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Emptiness: A Deep Dive

An Exploration of “A” and “The”

Geshe Michael Roach

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So I like to tell the story – I had never been much out of Arizona when I was a kid. So when I got the presidential thing, I had to go to Washington, and they put me on a plane and it stopped in Chicago, right? Then it was going to go to Washington. And it was a big deal for me and I was really happy. We took off... all my friends came to the airport, my high school friends, and then I flew.

And then we were outside of Chicago and we were supposed to land. And then we were all having fun – and we were... you know, I was really excited. And we were goofing around in the airplane, and looking at movies, and eating the... in those days they gave you food. And it was really exciting. And then we got over Chicago and it was very overcast. And then it took a long... they said, “We’re descending,” but then it took a long time to descend. And, you know, we were starting to wonder what was going on. And they were saying, “Oh, there’s traffic, a lot of traffic.” And they kept going around in circles. And it took longer and longer, and then we were starting to get a little concerned.

And then they started to climb very high... straight – like almost straight up. They started to climb like really high. And then they came over the peak of the climb and then they shot the plane down, like straight down. And then they pulled out of this dive like this. Like it would go (zhoom) and then it would go (vroom). And we were all like, “Ahhh!” And it happened like three or four times, and we thought maybe something really bad is going on, you know? And then we were all getting really nervous. And the stewardesses were obviously disturbed, you know? They were looking not so good. And they were coming up and down the aisle and poking their head in the cabin and coming back again.

And then after a couple of these dives, then the pilot came on, and he said, “There’s a problem with the airplane.” He said, “We can’t tell if the landing gear are down. We can’t tell if the landing gear are coming down. The light on the board says it’s not down. And we tried to shake it down to see if it would lock and then the light would go off, but it didn’t go off. So there’s an emergency light on. We don’t know if the landing gear are down. Then we’re going to buzz the control tower and they’re going to try to see if our landing gear is down.”

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So he came down really close to the ground and then he buzzed by the control tower, and then he went back up. And we're like, "Ahh!" And then he got on and he said, "It's so overcast, they can't see the landing gear, so we don't know if the landing gear are down." So then he said, "We're going to work on it, and we'll get back to you." And they kept circling and they kept circling.

And then finally the stewardesses started coming through the cabin and saying, "You might want to... this is how you take an emergency landing posture. Cover your head. We have a problem, it's not getting better. We're going to circle until the fuel runs out, until the fuel is almost gone, 'cause if we crash land and if the fuel spills out then there'll be less burning." And we're like, "Okay."

And now everything is getting tense. Everything is getting really tense inside the plane. And then the stewardesses come through. One stewardess broke down at that point. She started crying, she started bawling – she laid down at the front. And we're all like, "Ahh!" And it was very intense.

And then they were like, "Okay, you've got to practice getting your head down. Take your shoes off because they might melt; all jewelry off, because it will burn through your fingers."

And people were writing letters to their loved ones and stuffing them in the... you know, it's funny 'cause if the plane burns... Anyway, but you were stuffing them in there. And it was getting really tense.

And then we just had to wait. There wasn't anything to do for like a half hour, 45 minutes we just flew in circles. Everybody was nervous and everybody's looking around. And then someone started to cry. (emotional) And then someone got up from the other side, and came over and hugged them. And then somebody else started to cry, and then somebody else got up and went over and hugged them. And then everybody was... either you were breaking down or you were hugging. And everybody in the plane. This really weird thing... this thing was happening in the plane where everybody was hugging everybody else. It was beautiful. It was the most beautiful thing. Complete strangers were hugging each other and consoling each other, and saying, "Well, if this is it, I'm glad I knew you." It was really weird. All this love pouring out of the whole plane. Really, really beautiful. And I never felt anything like that. I never saw anything like that. Everybody in the plane was loving everybody else in the plane unconditionally. "I could die in ten minutes with you – let's spend the last ten minutes with a hug." (laughs) Everybody just wanted to hug everybody. It was really beautiful.

And then they said, "Ok – stop the hugging. We're going down. And get down in your position."

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So you were down like this in the seat (leans over) and you couldn't see anybody else and you were just by yourself. And you were just listening to see what happens. And they came down and they hit the ground. And then we looked out. First of all, you saw foam – they had foamed the whole runway. There was this big bubbles like bubble bath. And then there was two lines of vehicles along the runway. There was a whole line of ambulances and there was a line of hearses on either side of the runway. And then we're all like looking out at these hearses and ambulances.

And the pilots like, "The god-damned thing held. We have... the wheels are down and they held!"

And then everybody's like, "Oh man!" And then we got to the gate and everybody jumps up. It's like, "I got to get to a plane. Get out of my way!" (laughs) You're like, "What happened to the hugs?" (laughs) It was really sad, then. Everybody just forgot.

I don't know, but for me it was the closest thing I can think of... when you say *bodhicitta*, or you say love, true love, then for me I felt like I had experienced it there in the plane. And everybody was really hoping that the other person would have a good life or a good death, and true love was flowing through the plane on that night.

But then sometimes I think about that night and I think – what's the difference right now between you and me, and those people on the plane? We don't know if we won't... We're going to die. Unless extraordinary practices are done, we're in the plane all the time, you know? We're going down in the plane all the time. Why don't we have this kind of brotherhood feeling of people who are sinking in the same... like the Titanic? We're all going down. We all know we're going to die, so why don't we have this kind of affection for each other? 'Cause we know everyone in the room is suffering. And we know that this life would normally lead to dying. So why don't we have this kind of affection for each other? Why do we get jealous of each other, and why do we strive against each other, why do we struggle and compete with each other, when we're all in the same plane? It's like complaining about the peanuts on the way down. So sometimes I think about that.

And then sometimes I have this vision of a whole world of people who are loving each other, and a world of people who work against death itself. You see? A whole planet where death itself – where the whole united people on the planet are working together against death itself. I think about that a lot. And then I can see, I can imagine... I can see sometimes a world of people who don't have to die

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or who are not going to die and who are feeling that feeling with each other all the time.

And then it happens in my mind that I see that there are many other worlds. It's kind of silly to think this is the only one, right? There's got to be other worlds, right? And then I think of all those worlds also becoming places of... where there is no death and there is no suffering, and people are mentally hugging each other all the time.

So try to imagine a world where it's like that airplane, and everyone would just hug everybody all the time. Try to imagine a world like that and then spread it to all the stars in the sky, where there are certainly other worlds. We're not obviously the only people around. So then imagine countless worlds full of those kind of... that kind of love and that kind of harmony.

In the Buddhist path, you can cause that to happen. You can do certain practices in your life. You can do certain daily practices and that will come to be. They are advertised as causing that kind of world. And it doesn't stop in one world; it goes to many worlds. So according to the Buddhist teachings, you can – with your daily practice – cause the world to be like that.

And we've talked about it for a couple days now... people who came to... we had business seminars, which is just a sneaky way to get people to do these practices.

We were at British Air last week, in London. And they're having a very bitter strike. 40,000 employees, 14,000 of them are going out on strike and the management asked if we could go and help. So we had to put on business clothes and we had to use the language of corporations.

But this is a very subtle way to reach normal people. You see what I mean? So we put on our coats and ties, and we didn't mention *karma*, we said "mental seeds." And we didn't say "emptiness," we said "potential." And we went to British Air and we gave a presentation to some of the board and some of the unions of British Air. And at the end of an hour and a half, something, they all like jumped up and said, "Alright. Let's do it."

So the business talks we've given for the last few days are sort of sheep in wolves' clothing. So we... but we were talking in those classes, we were talking about how to get normal kinds of success through mental seeds. You want financial success – you want to build a quarter billion dollar company in your spare time, while you're doing the *geshe* degree in India. Could you plant seeds to create a quarter billion dollar company in your free time?

And then could you... I used to have a birth defect in my foot – a twisted bone. So I used the Diamond Cutter method to... on my foot, and now I do ballet. Last

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year I got the girl up and it was really exciting. And I'm old, okay? And I couldn't do that when I was 20. So you can use those seeds on your body. You can remove diseases from your body, you can make your body strong if you know the seeds.

And then we were talking about seeds for a partner, seeds for a nice relationship, which is planted by... basically seeds for money – if you want to make the fastest growing manufacturing company in the history of New York City, you develop a charity by which you can give money to Tibetan refugees. And if you want to fix the bone in foot, you help sick people in a certain way, selectively. With knowledge you help sick people, in a special way, which you have to learn. It takes time. And then if you want to have a beautiful partner, like the most exquisite divine partner in the world, then you have to help lonely people. This is the seed. The mental seed for finding a beautiful partner is to help lonely people.

So this whole week we've been... this last two weeks, we've been in London helping British Air's 40,000 – we're going to be doing those programs for the 40,000 employees, and then we came here and we did these business talks – supposedly business talks. And so tonight is the last night we're here. Tomorrow morning we leave for Paris and we're doing talks there.

And it's pretty easy to grasp all that, okay? You can design your future. You can plant a garden in this world of what you would like to come, and then it will come of its own accord. You plant the seeds, and you relax, and the things you hope for in your life come. We were talking today... I mean we got finished with the money, the health, and the girl – then we went to creativity. What are the seeds for creativity or for finding your passion for life? How do you rekindle your passion for life and a passion for some kind of career? How do you find the thing that you most love to do? And how do you find a thing to love to do if you don't love anything to do? And how do you rekindle a kind of excitement about your life that you have lost over the years? And we talked about those seeds tonight, earlier today. And those seeds are celebrating other people's successes, okay? So, I'm not going to go into detail, you can listen to the recording. There's some kind of recording deal going on – you can get it for free, okay? You can listen to that.

So what's left to talk about? Those are all intellectual understandings of an idea called "emptiness." And we talked about it. We did the famous pen thing.

Do you have a pen?

Here's a 30-second primer on emptiness. And if you understand it, you can change the bone in your foot, or you can make a quarter billion dollar company

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in your spare time, to help refugees, or you can find the boy, or you can rekindle your passion for life. You can re-find your passion in life, so if you understand the pen. Okay? So I'll just go through it one more time for the one person here who wasn't there.

What is this thing?

Student: pen

Yeah, you can say, "pen." And I'm not tricking you, okay? It's just a pen. One guy was insisting it wasn't a pen. I think he was in Florida one day, which makes sense, right? So I said, "Come up here, and I'll give you a Saddam Hussein mustache." He didn't come up. But anyway...

This is a pen, but if a dog comes in the room and he comes up on the stage, and I wave this thing in front of the dog, what will he do?

The dog will grab it like this, right? (puts pen in mouth) The dog will chew on it. For the dog, this is a... you can call it a "chew toy." For the dog, this thing is a chew toy.

Who's right? The dog or the human?

You can say both. I mean, I'm not trying to trick you, okay? You can answer. It just makes sense. Just say what makes sense. Is it a chew toy... Who's right – the dog or the human?

Students: both

Yeah. So can we say that this has the potential to be a pen and it has an equal potential to be a chew toy, right? So can we say then that the chew toy or the pen is not coming from its side; it must be coming from the side of the observer, right? The person who's observing it, if you have four legs and a tail, you see something to chew on. If you have two arms and two legs and you walk around, then you see a pen. Okay? So that is a simple proof of emptiness.

What do you mean by "emptiness?" What do you mean when you say "emptiness"? By the way, you have to understand this because if you do, you can get all the aforementioned things. You can make a quarter-billion dollar company in your free time, you can become a ballet dancer at the age of a hundred, you can find the most beautiful partner in the world – you can find the second most beautiful, okay? Then the last one... you could rekindle your passion in life, you could find new things in life. You could do all these things if you understand the pen. So you got to understand the pen.

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If I take this object and I set it down on the stage, and all the people leave the room and all the dogs leave the room, then what's there?

He did this... there's a debate in Buddhism. "Does the Buddha need to speak to teach?" (claps)

And they say, "No." (claps)

And they say, "Why?" (claps)

And they say, "'Cause he can go (shakes head no)."

So, you know, he did it. I asked, "What's on the stage?" And then he just went like that (shakes head no). Which is "nothing," okay? He's saying "nothing." Okay?

And at that point it's nothing. You can't vote for pen, you can't vote for chew toy. It's just there and it's not either one yet because the dog didn't walk in yet and the human didn't walk in yet. There's a potential for either one. Either one is available in that place. So you can think of emptiness as potential, you can think of it as availability, you can think of it as a blank screen. Okay? No problem. You can think of all those things. But that's emptiness. It's not that you close your eyes and everything is black. It's not that you close your eyes and try to think about nothing. It's not that everything is an illusion and it doesn't matter whether you kick somebody or kiss somebody. That's not emptiness. Emptiness means everything could be anything, just depends on who's looking. Got it?

So have we established that the thing is coming from your mind? It must be, okay? It's not coming from its side. If it was coming from... if it was a pen from its side, then the dog would write. If it was a chew toy from its side, then you would be salivating uncontrollably at this moment. Okay? It's neither one from its own side. It must be coming from you somehow, okay?

And then we said... we've been saying the last few days, you see what you plant. You plant the seed in your mind, that seed ripens in your mind – matures in your mind – it comes out of your subconscious and it affects how you see a thing. It changes how you see a thing. So if you are generous to people, if you give money habitually to help people, then you see business opportunities that other people don't see and you get wealthy. If you plant the seed of helping the sick, helping the ill, then your own foot changes. The bone in your foot changes shape. And if you make it a point or a habit to visit the lonely, the elderly, the people who have no one else, then you create seeds in your mind that you go to Starbucks and you sit there and the boy comes in and sits down next to you. And you don't have to go to a club, and you don't have to go on the Internet, you just

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sit in a Starbucks and wait, and he will come. I've done it. Not a boy, okay? But you can do that, okay?

So that's the practical side of emptiness.

Now Mahasukha Center being "*maha*" – "big" – they said, "Can you go deeper?" The week is for the normal people. Now you're on the last night in LA," we leave tomorrow morning, "Can you take us on a deep dive to emptiness?" Is there a deeper... there's a much deeper teaching on emptiness and I don't give it often. I give once every four or five years, or less. So, on the request of the *mahasukhis*, I'm going to go a little bit deeper, alright? So don't get nervous – if you haven't been studying courses for a while and I go over your head, just try to catch what you can. There's a custom in the monastery where the freshman go to the senior classes for a week, and they don't understand anything what's going on. But they say, "Sit there" and seeds are put in your mind for the future, okay? So if it's all incomprehensible to you, just relax. Let it come into your mind, it will ripen later. Okay?

It's one thing to understand emptiness when someone gets up and explains it with a pen. That's a certain kind of experience of emptiness. Have you experienced emptiness? Yes. When? When he shook his head. At the point where he shook his head. What's your name?

Student: Sal

Sam?

Student: Sal

Sal. When he shook his head, it meant we understood emptiness. We got an understanding... we had an experience of emptiness. Have you had an experience of emptiness? Yeah. It's an experience which was triggered by someone explaining emptiness, okay? You've had the ideas and you had sort of an idea understanding of emptiness, okay?

There's a deeper level. There's a much deeper level of the experience of emptiness. And that's the direct experience of emptiness. So tonight I wanted to talk about that and one of the special teachings which triggers that experience, okay? So maybe *the* most powerful way of triggering the direct experience.

The direct experience is different from the intellectual experience. You're sitting in a chair, you shake your head, it means you just had an experience of emptiness, but it was intellectual. Then there's an experience which happens in deep meditation. You must be in a very deep state of meditation and then you have an experience of emptiness. And that's a different thing. We call "direct

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perception of emptiness.” That’s a whole different thing. It’s like the difference between reading about ice cream and licking ice cream. It’s a big difference, right? It’s a totally different experience. It’s the direct experience of emptiness.

Something happens to you – when you have that experience – which takes like typically 15-20 minutes. It only takes 15 or 20 minutes. When that happens to you, a deep and lasting and incontrovertible change occurs in your being, okay? Something changes within you which can never go back again. You can never go back again. And you become what they call... in Sanskrit, they call अर्य “Arya.” Hitler used the word “arya” – it was a very terrible thing. In Sanskrit, “arya” does mean “superior one,” “different one,” “set apart.” *Arya* means “set apart.” And when you see emptiness directly, then you become *Arya*. *Arya* means you are a different level of evolution. You are a whole different level of evolution. You are as different from a normal human being as a normal human being is different from an ant, okay? You are as different from a normal being – normal person, human – as a human is from an ant.

Then they have words in Tibetan and Sanskrit to describe people who haven’t seen emptiness. And they call them རྩེས་པ་ *chiba*. *Chiba* means “infant.” We were saying today, you might translate it as “three-year old.” We say, “You’re acting like a three-year old,” right? So a babe in arms – she’s (Bella) already past *chiba* – Bella is already past *chiba*. *Chiba* means “clueless.” Clueless. So you can think that in a normal way, everyone in the world – almost everybody in the world – is *chiba*. They haven’t had that experience. If you undergo that experience, once, in your life, for twenty minutes, then you are on the way to creating the worlds that we talked about when we talked about the airplane. Then you are close, very, very, very close to the ability to make this world a single world of peace and harmony and no death. You’re very close to being able to guide an entire planet to deathlessness. You see? You would be like super Jesus. You would come to the world with this understanding and you could change the whole globe, quickly. You would have that... if you saw emptiness once directly, you would have that power to come to a world and change the entire world and eliminate, eradicate death, disease, war, hunger, poverty, in this planet. Like Jesus, but better. Okay? You could pull it off. If you saw emptiness once for twenty minutes in this lifetime, right? In this lifetime, if you could pull it off, your whole being would change and you would be a different... you’d be like an angel or something like that. You’d be a higher form of life because you would have that capacity to change the whole globe. So it would be cool, right, if someone could show you how to do it, or at least give you the information you need to pull it off, if someone could give you a serious presentation on that that got you close to that,

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then that would be an evening well-spent, you see? Because then your whole being would change. Your whole... you would become a person that could single-handedly save the globe. So just think like that. That's our... we're trying to do tonight. The goal tonight is to speak about the immediate causes that would help you see this emptiness thing directly within your lifetime, in this lifetime. Okay?

And according to Buddhism, you've lived billions of... countless lifetimes. Billions and billions of lives. And then you could change in this lifetime. You have in this center, and you have in this tradition, you have that teaching. The teaching is there. What I'd like to do tonight is make it sort of accessible to you, so that you could maybe pull it off in this lifetime, okay? So it's big stakes that we're dealing with. It's a very important talk. It's a most important... there's a very good request to ask for this subject. So buckle down, okay? And just hang in there and stay with me, because there's big... the world is at stake. The world is at stake.

Here we go.

So I would talk about the supporting causes first. There's certain stuff that if you're doing it you're more likely to see emptiness. So there's a preparation. There's kind of the warm up. Before you run the race, you know, you do stretches and you do the jogging around. There are supporting activities that you can do that will prepare you to have this twenty-minute experience. There are other things you can do.

1. Maybe one of the most important of them is serving other people. One of the most important of them is serving other people. To soften your heart to see emptiness directly, you must be serving other people. Nothing like major. You are taking old people to the grocery store, you are visiting people who got sick, you are helping out people who are fixing the floor in their house, you are in the store and you let someone else go in front of you in the line. But your attitude in life is that you are serving other people and you are taking opportunities to help other people. You don't have to be a Mother Theresa. You don't have to organize an international refugee project. You just make it a way of life that in small ways you serve the elderly, you serve the sick, you help children who are confused or ignored. And you make it a way of life to be kind. So kindness is a prerequisite to see emptiness directly. Plain old normal kindness to little people is a very high spiritual practice to see emptiness directly. Okay? That's one.

2. You have to be meditating on a regular basis. It's not possible to see this object unless you are in a deep state of meditation. If you cannot enter a deep state of meditation, you have disqualified yourself. You will never become the savior of

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this planet. It's not possible. So you must be... you must have a daily meditation practice. If you don't have one now, come to Mahasukha Center, they will give one to you. They will grant you, they will supply you with a daily meditation practice. You must have it, or you cannot be of real benefit to other people. You know, we think, "Oh, I'm going to help others; I should be running around. I should be a big help to others, I should be running around more." But really, if you want to be a big help to others, you should sit down and meditate. Learn to sit down and meditate. You must be able to maintain about a one-hour meditation. Strong, solid, unmoving, deep one-hour meditation. What's the test of that degree of concentration? Somebody can bring a McDonalds French fry into the room and place it in front of your nose, and you don't smell it. Okay? 'Cause you're so deep. And someone can slam a door and you don't hear it. Okay? Really. Someone can touch your arm and you don't feel it. So you are so deep in the meditation that you are out of your senses, you see what I mean? In *yoga* they call it *pratyahara* – you have withdrawn from the outer senses. So that's the... if you don't get near that level of meditation, you cannot... you do not have a hope of seeing emptiness directly. It cannot happen. Okay? So that's... you've got to be kind to other people and you have to reach that degree of meditation.

3. Third thing. If you can find a Teacher, if you can find your heart Teacher – and everybody has a different heart Teacher, you know? You have to find the one that suits you. Heart teachers are like gloves, you know? And you don't try to sell a size 8 glove to size 6 hand. You have to search your world and your life for your heart Teacher. You must undertake this quest. Without your heart Teacher, you can't do it. You need a heart Teacher. You must find a heart Teacher. And they could be anybody. It could be your high school boyfriend, it could be your mother, it could be your son, it could be your dog, it could be a guy dressed up in a Tibetan red suit. But don't assume what they're going to look like. Your heart Teacher is the one you find who has that connection with you. And regardless of how other people see them, you see them as special and you experience them as special.

And everybody can find a heart Teacher. And what I'm telling you: find them at all costs. Find them at all costs. I'll tell you what "all costs" means. I grew up in Phoenix, but we used to live in San Diego in the summer, and I surfed a lot. And my goal after college was to move to Del Mar, which had the best surf in California, and rent a room, and surf all day or most of the day. Like I had a plan after graduation, you know? Like I would move to Del Mar and I would surf. Then I ended up studying in India and I met His Holiness. I had a long talk with His Holiness, and I said, "Tell me what to do and I'll do it." First of all, I said, "I want to stay with you forever."

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And then he said, “You can’t stay here. You have to go back to America.”

So I said, “Okay. Well tell me who’s a good teacher in America?”

He said, “Geshe Lobsang Tharchin. You go study with Geshe Lobsang Tharchin.”

I said, “Where is he?”

He said, “New Jersey.” (laughs)

Then I like... Tell me Kentucky, tell me Iowa, but New Jersey? Not New Jersey. I can’t do... anyplace but New Jersey. You know what they call New Jersey in New Jersey? They call it the armpit of the nation.

And in my mind, in my heart, I was like, “This is the ultimate test. Can I give up Del Mar for New Jersey?” I did. I went to New Jersey. Like the one place that I hated in the most in the world, because the teacher is there.

So in your quest for your heart Teacher, it overrules all other considerations. You could even give up Del Mar for New Jersey. And I stayed in New Jersey for 25 years – lived with him. So I’m just saying you’ve got to find a heart Teacher.

Then you have to serve that teacher. I cooked for my Lama for eight years, I drove his car, I bought his groceries, I washed his clothes, I did his Social Security, I built his house – I paid for his house and I built his house with my hands. And that’s... you’ve got to... when you find your own heart Teacher, then surrender to them and give them everything you have.

The first day I met him, I brought him my bank book with all my money. And I said... I made him མོག་མོག་ *momos*. *Momos* are Tibetan dumplings. I spent all day, I made him *momos*. And I came to the monastery and I knew some little Tibetan from India. So I came to the monastery. I said, “ང་བ་སངས་རྒྱས་མཁོ་ – *ngawa sangye go*.”

And then I said, “Here are *momos* for you, Master. Please accept me as a student. Here’s my bankbook and I’ll need a place to sleep – anyplace you say, I’ll sleep.” I said, “These are my four requests to you.”

So he looks at me, and he says, “Do you know what *ngawa sangye go* means?”

I said, “Yes. It means ‘I would like to study to become enlightened.’”

And then he said, “Oh, I see.” And then he said, “What are these things?”

I said, “They are Tibetan dumplings and I have cooked them for you, and I worked all day on them and they have whole wheat and everything.”

And then he said, “What’s this thing?”

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I said, "That's my bankbook. That's everything I have in the world."

He threw it back at me. He just threw it at me. He said, "I don't need your money." And he never charged me a penny my whole life. For 30 years he taught me, he didn't charged me anything. Never took money from me.

Then the last thing he said... what was the last thing? Oh, I said, "I need a place to sleep."

He said, "I can't help you." (laughs) "I'll teach you, but that's your problem."

And that was it. Nothing.

And then later he told me... 30 years later he said, "You know you came to me on the first day, you said '*nga wa sangye go*.'" He said, "Do you know what you said to me on the first day?"

I said, "I don't know."

"You said, 'I want Buddha.'" (laughs)

And then he said, "Do you remember the food you gave me?"

I said, "Yeah, I worked all day on it!"

And he said, "I ate one bite, and I took it out and threw it in the woods." He used to make fun of me like that.

So you have to have a teacher to serve. It's not for the teacher. He didn't need me. People gave him houses, and he just refused. He didn't need anything. He didn't need me, for sure. But you have to give yourself away to the Teacher.

And I'm not talking culty and I'm not talking like that. I'm talking if you want to see a world... if you want to bring the world to that, you need to find your heart Teacher. You must find your heart Teacher, okay? That's one of the requirements. If you want to see this thing happen. Or you can just go on like you are and get old and die, and that... you know. Whatever you're working for right now will be taken by your children and they'll waste it in one year, trust me. Okay?

4. Then the last thing you need is to study. Obviously the teacher should be qualified and they should be able to teach you what you need to know. And you must find a teacher like that. They must be able to teach you what you need to know – and you must undertake study with them. You must try to understand emptiness in an intellectual way. Over and over again. There's a joke in Tibet: You have to hear the pen thing 3,000 times. So some of my students are up to 2,800 or something. You must hear the pen thing over and over again. Okay?

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Under the influence of those conditions – kindness towards others, plain old normal kindness, and under the conditions of learning to meditate, and under the conditions of finding your heart Teacher, and under the condition of proper and authentic study – then you will have an experience of emptiness. You can have an experience of emptiness.

So now we want to talk about... in Tibetan it's called རློ་ལམ་ཚེས་མཚོག་ *lor lam chu chok*. These are the final moments, the final few hours, before you see emptiness. What happens? What's the process? What goes on in the final few hours? And this is a very unique teaching. What goes on, what happens in the final hours before you have this experience which allows you to become a person who can save countless worlds? What happens exactly?

So... for this you have to know སྤྱི་བྱེ་བླ་ག་ *chi jedrak*. *Chi jedrak* is a special subject of Buddhism. It's buried in a subject called प्रमाण *pramana*. *Pramana* is the study of how a human being thinks and how we see things. Sometimes they call it the study of logic, but it's more than logic. It's the study of how do you perceive a thing. How do you perceive a thing as a thing? What goes on in your mind when you see a thing as a thing?

And Je Tsongkapa's disciple – Je Tsongkapa had a disciple named Kedrup Je. He wrote a book... it's Course 13. Everybody hates Course 13; that's why it's 13. And Course 13 is syllogisms. How do you prove something? How to think. How to think in the mind, right? And why do you see something when you... when you look at something, why do you recognize that thing? What goes on in your mind when you make a decision or when you see something? That study is called *pramana*. *pramana* was a subject that became very popular around 650 AD, 7th century in India. Somebody named Master Dharmakirti wrote a long boring book, seven long boring books – short boring books. And then he explained how you see things. How you experience stuff. What happens when you see something. He taught that. That's considered a lower school of Buddhism. Okay? Those of you who are studying Buddhism, the first school is like अभिधर्म *Abhidharma*. The second school is called the *Sutrists*, the सुत्र *Sutra* school, सौत्रान्तिक *Sautrantika*. And then the third school is Mind Only. And the fourth school is Middle Way. Middle Way teaches emptiness in a very sexy way. Mind Only teaches emptiness in a pretty sexy way. *Abhidharma* teaches emptiness in a very basic way. And the second school teaches emptiness in a sort of dry way. And so people avoid that book and I haven't taught it much. I was trained in it for many, many years, and I worked hard on it. And I've only taught it a little bit, and

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nowadays I only teach it to one or two people who seem to be ready. It's dry, it's hard, it's difficult. But deep inside that school is a subject called *chi jedrak*. And Kedrup Je said if you think... they call... when I was taught that subject, my lama said to me, "This is the key to the Middle Way. This is the key to seeing emptiness. You understand this, and you can see emptiness. You understand school number two, you can understand school number four – and if you don't, you can't."

We were reading... Nyingpo's translating one of the important texts of Kedrup Je, he's translating probably the most beautiful text on this subject. And I said, "What did he say about the need to study this subject?" I was in Starbucks an hour ago about, and I said, "Nyingpo, remind me, 'cause I remember we translated it a few weeks ago."

He said, "Oh yeah, let me look it up. Oh yeah, here's Kedrup Je. He says:

'Anybody who thinks they can see emptiness without studying the second school, is like a person who says they're hungry but they don't like food.'

"I'm hungry, but I don't like food. I want to see emptiness, but I don't want to study *chi jedrak*. I don't want to study Course 13." Kedrup Je said, "You're like a person who is dying of hunger but doesn't feel like eating."

And then he said, "You're like a person who's building a house and they have to lay the stairway into the house, and they choose bubbles as their concrete. Instead of concrete, they use bubbles. So to make a solid stairway into your house, you go to the store and you order bubbles, and you try to make a stairway out of bubbles." He says, "You don't study this subject, you're like a person who builds the foundation out of bubbles."

He's like that. Then he says worse things, which I can't tell you.

So we're on *chi jedrak*, okay?

I'm not going to take a break. Do you mind? You can have donuts after – the bake sale will fail, okay. Hang in there, alright? I don't want to break it. I can't lose your mind. I can't lose your concentration. Okay? Hang in there, alright? We're just going to go.

Which gets into the clock, okay? So there's a subject of study in the second school called "general and specific." General and specific – *chi jedrak*. General and specific, set and subset. Set and subset. There are three versions.

And now I'm going off, okay? If you can't stay with us, you can sleep.

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The first version of *chi jedrak* is... this is a clock, by the way. I don't even know how to open it. Yeah. This is a clock.

The first and most elementary version of *chi jedrak* is that this is a clock, it's a whole clock, and it has parts. The general – the whole – is the clock. The *jedrak* is the pieces of the clock: the front, the back, the buttons; those are *jedrak*. That's the most elementary way of explaining general and specific. *chi* and *jedrak*.

Then there's a deeper version. This is one of all the clocks in the world. Got it? So if you had a big enough basket and you travelled from continent to continent, and you collected all the clocks in the world, and you had that big basket with all the clocks in the world and you threw this one in – this would be *jedrak*. This would be one clock among all the clocks in the world. And that's a higher level of *chi jedrak*. That's a different level of *chi jedrak*. Got it?

We're not talking about those two. Those have nothing to do with what we want to talk about, okay? We're going to talk about the highest meaning of *chi jedrak*. And now you've got to hang in there. Now you've got to really struggle. And I have to struggle, because it's difficult to express these ideas in language. It's difficult to express these ideas in words.

Now think of this as "clock." "Clock." I just say "clock." Look at this thing and I say "clock." "Clock."

I didn't say "a clock" and I didn't say "the clock." I just said "clock." Think "clock." Think of "clock." Is this "clock?" Be careful. Is this "clock?" "Clock." In English we use quotation marks. Is this "clock?" "He says he's a 'nice guy.'" Okay? And you do this thing, right? (air quotes) "quote, quote, nice guy."

This is quote... is this "clock?"

Student: yes

Are you sure?

Students: <unclear>

I didn't say "is it a clock" or "the clock;" I said "is it 'clock?'"

It's not "clock." Okay? It's not "clock."

When I put quotation marks around it, I'm referring to the word "clock," in one sense. Okay, got that? The word "clock." Is this the word "clock?" Is this "cl-ah-ck?" You see? That sound. Is it the sound "clock?" Okay? It's not the word "clock," right? It's not "clock," right?

Is it the idea "clock?" Is it the idea "clock?" The thing in my hand, is it the idea "clock?" You can't hold an idea in your hand. Ideas are ineffable. They are things

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within your mind. You can hold a clock in your hand, but you can't hold "clock." It's not possible. "Clock" is an idea, right? "Clock" is an image in your mind.

So now get used to the idea of "clock" in your mind. The thought "clock," the image "clock." Okay? What's that image like?

It's the clock you saw when you were three years old and you were in the kitchen, and your mother said, "Look at the clock."

And you were like, "Huh?"

And your mother said, "Look at the clock."

And you're like, "Huh?"

And she said, "Clock. Clock. This is clock. This is clock."

And then you looked at it, and you said, "Quack?"

And your mom said, "No, clock."

And you said, "Clock."

And then you looked at the kitchen clock. I know... the one at my house was on the western wall of the kitchen at 7747 N 17th Ave in Phoenix. I remember the first clock. And for me that's "clock." Got it? That's my mother's clock. Usually it's your mother's clock, okay? That picture in my mind is "clock." And I have compared all other clocks in my life against that clock, you know? When somebody said, "This is a clock," I mentally pulled out the image of my mom's clock, and I said, "Is it like that? Yeah. I mean it's pretty close. Yes, it's a clock." Okay. Got it?

In the *Sautrantika* system, in the second school, they say when you see a clock, when you recognize it as "clock" – see I held it up, right, and there was enough clock things about it that you thought it was a clock, okay? It had numbers, it had those distinctive numbers, it had that double thing between two of the numbers, you see? There was enough stuff about it that was clocky that you thought, "It's a clock." In the *Sautrantika* system.... stay with me, okay? I'm demanding that you stay with me or go home, okay? Stay with me tonight, okay? And I'm not going to stop, 'cause it will blow it. And no one's going to walk around and the baby's not going to cry. Alright.

So in the *Sautrantika* system, when someone holds an object up, your mind goes through the whole library... all the library shelves of all the stuff you ever knew, it pulls out each object. Banana. No. Fan. No. Car. No. And then it gets to clock – it gets to your mother's clock. It gets to the picture of your mother's clock in your

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mind. It pulls “clock” down off the shelf, it holds it up against this thing and it says “Clock. That’s it.” Okay?

clock མ་ཡིན་པ་ལས་ལོག་པ་ *mayinpa le lokpa*. clock ཟེར་ན་ *serna*. clock *mayinpa le lokpa*.

A clock is defined as the opposite of all which is not the clock. A clock is defined as the opposite of all which is not clock.

So when you wanted to recognize what an object is, in this school, your mind does this incredibly fast thing, right? It pulls down all the books in the library one by one, until it gets to clock, and then it compares it. It eliminates all the other possibilities – not a banana, not a car, not a fan, not my next door neighbor. Oh, clock. It’s clock. It eliminates everything else first. And you come to clock. Get it? Within a millisecond. Like it’s supposed to be incredibly fast, your mind does that.

That clock that you pulled down out of your mind, what’s it look like? What’s it made of? Your mom’s clock that you pulled down out of your mental library, what’s it made of?

Student: memory.

Memory. It’s a mental image. It’s an image in the mind, right? It’s a picture in the mind, okay?

Can we say that’s “clock?” Think carefully. If you care about Nagarjuna’s text, that’s what he calls “nature,” okay, and then you can figure out the rest yourself.

Is that mental picture “clock?” Or is it “a clock?” I don’t mean the one that was on your mother’s wall; I mean the image in your mind. The perfect little perfect original clock, is that “clock?” To you. Let’s say, “to you.” It is “clock” to you. It is “clock” to you. Okay? Alright? You have an image in your mind of the grandmother of all clocks for you, and you pull that image down in your mind and you compare it to this. It has a brightness. སེལ་ཞིང་རིག་པ་ཤེས་པའི་མཚན་ཉིད་ *sel shing rikpa shepay tsennyi*. It has a kind of brightness about it. It’s like light. Deep inside of your mind, it’s a perfect little image in your mind. It’s a bright little picture that you store in your mind. And whenever you see some object that might be a clock, you compare it to that, and you say it’s close enough. Okay?

So there’s “clock” and there’s “a clock.” Got it? There’s “clock” and there’s “the clock.” Got it? There’s *chi* and there’s *jedrak*. And that’s the real *chi jedrak*. Got it? That’s the real general and the specific instance.

I like to call it... this is very difficult. If you crack this, you can see emptiness. If you crack this, you are close to emptiness. I call it “quality and characteristic.” རང་

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འཇིག་ *rang shin* and རོབ་ *ngo po*. You can call it “quality and characteristic.” Change it from “general and specific.” Don’t say *chi jedrak*; say “quality and characteristic.”

Take “clock” as “clock-ness.” Okay? Not “a clock,” not “the clock;” “clock-ness.”

I just lost half of you, I can tell. Hee hee. Ah... but you’ve got to get it. You’ve got to get it. If you get it, you can become like Iron Man, okay? You can save the world.

Clock-ness. Think of clock-ness. I say that’s “quality.”

And then this (holds clock) is characteristic of that quality. This is typical of that quality. This is a manifestation of that quality.

There’s a big universal... what did Jung call it? Archetype. There’s an archetype “clock.” There is the original clock. There is the picture of a clock. You can call it “clock-ness.” Okay? There’s a big clock, in your mind – perfect clock. Perfect clock. Perfect picture of a clock. The perfect clock. The model of all clocks. The archetype of all clocks. That’s in your mind. It’s just a brightness in your mind, it’s a small energy in your mind, it’s a mental image in your mind. It has no (slaps clock)... It’s not concrete; it’s a picture in your mind, okay? That’s clock-ness.

This thing (hold clock) has it. This object has that. This object has clock-ness. This thing is typical of clock-ness. This is “a clock,” this is “the clock.” And that’s “clock” or clock-ness.

You can say “clock” and use your fingers, or you can say clock-ness. Okay? That’s a mental image. That’s a perfect picture of a clock. How big is it? (holds fingers together.) No physically... I don’t know, psychokinetically, your experience is about this big (holds fingers together). Seriously. If you go deep, deep, deep into meditation and you try to find “clock” in your mental library, and you finally manage to pull it out artificially in a meditation, it’ll be about this big. Where is it in your head? Back there (points to back of head). Okay. I’m not kidding. I mean, it’s not really there, right? And it doesn’t really have any size. But kinetically you feel it... you will experience it as a little picture in the back of your mind.

The day that you catch yourself seeing “clock,” you’ll catch it in the back of your head and it will be about that big. Okay? So that’s “clock.” Got it?

Is this “clock?”

Is this “pen?”

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Is this “a pen?”

Where is it coming from?

Get it?

You have a seed in your mind, it opens into “pen” – a picture in the back of your head – and you put it on this thing, you lay it on this thing and then you call this “the pen.”

Is it “the pen,” by itself?

Student: (unclear)

He’s so good at that. Yeah. It’s not the pen by itself.

A tiny image rises in your mind, a perfect pen – it’s too good. Okay? Remember what I say. Remember what I just said. It’s too good to be true. It’s too perfect.

For example, it has a back on it. Okay? The pen... “pen” that you put on this thing has a back on it. You feel that there’s a back to it. I’m holding it up. Is there a back to this pen? How do you know that? Why do you think that? I haven’t turned it around yet. Why do you assume it has a back? Why do you think you know what the back looks like? You see?

It’s because – catch this, okay? Now is the crux of the whole night – it’s 9:14 on August 20-something, at the Mahasukha Center, and you heard these words, okay?

You are just watching the image in your mind. You are watching an image in your mind. There is no pen here. Okay? There is a stick, it is purple, it has a rounded shape, but what you’re looking at right now is not a pen. You are looking at...

Students: “pen”

...you are looking at “pen.”

Get it. Okay? You are looking at “pen.”

If you get what I just said, you’re on... you can push yourself into the direct perception of emptiness. Really. And then whole mass of changes in your evolution happen within a day. Within 24 hours, you become a separate class of being. You become like an angel, you become like a divine being, you become a person who can save a planet or many planets. Okay? Just get that one thing.

Careful. Get it. When I hold this up, and you see “a pen,” you are not seeing a pen; you are seeing “pen.” Where is it? In your mind. You are looking at a tiny

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patch in the back of your mind. You're not looking at it. You're not looking at a pen. It's not "a pen;" you are observing "pen."

Why? Prove it Geshe Michael.

Because you see a back. You feel there's a back. You sense there is a back. Your instinct tells you there's a back. There can't be... there is no back here. You can't prove it. You didn't know that, you didn't see the other side. You don't know. You're watching this perfect little picture in your head. That has a back. Okay? That has a back. That's perfect. It's too perfect. It's too good.

Get this. I'll take you one more step, okay? Don't get lost, alright? Don't get lost. And don't get freaked out. Don't get out and stick a pen in your head and die, okay?

What was I going to say...

You can't be seeing a pen. It's not possible. What you think is going on cannot be going on.

Why?

To see the whole pen, you would have to look at the top and then you would have to look at the bottom. Got it? You would have to. You can't confirm that it's a pen.

(Holds up top) Is this a pen? No. You're just looking at the top, right? You're just looking at the top.

Can you see the pen, can you see the whole pen, without looking at the top? Can you see the whole pen without looking at the top? Can you see the whole pen without looking at the bottom? When you concentrate on the top, can you see the bottom? But you think you do.

Can you just see the whole pen? No, because if you don't look at the top and you don't look at the bottom, then you can't tell it's a whole pen.

Can you see the whole pen? No. You have to look at the top and then you have to look at the bottom, and then you say there's a whole pen there. Okay? But by the time you get to the bottom, you don't know if there's still a top there. But in your mind you think there is.

You say, "Geshe-hla, it's a whole pen. Geshe-hla, it's a whole pen."

That's a proof – that's a tiny little proof – you ain't looking at a pen; you are looking at a tiny image in your own mind. You are looking at a tiny image in your own mind.

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Now, immediately we have to pull you back from the precipice. Okay? We have to pull you back from the edge of stage.

Don't think you're living in your head. That don't help anything. Don't get confused. Don't go to the nuthouse from here.

And they say, "Why are you here?"

They say, "Geshe-hla gave this teaching, and I realize all the people I ever met are just in my own head. And I'm just living in my own head. Even all the pens are in my own head."

Don't think like that. That's wrong, okay? That's not the point. That's not the point.

Don't ever think like that. There are other... ལྷུ་ཤེན་གྲུཔ་པ་ *Gyu Shen Druppa* is one of the books that Chandrakirti wrote – Dharmakirti – to prove that... he proved that other people are real. He wrote a book to prove that other people are real, because he didn't want other people freaking out. He didn't want people saying, "Oh my god! Lauren Benjamin is just a little image in my mind. It's so lonely. I'm the only person; everybody else is just a little picture in my head."

Don't think like that, okay? Don't think like that.

Is it true that Lauren Benjamin is a small picture in your mind? It is true. But it's always been that way.

Can you interact with an independent being called Lauren Benjamin who's in your mind? Can you be her friend? Yeah. And that's all it ever was. That's all it ever was.

And it's enough to be real. Got it?

kol chupa. It's enough to be real. She's real, she can be your friend. You can love her, you can relate with her, you can go visit her house, you can have a friendship with her, she can teach you – and still be an image in your mind. No problem. Don't worry about that. Don't think like that. Don't get freaky on it – don't do that. That doesn't help anybody, okay? That doesn't help anybody.

Now next question.

Let's go back to "clock."

Where did "clock" come from? Why are you seeing a clock? Why did that image pop up in your head?

Student: (unclear)

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No, you see, if I held this same object up to the dog, right, he will chew on it. He doesn't see "clock." Why do you see "clock?" Why is there a picture of clock in your head and a picture of something inconvenient to chew on in the dog's head? Why? Why? Tell me why. Why are you seeing "clock?" Why did "clock" pop up in your head when I held this up?

Student: (unclear)

Yeah. You have a seed in your mind for that. Okay? You have a seed in your mind for that. Alright? A little tiny clock is popping up in the back of your head. Why? Because you have a seed in your mind for that.

How did that seed get there? Who put it there?

You did.

How?

That's कर्म *karma*. Okay? That's *karma*.

What does *karma* mean? *Karma* means doing something, saying something, or thinking something which puts a seed in your mind which later opens into a...

Student: clock

He just said, "a." Oops. Which later opens into "clock." Okay? It opens into "clock."

You just saw dependent origination. Those of you who care. You just perceived dependent origination. The true nature of dependent origination.

How does this happen in real life? How is the final hour before you see emptiness happen? When do you catch yourself with the image thing?

This is very typical, okay? You got up in morning. You've been being kind to people, you've been meditating at least an hour a day, you've been serving your heart Teacher, and you've been studying hardcore with Cliff at the LA ACI center, and then you get up in the morning and you make tea for your heart Teacher, 'cause of course you're serving them. And you, under the influence of those other activities – it has to be. You have to have that support or it's not going to happen to you, okay? You go to the stove. You're like normal day, you're like tired, he's getting up early; he's one of those lamas. And you put the pot on the stove and you turn it in on, and you step back to wait for the tea to boil and you look at the pot and you realize you're looking at an image in your mind. Something happens. Under the influence of kindness, under the influence of your Teacher's blessing, under the influence of your study, and under the influence of constant meditation, you go into another – something happens. And

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you're looking at the thing and you're saying, "Oh my god. I'm looking at a picture in my mind. I'm looking at 'pot.' I'm not looking at 'the pot' or 'a pot.' I'm looking at..."

(Bella cries.) Don't do that! This is... no really. Negative forces come when this is being happening. Usually the roof falls down or something bad happens, when you get to this point. Okay? 'Cause it distracts you. Focus.

You're standing there, you're looking at this thing, and you say, "My god. I'm looking at an image in my own mind." Okay? And out there, there's a black stick shape. And out there, there's a round shape. And out there, there's a change in color from white to silver as you go around the side. And there's nothing more out there. There's nothing more out there. Okay? There's a black stick shape, there's a curve, and there's some white. But the pot is in my mind. That thing suggests a pot to me, "pot" pops up in my mind, and my mind puts it on that thing, and it makes it pot.

Is it a pot? Out there. Is it a pot? No, it's a bunch of parts. It's a stick, it's a black stick, it's a round shape, and it's some white/silver color. Okay? Got it? That's all it ever was; it was never more. Your eye cannot see a pot. The eye can only detect colors and shapes. The eye consciousness is incapable of... the rods and cones in the eye cannot make a judgment about what an object is. It's not possible. The cones and rods in the eye can only detect shape and color. You can't be seeing a pot. Even in science you can't be seeing a pot. You're only capable of detecting... the eye can only register colors and shapes. You're seeing a rounding, you're seeing a white-ish, and you're seeing a black stick – a black, a black. Okay? And then... 'cause that's all... the eyes cannot see more than that. They're just set up to see shapes and colors. That's all. They cannot detect... they cannot make a judgment about what an object is. Okay?

That information comes into the mind, and then "pot" pops up. "Pot." Got it? "Pot" pops up in the mind. Picture of "pot," image of "pot," it's made of light; it's like a 3D computer image of light. "Pot" pops up in your mind and then it puts it on that thing, it projects it onto that thing, and you think, "I'm seeing a pot." But you're not. You're seeing...

Student: pot

..."pot." Okay? You're just seeing "pot." There is no "a pot." There is no "the pot." You have always been watching images in your mind. Okay? You have always been watching images in your mind.

Now, crucial; especially for you teachers. You cannot leave the audience at that. You cannot say, "Okay. Go home, you know what "pot" is. Good luck."

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You cannot stop there. You cannot stop there.

Why are we talking about these things?

How did I start tonight? What was the first thing I talked about? The plane. The plane that was going down. And the plane is going down for everybody. Everybody is dying. In this room, everybody's dying. You know?

I have a joke, with my old boss. She was a very rich lady in the diamond company. She used to take me on her trips to Tokyo. Why? So I could carry her luggage. I'm the vice president of the company, I'm making six figures, and she uses me as her luggage carrier, right? And I have to stand out outside the Japanese cosmetic store with her bags while she spends three hours inside to get the most expensive cosmetics in the world. And she comes out and she says, "How do I look?" And in my mind I'm saying, "You're three god-damned hours older than you were when you walked in. You are three hours older than when you walked in. You are three hours older than when you walked in. You see? No matter what you smear on your face, you have more wrinkles than when you walked in because you lived in the store, you breathed the air, you existed in the store for three hours. You're now older. You are closer to your death. In the time it took you to buy the cosmetics, you are three hours closer to your death."

And that's the story of our life, you see?

You go to a योग *yoga* class, an hour and a half of boom... your body is an hour and a half older, the bones are an hour and a half more brittle, the skin is an hour and a half more dry. You keep doing that, you'll die. You see? No, and you do. You do. You see? There's always a last *yoga* class. You see?

So we're fighting against that.

Why are we talking about "pot?" Why are we talking about "clock?" Why are we talking about "pen?" Because the world is not coming from the outside; the world is coming from the images you plant in your mind – and you can plant whatever world you want. You see? You can plant whatever world you want. You don't need a body that dies, 'cause it doesn't exist out here. It's an image in your mind. Plant a different image in your mind and you stop death. You see? 'Cause the pot's not a pot, and the pen's not a pen, and the clock's not a clock, and the arm is not an arm. It's all the same. Okay?

If it existed out there – if there was pots, and if there was clocks, and if there was pens, and if they were out there – then shoot yourself. My brother killed himself. He got it and he shot himself. He said, "What's the use? Why should I waste my time?" Kill yourself. There's no point. You can't change anything. If a pot is a

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pot, and a pen is a pen, you can't change. Give it up. What, are you just going to get older? Stop it now. He was twenty. He said, "I'm at my peak. I can surf Hawaii. That's enough." And he shot himself.

But, if it's an image in your mind – if *jedrak* is *chi*, if "a clock" is "clock," if those objects are images in your mind that you planted there – then, oh, then anything's possible. All things can change. All bets are off. Arms are not arms – arms can be made of light. You see? They don't have to be flesh and blood anymore. They don't have to be made of bone. I can have a body of light. Okay?

Put the seed in your mind. Find out the seeds for that, place it in your mind. Purposely. Consciously. Knowingly. And then watch the body change. It's so cool.

If things were out there, hopeless. Life is hopeless.

If things are pictures in your mind that are popping up in your mind because of how you treat other people, if the more you take care of others, the better images appear in your mind, then there's hope. Then there's hope. You see?

Then you could be the next Jesus in this world. You could be. If you understood those things. If you understood those things, you could teach people how not to die. You see?

And that's what seeing emptiness is all about.

You finish the tea, you go to your... you pour it into your Lama's cup, you go upstairs, you offer it to Them. You turn around, you go to your temple. You sit down, you go into the meditation which you've been taught, which you've been doing every day. And something happens. Under the influence of seeing "pot" and understanding what "pot" is, something is triggered within the next hour. Within the next hour, in a deep state of meditation, you see emptiness directly. You perceive emptiness directly.

What's it like? How does it feel?

It's a higher level of being, a higher level of reality. There's no object to compare it to in this world. Okay?

While you're seeing that object, you cannot see any other object at all. Which means you can't be aware of yourself. You can't feel the ground, you can't feel the air on your arms, you can't hear anything outside – it's just ultimate reality and you are in it, and your mind is in it – and there's no other perception possible.

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So it's kind of ironic. You can't think to yourself, what? "I did it." (laughs) "God damn, I did it! I saw emptiness directly!" 'Cause that's not ultimate reality – those are thoughts. Those are normal thought.

So while you're in, you can't be aware that you're in. You see? It's ལྷུ་ལྷུ་བཞག་པ་ *chu la chu shakpa* means "Water poured into water." Your mind is in that state, you are in communion with ultimate reality. Can you tell how much time has passed? No, that's another normal reality. You see? You come out – you come down – and you can't tell how much time has passed. You don't know if it's been a day or a week or twenty minutes, okay? You don't know. All other perceptions stopped, and you just had this one experience.

That experience changes your inner being forever. On the level of རྩམས་ཆུང་ལྷན་པ་ *chakras* and all that, it changes your *chakras* forever, okay? Things happen in your inner body forever.

And then there's a beautiful experience that happens shortly... within... before you stand up. It's called ཇེ་ཏོཏ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ *jetop yeshe*. Before you stand up out of that meditation, the heart *chakra* opens. The heart *chakra* opens and you have this perception of like a ... it's like a huge powerful stream of clear light coming out of your heart. Okay? The heart *chakra* opens and you have this perception like clear light pouring out of your heart. Huge, like a pole – I don't know, like a telephone pole – of clear light coming out of your heart. And then you go into this very, very beautiful experience – it takes maybe 5 or 10 minutes. This is not ultimate reality. That's finished, okay? You go into an experience where faces appear in your mind. You see faces in your mind. And this is very difficult to explain, okay? In those few minutes, you see the face of every living creature in this world. In the minute, at the same time, you see the whole face of billions of creatures. And I'm not talking just people – animals, insects, birds, worms, whales – all of them, you can see in the same moment, but separately. Okay? In the same moment, but separately, you can see the face of every living creature in this world. And get this, on every world. Okay? On every world at the same time. Separately and distinctly, you see the face of every living creature in this universe – and they have no number. There is no number. 'Cause they are infinite. The sky is... space is infinite. There is no end to worlds – there's no end to the number of living creatures. And you see them all at the same time. Within a few minutes time, you see all of their faces. And you love them like the airplane. You love them like the airplane. And you are loving that many living creatures as in the airplane at the same time. You are having an experience of love for every one of those beings at the same time. (breaks up) Okay? (laughs)

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And then you come out – you come down – and you have a third vision. And you see yourself as you will be. Okay? You don't become a Buddha, okay, at that moment, you don't become an enlightened being. But you're able to see the future and you're able to see yourself in the future. And you are standing above a world – maybe with somebody – and you are standing above a world and you are caring for that world and you are taking care of all the living creatures in that world. You are standing above a world and you have the power to care for all those creatures in that world – because of who you are. You see what you will be.

Those three things happen: you see ultimate reality, you come down, you have that experience of those beings, and then you see yourself in the future, and you know how long it will take. You can put a number on it, the number of years. You know how long it will take. Okay?

And all of that happens because you saw the pot. Got it? You saw “pot,” and you saw how your mind was making things. Because you couldn't save the world if the world was out there. You can save the world if the world is coming from you. Okay? It's only possible because it's coming from you. Okay?

And then you only saw the pot because of what? Sorry, you only saw “pot” because of what? Kindness towards others, and you cared for... what is it, you served your Teacher, and you did your meditation every day, and you did your study.

And that's all I have to say. Alright?

So remember. Okay?

It's a blessing tonight that you heard it. Okay? Alright.

So we'll be silent for a few minutes.

Just enjoy that feeling of seeing those faces, okay?

What do you need in your life once that has happened to you? You see? What do you need anymore? Are you going to worry about your rent? Or are you going to worry about what somebody said to you? Or are you going to worry about the traffic? What does all that mean to a person who has... if you've had that experience, what does every thing... what does every other care in the world mean to you anymore? You see? There's no meaning to anything. You know what's going to happen. Then your own life becomes magic. Your whole life becomes indescribable joy the rest of your life. You have no other... what do you need after that? You see? Okay? Alright.

So we'll spend a few minutes. Just sit with it, okay? Alright.

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