch your head at their feet. And that would be a way of saying, you are god and I am dirt. You know, something like that. So {tsuk-gyen} means, all other wise men of Tibet would take the top of their heads and put it at the feet Je Tsongkapa. Meaning you're incomparable or something like that. And you know, it sounds like this Tibetan exaggeration thing but I've actually read, you know, Pabongka Rinpoche has a beautiful section of comments about Je Tsongkapa made by the great thinkers of the other traditions of Tibet. Like Karmapas and they're very wonderful. They're extraordinary. Like they'll say, oh, Tsongkapa ... you know, one of the Karmapas wrote this praise of Je Tsongkapa saying you're just unbelievable ... And I was like are you sure? And I went and checked with Dr. {Shens} and I found it and it's very beautiful. So he was like recognised among his peers in Tibet in those days. And those were like the renaissance of Buddhism in Tibet. Those were the big days. The 1400's were the good old days. Buddhism just flowered. Great things happened; Ganden, Drepung, Sera, Tashilhunpo, Kunbum – were all founded within a few years by Je Tsongkapa's students. And it was just an incredible time in Tibet. It was the beginning of a whole era that ended in 1959, okay.

{Tsongkapa}; {tsong} means “onion”. Some people say “onion man” or something like that. It doesn't have anything to do with that. We read a text by Dharmabhadra saying there's a river back in where he used to live called Tsongka, and he was born near that river. So he was called the one from the Tsongka River which is Tsongkapa. There's also a mountain near there called Tsongka, Mount Tsongka. So anyway, maybe a long, long time ago there used to be onions there, I don't know but I don't think it's appropriate to call him Mr Onion Man. Tsongkapa.

You might see it sometimes spelled with a 'b', a 'ba' before it because that's an ancient spelling. This is a modern spelling.

{Losang Drakpa} we went through yesterday. That's his ordination name.

{Shabla}, means “at his feet”.

{Solwa deb}, means “I make requests”.

Okay. So now we’ll go into the ... that’s the, you know, etymological meaning of it. Now, what’s the meaning meaning of it? Okay, there’s this thing about enlightened beings that they have to have three qualities.

Say, {kyen tse ngu kyen tse nuyen den}.

And it’s explained like this. These lines are reflecting that Je Tsongkapa has {kyen tse nuyen den} okay. {Kyenpay} means “knowledge” and it means the ability to see all things. Like once you get enlightened the big advantage is that you can see the whole future, and on top of that you can read all the people’s minds simultaneously. You can see everything that is ever going to happen, and you can read the mind of every person in the universe, all at the same time. So it makes you like perfectly equipped to help people. You can read their minds and you know what’s going to happen to them in the future. So it’s like a perfect viewpoint from which to help people and to serve people. So Je Tsongkapa has this quality. You know ... well, we’ll talk about it.

{Tseway} means “love”. And they always say in the scriptures that it doesn’t help if they could read your mind and see your future if they didn’t care about you, okay. I mean, they wouldn’t do anything [laughs] for you. So {tseway} means ... love means they have the love to want to do something for you. They say that they love you more than you love yourself. So that would be a lot [laughs] okay, [laughter]. So like whatever concern or love you have for your own welfare, they have more than that, okay.

{Tibetan} means, it doesn’t do any good ... if they know about your situation and then they want to help you, but if they have no ability to help you, if they don’t have the power to help you then it’s useless. So {Tibetan} means power, the power to help you. And this is like some extraordinary thing. Their ability to emanate for example.

So people ask me, do you believe in God? I said ... I used to just say no, you know, and then go and prove it from the fourth chapter of the Abhidharma, you know. And say no, the world wasn’t made by God, it was made by your karma. And it’s silly to believe in God, there’s no such thing. But then, the people I said that to, my friends who were Christian, who were smart, they just got depressed because they didn’t have Buddhism. You know, [laughs] so they decided to get ... you know, they’d call me a year later and say, “I’ve been depressed for a year, you know, and to think that no-one’s watching over me and no-one cares”. And then I’d say, oh wait, that’s a big mistake. There are people watching over you. And this is the idea of certain beings have been following you from life to life and [cries] and they know what’s happening to you better than you know. And they keep appearing throughout your life, as different people, watching you, taking care of you.

Trying to help you. Trying to reach you. And Je Tsongkapa's like that. So je Tsongkapa appeared in the time of the Buddha, Je Tsongkapa appeared later. Je Tsongkapa appeared as Padmasambhava, then had to come back again to introduce Buddhism as Atisha. And then came as Je Tsongkapa. And then has come as different beings since then.

You don't have to think of Tsongkapa as some historical figure from the 1400's or something like that. He continues to emanate as different people. They're not restricted to emanating as one person, okay. They could be many people. And since he has {Tibetan} he would want to follow you round all the time and chase you around, and keep trying to get you enlightened, okay.

So, when you do this mantra, you don't have to think that you are doing a mantra to some Tibetan guy who's been dead for five hundred years. It's not like that. You're doing a mantra to someone who's been around you frequently and following you, cares about you, knows about your life, knows what you're thinking and is constantly emanating around you to help you, okay. So as you do the mantra you think like that, okay.

We'll do some ... we'll do a practice, okay, we'll practice it a little bit. It's good to get it on your tongue they say. And after a while you won't have to look at it, okay. And we'll go through the normal preliminaries first, okay.

So get ready. [laughs] Start by watching your breath. Get into a position that you won't move. There's a couple of movers on the right side here. Don't move, okay [laughs]. Get into a position that you won't have to move. Again, when we say watch your breath you're being aware of the touch of the breath on the opening of the nostrils. The cool air hitting it on the way in and the warm air coming out. I think about three rounds of ten is good. The out-breath is the first half and the in-breath is the second half of number one. And then you go like that. If your mind wanders major you have to start over at the count. If your mind gets distracted very instantaneously by some sound or something, and you come right back, you don't have to start counting again, okay.

{breath meditation}

And then take refuge, mainly in the emptiness around you; that you're alive and the people around you and the place you live are all empty. And if you kept your vows well then everything could change. That's taking refuge. That's the only thing that can protect you.

Then think about bodhichitta. Someone you know who's sick or depressed or in trouble, all by accident of their ignorance. They don't know what to do so they collected karma and now they have to go through that problem.

{visualisation}

Then invite a holy being, Je Tsongkapa if you can, as we spoke about yesterday, from Maitreya's heart on a cloud. And have them sit in front of you. Maitreya's this beautiful, beautiful bodhisattva.

{visualisation}

Then make offerings.

{visualisation}

Then think about something negative you thought yesterday or today. Or something you said. And purify it.

{visualisation}

And then something good.

{visualisation}

Then ask for teachings. And for good meditation.

{visualisation}

And lastly, ask the lamas to stay near, and your good friends and Je Tsongkapa.

Okay, now we'll do the mantra. So if you have to look at the sheet then you get your sheets. It's good to keep count of how many mantras you do. You can't count these until we close the place, okay. These are practice, all right. And there's some rules about doing the mantras. Okay. Your mala has a hundred and eight or a hundred and ten beads or something like that. The eight or then ten is for mistakes. So one round you only count as a hundred. That's why there's extra. If you have a major problem, like if you interrupt the mantra with other speech, like if you're half way through a round and you say how are you doing or something like that, you have to go back. There's a rule, I'll get it in the break. Something like ten. You have to take off ten. If you have a bad day on a mantra retreat you can end up with less than you started with, you know. If you yawn you have to take some off, if you burp, if you fart, like that. If you start to do another mantra 'cos your mind is wandering [laughs]. It happens.

They say generally, to sort of mutter it so you can hear it, okay. Loud enough for yourself to hear. Just sort of a loud whisper or something like that. So it will be a little noisy, touch noisy in here, okay. But they say that to hear it from other people is a blessing. And other beings are in this room and they will hear it also, okay.

So what I'd like you to do is we'll do mantra for, let's see, maybe twenty minutes or something. It's this five line mantra here. Sometimes there's a sixth line at the beginning like an introductory line, you don't have to do that. You'll start with 'mikme tseway', all right. Try to maintain the visualisation of Je Tsongkapa sitting in front of you. And his hand on your chest blessing you. You're asking him for blessings, you're asking for knowledge.

People think this is stupid, you know. You can go study ACI courses and you don't need this kind of stuff. That's a mistake, okay. Je Tsongkapa spent ... You can't find a better scholar than Je Tsongkapa. He spent half his time doing this kind of thing. He would go in a cave and do mantra retreats. There are many, many, many stories. He would go with {Umapa}, one of his lamas, and they would go each into his own room and do their mantras and then they'd come out and have tea together and they'd tell each other what they saw. And {Umapa} would say, you know, I met Manjushri. And Je Tsongkapa would say, Oh, I'm really jealous, I couldn't see him yet. And then {Umapa} would say, well, do you want to ask him any questions? [laughter]. And then Je Tsongkapa would actually ask questions to {Umapa} and {Umapa} would go ask Manjushri. And then he'd come back and tell Je Tsongkapa what Manjushri said. Then later, Manjushri tried really ... I mean, Je Tsongkapa tried really hard and he was able to meet Manjushri directly. And they say that most of his writings are dictation that he took. Which you can believe. How could somebody write ten thousand pages of that stuff, like that. Ultimately Je Tsongkapa is Manjushri.

The purpose of the mantra is {Tibetan}. He has the love of Chenresik, which is the embodiment of all the Buddha's love. He has the {kyenpay} of Manjushri, has the knowledge of Manjushri. And then he has the power of a tantric warlord, okay. Like some powerful tantric being. So really the mantra is ... The first three lines are {Tibetan} and then a line of a ... {losang drakpa shabla} ... where is it? {Gangchen kepay tsuk-gyen tsongkapa,

Losang drakpa shabla solwa deb.} The last two lines are like just to Je Tsongkapa. Meaning you don't have to say the first three lines really because he is the other three. You see what I mean? So really the last two lines are saying he is the culmination of the first three. And there's lots of ... there's many, many proofs for that. I thought it was all hocus pocus and stuff like that. You read Je Tsongkapa's biography, you read certain sutras, he's clearly predicted in some sutras by Lord Buddha. He was a monk named {Pema Nyenden} in the time of the Buddha. And Buddha predicted who he would be. And I used to think it was all like made up by people who wanted it to be like that but we've been studying the original texts, it really does say that. It is very clear that he is predicted and what he will do. That he will found a monastery called Ganden. And all of that is clear. His mother had distinct dreams of Avolakiteshvara coming into her womb during her pregnancy. And there are many amazing things about visions of Manjushri. He used to be haunted by visions of Manjushri as a child.

When he was a child, Atisha and Manjushri would keep coming in his dreams and teaching him. By the age of three he was already ... took his first, you know, his layman's vows. So he was like extraordinary. And I don't think it's b.s., I think it's for real. I've been studying the sutras. Just this last week we spent a few days reading all the sutras and I think it's for real.

So you're asking for a blessing from this being, okay. And it will come in the form of the people around you. He will appear or she will appear around you. And then you have to be ... you'll recognise them because of the blessing of the mantra. And that's the reason to do the mantras, okay.

So do the mantras. It'll be about twenty minutes. They say good to hold it near your heart. If you get tired, don't worry about it, you know, switch hands, do whatever you have to do. But start like that.

[student: [unclear]]

Generally, you can use whatever hand is comfortable. {Tibetan} if you know what that stuff is about, you know what to do, okay.

And go through the visualisation. Make the body clear. Start with the silhouette. Then do the eyes, then do the face, then do the hair, then do the body. The warmth of the body. The movement of the body. Get, you know, take the time. Don't waste the time. Don't let your mind wander. When your mind wanders, bring it back, okay.

{mantra recitation}

If your hand gets tired you can put it down, okay [laughs].

Okay, I'd like you to take about a fifteen, twenty minute break. And then when you come back we'll talk about protection circles and stuff like that.

[Prayer: short mandala]

We'll start at ten minutes to nine. It's eight-thirty now.

{break}

{Prayer: shot mandala}

We're going to talk a little bit about ... mmm, how the tormas work and then how you do your protection and stuff like that. The tormas we made are sort of like the sutra tormas

and if you do a real {le rung} you have to get instructions on how to make the actual tantric tormas. And that's a different story. You have to learn that. I just wanted to get you into the ... all the ... what do you call it ... these are like all the patterns that you have to have, these are all the elements you need during a tantric retreat. But they're all like 'sutra-ised'. So you'll have to get the actual instructions for them from your tantric lama. But these are all the elements and all the steps you have to go through before you put yourself into retreat, okay.

So I want to go over the tormas we made. The first big torma with the two other tormas; that was to Je Tsongkapa and his two students, Gyaltsab Je and Kedrub Je. If you're doing a {le rung} for Vajrayogini then there would be a similar amount of tormas with different shape, different colors, different {karyens}. And you have to learn that.

That torma, beginning tomorrow morning, you should start adding one pyramid a day on that plate. So you take one from the pyramid plate and you add it to that plate in front of the tormas and it means you are refreshing it, okay. If you're in a long retreat and they start to dry out and break up and fall apart or some mice get to them, you have to do them over again, okay. It takes a whole day. It's very exhausting so you probably don't want to ... you know, you'll get to where you really want to keep them away from the mice. It kind of breaks your concentration if you have to do them all over again. So when you're in a real retreat, like a month or six weeks, which I think if you do a mantra retreat for Vajrayogini you should take your time. There's people finished in fourteen days. The guy's name is Steve Foster. They changed his name to Steve Faster. [laughter] You know, but it doesn't work. Don't rush it. The mantras are supposed to be clear and your motivation is supposed to be clear and you're supposed to be relaxed and you're supposed to be enjoying it. And, you know, there's other people who tried to finish in two weeks and went crazy. For two days they were running around ... It's not worth it. It's better to try to get a full ... In my mind it takes about five weeks. If you count all the set up time to do a nice slow one. To do a bhum; 'bhum' means one hundred thousand mantras. And if you take Vajrayogini you're supposed to do four of those. And each one changes you vastly.

This is not like some kind of ridiculous thing that Tibetan people do, yak herders who don't know any philosophy or something like that. They're very profound and they change you a lot. Even this mantra retreat will change you a lot.

So that's the first torma. And that will stay on your altar the whole time, okay. You keep refreshing it every day. At the end ... always make a few more pyramids than you intend to stay in because then you're not under any pressure to come out. You might find at the end that you want to stay in a few more days or something like that, a few more years [laughs]. Anyway, it's good to have a few extra ones. So we made ten. We only have seven days or something. You make some extra ones, okay. So you'll start adding those tomorrow morning.

Tomorrow morning also you should have three rows of water bowls, okay. And just a normal order of the water bowls. Starting from your left as you face the altar, you know, two waters, you know, the ... if you don't know, ask somebody. And you should fill them up every morning. The first one should be water with saffron in it if you can. The second one should be water with saffron in it if you can: {argum}, {pardyum}, ... The third one, the custom is to put rice up to the level of the top of the {ting}, that offering cup. You know, so you fill it up a little bit extra and then you sweep it off like that. And then you put a flower there. You'll see two kinds of flowers. One you can put fresh flowers or you can put {Tsampa kar} which is actually a seed pod that looks like a flower. I don't know if you've seen Rinpoche use them but Tibetans use those 'cos they last a long time. They look like flowers and they last about six months or something. So you can stick those in there also. Or anything, what do you call it? Those dried flowers. What do they call them, the thin ones. The very thin dried flowers with the little thin stalk and the little tiny flowers.

[student; [unclear]]

There's another name for it. I'll think of it. Anyway.

[laughter]

They dye the colors on them.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, anyway. No, dry, dry. There's a special word for it. I forget. Anyway, you can use those. The fourth cup should be rice, a little bit heaped up so the top looks a little round, so you don't scoop it off like that. It should be a little round. And then you put two incense sticks side by side. Try to get them straight like that. By the way, there's a trick to get the rice in the bowl. You get a bigger bowl and fill it full of rice and just scoop it. You don't sit there with rice and try to fill the bowl, okay; take you all day. So you got {dupe}.

Then {aloke} means put a lamp. You can put a tea-light in there but according to the rules of Godstow you can't light it, so you can imagine that it's burning, okay. Or you can put a butter lamp or whatever okay: {aloke}.

{Gande}; the next bowl would be again, water with some kind of perfume in it. Like if you have some scent or what do you call it? ... orange stuff ...

[student; [unclear]]

Huh? No. Saffron. Dump some saffron in it, okay. {Argyam, pargyum, gande, niude}, okay. And then niude which means something to eat. I mean, normally they put ... they fill up the bowl with rice and then put like three cookies there; white is better. White or

yellow. They think it's inauspicious to use black. Okay.

And then if you have music you can put a CDROM, a music CDROM or a bell or a tape or a guitar pick or something like that. And that represents music.

So you guys should do that every morning in your rooms now, starting tomorrow morning. Three rows, in a row. Not quite touching; like one rice length apart between the bowls. Very important. It's important to do it right when you're in retreat. When you're in retreat it's very important to do the offerings right in the morning. You have finally time to do it. Get up early. Like when I'm in retreat it takes about forty-five minutes or something. Take time. Do it really nice. Put out some fresh cookies. We have lots of ... Yeah. I mean, when I go in retreat I buy literally about a hundred boxes of cookies or something and store them and change it every day. You know, change it every day and make it nice, have a good time with it. Make it really pretty, put different things there. Yeah?

[student; [unclear]]

Oh, you don't have to change the rice. And you don't have to change the incense. Yeah?

[student; [unclear]]

You could, yeah. I found that if you have certain kinds of flowers it works well. Some kinds it doesn't work too well. What do you call those things? Straw flowers. Yeah. Those are good. Yeah, those are really nice, okay. So I ask each room to do that. Have three rows of water bowls like that, okay. Starting from the left going to the right as you face the altar.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, do the one farthest away from you first. Normally what I do is fill up all the rice things first. I put in the water last and then fill in all the waters. When you're doing seven water bowls you stack them, you fill the first one on top and then you ... It represents the turning of the wheel that we talked about in the last class. And you fill each one from the last one. But when you're doing this, I spread them out, do the rice ones first and then fill in the water ones. And then I put them back together, 'cos otherwise it's impossible. There's a really neat trick; get a plastic straw for cleaning up. After you're all done and everything looks great then one of the rice piles will fall off onto the table. It's really easy to suck them up with a plastic straw. Otherwise you have to move like thirteen cups and start all over again, okay. It's a little trick, it helps ... saves about an hour, okay [laughs]  
[laughter]

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, you take out the water but you don't have to take out the rice . Just leave it there.  
Okay. Yeah?

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah. It's practice for something that's coming later, okay. And later on there'll be a little bit of a reversal about the rows. But right now you can think Je Tsongkapa and his two disciples. Okay.

There was something else about that. Oh, and then then water should be thrown outside where somebody won't step on it. Now, you guys can't go outside after this evening, so how're your going to do that?

[student; [unclear]]

Okay.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah okay, the waste bucket. It's considered in ... it's like considered holy substances after that. So you're not allowed to throw it on the ground where somebody might step on it. You're not allowed to pour the water out in the toilet or something like that. If you're living in the city and there's no choice, and there's absolutely no other ... you know, I used to pour it out the window, the neighbour started screaming one day [laughs]. Then you can ... in your mind mentally, you know, believe that you're not throwing it in the toilet and throw it in the sink or something. Never throw it into the toilet but you can pour it into the sink but better if you can avoid it. Like Leon uses it for his plants and stuff like that, so that's nice.

[student; [unclear]]

Like cookies and stuff?

[student; [unclear]]

I'd say every day you could put them out.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, or out there. But you'll see.

[student; [unclear]]

I wouldn't burn them. You just throw them out. Rinpoche just puts them out in the woods.

[student; [unclear]]

Well, not for animals but if they happen to eat it, I don't know. Technically, [laughter] I've heard two stories. I don't know which is right. I mean, Rinpoche says that they could get sick if you feed it to them directly. Then again, he always puts his offerings out there and they end up eating, I don't know. I wouldn't purposely feed them to them, but if they happened to come ...

[student; [unclear]]

It seems like ... that's ... I mean, from what Rinpoche does, that's what Rinpoche does.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, or just where someone won't step on it.

[student; [unclear]]

But take your time and make it really, really nice. It's a big part of retreat that you make the offerings nice. It's making a statement that you believe in these beings, that's all. Otherwise it looks stupid. If there are no enlightened beings it's stupid to lay out those things. Like Santa Claus cookies or something. It shows that you don't know what's going on. If you set them out it's an indication that you do believe in them and that you really want to meet them, and you want to see them. It's an act of faith in a way. So it's important to do it nice. Yea?

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, maybe that we could burn I guess or keep separately in a separate garbage bag.

[student; [unclear]]

Okay. Mmm. Now, the other tormas. What was the next one we made? The single one. We'll be making protection markers. These are made with a couple of pieces of kusha grass. I'll show you how to make 'em before we finish today, this session. And I mean, you put them in the four directions outside. It's the last thing you do before you close your house. So you'll ... it'll be these markers, they're on a piece of paper with some kusha grass on them. And we'll all make one each, okay. And then you go outside to the boundaries of where you're going to be, okay, so it can be outside the house for example. We'll be putting them on trees right around the house and you go in the four directions. We'll start with this direction 'cos our door is here, this direction. So start there, work our

way in that direction and then that direction. And then we'll put one here at the door and then we'll come in and lock the door and then you're here until next Sunday, okay. You can't go outside. And you should be very strict about it. When you do retreat you should be very strict about it, okay.

I think once you get better at retreat, once you've done a few, you can start to expand the borders. You can try to go outside a little bit and walk or something. But I would suggest doing three or four without it. Just inside the house, okay. It makes you a little crazy. It builds up wind. And that's the whole point. It puts you on sort of an edge. And then you start ... things start ... you start understanding things you didn't understand before. And you have to be careful that you don't go past that and get wacky. But there's a place between wacky and here that's the right place, okay. It's like a pressure cooker. You have to make a little pressure on yourself. And so it will hurt to sit there that long.

By the way, your jaw will get sore from the mantras, you know, right here, first few days. Don't worry about it, it's normal, okay. Your lips will start to crack. You need some lip stuff, okay. And your back'll hurt, and your bum'll hurt and everything else will hurt. But try to stay still and do your mantras, okay.

Oh, I got the list of penalties, okay [laughs] [laughter]  
And it's kind of a ... it's bad news because, you know, really you have days when you're just taking off more than you're putting on, but anyway. For a yawn; take off three. You just go back three beads, do see what I mean, if you catch yourself yawning. Where's Michael Wick? He's going to be in trouble [laughter] [laughs]. Okay. [laughs]

[student; [unclear]]

If it's a half yawn, take off one and a half, no [laughs]. No, it should be a full yawn. If you suppress it it's okay. Coughing out loud or talking to someone, take off five. Talking meaning any other words. Like if you start to say some other mantra or something like that.

[student; [unclear]]

I think you better take off five. By the way, the point is that after we close it tonight, nothing comes out of your mouth but mantra, okay. That's the whole point, okay. So if you cheat and talk to somebody you're just ruining your own retreat. Shouldn't be anything come out of your mouth except mantra. They even say take care of your mouth. Don't put a knife in your mouth. Don't stick anything in your mouth. That's when they say don't blow out candles after that. Do it with your hand or knock them out. Nothing should come out of your mouth but the mantra, okay. And you can keep doing it all the time while you're ... as you go to sleep or anything like that. If you have {dakye} commitments, {tundruk} commitments, that's no problem. Keep doing them. That's as

good as mantra.

Farting, take off seven, okay [laughter] [laughs] Spitting, blowing your nose, or sneezing, ten [laughs]. Falling asleep, fifteen.

[student; [unclear]]

Sorry?

[student; do you ever go below zero?]

[laughs] I didn't catch it. Sorry?

[student; [unclear]]

Oh yeah, you can. I've had days. No, not really, it's hard to do that. But I think in a ten minute period you can go below zero. But ... yeah?

[student; [unclear]]

That's okay. As long as it keeps going. We'll be doing ... We'll be going over the visualisation. I get to talk for another half a day or so. And there's a very sweet visualisation. There's three parts to the visualisation; two of them are explained in the book and one of them isn't explained in the book. Yeah?

[student; [unclear]]

That's no problem. We're talking after you start your mantra.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, yeah. [laughs] It's not in the scriptures. Yeah?

[student; [unclear]]

It doesn't say anything like that. You can do it but try not to, it disturbs other people. It's better for you if ... Again, it builds up a little pressure inside if you don't move. If it hurts a little bit. If you start getting wind, like a tightness in your chest or feeling shaky or something like that then move around, get comfortable. If it gets really bad talk to Fran. And you know, she'll give you some kitchen duty or something like that. But try to hold on as much as you can. You have to be somewhere in between.

Yeah.

[student; [unclear]]

The mantra? Yeah. Okay. By the way, the name is 'miktsema', very, very famous in Tibet. We just got a shipment of data from India. It's two volumes ... how many? Hundred and three texts on this practice. She had to split them up. She had to find where they started, where they stopped, who wrote them and stuff like that and it's beautiful. Okay. Did you have a question?

[student; [unclear]]

Protection marker will be the last ... We'll make them now. We'll put them up, the last act before you get locked up.

[student; [unclear]]

I'm thinking five ... Do you have a {tsegyey} at five? No, we have to do it at five.

[student; [unclear]]

At five? Yeah. That's okay.

[student; [unclear]]

Okay, then we have to do, oh, that's too bad

[student; [unclear]]

That's why I wanted to do the ...

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, it has to be done. Well, let's see. We'll do it at seven, okay. We'll put them ...

[student; [unclear]]

No, we'll do it at seven, it's okay.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, and then we'll start to ... Well, it only takes about five minutes. You just walk around and pin them up and then come in. By the way, if you're not doing {tsechu} just go to your room and do, you know, do mantras.

[student; [unclear]]

If you ...

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah. [Unclear] By the way, they were talking about putting all the snorers upstairs or downstairs. Does it matter to you guys, the men ... Are you sleeping all right? It's important to sleep all right. [laughter] Huh?

[student; [unclear]]

Where do you want to put the snorers? Upstairs ... Which is worse? [laughter]

[student; [unclear]]

Maybe talk with each other and make a plan 'cos it's know it's ... it's gonna be important to get your sleep. You're gonna need the sleep. Sleep well.

[student; [unclear]]

Okay. It's important

[student; [unclear]]

What's lights out? Ten o'clock.

[student; [unclear]]

Maybe ten o'clock the police come through and just let this guy through.

[student; [unclear]]

Okay. So please ... people need their sleep or else they'll get really wacky, too wacky. Okay Wacky.

[student; [unclear]]

That's good. Okay, so we're going to make these protection markers. When we actually put them up and then come back, we'll stop on the porch here and we'll do ... there's a prayer that you do to empower the protection marker. So you like load it, you know, activate it. When you do that prayer you use a torma. If you're doing Vajrayogini it's a

deity called {Tibetan}. We'll be using ... we'll be asking actually Je Tsongkapa to come and to emanate a protector at each of the protection markers. These things really work. I mean, I have personally seen someone with protection markers in a huge forest fire, like fifteen mile line of fire and the fire just split and went around the place. And you know, I'm not into new agey stuff like that. I don't believe in superstition, but I've seen it, so it's cool. If you really empower them properly. And of course the main thing is to keep out your bad thoughts, you know what I mean. It's not like where spirits so much are going to bother you as much as your own jealousy, and being cranky at a fellow student or something like that. Something that can ruin your meditation. Maybe the worst one is wandering. When you just wander off from that visualisation.

By the way, it's important to keep the visualisation moving. You know, you can't ... this is another Muchen Dharmabhadra question. One of his students said, you know, I have trouble sitting there for four hours seeing some guy touching my chest ... what am I ... it has to ... nothing happening, you know. And he says, quote, you know, "Any intelligent person would have the same problem." So you have to keep the meditation going. I'll teach you. There's like eleven different visualisations that can be going on at this time. I don't want to overload you but I also want you to be challenged and so the visualisation moves, okay. You can't sit there for four hours and just visualise ... It's had to visualise some guy. There has to be something, kind of movement. A normal sadhana moves it like a movie. And should be the same thing, okay. So that's what the single torma is for. And then we'll leave that torma outside on the steps on the stone.

Before we put up the protection markers you're supposed to go through the house and burn a lot of incense. I'll leave that to Fran. Just before that you go through the whole house and do a lot of incense ... And if you have flower petals you throw them on the ... all over the floors, okay [laughter].

[student; [unclear]]

No, it's to purify the place inside.

[student; [unclear]]

It's actually nice to see the flower petals for a week.

[student; [unclear]]

[laughter]

Then you take the sacred substance which is milk and honey and cow poop and you smear it on the walls. No. [laughs] [laughter]. But we'll save that for another time. I haven't actually tried that one. [laughs] [laughter].

And then before we go out to put up the markers we'll do a {gektor}. Okay, that was the last thing you did with the three goblets and the three ... and that's an offering to the local spirits and to pretas in this area who can disturb your meditation. And that's like, we're going to do a retreat here, please don't mind us. We ask you to help us. We ask you to cooperate. And if you don't, may your head split open [laughs] by the power of this retreat. That's actually what you say. Something like that. So we'll go out on the back porch, on the stone, and we'll do the heart sutra and then we'll do that mantra: {om gate gate paragate parasamgate bodhi soha}. And then we'll light the {gektors}. So that'll be ... they should be out there by seven, okay, so by seven o'clock your gektor ... {gek} means "obstacle", {tor} means "torma", okay, should be out on the back steps there. Well away from the house okay [laughs].

No, you don't go through the house. I mean, normally you light it in the house and go outside, but it's too much. We'll burn the house down. If it's too windy we might do them somewhere else, okay. But we'll see. Yeah?

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, yeah, okay, all right.

[student; [unclear]]

No, not till seven actually.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, you can. At seven we'll close the house, start {Tibetan}, then ...

[student; [unclear]]

You mean the thing on the wall? It's in Rinpoche's retreat commentary for Vajrayogini ... (whispers – Art has a copy in English) Okay. What else? What was the other torma? We made another torma? No, that was it. Huh?

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, the little one is for the marker, right. So I guess we only made three plates, yeah, okay. Oh, and the pyramids. So you know what to do with the pyramids. Okay, we'll start making the protection markers.

[student; [unclear]]

You're going to need a pen. Red is better. Pink is okay. And you can share, it's just three letters, okay. Actually they need ... do you have more kusha? You're going to need about four of these for each person.

[student; [unclear]]

And then you have to reserve some, like forty pieces for something else.

[student; [unclear]]

By the way, it'll end around nine-thirty, ten, and then you can come back and sleep.

[student; [unclear]]

Ten-thirty.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, that's enough what you have there.

[student; [unclear]]

Say again.

[student; [unclear]]

Well you need like four like that per person. Small is okay. Take two pieces of paper.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah, it's okay to pause. She asked if it's okay to pause as you're doing the mantra. That's fine. It's good ... I mean, ideally it's to continue doing the mantra while you do the visualisation, but it's okay to pause if you feel more comfortable. And normally you keep the book next to you. And then every time you do a hundred you do a hatch mark. And then keep your counts that way. If you have a mala ... Can I see your mala? If you have this kind of mala with the counters, you can ... You do your hundreds on one counter and you do your thousands on another counter, you see.

So you ... like ... every thing should come in towards the mala. So you start by pushing all the counters out and after then you finish a hundred you move one down. And after you finish another hundred you move another down. And when you get to a thousand, then you go to the other counter and move one down. So I suggest you do the ... the dorje is good for hundreds and the bell is good for thousands, okay. And when Rinpoche escaped from Tibet, he only took one thing with him. He was in the bathroom when the first shell hit his house and he had a towel and his rosary. And he ran to the side of the mountain

next to Sera which looks very much like Dragoon Mountain. And at the top he realised he'd only taken his rosary and his towel. He's just, you know, and then he sent Losang (?) back to get supplies [laughs]. And he met these bandits, and it's a long story [laughter] ... anyway ... who were already ransacking the monastery, you know, ... but anyway. That's a good one. But he had a mala that had these counters that were carved out of steel by this amazing old woman in Lhasa. Like this yogini. We made moulds and we cast them in silver. We did one in gold and gave it to His Holiness. We still have the moulds. I think it'd be cool if somebody wants to do like ... Fran Dayan knows this stuff. Just take it to one of those guys on Forty-seventh Street and we could make them. Everybody could have one. They're really cool. This is the actual ... what it looks like. It's very pretty and it was carved out of steel by this ... like this eccentric yogini in Lhasa. So if you want to do that, that's a project we can do. You know, and then they ... they just ... they cast them and then they polish them. Then you gotta get somebody to help you make the ... These threads were made by Rinpoche. You actually take threads and you braid it in a certain way. It lasts ... This one's been about, I don't know, twelve years or something. It lasts a long time, okay.

Okay, so you fold your paper in three parts. By the way, if you don't have counters on your mala just make hatch marks in a book, okay.

[student; [unclear]]

We'll start with one. So line it up like that. Doesn't have to be exact. And then keep folding it until you think it will rip without ... you know what I mean. So you can rip it in a line.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah. And then use your fingernail, your thumb nail. And then you can just rip it. We gave you two pieces in case you mess up one. You're going to need four pieces so you have to do the second sheet anyway. Then fold it like this, okay. I mean, on mine it comes out to five. Like you're rolling a cigarette or whatever. The point is to end up with something that looks like that. So you just fold it five times. There's five panels here. The number's not so important. It's just that the width should be about like that. That's fine, that's good.

[student; [unclear]]

Two and a half {tsors}. Do you know what a {tsor} is? That's how they measure things in Tibet. That's four {tsors}, that's two {tsors}, okay. That's a {tru}, that's a {kung} that's a {dom} It's very nice for measuring things. Red is better. Orange is not as good. You can share, I mean, there's enough. Huh?

[student; [unclear]]

It's a little too thick for it I think.

[private conversation]

It should be like on the second panel. If you fold it all up, there'll be one panel. That's going to be the back where the opening is. Should write it right here.

[student; [unclear]]

Ora can help you in the back. She's studied it a lot. And you have to do it on all four, right, meaning ... Not like an accordion. Should be like ... by the way, don't fold it like an accordion, fold it like a cigarette, okay. If you remember those days [laughs].

**Meditation Module**  
**The Four Powers**  
**Class Four**  
**RAW TRANSCRIPT**

Geshe Michael Roach  
Je Tsongkapa Mantra  
Godstow Retreat Center  
26/12/98 – 3/1/99

Class 5

[Prayer: Short Mandala]

This last ... we only have like half an hour. We're going to do a brief protection circle meditation. The full meditation for a {Tibetan} is different and you have to learn that and study it. But there's a sutra one and it's very powerful and you should learn it okay. So we'll go through that very quickly right now okay.

So get ready to meditate.

It's good to do this briefly before each session. And our sessions will probably be like three hours broken up with rest periods in between, and you know to drink ... I don't believe in going more than 45 minutes, an hour. I think you just get distracted, so we'll be breaking it up.

But at the beginning and the very end of the three hours of session you should do a protection circle, okay. And we'll go through that. Also they say in retreat or any other time it's very important to do one as you go to bed, as you fall asleep. And then your dreams will be good.

They say the mind is very vulnerable to...to influences, especially around two or three o'clock or something like that.

Lets say you wake up like in the middle of the night and you're having anxiety about something or you start to hate somebody. And then when you wake up they seem okay, you know what I mean. And your mind is being influenced by some kind of negativity or something. They say your mind is very vulnerable during certain hours of the night, especially in the middle of your sleeping periods and towards the end. So it's good to do a protection circle before then.

The principal of a real protection circle is bodhicitta, okay. I mean the active ingredient, if it were bottled, would be thinking about other people's problems okay. And that protects you. That puts up a wall around you and you cannot be influenced so much. In retreat, if you get into deep retreat, after two, three weeks you sometimes...you get more sensitive to spirits. Like you don't believe them before that. Then you actually begin to believe them. You begin to ... sometimes you can see something or you know, like I'm not a new age person. I don't believe in ouije boards and all that stuff. But there are spirits. They do bother you. If you get into deep retreat you might become aware of them slightly, you know what I mean. And then all of these things work very nicely okay. They don't like it

when people are doing stuff like this. They would rather you running around New York trying to collect money that you can die with you know. So this kind of thing they don't... the don't appreciate this kind of stuff. So this is actually the strongest way to form a protection circle around your mind okay, which is with bodhicitta; with thinking about someone else okay.

So the whole argument about protectors is doubly ridiculous because they're arguing about the concept of loving each other, you see what I mean. Protectors have no power at all until you are thinking about them with bodhicitta, or they represent bodhicitta. So to fight about them is the opposite of bodhicitta, so it's a joke. It's like, must be an inside joke or something, you know. It's like arguing about what kind of non-arguing would be best for people, you see what I mean. So anyway the power of a protector comes from bodhicitta; how much bodhicitta you can get. And the more...anytime you have a problem in retreat mentally, like some kind of harassment of your mind by negative thoughts or spirits do this practice okay.

It's called Protection Circle. Okay so we'll start.

Watch your breath.

And visualize the holy being in front of you. Je Tsongkapa if you can or one of his emanations that you feel comfortable with.

Then you ask that lama to come to the top of your head and bless you. So they start rising up into the sky, getting smaller and smaller and into the air. And then they turn around so that they're facing the same way you are and then they settle down on your head. They're sitting on a lotus. On top of the lotus is a moon. And on top of the moon is this holy being. And see them very clearly and you can personalize them to the holy beings you have met or come in contact with. If he looks a little like the Dalai Lama ...or Khen Rinpoche is easy. Or even some other person who's effected you deeply in your life. If the face has a little likeness to that, that's good.

Then ask them for their blessings. This liquid, like nectar, starts to come from their heart and flows down through their body and comes into your head. And it's like very thick oil coming down the side of the can. And then it just works down from the top and it's sticking to the inside of your skin and body. And it's spreading down, slowly going through your body.

And all the negativities you have are like dirt, black dirt, and the liquid is forcing it down towards the bottom of your body. This is called {Tibetan}

And all the dirt goes out the bottom of your body. And then it starts to fill up again with this nectar. So try to feel it slowly filling your body, like a cup until it fills it to the top.

And then your whole body is clean and bright, like filled with some kind of white light.

And then from your heart comes a stream of white light and goes out to the outside of this house. And it like burns a circle of white around the house, like white light. A line of white light on the ground in a perfect circle around the house. And the white light stays there.

And then from the white light grows a wall of white light and it's like twelve or fifteen feet high around this house in a perfect circle okay. Impenetrable.

And then to give the wall the power, think of someone that you know specifically who's in trouble physically or mentally, depressed or sick. And then think about helping them directly and indirectly. Someone very specific who needs help right now.

And ask that lama to come down into your heart.

And then dedicate the goodness.

Okay You can relax okay.

[student: [unclear]]

We're going to cover that tomorrow morning. "Going down" is called {Tibetan} When you do the protection is like a silver-white. When you do the mantra practice it'll be five colors. And when it comes up it's called a {Tibetan}. {de} is a rare word in Tibetan. It means to drive animals before you like sheep, you know. Move it you know (laughs). It means to push all the bad things out the way. It means to chase after something and push it out. And {yar} means going up, and {mar} means going down. First you do {marde} and then you do {yarde} okay.

Okay, all right so see you at 2 o'clock I think. From 2 till 4 we'll do a session. Then from...starting at 4.-5 your last {Tibetan, 5 to 6 dinner. We're moving everything [not clear]. Yeah 5-6 will be dinner. And then at 6 we'll start closing the place. And when we put up the protection marker, then silence okay. Silence means silence. No notes okay and no talking with your hands. Yeah, you have to do your book, but forget other people okay. It's you and your mind. Just forget everybody else okay. Lot of times when you take vows and stuff like that they say forget everybody else in the room. Just forget everybody else's here until next Sunday. Just forget it, okay. It's just you and your own head okay.

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah, let me see. Yeah at 6 o'clock when you come ...I think it would be nice before 6 if you could ... well I'm afraid the animals might get into it. So, you know I think we'll say... we'll meet at 6 o'clock here and then you'll go get your {gektors} and your

{Tibetan, the protection ones okay. And then we'll meet and then we'll go outside. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

Oh I'm sorry, yeah. Yeah, that's okay. So 6 o'clock with your {gektor} and your {Tibetan}. All right? And we need lots of lighters.

If it's too windy we'll come in here and light them and take them outside. If they blow out then it's okay.

Sorry?

Yes, you're gonna need your protection markers also.

That's good, ok.

[Prayer: short mandala ]

[Prayer: Dedication]

And during retreat, you'll feel tired and you'll feel sleepy. And after two days you'll say ...you go into this kind of a lonesome time. Don't worry about it. Don't trust it. It all works out okay. So don't believe it much. You'll get kind of a low energy for a while, don't worry about it. You have to keep going. And the mantra will keep you going okay All right.

[Prayer: short mandala]

[Prayer: Refuge]

Okay we're going to talk a little more about the actual meditation. There's three parts to it. The first part is called {Tibetan}.

Say {Tibetan} [repeat]

{Tibetan} means impurities, {Tibetan} means to wash. So {Tibetan} means to wash yourself of impurities.

And that's why we do a full {marde} and {yarde}; {marde} purify the bad things and then {yarde} filling up with good things, okay. Then there's called {Tibetan}.

Say {Tibetan} [repeat]

{Tibetan} means to stop all your ignorance, like get rid of your ignorance. {Tibetan} means not understanding, {tsel} means to clear it away.  
And then say {Tibetan} [repeat]

{Tibetan} means to achieve achievements okay. And that's traditionally a seven part practice. In your book it just says there are seven parts. It doesn't tell you what they are. So Rinpoche you know, fifteen years later, taught the second part okay (laughs). So it's not in the book and we'll do pieces of that okay. The point is I think, strike a balance between not having the meditation go too slow, or the visualisation goes too slow where it's static and you get bored and you can't keep your mind on it because nothings happening. And the other extreme is to load you up with twenty different visualizations. Then you get overwhelmed and you, you know, how to say ... Some people have that experience of {Tibetan} (laughs) Something that would take fifteen years to learn it well, and we're not going to do it here, and it's not the point.  
So the point is to have a manageable visualisation going on that's still powerful.  
So we'll be doing today {Tibetan}. We'll practice {Tibetan} and then tomorrow morning we'll do {Tibetan} and tomorrow afternoon we'll do {Tibetan} and then you're on your own after that, okay.

We'll do {Tibetan}

So get ready to meditate and we'll go through the preliminaries.

[unclear] Breathing.

Heat of the body.

Scent.

And keep reciting the mantra but ask Je Tsongkapa to come up to the top of your head. Ask Je Tsongkapa to come up to the top of your head and rest there on a lotus and moon petal, about three or four inches high.

Make it very realistic, very beautiful.

Then we're going to go through the six perfections. Okay. So the first perfection is giving. And imagine, near your heart, any...anything which you do which is not the perfection of giving okay. Things that you do that are against the perfection of giving. And keep visualizing Je Tsongkapa, keep reciting the mantra and try to visualise in your heart black darkness, like soot. Things that you do which are not the perfection of giving. Things where you don't give to people the things they need or the comfort they need or the teachings they need.

And again, be specific. Pick a few instances where you failed to give something that you could've given or where your attitude is just not to give.

And then see nectar coming down from Je Tsongkapa's body. Down, leaking down into your body like very thick oil. And this nectar, if you can visualise it, has five colors: white, red, green, yellow, blue. And coming down like a rainbow okay and it's forcing all the dark things down to the bottom of your body. When you get to the bottom, visualize them all turning into some kind of evil like scorpions and spiders and centipedes and ugly creatures – black. And then they come out of your rear end okay. And then you visualize a big hole opens up under you. And there's Lord of Death there. Personally I always visualize it as like a very cruel German shepherd about double size or something. Something very cruel. Supposed to have huge jaws, say like the Lord of Death that's holding the wheel of life. But some very cruel creature that's been waiting below the earth to take you on the day of your death. They don't believe there's such a creature, but you visualize it that way. Some very cruel, inhuman animal waiting to kill you. And they imagine that it opens up its mouth and all of these dirty things, black scorpions, spiders, creatures, fall into its mouth. And then it sort of curls up and lies down like it's satisfied. And...and that has deep significance, if you practice properly, then you don't have to die. And that represents that. Then you close up the ground and put a double dorje there under you okay. Crossed dorjes. That means you're going to live. You don't have to die like that.

So keep doing the mantra and push down those things. You should have at least a few pieces of black there. Specific things that you did, that you could've given to somebody something and you didn't do it okay. So you're purifying those things. Getting rid of those things okay. And you're going to do that for the whole week okay. And cycle through the perfections okay, through the six perfections. So the next time you do the meditation whether it's in that session or the next session, you use your vows. And then the third time you do it you use your anger. And then the fourth time you do it you use your joy. And then the fifth time you do it you use meditation. And you keep purifying yourself of things that work against your perfections.

[silence]

Now imagine the nectar starts filling up your body like a cup and it starts rising. It still has five colors and it feels warm and beautiful and light. And changing your body to light. And it's working up your body. And little traces of the black still left and it's carrying them up on the top of the nectar and comes up to the very top of your head and then under the...under the lotus it's like pouring out all the black ...the last traces of black are coming out. And then imagine your whole body filled with nectar and it feels really, really beautiful.

[silence]

Then with your body full start thinking of how you've done things that are...that are the perfection of giving in the last few weeks or years. Things that you've done that are the perfection of giving. And then think about things that you could do. And feel the nectar in your body. Beautiful. Light. And this beautiful, beautiful lama on your head, could be male or female, could be anything. Je Tsongkapa in the form that comes to you, okay. And then think about successes you're having with the perfection of wisdom. Think about more things that you could do with the perfection of wisdom. And feel the warmth in your body and your body changing. Becoming more like that perfect being on your head.

[silence]

Then ask Je Tsongkapa to come into your body.  
And he shrinks and shrinks and shrinks. Smaller and smaller until he's the size of a pea and drops down straight in front of your back bone, less than half an inch, coming straight down.  
Very, very straight. And then down to the level of your heart just less than half an inch in front of your back bone, and stays in a capsule there.

[silence]

And then dedicate the virtue by seeing the light go out of your body, out of your pores and touch other people and help them.

[silence]

Okay. We'll do a short prayer.

[Prayer: short mandala]

Okay. Take an eight minute break and come back and we'll do just a half hour okay.

[student:[unclear]]

So leave it at that. Maybe around Wednesday, we'll do the next step, if we get to it, okay, so don't worry about it.

People ask me about pausing in the mantra. I checked the text. I checked actually Pabongka Rinpoche's commentary and he said, if you feel like pausing, pause okay. So he actually states that, so you can pause if you want to get that visualization straight, and you're having trouble chewing gum ... what's the other one? ... walking at the same time, then ...but...yeah, you can pause and do the visualization. Pabongka Rinpoche specifically says that.

Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

Oh no, it's just a metaphor. It's just a metaphor. Don't think like that. They're not living beings, they're just pictures .

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah. It's actually six and then you do the seventh at the end, right. The dedication goes at the end. So it's a sxi limb puja with a meditation and then the last limb, you see.

[student:[unclear]]

In which way?

Oh no. that's at the very end. So you can keep him there and then bring him down and dedicate it. And then he's there when you walk around.

It's considered inauspicious to leave him out there.

Someone asked me a good question about Maitreya and the other two disciples. They go into Je Tsongkapa after he arrives, okay. So they melt in, Maitreya melts in and the other two disciples melt in. So when you start the main practice you have only one ...

[student:[unclear]]

I think at the time you count ... after you finish asking him to stay, at that point he's still sitting in front of you.

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah Yeah

The purpose of the second breath is to bring you back to the image. Then you build it up from the silhouette and ... and make it ... I don't want to say, don't visualize a thangka okay. Visualize a person. It's a very big difference and I'm afraid a lot of westerners visualise thangkas you know. We're talking about you know somebody who's Jesus and Moses and your high school girlfriend all mixed up in one, you know. Enlightened. You know what I mean? Like get that human thing there, you know. Like a perfect being who's been following you around for a while, okay, like that.

[student:[unclear]]

Of course. I mean, I./we just got through saying if Tsongkapa can be Padmasambhava and Atisha and Pabongka Rinpoche and Khen Rinpoche and the Dalai Lama; he's been following you around for a long time. It's not out of the...it's not exaggerating. It's not new-agey to say that. There's absolutely no ... I'd say the odds are that they were your close friends in high school or something, you know what I mean, or some percentage of them, okay. There's no problem with that. Every person you've ever met could've been an emanation of Je Tsongkapa. So, so...but you have to get the right ...you can't think of them as people. You can't think of them as humans during the visualisations okay.

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah. But you make sure you realise who they really were, you know, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, we don't change the mantra.

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah, after a day or two you won't notice, you see. You just won't be looking at it anymore and you'll say, oh I did it okay.

Vajrayogini mantra's like this long and you have to do 100,000 of them. You know after the first hundred, three hundred, you don't notice that you're not looking at the paper anymore. So it's not a big thing. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah, 100,000 would be very typical. I've never done a miktsema retreat. I mean I went straight to my Vajrayogini retreats. But I'd be interested to see how many ...you know let me know how many you do each day, at the end . Because I'm curious to know how long it would take. I think it'll be fast. Probably about the same time as Vajrayogini, I think. I don't know.

[student:[unclear]]

Side B

Yeah okay tomorrow.

[student: [unclear]]

‘Achieving achievements’ or something like that okay (laughs) And that last one has seven divisions and we’ll see how far we get. I want to stick with this one a while and then we’ll see in the middle if we go to number two. See how it feels.

Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

You mean after you finish this retreat?

[student: no during the retreat]

Oh Yeah. I mean fulfill your other commitments at a minimum, but this should be the main thing.

Yeah, there’s no rule that you can’t say it while you’re walking around, when you lay down to rest, you know, like that. Keep doing even outside in the sessions. It should be like rolling around in your head after a day or two.

[Student:[unclear]]

They would say it has a great blessing. There is no Sanskrit that I’m aware. It was written in Tibetan. So I’d say do it in Tibetan for now. I thought about it. I think there will be English mantras. There’s rules for creating mantras; of all people Dharmakirti wrote about it, the logician. And I’m sure there will be English mantras but lets do this one...lets do it in Tibetan for the blessing of the lineage okay. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]] [laughter, laugh]

He said, do they have to be dressed like Je Tsongkapa (laughter) No. Like if you have a high school teacher that you’ve decided was probably Je Tsongkapa, logically , then do you have to dress them with this hat and everything? And no you don’t. It’s a good question. But the identity, what we call the equivalent {Tibetan} in the sadhana, the identification of them must be there. You can use somebody like that but absolutely don’t ever think of them as normal persons during the visualization. That would be blowing it okay. Don’t slide back into thinking of them as not having been an emanation of Je Tsongkapa. That’s very strict. You can’t do that. Then you really blow it okay. So it’s a little danger to use somebody like that, but it’s ... There’s a big benefit but you can’t ...just absolutely don’t think of them on the other way, that you used to think of them okay.

[student: [unclear]]

I think in general when you do your own retreats, you'll be forced to follow your body's clock but tradition ...you know it's all to do with the moon, the sun, the stars, the movement of the earth, how the dakinis are moving around the world at certain times. And generally {Tibetan} means 'do not vary from the pattern of the four sessions'. And some scriptures say {Tibetan} which means don't vary from that supreme four sessions. (laughs)

I think if you try it, normally ending one session before daybreak; ending one session before noon; ending one before sunset and then ending one after night. And then sleeping in the middle watch of the night which you divide the day into six parts. The middle watch is like twelve to four. That's tradition. You'll go crazy after a week of that so we kind of kept it light here. But I think traditionally that would be the schedule okay. I think...I think for westerners, I think about 3.30 or 4 o'clock to 10 is good with naps, you know. But I... we're just gonna...you shouldn't do that for about a week or eight days into a retreat. We just don't have time to get down there so the schedule will be like that. It's good if you can keep the schedule in retreat, okay. Yeah?

[student: how do you do the visualization of like you were doing the first perfection with the mantra which is not necessarily about that, per se? How do you keep both of those things in...]

Oh, I think...you wouldn't be thinking about the meaning of the mantra necessarily at the moment.

Yeah, you have to keep saying it. Somebody asked if you could pause and yeah, Pabongka Rinpoche says in his commentary, pause if you feel it would be more useful to pause, then pause the mantra. But, but if you can keep it going it's good okay. So it's good if you can keep it going. If it doesn't disturb your visualisation. If it disturbs your visualisation ...I'd say even if it disturbs it, try for a couple of days, you might find that it works. This is coming from a person who didn't do a mantra retreat for ten years because I didn't think it would work. And I regret it that I didn't do it you know. It works. So I'd say kinda force it you know. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

How long do you hold each image? I'd say ... this is a Dharmabhadra answer you know. Not so long that you get bored and not so quick that you can't concentrate on it, you know what I mean. And you know, frankly, it was very, what do you call it, comforting to me to find that quotation, you know, that Dharmabhadra said, 'Look, you gotta keep the thing moving or if you'd get bored...you're a normal person you're going to get bored, you know. Something has to be happening. And don't just stop and space out. I'm afraid that a lot of westerners when they do a visualization during a retreat, you know. Mitreya's there kinda fuzzy and then they think about their mom for a while. And then think about

their dad for a while and ...you know I don't really believe that anyone can sit there for an hour and just look at Maitreya you know. So it was very comforting for me when I found that. Somebody asked muchen dharmabhardra that question in 1780 something I don't know. And that was his answer.

Yeah, keep it going, yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

We're going to do blessing the rosary tomorrow morning 'cos you're not doing mantras yet really, doesn't count yet. We'll start the count tomorrow morning okay. So we'll bless your rosary and we'll bless the meditation seat.

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah, I would only count when you're in session okay I wouldn't count it when you're in your room and just ... if you're sitting seriously in your room okay, but...but otherwise not, okay, all right.

So I think we'll stop there.

[Prayer: short mandala.]

[Prayer: Dedication.]

(end side B)

**Meditation Module**  
**The Four Powers**  
**Five**  
**RAW TRANSCRIPT**



Geshe Michael Roach  
Je Tsongkapa Mantra  
Godstow Retreat Center  
26/12/98 to 3/1/99

Class 6

[Prayer: Short Mandala]

[Prayer: Refuge]

It's very simple, not too long.

That was called {Tibetan} so the visualization you've done so far is called 'the cleaning your impurities' and we did it for each one of the six perfections.

The next part is called {Tibetan} and {Tibetan} means things you don't know or didn't understand yet; {tsel} means to make them clear, or remove what you don't understand, or light. Make it light. And for each of the six perfections you go through the same steps again. You have to start over. You have to do a {Tibetan} for each perfection. So you do that... lets take the perfection of giving. You do the {marde} which means the nectar comes down and pushes out negativities. And you think about two or three specific failures of the perfection of giving that you're doing or that you've done. And then by the time they reach the bottom of your body they become black like spiders or scorpions or something ugly. And then they go out of your rear end. The ground opens up, Lord of Death is there, goes into his mouth and then he's satisfied with that. He doesn't want you anymore. Then he lays down and the ground covers up and a double dorje appears there and seals it.

Then the nectar keeps coming and flows up. And the last impurities and the last weaknesses of the perfection of giving are floating on top of it as it comes up. And then it comes up out of your head and comes out. And then you're clean. You imagine you are clean. And then you rejoice in some of the successes you've had about the perfection of giving. And you think ... it's very important to do the second part and to imagine in the last day or week or year of the good things you've done, of the things you've given to other people. And you can rotate through the different kinds of giving, like that, giving things, giving love, giving protection, and giving Dharma. And then you... instead of going on to the next perfection, now you do {Tibetan}.

{Tibetan} means more nectar starts coming down and fills your body. And it's like... feels your body... this time it's a golden color, okay. The first time it was five color. This time is a golden color and it starts seeping through your body. And the text says try to imagine every single drop of the nectar, separate drops, try to visualize them as a little globe of gold. And inside the globe is a wisdom, light, like a butter lamp if you know that asian classics butter lamp okay. That's what that is, from the Manjushri {Tibetan} which is the first

tantric scripture in the whole Kangyur, okay. 'Chanting the Names of Manjushri'. And it says your wisdom should be a light for the world.

So you visualize a globe. And each drop is a globe. And inside each globe is a lamp, golden lamp, and it's burning with a gold flame okay. And you imagine that Je Tsongkapa is giving you more knowledge about how to practice giving, and more strength, and more power to practice giving, the perfection of giving, okay. And specifically that you understand giving more.

So at that point you go through, while the light is filling your body, you try to review what you know about giving. How you understand giving. What giving means. What are different kinds of giving. For example, what would it be like to give with the perfection of wisdom and what would it be like to give without the perfection of wisdom, that difference, okay. So you...while it's circulating through your body, okay, these little lamps, and you think your whole body is filling with light. And then you're gaining more knowledge from Je Tsongkapa. We call {Tibetan} for those of you who know the extra verses. (Tibetan) means let me study more about the perfection of giving, let me think more about the perfection of giving and let me meditate more or internalize more about the perfection of giving. You imagine that while...you imagine that Je Tsongkapa is teaching you more. So you review what you know about giving, and then you...it's very important during this meditation that you are in the mode of asking for help. The whole point of this meditation that we have been doing is to ask for Je Tsongkapa's blessing and help. So it's very important to actually visualize a person and actually ask them for help. And they keep helping you. And this nectar's coming down. Your knowledge of how to give gets stronger and more and more bright, more and more light. And you ask them to help you understand more about giving. And you ask them for the strength to give the things that you're not ready to give yet and to know the right ways to do it.

So we'll be doing this cycle through the six perfections like that.

This is called {Tibetan} and we'll do that for the next two days okay, today and tomorrow. And then the third step which is {Tibetan} we'll go on to that...we'll finish on Saturday, okay.

That's all.

[Prayer: Short Mandala]

[Prayer: Refuge]

Small new part for the visualization okay.

We finished {Tibetan} which is where you do the {Tibetan} okay. Clearing your negativities about the six perfections one by one down. And then the last part of them being cleaned out as it comes up. And you've been doing that for the perfection of giving for example. And then you did...you were doing {Tibetan} which is clearing away your lack of knowledge or something like that about the six perfections, by having the wisdom

nectar come down and each little drop being a globe and inside the globe there was golden light.

The first one was done with five colored water. In the commentary it says if you can't handle five colors, you just do white okay. And the second one when the light was spreading that's a golden light. That represents Manjushri's light. The first one represents Vajrasattva's purity.

And by the way, there's a lot of tantric ways of explaining this practice and I'm not doing that in public okay 'cos that's not the way you're supposed to do it. So I'm giving you the sutra version which is wonderful. And then it's very close to the tantric version but then you have to get that from your qualified tantric Lama, okay. And that's a whole relationship you have to have with somebody totally different than a public classroom okay.

Then there's a third part called {Tibetan}. The commentaries are sort of mixed on this point. Some commentaries put all the {Tibetan}, they have all the seven steps in {Tibetan}. So some people would say that the third part which is {Tibetan} which means accomplishing your goals would ... {Tibetan} means like siddha, spiritual accomplishments, spiritual achievements. Some people... some commentaries only have two sections; one is {Tibetan} and {Tibetan} and inside {Tibetan} is seven different categories. Some lamas have explained it as seven sections within the {Tibetan} but either way, there's seven visualizations, and some of them are tantric so we won't go into them.

I'll give you... when you're doing... I'll give you the sutra version. When you're doing {Tibetan} which is trying to attain spiritual attainments, okay. In the most common version of this practice, and there are many different written versions of the Ganden Hlgyama. But in the most common version, you have three verses called the {pelden tseway lama rinpoche} {Tibetan}. Three different verses ending in those three lines. And we'll do... and we'll recite it once for you at the end, the whole thing. Those verses are requests for what they call {Tibetan}. {Tibetan} means ultimate spiritual attainments, which is nirvana and enlightenment. The removal of your mental afflictions permanently and total Buddhahood, those two things.

And then {Tibetan}... there's two ways of explaining {Tibetan}. {Tibetan} means normal attainments or not the supreme attainments. One way is to explain it as the eight minor siddhis, which is like the ability to walk on water, the ability to fly through the sky, the ability to pass through solid objects with your body. These are all basically meditative abilities. The ability to take a drop of a pill and not eat for the whole day and things like that.

And then the other way of explaining it is just the normal attainments of your everyday life. And you're requesting both. May I get along with my friends. May I get a promotion at work, you know. May my children be happy today, like that. Those are normal attainments.

So those are covered when you do the six perfections. You don't have to do a separate for those. You will get them as a by-product of practising the six perfections.

So those are the three verses requesting normal achievements, attainments, and then highest attainments. Then there's an expanded version of the Ganden Hlagyama. The verses can be found in Pabongka Rinpoche's commentary. He wrote several commentaries. And this is where Rinpoche has added ... he taught us this practice in 1976 or 77, I don't remember. But then around 1990 something he threw in some more verses. (laughs) And so, those are {Tibetan} and then those other verses. Those are part of the seven visualizations, not the whole thing yet. I suppose he's planning that for us, 2010 or 20, I don't know. But we've already done {Tibetan} which means , please give me wisdom, which is the lights. So you did the lights. That's {Tibetan}. That's clearing what you don't know with light okay. We finished that visualisation.

Now we'll start the final visualization. It goes in three steps okay. And we'll just do the first one this afternoon. So for each of the perfections, you do cleaning {Tibetan} with {Tibetan} going down , sorry {Tibetan} going down {Tibetan} going up. Then you've done the practice with the lights which is knowledge. Some lamas teach it as darkness in your body and then you (clicks fingers), it's like a flash with a camera and it's called {Tibetan}. And you destroy your ignorance like that.

Now we're going to start the third stage which will be a few of those seven visualizations. I've been trying to see it in this painting. I can't see. On Je Tsongkapa's left and right should be a sword and a book. Is it there? I can't see it from this angle. So off to his right here, right inside the circle there, is a lotus flower with a sword and then on the other side is a book, a Tibetan-style book okay. You can look at it more closely. We're going to talk about this sword. This sword is called {Tibetan} which means a visualization involving his accoutrements okay. And on his right is his sword. The sword represents the 'che' in {Tibetan} so when you learn the verses more you'll see {Tibetan} and this represents the che.

This gets in to now that you have wisdom for yourself, how do you learn to communicate it to others okay. So the next day and a half, two days of visualizations will be the final step for each perfection. Will be...okay you've cleaned out your gross problems with this perfection, you've meditated on how well you're doing on it – your progress, you're rejoicing on your progress which is the second visualization where you fill up with nectar. And it's important that they're equal you know. Think of...it's always important to think of the dirt half the time and think of your progress half of the time, okay. So you cleaned out the dirt, you filled yourself up with progress. Then you ask for blessing to like supercharge your practice of giving, you know. Like you're asking them to light up in you abilities of the perfection of giving that you never dreamed you had. And you're asking for

their help and you're constantly asking them to give you abilities that you never knew you had. And that are way beyond what you thought that you could do. You know that someday somebody needs a finger and you could just ... here. And take an eyeball, and take my eyeball, like that. Or, or your dearest friend or your house, whatever is dearest to you, that you just be unhesitatingly willing and able to give it to somebody, without the slightest hesitation, anything. You've been asking for a blessing like that. And that was the lights inside the globes which is every single drop of that nectar.

Now we move on to , suppose you had perfect giving, and you were able to perfect your giving, now you're asking Je Tsongkapa for the ability to convey it to other people. To communicate it to other people. That's the last part of the visualization.

The first part of that, che, is very simple. You just...when the nectar comes down, this'll be the fourth time right. When the nectar comes in the fourth time right, this time the globes are filled with a lotus and there's a sword, okay, standing like that, and very beautiful like Excalibur or something like okay. They call namchak. Namchak means 'sky steel'.

Tibetans say that there were these rocks used to fall from the sky and hit the earth and then if you found the steel they would burn the ground so hard that it would make a kind of metal. And if you took that metal and fashioned it into a sword it was like the hardest sword that you could find. An in fact, it's the source of some diamonds on this planet. It's the impact of small meteors and stuff, there's diamonds in the craters and special kinds of steel. with diamond in it. So I guess there's some basis for it. I mean that's where we find some diamonds.

So you're going to visualize pouring into you more nectar, still golden color and globe, each drop is a globe. Inside the globe is a lotus, pink lotus and then a sword. And then there should be fire coming out of the sword okay. The sword should be wrapped in fire, flame. Like burning okay. So a really beautiful Norman sword okay and fire burning on it all right. And this represents the che of {Tibetan} which is the second line of that special verse that Rinpoche adds. {Tibetan}, you're gonna be asking for the ability to communicate Dharma to other people. And it doesn't have to be in a big class with 100 people or something like that. It could be at lunch with somebody you work with, it could be with your children, it could be with your parents and it could be more...not more than a few sentences. But you're asking for the ability to do it. And that's the che; che means verbally explaining Dharma to people okay. So in a situation when it's right, you're asking for the ability to be Dharma eloquent. And you could be talking this kinda language you know (said with accent) (laughter) It's just you asking for the ability to relate to people perfectly and to say the right thing at the right time. And not proselytise, but to say the right Dharma thing at the right time, when it's very natural and very right and the time is just right, that you're able to express yourself clearly to someone else about the six perfections okay.

So you'll take then one by one and then you'll be meditating on them okay. So that's now the fourth time the nectar comes down.

Retreat note; about 75 % through a retreat is when it gets really hard. You get really tired. If you're going to get lung you've already had it by now or it's coming (laughs) (laughter). You start to giggle a lot (laughs) and your mind will do something crazy. You'll have an outburst of hatred towards somebody, or anger or things you...weird things. It's coming from the winds okay. And it's not bad, it means you're into that right place. You're just a little too far. So this is the time when you separate the men from the boys and the girls from the women okay. You have to bear down. This is when you make a lot of progress you know. You have to work very hard during the next day or two. Three quarters ... for me it's seventy to seventy five percent through it. It doesn't matter if it's a month long or a week long. It's always kind of a down and the energy's not there and getting a little lungy and wanting to sleep more, and not able to focus. And this is where you have to bear down. Ask for blessings. The worse it gets ask them for more blessings. And just visualize Je Tsongkapa more and more and ask them...ask them to help. That's why you're doing it okay. So just keep poring that nectar down okay (laughter) (laughs) All right

Then the ordained people, we'll be doing ... there's sojong today, full moon – which also makes you crazy. So we'll be doing sojong as usual at seven o'clock. And we'll start at... you guys will start at eight o'clock as usual. I'll ask Fran to ring the bell and just do your usual practice. And when we finish ...we'll do our sojong in the library. And when we're finished we'll come in and be with you okay.

All we need is a Buddha image.

(laughter)

Ready?

New York Times makes corrections everyday. I think lamas should do the same (laughs) I'm sorry that's the next visualization. This one is just a Dharma book okay. So for the explaining it's just a Dharma book, so you see in the bubble a Dharma book on top of a lotus, okay. Golden wrapper, golden cloth wrapper. Personally I visualized the Diamond Cutter Sutra wrapped up on a lotus flower and that represents explaining the Dharma – I got ahead of myself Is it open? Is the lotus still pink? Yes. I don't visualize it open personally but I think you could. One tradition is to you can visualize it open or not. One tradition is to hear it speaking itself. It is reading itself to you okay. But I got ahead of myself, that's the next one. I just like the sword so much I went straight there (laughter) (laughs) So the explaining Dharma is the book, okay. So It's a Dharma book wrapped up in cloth on a lotus in a globe. And that's the asking for the blessing to be able to explain in its correct order the Dharma to people okay. (laughs) (laughter)

Okay, just a very brief thing and then we'll do like another half hour. An important part of retreat is coming out right. And the texts say a lot about it. They say you should start gradually and then you should come out gradually. And one of the first steps is thinking

about what you're going to do after the retreat, and this being January 1<sup>st</sup>, whenever you come out of retreat you should make a list of things that you want in your life. You know the things you want to change in your life. Your mind right now is clearer than it's been in years, you know, from the silence. And you're able to think clearly and when you start talking again you'll lose that so...and from the meditation. So you know, you'll start to have surprising insights into your life and you'll have some unusual insights have come up about your life. And you can trust them. That's the first thing to know, you should trust them. A week from now they will look naïve or crazy to you, you know. But your mind right now is cleaner than normal so it's a good time to make decisions about your life, about important things in your life, so it's important that you get out of retreat ... start thinking tonight, start the process tonight of thinking about your life, the things you're happy with, the things you'd like to change. And start formulating some kind of a plan, you know.

Personally most of the big decisions I've made in my life for the last ten years have been right during this period. And they've been very, very fruitful, very important. This place wouldn't exist, the classes wouldn't have happened. That all came from some retreat I had years ago. So trust it and try to now to give some time to thinking... you know as you go through the perfections you can start thinking about things that you'd like to adjust. And by tomorrow night we'll try to clarify that into a list of...don't make it too long and don't make it extravagant okay. (laughs) (laughter) Make it modest. The important thing is that it should be doable. Don't say I'm going to spend four hours a day meditating, and don't say you're going to get up at 4.30, you know (laughs) (laughter). Say I'm gonna do fifteen minutes more and I'm actually going to do my meditation everyday. And think like that. The say you should restrict it to five or six modest goals for your life. That's not to say that if you see there's an opportunity for a big decision in your life you can do that as well and don't be afraid. "Cos your mind now is more clear than it will be in a long time okay.

Monks have a thing called {Tibetan} means every morning we have to recite a certain number of verses that is basically resolutions for the day. Towards tomorrow evening we'll try to formulate two lists. One is things you're going to do with your life. You know like things about your practice or things about your personal life. Decisions you can make now that you won't be able to make in a week as clearly and after you start talking. Secondly, a {Tibetan}, meaning something you can recite every morning to yourself, you know like five things you don't want to forget about your behavior and your activities. So something short that you can get up in the morning and say you know, I remember back on January 1<sup>st</sup> I resolved the following five things. And don't make it more than five or six things okay. And start that process now. Start thinking about your life and what's important in your life and maybe some new ideas about what you could do with yourself, and then some resolutions. It happens to be the perfect night in the retreat and it happens to be January 1<sup>st</sup> so that's very auspicious.

We'll do half an hour.

It feels...I mean it's normal to feel very exhausted as you come out of retreat and sort of... when you start talking again it'll be very exhausting and you'll feel like hollow, very tired just from talking okay. So expect that and it's good to do that like the night before or something like that. It's not good to go out of retreat and to go back to work the next morning. It's good to ,like tonight, after the 8 o'clock, after the last session, we'll open for talking okay. And also start back easy, don't start gabbing right away. (laughs) (laughter) work into it. Try a little bit tonight and then a little bit tomorrow and try and talk about meaningful things okay. And expect that you'll feel tired so it's very unwise to finish a retreat and go straight back to work or...give yourself like a day to think and be by yourself even if you're talking a little bit and things like that. So we'll loosen up a little bit tonight after the night session okay. You can...when we stop tonight around 9.30 you can speak again.

Some people are having wind problems. Another good thing to do is read a book or something like that. Like a science fiction book (laughter) or a romance novel or something like that, okay. It breaks the wind, it breaks the mood actually (laughter) and then you relax. You know it works so I thought I should tell you that. If you've tried, you know some kind of oil on your chest or your back, eating lots of oily foods, you know looking out the window at the sky's okay, that's actually in the medical tantra's. That's a treatment for lung. It's to look at the stars or look at the sky and like that. And like...so those are wind ... things to do if you get wind. Actually since we're so close you might as well just go for it.(laughter) okay.

Next to the last part of the visualization.

Now you get to do the sword thing okay (laughter). So, so far we have a {Tibetan} which is, the first part is {Tibetan}, cleaning out. You know when you're cleaning out, it's like you've been constipated and you're having a big ugly crap or something (laughter) or pushing a baby out or something. You know think of it as some very ugly dirty thing and you're like working to get it out. And then you push it out okay. And some ugly... all your bad part of you. Even if you don't feel pure, do it anyway you know. It's the visualization of being pure, of ...take your worst, chronic mental afflictions and see them really going out and like spitting on Lord Death; here, that's all you can have. Give it to him and then see the earth close, double dorje.

And then {Tibetan} the last remnants come up floating on the top of the nectar and come out the top. Right here, called {Tibetan}, comes out right there and pours out.

And then the third one was, see the nectar come in again, and each drop being a globe, and inside each globe a lamp. And that's new kinds of knowledge, new kinds of spiritual strength and wisdom that you don't have now and that you would like to have and that you can't even imagine now. So you do that.

Then the next one was requesting the ability to explain these things to other people, gradually. Learning more and more about how to explain it to others in a {Tibetan} right,

from the {Tibetan} class. In appropriate, creative, clever ways that fit the situation, fit your culture. Fit the people you're talking to, fit the situation you're in, okay. Without pushing, without being proselytising and things like that. Just when the time comes that you be able to speak what's right at the given time. And what's going to help that other person's life.

Now the next visualization you get to do the sword okay. And you ask again for nectar. This is the sword on Je Tsongkapa's right. And Manjushri has one, here. And has that volume coming up here. And this one represents your ability to argue your case. (laughter) Like to a ... you know if you've ever tried to sell anything or ... they call it 'answering the customer's objections' or grant proposals. You have to have in your mind ready all the ... all the answers to a person's qualms or hesitations or objections, you know especially in a culture which is not Buddhist. People are going to be coming up with ... because of their unexamined cultural suppositions which they grew up with so they believe in them, they will ask standard questions, you know and you have to be ready to address them.

So when in the verse it says {Tibetan}, {Tibetan} means debating, like when the monks go to the debating ground they go {Tibetan}, means to debate. {Tibetan} can also mean legal disputes or {Tibetan} can mean arguing, {Tibetan} can mean quarrelling. But here {Tibetan} means the ability to answer people's objections in a logical way and in a strong way when it's necessary okay but always logical. Especially in your culture, which is ... which is so many of the ideas are so foreign to our culture and not for logical reasons but for reasons of the way we were brought up. So you have to be able to anticipate those questions and then you have to be able to address them logically. And as a rule, the first rule of {Tibetan} is always to never go beyond the other person's own understanding. Meaning you can't use as a proof anything they don't already accept. Perfect logic in Buddhism ever since the days of the Buddha and Dharmakirti is to prove something to somebody using what they already accept, you see what I mean. You're not asking them to accept anything new. You're just showing them a new way of organizing what they already believe. And then they must come to your conclusion. So the perfect {Tibetan} is always only using what the person already believes but showing it to them in a new light so that they come ... you can prove past lives and future lives. You can prove that the mind doesn't end. You can prove that the mind and the body are separate and the mind doesn't die. You can prove emptiness and you can prove the principles of karma without resorting to anything that a normal American person doesn't already accept. You just have to be wise about how you present it. You can present it to them using only the beliefs they already hold.

So you're asking for the wisdom to be able to do that.

Then you see the nectar coming down again. Nectar comes down, each drop is a globe. Inside each globe is a lotus, pink lotus. On top of that, vertically, is a very beautiful strong, I call Norman sword, out of namchak steel, sky steel, blazing with fire. And it represents cutting the wrong beliefs that other people hold, wrong world views. Wrong ways of seeing the world that other people hold. Like [unclear] classic is to think of some problem

you're having at work with somebody, and to believe that either that it's their fault, you know that it's coming from them, or that you can effect it with external means, which means in both cases to believe the person is bad from their own side, to believe that you can change them from external ways, are both kinds of holding them to be self-existent. That's ignorance. That's the classic ignorance. And then realizing that they have come from something you've done similar to someone else and changing them by not doing that anymore ...in other words that you could fix all the problems in your life, physical and mental, by keeping your vows and not by more exercise or better arguing with people or things like that. But just keeping your Buddhist morality with your Buddhist lifestyle would actually make all your problems go away. And not that you could solve them any other way. To be able to express that to people, to be able to demonstrate that to people is what you're asking for.

The sword represents cutting off those other world views, you know. Cutting them and stopping them in yourself and in other people. Where do things really come from? Where do your problems really come from? And then teaching people. Shantideva, Master Shantideva said it's either god is torturing you or it's just a random act of violence in your life or you made it with your karma, one of the above.(laughs) You know. And then act on that. And be able to demonstrate that to people, and to cut off their wrong views and your own wrong views. So that's what you're asking for when you see the sword okay.

That's the next to last visualization. We have one more we'll do tomorrow morning and then it'll be complete and you can use that practice yourself anytime. And you know how to do a proper retreat anytime. So you have a whole module you can pull out and use anytime you have three days or a week or a month or three years, free (laughs) (laughter) okay.

We'll talk a little bit about, for the next half hour we'll be doing a process which I found very useful. It was taught to me by a very great lama. And as you go out of retreat. to examine your life because right now your mind is very clear, relatively clear. Before you start talking again and before you start other activities...one of the great things about a retreat I think is the distance it gives you from your life. Rarely do you take a week away from your life and then have a week of distance to look at your life. And then rarely do you not have talk jumbling up your mind for a whole week. So then your mind is pretty clear and also you've got some kind of sweet taste, the call {Tibetan} from the practice. And maybe you've had some insights about what could be possible if you did more practice, you know what I mean. So it's a very good opportunity to look at your life and make some changes. And there are different kinds of things I want you to work on okay. There'll be like three or four lists by the time we finish.

Maybe I'll keep a list of them (laughs) (laughter).

And they don't have to go in order. We'll take a little bit of time in the next few sessions. I

think one is ... I keep a list of retreat notes and I go over my notes. And I look at the ... I make notes about how I did the retreat, things to watch out for, like one time I drank coca cola and I giggled for about an hour (laughter) (laughs) and one time I had lung and [unclear] made me lasagna and it went away. One time I had lung and I read a short story and it just went away. You know, notes like that. Also what you need to do your retreat. I have a ... like from boy scouts they give you a hiking list, like flashlight, bandaids, snake bite kit (laughter), you know make yourself a checklist for your next retreat because you won't remember next time you do a retreat.

I hope you will do at least a ten day retreat three or four times a year. Later on I found it personally to do a {Tibetan} twice a year, like that's about a month or five weeks each. And there'll come a time in your life when ... work your way out of the forty hour thing. I mean I did sixteen years of the corporate thing. Work your way out of it, slowly. Don't quit tomorrow. Just find a way that you can do it. Like I went to my boss and said you can pay me three quarters and just give me a month off. And he was ecstatic (laughter) And you know you can make deals like that, you can find deals like that. Not in a week but in a year or two years you can work out ... you should have an honest living, you shouldn't grub off other people, you shouldn't be in a situation where you're always desperate for rent money; but also I don't believe in America you have to work fifty weeks a year to feed yourself, even in Manhattan you know. You don't have to do that. So you have ... but you have to meet your obligations and you have to be responsible, so you work your way out of it. You work your way into a situation where it works for you well and where it works for your employer well. And you're both happy. Like time share a job with somebody or lower your expenses. There's two ways to get rich, one is to not spend anything, (laughs) okay. All right.

So first one is retreat notes, general notes to yourself for next time. What to take with you, what to avoid, what to do.

Second, would be what I would call a dudren. This is like when you wake up you're going to tell yourself six or seven things. Like I refuse to get jealous at ... these are like general principle things, that you're going to have for yourself. Like mine have been like don't get jealous of other Buddhist teachers or you know, don't eat sugar (laughter) at all. You know I kept it for a year, two years, you know. Split my meals with somebody so I don't ... or you know stuff like that. They work.

By the way, dudrens work really well for about a month (laughs) (laughter) I'm just speaking from experience, then they go down. So it's important ... they reach their bottom about the time you do your next retreat. So the purpose of the next retreat is to get up a little higher than the last one then you go down again. And then ... you keep making ... if you make a graph of all the peaks, you're going up. You go down less each time (laughs) okay. You know what I mean. So doing retreats is a continual process of improvement but you're still having peaks and valleys, but it's going up you see. So you'll do your dudrens really well for a few weeks or a month or two and then it'll start to degenerate you know.

You'll start having a cookie now and then, and you know ...that could be like how much sleep you're going to get, how much retreat time you're going to do, meditation time you're going to do just general life problems. You've been working on your six perfections. You've identified ...I was going crazy 'cos I was getting bored through the five hundredth time through the perfection of giving... and you probably identified some major problems you have with your 6 perfections, so you make a dudren for that.

Thirdly, I found it useful to make a schedule for myself, redo my schedule. Like after one retreat I flipped my whole daily schedule around. I used to not eat in the evening for many years and then I tried not eating in the morning. And then instead of doing memorization in the evening I did it in the morning or something like that. I switched the whole day around and tried that for six months. It worked really, really good. So look at your schedule and consider making some really major changes in what you do. In my personal schedule now I don't see anybody until 1 o'clock. I do all my practice and then I work until 8.00 or something like that. I found personally that I can do stupid work in the night but I can't meditate very well in the evening, you know. So I just pushed the whole day back, you know what I mean, like that. So consider it. Consider making some change and then write a schedule. That would be a daily schedule and a weekly schedule okay.

And then I make myself a fourth list which is, I write down all the things I'm doing like projects and job and other obligations. And I...in a clear state of mind I try to prioritise them. I try to decide, finally, which is more important and which is going to get cut off if I don't have time. So I think you could say...you know your life tasks, or tasks, or task priorities or something like that. And it's just a statement that these things are important to me and these things are not important to me and then you make the ... like if it comes to a choice between keeping your daily meditation or finishing a project ...three months after your dudren you're choosing the project (laughs) you know and you say, oh I can meditate tomorrow, you know. This is just where you write down all the things you're doing and then you give them an ordered number. And when there's a {Tibetan} means a priority conflict, meaning...it's in the Vinaya. It means...the vinaya says you have to do sojong every two weeks if you're ordained. The Vinaya also says that you're supposed to have a monastic tutor for the first ten years of your ordination who's supposed to guide you hour by hour. And if you lose your mentor, your Vinaya mentor, you're supposed to go get a new one immediately. Like if they died or if they went away, within an hour you're supposed to go find another one. So suppose your men...this is in the Vinaya right. So suppose your mentor passes away and it's time to go to sojong, that's called a {Tibetan}, there's a priority conflict. And then you have to decide which one is more virtuous, which one is more important. So in that case finding your mentor is more important and you're allowed to miss... you're required to miss sojong, see what I mean. So you have to do that. Make a priority list of what's important in your life and then live by it. That's the hard part. You got to put meditation is number 1; tantric commitments goes above meditation or something like that, you know. What my tantric lama tells me to do goes above what I might appear to be for other people or what might be comfortable for me, you

know what I mean. You make a priority of your...what's important to you in a clear state of mind. And then later you try to stick by it okay. And you can include there your projects. Like working on this project and working on this project. For a Buddhist this is mainly an exercise of deciding which virtues are more important than other virtues, you see what I mean. The dudren is more addressing your bad habits. The priority thing is more addressing...okay it's important for me to serve my family, it's important to get enough sleep, it's important to do my tantric commitments, it's important to do my monk's commitments, but then you have to decide which are more virtuous. And I think a lot of American Buddhists, who are pretty good Buddhists, get to a certain point where they... everything they're doing is virtuous, but then you have to learn the art of choosing what's more virtuous than other virtues, you see what I mean?

So that'll be number four. So work on for ... we have about twenty minutes. Start collecting your thoughts, look through your notes. Maybe you want to start with your retreat notes, or start with whatever's comfortable for you.

By this time, or by tomorrow afternoon try to have four lists okay. I'll say the four again. First one would be things I learned during my retreat about how to do a retreat and checklist for next time, you know don't forget to bring lots of Kleenex (laughs) (laughter) okay. You'll be surprised, you get into a one month retreat and realize you don't have any Kleenex (laughter) you know. I ran out of toilet paper once and that was ... (laughter) .

Number two is dudren, meaning this is like a list of personal goals that every morning when you get up you're going to look at it. I even memorized mine and recited it every day. And like addressing your personal weaknesses and what you want to do with your life okay. Like those are very noble, high principal things okay. And you.. and look at them every morning.

Number three is your daily schedule. Do you want to make any changes? Write it out in detail and put it somewhere you know like on the refrigerator or something and try to stick to it for a while. And make it realistic. Don't say, meditate at 4.30, eat at 7.00 for 15 minutes (laughter). I mean be honest about what time it takes. What you'll find out when you do the schedule is that you're having task priority conflicts. You know you don't have enough time to do everything you thought you wanted to do. You have to cut some things and just admit it. Admit it now in a clear state of mind rather than not doing them, you know what I mean? Personally I found that daily schedule... throw in a little bit of week thing ...uou'll have a daily schedule but say on Wednesday's I'll change it to that, you see what I mean. Just sticking yourself to one day can be pretty...it can be... it doesn't work 7 days a week, you see what I mean. You do need to take a day off every seven days or so. You do need to break your schedule every seven days or so and leeave yourself some goof-off time, you know like... you know what I mean...don't pack every 15 minutes, okay Winston? (laughs) (laughter) you know...you know liketime for a movie or time for walking around, time for just goofing off okay. And you leave yourself ... every other day or every third day... that's what I'm saying, don't make a daily schedule that hasn't built

into it some other outlet, pressure outlet, okay. And for unexpected things that come along.

The last one is a list of what you do, you know your activities in your life and decide now in a clear state of mind what's more important. And then when the {Tibetan} come, when the priority conflicts come you choose on the basis of that list even if you're not thinking so clearly a week from now. (laughs) Okay. All right, okay go ahead.

Very last part of the visualization.

The text says, {Tibetan} means, please bless me to increase my amount of learning {Tibetan} means hearing or learning, classroom hours okay. And frankly it's just raw classroom hours, maybe 1000, 2000, 3000 hours in the classroom hearing the subjects of Buddhism okay

Side B

And you have to go through that. It's like playing piano. It's like doing your scales okay. You have to do it and it has to be repeated over and over again. You keep hearing it, okay. So that's a {Tibetan}. {Tibetan} means the process of integrating it in your mind by thinking about it a lot on your own. You know, considering it. And that's like Buddhism going on in your head all day long. And then {gomba} means when it gets internalized and it just becomes part of you and that also means meditation. So it means internalizing it on the point of...to the point of where it's part of your being, and also meditating on it. Learning to go into deep meditation, which means you have to learn to sit quietly for an hour or two without moving and with concentrating. You have to be able to do that. To see emptiness directly you must be able to do that or else you can't. So you have to get to a point where you can do that. And the next line, and then it says sherab; sherab means wisdom. {Tibetan} means please bless me that it increases. That's the meaning of the first line.

Then he says, {Tibetan} ...The second line is how do you communicate what you've learned to other people. {Tibetan} means is the book on the lotus flower, meaning the ability to explain verbally to other people what you've learned, okay. {tser} means the ability to address objections like a good salesman okay. Like the customer says, this is the wrong color and you say but it'll fit your living room. And then they say, but I didn't want it, and then you say, but you need it. (laughter) And then they say, it doesn't work and you can say, well you can fix it you know and this is learning to address people's concerns. And in the west even more necessary than in Tibet where it was already part of the culture okay. That's the sword flowing through the nectar.

Now, the last...the very last part of the visualization. You do the...this whole thing is called {Tibetan} okay. When you do a Vajrayogini retreat, there's a whole section at the end relating to this so it's good to practice it.

{Dutsi} means nectar. {Tibetan} means... {Tibetan} coming down, {chang} means making you pure. {Tobetan}...so you...all of these visualizations are called {Tibetan}

Then you imagine nectar coming down one last time and there's a book with a sword, okay. So that's just .. the last visualization is a globe, each drop of nectar is a globe, like a crystal globe and then inside of it is a lotus flower, pink and on top of that is a book wrapped up in a golden cloth Tibetan style or you can do western style it doesn't matter and then a sword on top of it. So it's a combination of {Tibetan}. A combination of the ability to explain yourself about Buddhism and the ability to address other people's objections or concerns about it. The ability to debate, basically. And those two together represent {Tibetan}, I'm sorry {Tibetan} So {Tibetan} is what you've been reciting when you do your {Tibetan}, tundruk ... {Tibetan}

{Tibetan} means the ability to write about Buddhism, okay, the ability to compose books. The ability to write articles, the ability to send someone a letter a letter and explain Buddhism in it. Basically the ability to put down in writing, which requires a combination of explaining and addressing concerns or debating. So you have to have a little bit of both, so that's why there's a book and a sword okay. And that's the...you're praying to Je Tsongkapa for the ability to do that. Je Tsongkapa in his own lifetime wrote 10,000 pages of scripture. His works and his student's works which are in the temple in 6<sup>th</sup> Street, up on a wall, thirty eight volumes. There's probably about, I don't know how many, about 500 to 600 different books there. And he didn't live that long. He lived 60 something. So it was... it's amazing that a person could write that okay. So he obviously had it and then you're asking for it.

I think it's very important especially in the west that people start writing authoritative books about Buddhism. There are a lot of books available, they're sort of like ...I see two extremes. One is books about Buddhism from a scholarly point of view, meaning looking or writing about Buddhism as a subject of study almost like anthropology or something like that. And then a lot of foreign words and a lot of technical explanations of the philosophy without much reference to your personal life. And then on the other extreme, simplifications that miss the great wealth or the richness of the scriptures, all the detail and all the helpful questions that come up and are addressed and treated with beautiful detail in the scriptures are just...the people don't know them so they just simplify them. And then...so you get two extremes like that. And I think there's an important place for... there's a big gap in the middle for the scripture and the sword, where you give them the wealth of the information but you also apply it to people's daily life, in a clear way which doesn't involve a lot of foreign words and technical comparisons to schopenheimer and who ever it is, you know what I mean (laughs) (laughter) just clear, factual Buddhism.

And I'm not criticizing. Buddha started, you know, three turnings of the wheel. The first one was simplification you know. The third one was too complicated (laughter). The second one was fine, if you were a middle way person (laughs) So you know that. They could be Buddhas writing them, I'm not saying that. But I think there's a big place for in the middle, which you are trained to fill. You may be a person who never imagined you'd write anything but there are students in this room who I've seen like two, three page things they've written in magazines that five years later people are still talking to me about them and saying, oh I read that thing. So you can do it. And even if you think you can't do it you have to ask for the blessings to do it. There are thousands of pages of stuff like what Ora's working on that you can help. And then eventually those have to be edited and cleaned up and we'd like to put them on the web and ... That would be very appropriate. That would be something that Je Tsongkapa would like to do if he were alive today okay.

I think last thing to say that I didn't talk much about is that in Tibet this mantra is considered very, very powerful against all kinds of obstructions. So like if you had a health problem or a personal problem or you were feeling depressed or anxiety or something like that, in Tibet the lama would say, oh you need to go do some miktsemas. The mantra is called miktsema and there are... as I said there are volumes and volumes written about miktsema. There are a couple of hundred commentaries written just about miktsema. So that the doctor would order, oh you need three, four, five hundred miktsemas. You can use it if you have a problem. It's especially powerful with regards to problems, to personal problems or other kinds of problems that you have. It's considered a very powerful mantra with regard to personal problems. So people would be reciting it all the time. And you don't have to do a two hour retreat or two week retreat. If you have five minutes extra then do some miktsemas, you know. If you have a minute extra do some miktsemas. It gets burned into your mind, the VCR of your karma collecting mind is on all the time. It's collecting all the time. It's taking in imprints constantly, so you might as well fill them up usefully, you know what I mean. If you have an extra minute or two minutes, you know you're waiting for the dentist or something, then don't waste the time because the brain is only alive, in this life, for a certain amount of time. So you want to keep sending impressions to it, filling it with impressions, karmic impressions.

So in Tibet they'd be doing miktsema all the time. And then they say the demons were upset by this, so they invented Tibetan cheese (laughter). And this is like, dry Tibetan cheese is very, very, very hard and it comes in little pieces like that and it's like bubble gum. If you start eating one it's very hard to soften it, it takes like an hour to get it soft. And during that time you can't recite anything. It's like a big piece of bubble gum in your mouth. So they say the demons were upset by miktsema and invented it. Tibetan's love to eat the cheese, if they get a bag of it they'll spend all day on it. (laughter) So like that.

Okay, we'll do meditation.

Also like to thank the protectors (laughter) (cheers/applause)

No, I mean normally at least a few people really go crazy and we're been very fortunate .

You know usually fire breaks out or someone goes really nuts or you know, Patrick can tell you. (laughs) (laughter) Anyway thank them.

And then this teaching ... Khen Rinpoche gave it to us in, I don't remember in what year, early 75, 76, something like that. So it's really through his kindness that we have this place or that any of us are here. So we'll do his long life prayer for that okay. The idea is to do it slow okay. In Sera they do it very slow ok. And they do it at Sera, every time they do a prayer they do Khen Rinpoche's long life prayer.

(Tibetan - Long Life Prayer for Khen Rinpoche)

Miktsema

Mikme tseway terchen chenre sik,  
Drime kyenpay wangpo jampel yang,  
Dupung malu jomdze sangway dak,  
Gangchen kepay tsuk-gyen tsongkapa, losang drakpa shabla solwa deb.

The best thing to do about Je Tsongkapa is to...you have all the teachings on, on his world view and the best thing is to carry it and teach it and hold it yourself. You know the main that's causing your world is your karma and that everything is empty and that what you see around you, whether you like it or don't, is coming all from that. So the only way to change it is to keep your book. Okay. (laughs)

[Prayer: Dedication]

Request for Geshe la to lead another retreat

If you meditate every day, (laughter) until then – Mase!

**The Four Powers**  
**Class Six**  
**RAW TRANSCRIPT**

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Geshe Michael Roach  
Je Tsongkapa Mantra  
Godstow Retreat Center  
26/12/98 to 3/1/99

Class 7

[Prayer: Mandala]

[Prayer: Refuge]

We'll go in several topics okay.  
You're good at this, why don't you do this.

Okay, topics are:  
Questions about the practice.  
Comments about doing retreats, meditation posture, everything else.  
You know like things that you found were useful that might help other people and stuff like that. I think comments about your priorities, your schedule and, what was the other thing?  
Your resolutions. You know those three, the other three lists, okay.

So questions about the practice, comments about your own meditation, how it went; doing retreats in general, and then comments about your other three lists – your schedule, your priorities, what's the other one? Your daily resolutions. Okay? All right?

She's a really good monitor. We have one hour.

[student: [unclear]]

No, I mean, the last three? Yeah the last three you can mix up. They're all equal importance.

[student: [unclear]]

That comes in number...no, no, no, that comes retreat comments, actually. You talk about retreat.

So right now it's technical questions about the visualizations. Nope, okay.  
(laughter)

[students: Three things that you raised were, number one –questions about the practice.  
Number two...]

Which is more like me just answering and then ....

[student: things about meditating?]

Yeah, and, and the retreat, meaning anybody say, I thought useful to sit like this or I found....I think we should put this snorer south side next time. (laughter, laugh)

Suggestions about Godstow and about how to meditate and how to do retreat.

[student:[unclear]]

The three lists not counting the meditation retreat because you already did that one. All right.

[student:[unclear]]

(question)

{Tibetan} comes in 2 parts right. {Tibetan}, the big hunks. You squeeze them out you now and then he gets to eat. And then the left overs are skimmed on the top and they come out the top. And those are mainly {Tibetan}. {Tibetna} means bad deeds like natural bad deeds, killing, stealing, lying, like that. And then {Tibetan} means breaking your vows, you know things that you took a vow not to do.

So {Tibetan} you get eliminated; {Tibetan} means obstacles to your practice. Some that hurt you like mental afflictions okay. And the {Tibetan} would be more the object of {Tibetan} which is the inability to know things or the inability to understand things clearly. That's more cleaned out during {Tibetan}. So during the {Tibetan} which is clearing out the impurities, it's more like broken commitments.

If...the bodhisattva vows, if you remember the course, they are designed around the six perfections although there're not very obvious. They are designed around the six perfections. If you broke a bodhisattva vow you're hurting your six perfections. So that would be doing the cleaning up and down, down and up. And then things that you haven't understood yet, emptiness, karma, you know, subtle things; that would be cleaned out during {Tibetan}, with the lamp. That's the difference. And that's the difference between {Tibetan} and {Tibetan}.

{Tibetan} keep you from achieving nirvana, {Tibetan} keep you from achieving enlightenment. Mental affliction obstacles and knowledge obstacles.

[student:[unclear]]

I'll repeat the question because it helps others later. She said she put the double dorje over the Lord of Death to keep ... that's a ... there's a lot of visualisations where you use double dorjes to shut things and to keep them shut. It's like a double lock or something like

that. But it can also mean long life, so it is appropriate to use it. Like when you put a double dorje on a lama's throne with svastikas on it they all mean long life. So that's fine. That's all right.

[student:[unclear]]

You are sitting on it, 'cos when you use it to shut the .... ( student)... it's okay

[student: [unclear]]

(laughs) (laughter) I don't know. You have to push them. You have to push them. Put more nectar in ...

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, I know. {De} means... as I said the word {Tibetan}. {De} means to...it's a very unusual word and it means what a shepherd does to sheep with a stick, or what a bullock cart driver does to the bull. It means to drive things in front of you. Like in the wild west there'd be twenty horsemen driving the cattle to Kansas city. That's {depa}.

[student: [unclear]]

She has problem when she tries to push them down with the nectar, they stay. They just lock there. I would ask for more blessings. I don't have any ... I never... I can't think of ... I'd just ask for more blessings.

[student: [unclear]]

Try bodhicitta. You know, try some bodhicitta. That seems to work usually. Think of someone who's sick, okay. Like that. Somebody who's having a problem and that'll help. You decide it. (laugh)

[student: [unclear]]

That can be all over. Mostly when you do tonglen you collect them at your heart. So you can do it either way. I think it's probably convenient to collect them at your heart. 'Cos if you're used to doing tonglen you're doing that with other people already.

[student: [unclear]]

I did that all the time and you just cycle to the next period.  
She said she doesn't finish all six perfections in one period. So do two in one period , then do one next period and that's fine.  
(laughter)

[student: [unclear]]

He said can you visualize the nectar as being emptiness? Sure. That's fine. He calls it in his commentary 'vajra nectar' or it would be {Tibetan}. That would be... It would be, especially if you're doing tantric practice. It would be {Tibetan} okay. But generally if you want to think of a meaning to it, can be a mix of the three principal paths or something if you want to think of that. But he did say vajra nectar, so in his commentary.

[student: [unclear]]

Some people say... she asked if there was a big difference between saying it out loud or doing it mentally. And I think, the question comes up in the scriptures. And they say that one obvious advantage of doing it out loud is that other beings in the room can hear it. And that you have to imagine while you recite it that there are a lot of pretas or other beings in the room who'll benefit from it. And that's why they say it's important to do it enough that you can hear it, you know, like enough of a whisper that you yourself could hear it. Then they say if you get good enough at it you could do it mentally and then it's good to alternate. You know do it mentally for a while and then do it verbally for a while. Some people say they get distracted if they do it verbally. But if you get deep into a retreat I think you could switch from verbal to mental. So that's possible.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. You could start the session off with a couple of hundred verbal and then go ... how many did people do because I'm curious?

About 1000 a day, something like that?

[student: [unclear]]

It's okay. It's better if you count. I mean it's ... they got this famous incident in the lam rim, where someone's ... three guys go to a cave to do, they call them 'counting mantras' {Tibetan}. And they come out and make a fire and have some tea, after a week, and say how, you know. And the third guy says, I thought it was more important to concentrate on it and I forgot to count. Then the lam rim says he was the most brilliant one of all. (laughter) But it's not bad to count them, you don't have to think it's like competitive or dumb or childish or something like that. It's great. You should be proud of it. I think it's good to count them if you can. Some people it distracts them greatly to actually sit there with the rosary. They lose the visualization and then, you might try putting it here and then moving it like that, that works. On your knee. And if you still get distracted I think you could do it mentally and you would lose count. But when you're doing a {Tibetan}, you

have to count okay. You have to know that you've got to 100,000. If you know that you can do 100,000 in twenty days and you do forty days then that's okay.

[student: [unclear]]

That's secret.  
(laughter)

It's 10,000 of a different mantra.

[student: [unclear]]

Oh I think like two, three hundred. Most lamas say two, three hundred is good. If you can do couple hundred in a day. Couple of rounds. Three rounds is great. Two rounds is good, one round is, you know...(laughter)

No, I mean it depends how your life is going. I mean there's this kind of thing where ritual takes over your life and you're all nervous and upset because you didn't do two hundred that day. It ruined your meditation and your visualization, you know what I mean. So you have to be ... I think two mantras if it's concentrated are probably better than three hundred if it seems like an obligation and you're rushed.

[student: [unclear]]  
(laughs) (laughter)

When you...they say {Tibetan}.

Say {Tibetan} repeat. The internal winds which are not the same as your breath, but the inner winds and the mind are...they move in tandem, {Tibetan} means tandem, and that's the basis of tantric practice, {Tibetan}, higher tantric practice. So as you think, so go your winds. And as your winds go, so do your thoughts go. So they influence each other. So if you're frightened for example, your winds start moving in a strange way. They call it outside of the channels. And then, you start breathing; that effects your breath. It's not your breath but it effects your breath. And that's why when you're frightened you start to breath faster or something like that. And then if you purposely breathe slow, you get more calm because the breathing effects the inner air, which effects the mind. And that's also called lung, but that's a different lung. The lung that people say, 'I got lung', is called {Tibetan} means a kind of central wind, in the area of your heart and it's connected to ... if you're meditating and it builds up ...if you build up breath, for example if you keep going (inhales breaths) every time you do a mantra that effects your inner air and you get lung faster. You shouldn't collect physical air because it effects your inner air, while you're doing the mantras. So that's one thing. And one sign of it is that you start getting shaky and like that. As you start to straighten out your inner channels you get a different kind of

shaky. And then different kinds of inner things are happening and you might feel different physical experiences that are very strong. And that's a sign that you're mental afflictions are getting less. And generally every time you have an emotion of anger, it chokes your central channel. Every time you have any other bad emotions it chokes your central channel. That's what actually kills you physically, eventually. When you die it's just finishing. And the process of meditation ultimately is to try to loosen them and not to choke that channel.

As you start to loosen it, the more sweet thoughts you have ... every time you have a good thought, it loosens a little bit. And if in your life you have enough good thoughts, and specifically in sutra not seeing things as self-existent, and in tantra as not seeing things as {Tibetan}, that opens, that loosens that channel. And then you start to have some experience of shaking a little bit. So that's a good sign but it has to be controlled. Also if the winds get out of the channels you start to shake. Like if you get agitated at work or when you're angry then the winds are moving in the wrong places. And then you get shaky. Or when you get nervous or something like that.

[student: [unclear]]

No. Don't confuse the winds with this practice. This practice is not connected with the winds at all. So yeah, just let it flow down like oil, like someone's pouring motor oil on your head. Yeah, very soft, like motor oil coming down the inside of your body. And nothing to do with holding your breath or pushing your breath. That's a totally different thing, and very bad to do it at this point okay.

[student: [unclear]]

I've never seen that. (laughter) I never heard that. Normally they say it's coming straight down from his heart. And when you do Vajrasattva, it's coming from some place, other way, different way.

[student: [unclear]]

Heart, yeah. And sometimes you'll see ... by the way, I have something I want to pass around. Marjie is working on a set of fifteen paintings of Je Tsongkapa's life, extremely rare. We found the original manuscript that tells you what's going on in each scene, and she's been translating them and working on them for a couple of years actually. We have a mock-up that we made to show a publisher that has some neat scenes in it. So I thought you'd like to see that. In those scenes, it's coming like that, you know.

Those of you who were in California last summer, was it, and made a donation to [unclear], we found a very rare kadampa book, 1000 pages long 'ten rim chenmo', that the lam rim chenmo was based on. Lam rim chenmo is the greatest book ever written in Tibetan. Ten rim chenmo ... it was a rip-off of the ten rim chenmo, but a kind one. And ten rim chenmo

was lost and we found a copy and it's been input. Ora's been working on ... she's about two days away from finishing the book. So it'll be published in Tibetan and given away to all these monks in India because people donated it. During Je Tsongkapa's life it was lost as well and he found a copy in his life. Then it was lost after him and we found a copy. But in the painting there's a very amazing (laughter)... there's a amazing...you can see the scene where he's finding the book...(laughter) And then you can see the scene where he's teaching it to his students. So I thought those of you who were in California might appreciate that.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. Those of you who didn't see, we did a silver plate with ruby and diamonds to be put in the heart of the Buddha statue that Lama Zopa's working on. I'm sorry, Maitreya. Which is like 500 feet high? 500 feet high in Bodhgaya. Do you want to pass that around?

[student: [unclear]]

Oh by the way, the nectar's not pouring down in the middle. It's not like a faucet. It's more like ... we say imagine your body is {Tibetan}, means deity's bodies don't have anything inside, there're just like the sky or something inside. You can visualize them as blue sky or something. Inside they're hollow. They're just appearing like ... there's very beautiful ... in a Buddha land there's a {Tibetan} but not a {Tibetan}. {Tibetan} means visible matter, but {Tibetan} means there's no physical matter. You see what I mean? No particulate matter, there's a distinction. So you can see a Buddha, but actually they're just light. And they don't have guts and intestines and stuff like that. So you have to imagine yourself like that. And it's just coming down the outside, pouring down like that. You can imagine it coming down also through your channels and stuff. I personally like to do it through my blood vessels and stuff like that. But, but your ... inside of your body, think of it as, if you want think of it as {Tibetan}, like filled with blue sky or something and then the nectar just coming down and spreading every where like that, like oil, like very heavy oil. But not like a faucet or something like that.

[student: [unclear]]

Oh no, it's coming right down through your {Tibetan}. Say {Tibetan}. There's an opening right here, in the middle of your bald spot. There's no translation. You can say , centre top of the head, that's I translate it. It's right here. And you can imagine a very small opening like very small, like a straw, okay, like the width of a straw.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, it starts at the heart. It comes down.

[student: [unclear]]

It's funny because in Rinpoche's commentary it says five colors, in Pabongka's commentary it says white. And normally when you visualise five colors it's related to the five Buddha families. The five classes of the five Buddhas. And those have significance in your vows, in your tantric vows. Your tantric vows relate to one or another of the five Buddhas; they relate to your five skandhas and they relate to the purification of your five skandhas. So like when your body becomes pure, it will change from guts and blood and skin to light. And that's represented by one of the five dhyana buddhas or buddha families. And then there's a set of vows for them. So you have nineteen vows relating to them and you have other general vows that relate to all five, so you can think of the five colors like that.

[student: [unclear]]

It's in Rinpoche's commentary; blue, white, green .... Yeah Right you got it. Nancy's got it.

[student: [unclear]]

Oh and then, sorry, the other colors are yellow – gold, right. After the first one. After the (tib ) the other durti, the other nectar's gold. When you start with the lamps that nectar is golden color and that represents Manjushri. The white represents Vajrasattva, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

You can do white only, yeah. Firstly it's more comfortable for me to do a single color. I have trouble with five colors (laughs). It starts to look like a peppermint.

[student: [unclear]]

It's nectar, which is light. He's been like so patient, his arm is like falling off.

[student: [unclear]]

As far as I understand it it's important to take them off from retreat, because they actually block the air space around here. Like the local spirits will get upset, like they can't move around them. So as I understand it it's important to take them down, to get them all down. Otherwise it's like putting a big, ...I don't know, it's like putting a big...I won't say... setting up a tent in the middle of Grand Central station, you know what I mean. And the commuters are trying to move around and they can't (laughter), no, it's just the same thing.

It creates a space that they can't penetrate and it's very inconvenient for the local inhabitants that you can't see, you know.

[student: [unclear]]

(laughter) (laughs) I think that's fine. I don't think there's any problem if you want to do it that way. I don't see any problem with that.

[student: the mantra and the visualization are they done at the same time? Or do they have to separate, can it be at the same time?]

The texts clearly say you do it at the same time and then if it's more convenient for you, stop and do the visualization for a while and then come back to the mantra. So it's clear in the text that you can do it either way. Normally you recite and do the visualisation. But if you have trouble, or if you want to go deep into the visualization, or not so deep sometimes, the book clearly says you can pause, do some mantras and then go back. And when you recite it, Ganden Hlagyama in the long version, you stop and insert miktsemas okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Can you switch the order? That's okay. The book says that clearly. Pabongk Rinpoche's commentary says clearly if you have a problem with speaking in public then use that one. You know do a couple of days on that one, you know. If you said something particularly mean to somebody then do the {Tibetan} for a while, you know. That's okay.

[student: [unclear]]

They always say do something very basic. Like, just try to get Je Tsongkapa's silhouette, you know. They always say that. Start with the silhouette. Like as if there's a light behind him and all you're trying to get is the outline. Like if you're standing behind a sheet and  
....

[student: [unclear]] (laughs)

I think it's important the books say don't visualize a thangka. See I think many Americans, you ask them how's your visualization, they say fine; he's got the right thing in his left hand, he's got the right thing in his right hand, and he's flat, you know ... I think, as Axel said, it's very important to get the feeling of the presence of a person. A three dimensional, breathing, warm ... like to visualize the scent of the person. Yeah, that's very important. The emotion of the presence of that being is as important.

[student: [unclear]]

I would visualize the presence, you know. Start with the presence and then ask for nectar to be able to see him, okay (laughs)

[student: [unclear]]

It's really the same question.

[student: No I have the other way round. I'm...]

You should marry Axel. (laughter) (laughs)

[student: I could see or I could visualize then suddenly I have the impression, okay, it's not the real picture or external being, it's a mental state. At that moment I had that thought at visualization, it's gone and I just had the presence and then I had, after that, I have problems to visualize again, after this thought. So it's [unclear] a state of mind and, and that you know, what's [unclear] at the end]

When lamas teach this visualization they go into a long spiel about the three bodies of a Buddha and how they can be there the moment you wish them there. They travel at the speed of omniscience, you know. They knew a million years ago that you were going to try to visualize them. So like they have an alarm clock, they know it's time to go and sit on your head .. (laughs) (laughter) They knew a million years ago they had to be there at that time and they started a million years ago, so... I find what's useful for me is to think of Khen Rinpoche or somebody. You know, when I lose ... when it starts to become a thangka, or you lose the ... then think of some specific lama or His Holiness, that you know their face pretty well, and fill in the face from that if you're losing the face again.

By the way, in tantra the distinction is between {Tibetan} but {Tibetan} is the presence and {Tibetan}, is the vision. You alternate in tantra. Sometimes you , the {Tibetan} is going well and you switch to {Tibetan} and then you go back to the {Tibetan} and then sometime you unify the {Tibetan}.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, in tantra you have to get to perfection of both at the same time.

[student: [unclear]]

I think you'll find that you calibrate it to all sorts of things. It'll start out to your heart beat for example. When they teach {Tibetan}, there's a whole bunch of calibrations going on and you have to learn that from a qualified ...but during the practice of {Tibetan}, you

breath is an indicator of many, many different things. You're watching many different aspects of the breath and it indicates the process of {Tibetan}.

Say, {Tibetan} repeat (laughs) okay

And that's different things going on with the inner airs and you have to learn it when you study {Tibetan}, which you should do, you know what I mean? {Tibetan} is the sadhana, {Tibetan} and if you get perfect at {Tibetan}, then you finished {Tibetan}. But on your priority list, mentally, should be that you have to get to {Tibetan} as fast as you can because that's the only way to get out of this body before you die. So in the back of your mind you should be thinking, I want to study tantra, and then especially after I finish {Tibetan}, I want to very much do {Tibetan}, because really the ultimate expression of compassion for others would be to practice {Tibetan} perfectly and get...and get out, you know if you say I want to have compassion then ... in Buddhism that means I want to become a Buddha quickly. And then {Tibetan} is the only way to do it in this lifetime, so during that practice you're very much calibrating different things to ...your breath is a signpost of many inner things going on and you watch it for many different aspects. So yeah, it would be fine to calibrate it to something now, like your heart beat or the mantras.

It's a good sign if they reach equilibrium, meaning same amount of heartbeat out and the same amount of heartbeats in. That's a good sign. So without forcing it you can watch it and slightly can kind of nudge it that way. You're not supposed to, in this practice, fool around with it, forcefully. But if you see that you're close to getting them equal you can just try. Personally I find that when my mind is in a bad condition, I'm breathing in faster and... let me see, yeah in too fast and then out slower than the in. So, that's an indication of some kind of mental affliction often. It's the in-breath, how fast the in-breath is. And that's all related to your channels and when they're all straightened out, everything changes. Your body changes, okay.

[student: [unclear]]

And comments about Godstow and how we ran the retreat. And this is not me talking, I'd rather have you talking. If you have a comment ... things that helped you that you'd like to share with other people. Or problems that you had that you thought somebody else figured it out.

[student: [unclear]]

That's a good sign. It's a good sign. It means something in your channels is getting straightened out that was blocked before. Like you're dealing mentally, you're examining your anger or your jealousy of someone and you remove the block and that's a good sign. You might also find when you're doing mantras, when you start to get a wind problem you're panting, like a little bit, or you feel short of breath or something. That's normal

when you're doing a mantra retreat. It's an early sign of a wind problem ok. And it's okay, but you should start watching it at that point okay.

[student: [unclear]]

Sorry, one more thing. And your heart palpitates. So that's normal. Those are indications of an ... early warning wind problem. Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

Also you know the feeling of a sonic boom? Like that. If you get those every once in a while that's a very good sign. That's a...it's just a jolt or something and it means some movement in the channel that there wasn't any movement before. And it's...I don't mean constant shaking like that. I mean a sudden like 'boom' that nobody else hears and kind of a jolt. And it feels like a sonic boom inside. And that's a nice sign. That's a good sign.

[student: [unclear]]

They say two things. mean they're very famous. They say ... people ask Khen Rinpoche about dreams and then they're waiting for some mystical answer and he says, if you have a good one it's a nice sign and if you have a bad one just forget it.(laughs) (laughter)  
You know, it's always an indication of your mental state, generally. But not to be believed very seriously, okay, because they're so ...what do you call it? They're easily effected by spirits or what you ate or you know, a small fight you had with somebody. They're very, I don't know how you say, shifting. They're not to be trusted much. Good dreams are throwing up, flying without an aeroplane, imagining that you're saving other people somehow, all kinds of purification like throwing up things or things coming out. Those are supposed to be auspicious dreams. Keeping your vows in your dream, like you're about to break a vow and in the dream you remember you know, to keep the vow. Those are all good signs. But generally they say if you have a bad one during retreat don't worry about it too much. Don't think about it too much.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, I don't have any ...she said what if you feel a hand on your head or something like that. I mean they often say in a meditation, asking a lama to bless you, you might feel their hand on your head or something like that. That's all I can think of. Something like that. That's pretty common. That's good.

Anybody have any comments about they found something that might help other people?

[student: [unclear]]

(laughs) (laughter)

I can't say. I can't say. I haven't read anything about that and I haven't had anything like that except when I fell asleep and hit my head on [unclear] (laughter), but I would guess that some kind of channel cleared slightly. Like on one side I would guess but I don't know much about it.

[student: [unclear]]

Humor helps lung a lot.

[student: [unclear]]

That's a long story. I think you have to do it with people who've done it. Elizabeth's good at it. [unclear] is pretty good at it

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. Yeah. I didn't give you the full mantras for the seat and the mantra for the mala that you would do if you were doing a {Tibetan}. So if you planned to do a Vajrayogini {Tibetan} you have to get instructions on those and on anything. So you've done a dry run but it's all with you know, dummy stuff. (laughter) I just mean if you plan to do a {Tibetan}, a tantric retreat, now you have to get the full version of everything. But what you've done is a very heavy sutra retreat. That's about as heavy as you can get without going to tantra. Okay.

[student: [unclear]]

It's good to do it. You can say, 'om vajra asana soha'. You know who's got it? Ask (?) She wrote it down. You can write it down afterwards.

[student: [unclear]]

No you don't have to always do the mantra. But I think you got some ... I was very very sceptical about mantra retreats. I didn't do it for eight years or something and then I did. If you do a long one, they're very very amazing. The mantra has a very powerful effect on your subconscious that you don't even know. So I would encourage you to do some. But for daily practice, I think it's more important to be in deep meditation for an hour without the mantra okay. So I wouldn't suggest that you...

[student: [unclear]]

I think to see emptiness, you have to be able to do that. I would do some mantras but I

wouldn't ... the first priority, you know on that priority list... the first priority is to be able to meditate single pointedly silently, inside, for an hour. Straight. Perfectly. Of course it's very important to do some mantras, but if you asked me which is more important, I... I don't hesitate to say you should develop the inside one. But you'll find that if you do both it helps.

By the way, without junking up your practice okay. Junking up your practice means collecting practices until it's impossible to do them nicely. And Americans are really good at that. And then you get guilty, so use your practices like a tool kit, you know. Do this one for a couple of months and then move to the other one when it gets stale. Then move to another practice. You know I found it very important to do that. When you get burned out on a certain practice then have another four, five practices ready that you can say, okay now I'll do this one. And that's...I found personally, every two or three months I change my practice and concentrate on ... I might do death meditation for three weeks and then stop that and do something from the {Tibetan} and then stop that, you know. Until you get good at it. Right after you get good at it you kind of get burned out on it. Then move on to something else. Don't do the same one all the time.

[student: [unclear]]

This is a great daily one. This is a very powerful daily one. Start out with at least twenty one mantras, 100 if you have time and then go into deep meditation or something.

[student: [unclear]]

I love that sound. Who knows that? (laughter) Teach us that.  
Teach us that. Let's hear it right now.  
Yeah. Then I'd like to remember it.

{sing miktsema.}

(laughter) (laughs)

I like it. We'll use it secretly (laughter) (laughs)

[student: [unclear]]

I mean, tell us tricks that you used that would help us, like Petra's thing is really cool.

[student: [unclear – I found it was very powerful that when we meditate the first forty five minutes then when I do mantra, it's like...you know, it would give me a lot more energy and much more focus]

I find that with the last third of a ... I'm duller, so I do the mantra then. And then in the middle half I'm really bright. I do the deep meditation then and then the preliminaries before that. I switched it after a while, yeah, like that.

[student: [unclear]]

Like sitting tricks. You seem to sit really well. What's your secret? (laughs)

[student: [unclear]]

(laughs)

[students: [unclear]]

Yeah, you can do one point visualization. It can be a visualization.

[student: [unclear]]

That's a good place to start.

Later it would become a concept like emptiness or something like that.

But to start learning {Tibetan}, one-pointed meditation, is... a visualization is very good.

And this one is perfect. So fix your mind on a single point of it like Je Tsongkapa sitting on your head and make it perfect.

[student: [unclear]]

(laughter)

Are these the people who did 5000? (laughs)

[student: [unclear]]

I think it's true. I mean, the lam rim says that you should stay on a single object for up to six months or something like that. I'm just saying you're not supposed to skip around and change objects everyday because then you don't get good at any of them. But I think that once you get good at one and... to me, I get good at it and then about two, three weeks later, I get dry on it. I don't think there's any particular month, you know what I mean? When you get dry on it and it's not moving anymore, personally I would move on. And usually it's three or four months. And then I'll just change my whole morning practice... you know I'll do a different ... I'll do Vajrasattva for a while and then I'll change it every ... personally I find about three months, but maybe it's different for different people. I don't mean ... The lam rim does warn you not to flit around from visualization to visualization before you get good at the one you're on.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. Yeah. And also I think much more dangerous and much more typical for westerners is to try to do too much. You know I mean choose one ... I think more dangerous than many meditation objects is...much more typical is that people get five initiations and they're rushing through. They're just reciting it, which in my mind has very, very little effect on your mind. It is a blessing. It is a good thing. Like to do tundra and recite it is a big blessing, but if you don't examine your vows, if you don't do the book which is the meaning of tundra, then I can't see that it will have much effect on you. I've interviewed many Americans who have been practicing for ten or twenty years and they say, I kept my commitments. And I say, what did you do? They say, I recited {Tibetan} And then I say, what else did you do? They say, I don't know, I kept my commitment you know. They're not different. They didn't improve, they didn't make any progress, nothing's happening in their lives, you know. Because the meaning of those things is to visualize them, you know (laughs) and slowly and perfectly. Real tundra is to stop and check your vows, write down how you're doing and things like that.

So I...I'd say much more dangerous is trying to do too much in the morning. Pick a sweet practice and stick to it for a while, don't try to ... even in the Tibetan monasteries we do three hours of reciting in the morning in the tsok, and they'll do three {Tibetan}, four {Tibetan} and personally I can't imagine how anyone can concentrate you know, in three hours straight. And I can't judge other people. I don't know what other monks are thinking but a lot of them are asleep or, you know, like that ...you know I can't imagine that you can do it unless you're highly advanced or something; that you could quickly recite Ganden Hlgyama, you know. {Tibetan} And that's how fast they go for three hours. I just imagine that each abbot over the course of the last 500 years said this is a really important prayer. We should do this one in the morning too (laughs) (laughter). And then somewhere around the eighteenth century it became impossible to concentrate on it, I don't know

But I...personally I think Americans should do something slowly, nicely, sweetly. Take an hour you know. Like that. I'm just warning you against jamming too many things into your daily practice, okay

[student: [unclear]]

(laughs)(laughter)

[student: [unclear]]

Side B

By the way, if you get this when you don't sleep for two nights, then you think you're

reaching some new plateau and no, you don't have to sleep and that's wrong. And then you're going to go crazy about two nights after that. So it's a fallacy, which you're about to say I think. If you don't sleep for two nights, do something about it. You're not reaching some new spiritual state, you're just about to take your clothes off and run around (laughter) (laughs). It's important to know that. It's important to know that.

[student: [unclear]]  
(laughs)

I tried a little coffee, first time I've ever done it ;it worked really good, maybe it's (?) right when I was getting dull. It helped a little bit.

[student: [unclear]]  
(laughter) (laughs)

What's that?

[student: [unclear]]  
(laughs) (laughter)

Let me explain the hall a in the library. Part of the contract we have with the previous owners is that we preserve his papers and his degrees and stuff. They're supposed to come and organize them and sort of put them in a big photo album and we can put it in the library somewhere.

[student: [unclear]]

What I'd like to see if someone ever wanted to work on it is a brief description of his holy deeds, you know. He saved nearly five million children or something, that's something. And that's enough, you don't need all the dancing medals and stuff (laughter) You know and put it in....make it a beautiful peaceful thing in there and it would be really nice.

[student: [unclear]]

(laughs) I would like to see it cleaned out. The previous owner has been ill and so she hasn't been able to do the work that she was supposed to do. We didn't want to impose on her by saying, you know hurry up, because she's been ill. W But we'll try.

Yeah, I read that one plaque fifty times (laughter) (laughs)

[student: [unclear]]

There's this thing of turning distractions into the practice. If you start thinking about your mother, then practice on her. Like that.

[student: [unclear]]

Thank you very much. Truly, I think I'm the luckiest person here, I get the most virtue and I think get the most blessings, so for me it's a very holy time. I feel very fortunate to have you people. That we're all be together is very rare, for me it's very much a blessing. I often feel I'm the person getting the most, so I thank you for that.(laughs)

[student: [unclear]]

The only comment I have is start tomorrow, do it tomorrow. If you don't break the first five or six days, you'll get in the habit. If you give yourself a day off in the next week or so you can forget it. So start tomorrow. Most important thing.

[student: [unclear]]

She asked about eating the cookies. I think it's very dangerous to get into the habit. It's a very bad thing to eat them while they're on the altar (laughter) and then personally I think it's very dangerous even afterwards. To me the best offerings are totally selfless and no self interest at all. Like take a dollar bill and throw it in the ocean is a good offering to me. You know, I think ideally not to use them yourself is the purest way to make offerings.

[student: [unclear]]

I just wouldn't get in the habit. I don't think...I think [unclear]I can't eat but I think it's a bad habit. I think offerings should be totally selfless, nothing in it for yourself. Not at all. Even [unclear] you might get a regret from an old cookie or something... I think even that.

[student: [unclear]]

Oh they say throw them out where no one will step on them or walk on them. and they... there's a big debate about whether you should offer them to animals or not. Rinpoche says no, should not. It'll make them sick, it's too powerful for them. But then he throws them out in the woods in his backyard and animals can eat them and he likes that, so ...I think not purposely feed it to animals. But to put it in...they say to put it in a body of water is perfect, like the ocean or a lake. Or leave them in the forest, but definitely not to throw them out with the regular garbage. I think in Manhattan I put them in a separate bag and I put the bag in the garbage because there's not much else you can do. I think you have to just treat the special. You're never supposed to walk on them or step on them .

[student: [unclear]]

Take it to work is great.

[student: [unclear]]

[Prayer: Mandala]

]Prayer: Dedication]

So get comfortable and then listen carefully. Then the blessing comes from the...from hearing it and then you pass it onto other people. And I think, what's beautiful about Tibetan Buddhism to me is that the lung and the teachings have come so purely through the lineage from teacher to student, even since Lord Buddha, it's clearly what Lord Buddha taught is what we're being taught. And to me that's very...it's amazing over two and half thousands, unbroken. So then to take a lung or to receive a lung is additional responsibility on your part to pass it on and not let it...not let the lineage dead end with you, okay? All right, here we go.

This will be the full version and some day you should get teachings on the other lines that we didn't do.

Oral Transmission {Lung}

[student: [unclear]]

Recorded tracks: ? / Knocking on Heaven's Door

Thank you ...

**Meditation Module  
The Four Powers  
Class Seven  
RAW TRANSCRIPT**

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