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ACI Course 9: The Ethical Life
New York, 1996
Taught by Geshe Michael Roach

Class One: Overview of the Course
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This class is about Vinaya and just Buddhist ethics...the study of ethics, and you can't really study that...or the reason to study that is nirvana...is because you want to reach nirvana. So really, the very first thought you should have in this class, I mean the reason you came to this class should be because you wanna reach nirvana. I was in a Buddhist class recently and I asked people what nirvana was and I got like fifty different answers. So I think first you have to decide what is nirvana. Because you're not supposed to be in this class unless you really wanna get to nirvana. So first you have to understand nirvana. Nirvana is escaping from...samsara. So to understand nirvana you have to understand samsara. Nirvana is the escape from samsara. So you have to decide what is samsara. Samsara is pretty tricky.

You know, you say escaping from samsara and people have this vision of some kind of a place. Like they think of this world. Or they, you know, they think if you reach nirvana you go to some kind of heaven or something. Or some people think that if you reach nirvana you're just sitting there in a lotus position and your mind is...reach some quiet place or something, or whatever. Samsara...escaping samsara is something different than that. Samsara, starting with this, our own body, okay, your own body, is part of samsara, okay? Your own body is part of what you escape. This body was caused by something impure. The reason it's the way it is, is because it was caused by something impure.

And we'll talk about it sometime. But basically this body is...is not very nice. I mean sooner or later this body will die, and it doesn't...in Buddhism, we say doesn't necessarily take a car hitting you. If you took this body and took it the Museum of Natural History and put it on a chair and they came and fed it everyday and gave it something to drink and gave it vitamins and massaged it and exercised it and...only organic foods, right? And if everything was absolutely perfect, you know, which never happens in real life, but suppose you got exactly the right exercise, exactly the amount of sleep that you need, no stress, someone's feeding you, only organic foods, best vitamins, best things to drink, you never smokes, nothing...if you put that body in that museum, and don't

allow any cars or any bombs or anything near it, it would still kill itself, you know?

That's the nature of the body. The organs inside the body are competing. The heart, the lungs, the liver, the kidneys, according to Tibetan medicine, are actually in conflict. They are competing with each other. And sooner or later, one of them gets weaker, one of them begins to assert itself, and...and they break down. One of them breaks down, and they stop. One of them stops, and it kills you. So the body itself, the body...the kind of body that you and I have now, is doomed. And there's nothing you can do about it. I mean once you're in it, you're stuck with it. And you can't fix things. You can try to do maintenance in a very intelligent way, you know, and some people succeed and some don't, but...but you basically can't save it. It is made of something impure, its nature is impure, sooner or later it will kill itself. You can just be sitting there and it will kill itself. And...and that's one part of samsara.

The other part is mental. And the first Panchen Lama describes it very nicely in his {lam rim} text...and these are all the mental sufferings that people have. You can start with...and we've talked about it before...to me the one that hurts the most is that a human mind cannot be satisfied. In its present format, in the present condition of our minds, they cannot be satisfied. Human mind cannot be satisfied. You work for what you want. You try to get things that you want. About I don't know what percent of the time, you get them. So...but when you get them, it takes about a day, or a week, or a month, and then the mind starts to become dissatisfied with it. Like Clinton was very happy to become governor of Arkansas, or whatever? Was it Arkansas? I don't know. But he was very satisfied...like for the first week, I can tell you he was probably thrilled. But then at some point he starts to be dissatisfied, he has to be president, you know? Work very, very hard and get to be president.

Then you finish your first term then what do you want? Second term, you know? [laughs] I mean the human mind cannot be satisfied. The human mind gets what it wants, sometimes, and then it cannot be happy with that or contented. It's a part of our nature. Our nature is like that. It's one of our sufferings. And this suffering is inescapable. It's not like something that only happens in Bosnia, or something that only happens in the Third World, or something like that. Everybody on Earth, unless you're practicing very well, has this disease. And that's part of our minds. That's samsara, too. That's a big chunk of samsara. Another kind of samsara is another kind of mental...which is that you can't trust anything in samsara. There's no normal object in this life that

you can trust. You don't know that the job you have, you'll have next week. You don't know that the spouse you have you'll have next week. You don't know that the health you share now will be gone next week. You can't say anything with certainty about your life. You just don't know. You can't tell me whether or not you will own the shirt on your back tomorrow. You can't...you can't say with certainty that that will be something that you own.

You can't be sure that the place you stay you will have a week from now. You can't even be sure that the body you're in, you'll enjoy its use tomorrow. You can't be sure. Nothing is sure in life. I mean life is very chaotic. And you...nothing is trustable. You can't trust anything in life...from basic things, also relationships. Like you can't predict how a relationship will go. You can't trust it. It's nature...the very nature is to change. It must change. It will change. The people that you love today, you'll feel neutral about them or you'll hate them a year from now. The people that you don't...you could care less about...could go either way. The people that you hate now can sometimes become your friends. There's absolutely no certainty that any of those objects stays the way it is. And it's a big suffering, you know, we suffer from that all day long. You...you have basic things that you take for granted like being alive, or being healthy, or having a good mind, and they could all disappear tomorrow.

None of them is anything you can count on. Nothing. And this is a suffering that's related to our mind. The mind tends to perceive things due to certain causes, and as those causes change or wear out, the nice things that we own, or even the nice things that we are, has to go...must go...must change. Every part of your life is fluid, and it's all shaky, and it could all change tomorrow, and there's nothing you can do about it. It's...it's gonna be that way. You can't say that any of the relationships you have today will not be totally different several weeks from now. You have no guarantee at all. Nothing. And this is samsara; this is the nature of samsara. This is the nature of the human mind and the human body. Our bodies and our minds are...are defective.

And they...not...it can't turn out right. You know, you can struggle your whole life to get something...nice place to stay. You can struggle your whole life to find someone that you get along with, and someone you love and someone you can be with. And you can struggle all your life to find some kind of security, and you just won't find it. It doesn't exist, you know? You can...you might as well give up now. [laughs] You can...I mean if you didn't notice yet, that's the way it is, you know. And if you're kinda young, and things are still going okay, you can keep trying, but it just gets worse, you know? There is no certainty about

anything. Even your mind, you can't control the state your mind will be in a week from now. You cannot control it. This is suffering. All this change and all this uncertainty is suffering. And...and we have it and it's part of our nature. So escaping from samsara is escaping from that part of our own nature, okay? Escaping from samsara is to escape from that part of our own nature. You don't have to move out of New York, you know? It's not New York City, it's not America. It's...it's that condition that your relationships are not predictable, your life is not predictable, your death is unpredictable, your health is unpredictable, your own mind drives you to be unhappy, and you...you can't stop it. This is the nature of the mind. This is the nature of samsaric mind. So nirvana is...is to escape that. When you get to nirvana, it's like here...

The definition of nirvana in Tibetan is {nyendrup malupa panbe sosor tango}, and it means the permanent stopping of your bad thoughts. According to Buddhism, samsara is created ultimately by bad thoughts: anger, desire, jealousy, hatred. Ultimately that condition that I described, that your mind is constantly shifting, that your relationships must degenerate, that your own body must collapse, all of this is caused ultimately by bad thoughts. And why and how, we'll cover, okay? It can be proved. But take it for that way right now. Nirvana is a place that you reach where you just don't have those bad thoughts anymore. You just don't have them. You are not capable of them. No matter how badly someone treats you, no matter how nasty a thing someone says to you, no matter what kind of disaster happens in your personal life...your mind is in a place...it's like some golden window, you know, it's like some portal, and inside there it's just totally golden light, totally free... incapable of having a bad thought.

Someone can attack you, someone can say something to you, someone can physically abuse you, and you might have pain, but your mind cannot be disturbed from that peace. And sometimes nirvana is called peace. Peace is a synonym for nirvana in Tibetan: {shiwa}. So nirvana is reaching that mental place where you are incapable of having a bad thought ever again. {Sosor tango}. {Nyendrup malupa panbe sosor tango}. {Sosor tango} means you can only reach that condition by {sosor tak}. {Sosor tak} comes about here...

It's the...there's...this is emptiness, okay? [laughs] This is direct perception. And somewhere along here, somewhere between samsara and nirvana, you must perceive emptiness directly. You must, okay? It's part of the definition of nirvana. Nirvana is the permanent stopping of your bad thoughts due to having seen emptiness directly. Due to this experience. This must take place somewhere in here. Okay? Must take place.

Sometimes this is called wisdom and we have three trainings in Buddhism: wisdom is number three. We call it...

[silence]

The Tibetan here is {sherub}. And it's basically the direct perception of emptiness. Okay? Emptiness can be perceived intellectually, which takes a lot of training but not so difficult. The direct perception of emptiness in deep state of meditation is much more difficult. And much more rare. Extremely rare. The essence of the extraordinary training of wisdom is...is to see emptiness directly. The scriptures state, especially in the [b: Abhidharma], that to reach that perception of emptiness directly your mind must be at a certain meditational level called {samten dampo nyendop michok me}. We'll call it:

[silence]

Say, {ting ngendzin} [repeat]. By the way, I'll say Tibetan. You don't have to memorize it. If you're in the Tibetan track, you have to memorize it. But I just think it's good for you. Most of the English course from the last year has now transmigrated to the Tibetan track. So the point is, if I keep saying Tibetan words, sooner or later you'll get comfortable with it and you'll move to the Tibetan track, okay? It's a very easy language, not hard, okay? Say, {ting ngendzin} [repeat], {ting ngendzin} [repeat]. {ting ngendzin} means that extraordinary training of meditation, and it's called {ting ngendzin hapash hlapa tingendzin gyi lapa} which means basically the ability to keep your mind on one object, fixedly, fixated on one object. Okay? That's also possessed...that ability is also possessed by baseball players, businessmen like my boss. The object in the first case is the baseball. Like if you see the guy at bat and they closeup on his face and as the pitcher release the ball the eyes start to dilate. You know, you actually see the pupils dilate. And the guy's...if he's a good hitter...he's, he's actually got {ting ngendzin} towards the baseball. And that's...it's not...you don't have to be a Buddhist; it doesn't have to be a holy object. You can have meditative concentration standing there in a baseball game. He doesn't hear the crowd, you know, he doesn't taste the tobacco, you know, he doesn't smell the catcher, you know, his mind is totally fixated on the ball, if he's good. And the eyes are dilating and he's...and he's got {ting ngendzin}. To differentiate meditation on a holy object from normal meditative ability, or concentrating ability, we say extraordinary. Extraordinary means Buddhist, you know, fixated on a holy object, okay? And that's why the three trainings are called extraordinary. They're actually called {pakpe labasum}, which means

extraordinary trainings.

[student: [unclear]]

We're gonna talk about it, okay? I'm going backwards, okay? [laughs] Extraordinary training of meditation is like a...you can think about it as a...as a pond...and that the water is totally still. The top of the surface of the water is totally, perfectly still...perfectly quiet, and there's no ripples, and there's nothing moving. That's perfect meditation. That's {ting ngendzin gyi lapa}. Number one, I'll put it up here.

[silence]

Say {tsultrim} [repeat]. You got...you gotta make noise in language...it's not a language class but you gotta make noise, okay? {Tsultrim} [repeat], {tsultrim} [repeat]. Okay, good. It'll start to get you...stick in your mind and after a while you'll be learning Tibetan. So, just warning you, alright? {Tsultrim} is sometimes translated as morality. I like to call it ethical living because the word morality, you know, brings up images of Billy Graham screaming at you and the Christian coalition and all that, you know. I...it's just an ethical lifestyle. It's a...it's a good...being a good person, in your everyday life. That's {tsultrim}, okay? This training is described as being like the quality of that pond, that it's very pure. The water is very pure. So if you had a big pond of water and the water was very, very pure, that's an ethical way of life. If the surface of the water was perfectly quiet and had no ripples or disturbances on it, that's the extraordinary training of meditation. So where does wisdom come in? They say that if the object called emptiness is going to reflect on that thing called the surface of your mind, the mind must be totally pure and totally quiet, okay? You cannot see emptiness...it's totally impossible to see emptiness unless you reach the first level of the...of the form realm...of a whole different realm. Your mind has to reach a meditative level which is out of this world, okay? It's out of this desire realm. It's such a perfect meditation, that your mind, as you see emptiness directly, must be in the first samten level, the first samadhi level...must be, okay? Otherwise, you cannot see emptiness directly. Reaching that level takes a certain amount of training like jogging or weight-lifting, you know? If you wanted to lift a certain weight, you would have to do a certain kind of regimen everyday. And to reach that level of meditation takes maybe an hour a day. You must meditate at least an hour a day to reach that level of concentration. In addition, your conscience must be perfectly clear. And that's the rub. That's the hard part, okay? People say...people constantly come in to me...I've been meditating for six years, and

nothing happened. And then I say, well...the first question really is, are you doing the preliminaries properly. There are certain warm-ups to a meditation session...that if you don't do them properly, the meditation will never go very well. There's...there's like seven steps to get into deep meditation. But more importantly there's a relationship between these three trainings. Meditation depends on an ethical way of life. If your conscience is not clean and clear...happily clear...you will not be able to meditate perfectly. It just won't come. It will never happen. And that's just a fact of meditation. The presence of something unclean in your life, and knowing it, and being aware of it will...will...will prevent you from reaching a deep state of meditation. You just can't. So, in Buddhism, an ethical way of life it's more important than just being a good person for that...for the sake of that. To reach the higher goals, to reach nirvana, you have to see emptiness directly...you must. To see emptiness directly you must have this level of meditation. You must reach this level of meditation. You cannot do that without having an ethical way of life. And...and it's compared to the reflection of the moon in the...in the pond. You know, if the pond water is going like this, the reflection will go like that, and you'll never see emptiness. Emptiness is such a subtle object that it cannot reflect in your mind stream unless that mind stream is perfectly still. And that's meditation. It can't be still, unless it's pure. The water has to be pure. Your mind...your heart has to be clear of any bad deeds. So you have to clean up your life for that reason. You'll never see emptiness if you...if you can't. And if you can't do that, you'll never reach nirvana. Impossible. It's part of the definition of nirvana. You can't do it. So you can see that training number one leads to training number two. Number two depends on number one, okay? That fact is not talked about much in America. Or at all. I mean they don't say, when you go to, you know, this temple and you're gonna meditate, they check you at the door and say did you do anything bad this morning, you know. 'Cause your meditation is not gonna work. I mean people don't do that. And Je Tsongkapa in the poem you're gonna read...there's a poem, a letter that he wrote, to one of his most beloved disciples. It's your reading for...for this first class. And in that letter he says, back in 1400 when he wrote that letter, he says people even nowadays, they don't realize the connection between one and two. He says everybody has forgotten it. He says people do understand the connection between three and two. You know, people understand that if you can't get into perfect meditation, you'll never see emptiness. He says, people understand it like barely. This is back in 1400 in Tibet. But he says people who understand that you have to be living a good life to reach that state of meditation...he says, everybody forgot it. He says, nobody...nobody remembers that. Back in 1402 or whatever he wrote this letter. It's like you can read that in his letter. He says people don't understand

the connection between living a good life and being able to meditate properly. Living a good life is...what is a good life? You know, I mean different people have different ideas. Different religions teach mainly the same things, but with some differences. In Buddhism, we say that to really understand the rules of a good life, you know, what should you do and what should you not do, you know, what's a good thing to do, and what a bad thing to do, you must study Buddhist scripture, okay? You must study the word of an enlightened being. Why? Because the connection between what you do now and what comes to you much later because of those actions is so subtle that only a Buddha can perceive it perfectly. They say colors like red and shapes like round or square are on this level of reality. And everybody can perceive them pretty easily. Except for blind people or whatever. And on the second level is emptiness. And only a select few people in the world have seen that directly. Maybe fewer. And then on the third level is the...the real subtle connection between the good and bad things you do and what happens to you a year later, you know...why is the air conditioner not working quite perfectly? Why is it a bit noisy, but it's still cooling us, you know? Why do I have this mixture of goodness and badness? I mean only a Buddha can tell you, "Oh, back on October 3, 1966, remember, you were cooling off this thing, but you quit 'cause you wanted to go eat and...that's why." I mean, we don't have that capacity. So the Buddha taught sixteen volumes...sixteen thousand pages about ethical living. You know, how do you live an ethical life? And that's the...

[silence]

All of the Buddhist teachings...we have about a thousand texts in the Kangyur. The Kangyur is the speech of enlightened beings translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan. So we still have about a thousand separate works. The shortest one, do you know? [b: Heart Sutra]? There's a book called [b: Om]. And it's one syllable. [laughs] It says [b: Om]. [laughs] That's the shortest book in the Kangyur. The longest one is like hundred thousand verses or something, you know...covers many volumes. But basically a huge part...and the first part of the Buddhist canon, of the whole Buddhist scriptures, is called the vinaya. Okay, say {dulwa} [repeat]. You guys are sleepy. {Dulwa} [repeat], {dulwa} [repeat]. Okay, {dulwa} is the Tibetan name for vinaya. Okay, that's the first huge collection of Buddhist scripture. And in that collection of scripture, and in that scripture the Buddha describes what it would be like to lead an ethical way of life. Oftentimes he does so by describing stories of the past where somebody did something wrong and got some horrible result from it for thousands of years. And most often, the bad guy is...the Buddha in his former lives, okay? [laughs] It's very,

you know, when you read it it makes your goosebumps because he'll go through this...describing this bad boy, for example, who beat his mother on his head, and then he'll describe incredible, fantastic adventures that the boy went through and incredible things that he saw, extraordinary things that happened to him, and then at the end he'll give the punchline and he'll say that was me. You know, and most often the stories are actually from his own life. And he's describing how not to live an ethical life by describing his own mistakes...most often. So there you get sixteen volumes of that or something around that. Then you have the extraordinary training of meditation and that's treated in...

[silence]

Say {do} [repeat] {do} [repeat]. {Do} is the Tibetan word for sutra. Sutra has three different meanings, okay, and you should know. First meaning is the difference between sutra and tantra, okay? Sutra meaning the...the teachings of an enlightened being which are not secret, and tantra meaning the teachings of an enlightened being which are secret, okay? So all the Buddha's speech, everything the Buddha ever taught, can be divided into sutra and tantra. That's not what it means here, okay? Sometimes sutra means a short book, and the word {do} means short book. That's also not what it means here, okay? The third meaning is one of the three great collections of Buddhist scripture...one of the three {pitakas}. And that's what it is here. So don't get confused, okay? This sutra means that huge collection of Buddhist scriptures spoken by the Buddha which talk about how to reach meditation...how to reach perfect meditation, okay? And for wisdom, which used to be up here on the board...

[silence]

...is called the abhidharma basket. There's a section of Buddhist philosophy called abhidharma. This is not that. This is the whole group of scriptures that treat wisdom collectively...are known as abhidharma. The order of the scriptures in the Kangyur, the order of all the scriptures that the Buddha ever taught, is exactly this. First come the vinaya scriptures. Then come the sutra collection. And then comes the abhidharma collection. This is the order of the Buddhist canon. And Je Tsongkapa says, you know, it doesn't take a genius to figure out that it corresponds to the order of the three trainings. You have to start with the vinaya collection of scriptures because your spiritual practice has to begin with an ethical way of life. Your whole spiritual life, everything you're going to do spiritually, has to start with vinaya, has to start with living a good life. Based on that foundation you can move up to the sutra collection of scriptures, which is

the next part of the canon, because that teaches perfect concentration. And you cannot have perfect concentration, meditative concentration, Buddhist concentration, if you're...if you have something on your conscience. Can't do it. And you can't...and the third basket, or the third great collection of scripture is abhidharma. It comes third because it relates to the training of wisdom, and you can't get that unless you have perfect meditation. Okay?

{Chung lungba dzuh}...{chungla}...in...in...as a basket it's called {lungpa}, which is just [abhi]. Tsongkapa is reacting to a corruption of Buddhism during his time. You know, during his time and before his time, there were people in Tibet who got a spattering of Buddhist philosophy from a few Indian teachers that showed up in Tibet, and then they heard about tantra and tantra sounded like a lot more fun, and they started doing tantra. And then after a while the whole thing got so corrupted you had people saying, something like, I just want to see emptiness or do secret practices and I don't need the first pitaka, you know? Once you see emptiness directly you're freed from this very boring thing called ethics, you know? You don't need ethics if you've reached that high level called wisdom or meditation or especially tantra. There were people in Tibet saying that, and Je Tsongkapa came back with, you know, why do you think the Buddha spent sixteen thousand pages describing an ethical way of life? You know, was he...was he stupid, or he didn't know that it wasn't necessary, or he didn't see emptiness, or he wasn't practicing tantra, or what do you think, you know? I mean, he's trying to prove that not only is an ethical way of life related to emptiness, you can't reach emptiness unless you are ethical. Impossible. Totally impossible. So he's saying the people who say it's not necessary and not related are...are crazy. And he was very adamant about it. And then he went through describing the relation of the three baskets. So, we're gonna start with vinaya. We're gonna talk about {dulwa}, okay? {Dulwa} is a word in Tibetan that means to tame something or to control something. It's the word in Tibetan, it's used for what you do to a crazy horse. Like when you're breaking a horse, that's called {dulwa}. {Dulwa} means trying to control a wild horse. That's {dulwa}. A {dulja}, which means the wild horse to be tamed, is the Tibetan word for a disciple. A student in Tibetan is called {dulja}, okay? {Dulja} means somebody who has to be {dulwa}-ed. And {dulwa} means to control, or discipline, or train--to bring a wild horse under control. And that's the literal meaning of {dulwa}. This is very famous quotation by a lama called Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra who's very important in the lineage of Vajrayogini...who is one of the main predecessors of Pabongka Rinpoche, who was our teacher's teacher...who was Rinpoche's teacher. He said this about the meaning of {dulwa}. So I'm, I'm not gonna...you don't have to write the whole thing out. But I'll...just say it, 'cause it's a blessing to say it. Say {dulway} [repeat] {denu} [repeat] {kyi} [repeat] {zhuja} [repeat]

{pongdun} [repeat] {korchey} [repeat] {kyi} [repeat]...this is supposed to be like this...{nyomong} [repeat] {ba} [repeat] {dulwa} [repeat] {dang} [repeat] {wangpo} [repeat] {dulwa} [repeat] {chepechur} [repeat] {dulwa} [repeat]. Okay. {Dulwa denu}, this part here, it means the...the basket of vinaya...all those books about the vinaya, okay? All those books about leading an ethical way of life, okay? {Kyi zhuja} means its subject matter, its subject matter...the subject matter of the scriptures on vinaya, okay? What is the subject matter of the scriptures on vinaya? {Pongdun}. Say {pongdun} [repeat]. {Pongdun} refers to...{pong} means rules; {dun} means seven, number seven, okay? Seven rules. How many bad deeds are there if you group...? Abhidharma says, {rabrum chena migewa chu}. There's eighty-four thousand different variations of bad deeds and bad thoughts. But if you're gonna make it easy for American disciples in 1996, what's the minimum number you could talk about? Ten. Basically ten, I mean the ten non-virtues, okay? You know them. We'll go through them really fast. It never hurts. First one? Killing. Okay, killing any living creature. Okay? Second one? Stealing anything of value, like more than ten cents or a dollar, or whatever, okay? Third one? Sexual misconduct which mainly refers to adultery, but not only, okay? Three that you do with your body, okay? Three bad deeds that you do with your body, okay? Those are the three of body. Then there are four of speech, first one being?

[student: Lying.]

Lying. Good. I like this, you know, I was teaching a Buddhist class to a bunch of old-timers in...I won't say the place. And nobody could name the ten non-virtues, so I was like...aaah. Yeah, first one is lying, okay, creating a...a misimpression in someone else's mind. If you...if you define it that way, which is the way to define it, it becomes a lot more subtle. Second one?

[student: Divisive talk.]

Yeah, divisive talk. If it's in the top ten, we must be doing it all day long. So it doesn't have to be, you know, some secret plot to di...to split up two friends. It can be those very subtle slips of the tongue where you slightly put someone down in front of somebody else, and as a result they get slightly get alienated from them. And we do that all day long. All day long, we are constantly dropping hints that so-and-so is not as cool as I am, and you should probably not like them as much as you do, and you should like me more. I mean, that's the basic format. You...you have variations, but that's the basic format, and we do it all day long. Number three is speech...harsh words. And all of the scriptures are

very careful to say it does not have to be a curse word. It could be, "Hi, how are you?" You know...[laughs]...said in the right way and knowing that the other person's feeling will be hurt, okay? Fourth one?

[student: Idle talk.]

Idle talk, okay? Just, you know, we used to say gossiping, but you don't have to be gossiping over the fence with the other...person. We do it all day long. Any kind of talk which is not relevant or necessary is idle talk. The ultimate form of it is: saying your prayers without thinking about them. [laughs] Seriously. Okay? Ultimate form of idle talk. Last three?...are of mind. The last three you do in your mind. What are they? First one is craving. You know, craving other people's things. And it makes you unhappy all day long. You know, I had it a couple of times today at work. You know, it doesn't...you can crave other people's possessions. It's the coveting that's mentioned in the ten commandments. You can also crave their personal qualities, and that's where jealousy comes in. So all of that is under number eight. How about number nine? Ill will. Ill will means...number nine...that means like not being too upset when something bad happens to somebody else. And we do this constantly. You know, even when it's destructive to ourselves, even when there's bad results for ourselves, we are never that sad when someone else screws up, never as sad as we are when we mess up, you know. And there's this kind of very sick, subtle pleasure that you sometimes take when you see somebody at work mess up and you're like, "Oh stupid them," you know. It's very subtle, and if it's in the top ten out of 84,000, you know if it's more important than 83,990 others, it means we're doing it almost all day long. Number ten?

[students: Wrong views]

Wrong views...classic two: not believing in past and future lives, and then thinking that the idea of karma is stupid. Do you do that? I mean when was the last time you gave a speech about the stupidity of karma. You haven't done it recently, but if you did any kind of bad thing today, from the slightest irritation at someone, then implicitly you have that wrong view, because you are saying, that's not gonna have any result on me, it will not boomerang back to me, you know? You didn't say...you didn't have a very, slight irritated thought towards someone and then sit down on your chair at work and say, "Oh, my God I just created a huge karma," you know, "It's gonna come back to me; this is gonna happen, this is gonna happen, this is gonna happen." You didn't do it, 'cause you really don't believe in it. You know, sounds good theoretically, but it's not

enough to keep you from killing roaches or anything like that, you know. [laughs] We have it, and every time you do even the slightest bad deed, which...which is...can be very subtle...it takes about a second to think an irritated thought about someone, it is a bad karma, and you're spitting on the rules of karma, you know. You're spitting on the laws of karma. You're saying I don't believe you. If you don't stop and say, "Oh my gosh, you know, what did I just do? I just planted an...a seed which must come back to me." You know, I mean, if you really understood Buddhist psychology well, you would be terrorized at your own mind. And every time...I mean, you, you probably couldn't make it through the day if you really believed in karma. If you really understood karma clearly, it would be very hard to get through a day...with your, with your...with our minds in our present condition. So {pongdu}... Why does it say only seven? Vinaya mostly relates to the first seven. Okay? Vinaya mostly focuses upon...most of the vows in vinaya are focusing on your...what you do with your body and what you say with your mouth. They are not focusing so much on what you do with your mind, okay? That's left mostly to the bodhisattva vows and to the secret vows, which we're not covering in this course, okay? We're working on vinaya. So the main subject matter of the vinaya is keeping those seven {korche}. {Korche} means along with their friends. {Kor} means retinue, okay? The retinue...like the Dalai Lama's {kor} is all his bodyguards and all the people...his managers and all the people who take care of him, and cooks and people who carry his robes for him, and all those people are {kor}. So {korche} means along with your great circle of supporters, and that's where you get the other 83,999, you know? They're all in there, okay? {Korche} is very tricky here. {Korche} means and all the other bad things you could do, okay? {Kyi nyomongba}. Say {nyomong} [repeat] {nyomong} [repeat]. {Nyomong} in Sanskrit is [klesha]. It comes from the root [klish], and [klish] means to bug somebody, to bother someone, to afflict someone, to interrupt someone, to upset somebody...they're all...[klish] is that meaning. So [klesha] or {nyomongba} means mental affliction, okay? Mental affliction, defined as: {semme shiwa chepe semchen}, which means any thought that disturbs your peace of mind, okay? There's tiny [kleshas], tiny bad thoughts, like a moment of irritation and for as long as that stays with you, you can't really be happy. You're...it's like throwing a...a rock in a pool of water, and there's those ripples...that go out. And then you really get angry, it's like throwing a boulder in a pool of water, and there's this huge splash, and the mind is like this for about three hours or something, you know, and then it slowly comes down like that. That's the function of a [klesha]. That's the function of a mental affliction. It's function is to ruin your peace of mind commensurate to the strength of the [klesha]. And it can ruin your peace of mind for ten years. I mean, I've met

people like that who are obsessed by something that someone said to them, or some incident that happened in their life, and, and they're holding that [klesha] for that long. That's a mental affliction. When you get rid of that...permanently by seeing emptiness directly, you've reached nirvana. That's the definition of nirvana. I mean, you can reach nirvana tonight, and you won't look different to us, you know? You wouldn't have the frowns or the grimaces that we have...no, you just wouldn't be capable of it. There would be no thought behind the skin to express itself that way. It's very interesting. You just...you would never go like...you know, or...you know, you just couldn't do it because you just don't have those thoughts that would drive your mouth to do that, or your forehead to do that. I mean, so your face might change slightly, but otherwise the rest would be the same. You're stuck with a body until it wears out...until it dies. In extraordinary circumstances, with extraordinary teachings, which are secret, even that can change. But that's a long story. And it's secret. {Dulwa}. {Dulwa} means to, what? Tame. So here Dharma Bhadra, who lived about two hundred years ago, is explaining the word {dulwa}. He says, the vinaya is called the vinaya, {dulwa} is called {dulwa} because if you take the subject of the vinaya scriptures and apply it to your own mind, and if you're able to keep the morality of avoiding those seven bad deeds and their nasty friends, well then you can {dulwa} your bad thoughts. If you {dulwa} your bad thoughts, then you've reached nirvana. So that's the first reason why vinaya's called vinaya. {Dulwa} is called {dulwa} because it can...you can {dulwa} your bad thoughts, meaning control, tame, discipline, stop, like a wild horse, okay? And...{dang}, {wangbo}. {Wangbo} means the sense organs, okay? [cut]

{Wangbo} means the sense organs, okay? {Mikme nawame namme chenme lume sume}. Those are the...in the [b: Heart Sutra], these are the sense organs: the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the sense of touch. As long as you are closely obsessed with those organs, you know, as long as they are a large part of your life...that you're struggling to see the things you want to see...you know, you wanna live in a part of New York where you don't see certain things, you know, and you turn on the best CDs, and you wear only the best perfume, and you only go to the best restaurant, and you only wear very pleasant clothes, and you exercise just right, then you're living in the world of the senses. And it...and it will cause you to suffer. You cannot satisfy those demands, and the more you try, the worst it gets...the more you need them and the more you want them. It's a trap. If you study vinaya, you can {dulwa chepa} those sense powers: you can bring them under control. You can start to move out of that sphere of activity...of the sense organs, and move more into a spiritual sphere, okay? It doesn't mean you can't eat. You have to eat. It doesn't mean you can't listen to nice music. If it comes, listen to it. But don't get caught up in it. And the better

you keep your vows, the less you will need that gratification...and the happier you'll be, because you can't gratify yourself on will. It comes to you; you can't control it. You can't demand that music sound good tonight. Sooner or later it won't sound good. Sooner or later you'll die, you won't be able to hear it anyway. You know, you can't control those things. You cannot control sense objects, period. And you get very frustrated trying. As you may have noticed. So [laughs] okay? So the...the second benefit of {dulwa}, of vinaya, the second function of {dulwa} is to {dulwa} your sense organs...to bring them under some kind of restraint and push you into a...a different sphere, a...a higher sphere, spiritual sphere of life. {Chyur} means because of that, we call the vinaya {dulwa}...and there he has the word {dulwa} again. So Dharma Bhadra's telling you why vinaya's called vinaya. {Dulwa}, meaning discipline, is called {dulwa} because you discipline or you turn off the mental afflictions, and you discipline your sense powers, okay? And that's why vinaya is called vinaya. One more point and then we'll take a break.

[silence]

In the monastery when you're about...I mean classically you enter it at seven years old or something, and the first thing they do is sit you down and make you memorize the [b: Abhisamankara]. It's about fifty pages long. And you have no idea what it means. Not one word. But your teacher says, okay you gotta memorize the [b: Abhisamankara]. This is a work by Maitreya, the future Buddha. So it's this blessing, even at seven years old, of having the words of Maitreya in your mind and in your heart. And it starts to echo through your mind all the time and then it starts to have an effect on your mind stream. And then when you reach about thirteen, fourteen, you start to study what it means, okay? So I...I encourage you, if you're gonna take this class, you know, write down this pronunciation, and memorize it. And it's a little piece of sutra, okay? It's a little piece of the Buddha. As you'll soon see, alright? Memorize it. It doesn't...it doesn't hurt, you know? It might bounce around in your head and do something. Say {dulwa} [repeat] {mi} [repeat] {tendan} [repeat] {dunba} [repeat] {luh} [repeat] {yin} [repeat]. {Dulwa ni} [repeat] {tendan} [repeat] {dunba} [repeat] {luh} [repeat] {yin} [repeat]. Okay. {Dulwa} means what?

[student: Vinaya.]

Vinaya, okay? Discipline. I call it Buddhist discipline. You can call it vowed morality if you want. It does not have to be monks and nuns, okay? As you're going to see, just about half of the vows relate to lay people, okay? By the way,

I'm not allowed to teach you the vinaya which relates to monk's and nun's vows. Those are secret, and I cannot teach them to you unless you take ordination. So if someone says what are you studying over there at Sixth Street, you have to say vinaya, but he's only teaching us the part that doesn't relate to monk's and nun's vows. Otherwise I get in trouble, okay? And I'm not gonna teach you the monk's and...I can't...until you become ordained, and then I will, okay? And then we have to. So {dulwa ni}, vinaya is...{ni} means is...{ten}. {Ten} means the teachings of the Buddha, okay? This quotation is by the Buddha, and in this quotation the Buddha himself says, if all you had in your house was the [b: Vinaya Scriptures]...not the whole teachings, but just the [b: Vinaya Scriptures]...that's enough to say in my house I have the whole Buddhist teachings. He says the vinaya teachings themselves, just the teachings on leading an ethical life, represent the entire teachings of the Buddha. I mean, we have a project going in Russia. We're cataloging the scriptures that are in that particular library. It's gonna take ten years. There's two hundred thousand titles there. Probably there's more. I mean, definitely there's more, but if you took those whole hundreds of thousands of scriptures and you put them all into one, it would be the vinaya. 'Cause if the Buddha himself said, if you've got the vinaya you've got the Buddhist teachings, okay? {Ten}. {Dang} means "and." {Dunba}. {Dunba} means the Teacher, capital "T," which means what? Lord Buddha, okay? And this is another thing that he's saying. He's saying, if you've got the vinaya scriptures and if you study them, then you can say that I'm alive in the world. If there's anyone in the world studying vinaya, you can say that I'm in that room. And he doesn't say it metaphorically. He says {luh}. {Luh} means the actual, the real thing, you know? Very interesting, you know? Buddha is saying that if there's a person in 1996 in the East Village, studying vinaya there, properly, I am there, and that is my teachings. Those, those are the total teachings of the Buddha, you know? That's...he was very adamant about it, you know. And he said to the monks many times, you know, if you're wearing those robes, you're representing me. So be careful. As long as there's one decent monk walking around on the planet Earth, I'm there, you know? That represents me. I am that. And when you study the [kayas] of the Buddha, the bodies of the Buddha, you'll see why it's true more. But basically {yin} means is. So what the Buddha is saying in this quotation is that in...so long as anyone in the world is truly studying vinaya, and that vinaya is teaching that person how to behave ethically, I'm there. That's me. That is the Buddha. The Buddha exists in the world. Buddha is walking on planet Earth as long as somebody on Sixth Street is studying vinaya, okay? We'll take a ten minute break and then come back when you hear the...there's a little gong, okay? So...[cut]

[silence]

Now we go through the boring part...the more boring part. Okay. In the monastery, you know, they just throw you in the vinaya class and they hit you with all these things right away, and they don't tell you the history of vinaya, and you don't hear much about, you know, where did it all come from. I thought you might like to see the lineage, you know? So we're gonna do, very briefly, you know, where did it all come from. Say {gelong payi} [repeat] {sotar gyi} [repeat] {do} [repeat]. {Gelong pay} [repeat] {sotar gyi} [repeat] {do} [repeat]. Okay. {Gelongpa} means a fully-ordained monk, okay? A full monk. And later we'll get into all the kinds of monks and things like, okay? But that's a fully ordained monk. {Sotar} means vowed morality, okay? And we'll talk more about it. Literally it means a vow of individual liberation, vow of freedom. Vow of freedom: {sotar}, okay? Freedom vows. And we'll talk about why they're called freedom vows. You can probably guess. [Drops something.] Woo! {Do} means sutra, sutra. So, this is the ultimate source of the vinaya. These two are the two root texts. {Gelong may sotar gyi do}--you can see there's only one difference here: {mayi}. {Mayi} means what? It's...it's feminine. It's the feminine ending. So {gelong may sotar gyi do} means the sutra on the vows of individual freedom for a fully-ordained nun, and that's a {gelogma}, okay? These are the two root sutras. They're called the root sutras. These two. All the vinaya teachings in this world trace back to these two sutras, spoken by...the Buddha, okay? There are also four different explanatory sutras, okay? They're called the four explanatory sutras. And I'm not gonna go through they're names with you here, but there's a set of four sutras which explain the two root sutras, and they're called the four explanatory sutras. So if you look at what's in the canon about vinaya, these are the two root sutras, then there's four explanatory sutras, and then there's a whole bunch of what we call relevant sutras, okay? They're like vinaya-related sutras, which are not included here. So there's huge...the materials are huge. I mean, we've put a lot of them in on the computers. It's thousands and thousands of pages. Yeah, this one means the Sutra {do}, {kyi} of, {sotar} individual freedom vows...of a fully-ordained monk, and this is the sutra of individual freedom vows for a fully-ordained nun. And those are the two root sutras. I'm only gonna ask you on the homework about the two root sutras, so...don't worry. Then in the [Tengyur], which is the classical commentaries on the sutras...the [Tengyur] and the [Kangyur] are two divisions of what in Tibet are called the Buddhist canon...and the [Kangyur] is spoken...has to spoken by an enlightened being. Those are the teachings of an enlightened being, either this Buddha or another Buddha. There are a thousand books. There are like thirty-five hundred books in the [Tengyur]. [Tengyur] is the early Indian

commentaries, okay? And the most famous one is called {dulway do}. Say {dulway} [repeat], {do} [repeat]. {Dulway} [repeat], {do} [repeat]. Okay? In Sanskrit, just for your information, it's the [b: Vinaya Sutra]...very famous. It was written by say {lopen} [repeat] {yenden} [repeat] {wuh} [repeat]. {Lopen} [repeat] {yenden} [repeat] {wuh} [repeat]. [laughs] Okay. {Lopen} means [acharya]. It means a master...the master. We're not supposed to, in Buddhism, ever refer to our teachers lightly. So we always say "Master" before that. Master: [acarya]. {Yenden} in Sanskrit is [guna], and {wuh} is [prabha]. So his name was Guna Prabha. You can say Master Guna Prabha. We're not sure when he lived. We take a guess that it was around 500 A.D., okay? And he wrote the [b: Vinaya Sutra]. But didn't I say at the beginning of the class that a sutra is a book wri...written by...spoken by a...a Buddha? So what happened? Did {Yenden} become a Buddha? This is a trick, and it messed me up for years, but I finally figured it out, okay? This "sutra" means short book. It doesn't mean a sutra, okay? This...in this case, the word sutra means a short book. And in this book he has managed to stuff in the entire contents of the four explanatory sutras...those four sutras on vinaya. Those are hundreds and hundreds of pages long. {Yenden Wuh} took the whole thing and squished it into a sutra, meaning a short book; and he named that [b: Vinaya Sutra]. In the next class we're gonna through an outline of the whole thing. So in a nutshell you'll be able to see the structure of the entire vinaya. It's very exciting. It's very rarely been done. He took the entire, huge teachings on vinaya, squished them into this little book called the su-...[b: Vinaya Sutra], and we're gonna go through the whole thing...I mean, just the whole topics next class, okay? Last thing tonight is I wanted you to know the names of the three books we're gonna be studying. There's this famous story of this American, young hippie who went to India to learn Buddhism, and was in a Tibetan class in 1973 or something four, and went to the train station to go to Delhi for some visa thing, and there was this big hussle and bustle and there were all these attendents coming in and out of this room in the railway station, and so we asked, you know, "Who's in there?" And they said, "The senior tutor of His Holiness." So we ran and bought these lousy, little Indian cakes. And, you know, the train is coming, right? And we ran into the room and we wanted to offer them to him. And the head of the Tibetan library was standing behind him. And we prostrated and, you know, like we knew, like twenty words of Tibetan, and he says, "What are you studying nowadays?" And we were studying Shantideva's [b: Bodhicharyavatara], but we didn't know how to say it. And we didn't know the name of the book we were studying. And the library director was standing behind him going, "Bodhi-...Bodhicharya-..." [laughs] [laughter] 'cause he was getting embarrassed, you know. The moral of the story is you should know the name of the book you're studying, okay? I'm

gonna give them to you in order...and then that's the last thing tonight.

[silence]

You don't have to put this on your homework, but I thought...you know, it's good to have that seed in your mind, okay? Say...well, I'll write it first.

[silence]

Say {dulwa} [repeat] {gyatsu} [repeat] {nyingpo} [repeat]. {Dulwa} [repeat] {gyatsu} [repeat] {nyingbo} [repeat]. {Dulwa} means...

[student: Discipline.]

Vinaya, yah, Buddhist discipline. That you gotta know, okay? I mean, if the Dalai Lama's friend shows up or something and says, "What are you studying?" You say, "Dulwa." "Ooh..." [laughs] [laughter] Okay? {Gyatsoy} means, what? Tendzin Gyatso is His Holiness' name. Ocean. Okay? In Mongolian?

[student: {Gyatso}.]

No, what...{gyatsoy} is Tibetan. What about in Mongolian?

[student: [unclear].]

Nope. What's the Mongolian? [Dalai]. That's the [dala] in Dalai Lama. Okay? Dalai lama means {gyatsoy lama}. So {gyatsoy} is...Tibetan for ocean. {Nyingpo} is the very essence, okay? The very essence. So this is a book called the...the essence of the ocean of vinaya. And the story is that the author of this book took those huge four commentaries--the explanatory sutras--and took the very essence out of them. He's giving you the very essence in a few pages, okay? Who would do something like that?

[silence]

He's always doing things like that, okay? First he writes the thousand page commentary and then for normal people he writes the three, four page one, okay? And that was by Je Tsongkapa. And his, his...I like you to know his years.

[silence]

This is a summary of the entire contents of the vinaya in about three pages...four pages, okay? It's extraordinary, and it's wonderful, and...etcetera. And you're gonna study the whole thing. We have located a commentary on it, you know. We're in different countries looking for what's left of the Tibetan Buddhist scriptures and in many countries we're searching to find the ones that were destroyed in Tibet. And we found this one. And it's very beautiful. Short name. Say {nyingje} [repeat] {nyingje} [repeat]. {Nying} means "day" and {je} means "to make." So what is {nyin je}? {Nyin} means daytime and {je} means make. So {nyin je} is...it, it's called daymaker. And it means the sun. It's a...it's a poetic word for sun. And it means that if you open this book and study it, you'll be like shedding sunlight on the true meaning of this book, okay? I mean, it'll be bright as day. If you open this book and study it, then you'll...it'll be like turning on a huge torch, you know, spotlight on this book, and you'll understand what it means. It expands on Tsongkapa's text. That's by...

[silence]

And it...it's just good to know and to appreciate all the trouble these lamas went through. So you should learn his name: Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra. His...his name was Sanskrit, but he's a Tibetan. He was one of the few Tibetan lamas who was given a Sanskrit name. Ngulchu means quicksilver and it's significant in Tibetan because it's...traditionally in alchemy this was the main ingredient. This lama has the ability to turn iron into gold...I mean, philosophically speaking...or maybe really, I don't know. But he wrote this commentary. His dates are...

[silence]

He is one of the most important lamas of the Vajrayogini lineage. His commentary was the basis of Pabongka's commentary which is the basis of most study of this lineage in this world right now, and very incredible lama. And there's one more commentary we'll be using, and that's the end of the class...almost on time.

[silence]

Say {yishin} [repeat] {norbu} [repeat] {yishin} [repeat] {norbu} [repeat]. {Yishin norbu}...{norbu} means a jewel. {Norbu} means a jewel. {Yishin} means...wishfulfilling, wish-fulfilling jewel. This is the Aladin's Lamp of Asia,

okay? There's supposed to be this jewel that if you find it in a swamp, and dig it out, and wash it with these special perfumes, and treat it with a special cloth, and then you put it up on the top of a victory banner, and then you make offerings to it, there comes this transformation of this jewel. And then you can...anything you can wish for you get, you know? Any-...you just think about the jewel, and you make a wish and then you have it. And that's called a {yishin norbu}. This is the name of an important commentary on the vinaya. It's also the name of...it's the Tibetan name for His Holiness, okay? The Tibetans don't call the Dalai Lama "Dalai Lama." They call him {Yishin Norbu}. And it's sort of an affectionate name. I mean all over India and Tibet, people refer to His Holiness as {Yishin Norbu}. They don't...they don't say Dalai Lama. It's a beautiful word. The author... Say {Chone Lama} [repeat] {Drakpa Shedrup} [repeat]. {Chone Lama} [repeat] {Drakpa Shedrup} [repeat]. His dates are...

[silence]

Most of the major monasteries in Tibet--the Gelukpa monasteries--there are six major colleges, two each of the three major monasteries. Each college had its own textbook series. In Sera Mey, which is the greatest monastery of Tibet [laughs], we had two sets of textbooks, and the second set was written by Chone Drakpa Shedrup. He's from Amdo. Chone Lama means the lama from Chone, which is a section in Amdo, which is east Tibet. And the Amdo writers had this extraordinary ability to explain things much as a Westerner...like a Western scientist would. They were very precise...very...they went through the subject very methodically. And they asked all the questions that you or I would ask. So his works are especially wonderful to study. They have been missing for forty years. All the copies were contained in the library of Sera Mey, which was bombarded by Chinese artillery in March of '59, and totally burned. So we've been looking for over thirty-five years for a copy--it's twelve volumes--and we found one in St. Petersburg...in the collection there. So you'll be the first people ever to study this commentary...in modern times. And we...that's a hundred and forty pages long, and it's extraordinary. It's a beautiful commentary. So we're gonna study parts of that commentary as well. The...the...Sera Mey is trying to reprint it right now. But we have copies here, so...so you guys will be studying it. That's about it. I think just try to keep in mind the motivation, you know? It's...sometimes easy to collect Buddhist knowledge without collecting Buddhist realizations. And, you know, try to think of vinaya in the way that Tsongkapa mentions it. When you read the reading, it's a very, very beautiful letter that Je Tsongkapa wrote. He had two famous disciples who are up there: Gyaltsab Je and Kedrup Je. Gyaltsab Je, on his right hand man and Kedrup Je. And you

never hear about his other great disciples. One was the first Dalai Lama, Gendun Drup, and one was Ngawang Drakpa. Ngawang Drakpa trained with Je Tsongkapa. Je Tsongkapa trained him thoroughly, then he took him in a room and said I'm sending you to East Tibet, and I want you to make a hundred monasteries and ordain a bunch of monks, and then you can come back. So...so he's sending to like nowhere. He's sending to Gyalrong. Gyalrong...we have a deep connection with Gyalrong because our root lama Khen Rinpoche came from Gyalrong House. Pabongka Rinpoche came from Gyalrong House. You are all unofficially members of Gyalrong House. This is a small college inside of Sera Mey. So he sent him out to Gyalrong, which is a very border of China, and he said go found a hundred monasteries, and he actually did it. But he was very lonely out there, he missed Tsongkapa a lot, and he kept sending Je Tsongkapa love letters. And they're very beautiful; they're very touching. And Je Tsongkapa kept sending him these wonderful letters full of advice. One of them is the [b: Three Principle Paths] which is probably one of the most famous Tibetan commentaries ever written. It's actually part of a letter that Tsongkapa wrote to this guy that he banished out to east Tibet. One day Ngawang Drakpa was able to ordain the first monks in that province. And he was very happy and very proud, and he sent Je Tsongkapa a letter. And then Je Tsongkapa, out of joy, wrote an explanation of why ethical way of life is necessary to reach nirvana. Why you must have a pure conscience to get perfect meditation and then to see emptiness directly. So he wrote this beautiful poem about it. And that poem is in your reading. That's the first time it's ever been translated, I think. So, enjoy it. And try to get the spirit of vinaya, you know? Get pumped up for your study from that poem. It's very beautiful. And it comes from his heart. When you read it, it's like, the...the end is very, very touching, you know? He's saying, if you study vinaya perfectly and then see emptiness and reach nirvana, and then later reach Buddhahood, then you and I can enter paradise on the same day, and we'll share the cup of immortality together. It's very...really beautiful. So, you know, try to read that and try to get pumped up for it. Okay, we'll do a short meditation, like just for three or four minutes. I know it's hard at the end of class because you'll invariably think of the bus you have to catch or something, but try to think...try to be happy about the class. It's a great opportunity. I don't think vinaya is taught at all in this country, that I'm aware of...very little. And you're very select, you know? You're very special. It's a very special chance to study something holy. So be happy about it, think about it, and then we'll do some prayers. Who's the chanting master in this class? Anyway...you wanna try Vil-...Vilma?

[student, Vilma: Yah.]

Okay. So, when I make this sign, you start the ending prayers. The ending prayers are in your book, also. We'll do the mandala offering, and then we'll do the {ngowa], which is a dedication, okay? So...but first we'll do a little meditation.

[End]

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ACI 9, Class 2

The Ethical Life

A Synopsis of the Sutra on Discipline

Proofread by: Summer Moore

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8-1-96

We're gonna go over the whole [b: Vinaya Sutra] in one hour [laughs] no, I thought you'd like to see... I was always curious to know how much I didn't know about Vinaya so, I was reading a commentary to get ready for this course and, uhm, that's the commentary by {Chone Drakpa Shedrup} Chone lama, sometimes he's just called Chone Lama which is like saying Kansas lama, okay? Chone is a pa... is a little place in Amdo like Kansas and, sometimes he's just called Chone Lama but, he undertook in a hundred and fifty folios to explain the whole [b: Vinaya Sutra] like sixteen thousand pages down to, you know, the whole [b: Vinaya Sutra]'s not that long but the whole subject of Vinaya, he he abbreviated into a very, short work... relatively short work. So I thought you might like to just get a whole... I mean to me it was very interesting to get a whole grasp of the whole Vinaya and, we can't fill it all in tonight, that's not the point. So I'm not trying to teach you the subject of Vinaya so much tonight, as the scope of Vinaya. So you just see from the beginning to the end where it goes, and we'll go as deep into the outline as we can, Tibetans love to outline texts and, he does it that way and I'll just start and and we'll see how far we get... but I thought, you know in in one hour, one and a half hours you could get a whole grasp of where does... how far does Vinaya stretch and then we'll get into more deit... detail on each subject when we cover Je Tsongkapa's commentary which we'll start the next class. Alright, so we're gonna go over the whole [b: Vinaya Sutra]. Acc... according to the commentary of Chone Lama, he'll have a few points that are not covered in the [b: Vinaya Sutra], the first part he covers in a very prelimin... he calls it the preliminary overview, okay? So you could do like... I'll d... I'll give you an outline like this. You you have it in your reading but... he gives a very preliminary overview and what he ends up doing is covering the life of Shakyamuni Buddha. He describes and most of the Vinaya texts describe the process through which the Buddha that came in this world became a Buddha, and it's a long story. It's like three countless eons, how long is a countless eon? I mean we did that...

[student: Ten to the sixtieth power times three times ... [unclear]]

Ten to the sixtieth power times three times jillions of years, okay? And it basically outlines the major stages in his spiritual life, you know, how long it took him, how many... you know, over trillions of years of being reborn and experimenting with paths to find the right path and then to follow it properly and, in different texts it goes through different stages, but basically you can think of it... of him reaching the first bodhisattva bhumi and then getting up to the higher levels of the bodhisattva bhumi, bodhisattva bhumi basically relate to the six perfections. You get on the first bodhisattva bhumi when you see emptiness directly for the first time. So, this is his whole spiritual life, is outlined. Then, Chone Drakpa Shedrup goes through the specific years in which the Buddha did certain things which is really nice, you know, we know according to the sixty year cycle of animals and elements like twelve times five elements. We know basically, exactly the years in which he decided to leave the palace, we know what year he began meditating in the forest, we know what year he gave his first teaching and they, they... Chone Drakpa Shedrup goes through each of the events in his life that way... he covers the years in which he gave his teaching. Then he gets into the statement by the Buddha that we covered last time that, if you wanted to get the whole essence of Buddhism, it would be enough just to have the Vinaya scriptures. If you had the teachings of Vinaya, that stands for the teachings of the Buddha and he explains those quotations and he goes through that, then Chone Drakpa Shedrup which is not very common for Tibetans, goes through all of the literature, he explains the whole thing that we, we did it in a rough way but he goes through the entire literature, he says here's the two root texts here's the four explanatory tan... sutras and then goes through all the, relevant sutras and he goes through all of the commentaries by ancient Indians and then he starts to explain a little bit about the Tibetan commentaries but that's very unusual and it's nice to have. So that's his whole overview, he gives the whole overview, it's important to know why he spends so much time on Shakyamuni Buddha, you know, what's the point? Is it just that Shakyamuni Buddha taught this Vinaya for the first time or why, why does he spend so much time on Shakyamuni Buddha? And it's very beautiful, he explains that especially at the beginning of the text why we mention Shakyamuni Buddha is that the workings of karma which are called {len-dre} [pause] he says basically when you're talking about Vinaya you're talking about good deeds and bad deeds and this is the subject of karma and its consequences, {lay} means "karma" or the things that you do or say or think and {dre} means the consequences that you get from those things. We're gonna spend... I forgot to

go over the syllabus with you, but towards the end of the course we're gonna take a reading from Je Tsongkapa's [b: Lam Rim Chemo] which is the great lam rim, the greatest book ever written in Tibetan, probably and we're going to cut out the section on this subject... exactly what consequences do you get from keeping or not keeping which vows, and Je Tsong Khapa goes through it very beautifully. So basically there's a b... there's a connection between what you do, what you say and what you think and your whole world, your whole world is determined tha... by that, if you don't like your office then blame yourself, if you don't New York then blame yourself, you know, if you're not as pretty or as handsome as you would like to be, you got one person to blame, and and, if you study the correlation's between what you do and what you say and what you think and w... and how your world turned out, then then it's a great subject, you know that's very useful for a person to know where everything in their world came from because the implication is is that you can fix it in the future, you know, you can't change it by wishing it now, you know, I can't be handsome by wishing it, but if I know for example that leading a moral life might cause that in the future then I could, I could actually, start to affect my future and if I perfect that process I could determine my whole future, the whole future world that I lived in would be determined by me quite consciously. But the connection between what you do and what you say and what you think and what's happening to you on a day to day level, you know, why did, our customer complain to me today and, I got in trouble and, my boss re... yelled at me and all this you kn... exactly why, why did each event happen, you know, why during each twenty minutes of my day today was something screwing up or, you know what, what caused it, you know [laughs] you know I mean it's very curious you can't control it I mean you get to a certain age you realize that it's out of your control basically, you do the right thing your boss yells at you, you do the wrong thing they give you a medal and raise, you know. And you know, so why? Why do these things happen? If you study the connection between karma and consequences, you can understand that and then you can actually control your future, you know. It doesn't come through will power it doesn't come through being intelligent, apparently, it doesn't come through lucky because it... luck changes. What makes the world run the way it does? It's {len dre} okay? That, leads us to a subject called the three levels of reality which you have to know. [pause]

[Student: Is that the stories of libo? [unclear]]

Yeah. We're trying to bridge between the overview and the text, the text starts with, I mean after the title, they bow down to who? They bow down to

Shakyamuni Buddha. Why? I'm trying to connect you between the overview and the beginning of the text, okay? Which is important, mm... three levels of reality, first one called {Nyun gyur} [pause] say {Nyun gyur} [repeat] {Nyun gyur} [repeat]. {Nyun gyur} means that level of reality which you can perceive directly, for example, with you senses, things that you do not need to figure out, things that you could see right in front of your face, okay, colors are a good example, shapes are a good example, even you can have direct perception of certain thoughts like when you're thinking of something directly and you're not using a process of reasoning, those things are obvious to you... you could call this obvious reality. Is your obvious reality obvious reality for everyone else? Example. Let's take colors and shapes. Yeah, I mean if you're blind or color blind, uhm, colors, certain colors are not {Nyun gyur} for you, so you can already see that these categories are sort of fluid depending on...

[Student: [unclear] Your karma, your...]

Who you are [laughs] okay? You know, like, for most of us colors and shapes are {Nyun gyur} like if you had a certain kind of color blindness or something, you could only understand colors and shapes from other people's explanations of them and then they would be on a different kind of reality for you, it would be some kind of more abstruse reality, some kind of more deep reality, so the second kind of reality we call {kok gyur} [pause] I'll call it deep reality, you can call it just about anything, abstruse is a very good word but its... you don't see it in the New York Times very much, so I don't like to use it. Say {kok gyur} [repeat] {kok gyur} [repeat] , {kok gyur} means something which is deep enough that for most people it can only be perceived logical... by a process of logical reasoning. It cannot be perceived directly by most people, you, you would have to think it over to perceive this thing, it's not something that you could ever see with your eyes or your ears or your nose or your hands, it's something that's pretty difficult to see and you can only perceive it normally under normal circumstances with some kind of reasoning. An example of a {kok gyur} object for most of us is emptiness, okay, emptiness is in category number two, for most of us, at this stage in our l... lives, at this stage a... in most people's lives, emptiness would be an object which they only can see right now by thinking about it and by reasoning about it, okay? By contemplating about it, cannot see it directly, most people, okay, most meaning ninety nine point nine, nine, nine, nine, nine, nine per cent, okay? [laughs] Third category... by the way if you ever saw emptiness directly it would change to...

[student: [unclear]]

{Nyun gyur} if you had a yogic... what they call yogic direct perception, if you had a... in deep meditation. It only happens once in, in in countless lifetimes, I mean the first time only happens after al... literally countless lifetimes, you would see it directly, then it... that emptiness during that five minutes would be {Nyun gyur} to you, when you come out of that meditation it switches back to {kok gyur}, okay? [pause] By the way, eh... if you feel hot, I don't what's the best thing to do, usually this causes a fight [laughter] we could turn it on and you won't be able to hear me so well, we could open the windows, I don't know how that'll work, what would you guys like to try? Do you wanna try opening the windows?

[Student: Yeah.]

Let's try that, let's just see how it works, okay? Be careful of the glass things, they, they ff... they fall off [laughs] they rotate they just push them or something like that. [pause] W... we'll try that for a while, I think it might be... okay, we'll see. All right, {Shintu kok gyur} the example would be, mm... the subtle workings of {len dre} okay? The subtle workings of karma and its consequences, the real connections, between what you do say or think and what happens to you, okay? A Buddha could explain to you very easily why each bump is on this brick and explain why, why this is here, you know, I... I mean he could go into e... he said three thousand years ago, you know you were looking at the wall and you thought something and that's why this, this bump is there in the masonry here. I mean they could explain to you clearly, you know, why this... I have this, this thread on my eyebrow that grows out, you know and [laughs] I mean, I always wondered where it came from, I mean a Buddha could sit there and say, yeah you know you you made a joke about this guy a million years ago and and that... that's why that hair is growing out, you know and, and stuff like that. I mean but that kind of thing is called {Shintu kok gyur, Shintu kok gyur} means extremely deep reality, so the subtle workings of karma and its consequences, you know, you had thousands, you had tens of thousands of distinct thoughts today, most of mine were like crazy at work, you know like very busy, very wild, people screaming, you know everything, people want their checks, stuff like that [laughs] and just wild, and I had tens of thousands of thoughts today, each one of those is going to have its own discrete result, each one of those will contribute to my future reality, and the reality around you know with all of those millions of different objects, all those cracks in the wall, all those wrinkles on the {tangkhas} everything around you has been created by a different discreet karma. You did something and that's why you have that piece

in your world, that thing, so, fo... for you to really understand where it all came from you have to understand the subtle workings of karma and its consequences, there's only one being that perceive {Shintu kok gyur}, who do you guess?

[Student: Buddha.] {laughter}

I mean Buddha [laughs] okay? All right, so if you're going to write a sutra, a book, not a real sutra, right? About Vinaya how to behave, you know, how to collect good karma, how to avoid bad karma, if you're gonna write a book about that you have to depend on... the Buddha and you have to... mainly {Shintu kok gyur} can only be understood by means of studying what has been spoken by an omniscient being. Okay? We cannot see directly the connection between telling a white lie at work and having the taxi driver steal...five dollars or something. I mean we can't, we can't get out of the cab and say, oh geez that was three thousand four hundred years ago [laughter] shouldn't have done that, you know. [laughs] We can't, we just don't have that ability, we have to depend on the words of a being who knows these things and its only an omniscient being, it's so vast, the interconnections between every single atom in your life and everything that might have been done in history by you, are so subtle and so vast only an omniscient being can see them, so when you're... when you start out studying the Vinaya the first thing you do is explain the life history of?

[student: [unclear] Buddha.]

A guy who go there and, and you want to explain how he got there because that's very relevant, because it's only by studying what he's talks about that you can succeed in keeping your vows, your pratimoksha vows, your... you're depending on a person who sees all things, because we can't, you know, if it was left up to us we would never come up with the idea that, I, I, I didn't get a raise at work, I must have stolen something, you know. The place that I live in New York has bad smells, I must have committed adultery, you know, I mean, those connections wou... just wouldn't occur to us. We, we don't have the minds to perceive these things, some very, very good people maybe slightly have an instinct for it but, but we have to depend on a person who is omniscient. And then the sixteen thousand pages of Vinaya, or whatever it is in the cannon are all this guy explaining the connections between what you do, what you say, what you think and then why your world is the way it is... if you don't like your world, study Vinaya. You know, it's very cool, you can turn it around, Vinaya is not the study, it's not the boring thing thing of studying all these stupid rules

which just restrict your life. It's the science of constructing your future reality. You know, it's working backwards, it's very interesting, you know. I'm not going to get up here and describe three and sixty four nun vows, two hundred and fifty three monk's vows, thirty something lay... you know it's not point, the point is figure out what caused each part of your reality and then work backwards, and avoid the things that caused the parts that you don't like. Okay, I have to figure out why this customer rejected this order today, that's my job, okay? [laughs] That's {Shintu kok gyur} that's that's the reason why at beginning of all the Vinaya texts, they are bowing down to the Buddha. Cause... we have to rely on the Buddha, for the study of, of morality, for the study of ethics, we're not just talking about the effect of lying on your present life, we're talking about the long term effect on your reality. You have to learn which parts of your reality were created by what kinds of deeds in the past, people are always... I... there's these... I won't say exactly who... people wandering around America telling people, oh, I see you las... past life, you were a, a knight in England, you know, and you had this armor and you know, they describe to you your past life, you know. I've actually had students come in this class and say tell me about my past life and if you can't, I'm not interested in this class, you know and, and and Geshe, we had a, a fortune teller used to wander around our residences in India, we lived in these little rooms and, this fortune teller used to come 'round and tell everybody's fortune from the palm of their hands, you know, and one day I saw the Geshe who was teaching us, Geshe Nagawan Dargye, he was peeping at us out the window, you know, so I knew we were going to get some heat the next day. [laughs] [laughter] And, he gets up the next day in class and he says, you don't need a fortune teller, you don't have to waste your ten rupees, okay? On a on a fortune teller who comes and lies to you about your past, you know, if you wanna know where this all came from study Vinaya, I mean study the vows...study karma and it's consequences, you can figure out where your whole life came from, you know, you can see your past life as {kok gyur} by using reasoning and these are as good as eyes, you know. Reasoning is as good as eye balls. You know, you can quite clearly figure out who you were and what you were doing mostly. And you can very clearly figure out what's gonna happen to you in the future. You don't need a fortune teller for either one. You know? You can tell you own future from ex... from exactly what you're doing now and by the end of this course you'll be able to tell exactly what your future's gonna be. Weather or not you can change it is a... is a matter of personal will power. You know, but, you're gonna learn all the connections, but it takes an omniscient being to lay them out, we have to study it from an omniscient being, okay? That's the first part. Next he gets on to the... actual explanation of the root text. So that's actually number two. [pause] The first part is called... [pause] So

most of the preliminary, most of the overview was devoted to the Buddha, talking about the Buddha and the he, he gave a, a review of all the texts about Vinaya. Now he's gonna actually start to explain the text and the first thing he does is explain the name of the title. {Tsen gyi dun} means the "name of the title," the title, he explains what Vinaya means, he explains what sutra means. You've already been through that, okay? You know what Vinaya means, Vinaya controls two things... Vinaya's called Vinaya because you control two things by studying Vinaya. Okay? So we don't have to go through the meaning of the name. Then he goes through... [pause] Say {gyur gyi chak} [repeat] {gyur gyi chak} [repeat]. {Gyur} means translat... sion, and {chak} means a prostration. So, at the beginning of almost... well at the beginning of any text which was translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan, we start out... normally you have the name of the text in Sanskrit, then you have the name of the text in Tibetan and then you have some kind of a prostration, they'll say, I bow down to Manjushri or I bow down to the Buddha. I bow down to this or that... as we studied in one of our translation classes this was a requirement that was set up by some of the early Tibetan kings. When the ... first translations were done from Sanskrit into Tibetan, the Tibetan kings said, let's do a prostration at the beginning, it's a nice thi... it's a good thing to do. It has allot of benefits and then also it helps, they... they set up rules to identify the subject matter from who you did the pra... prostration to. So like if you're doing a prostration to Manjushri at the beginning of a text you know the main subject matter is wisdom or emptiness or something like that. In this case in the Vinaya scriptures, the translator is is bowing down to... the Buddha, Shakyamuni Buddha, okay? Because he's the person who understands the subtle workings of karma, okay? The subtle connections. [pause] The third part of the beginning is [pause] say {gu sok} [repeat] {chu shi} [repeat] {gu sok} [repeat] {chu shi} [repeat] Mmm.... {gu} means, in this case, goal, goal, g, o, a, l, okay? {Sok} means "etceteras" {chu shi} means the "four points," the four points, the fours dharmas meaning the four points. This is a very common preliminary, or it's a very common opening of almost every Buddhist text and this involves proving that this text is worth studying, okay? It's a demonstration that this... that if you study this book it will, be relevant to your own reaching nirvana, it will be relevant to you own stopping your own suffering, okay? In Buddhism if a book doesn't have {gu sok chu shi} then forget it, your life is too short to waste time on, on another kind of book. In Buddhism reading a book is, is not, picking it up, staying with it a coupla weeks, you know after work, drinking tea and enjoying it. It's not like that. I mean the whole relation to the thing called a book is different. I mean normally you memorize it first because so important so valuable, so vital for your future, the, the way you relate to a book is completely different, a book is

not a book it's an experience, you know? It's a whole lifetime's relationship, it's like getting married, when you pick up a book in Buddhism, you're creating a relationship with this thing that's gonna enlighten you and it's not just reading it, it's like experiencing it. You know you memorize it? You debate it over and over, you read it over and over, you read hundreds of commentaries, or hundreds... [laughs] you read dozens of commentaries on it. It becomes like a lifetime companion, the knowledge in that book becomes like life time companion. It's not a book in the way we think of a book that you just read it and then you put it the shelf and next year it's it's not on the best seller list any more. You know. A book is an experience, a book is lifetime intimate relationship that you have with something and it becomes a lifetime friend, if you study, for example the [b: Vinaya Sutra] well, or say the [b: Abidharmaasha] we spent ten years on the [b: Abidharmakosha] and it just becomes part of your life, it becomes like a good friend of yours or something, it's not like a book, it's a whole entity with which you're going to spend your life and you never finish with it, you just get deeper, , so {gu shok chu shi} means a Buddhist book should have four qualities, I'm not gonna go through them tonight, I mean, my object is not to teach you all these subjects it's just to tell you what the [b: Vinaya Sutra] is talking about, but basically the {gu sok chu shi} proves that this book is worth becoming your life long companion, okay? It ... it will save you, it will give you nirvana, if you relate to it in the proper way you can reach nirvana with this book and Buddhahood. It's, it's very beautiful and basically, a Buddhist who know the score shouldn't waste their time on anything less, your mind is precious, it's... extremely difficult to get to the point of being a human being who's intelligent, who's getting enough food, who has leisure time to study and don't waste your... that real estate on anything less... don't be satisfied with anything less, I mean I'm not saying don't read the newspaper... the Sunday Times cause it's bad, I'm not saying that, I'm saying these books can become your lifetime companion and lead you to total happiness and compared to that, you know reading the New York Times Sunday, you know I have allot of friends who waste the first half of Sunday on the... on the Times, and and sometimes the second half too [laughs] and part of the week as well [laughter] and, it's just not worth it. It just can't help you much. I mean if your brain is fried from work or something, okay, read, read part of the magazine or something, but, but then set it down and come to these life long friends who can lead you to something holy and, and, and ultimate experience. Reserve your mental real estate for these things because it's very brief, you know, the stage of your life when you can think straight and intelligently is, is, very brief, it will end soon. And, you don't have much space, you don't have much time, so fill it up with something that has {gu sok chu shi} if it doesn't have that don't waste your

time with it. Waste a little time but not much. Okay? [pause] Then he gets into the actual subject matter and that has three parts. [pause] Say {dompa} [repeat] {matoppa} [repeat] {topje} [repeat] okay. {Dompa} means "vows," {dompa} means "vows," the word {dom} is very interested in, in Tibetan, it means to, tie somebody up, to restrain somebody, to restrain somebody, , and vows are keeping you outta trouble, okay, we'll talk more about it, I mean you... your idea or your conception of vows has to change a little bit, it's almost like the idea of a book, you know, when you really grasp, the idea of a holy book in Tibetan it's like a person that you're marrying, it's a... it's gonna be a life time relationship with this thing and it's gonna affect you deeply. Vows are the same thing. I mean, when I say vows in English it's like you think of... I don't know what you think of but I think most of you think of restriction or you think of limitation or something like that, but think of it more of as, wings or something, you know, these are things which are gonna let you fly. You know? These are something beautiful that if you can grow them strong enough you can fly, you really can fly, I mean they give you a certain kind of power that you could never have without them, you can do the same things with... before you take your vows and then do the same things after you take your vows and they change. If you are under vows and do the same good deeds that you used to do goo... before the whole experience totally change. They, they are not the same thing, it's a completely different experience, if you take vows and then keep them, it's a totally different thing than if you didn't have the vows. So the first subject of the Vinaya, the first study, after you get through all of those preliminaries, is {dompa matoppa, matoppa} is means if you don't have them, {topje} means how to get them. Okay? So obviously, the first subject of Vinaya is, if you don't have vows, well then how do you get them, how can you, how can you get a hold of these vows. In the [b: Vinaya Sutra] there are four subjects covered here. Obviously here the first one is the rights of ordination, you know, how do you take vows, by the way it doesn't have to be monk or nun, you can take one day vows, we'll talk about it. You can take lifetime layman's vows, the first three sets of vows are for people who don't wanna commit themselves to robes and, and those are beautiful, they're wonderful, everybody should take them. No obligation, not too hard, you know, and totally change your life. And that whole process by which you get those vows, you know, what is the proper way in which to take them properly the... there's a whole kinds of circumstances, there has to be a certain attitude there, there has to be a certain ceremony there. It... to receive a vow purely in the lineage of Shakyamuni Buddha, you know, to get really the real thing, in the correct way, it, it's a little, tricky, and you have to know how to do it properly, you know, there's all these people going around doing things which are strange and stuff like that, I mean but to get the pure,

lineage vows in the proper way so that they actually form in your being, properly and then you really have them and they have the real effect on you, that's a whole science in itself, and that's the first subject of Vinaya, how to, how to get those vows, what are the ... ritual, what is the proper ritual, what is the proper attitude that you have to have, who should be there to give you the vows, who... who's qualified to give you vows, what should you be like, this is the first subject of Vinaya. How to get the vows. That's called, the ordination ceremonies are called the... the later, the earlier and the later ceremonies, okay? There's earlier ceremonies and later ceremonies. What does that mean? For the first few years of his teaching career, the Buddha ordained people by, like say come here Tess, and the hair would sh... fall off and the ho... robes would form. [laughs] You know like {laughter} You know he had this power, miracle power, he could ordain in many different ways, I mean for the first five years or so of the Buddha's career it was very wild, the way he ordained people, you know, it was like come on, I mean the way Jesus is going up to the lake and saying, you know don't be a fisherman, come with me, and that would be ordained ordination in those days that was... those were the first ordinations. And that had the full power of ordination, for example if you perceive certain objects, you are automatically ordained, these are, these are deep things. Later on, after, you know, five six years... it became formal and there begin to be a ceremony and the monks would say certain things and you would think certain things and then you would get the ordination and that is what is what has come up to the present time. Those ordination ceremonies have come up to the present time. We have lost, some of them, some of them have been broken, the lineage has been broken, we cannot, for example, we cannot ordain a full nun any more, in the Tibetan tradition. It was broken during... during the reign of a certain king and there were not enough nuns and monks, he, he wiped out most of the monks and nuns in Tibet at that time and it got so few, it takes allot more nuns to ordain a nun than to... monks to ordain a monk. And it's very difficult to ordain a full monk and the lineage broke, we don't have the lineage in Tibet, any more, so for example that lineage has broken. The ordination ceremony has to be carried out in a certain way by certain people and it requires a certain quorum of qualified people and that whole subject is the first subject of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] okay? After that they get in... I'm just naming some of the subjects under here, there's a study about [pause] say {khenpo} [repeat] {loppon} [repeat] {khenpo} [repeat] {loppon} [repeat] okay. {Khenpo} is word that you... I'm just putting up here cause I want you to know about it. {Khenpo} has come to mean in modern Tibet especially in Gelukpa monasteries, the abbot of the monastery, so they say the {khenpo} who's the {khenpo} the word for ex is {sur} so what's a {khen sur}? It's a ex-abbot, so Rinpoche out in New Jersey technically he's {khen

sur} of Sera monastery, he's {khenpo} of Rashi Gyenpo Ling, little Mongolian temple, all four of us monks there and, that's why we call him Khen Rinpoche, so Khen Rinpoche means precious abbot, precious {khenpo}, in some traditions {khenpo} means like geshe. {Khenpo} has come to mean in other traditions, a person who has passed a certain course of study and then they're called {khenpo}, but in the Vinaya it has a totally different meaning, okay? And a {khenpo} is the person who grants the vows, that's the, that's the what do you call it? There's some French word for the main guy.

[Student: [unclear] [laughter]]

He's the master of ceremonies, I mean he runs the show, he's the... he runs the show at an ordination, that's the {khenpo} there's many different forms of {khenpos} the qualifications of a {khenpo} are very strict and very complicated, you know? He has to have rather extraordinary qualities and rather extraordinary personal history as a monk, you know? It's very difficult to be a k... a proper {khenpo} in a, in an ordination ceremony, so {khenpo} if somebody says to you what's {khenpo} mean you have to say you talking Vinaya, you talking monastery, or you talking Kagyu? You know what I mean? [laughter] You have to ask. And then they say, oh he knows Buddhism, okay? {Loppon} in the Sanskrit is called acharya, it has come to mean in India anyone who's good at something like a, am, a, a, an archery {loppon} is a, is an archery master, so it means like a master, a tea ceremony {loppon} but in the Vinaya, {loppon} has a different meaning. In the Vinaya {loppon} means, the monks who take other important roles during the ordination ceremony, you know, they each, there has to be certain kinds of monks there, they have to have certain qualities, they have to perform certain important functions or roles during the ordination ceremony, so the next subject in the Vinaya under this category is, who can be a {khenpo} what are the {khenpos}, how many {khenpos} are there, you know, what's your relationship to your {khenpo} later on? What's your relationship to you {loppons} there's many kinds of {loppons} during the ceremony. What is their job what are they doing what is each one supposed to be what kind of qualifications do they have to have? This is the whole thing of creating pure vows in the mental stream of a new person. You know, and it's a very difficult... and we have the pure lineage has come down to the present, you know. If we study these things nicely, we can keep it going. Two and a half thousand years, these ceremonies have been strictly performed, strictly watched, all the attitude is there, the monks are pure enough, everything is right and the person gets their vows. Very important, you know, how do you do create this thing called.... we're gonna talk about it next, class. How do you form that thing called a vow within another person's heart, you know do you inject it? [laughs] You know what I mean? How do you get this invisible thing to form within a person. And

it's very cool how it's done, it's very nice it's very pure, very interesting how by this process you actually create this new thing within a person called vows. It's, it's very beautiful... okay next. Next they cover the different types of vows very briefly. There are eight different, sets of vows that you can take in the Vinaya, okay? And we'll be going through that in detail but that's the next subject in the [b: Vinaya Sutra] so I'm just showing you the topics, I'm not going to I'm not trying to explain the whole [b: Vinaya Sutra] cause we don't have, fifteen years, okay? Next, Chone Drakpa Shedrup in the [b: Vinaya Sutra] goes into the measurement of time, how do we measure the years, how do we measure months, how do we measure days? What's the point of spending page after page on the proper measurement of months and days? In the Vinaya it's very important to time your ordination. At the end of the ordination one of the last things in the ritual is that the {khenpo} has to figure out exactly what month date and moment it is, and then they say, you were ordained on the fourth month during the rising of the... moon... during the waxing of the moon in the fourth day, at exactly six hours and thirteen minutes after noon, you know, and that's it, your, your ordination is timed, it's a very important thing in the Vinaya, why? Well, for one thing it, it, it creates seniority levels [laughter] [laughs] like even if a person's much younger than me, if he was ordained before me, then they're all these... there's all this protocol within the monastery, you know. Technically if he has taken his full monk's ordination before me, then, there... there's all this protocol that takes place and it's much more strict in in, in different countries but you ... for ever after you have to respect this person in a different way, and, so it's very important to time the ordination that way. That's also true of you bodhisattva vows although most people ignore it, okay? You shouldn't ignore it, it's very important, okay? But that's a long story, okay? It's one of your vows, by the way. Okay, second major subject, and then we'll probably take a break shortly after that. I, I say that to keep you awake. Okay? [pause] Say {toppa} [repeat] {mi nyampa} [repeat] {toppa} [repeat] {mi nyampa} [repeat] , if tell you that the first section of the [b: Vinaya Sutra]... Vinaya scriptures is always how to get the vows if you didn't have the vows, what do you guess the second subject is?

[student: How to keep them [unclear]]

Yeah. Okay? [laughs] How to keep your vows. {Toppa} means after you... after you have gotten vows, {mi nyampa} means how to keep them from being damaged. It's a, it's a, there's this concept in, in the Vinaya of you vows getting damaged. Okay? [pause] There's four main parts here and I'll just put them in English. [pause] And this subject centers around, by the way this is outer support

to keep the vows, they're gonna be four sections here, the first one is you've got some form of out, outward support, someone outside of you to help you keep your vows and that's called a {ne lama}. [pause]

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah, yeah. Say {ne} [repeat] {lama} [repeat] {ne lama} [repeat]. Okay, {ne, ne} means like resident, {lama} means "lama," teacher, spiritual guide, okay? I've translated it in your outline as, preceptor, monastic preceptor, oh, did I say preceptor? Yeah. Meaning a person who guides you, who guides a young monk. A {ne lama} you're supposed to keep for... well for, you have to keep for a minimum of ten years, in other words for ten years, for the first ten years of your ordination, you are under the strict guidance of an older monk, and that's a {ne lama} that's your {ne lama}. It doesn't have to be your spiritual teacher, it doesn't have to be your scripture teacher, it may not be your root lama, but it's the older monk who has agreed to take you on and for ten years... I mean if you keep the Vinaya strictly, the only things you can do without, it... consulting him or her is, brush your teeth and go to the bathroom [laughs] also that too. It's very strict, for ten years you are very ah... you're under the very strict, guidance of a, of a private monastic preceptor, male or female depending on, you know, if you're a monk or a nun. Yeah?

[student: Which are old, ordination or? [unclear]]

Ordination, but, wisdom... the, the requirement, by the way the requirement for {ne, ne lama} are the next subject of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] and they are extensive, I mean, I think there's a hundred and five qualities, and they're very difficult to fulfill, I mean this person has to be really extraordinary, this person has to be, you know, very wise, very well trained, very pure, there the whole... I mean the list is a hundred and five items long, it's very difficult to be a real {ne lama} you know, it's a, it requires a very high degree of, of purity as a monk to be a {ne lama} and then your relationship to that {ne lama} is very strict, after ten years you gain some kind of ability to act on your own, more frequently, that's, that's the... in, in the monastic system that's called a {ne lama} okay? In this section they also go through the ordination, some of the ordination details, referring to the student's det... what the students should be like and then they talk some... even in the [b: Vinaya Sutra] about the ordination of nuns, so they do cover that in this section in the [b: Vinaya Sutra]. [pause] This is called the inner support, it's called {sampa namdak} we talked about it when we had the course on the bodhisattva vows, basically this is keeping in mind throughout your life why

you took your vows, you know try to remember the attitude you had when you walked in that room, I still remember, you know, the ceremonies when I took my lay vows, and then when I took my monk's vows, I mean, you remember forever sitting in front of this person and swearing to keep these vows and that's called the inner support, I mean the... remembering, the, the reason you took your vows, remembering the state of mind you were in when you knelt before that person and swore never to break these things is very powerful and that... you know, there's certain things that an outside person can help you to do to keep your vows, but on the inside you have to have these... you have to keep, some kind of awareness of the intentions with which you took your vows, ideally, perfectly, during the ordination ceremony you must at least once cross your mind that this life is suffering, and, and that there's nothing good about this life as it stands now, and... and I, during that ceremony at some point there must be some realization that I'm taking these vows to get out of this, you know, I'm taking these vows to get to nirvana, you know, that's why I'm here, that's why I'm taking these vows, ideally during the... there must be during the ceremony that even if just for a short time that crosses your mind. You must have that in mind, for the vows to form and, and throughout your life, until you die, because pratimoksha vows finish when you die, you lose them when you die, not like bodhisattva vows, bodhisattva vows stay in your mental stream even after death. Pratimoksha vows, the Vinaya vows they, they disappear when you die. Okay? So, but from the moment you take them to the moment you die, you have to keep reminding yourself why you took them, and, and that just thinking about why you took them if you took them for the right reasons will help you keep them, okay? [pause] This is called {mi tun chok} say {mi tun} [repeat] {chok} [repeat] {mitun chok} [repeat]. Obviously one of the best ways to keep your vows from being damaged is to know them, okay, [laughs] and you know I was out in California, I was teaching the bodhisattva vows and sixty four vows and some of those people had been there twenty twenty five years, they did not know their vows, you know they didn't know what they had vowed and they do it every couple years, you know they take these vows every couple years but, but the best way to keep them is to know what they are, okay [laughs] okay, I mean it seems like pretty simple, but many, I would say ninety percent of Americans who take bodhisattva vows have, have no clue what most of them are, and, and, one of the most important things obviously th... one of the most important ways to keep your vows is to very very clearly understand what you agreed to do and what would be breaking them and what's not breaking them, you know you have to study that, that's a very important study, okay? That's... as you can guess is the major part of [b: Vinaya Sutra], you know, is the study of, well what the heck are the vows, you know, when do I break them, when do I

not break them , when can I stretch them, when can I not stretch them, you know, which ones are forever for all situations which can be, which must be modified in certain situations and that's the whole study of the vows, inside here in the [b: Vinaya Sutra] you get five different classes of vows, okay? You study... at this point they're beginning to talk mainly about monk's vows and in... inside the monk's vows it's two hundred and fifty three vows and there five groups of vows they range from extremely serious to very serious to medium serious to you know and then they're hundred and twelve lighter ones you know, four very very grave ones, and then you have to study all five groups and that is the main subject of the [b: Vinaya sutra] that whole part you'll won't hear from me, I can't teach that to you, I can't teach that to you, all I can do is say there's... there's five groups of vows there's two hundred and fifty three vows ranging from extremely serious to, to pretty light very light you know, and that is obviously a big chunk of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] we won't even go into that. Let's see if he says anything in, inside there also he explains how you can loose your vows, okay, and we will cover that also, okay, in here about understanding what works against your vows is the study of how, how do you lose pratimoksha vows, how do you loose the vows that we're talking about here okay, what can make you loose those vows and it's pretty interesting and Je Tsongkapa's gonna over it, okay? They then, by the way way they also then get into ethical conundrums, wh... is that how you pronoun..?

[Student: Yes.]

Yeah? You know like if you're supposed to do that but you're not allowed to do that but you have to do that to do that, what're you supposed to do? You know? And that's a big part of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] you know? What are you supposed to do when two vows have conflicting demands on you, you know and if you take bodhisattva vows and then you go ahead and take the secret vows this becomes a very important subject 'cause sometimes they're they're, sometimes th.. they.. it's the study of prioritization, you know? Which vow takes priority over which other vow and it's a very difficult subject, it takes a lot of study, you have to study that very carefully. Also in that general category of things is a thing called {dor du, dordu} means, it's a subject in the Vinaya where given a whole different culture, you know, if Buddhism has reaches a new culture, if Buddhism has reached a new culture, then under what circumstances can we do something different and still be keeping our pratimoksha vows, this a whole study within the [b: Vinaya Sutra] and it's a very, obviously for us cause we're involved in the transition of Buddhism from Asia to the West it's very important to know the ground rules for when you can a... adjust things for

different situations and that whole study is called {dor du} and that's that's another section here. Then finally they get into extenuating circumstances like if a monk goes crazy and he does something bad did he break his vows did he lose his vows, what happened? You know what I mean? What... what about extenuating circumstances like, and they get.. they actually get into the question of temporary insanity and things like that you know, if the person accidentally takes a drug or something and does something wild then did they, have they committed that, that have they broken that vow or not and what's gonna be the circu... the, the result of that, okay? The last section here and then we'll take a break. [pause] There's a thing called {shi}. In Sanskrit vastu, there are seventeen {shi, shi} means like a monastic practice, seventeen monastic practices, they can d... also be divided into a hundred or something rites of monasticism. But basically the most important ones are three and those I can tell you but I can't describe them much, okay? First one is {sojong, sojong} means the practice of monks meeting together twice a month to do a ritual of purification and confession, okay? Twice a month all the monks and nuns must meet together and then, we have a ritual by which we purify anything wrong we might have done, okay, that's called {sojong} okay?

[Student: How do you spell that?]

S, o, j, o, n, g {sojong}. Like a lot of our classes are going to be canceled due to {sojong} okay? [laughs] As you may have noticed and it's on the lunar calendar, you know, it depends on the, it's according to the position of the moon at a certain time so that all over India all the monks were doing {sojong} on the same night, monks and nuns, it's done together with the monks and nuns, that's {sojong}. The next {shi}, of the b... top three is called {yar ne} say {yar ne} [repeat] {yar ne} [repeat] {Yar ne} means there was a custom in India of undertaking a retreat that all the members of the sangha, each year in the summer {yar} means "summer" should do a summer retreat together. Normally it was three months long and it was a very strict thing of... in fact our {yar ne} started two days ago. Normally you would say I'm not going out of this block for the next three months and there's a whole ritual where they give you a bed and they give you a mat and they choose someone to cook the food for three months and then you all agree to stay quietly and to study Vinaya, to study the scriptures and to meditate for three months, so that's {yar ne} that's the second of the great three {shi} there's seventeen total but I'm talking top three. The next one's called {galye} say {galye} [repeat] {galye} is the release of the summer retreat the summer retreat lets out. In the monastery nowadays, it's a time for celebration and goofing off. And it's great custom, it's very good custom, because you've

been, you know working very hard you've been studying very hard for three months you've been restricted for three months and during {galye} everything is... I mean you can't do anything bad bad but you can listen to listen to radio you can go to movies you can play games, you know, things like that, the whole monastery loosens up, there's no classes, there's no debating there's no anything, everyone just relaxes, and enjoys themselves after this time of intense study and meditation and then... it's very nice to feel the... and you even see the {khenpo} meaning "abbot" playing games with the little kids and you you know play pool and stuff and ka... karem? And and things like that, I mean it's a very nice custom where the whole place lets up and I think it's necessary sometimes, speaking of which, veggie, sushi, and kung fu extravaganza, you all know about that, right? You got that blurb already, I was supposed to announce it again Saturday five to twelve One Forty One East Third Street. Somebody'll write it on the board, it's a fund raiser you have to pay twenty dollars, you get to eat sushi all night and watch kung fu movies [laughter] that's {galye}, American {ga ye} [laughter]

[Student: [unclear How long is it in the monastery?]

Oh, in the monastery it's about two three weeks something like that, I don't know... you know. You know and then they go back to really hard study, they work very hard in the monastery. I mean, the day in the monasteries are eighteen hours long and it's very, very difficult, so {galye} is like a well deserved rest and it's important, in Buddhism it's recognized that there's a time and a place for for resting and relaxing. And that's the other one. Finally they talk about, the proper ways to do {sojong} and also there's, not only restoring your vows if you happen to damage your vows but there's a whole section in the [b: Vinaya Sutra] at this point of how to restore unity inside the monastery in case of a split, in case of some problems, I mean, the reason people go to a monastery is that they're not perfect and the purpose of a monastery and the purpose of taking these vows is to improve yourself but by definition if you're a Buddhist and by definition if you're sitting in this world in samsara, m, you're not perfect, a... already, you... because you didn't reach nirvana you have ... mental afflictions, by definition, that's the definition. So people are in the monastery in order to reach some kind of nirvana, but by definition if they haven't reached it yet they have mental afflictions, and even in the Buddha's time, you know, quarrels between the different people in that sangha, fights, splits different kinds of disagreements, very common, I mean if you get to the point where you can read the sutras well, allot of them would start out with... by the Buddha saying you guys have been quarreling with each other a lot nowadays so I'm gonna tell you

a story and then he'll go into this long story about this guy who was a bodhisattva and someone else criticized him for what was apparently wrong behavior and then it turned out to be pure behavior and then the guy who criticized him ended up hells for fifty thousand lives and then the Buddha... this is and actual story, and then the Buddha at the end will say, the guy who did the criticizing was me so I know, so I'm telling you don't quarrel with each other, you know [laughs] So the the, the las... this the last part of this section of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] is how do you bring the monks back together if there's been some problem, you know, how do you keep the monks... how do you keep the unity among the sangha, because there will always be problems, in any dharma group in any group of more than one person and even sometimes in a group of one person [laughs] [laughter] you know, you have problems because we have ment... we live on mental afflictions and it groups it gets worse so this is whole study and it's recognized as an important part of the Vinaya, you know, how do you keep a group together when all of us are crazy, laughs] you know, and and that's a whole study and then how do you patch things up when things go bad and and that's a whole study in the Vinaya. Take a break come back in a bout ten minutes we got a little bit to go, not much, I alw... [cut] I don't think I made it clear that we just went over the third part, the third major part, the first one was getting vows, the second one was keeping them from getting damaged and the third one would be [pause] if they are damaged how to fix them [laughs] okay? [pause] And that's where we get into the, the {sojong} ceremony? And that's where we get into the restoration rituals or the rituals for bringing the sangha back together to restoring unity, so there's really two subjects there, you know, how to do your confessions and your purifications if you do mess up which is assumed we will. I mean the purpose of taking vows is to control behavior which otherwise we normally do, so it's very likely that you're gonna be breaking them to some extent that you're gonna be damaging them from... to some extent, so the whole concept of how to do a good purification and to restore your vows is very important and that's a whole subject of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] very important subject and then how to patch up things if there's fights within the group or quarrels within the group and things like that, okay. The next section in the outline which we're gonna hand out at the end, is called ancillary points, you know, it's like other stuff to know and in there they get into, for example, the construction of a monastery, you know, what should be in a monastery, what what different how should the walls be, what what kind of foundation should it have, how far away from the nearest lay people does it have to be, five hundred {yang draks} by the way [laughter] and things like that details like that inside there is what I consider to be one of the most important subjects in the [b: Vinaya Sutra] which is how to draw the required painting in

the foyer of your temple and what is that painting ... it's the wheel of life painting that we have here at the a... foot of the steps and I love that, I love that to to, you know here it is the last part of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] one of the last subjects is, by the way, when you finish the temple don't forget to draw the wheel of life at the at the at the door, you know, everybody should see it as they come in, if you study the painting of the wheel of life there are two stories of how it first was painted, it was painted on two occasions by the Buddha, it was designed by the Buddha himself, to talk about samsara and nirvana and, one of the most famous, I mean, one of the events was that one of his disciples when became a monk he was still attached to his former wife... to his former pleasures, so the Buddha decided it would be a good exercise to take him to hell and show him what it was like, you know then he'd would get renunciation and he'd wanna be a monk, and he did he'd... it's like Dante it's very similar to Dante, I mean it's eerks... it's eerily similar to Dante, I mean the experiences that he goes through what he sees there, what the Buddha shows him... according to the [b:Abidharma] a person with certain powers can take another person to these realms, you know, and he did and when he got back and the guy was you know, shaken up [laughs] and he said now I want you to draw what you saw and we'll put it at the at the at the door of every temple, okay? So I thought, we'll go through, I would like to go through there are about seven components of that painting that the Bu... that the [b: Vinaya Sutra] says you must have, it tells you how to draw the painting, and we'll go through those seven real quick. By the way the quotation, the opening line of this section is, I'm gonna write that cause it's on your, homework. You don't have to do it in Tibetan but [pause] it's good just to say it, okay? It's just a blessing to say the words of it say {gokang} [repeat] {du} [repeat] {korway} [repeat] {korlo o} [repeat] {cha ngapar} [repeat] {ja o} [repeat] okay {go kang du} means "at the foyer," "in the foyer" {go kang} means "place where the door is," okay, at the at the entrance to the temple {go kang du} this {korwa, korway} means "of samsara," okay? "The circle of suffering life," okay {korwa} and then {korlo o} means {korlo} means "the wheel," okay? Nowadays, that wheel is called what? In, do you know the Tibetan word? {Sipay korlo, sipay korlo} means... it's another word for samsara, I think they changed the name because {korway korlo} they probably got confused, you know, because this {korwa} means "the circle of suffering life" and this {korlo} means "the circle" so it's like the circle of the circle and people probably got confused so they, later on they called it {sipay korlo} same thing, exactly the same thing, so what it is an {o} is like and instruction it's like an, an ending, this is how the [b: Vinaya Sutra] reads it's like build the temple. Put the the painting. Make it five parts. [laughter] You know [laughs] it's like, the whole thing reads like that, the original sutra, so, so this is {go kang du, korway korlu... korlo o} you know, put that, put that painting of

the wheel of life, of the wheel of suffering life in the foyer, okay? And then it says {cha ngapar ja o. Cha, cha} means "part," {ngapar} means "five" {chawo} means "make it," okay? Make it five parts, give it five parts. Okay? That's the opening line and now we're gonna go through the seven components of the wheel and then we're done for tonight, okay? This is, I thought you like it because this is the perscription of the Buddha, you know, this is the way the ... the wheel was originally drawn, okay? And I think it's good to know. [pause] The study of the twelve links around the wheel is a part of the study of the perfection of wisdom which comes in the monastery when you study Madhyamika, you know, we're not gonna get to that tonight. That's a very deep subject. I think we could devote a whole course to it actually. We did it up in Boston it took three days. So we're just gonna... we're not gonna go through the meaning of the wheel we're gonna go through what did the Buddha say had to be in the wheel, okay? Seven... parts, first one is, he said {cha nga} [pause] {cha gna par cha o} Okay, first thing you need in the wheel is the main wheel, you know? It's that part, by the way, it's that part [pause] here, [laughs] I didn't do it quite right but, it's this part from here to here and this represents what, the five parts are? It's the five realms of existence, okay? It's the five types of beings, it's the five choices after you die. You're gonna go to one of them unless you work really hard in this life, unless you become the summa cum laud graduate of ACI who finishes all of his or her tantric practices and gets out of it in this life, okay something like that, which is the goal. If you don't make it you've gotta stay in one of these five, you don't have any choice you will end up in one of these five. Here there's what I call pleasure beings which are these ... by the way I'm not sure exactly you gotta check it out but, you can divide it into better realms and lower realms, okay? In the better realms you've got two, in the lower realms you have three, okay? I'm not necessarily putting them in the right location, I'm, I don't remember actually but, pleasure beings up there, which is a temporary heavenly state and after that you usually go down and then human beings and then down here you have hell realms and then what we call hungry gh... they're called hungry ghosts or craving spirits and then animals, so traditionally th... the painting should have five parts here, allot of paintings nowadays have?

[Student: Six.]

Six and if you look at the one at foot of the stairs it has six, okay? That's because the broke off in the pleasure beings the lesser pleasure beings, there's full pleasure beings, there's and lesser pleasure beings. And they split them off and they made six, which is okay. But traditionally the instruction were {cha nga par jao} make it five parts. So the first component of the wheel is those five parts,

second component [pause] Say {bardowa} [repeat] {bardowa} [repeat] also you can say {dzu kye} [repeat] say {dzu kye} [repeat] the instructions only say {dzu kye} okay? They don't say {bardowa} so I want you to know that, it says {dzu te key way sem jen, so chung gyu ma shin du chipowa dang kye wa dand kyang gno} which means {dzu kye kyewe dang sem chen} means "those beings who are born miraculously," miraculously means the just show up there. Like the first human beings on this planet according to Buddhism, they just appeared. When you're born in hell, you don't have a hell mommy and hell daddy you just show up there, I mean you die here you go through the bardo then you take birth in the hell and and in a second you are there with a whole body and someone's about to smash you with some kind of a weapon and and you know, you o... you o... you're just there, suddenly you're just there and somebody's smashing you and killing you and then you're first reaction is to struggle against them and then your whole career there is spent in this Hades, you know, it's spent in this insanity of people just trying to slaughter each other, so from the very first moment that you're conscious there, you know you just show up and someone's attacking you already and that's, that goes on for the whole time you're there and that's called {dzu kye} so {dzu kye} means a being who's born that way. The classic being who is born that way is a bardo, what's a bardo?

[Student: [unclear]]

It's it's a some kind of a spirit being between the death and rebirth, okay? And we went through the whole thing in the last course, the last course was devoted to that. You need to take some kind of birth through which you can reach your next destination and that's called the bardo, okay? I wasn't aware of this instruction in the Vinaya, the instruction, the full instructions say, "Paint them in a chain to demonstrate that they are swirling around and taking birth again and again in death... death and birth, death and birth, death and birth" and that's where you see, I assume that it's in that inner part of the wheel there and if you look carefully there's, there's like these evil spirits dragging people down and there's these holy spirits bringing them up and I take it to be that that chain of beings here, that's also supported by the fact that bardos are included where in the five realms? Do you remember from the last course? They're not included [laughs] you know. So you gotta get 'em in there somewhere, they're in, they're in samsara, we gotta include everybody here right? So I assume that this refers to that inner wheel because they are circling around and I guess they are parking in different locations, you know, they are going out and coming out here or coming here and then I've never thought of it that way but that appears to be the intent of the [b: Vinaya Sutra] okay? The next instruction is [pause] I'll just

put {duk sum} [pause] say {duk sum} [repeat] {duk sum} the three poisons of the mind which make us suffer our whole lives. {Duk} means "poison" {sum} means "the three." [pause] I think somebody burned a chappatti. [laughs] [laughter] {Duk sum} this is those three animals in the middle of the picture, okay? We, you know them, the ...

[student: Hatred, anger, and desire. [unclear]]

Yeah, and we, they say hatred, anger and desire, but you know from our past discussions that, the... there's a there's a for ex... we'll start with the snake the snake is easy, there's a... well let's start with where the susu... sutra starts, they say start with the, desire, okay? And desire normally you think of a rooster in the middle, there's a rooster in this area here and we chch... we drawn it before, right? Very badly and, that represents desire. I don't like the translation desire so much because it implies like, you know, something very strong and and... only happens once a week or something. It is liking things, okay? It is liking things ignorantly, okay, is it wrong to like things? Well, yes and no. Should you like anything in this world, I mean, should you like the fact that you're strong? That's just stupid, you know, the last thing you want to do is get attached to this hunk of meat where the only future is bad, you know, you don't want t... that kind of liking. Should you like nirvana? Of course, you know. But this is ignorant liking, okay? This is liking samsaric things that can never make you happy anyway, okay? It's that emotion of wanting, okay? Second animal is? Oh by the way, in the original text it doesn't say rooster, it says pigeon [laughter] which I never knew, you know, nowadays they... they draw a rooster but the original sk... the early ancient text they say pigeon because apparently pigeons had, apparently they... had some kind of desirous behavior, okay? Yeah, okay and you have here a... You have a snake, okay? The snake represents, disliking things. In other words these three poisons are not something that comes up in your mind every time you... every time you go off into a fit of fury every three weeks it's not like that, they are operating continuously in your mind. These three poisons are are in your brain constantly, they are acting in you constantly. So I don't like the translation anger, I mean I don't get angry except when the customers hassle me, but, but disliking and liking ignorantly I have a... we have it all day long, we live on it, it makes us unhappy, it's our main mental afflictions, we, we live on that, it's our whole life story it's those three poisons going on in your mind. We have very little vacation from those three, they make us unhappy our whole lives, most people are unhappy the whole length of their lives and it's these three poisons cooking there the whole time and just making you miserable. They... they pull you from one direction to the other, I

want this I don't want that, and your whole life is spent struggling like that, that's the three poisons. So don't think of them as you know "Playboy" magazine and screaming at somebody, they're more subtle than that. They're in your... there it's the poison that's in your blood stream your whole life, okay? Then it says draw the pig and he... the [b: Vinaya Sutra] says be sure to draw the pig... the tail of those two coming out of the pig's mouth, the pig should be eating the other two. Okay. And if you see ancient pictures of the wheel of life, that's the way it is, nowadays they draw it as the three animals eating each other. But in the very old pictures you'll see the pig and then the other two animals coming out of its mouth, why?

[student: Ignorance.]

Yeah, it's because we don't understand emptiness and we don't understand ethics and we don't understand the marriage between ethics and emptiness that makes liking and disliking happen. If you understood emptiness... well and if you understood ethics to be the... the holy sister of emptiness, you wouldn't have the other two. You wouldn't have liking and disliking in the way that we have them now. You would be free, you'd have reached nirvana already, okay? If you kill the pig you kill the other two. Okay, very important. Okay number four. [pause] I'll cheat, I'll put, a number [pause]

[Student: [unclear]]

Excuse me?

[Student: What does the pig represent again?]

Ignorance. The pig is ignorance, it's {yen lak} y, e, n, l, a, k, twelve, okay? [laughs] I cheated, I'm gettin' tired tonight I had rough day, so [laughs] {yen lak} twelve, [laughs] okay? These are the twelve links of dependent origination which are to be drawn around the outside. [pause] Twelve pictures which describe the mechanism which trigger rebirth, okay? The mechanism by which we stay in this world, you know, what thing triggers what thing which trigger what thing, what trigger what thing, what triggers what things, it's this domino thing that once you get it started you're gonna be here forever, they they continue to trigger each other in a circle, okay? You must study the twelve links, it's a long story, we don't have time. [laughter] [laugh] But we will do it sometime and Rinpoche did a very beautiful... he taught it to us very carefully and, it's part of the study of the perfection of wisdom, okay? Asanga went over it, Maitreya taught it very nicely. [pause] Mr. Wick, John can you do me a favor? Find me a

{sojong} book if anybody has one, in Tibetan. And, I have a painting of the wheel of life on my b... under my bed I think.

[student: A {sojong} book.]

Yeah, in Tibetan if anybody has one. If not it's okay. Say... this one is important so I wanna make sure you got this one, say {tamche} [repeat] {mitakpa} [repeat] {nyi kyi} [repeat] {sung} [repeat] okay. {Tamche} means "the whole thing," okay? {Tamche} means "the whole thing." {mitakpa nyi kyi} means "by impermanence," capitul I, by Impermanence {sum} means, "in the clutches of." Draw everything in the clutches of impermanence," okay? And that's where you have, what? You have that monster that cookie monster [pause] okay? The whole thing is in the grasp of this monster, okay? You know, I take people to the... round the temple in New Jersey all the time and they see this painting and they say, "Oh, Buddhists believe in these demons and stuff." I said no. It's always described in scriptures as as the event inside you of death, know, working since the day you were born, you know he's biting biting biting, you know, chewing chewing, you know he's scratching, he's taking out more and more from the nth... inside, he's working his way out from the inside and he's ripping up your your insides and then sooner or later he'll reach something vital and then you'll die, it'll be called death. This monster is inside, it's the fact of your own impermanence, okay, they don't believe it's some little guy that jumps out after you die, or something like that. It's the own imp... it's your own impermanence which is killing you day by day moment by moment working to kill you from the inside, that's {mitakpa nyi kyi sungo} [pause] Say {dawa} [repeat] {dawa} [repeat] this is very abbreviated, okay? Cause it's so late. The full thing is {tengdu sang gye yangen le depe kingor kappo nyewar tumbao} and that means, {tengdu} means "on top," okay? {tengdu} means, thank you, "on top" and {sangye} means what?

[student: Buddha. [unclear]]

The Buddha, {nyangen de} means {nyangde}? This is not a real great version, okay? Now you know, this is the Buddha, up here and it says {kingor kappo newar tumbao} "he should be pointing to a white heavenly body", okay? It doesn't specifically say moon, {dawa} means "moon" but it says he should be pointing to a white heavenly body, which here is, I guess it's this one, but normally it's a, it's a full moon, normally it's a big white full moon. If you look at the one in the temple down in New Jersey, it's... it's, this part is better and you can see ...the Buddha pointing and then the moon... normally there's a big full

moon over here. That represents the Buddha showing the way to nirvana. The moon is nirvana and the Buddha is showing the way, okay? Why didn't they paint him down here which some people do nowadays?

[Student: Because he's outside of...]

He ain't in the clutches of impermanence, okay? He's out, he got out. Okay? He's not in there any more. I mean some people nowadays, they paint Buddhas around all over the place, teaching, stuff like that it's considered very inauspicious in... among those who, who know about this painting. He should be outside and he should be showing the way to nirvana, that's what the original scripture says. By the way you can see here that it's not, no here it is painted correctly. Sometimes you'll see them in a chain but here it's painted correctly and then here are the bardo beings and here you got six instead of five. So, they they didn't do {cha nga par jawo} okay? They did get the twelve links as it should be, the last instruction and that's the last thing tonight.

[Student: [unclear]] [pause] Yeah, it's here. The last instruction is at the bottom of the painting "add the two verses", okay, add the two verses. It has not been added to this painting. You... in more traditional paintings you can see it. I think the one on the cover of the wheel of life book has the... you can see the verses down at the bottom in the... in the right place. And I... since it's late I'm going to read you the verses, okay? It's it's two verses of four lines each, first... it starts out by, and it's auspicious to say it, okay? Ready? {tsampar ja} [repeat] {shing} [repeat] {yung war ja} [repeat] {sangye tenla} [repeat] {jupar cha} [repeat] {dambu kimla} [repeat] {lang chen shin} [repeat] {chidag de nyi} [repeat] {shaombar cha} [repeat] {kang shin rab du} [repeat] {payu pay} [repeat] {chun dul di la} [repeat] {chu gyurpa} [repeat] {kye we korwa} [repeat] {rapang ne} [repeat] {dugnel tamar} [repeat] {chepar gyur} [repeat] and monks are required to recite that at the end of every {sojong}. So, it says this {tsampar ja shi nyi war ja} means, "take it up and give it up," take it up and give it up, what it means is, learn the things you should do and the learn the things you shouldn't do, okay? Take up the things you should do, give up the things you shouldn't do. {Sangye tenla juppar ja}, "enter the teachings of the Buddha." You know, get into the teachings of the Buddha. [pause] {Dambu kimla langjen shin}, {dumbu kim} is a very difficult word but what it means is a "house made of reeds" you know those very skinny weak reeds, a hut made of reeds. {Langchen shin} means "like an elephant," okay? Like a bull in a china shop, okay? Same thing [laughs] okay. Like an... like an elephant who squashes a, a little hut made of little sticks, okay. I mean in India that's a b... powerful thing. {Chi dag de nyi shombar ja} "destroy the lord of death in the same way." Smash the lord of death in the same way.

Meaning if you study this pain and you understand it, then you'll be able to smash death itself. You don't have to die the kind of death that you've seen everyone else die in this world. You are among a very few people who have an option now, if you study these things properly you don't have to go through that process like that. And that's the point. Okay. {Kang shin rapdu payu pay} means "anybody who with the proper care," okay? Anybody who with the proper care, {chun du dila chu gyurpa} "practices this dharma which is {dul}" ... what's {dulwa}?

[Student: What you're teaching us. [unclear]]

Vinaya, okay? [laughs] Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay. "Anybody who practices this disciplining dharma," okay? And I... obviously it's an... an allusion to the Vinaya, okay? {Kyewe korwa rappang ne} "they will give up the they will be able to, leave behind the wheel of rebirth" okay? {Dukgnel tamar jepar gyur} "and they will put an end to their suffering." [pause] So meditate for a few minutes, okay?

[student: [unclear]]

[unclear] [cut]

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Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class 3: Introduction to Individual Freedom Vows

8/5/96

transcribed by: Roy Yoshimoto

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Tonight we start the actual commentary by Je Tsongkapa. So the first class is sort of an overview of everything. The second class was a...an outline of the entire [b: Vinaya Sutra], the whole thing, and now tonight we're gonna start Je Tsongkapa's commentary. Je Tsongkapa not only covers the [b: Vinaya Sutra], he's covering the whole vinaya scriptures, which is a huge task, and we're gonna do it in like four or five classes...interesting. So the opening line is this:

[silence]

Say {om} [repeat] {de lek su} [repeat] {Gyur Chik} [repeat]. {Om} [repeat] {de lek su} [repeat] { Gyur Chik } [repeat]. Okay {om} you've heard a lot, you know, you've heard the...the sound a lot. It is made up of three components: {a}, {u}, {um}. And these are representing the body, speech, and mind of the Buddha, okay? The body...this one syllable represents the whole body, speech, and mind of the Buddha. In, in one sound: {om}, okay? Body, meaning one body in a paradise...very cool, and another body with which automatically he emanates without even thinking, in every planet, in every place where it might help somebody. And as we said before it could be the person next to you on the subway, you know? The minute that you are ready to receive something from a...an enlightened being they appear next to you because of the power of their past deeds. So that's the quality of the Buddha's body. Speech, meaning mainly that those emanations can speak to you and explain to you dharma, 'cause that's the only way to make...you know, ninety-nine percent of the time that's how a Buddha can help you...is to say something to teach you Buddhism. And then finally the mind of the Buddha, meaning omniscient...knows all things, knows every object in the universe at one moment...and all history at one moment, and all the future at the same moment, all the time. Those qualities of the Buddha...I mean it's typical of Je Tsongkapa to start his book with that: {om} in one syllable, okay? {De} means happiness and {lek} means goodness. And this is also a code

word. The {de}...the {de} here, the happiness, refers to the happiness of nirvana, okay...which is what?...basically...we covered it in Friday night class. Yeah, just not having bad thoughts anymore. And imagine it...I mean, never getting upset again, never being irritated again, never being nervous again, never being stressed again, never having anything knock your mind out of some total peaceful state. And it's possible. You can do it. That comes while you're still in this body, and this body is still, you know, no future. And your life basically is still no future as far as job, place, friends, family, possessions...it's all gonna leave you and it's all gonna degenerate, but...but your mind is totally happy. Your mind is totally peaceful and you...you have that. Later on you get to {lek}; the goodness means the goodness of Buddhahood, okay? I think I must have missed something. Yeah, I'm sorry. {De}...I have to change that. {De}...{lek} refers to nirvana and Buddhahood, and {de} refers to happiness in the sense of the...of the higher births. So {de}--happiness in this case--does not include nirvana. That comes in {lek}, okay? {De} means just keeping yourself out of the lower births. What are the three lower births, the three bottom parts of the wheel of life? I mean hell realms, hungry ghosts, and then animals. So just keeping yourself out of that is happiness, okay? To be born in one of the two higher realms, or three higher realms depending on how you count it is happiness. And then {lek} here stands for nirvana, which is that mental state, and then also Buddhahood, which is where you go beyond...based on that state you expand it mainly by your compassion, by...by a desire to lead other people to that place. And then because of that combination of compassion and understanding, you...you enter those...that body, speech, and mind that I just talked about. And then your life is...then everything else is okay. You know, your body has changed, your place has changed, all your relationships are changed, and you're in paradise. That's {de lek}. {De lek su gyur chik} means "may there be." So in the opening lines he's saying may there be happiness and goodness, and that's a code word, okay? What it means is, may all living beings achieve temporary happiness, which means may they stay out of the animal realms, the hell realms, which he calls here happiness, and may they achieve goodness, which means nirvana and Buddhahood. And all of that he's calling upon Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and that's the word {om}. So {om} which seems to be just a plain, old syllable {om} is actually a code word for him calling upon the Buddhas and the bodhisattvas: may all sentient beings reach temporary happiness and then ultimate happiness, okay? That's, that's the meaning of his opening line...very typical. The opening lines of his book are {kala dena de lak du tape dona drube dak deshe deme ning me cho soso ta rche drapa gang}. That's the opening verse. And it's an explanation of {so tar gyi dompa}. Say {so tar gyi dompa} [repeat]. {So tar gyi dompa} [repeat]. Okay, {so tar} is short for {sosor

tarpa}. In...in Sanskrit, which you should know, it's pratimoksha. [Prati] stands for {so}. And {so} means "individual." {Soso}. In Tibetan if you say {soso} it means individual. So {soso} means [prati] or individual, [moksha] or {tarpa} means freedom, nirvana, okay? Freedom is a code word for nirvana. {gyi} means of, and {dompa} means a vow, the vows, the pratimoksha vows. This is the subject of vinaya, period. This is what vinaya teaches. Vinaya as you saw in the outline is how to get the vows, and then how to keep the vows well, and then if you mess up, how to fix them. I mean all the vinaya teaches are all included in those three subjects, which all centers around the {so tar gyi dompa}, okay, the pratimoksha vows. Why are they called pratimoksha? I mean, I used to wonder about it. And Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra in his commentary is very clear. He says, they're called individual freedom vows [pratimoksha], individual freedom vows, because people who keep them get to nirvana, and people who don't keep them don't get to nirvana. So it's an individual matter of whether you reach freedom. Therefore, they're called individual freedom vows, and it's nice to know. I mean, otherwise, people are always talking about pratimoksha, pratimoksha, and you don't know what they're talking about. So it's important to know that pratimoksha means individual freedom vows in that sense. There's another explanation that I won't go into, but I'll just mention it: [prati] can also mean "first," and [moksha] "free." First freedom vows. Sometimes they're explained as being first freedom vows. And what that means is that the moment you take them, you're free from not having them. Okay? The day you take them is the first time you're free from not having vows. And then in the debate text someone comes up and says, "Well, what about day two, do you still call them first freedom vows?" And the guy says, "Well, you know, the same thing." So that's not as popular an explanation, but it an explanation that appears in the ancient books, okay, for pratimoksha. Next thing...I thought I would give you the technical definition of a pratimoksha vow. But first I'll give you the easy definition. And this is from...straight from his root text...from Tsongkapa's root text, and you should know it.

[silence]

{Sampe} [repeat] {gyujene} [repeat] {shenmu} [repeat] {shidang} [repeat] {chepa le} [repeat] {dokpa} [repeat]. Okay. This is the definition of the freedom vows, okay? I like to call them freedom vows...pratimoksha vows, okay? {Ngenjung} means renunciation. And we'll talk more about that. {Sampe}...{sampe} means motivation in this case, okay? {Gyu} here means the reason. {Gyujene} means the reason why. {Shen} means others... {Shen} means others...other peo-...other beings, okay? {Mu} means to hurt them...to hurt them: {Mu}. {Shidang chepa}

means along with its basis, along with its basis. {Shidang chepa} means along with its basis. {Le} means from. And {dokpa} means turning away from or refraining from, okay? So here we have from Je Tsongkapa...a very brief definition of the pratimoksha vows, which is the subject of the whole vinaya. I mean, if you know how to get them, how to keep them, and how to fix them, you know the whole vinaya, okay? So I'll...I'll try to translate it roughly off the top of my head, okay? Vows of individual freedom are restraining yourself, or...what did I say before? Restraining or something. Oh, refraining is better, okay? Refraining from. I had a real bad day at work, okay? Sorry. [laughs] Refraining from, hurting others and also refraining from the basis of hurting others, and doing so for the reason that your motivation is renunciation...out of renunciation. Now that's lousy English and I'll...we'll go over it in plain English, okay? That's the strict translation. The point is this: the reason to take these vows, the reason to follow Buddhist code of ethics before everything is the motivation. Why are you doing it? 'Cause you're fed up with suffering, and you're fed up...I mean, my whole day was [laughs] something like that. I mean, very typical samsaric day, you know, nothing stable at all, everything shifting. One moment I'm a hero, next moment I'm an idiot...in the same day like twenty times. And maybe the company is the most famous in New York, and maybe it's going bankrupt next week. And you know people are my friends but they're also trying to cheat me out of a million dollars and...and, I mean, all of these things going on in the same day. This is typical samsara, and then all my reactions to it, you know. I'm happy, then I'm sad, then I'm jealous, then I'm mad, you know, and the whole mind just going through the stations of the {kleshas}, you know...in one day you know. And, and it's very typical samsaric day. I mean, you can't be happy in this place. You can, I mean, that's nirvana, but I mean you cannot succeed in this world. It doesn't work. The world is defective, you know. All your relationships will always end up that way. The company you work for will end up that way. Your own body will end up that way, you know? Your own happiness is always like a roller coaster. And, and we keep struggling, you know? We think oh just one more day. Give me one more day to fix it up, you know? Maybe I'm not exercising enough. Maybe I need more sleep. Maybe I don't take the right vitamins, you know? Maybe I can get rid of this guy at work. And then my life will finally straighten out. Well, it's not gonna happen, you know? Just give it up, you know? I mean, it doesn't mean shoot yourself, or run away, or something like that. But, but stop it, you know. Stop the causes which is your...your mental afflictions. You know, work on them. So the real motivation for taking these vows has to be: just tired of all...it can never work. So why struggle? It won't work. If you think so, keep trying, you know? It just won't work out. It's impossible actually. In our

present condition mentally we cannot be happy. The mind cannot be contented. I mean, that's problem number one, maybe. No matter what you get, you won't be happy. You'll always want something else. The next day you'll find some reason to be unhappy again. It's just the nature of our minds. It cannot be happy. Just get tired of it and find the place where you can be happy, you know? Find what can really make you happy, and it's nothing external, and it's no kind of relationship, and it's no kind of financial level, and it's...it's no kind of security, and it's no kind of anything except nirvana. And that has to be the reason to take the vows. That's what {nyenjung sampe gyu chene} means. {Ngenjung sampe gyujene} means your motivation must be you're fed up with this condition, you know. That has to be your motivation. In, in the monk's vows, if you go and take them because you're hoping to get fed in this monastery and get a free house...if you go and take them because you have debts and you want to escape...in ancient India if you go and take them because you're trying to get out of your military service or something like that...the vows don't form. Those are called bad motivations for becoming a monk, and...and even nowadays you know often times it seems like the refugees from Tibet are coming and entering the monasteries 'cause it's free food, it's a free place to stay, and usually they get converted after a while, but...but I mean the reason to take the vows should be renunciation. It shouldn't be because someone else you know is taking them. I shouldn't be because most people in the group seem to be taking them. It shouldn't be any reason except you're just fed up with all this life...this crazy life. You want something better, and these vows cause nirvana. These vows are the cause that create in your mind contentment and peace and, and that should be your reason for taking them and keeping them. And if it's not that reason you will not be able to keep them. And they won't be fun either. They'll be like this obligation, you know, and you won't enjoy them and you'll break them and sooner or later you'll get tired of them...and you'll be one of those Buddhists who can't remember what they were after a year you know...all five...you know [laughs]. So think of it that way. These vows are your ticket to get out of this lousy situation, you know? And take them for that reason. And keep them for that reason. It's the only thing that can get you out, okay? {Shemu shidang chepa le dokpa}. {Shemu}: hurting others. So because you want to get out of suffering for yourself, because you're tired of all this crazy world and you know, dead...what do you call?...dead end future for your body and your mind, and all your relationships and all your possessions and all your family, everything...dead-end. Because you're tired of that, you agree to refrain from hurting others, okay? You agree to refrain from hurting others, okay? That's mainly referring to the seven non-virtues that we talked about: three in your body and four in your speech and all their friends, which are endless

possibilities...of hurting other people with what you do and what you say, okay? So first is agreeing to give up that. {Shidang chepa}. {Shidang chepa} says along with their foundation or their basis. Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra tries to figure out what this word means, you know? What's the basis? And he comes up with two things. The first one I think is the most viable. He says Je Tsongkapa is trying to sneak in the last three non-virtues, which are the basis for the other seven, okay? Craving, ill will, wrong view. They generate the other seven. So they are their basis or foundation. So Je Tsongkapa is trying to say we all know that the emphasis of the vinaya is what you do and what you say, but let's not forget that what generates what you do and say is what you think. So let's add that in the definition. It's agreeing to refrain from hurting others and agreeing to refrain from the thought processes that make you hurt others, which is called basis here. And that's his definition of a pratimoksha vow. That's Je Tsongkapa's short definition of a pratimoksha vow.

[student: [unclear]]

Excuse me? The other one's a little complicated. You want it? I'll mention the, the main parts of it okay? Let's see. And I'll...I'm just...you...this is not on any...your homework or any...just for your information. This is the more technical definition. {Rangyi mitung chok cheltsu ungyen}. It is the direct antidote for the opposite which is immorality, okay? [laughs] That's the first thing: it's direct antidote for its opposite which is immorality. Or anything of the nature, and that has many implications when you're debating, you know? It probably means that, like if you're in deep meditation you can't hurt anybody else. I mean to stay in deep meditation normally you cannot have a thought of malice. The minute you have a thought of not liking somebody it'll pop you out of meditation. So let's say you're in deep meditation, you won't be hurting other people. But that doesn't act as an direct antidote for immorality. It's just that you can't be immoral while you're in deep meditation, okay? So he's trying to eliminate that. Technicality. {Duse du}. {Duse du} means in the desire realm. Thereby he's eliminating certain kinds of...we say there are natural vows that you get by being in deep meditation. If your mind actually goes into the form realm, that we talked about in the last course, you can't hurt anybody else. If you start to talk, or if you start to move, it'll pop you out of deep meditation. So as long as you're in deep meditation you can't talk and you can't move. Therefore, you will not break the first seven vows, you know? So he's trying to eliminate that. He says has to be in the desire realm, okay? Which eliminates what we call the vow of deep meditation. There's a natural vow or a natural restraint that comes on you when you're in deep meditation. You can't lie to

anybody 'cause you can't say anything. If you say something it pops you out of meditation, okay? Like that. Next he says, {chu deng nyenjung samsen}. He says, "Should be motivated by thoughts of renunciation of this tradition," meaning of Buddhism, you know? There's many different kinds of renunciation. There's a renunciation called {nyenjung pusu}. {Nyenjung pusu} means you just...your mother just died, you just lost your girlfriend, your boss just fired you, and then for like three days you're...you've got this kind of renunciation. You're fed up with the world for about three days. It's not logical. It's emotional, you know? And then someone invites you out to a movie, you see a new girl, and your mind is out of renunciation. That's called goose-...it's called goosebump renunciation. [laughter] It...it lasts for as long as a goosebump, you know? That would not be {chu-}...that's why that part has to be the definition. It has to be real renunciation. There's other kinds of renunciation that everyone gets in life, on occasion, when something really bad happens. And it wears off quickly. It's called goosebump. We're talking about renunciation which is based on understanding. You understand...okay I'm not sick yet, I really don't have any major diseases yet that I'm aware of, you know? But I know the future of this body. You know, I'm using my reasoning to plan ahead and get away from it before it starts to get really bad...worse than it is. {Seme sen ponwasuchen}. {Ponwasuchen} means physical actions. Physically giving up certain things. Physically avoiding certain things. Remember vinaya is concentrating on what you say and what you do, okay? {Shipu tonwe rikshu mepa}. {Shipu tonwa} means and something that you loose when you die, okay? Something that you loose when you die, which eliminates the bodhisattva vows and the secret vows, the tantric vows. The pratimoksha vows you loose when you die, and we'll talk about it, okay? That's the technical definition. It has to have all those parts in it. And if you're in the debate ground, you better know that one, okay? {Nyenjung sam}. This is Je Tsongkapa's very beautiful summary. And, and the essence of...of a pratimoksha vow, okay?

[silence]

Repeat it just for fun, okay? {Ngowo dang ni} [repeat] {rabye dang} [repeat] {sosoy ngundzin} [repeat] {kyeway ten} [repeat] {tongway gyu dang} [repeat] {pen ye ten namba dungyi je sheshe}...okay. First part is {gnowo}. By the way, these are...this is the mini outline of Je Tsongkapa's mini text, okay? And it's nice. This is what we're gonna go through, in his text. He's explained to you generally what a pratimoksha vow is, and now he's gonna tell you, look, these are the categories that I'm gonna use for my explanation. Here's what you're gonna get in my little, tiny summary of the vinaya. First thing is gonna be {ngowo}.

{Ngowo} means the definition or the basic nature. You can say basic nature. What are the vows made of? Are they something physical? Are they something mental? Are they something else? Where is a vow? When you take a vow, where does it stay? What's it made of? I mean that's an interesting question, and, and it's hotly debated in Buddhism, okay? What is a vow made of? When you get a vow, where is it? What's it made of? That's {ngowo}. What is its nature? What is it made of? {Rabye dang}...this word here...these {dang}s just mean "and," "and," "and," okay? {Ni} is when you don't have enough beats in your line, you just throw in a {ni}, okay? In Sanskrit it's something else. So {rabye} means categories...different groups of vows. How many groups of vows are there? Okay? We're gonna get to that eventually. It's eight. But we'll get to that. We'll talk about it. The next subject I'm gonna cover says Je Tsongkapa is {sosoy ngundzin}{sosoy ngundzin} means...literally it means identifying what the vows are...individually. There's that {sor} again, that we had in pratimoksha...{sosoy takpa}. {Soso lundzin} means okay...here's what each set of vows is, you know? There's eight sets of vows and I'm gonna identify each vow. Here's the vows that you take if you're a one-day vow. Here's the vows that you take if you do a lifetime layman's vow. Here's the vows that you take if you become a monk or a nun. The next subject is {kyeway ten}. {Kyewa} means to be born or to arrive. {Ten} means the basis. So {kyeway ten} means what kind of person...in what kind of person can the vows grow? Okay? You have to grow these vows...through a proper ordination ceremony. They have to grow inside you, but they grow in some kinds of beings and they don't grow in other kinds of people, okay? So in this section he explains what kind of basis or what kind of person can grow the vows, in them. Because there's people that can never grow the vows, okay? For example, you have to be twenty years old to take a full monk's ordination. If you're nineteen, you're not a {kyewe ten}. The vows won't grow in you, okay? If you try to take them, they won't...they won't grow. You have to be twenty years old. You have to be old enough to make that decision. So that's one example of a...I mean, if you're like twelve or thirteen, you're not a {kyeway ten} for full monk's ordination. It won't grow. It won't grow in you, okay? Number five...is {tongway gyu}. {Tongway gyu} means, how do you loose the vows, okay? How do you loose pratimoksha vows? We already mentioned one way, which was, what? Die. [laughs] If you die they disappear automatically, okay? And we'll get other causes later. We'll explain it more. And lastly, the last category is {pen yun}. {Pen yun} means the benefits of keeping them properly, okay? What are you gonna get out of it, if you keep these vows properly? And those are the divisions. Those are the categories through which Je Tsongkapa is gonna lead us, okay? He's promising you these six categories. Incidentally, he's promising to finish the book. And

that's a big part of a Buddhist book. Usually at the opening of a Buddhist book, that lama or that author will say, I promise to write this book. Maybe it won't help anybody. Maybe it's just for me. Maybe it's just to make my own understanding more clear. But I promise I will not stop until I finish this book, you know? And that's just a...because normally when you start translating a book into English, or when you start studying a book, or when you start writing a book, it attracts a lot of negative energy, you know? There's like all these energies that would rather not see people get out of samsara. They're quite happy to see you reading the New York Times or watching 20/20 or, you know, eating in a restaurant with your friends, and they would greatly prefer that you not think about these things until you're dying...when it's too late. So the minute you start to study these things you...you will get some negative energies coming. And, and...and like having a class like this, with a lot of serious people and studying a very pure tradition, is really dangerous. [laughs] It attracts a lot of bad energy, you know. You guys have a good chance to pull this off, you know. You have a good chance of reaching nirvana in this life. That's very disturbing to certain kinds of ener-...energies, and they're attracted and they...they're attracted to these things. So...so when a Buddhist writes a book, it's like a very serious pledge. It's like taking a big risk. And saying I...I won't stop until I finish. And, and as you get more sophisticated, as you study more, you...you also have to think at the beginning of the study, you know, I'm...I'm gonna finish this, you know. And, and they take...they swear at the beginning, this is implicitly by giving this outline Je Tsongkapa is saying, I'm gonna...these are the categories which I'm gonna explain, which means...I'm gonna finish. And it's a big deal that he swears he's gonna finish, okay? There are books in the [b: Tengyur] that stop in the middle of a sentence because the person died, you know. There are books in the [b: Tengyur]...in the ancient canon that stop in the middle...and they carved it that way, and they stopped, you know, 'cause it was never finished. And, and we know that the person died. So, I mean, if you're still breathing you gotta finish. [laughs]

[student: [unclear]]

It means that's not the whole line. There's more to that line. {Pen yun teng namma dukyi jesheshe} means, I'm gonna give my explanation in these six parts, okay? I'm not writing the whole text out 'cause you won't get home tonight, if I do.

[silence]

[cut] {Lu ngak le} [repeat] {sukchen yin} [repeat] {she du} [repeat] {pa} [repeat].
Sorry, okay? [laughs] They...means moreover that thing...what's he been
talking about, generally? Subject of vinaya? Those vows, okay? Those
pratimaksh...pratimoksha vows...okay? Moreover, those pratimoksha vows
are...by the way, here he's giving the {ngowo}. He's trying to explain what are
the vows made of? I mean, what did you think? I...it's curious. Anybody have
an...I mean...anybody wanna venture? What's a vow made of? Yeah, I
mean...spirit? Anybody else?

[student: Subtle energy.]

Like a subtle energy, okay? Any...? I mean, interesting. When I say vow, when
I say a vow forms in your mind stream...when you get a vow, I mean,
what...what pops into your mind? There was some mental image, you know?
What did you think of?

{student: [unclear]}

Effort? Okay. Does that mean when you're asleep you loose your vows?
[laughs] I mean it's interesting. What are they made of? You know?
Supposedly they stick in you. What are they made of? Huh?

[student: Thoughts.]

But what if you're not thinking about it? That...there's a big debate about it.
What if your mind...they say, what if your mind is distracted, you know? Do
you loose your vows? Do you only have your vows when you're being aware
of your vows? Is it some kind of subliminal thought that stays in your mind,
you know, all the time?

[student: It's subtle consciousness.]

Is it subtle consciousness, you know? Is it like a sub-consciousness that's always
thinking thinking about the vows or something? You know, where does the
vow stay? And, and here he begins explaining that. What are they made of,
okay? We all, all Buddhist schools agree that you can take vows and that you
have vows, so there must be something, okay? {Lu ngak le}. {Lu...lu ngak le}
means karma of body and speech, okay? {Lu} means body, {ngak} means
speech, {le} means karma: karma of body and speech. What is karma made of?
There's basically four choices in Buddhism. It's either something unchanging like

empty space. Or mental, or physical, or something which is neither mental nor physical but still changing. There's only four choices. Actions.

[student: [unclear] actions?]

But what do actions...what are actions made of?

[student: Mental thoughts.]

{Pah tsa}! Is lying a...lying's a mental thought? I mean, there's the thought that comes just before lying. But what is the lying itself. Is it sound? Or is it the activity, you know? It's a very important question. Okay? Anyway, karma of your body and speech. And then they say, {sukchen yin}. {Sukchen yin} means something physical. Something physical. By the way, this is the...what we call the Vaibashika School. The Abhidharma School. Who's talking now, okay? You have to say...this is on your homework. So, I'll call them Detailists, which in Sanskrit is Vaibashika. I don't...I don't care if you learn the Sanskrit or not. Detailists are the Vaibashika School, okay? It's the first school, the lowest school of Buddhism. There were four great schools in ancient India. The four great...this is not the four schools of Tibet, okay? It's not Sakya, Kagyu, Nyingma, Gelukpa. That's a different thing. I'm talking about the four ancient schools of...of Buddhism. And this is the lowest school. This is school number one. I sometimes call them the Abhidharma School, because that's what they teach. I mean in the monastery the main book we study for Vaibashika system is the Abhidharma-kosha, okay? The Detailists. All of the vinaya that we study in the Tibetan tradition is Detailists, okay? These vows that I have are hinayana, okay? The vows that we take in the Tibetan tradition are hinayana. The vow...the whole study of vinaya is a hinayana subject, okay? I dare say...would it be sectarian to say, the hinayana is, is well studied in Tibet? We spend ten years on the Abhidharma. I mean, we really do it right. And I don't believe all those commentaries survive even in the countries where they only practice hinayana. I mean we...we study it really in detail. Detailists means they like a book...there's a book called the de...detailed presentation and they like that book and that's why they were called Detailists, okay? And the name in Sanskrit: Vaibashika. This school, which is the school of all vinaya for us believes that the vows...pratimoksha behavior...consists of the shapes and colors moving around. Or they believe it's physical. They believe the vows are something physical. In another place they say...they permeate your body and they give two examples: like oil permeates a sesame seed. Like, you can't split open a sesame seed and find the oil. But when you squeeze a sesame seed all this oil comes out. So

where does it stay? They say it permeates your body. The vow permeates your body like oil permeates a sesame seed. Then in another place they say it permeates your body like fire in a forest fire. Like I was recently, intimately associated with a forest fire. And the fire spreads all over the forest. You know, I mean you could see tons of red flames all over, all throughout all the trees. It's spreading all throughout the forest and the vows are like that. The vows are like interspersed throughout your body. According to the Vaibashikas, they are physical matter. They're like an aura that you cannot see that permeates your body. This school believes in a kind of physical matter which is untouchable and invisible. They believe that at the first moment you take your vows, and you're bowing before that {khenpo}, and he or she is giving you your vows, at that moment you understand what the person is thinking right? What is he thinking? He or she. It's like renunciation, hopefully. I mean at the moment the vows are...the guy's gonna go [fingersnap] you got the vows. There's this thing in the ceremony where they go [fingersnap], and at that moment, hopefully you're thinking about renunciation. "Oh, I got vows, now I can get out of samsara," you know, and at that moment, while you're all...you know, tears are pouring down your face and you're all bent over, the person whose watching you can say, "Oh, this person is taking vows." This person just got vows. This is Vaibashika system. That's called communicating...that's called physical matter which communicates. And it means communicates the intent of the person whose doing it. Okay? If you see some person weeping, bend over in front of a great lama whose granting vows on them, you can assume that they have some kind of renunciation. But what about three days later. They're walking down the street. They still have the vows, but you can't tell anything by looking at them. And that's another kind of physical matter called...physical matter which does not communicate the intent of its...of the owner of that physical matter. In other words, it's invisible and it's untouchable. So from the first moment of your vows, the moment you walk out of that room, if you don't have on some kind of special clothing or something, nobody can...can see that you have them and no one can tell why you took them. You know, they don't...they don't automatically see that when they look at you. You know, if you put ten people in this room and I say, "Pick out the ones that have vows," you couldn't do it. The Vaibashika School says, that the vows, after the first moment, consists of some kind of invisible, ineffable, physical matter that permeates your body, okay? Even as you restrain yourself from bad karma, physically and men...and verbally, okay? So, it's for them, for them it's all physical. The vows are some kind of invisible aura that's on you, that you have. And the day you die, it disappears. Yeah?

[student: Is there an argument with different schools?]

We're gonna get to it right now. Now it's very interesting. There's another school called...

[silence]

[cut]

...Buddhism, the one that Nagarjuna belongs to, the one that Tsongkapa belongs to, the one that His Holiness the Dalai Lama belongs to, the one that Khen Rinpoche belongs to...is the Implication Section of the Middle Way School. Middle Way School is School Number Four. School Number Four. And the Implication Section is the upper half of that school.

[silence]

Why are they called Implication? Why are they called Middle Way? They're half way between the wrong view that nothing exists and the wrong view that everything exists without your projections. Okay? They're called Middle Way School. Or in Sanskrit? Madhyamika. And I'll spell it.

[silence]

By the way...[madhya] came into Latin and then reached English and it's in the word "medium," okay? [Med] means medium. So Madhyamika is the name of the Middle Way School. Why are they called Middle Way? They are...they are right in middle between the two bad views, one bad view that says, "Nothing exists at all." "Emptiness means nothing exists at all." That's a stupid wrong view. And then there's this other wrong view that everything's the way it looks. And they're half way between, okay? They don't believe that everything's the way it looks like to us, but they also don't believe that nothing exists. They're half way between. That's Madhyamika. I didn't mean to get into this, but anyway Implication means, they believe that if you go up to person and say, "Oh, what did you think? It was anything more than your own projections?" That's enough to imply to them that things are empty. You know, based on a sarcastic statement, which is called a {telngyur} or a [prasangika], you know, "Oh, what did you think? That everything was not your projections?" Just based on saying that, someone can eventually recognize emptiness itself. That's a long story, okay? Without telling them directly what it is, but just by giving them a sarcastic

statement, "Oh, I guess nothing can change then, if it's not your projection." I mean, just based on that, at a certain level you can realize emptiness, okay. That's called Implication. You don't have to worry about that, okay. In Sanskrit that's [prasangika].

Why did I get into all this? The highest school of Buddhism, and the upper half of the highest school of Buddhism, believes that the pratimoksha vows are physical matter also. Nagarjuna, His Holiness, every Gelukpa wise man, believes that the vows are something physical. So this viewpoint that's expressed in, in Tsongkapa's two lines here is shared by the lowest school and by the highest half of the highest school. Now they don't quite believe it the way the Vaibashikas do. They don't say it's something...kind of aura that's hanging through your body and stuff like that. They say, it's the conceptualization of not lying and not stealing and things like that. It's the conceptual part. They believe in a kind of physical matter which is conceptual. And they give as an example when you close your eyes and, and imagine "red" or you close your eyes and think about your refrigerator at home, okay? That is a kind of matter. Or I should say it's something physical in the sense of having colors and shapes. Maybe I avoid the word matter which is a little tricky. They don't believe it's matter, but they do believe it's physical. And they believe that your visualizations, for example, are a kind of form...colors and shapes...and they exist as an object of your mind. And that is where the vows are. That's what the vows are. They are the conceptualization of not saying anything bad and not doing anything bad, okay? That's the highest school. Yeah?

[student: Does that mean thoughts are physical also?]

No. I mean visualized colors and shapes belong to the category...and almost all schools of Buddhism accept this...of what we call mental form, you know, visualized form, you know. Form which is pictured in the mind, you know. Otherwise, where do you put the colors and shapes of your dreams, you know. Are they, are they colors and shapes...are they visual objects? Yes. But they are imagined. And they are an object of the mental consciousness. So these are all included in a thing called the [dharma ayatana]: the object of your mind. The colors and shapes which your mind can conceive of, okay? And the vows are that, okay? The act, the act of refraining from lying is a conceptual picture is a conceptual picture, that you have. When Dharma Badra gets to this part, he says, this is really tough. And I don't understand it very well. And this is the Prasangika viewpoint. And I hope somebody later can grasp it more fully than I do. [laughs] If he says that, I mean, you know, that's like Einstein saying I don't quite understand this, but maybe somebody else will, later. I mean, he's

admitting that it's a very difficult thing to, to understand. There's a point in, in one of his scriptures where he says this is pretty tough stuff. Okay? Yeah?

[student: Is there a difference between thinking or, and saying and doing a bad act from some thinking of it and refraining from doing it?]

Yeah, it also comes in Dharma Badra's...one of his...he has a huge book of questions and answers. And it was all carved out. These are the interviews that took place during his whole life. And they were recorded and carved. And in one of them, somebody says, "Is thinking about a bad act, a bad act?" You know? Because it's not covered very much in the scriptures, you know? Is planning out a bad out...or let's say hatred, you know? Is, is ill will bad karma? 'Cause I haven't done anything yet? And he says, yes it is bad karma. I mean, it plants things in your mind. It plants future unpleasant projections in your mind, which is the definition of bad karma. So he does go into that. Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

We didn't, but I can do it. It is {yin}, {she}, end quotation marks, in Tibetan you only have end-quotation marks, you never know where the quotation begins. And {dunpa} means, they believe, they say, okay? What he's gonna get to is that there are two broad positions, you know, there's this whole one-and-a-half schools, of the classic four schools saying they are, they are something physical. They are colors and shapes. Or sounds, in the case of light. And then you have the other whole two and-a-half schools saying, they're something else. So he's only reporting what these guys say. He says, they believe, quote, that this is...things that you do with your body, and things that you say with your mouth, which are physical, and that's the vows. The vows are physical. Pratimoksha morality is something physical, okay? That's the viewpoint of this Detailist School, and then you have the Middle Way School saying, "Yeah, it's the conceptualization of saying things or doing things." It's, it's the imagination of it, you know. By the way, that doesn't mean the intention. It means the...as you do it or as you say it, it's the conceptualization of yourself doing it, like that. Yeah?

[student: I don't understand the difference between the conceptualization of saying something [unclear].]

Oh...no. I'm saying...I'm not talking about the premeditation when I say that, you know? Where you say, I'm gonna lie.

[student: Right.]

I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about...

[student: It's not considered physical when you say that.]

No. I'm talking about this conceptualization of yourself as not lying.

[student: Right.]

Because conceiving yourself as not lying is something...it's a sound in your mind. Or it's a lack of sound in your mind, you know? It's saying something pure. It's thinking of yourself as saying something good...and not lying. Avoiding killing is imagining yourself not lifting up that ax, and killing...and doing harm to someone. It's tough stuff, okay? I'm just reporting, okay? {Shekdah}. Okay, take a break. Come back in five minutes. Then we'll do a little one and I think we'll go home in time today, okay? [cut]

...believe we just end up, saying it. It's probably related to their unique understanding of emptiness...[laughs] which is true. I mean, ultimately everything they believe which is different is normally ties back to their belief in how things exist as projections of the mind. So you might contemplate that. That might have some relevance here, you know. Usually that ends up being the, the pivotal concept that makes you figure out what they're trying to say about anything else. Because that idea is so unique, you know. And so true. Okay.

[silence]

[cut]

{Gyunchakpa} [repeat]. {Gyunchakpa} [repeat]. {Sabun dang che} [repeat]. {Sabun dang che} [repeat]. {Yinno she} [repeat]. {Yinno she} [repeat]. Okay. This is the other half, okay? This is the other half, which is two-and-a-half schools, okay? So far we've had one-and-a-half schools, right? So, this is a position held by School Number Two.

[silence]

If you...I'll put the Sanskrit, although you don't have to know it. And by School

Number Three.

[silence]

Mind-Only School or Chittamatra. They're also known as Yogachara, for...that's another story, okay? And we got half left, which is what? The other half...the lower half of the Madhyamika School, okay, which is the...Independent Section.

[silence]

Okay, I'll translate for this...this for you. {Pongway sampa}. {Pongway} means to give up...to give up doing those bad deeds, mainly the seven, right? {Sampa} means the intention...the intention to give up those bad deeds. {Gyunchakpa} means the continued intention, the stream of that intention. We're gonna skip to {dang che}. {Dang che} means along with...okay, so you got that continuation of the intention, along with {sabun}. {Sabun} means mental seed...the mental seed of that intention. {Yinno she}. {Yinno she} means some people say it's that. [laughs] Okay? {Yinno she} means some people say...some people say that what the pratimoksha vows are made of is the continued intention to give up those bad deeds, and the propensity or mental habit that doing that...causes, okay? Like, if you play baseball long enough, you get a {sabun}. You get certain {sabun}. Sometimes we call them {bakchak}s, and it's...it's an energy in your mind. And it's where, you know, a glove looks familiar to you, or feels good, or a baseball bat...you pick it up and it just feels right, and these are things, these are like habits planted in your mind that if you do something long enough, it just...there's some kind of energy in your mind for it, some kind of propensity towards it. And like after you die, if you've been a baseball player your whole life, after you die then you reborn, and then the first time you see a baseball bat it's like you're attracted to it. That's...that comes from the {bakchak}. You know, that's why Mozart played piano at five, you know. You have {bakchak}s for these things. So, if you, if you continue, to have this intention, then there's some kind of seed or some of propensity or some kind of...in Tibetan it's called...it stains your mind or it rubs off on your mind, or creates some kind of energy in your mind, okay? This also...if you explain a vow as being the continued intention to do something or not to do something, what happens when you're asleep? Well, the {bakchak}'s there. Okay? Even you're not thinking about it, the vow is still there because the seed is there...that habit that's formed...that energy, which is the...which is the...familiarity with the thing, or something like that, okay? So, in these three...two-and-a-half schools, a vow consists of the intention to avoid those bad deeds and the propensity of that intention, which

resides in the mind stream, okay? The first of these two things--the intention...the continued intention--is mental...made of mental stuff. We talked about that, we talked about future lives. Mental stuff is a stiff...specific kinda material. It's quite different from physical matter. Mental stuff and the {sabun}, the {bakchak}. There's huge debates about it. What's it made of? You know. Is it like a tumor in your mind? Or...is it physical? Is it a thought itself? Or is it just a condition, a kind of energy? And, and the, generally, it's accepted that it's the third. It's the last choice. It's a...it's a kinda potential in your mind. It's a condition in your mind. It is not mental...it's a condition which resides in the mind. And that's what they think the vows are made of. So here are the two great positions, you know. One side says it's something physical, and then the other side says it's something mental along with some kind of energy that resides in the mind. Okay? But the two schools that say it's physical differ greatly in what kind of stuff they think that means. One of them says it's some kind of outer form, and one of them says it's some kind of visualized or conceptualized form. Okay? That's how vows stay in you, okay? If you ever want to know. [laughs] That's what their made of. And it's...you know, it's something you have to ask yourself. If you're a Buddhist, you have to...you have to think about these things, you know? What separates a person who has vows from a person that doesn't have vows? Oh, they have vows? What's that mean? Where are they? What are they made of? You have to think about it. You have to decide, what they're made of, okay? Last point tonight, and then we'll stop on time, I think...yeah, weird...the eight different groups of vows. We'll do the eight different groups of vows. And I'm just gonna do it in English so that we really can finish on time. Well I'll tell you what. I'll give you the sound, okay? You want the whole thing?

[student: Yes.]

[student: No.]

[laughter]

Did I spell that right? Aura? {Denpu}? {Nyen ne}. Say {nyen ne} [repeat] {nyen ne} [repeat]. {Nyen ne} is the one-day vow, okay? The one-day vow. We'll talk more about it. I mean, we'll go through each of the vows individually. But so you know there's...it has eight components and we'll talk about it. But it's being good for one day, to just see if you can do it. [laughs] It's good practice. It's acting like an arhat for one day. Just to get used to the idea. And it, and it's...and you loose it, when you...when the sun rises the next morning and you can see

the lines on your palm, you've lost the vow...it's over...it goes away, okay? It lasts for twenty-four hours. It lasts till dawn of the next morning...or daylight, okay? That's a {nyen ne} vow. It's not divided into male and female because it's so short, okay? Second vow is...

[silence]

And we'll do it together with number three.

[silence]

Say {ge nyen pa} [repeat] {ge nyen ma} [repeat]. Okay. {Ge nyen} means lifetime laymen's vows. And the {pa} means the male one, and the {ma} means the female one. Okay? These are really, really nice to have. [laughs] Okay? You'd be very lucky if you could get them.

[student: [unclear]]

Excuse me?

[student: [unclear]]

Oh, how many are there? We're gonna talk about it in detail. Say {ge tsul pa} [repeat] {ge tsul ma} [repeat]. {Ge tsul} is a novice. {Ge tsul pa} is a novice monk and {ge tsul ma} is a novice nun. Say {ge long ma} [repeat] {ge long ma} [repeat]. We translate this as an intermediate nun's vows. Okay? Intermediate nun. Nuns go through three steps and monks only go through two. It's a, it's a special...like a two-year special vow between novice and full nun, okay?

[silence]

Say {ge long ma} [repeat] {ge long pa} [repeat]. Okay, {ge long ma} means a fully-ordained nun. And a {ge long pa}, which is normally called a {ge long}, is a fully-ordained monk. The nuns have three hundred and sixty-four vows and the monks have two hundred and fifty-three. 'Cause we're better...no, just kidding. [laughs] And very difficult to...this, the ordination especially for {ge long ma} is very, very difficult. It's very complicated and in fact in our tradition it has died out. It...this ordination was, was lost due to not enough nuns to hold the ceremony, at a certain point in history, in the history of Tibet due to some political disturbances. There weren't enough...it takes a lot of nuns to make a full

nun, and it's broken in the Tibetan tradition. So all the nuns you see are {ge tsul ma}'s in the Tibetan tradition...have novice vows. Anyway, those are the eight classes of vows. Next class we'll group them, and then we'll start to explain them individually, okay?

[student: Nuns were three hundred sixty-four?]

Yeah. {Tsongya dachu sashi na pongwah chepah ge long ma}...is the root text. [laughs] In this tradition there are [cut]

...Abhidharmists, and at a certain point they...Tibetans decided to follow one of the eighteen schools of ancient India. And in other countries you'll see slight differences, you know? There'll be slight differences in the count...in other countries, depending on which school originally introduced the vows in that country.

[End of side two]

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Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class 4: A General Description of the Vows, Part I

8/12/96

Transcribed by: Roy Yoshimoto

Proofread by: Summer Moore

First of all I have one addition to make to last week's class, okay? After that I read another commentary [laughs] which is by...we think it's by a Kagyupa from the thirteenth century and it's the main commentary we use for vinaya called {tsoteg}. It's about a thousand pages long. Anyway, he got into more about what the vows were made of, and he made it more clear. So I thought you might like to hear that, even though you already finished your homework and everything. He starts out this way. He says the Sutrists--the {Dodepa}--believe that the vows, when you take vows--pratimoksha vows--they exist as the continued intention to give up those bad deeds...and he...I like that he gives an example of the continued intention. And it's a monk thinking just as he's about to do something, "I shouldn't do that because that would be breaking my vows." So that's to them the...what the vows are made of. For the Sutrists, the second group of the four, they say the vows are made up of...the vows consist of...you're just about to do something wrong and you say, "I shouldn't do that 'cause I have vows." And that is the vows, okay? That's according to the Sutrists. Alright? Then the Mind-Only School comes along and says, "What if someone's in deep meditation? What if a monk is in deep meditation, or what if a monk is deep asleep? Well, are you saying they lose their vows? Like when a monk goes to bed and he goes...he goes into REM sleep and from midnight to four, he's not a monk anymore? 'Cause he doesn't have vows anymore." And then the Sutrists say, "Well, how can he break vows if he was in deep meditation, anyway?" And then they give this example. There is a vow for fully-ordained monks and I'm not supposed to tell you all the vows. I have to tell you this one...that if you have been assigned to taking care of all of the monks' mattresses during the rainy season, and they've been hung outside and they've told you, you watch them, in case it starts raining, you bring them in. And then everybody goes off somewhere. And then you go meditate in your room, and you go into this deep meditation, if during that meditation, it starts raining, and the mattresses get ruined, you're vows have been broken at that moment, okay?

So the Mind-Only School says you must be able to break a vow even while you're in deep meditation. And if you don't have a vow...if the vow consists of thinking I better not let those mattresses go to waste, and you can't have that thought when you're in deep meditation, then that's not enough. The vow has to be more than that. Okay? Confused enough? Alright. So in other words if the vow is the conscious thought I shouldn't be doing this, then that guy can't break his vow at that moment, but the Buddha says he does break his vow at that moment. So then the Mind-Only School says, "We have to add the {bakchak}." We have to add the mental seed for that vow. And that's where the {sahben} comes in. That's where the seed comes in. The Mind-Only School says you better add the seed. Because even when he's not thinking about his vows, he can break his vows. Then along comes the Vaibashika School...the first school...the Abhidharma School. And they say, "What if somebody is sitting before the abbot, and they're about to take their vows, and they have this intention to have vows and to give up bad deeds? They're thinking, "I shouldn't do this. I shouldn't do anything bad." And they also have this seed for a vow at that moment. And they're just about to get their vow. Well then they must have vows the moment before they get their vows, which is impossible 'cause you didn't get the vows yet. Because the abbot didn't go [fingersnap] like that. So your definition's not enough. Even the intention and the seed is not enough. It has to be the physical form of that guy at the moment that the abbot [fingersnap] takes his...snaps [fingersnap] his fingers and he's got vows. It must be the physical restraining from doing bad deeds. And the physical restraining from saying things. Then people give the Vaibashika a hard time. And they say, "Well, what about ten minutes later when he's gone out of the room and he looks like a normal person again?" Does he have vows or not? Because he doesn't...it's not...it doesn't look like he has vows. You can't tell an hour later how he looks from someone who looks who doesn't have vows. They look the same. Then the Abhidharma School has to get into this special kind of invisible form that surrounds your body like an aura or it's all through your atoms of your body, and then they say that's the vow. Then the Prasangika comes along and you know what they say. They say it's like some kind of mental picture of having the vows. So anyway that's how the argument goes. And I...it wasn't too clear last time and I think now you get...especially about that mental seed. Why, why the mental seed. So how do the vows exist in you? You know, if you have vows where are they, you know? If you take a razorblade, can you cut open and find the vows or something? Where are the vows? What's the difference between a person who has vows and doesn't have vows? Do they weigh an ounce more? You know, I mean, what are the vows made of? And it's a very interesting question. Definitely you have vows, but where are they? And what

are they made of? So the highest school says something like, the physical restraining of your body and speech as you imagine it, or as you're thinking of it, okay? Okay? Now we'll get down to today's subject. Je Tsongkapa finished...he was gonna give you {Ngowo dannyi rabide sosoy lundzin kyewe ten}. He was gonna give you the divisions of the vows, and we finished them. We finished the eight kinds of vows. He makes one more division. He says you can split the vows into two groups. Okay? We're gonna cover that first. Two groups are these.

[Silence]

By the way, before we go any further, I'd like to introduce and welcome Pako...I dunno how to say your last name. But he is Lama Yeshe's father. So very honored to have him here tonight. Like to welcome you...[laughs], okay. He did a big job. [laughs] Say {kyimpay} [repeat] {chok kyi} [repeat] {dompa} [repeat]. {kyimpay} [repeat] {chok kyi} [repeat] {dompa} [repeat]. {Kyim} means a house. So {kyimpa} is a householder. Okay? Someone who has not yet left the family life...{kyimpa}, householder...{kyimpe}. {Chok} is a tough word. {Chok} means this side or that side. {Chok} means one side or the other. In Sanskrit it's [baksha]. And we'll talk about the word {chok}. It's important. You can say "type" here. Okay? "Type." Or "kind." Okay? {Dompa} means, what? Vows. Okay? So all the eight kinds of pratimoksha vows can be divided into vows that relate to householders. And then {rabjung chok kyi dompa}. Say {rabjung} [repeat] {chok kyi} [repeat] {dompa} [repeat]. {Rabjung}...{rab} is short for {rabtujungwa}. {Rabtujungwa} means really came out. And it means someone who has left the family life. Someone who has decided to leave the family life. {Rabjung}. {Chok} means that side or that type. {Dompa} means vow. So vows which relate to those who have already left the home life. And here you have to know there's a kind of...status that's halfway between being ordained and not being ordained. And it's called {rabjung}. Okay? {Rabjung} is not a...one of the pratimoksha vows. It's sort of a halfway house between not having vows and taking ordination. And it's where you undergo a ceremony where you agree to leave the home life. Okay? And you can start wearing red robes. And that's what the children in the monasteries are. They've taken a {rabjung} commitment. We don't call it a vow. It's called {rabjung kyi tsultrim}. And it means they've agreed to go to a monastery and look, you know, start...start getting ordained, or something like that. But it's not a...it's not considered a pratimoksha vow. Okay, so these are...you could say vows that relate to the ordained life, and vows, or having left the home life? And then vows that relate to those who are still living the home life. Okay?

Householders, okay? Normally you take a {rabjung} commitment before you take your first ordination. Okay? There's a trick here. The reason they say {chok}, the reason they don't say vows of those who have left the home life, or vows of those who have not left the home life...rather they say vows that relate to them, okay? There's a reason. And they give the example of someone who has already taken their {rabjung} commitment. They've agreed to leave the home life. But they haven't taken their first ordination yet. Which would be a novice ordination. So where do they fall? Let's say they took lifetime laymen's vows, but they didn't take their first novice ordination yet. Where do they do? How many of the eight vows are here, and how many are here? Let's start with that. Okay? First vow's what?

[student: One-day vows.]

So that's gotta be...yeah. This is a one-day vow. And two?

[student: Layperson's lifetime vows [unclear].]

Yeah, lifetime, yeah okay, layman...{ge nyen palma} Yeah...and lifetime laywoman. So those are considered of this type. Okay? And then the other five are considered this type. Okay? In the root text it says {kimpay dompa dampo sun rabje dompa tama gna}. The first three are...relate to people who have not yet left the home life and the latter five relate to those who have left the home life. And the example we were talking about was somebody who has this vow, but already took this commitment. Where is he? He agreed to leave the home life but he hasn't taken hi nov...he hasn't taken vow number four yet or five. He hasn't taken a novice vow yet. That's why they have to say relate to. Okay? Because technically he's still here. But he's already a {rabjung}. Okay? Got it? That's why they have to say {chok}. And it's a big deal in the vinaya. Alright? So those are the basic divisions. You're either in this one or this one. If you have one of the first three vows...sets of vows, you're over here. If you have one of the latter five sets of vows, you're over here. Okay? Now we're gonna start to talk about the first vow. He promised {ngowo dang ni rabye dang sosoy ngundzin kyeway ten}. {Ngowo} we finished. What's the vow made of? {Rabye} we finished. What's the divisions and the groupings? And the third one is {sosoy ngundzin}. {Sosoy ngundzin} means, well, what are the vows? Okay? What are the individual vows? Now we're gonna start with the one-day vow. The one-day vow has eight separate commitments. And they are divided into the four primary commitments and the four secondary commitments. I'll give you the Tibetan.

[silence]

Say {mi tsang chu} [repeat]. {Mi tsang chu} [repeat]. {Mi} means...I think you know. Not. Okay? {Ma mi min me} are the four negatives. {Tsang} means pure or clean. In Sanskrit it's [brahma]. But it means clean, okay. And {chu} means activity. Unclean activity means sexual activity. Okay? It's a word for sexual activity. So {mi tsang chu} means for the length of one day you agree not to engage in sexual activity. The most serious would be adultery. Right?

[silence]

Say {ma jin len} [repeat]. {Ma jin len} [repeat]. {Ma} means "me"...same, okay? {jin} means given. {Ren} means to take. To take what has not been given to you, okay? Stealing. Okay? {Ma jin len}. Classically, they try to set a limit, you know? Like, if you stole a pen from work, did you commit {ma jin len}? I was always wondering about, 'cause I do it all the time. [laughs] And, the...the limit is a quarter of a [karshapana]. And, that comes from [Magada] in ancient India. And, like it's some kind of monetary unit. Alright? And, even the Tibetans like in Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra's time were debating how much is a quarter of a [karshapana]? In fact, there's a whole little text in his collected works that...where he discusses the value of a quarter [karshapana] in terms that we can't figure out now anyway. So, [laughs] I, I asked Rinpoche, I said, "How much is a quarter [karshapana]?" He said, "I don't know." But he said I guess it's somewhere between a quarter and a dollar. Okay? I've heard ten cents, I've heard fifty cents, I've heard a dollar. Something that someone would feel you stole. I think, I think that's the bottom line, you know? Something that someone would feel that you stole. You stole it, you know? Like I think a pen would probably be okay. And something that's worth a dollar, you know, like three pens, or something. It's like when would your boss start to object? You know, depending on your boss, right? Anyway, something of...of...of some kind of value. Okay? {Ma jin len}. Of course, it's not good to steal anything. Yeah, that's like going like this...and they, they do that...in scriptures. Fun to carve, I think. Say {sok chu} [repeat]. {Sok chu} [repeat]. {Sok} means life. {Chu} means to cut. So this is killing. Killing. Most serious one is to kill {miam mir chakpa} [repeat]. {Miam mir chakpa} [repeat]. {Mi} means "a human being." {Am} means "or." {Mir chakpa} means a "fetus." In other words, to...to have an abortion, to cause an abortion. Okay? So {miam mir chakpa}. That's the classic...I mean when they ask the Dalai Lama, "Is abortion okay?" This is...this is...all Buddhist scriptures say the same thing. They don't say killing a human. They say killing a

human or a fetus. They always say that. So it's very cut and dried. It's very simple. Okay? Can't do it. It starts at the moment of conception. There's no debate about nine weeks or three weeks or...okay? It's when the egg meets the sperm. That's a...the consciousness enters at that moment so...that's it. Can't do it after that, okay? It's good to know, 'cause it's very dangerous. 'Cause say in our country it's considered okay right now. Okay? Number four...

[silence]

Say {dzun ma} [repeat]. {Dzun ma} [repeat]. {Dzun} means false. {Ma} means to speak. And it means to lie. The biggest lie you can do--the classic lie--is to lie about your spiritual life. For example, the classic lie about your spiritual life is to say you've seen emptiness directly, when you haven't. Okay? If you have, you know it. Okay? So if you're not sure, you didn't. Okay? If you're not totally sure, you didn't. So it's...that's the...that's the worst kind of lie. It's total...total lie. These are called the basic four, the root four. The first half of the one-day vow. You have to keep these four. Avoid these four, right? Yeah.Yeah. Sometimes they're called root--the four root vows. Sometimes they're called the four primary vows. {Mel che te}. Well, we'll do it in Tibetan.

[silence]

Say {Mel che te} [repeat]. {Mel che te} [repeat]. {Mel} is a difficult word. We don't have one word in English, but it means a seat and also a bed. I mean, 'cause in Asia normally you're sitting on your bed. You use...it's a multi-purpose thing. So {mel} can mean your seat or your bed. {Che} means big. {Te} means high. And in this case, big means big value, like very expensive. {Te} means exceeding one {tru}. This is a {tru}. It's made up of twenty-four...twenty-four {sor}s, that's like {gyanchak}...{dom}. And you know it goes like that. So anyway, it's using expensive furniture, something like that. Luxurious furniture. In other words, you're supposed to--for that one day--try to live simply. I can imagine that in our society, it would be like using your Mercedes rather than your Volkswagon...for that day, you know, it just means avoiding luxury for that day. For that one day...I don't have this problem. It doesn't say that technically. It's just a luxurious seat or bed. But I think the spirit of the thing is, you know, avoid luxury for one day. Try to live simply. The, the one day vow is trying to emulate an arhat for one day. You know it's trying to live like a person who is incapable of having a bad thought for one day. That's the whole point of a one-day vow. And then if you keep doing that often enough you might...it might plant a seed in your mind and maybe one day you actually start

living that way, you know? [Unclear]...{chang tung}.

[silence]

Say {chang tung} [repeat]. {Chang tung} [repeat]. {Chang} is a Tibetan beer. Okay? Alcohol. Alright? I once drank some by accident, before I became a monk. And...anyway I won't talk about that. {Tung} means to drink. Okay? {Changtung} means to drink alcohol. And the scriptures always say here... {druwam chume chang}. {Druwam chume chang} means it doesn't matter whether it's a naturally brewed alcohol, or whether it's some chemical concoction like a drug that you've...that you've put together from chemicals, artificially, and not brewed. So it covers all kinds of intoxicants, okay? This one covers drugs and alcohol. Yeah. Yeah, it's always explained as {druwam}...this is the short version. {Druwam chume chang tunwa}. That's the full vow. There's a big debate about it. For a monk it's quite strict. But I think in general, the modern lama's advice would be, you know...like if you have to take some novocain or something, I mean, it's alright. The point is whether or not it lowers your inhibitions. That's the point.

[cut]

Say {Gar sok treng sok} [repeat]. {Gar sok treng sok} [repeat]. {Gar} means dancing, okay. {Gar} means dancing. {Sok} means etcetera. {Tren} means like in India there was a custom of wearing these flower leis, these garlands of flowers around your neck, like if you see women in still Karnataka State, they're still wearing...every morning they put a fresh flower in their hair. {Tren}. {Sok} means etcetera. I'm gonna tell you what the etceteras refers to, okay? It's very specific. {Gar} is dancing or singing or playing music. Whenever you get into this point you get all these objections from Western people. I'll, I'll summarize them. 'Cause I also share them. What about religious music, you know? Then there's this debate about whether certain rock songs are religious. Or is it only Bach who's religious, you know? And then they say what about, you know, holy dancing, you know, like lama dancing and stuff like that, you know? What about that stuff? And what's the difference? And if I feel like it's religious, isn't it alright? The point is this. Two...two, and I...two things I...I've known about it...one is...this mostly refers to something like a disco or something. I mean it refers mostly to activity which would make you...would lower your general inhibitions and you would do something else. You know like, you start acting crazy and a little wild, and then you do something else. I mean the point is that. The point is that...one point is that it's this kind of dancing or singing or playing

of music that would...that you would do at a party, and that would eventually lead you to get a little wild and do something else that you shouldn't be doing. But the second point is deeper and that's that, at most levels, these three activities in almost any form would disturb your meditation. You know, and if, if you're musically inclined you know that, you know? I used to not...you know, eight years I didn't have any music in the house and I used to go to the laundromat just so I could hear a few snips of songs, you know, and...'cause they have these songs going all the time. And I would try to come back and try to meditate, and the song would be going, you know...the whole day. So it does really disturb your meditation, if you're trying to reach shamata, which you must reach to see emptiness directly, this acts...this does disturb your mind. This does disturb your concentration. If you're a person like me, you know, I don't know. So I'd say at a certain level you'll see that these things might be disturbing to your meditation. And then they would actually block you from seeing emptiness. So that's very serious. In that case you might want to lay off them for a while and see how it works. On a much, much higher level, you know, which is getting into the secret teachings, there might be something appropriate here--I can't talk about it--and no one should ever perform it in public obviously. Okay? That's another point. Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

That's what I was...I can't talk about that. Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

[Laughs] Now you're getting into a personal case, you know? I, I think it would disturb your meditation and I also think it wouldn't make you act crazy and hurt somebody or something like that. You know? So I'd say on level "a" it's not gonna make you wild like disco music and then make you hurt somebody or do something immoral. On the other hand it will disturb your meditation. If your meditation gets serious, it'll start to disturb your meditation. If you reach a certain state of shamata, or close to shamata, you'll find this quite disturbing. That's...that's just my personal reflections on it. I mean I, you know...it's obviously...they're meant to be activities that would disturb you spiritually. You know, and that's the point. With a lot of people it calms them down. So, you know...I think it's at different levels. If you're on an everyday level, it might actually calm you down a little bit. If it's something you're gonna go do at a club at two a.m. and go wild, it might actually hurt you. If you are in meditation, or planning to be in meditation, or you're trying to go on retreat, or you're trying

to gain shamata, I think you must strictly avoid these things. If you are into the secret teachings deeply and you're some kind of huge yogi and you've done it for millions of years, which you know to be the requirement, right? Perhaps it could take on a higher meaning. So I, you know, that's...that's up to each person's level I think.

[student: Historically then, when this might have been written that might have been a group activity or party just by definition.]

...could've been, but you have to be careful about that. I mean people...I'd say be careful about the historical thing where they say, "Oh that was India two thousand years ago; it's not like that now." It is like that now. Whatever reason the Buddha said not to do it in those days...the historical thing doesn't work very well, usually, I'm just warning you, you know. People say, "Oh that was back in India, you know? That...they couldn't get angry back in India, but we realize that it's helpful to get it out, you know. [Laughs][laughter] It's not like that. Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. What was the story of meditation? Oh, yeah, no, he's not supposed to go into meditation, 'cause he...he promises the other monks not to go into meditation. He's actually lied. He's, he's taken the res-...he has agreed to take the responsibility and he's just drawn to his meditation seat...which never happens to us, [laughs][laughter] and he break...he's already committed himself to take that responsibility, in that case. Then you get into a thing in vinaya called {dom}. And we're not going to go much into that. But it's called spiritual priorities, you know? Like when you have two good activities, but one of them is lesser than the other, you have to make prioritizations. And, yeah, if he didn't...if he had not agreed, if he'd said I...I'd rather meditate, I can't take responsibility for the mattresses, then it's okay. But if he agreed to do it, and then he goes and meditate, he breaks a vow. {Treng sok}...I'll give you all of those. Those are the examples that Ngulchu Dharma Bhadrakives. Those are pretty common. Nagarjuna also discusses this in his [Suhrllekha], okay? If you're really interested in the one-day vow you can check the [Letter to the...][Letter to a Friend].

[Jay: Now with the first part with regards to, that include reading non-dharma too?]

No. Just specifically these things, 'cause they make you a little bit wild. Insofar

as they might make you loose your inhibitions, okay? That's the point of those. Say {Chi dro} [repeat] {kase} [repeat]. {Chi dro} means the latter part of the day, meaning afternoon. {Kase} means food. It means eating after noon. So on the day that you take a one-day vow, you have to keep the commitment that traditionally monks kept in the old days, which was not eating anything after twelve o'clock. And there's this whole ritual and there's whole books written about how you measure noon. You know, you take a stick that's a certain size and you stick it in the ground and you check the shadow and...it's too late to eat, you know? [Laughs] Okay? In your part of the world; it's all this complicated thing. Anyway, the bottom line is arhats don't eat much, they eat once a day. They take...they take...might take...they go out and beg for their food once. And they eat once. And then it's over with. No more washing. No more thinking about food. No more going to the grocery store. It's a great relief off your mind. Then your mind is free for the rest of the day to think about holy things. And it's very liberating. And it also makes you very light, and it allows you to think clearly for the whole latter part of the day. You can drink anything except milk, and that's considered a food...and yogurt. You know, you can drink watery milk...there's this thing, you know? Generally, fruit juice is okay. And things like that. But milk is considered a food. And yogurt would be like...like a milkshake or something would be considered a food...like that. And that's...those are the...the four secondary parts of a one-day vow, okay? In the Tibetan monastic tradition, when you become a monk, you can...you can declare that you're going to keep it or not. It's called {gongche}. {Gongche} means "cut off the evening." And when you take your vows, normally, I mean just talking local Tibetan tradition, you keep it for a while, and then you start eating in the afternoon. But there are some monks who keep it their whole life. So you're really supposed to keep it your whole life. But that's just the way the tradition has developed. Particularly, it's considered that you should use common sense, you know? If you're working hard, like if you're out working in the fields for the monastery, and...and you, you should be eating something--if it would hurt your body not to eat in the evening--you're not supposed to be a fanatic, you're supposed to use common sense, you know? If you're working in a busy office and you couldn't get out before twelve o'clock, even if you've taken this vow, you can...you know, you're supposed to eat something and keep yourself strong. Common sense is something very important in vinaya. And it's part of vinaya. You know, there's this thing called {miksi} which means "exceptions." And the vinaya is full of exceptions...depending on common sense...about your hair, about your clothing, about a lot of the details...there are written into the vinaya situations where...if it...if it's...if it's...helps many people, if it's something good, if your lama tells you to do it, you should do it. Yeah, and in the Hinayana vinaya there are {miksi}s.

There are special cases where if your lama says, "You gotta go to work, I want you to wear a suit," you have to wear a suit. And the vinaya says for ten hours if he says for ten hours, for twenty-four hours if he says for twenty-four hours...and for your whole life if he says your whole life. So, you know..you have to study vinaya deeply. It's a, it's a long story. If you've taken higher vows, it's even more important to be sensible, take care of yourself. Do what's compassionate. You cannot break the...you cannot stretch the rules which are meant to...like the rule...the rule of celibacy: there's no exceptions to that, never. There's no case where it would be more compassionate to break it. [laughs] [laughter] No, Je Tsongkapa covers that, he covers that. No, he covers that. Well, the example he gives is, what if a lady says she'll commit suicide if you...or something like that. Which...and then he says you have to give back your vows first and then do it. But you can't...as a monk you cannot...never break that. And other...other things like that, okay? His Holiness would say I'll tell you when it happens. [laughs] Okay.

[silence]

Say {tekchen} [repeat] {so jong} [repeat]. {Tekchen so jong} [repeat] and {nyene} [repeat]. Okay, {nyene} is the one-day vow, which is the first of the eight pratimoksha vows, which is what we've been talking about so far. That's a pratimoksha vow. That's part of the vinaya. There's another one-day vow called {tekchen sojong}. And I don't want you to get confused between the two, so I'm mentioning it. It's not mentioned in the vinaya. Okay? {Tekchen sojong} is a custom...{tekchen} means Mahayana, Mahayana, which already takes it out of the realm of vinaya, okay? {So} means to repair. {Jong} means to purify. And so it's like a one-day vow of purification. This is a practice which is current among the Mahayana schools and we...we do it on big holidays, for example. We get up before dawn. We take the eight precepts...same eight precepts...and then until the next morning...the trick, the trick is...the {tse}, the point at which you loose the vow, is the following morning at dawn. So you have to finish it before daylight normally. And then when you can see the lines on your hand, on your palm, from the natural light in the sky...well, then the vow is over. So I've some friends who were sitting with these cookies [laughter]...and watching their hand, you know [laughter][laughs]. There's actually a story like that. So this is a Mahayana vow. What's the difference if the parts of the vow are the same, what's the difference? There's two big differences that I'm aware of. The motivation is, is different. What's the motivation for taking any pratimoksha vow?

[student: To get away from suffering [unclear].]

Just, just to get away from samsara and reach nirvana, which is a mental state. Okay? It's not reaching Buddhahood. It's not reaching enlightenment. It's, it is that golden porthole where you put your mind and you can never again be unhappy, period. Impossible...cannot have a mental affliction, impossible. Definition of nirvana: {nyurnjup malupa pambe sosoyr tango}, "because you saw emptiness directly and practiced a lot, then you can never be shaken out of that state of happiness." Nothing can shake you out of that state of happiness. Your whole world is still screwy. Your body is still doomed. Your relationships are doomed. Your career is doomed. Everything's screwy. But, but your mind is totally unshakable, and happy. That's the motivation for taking {nyene}. And any other pratimoksha vow. But the motivation for taking {tekchen sojong} is "I want to become a bodhisattva; I want to reach total enlightenment; I want to get through that golden hole and move on to total enlightenment where my whole world is paradise; and I want to drag everyone else...I want to be an example for everyone else. I want to be able to bring along everyone else with me...through that place, to, to total happiness. That's the motivation. So motivation is different. Also there's this detail where if a person with a higher pratimoksha vow, takes a lower pratimoksha vow it ruins his higher vow. Okay? Like if a full monk takes a novice vow again, it ruins the full-monk's vow. Can't do it. It pushes out...it's like contradictory. You can't go back to a lower ordination...without giving up the higher ordination. So a monk, for example, cannot take this vow...cannot take this one-day vow, in the Hinayana, as a pratimoksha vow. But a monk must certainly, often as possible, take a Mahayana one-day vow. So that's another difference, okay? You can't take a lower vow in the pratimoksha system, but monks are...happily take this vow. Which is trying to emulate the high bodhisattvas for the length of one day, okay? Yeah?

[student: Can laymen take the one-day vow?]

Sure. Oh Yeah.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, this is a bodhisattva vow.

[student: [unclear]]

Oh sure, Yeah, yeah. Can a...can a lifetime laymen's...I don't know, I gotta check that out. Maybe not. I'll check it out. I'm not sure actually. Do you guys know? I don't know. I would guess, maybe not. But I'll check it out...check it out. I'm not sure. I'll ask Rinpoche. I've a feeling maybe not, 'cause you've already committed to it...most of it. But I'll check it out. You know there is a...well, I won't get into that. There is a kind of vow where you do agree to take it everyday, for the rest of your life. And I think that's a higher vow, but then that get's complicated. And I don't think that's a real higher vow. It's a nominal higher vow. Okay. Anyway...next we're gonna do the lifetime layperson's vows. Okay? I think this is the highlight of the course for a lot of people here, okay? I mean a few people came up to me already and said, "Can I take lifetime laymen's vows." And I said it would be wonderful but wait, wait a while, let me see if I can catch more people, okay? [laughs] It's very easy actually. There's five vows and there's one additional part, okay? So we'll go through them mostly in English. But this is...to...{sepa} means to kill, {mi} means a human being, {am} means or, {mir chakpa} means a human fetus. Okay? So killing a human or a human fetus. That's the first thing you vow not to do. And this is a {jisi sorwa pardo} which means for the length of your life, until you die. The moment you die you loose these vows. These are pratimoksha vows. Right. I mean, technically speaking, the lifetime laymen's vows are pretty easy to keep. Okay? They are big time bad deeds. Technically speaking. They are really...they're...it's pretty hard to do, do them, okay? Except for abortion. I mean, that's pretty common. I think this one might be, I mean as I think about it, this would be the most difficult one. This one might be very difficult, actually. I mean...there was a point in the translation of the Buddhist scriptures into Tibetan when the king said I want all measurements expressed in Magada units. Magada is like one part of central India, you know? So all the weights, all the lengths, all the times, all the monetary was expressed you know in units that were current, you know, down in India at that time. So, karshapana. And as we said, a quarter karshapana...think of it like twentyfive cents to a dollar. That's...I mean that's from Rinpoche, and Rinpoche is one of probably the last three or four greatest scholars of vinaya in the world. So if he doesn't know, I don't know if we're gonna find anybody that knows. He started to convert it to Tibetan currency and then he said, "But that's all over now," and you know like Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra converts it to Tibetan currency of his day; but that was two hundred years ago and we don't really know." So...stealing anything of value. I think that's hard. There's a long discussion in the vinaya why cheating on your taxes is stealing, for example. I mean, all kinds of cheating and things like that are stealing more than a quarter karshapana, so that's tricky, you have to be careful about it. Okay? They discussed it specifically.

[student: If you take that same pen from the office without realizing [unclear]]

I don't know if you have to...there's a {shi sanba jorwa tartu} whenever you do a bad deed, there's what the thing is, what your motivation was, did you undertake to do it, and did you complete it? And normally all four have to be there for a big karma to be created. I'm not sure, but I don't think if you, for example, kill a person in a car accident that...I don't believe you would break this vow. Okay? If you're not conscious of it I don't believe you would break it. I believe you have to have a motivation. You have to have premeditation, normally, even if it's only a moment of anger, you know, twenty seconds of, milliseconds of anger, and then you kill somebody or something, but you gotta have some kind of forethought about it, normally. Okay, number three.

[silence]

Dharma Bhadra mentions two versions of this lying about your spiritual life. One is a direct total lie, and very typically, "I've seen emptiness directly," or something like that. That's the classic one. But, then he goes into a discussion. I don't know if it was him or Chone Drakpa Shedrup, but it was...then they go into a discussion of why certain other kinds of lies that imply you have spiritual realizations are also come under this category. And he mentions people who come up to you and say they can see your future life, or they can see what you were in the past, or, or things like that. Or even to imply it. Or to claim that they have some miraculous powers or something like that. Because that implies that you've seen emptiness directly and stuff like that. You see? If I say I can see my future lives...since that's something that happens right after you see emptiness directly, then that's implying that you've seen emptiness directly when you haven't. And that's another kind of lie, you know? Yeah?

[student: So you're saying that, he is they're saying that it's impossible for people to any kind of psychic powers unless they've seen emptiness directly.]

no...not saying that. You can possibly see some things before you see emptiness directly. You always see them when you see emptiness directly. But it is possible, like for non-Buddhists, who is very good at meditating to see a future life. And that's...that's possible. But most times it implies that you've reached some high level, and even if you've seen emptiness directly, it's part of the experience that you'd never tell anyone directly. You'd never get up there and just say I...July seventy-five I saw emptiness directly...something like that. You

can't do that. They wouldn't do it. So if someone gets up and says it, you have to be careful. Okay? I'm not saying that that person's definitely lying, but it probably would have to be some extraordinary circumstance.

[student: Don't you do that sometimes with your bodhisattva vows to show that you're an authority or something?]

Extremely rare, because it's not a good way to prove yourself because it cannot be confirmed by the other party. And that's one of the big reasons why you don't have to talk about it. They can't confirm it anyway. You know, you can claim to have seen anything, but they can't confirm that. It's better to use logic or something that they are grounded in. Use some reason that pertains to what they already accept. And what they can already access. But don't make some claim that they could never confirm anyway, 'cause someone else could come along and make some weirder claim, you know. And if they're gonna believe yours, they're gonna believe theirs, and they're gonna get all messed up. So, like that. Not committing adultery with another person's spouse. Technically the text says, with someone who is not your wife, but as I've always had it taught to me it, it specifically refers to another person's spouse...as opposed to general sexual misconduct. It's not sexual misconduct in Buddhism between consenting adults of the opposite sex. That's not sexual misconduct and it's not adultery, like that...if one of them is not married to someone else. But there's a lot of other kinds of sexual misconduct which we'll cover

[cut]

That's...I believe, no I'm sorry. I believe it is adultery. I believe that would be adultery. Yeah.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, Yeah. I believe...you taught me, I believe that is...that would be included here in adultery.

[silence]

You know, I, I dunno where I heard it but it's one of these dharma rumors where I heard you can take this one or not take this one. You could take these four and not commit yourself to number five. You know, I-I-I-I thought I heard that somewhere, and I, I know there are different kinds of {ge nyen}s: there's {ge

nyen} where you take only one, there's a {ge nyen} where you only take two, but, but then technically you have to take all of them and Dharma Bhadra makes of point of saying, you can't drink alcohol, period. If you take these vows, you can't. You can't take any kind of intoxicants. And then I've often quoted, you know where the Buddha himself says...it's in the [Abhidharmakosha] quoted from sutra: he takes a blade of grass, he holds it up, and he says anyone who drinks the amount of alcohol you could hold on the tip of this blade of grass, or serves it to another person, don't call yourself a Buddhist. Don't say you're following me. So, quite clear. I can show it to you anytime. Okay? [laughs] And it's just not worth it. I mean it makes you stupid. It wastes money. It hurts your body. There's just no point to it. And you won't miss it much, if you give it up, so..the last...there's an additional part, okay? On your homework it says something like, "additional part." You also commit yourself to this when you commit yourself to a lifetime laymen's vows. Oh, sorry, additional part. {Kyamdrul labjang dang gyalwa machepa}. Which means, "never breaking the advices on going for refuge." They are what they call unique advices and there are common advices. I'm not gonna cover the whole thing in this class, but basically the essence of the advices on going for refuge is never to give up, speci-, most especially, the Dharma Refuge. Okay? The Dharma Jewel. And in this case it refers to hurting other people. So, so the essence on all the advices on refuge...in other words, if you claim to be a Buddhist, then one thing you must absolutely give up is hurting other people. It doesn't mean if you ever hurt someone you've broken your {ge nyen} vows: no. This means more like philosophically. When you say, that's all BS. I don't believe it any more, you know? I don't think there's any point to trying not to hurt other people. I mean this is a very serious thing. And that, that would be breaking the advices on going for refuge. That's the essence of it. Yeah? Yeah. [laughs] In the Abhidharma, joining the army is called a {dompa mayinpa}. It's taking an anti-vow. And you get that same invisible aura...once you swear that you will bear arms against another being. You get that same aura. And until such time as you resign from that organization, you, you are...you have what's called an anti-vow in your mind stream...that same thing. Or if you swear I'll be a butcher for the...a period of, you know, the next year or so. If you say I promise to be a...I promise to study butchering, and animals, and...the...it grows in your mind stream like the other vows, like a pratimoksha vow. That's a...that's a [Abhidharma]...in the [Abhidharma]. Yeah? No. Not like that. You can eat meat, and it's not considered necessary in Buddhist philosophy to give up the eating of meat, technically. It's strongly encouraged. But the point that lamas would say is that when you go to the store to buy meat you don't say, "I'm going to the store to kill a cow." You say, "I'm going to the store to buy meat." Okay? Now you have

to kill a cow to buy meat. But you're not doing the killing. You can't kill a cow. The cow can't be killed specifically for you. You can't go to a farm, and they say, "We're having dinner tonight, and since you're a special guest we're gonna kill a cow for you." In that case, you've broken the vow against killing, 'cause...by the way anytime that you instigate someone else to do any of these things, it's equal to committing it. So, now, if no one ever paid for meat, they would stop killing animals, and there's big debates about it. Okay? And there are sutras which say don't eat any meat, and like that. But there's also...there's big debates about it. Basically speaking, the viewpoint currently is that...the viewpoint throughout Buddhism has been...I think it started when monks had to beg for their food, and you weren't allowed to reject anything, you know. So you weren't allowed to say, "I like that, I don't like that." So whatever they put in your bowl, you were supposed to eat. And that would often include meat, or could include meat. So it wasn't...there's never been in...in the vinaya or any place else, technically, something that says you can't eat meat. You cannot kill an animal. Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

And what?

[student: [unclear]]

These are...well, there are other traditions where there are other kinds of vows or other sets of vows. Like in Thailand you can take monk's vows for three months; you're even encouraged to do that in Thailand. We follow what's called the Savastivadin group of Hinayana vows...Theravada vows. It's one of eighteen groups of...there are other...other sets of monks vows were recognized in ancient India. This is the one that was accepted in Tibet, and followed in Tibet by all monks in Tibet. They're not much different; the sets of vows are very little different. There is, as far as we know--and we have most of the root text on vinaya--there is no other pratimoksha vows than these eight. The [Abhidharma] teaches eight. All the Abhidharma scriptures teach eight. There's, there's no other set beyond the eight that I...that we're...that's in any kind of current copy of the ancient scriptures that mentions any other ones. Not that I...not that I'm aware of. There are in Burma and Thailand, they keep a slightly different number of vows, but basically it's all the same. Okay? Take a break, and we'll come back in five or ten minutes, when you hear the bell, dong.

[cut]

...he can arrange it with Rinpoche. And it's very wonderful. It's very nice to have them. It changes your spiritual capacity. It changes your...what do you call it...your sensitivity to dharma. It actually changes your ability. It changes how you...receptivity...to dharma. It changes a lot. So if there's any way...if you have any idea to take it, take it. And then once you know them clearly, they're not that difficult, right? I mean, it's not like...you know, small lies or stuff like that, you know. Yeah?

[student: I'm just a little[unclear] from the Vinaya that you read from the Vinaya, you mentioned Burma and Thailand they're not so specific...like they don't say lying number three or just stealing or...]

I think they just didn't...you know, I...when I was taking the vows, they didn't explain them to me very carefully. I didn't know they were this specific either.

[student: [unclear] easier this way.]

Yeah, they do. And this is what they really are. This is what comes from the vinaya. And, and in, you should know, in Tibet there are...I mean, there's like sixteen volumes of the original vinaya text...sixteen thousand pages, and the commentaries run into the thousands, tens of thousands, probably. And they're very clear. They're very cut and dried. They all pretty much agree on all these points. These points are, you know...it's very, very nice, very clear, very...they, they've saved many scriptures in Tibet. Many scriptures reached Tibet and because of the inaccessibility until the airplane was invented, they were kept very, very pure, and so the...even the Theravada traditions in Tibet are extremely pure and more detailed than in countries...I've been to Srilanka...I've been to the monasteries there...I've lived in Thailand, you know, I...we're very fortunate in Tibet. We have a very, very...we're extremely fortunate. In St. Petersburg we have a hundred thousand, two hundred thousand scriptures, in Tibetan, and they're just extraordinary. And it really is a very, very...I'm not just bragging but...in...I went to Thailand, I said show me your canon; it was forty-five volumes left, you know, thin volumes left. We have about two hundred thousand. I mean, we really do have the original scriptures in pretty good shape. And we have unbelievable commentaries from the early Indians all the way up to the nineteenth, twentieth century. They're wonderful. So we're really lucky. We really are fortunate. Okay. We're gonna talk just a touch about {ge tsul}. This is a novice, novice monk. It's a {rabjung chok kyi dompa}. Okay? It's an ordain...it's really what you can consider an ordination. Okay? And there's different ways of dividing their vows. I'm gonna talk about the most basic way

and I'm not going to go into details on their vows 'cause we're reaching the point at which I can't tell you everything. You have to take it before I can [laughs] tell you everything. But we're gonna do it very broadly speaking. Say, {tsawa shi} [repeat], {tsawa shi} [repeat]. {Tsawa} means root. {Shi} means four. The root four. So you've already had those. Okay? To agree to give up those for the length of your life is the root four. On top of that...

[silence]

Say, {yen lak druk} [repeat], {yen lak druk} [repeat]. {Yenlak} means the secondary vows, and in this case there are six. Before, we had how many?

[student: Four.]

Four. Before we had four and four. Now we have four and six. These six are arrived at...Aura and me and Elle spent like two hours on this last night. They're arrived at in the following way. Remember before we had dancing, etcetera, and flower garlands, etcetera...we'll just split those into two. So, dancing, etcetera, becomes one separate secondary vow, and flower garlands, etcetera, becomes another vow. Then you get one extra, which makes five secondary vows. Okay? You split one into two, you get five. Okay? We were confused for about an hour. So you're getting it the easy way. On top of that you add handling money. Okay? Like...keeping money, handling money. I believe that traditionally you weren't supposed to have any period.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, I think you wou-...I, I don't know, to tell you the truth, and I don't know if I could go into it, but generally, for example, you weren't even allowed to keep food. You weren't allowed to keep more food than you could eat that day. So, don't think you'd be allowed to keep money. Now, obviously nowadays people do. So...so that makes six. And then you have a third group, which is called...

[silence]

I should add something here.

[silence]

Say {lang de} [repeat] {sum} [repeat]. {Lang de} [repeat] {sum} [repeat]. {Lang

de} is a difficult word to translate. {Lang} means to take. {De} means to transgress. And what it means is to transgress certain precepts that you have taken from a preceptor or {khempo}. So it means a transgression. {Langde} means a transgression. And {sum} means three. Number three. Roughly speaking, they consist of disrespecting the person who gave you your vows, failing to give up the appearance of a layperson...in other words, wearing your hair long or wearing lay clothes...and then, the third one is failing to take up the appearance of a monk...in other words, shaving your head and...and wearing robes. Those are the three. And there's all sorts of technicalities, and I'm not gonna go into it, okay? There's all sorts of {miksel}s and things like that. This makes a total of how many vows?

[student: Thirteen.]

Yeah. So normally we speak of the ten basic ones and the three transgressions and the basic structure of the vow for a novice monk or nun--same thing--are these thirteen. Now there's...the {lang de}s can be divided up and you come out with thirty-something...and I'm not gonna go into that. But, basically, this is the basic structure of a novice vow...to take those for your life. That's about all we're gonna do tonight. Okay? Yeah.

[student: What's the advantage of taking your vows [unclear]]

[Laughs] Generally they're considered secret, but in practice if you've taken a {rabjung} commitment, you've already been in a monastery, you know pretty much what they are, and in, and in, and in practical...in practice...my lama, for example, sat me down and taught them to me before. And I think in practice you end up doing that. Once the person has committed themselves or something like that...but I, I...I don't know, I haven't read yet the real exact reason why. I know that when Je Tsongkapa covers the bodhisattva vows he says, "These are the only vows of the three kinds of vows that you can learn ahead of time, in detail." So it is true. Now, why, I don't know exactly. I know that it's considered breaking, the vow...or it's considered a violation to let people who don't have ordination to witness certain ceremonies of vinaya, or to be present in certain ceremonies of vinaya, and that's very strict. So maybe it has to do with that, or...I don't know. But I, I know that that's covered in the vinaya. I...but I...I've never seen like in the vinaya...and I haven't studied it...I haven't studied the huge texts, but I haven't seen a specific section where they say, "This is why we don't teach people their vows ahead of time," or something; "this is why you can't study in detail the monk's vows," or something like that. But I

haven't seen that yet. It's probably there somewhere. Okay? Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

I, I...the laymen's vows, you can study ahead of time. But the...especially the full monk's and full nun's vows, you're not allowed to study. I...and as I say, I haven't seen an explanation of exactly why...although in practice I think a good lamas try to make sure their students understand the vows, and I know that when you take the vows, they don't form unless you, in your mind are ready to commit to all of them. And I don't know how you could do that if you didn't know them all. Like if you had reservations about any of them, they don't form properly. So, I'll have to defer that one til later. Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

Can't...Yeah, can't say, don't know exactly.

[student: [unclear]]

[Laughs] Yeah, this is the problem of reading something somewhere. I'm not sure about it. But, I dunno. I'll ask Rinpoche. We'll see. I, I'm not...I don't know exactly why. All I...all I really am aware of is that, is that it's very strict that you cannot witness vinaya ceremonies and things like that. Maybe it's connected to that. I don't know. But why...it would seem to be beneficial...it would be beneficial to the Sangha if they knew everyone knew exactly what their vows were, you know? And I think in countries...like I was in Srilanka, and a typical TV show in Srilanka is discussing how long a monk's hair can be. And so I know in Srilanka they...it's pretty...everyone knows. So I...I'll ask Rinpoche. I'll see. I don't really...I have not...I've studied a number of texts on vinaya, but I've never seen a, a, a direct explanation of why that's the case. Alright, we'll do the...we'll do about five minutes meditat-...it's very...this meditation is very hard, 'cause you're thinking about going home. So try to...think about...just try to think about just how lucky you are to have a class like this, and meditate on that, and maybe try to consider whether you want these secret invisible wings or not. Okay?

ACI Course 9 – The Ethical Life

Class five – General Description of the Vows, Part Two

Geshe Michael Roach

Transcriber: Joseph Schuster

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Okay welcome back. Ahh. Let's review where we were, okay. 'cause I hardly remember myself. I had somebody run here and get the notes this afternoon. Let's say you're a lady and you wanna reach nirvana then what are the steps you have to go through, cause that's where we're going to pick up tonight. So I think ... which of the {pratimoksha} vows would you take first. Talking about a lady. If you're going to do it ... in Tibetan its called. I'll show you.

Say {nye me}[repeat]

{pun sok} [repeat]

Okay {nye} means problem, 'bad thing', {me} 'no problem'. {nye me} means like faultless or perfect, okay. nye me}. {Nye me} means without a problem. Yeah in the bodhisattva vows a {nye me} is our dear friend which is exceptions to the bodhisattva vows, like in general you committed if you do that, but you can do that or you can do this and still get away with it. Okay [laughter] but in {vinaya pratimoksha} vows it has a different meaning. So {nye me} means 'no problem' and {pun sok} means like 'excellent, perfect'. And {nye me pun sok} is a special expression in the vinaya and it refers to getting to your full ordination vows the right way, like just the right way. Okay like you can do it. Like you can do it not the right way, or just the right way. Okay and just the right way in vinaya means going through the vow in order. Taking them in order. Technically you can skip to a higher vow, or you take them in the same day. I did. You know you can take your novice vows and your full ordination vow in the same day for example. That is recognized as a way to take the vows. It's not considered perfect. It's like if you could go through them one by one and hang out in the vows for a while and take them gradually, that's the ideal situation. So this really means ideal. This is the ideal way to take the vows. And we were talking about a woman, okay who wants to take, let's say the woman wants to take full ordination if it existed okay, in the Tibetan tradition. So lets say they want to take full ordination where would they start?

[student:[unclear]]

Even before that. Okay. Ideally this means ideal, you should take your {genyen ma} vows first. Okay so I'll write it up here. {Genyen ma} is which vow do you remember? Life lay woman's vows. Agreeing to keep for the whole length of your life lay woman's vows, okay. How many vows are there?

[student:[unclear]]

Y. Okay which are... do you remember?

[student:[unclear]]

Okay. No alcohol and no [student:[unclear]] Yeah, yeah okay. Those are the five so really it's the ... it's more or less four basic ones. Well I wouldn't even say that its those five. So five vows. Although there are other versions of that vow but that's the main one. Also to keep what? Something else. Yeah, to keep the advices on going for refuge. Okay I mean that's an integral part. People don't count that when they count the vows but its really like half the vow is, is are you going to take refuge properly. Does that mean swearing, I mean when I was growing up, frankly as a Christian, and they said 'thou shan't not have no other gods than me' and 'thou shall not bow down to any graven image'. Or things like that and I carried that over into Buddhism and I thought if I'm being a good ... if I'm taking refuge properly, I have to believe in a new statue, you know, like I have to ... when I take refuge I have to think of this statue instead of a crucifix, you know like I was thinking I have to change statues, you know and I mean when you say take refuge in the Buddha I'm afraid that's what comes up naturally in a person who grew up in the west. Its, its I have to do what I had to do when I was a kid which is I have to go to this place and I have to look at the thing on the alter and I have to put all my faith and trust in that statue. And I don't get anything out that. That's always been a problem for me. You know? I mean I could pray to the statue or not pray to this statue and my life pretty much went the same. So that's not what refuge is. And I mean that's the advices on refuge. Refuge is a state of mind where you're putting all your hope and trust in what that being represents and in the case of two of the three refuge objects it is what? It involves seeing emptiness directly. You become sangha refuge when you see emptiness directly. The ultimate dharma refuge is to see emptiness directly. So the minute you see emptiness directly you already two of the three...objects. You become what we ... we'd think was god or something. You know what I mean? You become the thing which every one else is bowing to. And the thing that everyone else is taking refuge to. And you actually become that thing. Later on when you reach Buddhahood you become the first refuge object. So I mean when you think about a person who is committing themselves to a lifetime vow, think about that. Don't think ... on't get fooled that. Don't bring that thing over from your childhood where you're taking refuge in a picture. I mean Buddha doesn't have to look like that at all. We studied that in California. That's the {chok ke trulku} the ultimate {nimanakaya} that's the ultimate way that they show themselves in the world but they don't have to look like that at all. they could be anybody. Don't, don't, don't put the buddhas down. Don't think they can't look like anything, they could look like

anybody around me. That's not the point. The point is not how they look. The point is how they think and what they do. And that's what you're taking refuge in. It's not ... so I think that its really important that when you talk about taking {gen yen} vows, lifetime laymen vows, that you're taking the state of refuge in your mind and you're putting your hopes in something spiritual, you're putting your hopes for example in an ethical way of living. And that's your refuge. You're not taking refuge so much in some divine being or something like that. I mean its part of it but its not the main thing. The main thing is to understand emptiness. Understand why you need to live and ethical way of living. And that's refuge. And that lead. Why? I almost said it for you. Why? Why is that refuge? It protects you. If you don't like the way life is going then take refuge, because it protects you. Simply bowing before a picture of an Asian looking person instead of a middle eastern looking person, who's come to look like an English person [laughter] it is not going to protect you. It won't protect you. I mean maybe there's some small virtue. But it won't protect you like keeping your vows. Keeping your vows really protects you. Keeping that way of life really protects you. That's protection. And when you think about {gen yen} when you think about lifetime vows really the whole point is that you have both halves. You got, you're taking refuge and you're committing yourself to the actions which are protection. And they go together. That's why they go together. And that's taking {gen yen} vow. So if you're going to do it ideally, in the fully ideal way, if you're going to become a fully ordained nun in the ideal way you would first take {gey yen ma} . What would you take after that? Very Close, but no cigar! This is a trick question. That's a novice nun. But we're missing something. You have to take something between them. Do you remember? Yeah to vow. .. Its not really a vow and it doesn't count as a {pratimoksha} vow but it's a commitment to lead the home life. Its called {barma rabjung}. Say {barma}[repeat]

{rabchum} [repeat]

{barma rabjung}.[repeat]

Its not one of the ... how many {pratimoksha} vows?

[student:[unclear]]

Sets of vows I should say. eight. There's eight sets of vows. Right? This doesn't count as one of the eight. But it is a commitment that you have to make before you make the next step up. Okay. If you're going to be ordained you first have to take{parma rabjung}. {parmarabchun} means 'I agree to lead the home life. I'm not going to try to do the family life anymore.' Then you take {ge tsul ma}. And {ge tsul} and {ge tsul ma} in its most basic form has how many vows? Do you remember? You can say thirteen. Sometime they say ten and they leave out the last three. That would be five and five or three and seven or what? Four

and six. alright. You guys are cool. Okay . Four plus six in its most basic form. I mean you can divide into to... there's also division into thirty-six, and there's another division into forty and there's a division in thirteen. But we're going to talk ten. What are the four? Where do these four come from? Yeah they actually come from the one day vows, the match the one day vows. Yeah because you're pledging to be celibate, right. So, this is the root four as expressed in the one day vows. No killing anything really. No stealing over a certain amount. No sexual misconduct. No lying. Okay. And then six which is what? Where do these six come from?

[student:[unclear]]

Of the...? Of the one day vow. These come from the one day vow. But you split one of the one day vows into two which is what?

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah. Dancing, etc. and ornaments etc. split into two. Which are... And then dealing with mulah. Okay... all right and that makes ten. Which brings us up to this class which we're in tonight. Okay. The reason that we talked about a woman in particular is that there's an intermediate ordained vow that only women take, men don't have to take. And its called a {ge lob ma}. So its going something like this; {ge lob ma} is a {ge tsul ma} with 1two more vows. So it the ten, those ten, basically, okay plus twelve. To be {ge lob ma} means intermediate nun. It's before you reach your full nun's vows. Those 1two are divide into two sets of six. Okay? Say it {tsaway} [repeat]

{chu druk}[repeat] [repeat]

{tsawa} means: 'root' or 'primary'. {tsawa} means 'primary'. {chu } means 'things'. It means Dharma, right? Here it means things. It means things that you agree to stop doing right? I mean that's what it means here. And then {druk} means six, number six. And this is five activities that are, that an intermediate nun agrees to stop, to give up. Okay. I can't tell you what they are. You can't learn them until you become ordained. They are in the root text and they are in the commentary. And you're going to get the reading tonight. But when you get to that part it will have 'dot, dot, dot'. Okay. I don't think that we can publish it. So I can't tell you much more about it. They have to do with...a lot of a ... like getting into situations where you'd be in intimate contact with a man, for example. That's the kind of vows that are there. That's {tsaway chu druk}.

{jetun} {jetun} we've translated as 'ancillary vows' or 'secondary vows, okay. (Chu druk) is the same: six thing that you have to give up. I can't again describe them in detail but these mostly relate to activities that would be improper, for example how you store food, whether or not you store food. Whether you can eat food which has not been blessed properly, things like that. I can't go into

much detail with it. So these are more serious, the first six, and the secondary are less serious. Have to do with digging in the ground for example, which hurts insects, stuff like that. Those are very roughly examples, I can't go into much detail but things that would be improper behavior for a person who's about to become a nun. A full nun. Okay. Excuse me?

[student:[unclear]]

I think that in most cases, a responsible Lama if he knew you that were about to commit yourself to them he or she would, would describe them to you in detail before you took them. I think that practically they do that. Somebody asked me in the Tibetan class 'so what's the problem with knowing them' and I promised to ask Rimpoche and I haven't done it yet. Okay. I don't exactly know why. I know that for example you can not give a {pratimoksha} vow to someone who is just wants to check out ... you know who is from another tradition. And who more or less just wants to figure out what's going on in Buddhism. And its not because they have renunciation. It's because they're some kind of curious or they want to incorporates some of it into their spiritual path or something like that. And you're not allowed to give {pratimoksha} vows to somebody who is not committed to getting out of samsara, and who doesn't understand what samsara is to get out of. What is samsara? I mean in its most basic form the reason that you're taking these vows is to get to Nirvana, Nirvana is the permanent cessation of your mental afflictions. So I mean mainly you have to be tired of being unhappy. That's very interesting. I mean, the reason to take {pratimoksha} vows mainly is that you're tired of your own mind being bad. It's interesting, because if you say...if you define {pratimoksha} vows as something you take in order to get to Nirvana, nirvana is the absence of those bad thoughts. So really what you're committing yourself to is to keeping a code of behavior in order not to be unhappy anymore. Okay. And if you take them for any other reason, like, lets see what these guys do so we can incorporate it into our new ... into our latest book about something, something, you know. Then that's and improper motivation and we're not allowed to give {pratimoksha} vows to such a person. And they don't, they don't actually form. They can sit through the ceremony, they can be listening, they can be repeating all of the words properly, but if they don't really, if they're not fed up with being unhappy, if they don't want to get rid of the mental afflictions, then they can't take vows, there's no reason to take vows. The purpose to take vows is to get rid of your mental afflictions primarily. Secondarily, you'll get rid of your other kinds of suffering, like your physical suffering, the fact of getting aging ... old, like that. Yeah

[student:[unclear]]

I can't hear you

[student:[unclear]]

Oh, they are. They are. No I didn't mean it only women but ... I'm just doing a woman's case today at the beginning because they're required to take a special pre-ordination vow. They're ... I've heard a dharma rumor which I, which I don't want to repeat because I have not seen it confirmed in a scripture. So I actually won't repeat it 'cos then people will think of it that way. I believe that ... I'll repeat the dharma rumor. [laughs] [laughter] I've not seen it in a scripture and I've not had it explained to me but I've heard this from some people. By the way this vow is kept for two years only. Okay. It's a commitment for ... it's a two year commitment. You pledge to keep those twelve for two years. I've heard, I don't know if its true, that it might apply to women who are pregnant and don't know it when they take this vow. And then if they had taken full nuns vows it would look very strange after nine months or something. So they pledge to keep this vow for...you can take a {ge tsul ma} and a {ge lob ma} very quickly after each other. So if you were already pregnant and you didn't know it, and then you took your full nun's vows, and after a certain time they saw nuns walking around with big tummies, people might think badly. So I've heard that. It makes sense knowing that the vow lasts for two years only. That you only commit yourself for two years. But I haven't confirmed that okay. I'll try to confirm that before the end of the course. I have not seen that mentioned in the text I've studied, but I have not studied it deeply. Yeah.

[student:[unclear]]

Oh, you can. Absolutely. Absolutely. Mental. Mental suffering.

[student:[unclear]]

No you can go through ... I mean the Dalai Lama was the single wealthiest person in Tibet. And had pretty much total authority over every part of Tibet. And to be a king is not like to be a president. A president has to follow the laws. A king in the old sense of the way, owns everything in the country. They can come to your house and say 'that I want your car' and you have to give them your car. You know? I mean that's a king! And they say that the Dalai Lama while he was overseeing this country of 6 million people, five000 monasteries, you know obviously extremely busy, and all they cared ... the only possessions they thought they owned ... there's a famous quotation by one of the Dalai Lamas 'the only thing in my mind that I own is my bell and my {dorje}', you know? Those are the only two things that I own, those are the only two things that I care about to own. I don't feel that the rest is mine. They had the Potala Palace, it has ... I don't know like five hundred rooms or something, and they didn't feel ... I mean, its possible, the goal is to reach a state where your mind is totally clean. And totally ... it's a very interesting concept. It would be like, some kind of a golden window or something and if you got there, if your mind

got there, you would never again be upset at work. You would never again be unhappy. You would never again be nervous or irritated; you would just be totally ... your mind would be totally clean throughout. That can only be done by seeing emptiness directly. There *is* no other way, and it's not like an instant result of seeing emptiness directly, it is the result of a long period of practice, in the world after you see emptiness directly. And we studied that a lot, that's a long story. But you must see emptiness directly and then you must apply that understanding for a long period of time, and then you can reach that place. But, but you would be...and at that point your body has not changed. It comes later, that comes later, so really you have a piece of samsara left over. They call {tack-che}. Its a piece left over. There are still parts of you that are suffering, but your mind is not suffering. And you can do that and that would be a really wonderful thing to take to work you know. I mean it would be very unusual to have a person at work, under the pressure of a normal office, under the normal stresses and screaming people and demands on your morality, you know.. "could you just lie a little bit today? We need this deal closed" you know? To keep it in those conditions is ... really you haven't reached nirvana if you cant keep it in those conditions. So it would be good to be in those conditions. Because then you'd know if you'd got there or not. I mean, if your going to sit in a cave and not get angry at anybody, so big deal. You know?

[student:[unclear]]

Well there's a point at which you should be in a cave, okay. [laughs] And then you should come out and go to the office. And probably you have to go back a few times. Like many times. You need both. You really do need both. And people should do both. At least a couple of times a year you should go work on it in meditation and then bring it back. Okay? That's {ge lob ma}. Those two sets of vows. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

We're going to talk about it right now Sabhuti [laughter]. She asked 'who can give you these vows'. There's a thing like this...I've got to make sure I spell it right. {Ulu}[repeat] and {ta kob}[repeat] . There's a lot of unique vinaya expressions. And I... we'll go through a few of them. {Ulu} means a central land, okay. Middle Kingdom. A civilized country. {Ul} means 'country'. {u} means 'central'. A central land. What's called a civilized country from a Buddhist point of view, okay. And {takob} refers to an uncivilized country. A barbarian land. From a Buddhist point of view. {Takob} means 'out lying land'. An outlying land . {ulu} means a place where the Buddhism is firmly established. And {takob} means a place where its not established firmly. And there's all the arguments about what means firmly and you know. As you can imagine. The vinaya, has hundreds of pages about what is...what makes a {ul} a {ulu}.

Roughly, very roughly, you can in general consider a country a Buddhist country once the sangha are performing {sojong} on a regular basis. I mean, A country is considered a Buddhist country once a sangha are, are performing sojong on a regular basis. Okay, I mean a country is considered a Buddhist country once there's a sangha, meaning four or five fully ordained people holding {sojong}, holding the confession ceremony, on a regular basis twice a month. Then you can say that Buddhism has reached that country. So as far as I know its being done only definitely in New Jersey. And I believe that there's now a group in Maryland that's doing it. So you can call maybe the eastern seaboard a Buddhist country. {ulu} means firmly established though. And {takob} means Buddhist country but not firmly established. In a {ulu} to make a {ge lob ma} you must have a quorum of twelve {ge long ma}, twelve fully ordained monks ... nuns must be present for that ceremony. Okay, twelve.

No no to make a {ge lob ma} to make an intermediate nun it takes twelve {ge long ma} fully ordained nuns. The requirements for the abbess are especially stringent. And it would probably be difficult to find someone who had perfect all the requirements, they're very difficult to have. I mean they require keeping your vows for a very long time. Not having broken major ones. Its very strict to be a real abbess. Meaning the mistress of the ceremony, right. Matress of the ceremony? I mean to be the one who directs the ceremony, the nun, its very difficult. In an outlying land six {ge lo mas} is enough. Six {ge lo mas}. So normally the ceremony is presided over by a nun. A fully ordained nun. Normally. There are certain requirements as far as the woman's dress. She has to have two of the three standard robes. There are three standard robes that you have to have. Before she actually takes the vows she has to possess, she has to have those three robes ready. She has to have a begging bowl. Okay. She has to have all the requirements of a fully ordained person except for one of the outer robes. She has to have two of the robes. And she has to have taken {ge tsul ma} before. Okay. She has to have taken this vow before. Now whether it was done in the extended way of going through each and keeping each for a while, which is the ideal way to do it, it's not, it's not ... that's the best way to do it, but in either case even if she takes her {ge lo ma} vow the same day that she takes her novice nun vow, she must take the novice nun's vow first. She must take this first. And then she has to do a certain ceremony, of requesting her vows from the, from the full nun who gives them. And that's called a ceremony of a double request. When you do the higher vows it's a different ceremony. So its called a double request. And then she can become a {ge lo ma}. Can she then become a {ge lo ma bikshuni}? {bikshuni} A fully ordained nun. Alright. And we're going to talk about that after the break. But there's one step that this lady, this intermediate nun has to go through before she can take a {ge long ma}. And

that's ... it's that another vow? Is that another {pratimoksha} vow? No. There ain't no more female vows than these and the one day lady's vows, right. So it's not another {pratimoksha} vow. It's another commitment that she has to make. It's a little bit similar to this number two here. Which is not a vow but is a commitment. She has to make another commitment at the end of the two years. And it's called {nerne kyi tsultrim}[repeat]

{tsang chu nerne kyi tsultrim} [repeat]

{tsang} means pure, bhrama in Sanskrit. {tsang} means pure. {chu} means activity. Generally speaking {tsang chu pa} means to observe celibacy. To observe celibacy. {tsangchu}. {Nerne} means to keep it especially well. Okay. {nerne} and {tsultrim} means morality. Sometimes they call it a {domba} which is a vow, but then other texts say it's not a real vow. So you're going to confuse people if you call it a vow, so let's call it a way of living where you commit yourself to a level of pure activity. Now I've never seen yet a good explanation of what this entails. And in Tibet you can't take this vow anymore anyway. You can't take a {ge lob ma} and you can't take a {sangchu} vow. The lineage has been broken. In Tibet. So they don't cover it a whole lot except in theory.

[student:[unclear]]

What's that? {sheshin}[unclear] There's dharma rumor... I mean apparently there may be a ... a ... a still authentic transmission of the full nuns' vows in, in other countries, like some people have said Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong, China, Vietnam. But we haven't been able to confirm it yet. I mean, His Holiness is studying it. Okay we haven't been able to confirm it yet. I had a very aggressive California nun as me 'well how would you confirm it'. And I said that's His Holiness' job not my job. And then they said 'well you're teaching Buddhism you'd better figure it out' you know and I said, well if it were me, which it's not, I would go observe the ceremony and see if it's authentic. You know are there twelve fully ordained nuns there and the central nun. If it's not, are there six fully ordained nuns there. Does the current abbess have all of the qualifications of an abbess. Even if the tradition had been authentic up to the present time, if they weren't doing it that way now, it's broken. As far as I understand it. Rinpoche always says that's not very far [laughs] that would be my first. Then I would try to establish whether or not that had always been done that way. Because if it had not ... if there's ever been a twenty year period where it had not been done that way I believe that you would say that the transmission had been broken. Now how do you prove that. I mean, you'd go back and try to study records of ordinations and things like that. That's all I can think of. I don't know of any other. I guess you'd want to look at the vows and see if we see that there are certain kinds of customs that have sprung up in countries such as Thailand of taking a lifetime vow for three months and we

don't recognize that. That's not in the eight {pratimoksha} vows. Is it useful? I think that it may be very useful. Is it a {pratimoksha} vow? I don't believe so. I've never seen that in the {pratimoksha} vows. I don't believe that its in the {vinaya}, but ... so you have to check it out. Things have to be pure. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

No you need twelve of these to make this. That's a problem

[student:[unclear]]

No it takes twelve of number six to make one of number four. You see what I mean? If there's not twelve of number six around in the world you can't ... in a central land you can't make any more new nuns.

[student:[unclear]]

Right. yeah. A monk, for example, can give these vows and a {ge tsul ma} can give these vows. I believe in extra ordinary circumstances a monk may be able to give these vows, but I won't to don't quote me okay. But I don't believe that you can get these vows except through a very difficult ceremony with a very stringent number of nuns and things like that. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah

[student:[unclear]]

.Right. There's a thing called a {ngun chok} and a {dak chok} okay. {[unclear] } and {[unclear] }. {[unclear] } means ...I mean there's a big. There's a debate that comes up in the vinaya at this very point in the scripture and it says, could you become a... you know that's interesting. Anyway. Could you become a full...let me think how it goes. Actually I wrote it down. Let me make sure I get it straight. {nga chok} means... Did we go over that? In the first five years of the Buddha's teaching monks and nuns were made by about twelve different methods, ncluding the Buddha saying Wilma come, come to me. And then your hair would fall off and your clothes would change into a nun's clothes and Ken would be upset at me. [laughter] No [laughs] That's .. that's one way. And then it's like there's by letter. The Buddha sent a letter to someone and said you're a nun now. You know? That was the ordination. And like that. And that's recognized as a real ordination. And after that first five years of the Buddha's teaching he changed and he said from now on it has to be like this. It has to be twelve nuns in a central land. It has to be six nuns in an outlying land and he made rules that if it weren't that it would not be a transmission of the blessing of the vows. And that's all I've... I don't know much more than that. We're going to be studying it. We'll get back to you in about six years. There's things called {le} there's things called {le gi cho ga}. {le gi cho ga} means a real vinaya activity. And there's a hundred or a hundred and something for monks for example. In many of those activities there has to be a quorum present. You

know. Why was it that way? I, I don't...you know I could go check in a scripture, but I think mainly its that you're making a very serious commitment and perhaps that there should be enough people present to witness that commitment. You know. I've heard that some kinds of weddings are like that. You know. They make it a big deal in some traditions because you'll be afraid to get divorced after that, because there's like four hundred people were invited. And you would be embarrassed. I think that that's part of the point is that there would be enough people around you in your immediate life, twelve people were present when you took those vows. Like I remember the people who were present when I took my vows. And when I'm around them I feel especially responsible to keep them. So it may be like that thing in the Boddhisattva vows, where being embarrassed to break them in front of the people you took them plays a large role ... plays a large role in keeping them well. But I, I haven't seen exactly it stated directly. There are scriptures that state it but I haven't studied them yet. Is there any other way to become a full nun in the present day according to....okay let's skip those first five years of the Buddha's teaching. Is there any other way to become a full nun in the present day aside from going through these either as a slow process which is ideal or going through then in a, you know, doing the two of them in one day and stuff like that. Which is okay. Which is allowed you do get your vows. Is there any other way to become a full nun. And that just gave me an idea about restoring the nun's vows. If a full monk changes sexes, he becomes a full nun. She becomes a full nun. they'd become a full nun. [laughs] Okay. So maybe she'd find twelve guys willing to...

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah, oh yeah. There are cases in the ancient history when...

[student:[unclear]]

I mean ...

[student:[unclear]] [laughter]

I know, I know. Apparently in the ... apparently in the old days there'd be some thing that could happen half way through your life or your sex actually changes naturally. I don't believe that it refer to an artificial sex change, but I'm not sure about that. But it was where actually what we call the sexual energy which is called {mo wang mo} or {po wang mo} it actually changes into ... you become a woman. And I don't want to ...I can't say much more about that. It's recognized in scripture. And in ancient times apparently it was not uncommon because it's mentioned a lot, that it's possible for the sex to change half way through you life. And in fact it can happen more than once. And as we're going to study in the next class, if it happens more than three times you lose your vows. [laughs] [laughter] or if it happens three times. {[unclear]} it happens.

[student:[unclear]]

I mean more than twice, how's that? Three times or more. {nam som gyor} So I guess in theory if you had twelve monks, fully ordained monks who that, that happened to they could restore the... I didn't think about that. But that's another way to get to {ge-long-ma} without going through this, so there's only two ways. And that's why I brought it up. You can either live in the first five years of the Buddha's teaching or you can be a fully ordained monk who becomes a fully ordained nun by changing sex. And sex has a lot to do with the vows. And the sexual energy has a lot to do with the vows. And we'll talk a little bit about it next time. What happens to a {ge-lob-ma} if she changes sexes? See there's no {ge-lob-pa} there's no male version of this. So she becomes a {ge tsul}. She becomes a {ge tsul}, okay. And for that reason when they group the vows by type, its called {ze}. this {ge lobma} is included into the {ge tsul} and the {ge tsul ma} vows. So although there are eight separate groups of {pratimoksha} vows, by type, there's a thing called essence or essential nature and when you divide this by {ze}, that {ge lob ma} vow would be grouped with the {ge tsul} and the {ge tsul ma}. So those two would be grouped together as being of the same general type. Okay Prolo, don't worry about it. [laught] It must happen a lot because it comes in the scripture.. Apparently in ancient India for some reason or another it must have happened a lot because ... even physically the change happening. Because it's been described in the scriptures. There are also like, if you want to get into it, five kinds of male-ness, five kinds of female-ness, hermaphrodites...anyway, we're going to get into that next week. In other words there is something about the pure sexual energy of a male or a female which helps the vows to grow. That we don't believe for example that a person who doesn't have that energy can keep vows. Because according to the scripture it affects the stability of their mind. Apparently if you have all your hormones in tact actually literally makes you... it has an effect on you mind. And people who don't, like people who have been neuterized or something like that, they, they can't take vows. There's something that happens about their... the lack of a sexual energy means that their minds are not as stable. Or as strong minded. Strong willed. Their willpower is somehow affected and they can't keep ... they're not an appropriate physical body to take vows. And that also applies to higher teachings. You have to have that ...that has a real downside in that it's....it's...it's so, it can be abused so much, the sexual energy. But it has a upside that it gives you a tremendous strength and you can use it for very good things if you use it properly. And you'd need it for certain kinds of teachings. Okay we'll take a break. And then we'll cover full nun's and full monks vows in absolutely no detail. [laughs]

But I wanted you to get a taste of how those vows build on one another. I think

you got some taste of that, and how they're building on each other. Okay {ge long ma}. Or a {ge long} you just cut this out okay. But we're going to start with the {ge long ma}. And I can't tell you much about these vows because I'm not supposed to. And I was even hesitant to have a course called Vinaya because it would get around to the monks in the world and the nuns that I was teaching vinaya to non-ordained people and I would get in trouble. [laugh] but I can tell you some general things. And that's what I'm going to do.

Say it: {tung wa de nga}[repeat].

{tung wa} means, and {tung wa} is the same as {sung wa} and they both mean 'to trip' or 'fall down' you can call them falls. {tungwa}.

{de} means 'a group' and {na} means five. The five groups of falls. Fall means here breaking a vow. Okay and there are five groups into which the nun's vows and the monk's vows fall. And I'm going to give you the names of the five groups and describe them very briefly but nothing precise. Okay.

Say it: {pamba}[repeat]

{pam} means 'to lose' like if you have a football game and you lose that's {pamba} okay. {pamba} means to be defeated. This is the most serious group of vows. The most serious groups of falls. And {pamba ge da} a nun, a full nun, has eight of these. There's a nice section of the reading that you see that I left in there that explains why they are called defeats. I translate them as defeats. There are eight defeats. And in all the vinaya scriptures I've seen they're called defeats because you mental afflictions defeat you. If you commit one of these its normally because your mental afflictions have defeated you. And then obviously they're going to promote your mental afflictions very badly. These vows damage ...these falls damage the vows very, very seriously. And in fact some groups of Buddhists, although not the one that we follow, some groups of ... some schools of ancient India believed that if you committed one of these that you lose your vows completely. That you lose all your vows. Okay. So these were very serious. We're going to talk about that next time. Our particular school that we belong to in vinaya does not believe that. But these are so serious that there have been groups of Buddhist's schools, Buddhist's schools of ancient India that have said that if you commit one of these eight you lose all your vows altogether. Even in our school they are damaged very, very badly, Like irreparably damaged. I'll tell you that for a full monk they pretty much correspond to the root four. Make sense? I mean the most serious forms of those four. The four of the {ge tsul} . The root four of the {ge tsul}. Roughly. Pretty much correspond to that. I don't know for a fact in the case of these eight. I assume that they include those four and maybe four others. Okay. But I couldn't tell you if I knew.

{hlakma}. {hlak-ma} means remainder. Literally means remainder. What's the

favorite Tibetan soup of all time? Tibetan soup in Tibetan. {tupa} and leftover soup is called {tup-hlak} so you get a sense of what {hlak} means. {hlak-che} Nirvana is what? {hlak-che} where you still have {hla-ma}. That's that point where your mind is totally pure, but you still have this suffering body. And when you get rid of this suffering body that's {hlak me} no more {hlak-ma}. So you get a sense of what {hlak-ma} means. {hlak ma} means a 'left over'. How come there's no such thing as a {mo-hlak}. What's a {mo}? And slurred in modern Tibetan is {mo-mo}. Tibetan dumplings, right. Like you never hear that there's {mo-hlak} for dinner because they always eat all of them. "Cos they love them. This is a national food. There's no such word as I've ever heard anyone say {mo-hlak, which is leftover {mo-mos}. There's always leftover {tu hlak}. Left over {tu pa} Like 'what are you having for dinner?' and they always say {tu-hlak} and they say 'not {tu-hlak} again, you know? Leftover tupa. So {hlak-ma} means remainder.

{{Tibetan}} Twenty. What's the difference between a {hlak-ma} and a {pamba} ? A {hlak-ma} is less serious than a {pamba} and more serious than the next one. And that's it. That's all it says. The literal meaning of {hlak-ma, {pak pa}...{hlak ma} is that you still have something left over that you could repair, and get the vow back to just about normal. Which implies with a {pamba} its got some irreparable damage. But then the text always says, don't take these words too literally. Okay. I mean they have their own flavors of what they mean in general but you're going to see that they are not ... these literal explanations are not airtight. They're not like ... what's the Tibetan word for nirvana?

{nyang de me depa} {ngyang-de} transcending all grief. Now do you transcend all grief if you reach {nyang}....well you do but ... is it just the kind of grief of losing your mother or something like that? No. So in some cases the words used in Buddhism are not totally descriptive. They're just a general word that sounds like that thing. So these are generally descriptive words but they're not airtight definitions or anything like that. The definition of a {hlak-ma} is that member in the five groups which is less serious than the one before and more serious than the next one. And that's all. You could have called it serious level number one, serious level number two , and serious level number three. Say it {tung-je}[repeat]

{tung} means what? To fall. Okay. {je} means makes you fall. We translate it as downfall which is not the same as the general name for all of these things which is called {tung wa}. So don't confuse them. {tung wa} means a fall. {tung-je} means a downfall. We're trying to distinguish between the two. And its called a downfall because if you commit one of these it takes you to the lower realms. It makes you fall down to the lower realm. Well is it not the case that these two makes you do the same thing? Sure. So again the word is not exclusive its just

meant ... they're trying to give you a flavor of what it means. Okay {tung-je} . There's two types of {tung jes} . They are normally split into two groups. Okay. Two kinds of {tung jes} . Two kinds of downfall. Say it {pang tung} . {Pang} means to give up something. {Pang} means to give up something. {tung} stands for {tung-je} meaning a downfall. So {pang tung} means a downfall where you have to ... its called release something. You have to give up something. And these are a certain group of vows where in order to fix what you did, you have to give up something for a certain period of time. Okay. For example if you kept a possession longer than the period allowed by the vinaya, in the vinaya, the strict vinaya, which would be very cool to live that way, you don't have any possessions basically. You own your robes. You own your bowl. You own your strainer that you strain your water with so you don't kill bugs. And you might own a parasol so you don't burn your bald head. But you're not even allowed to own much more than that. If you do happen to, let's say get some cloth, with the intention of making them into robes because your old robes have all worn out or something. and you're going to throw them away or something, and you keep the cloth too long without making it into a robe, which means now you're getting possessive about the cloth, right? It was kind of pretty and you wanted to have it and ... to purify yourself you have to separate yourself from that cloth, you have to give up that cloth before you ... as you do the act of confession. So there's, I think its thirty-three ... a nun has thirty-three of these. A full nun. Where she has to give up something in order to fix them. Okay. {dung je bashig}[repeat] . {dung-je} means a downfall. And {bashig} means a simple downfall, implying that you don't have to go through giving up something to fix it. So there's two kinds of downfalls. {pan-tung} means fixing this breaking of the vow requires giving up something. These don't, but they're both types of downfalls. They both belong to group number three. On your homework its going to say give the six groups, so what are you going to do? You're going to split this into two groups. This is going to be three 'a' and three 'b' and you're going to come out with six. Although generally there's only five groups.

[student:[unclear]]

Oh {bashig} means simple. {bashig} means that you don't have to give up anything. You don't have to take back anything or give back anything or leave something. {bashig} means a simple downfall, which implies that you don't have to give up anything. For example the cloth that you kept too long because actually you liked it and you're attached to the cloth. I mean pure vinaya you don't own anything, and you need anything and you have no desires for anything. And that's the bottom line on a monk's life. Ideally. There are lots of {mig sel} . So in a special situation you're allowed to keep the cloth. If you take

Bodhisattva vows you are required if offered twenty-five warehouses of cloth, to keep them, get a hold of them acquire them, negotiate them, protect them, get them into shipping containers and ship them somewhere where they'll be of use to somebody. You are required and that over-rides this. If you're a monk and you have Bodhisattva vows, the whole scene changes a lot. You're required to store cloth, and you're required to have possessions if they're of use to other people. If by having possessions you can serve other people, you're required to have them. Okay. I mean it would be easier not to have them. But as a bodhisattva monk, you're required to have them in order to serve other people. The flavor changes a lot. {dung je bashig} how many do they have? Ninety. What differentiates a {tung-je} from a {hlak-ma}? What makes a bad deed in group number three different from the bad deed in group number two? Just less serious, okay. [laugh]. Its less serious than two but more serious than four. Okay.

[student:[unclear]]

I haven't seen anything that said that. That doesn't mean that its not there. It's a good question. I don't think so. I think that the distinction between these two is whether or not you have to give up something as part of it.

[student:[unclear]]

I don't think that it does. Not that I'm aware of. Could be wrong. This is not ninety it's one hundred and eighty. Say it {sor shak}[repeat] . Okay {Sor shak} we have eleven. Why is it ... why are these eleven put into a separate group? No brainier please. [laugh] They're less serious than number three. They're more serious than number five. Okay. And that's the only thing that makes them different. Literally {sor-shak} means {sor-so-shakpa} {sor} means individually. {shak} means to confess. You can say bad deeds or breaking a vow that you have to confess individually. And they say a monk or a nun, a full monk especially, during the {sojong} ceremony has to confess these one by one. But that's not ... but that's also true of the whole thing anyway so ... it's really just another word for breaking a vow. And it's just to indicate that these are more serious than these. By the way once you get down to these number four and five they get pretty minor. And when you study them you'll see that. I mean is not like these are big big major breakings of vows, okay. They're all physical and verbal don't forget. Mostly. Okay. Almost always they are... they are like ... we'll I can't ...I don't want to get into it. But for example taking food from certain improper people would be a {so-sor shak}. Okay? [laughs] Number five. {nye} means bad. Say {nye-je}[repeat]. I'm putting a mental seed in your mind so when you become ordained, in this life or the next , it'll be easier to memorize the {sor-jo} ceremony. Right? [laughter]. Say {nie-je} there seems to be some sort of obstacle to the {sojong} ceremony. Right? [lauhgs] Say {nie

je} [repeat]. Seems to some kind of kind of obstacle with the {sojong} ceremony. We're not supposed to take a paper in there. Nobody. And it seems to hard for us to memorize. We're always sweating over it. Rimpoché is always tormenting us. But anyway, {nye-je} means did a bad thing. {nye} means bad. {je} means did. And it just means doing something wrong. The literal explanation is {leg pa ma yin pa chepa} which means you did something that was not excellent. [laughs] which was not good. And there's one hundred and twelve of those. So how many vows does fully ordained nun have, in this tradition?

[student:[unclear]]

Does it add up? Did you get 364. Really? I must have messed up someplace. 364? That's good. {Tibetan}. That's the {ge long-ma}. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

Yeap. Yeah, 'cos a monk can teach, can teach the vinaya to the {ge long ma}. Don't get me into it okay. [laughs] I'm very good at sidestepping this issue. Okay our class is just about done. I'm going to give you the number for the monks. Okay? The monks groups are still five. Or six if you split number three into two. And I'll just give you the number of vows okay. I'll circle the monk's ones. Four {pam pas}. Four defeats. {hlak ma} which means little bit left to fix. Thirteen. Downfalls where you have to give up something. Thirty. Thirty of those. Downfalls where you don't have to give up something. Ninety. Its easier to be a monk, right? I wonder why its exactly double. There's probably something going on there. {sor so shak pa} only four.

[student:[unclear]] [laughs]

Careful. And one hundred and twelve {sen}. So how many do you have for a monk? Yeah. {Tibetan}, that's the root text. Two hundred and fifty three. Okay. Excuse me?

[student:[unclear]]

Four instead of eleven. Okay so you should come out with two fifty three. Did you have a question? I'll tell you frankly, because I feel kind of strongly about it. The wording of the {sojong} ceremony makes you believe that originally the monks sat around and actually said what they did. Because there's a section near the end where it says 'are we done. Did everybody say everything that they did?' you know? 'I'm asking you once, I'm asking you twice. Think about it. I'm asking you three times. If you don't speak up then you're lying.' And a hidden ... breaking a vow and hiding it is much more serious than breaking a vow and not hiding it. There's two kinds so the wording of the ceremony makes me think that originally people actually sat down and, and you know said what they did. In the current ceremony as its practiced in Tibetan Gelupa.... Sera-Mey monastery. By the way, both monasteries do their confessions together. So its one activity that the two Seras join to do together. You just go straight through

it. And you just recite it. And I believe that the serious monks there are mentally reviewing the vows and mentally they are confessing what they did. And I know that some of them actually go to other monks and tell them what they did and you should. No matter what kind of vows you have its much more powerful if you actually go to somebody and the only requirement of the bodhisattva vows for example is that they understand how serious they are. They don't even have to have bodhisattva vows, I think. You have to understand the concept and know how serious it is. But you do ... it's much more powerful if you go and confess it. And I encourage everybody to do it. Its very very liberating and it's very very cool. And I've had time when I couldn't stop a vow out of habit and I said if I do this one more time I'm going to go tell Rinpoche to his face. Clearly. You know? And I did. And it was very embarrassing. And it works. I mean its very embarrassing to admit it in front of other people. I mean its good to find someone who is such a good person that it would be very embarrassing to go and tell them. I've had monks say 'Don't tell me. Don't tell me.' [laughs] You know. Because Rinpoche wasn't around. But there's a time factor. The quicker you confess it, the better it is. If you let it go on for a day or two, one thing you could die in there. And then secondly it's just the power of the bad deed supposedly doubles every twenty-four hours or something. So it's important to tell it to somebody quickly. And it's very very liberating. Even if you can't stop yourself. And even if you know that you're going to be doing it over and over again, go tell somebody. Because just telling purifies a lot of the bad deed. So it's very cool. And is this some kind of thing, like back in confirmation class, and stuff like that. I don't know what you did in church you know. But I mean is it some kind of guilt thing or are you supposed to feel bad or are you supposed to feel dirty or guilty or something. No, it's not like that. If you really have a nice relationship with a lama, if you really find your root lama, you know all they want is that you're happy. And you can't be happy if you're doing these things. You just never will be. 'Forget reaching Nirvana. You won't even be happy in this life. You just won't feel clean. And you know that. You don't have to be Einstein to know that when you do something bad you feel dirty. You just feel dirty. If you do any one of those main ones you don't have to be a Buddhist to feel bad about it. I mean, normally most people feel bad about it. And you won't be able to go on spiritually. 'I have a lot of Americans come to me and say 'My meditation is not going well. I'm doing this Tantric stuff all day long . I do the whole ritual. I do everything they told me to do. 'And I've been doing it for ten years and nothing's happening much and I'm losing faith in it. You know. What should I do?' You know. And I believe that in a lot of cases it's that they're not keeping an ethical way of life. And it's very tricky. You know, like idyll gossip. You can be in Buddhist groups

and you can be driving in a car with a bunch of Buddhists and you never heard so much idyll gossip. I mean it's relentless, you can get a headache from that. And then they go and do their prayers. They're on their way to do a prayer. And they're doing this idyll gossip and its driving you ...its giving you a headache. And then when you get there, they do their prayers and they do their meditations and they say 'I can't figure out why this is not working' you know? Like I'm doing the posture perfect. I can do a full lotus. You know I can hold it for two hours. You know and I just can't figure out why nothing happens. I never saw any tantric deity. 'And I'm not feeling different. And I'm not aware of any special change in my body. Things aren't happening to me. And I don't know, I'm not getting all these realizations about emptiness. I don't know if this is the best way to do it. I think that there must be a problem with this ritual. You know? I think that this ritual must be too long or something. You know this {dag kye} thing is just too long. Probably because its so long I'm not getting any benefit from it. Nothing's happening to me. You know. I don't see things ... I don't have extraordinary spiritual experiences happening in my life' and stuff like that. And I, I just encourage people to just go check their plain old {pratimoksha} morality. That is where is all come... that's the engine that generates all those amazing things. If you want to have amazing spiritual things happen to you, just go back to the {pratimoksha} and keep it. We're going to cover the basis which is the ten, you know the ten bad deeds. And we're going to talk about it in detail and that's the seventh class. Because that really is the basis. People ask me about the secret teachings. You know. And technically speaking you have to have an initiation. The technical system of the teachings is that you must be initiated in order to start practicing it. You must go through that process of having initiation. Even if you're mind is wandering, and nothing is happening, and it's a long hot day and you're not even there half the time, or whatever. You must have that process, you must go through that ritual. But on the other hand. If you keep your {pratimoksha} nicely, not only does it stop you mental afflictions, you will get to a place where things start happening to you. Extraordinary things start happening to you. Special things start happening to you. And if you don't keep them it will never happen. You have to know them and you have to keep them. And you have to take them if you ... you really have to take them. The energy of taking a vow not to do something and then not doing it, is much much much more powerful than just being a good guy by nature. The second one wears off. The second one doesn't have much energy. The second one is not your fault. Don't credit yourself. It came from your past life. Okay. If you generally don't enjoy kill, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying etcetera, if you consider yourself a good person, its not because of any extraordinary effort that you've made in this life. You've always been that way.

You know. It's been part of your character. If you want to improve on it you have to make conscious efforts. It's very interesting. If you really want to get better, it's going to take work. Whatever you have in you now that's good, you can't take credit for it. Okay. It's almost certainly your past life. It wasn't like you had to work over and over, day to day, keeping track in your little confession book, over and over the good things and bad things you did. You just don't like lying. Or you're not attracted to stealing money out of people's pockets or stealing their cars, or like that. But that's not uncaused phenomena. That's a caused phenomena. Somebody in the past was a moral person. And that's why you climbed up the ladder to where you are. It's very easy to fall down. You know in this life most people slide down from where they reach. As they get older they start to lose it. You have to make a conscious effort to progress from where you are now. Whatever morality or ethical feelings you have now, whatever instincts you have, they come from somebody else's work, in the past. And you must build on it. You must go on. You can't stay where you are. Because to stay where you are is to drop, you know. The karma for doing that wears out as you live your life. And you won't be as ethical in the second half of your life as you were in the first part unless you make conscious ... unless you really make it a project to be an ethical person. And definitely you won't have any amazing spiritual things happen to you if you don't keep them. You know. If you don't progress in your {pratimoksha} morality, in those ethical codes, you won't, you won't have those things happen to you. And you'll be one of those very pitiful Western people who says 'you know the Tibetan lamas are flying, and I've read about Milerepa, and Naropa could take dead fish and throw them in the water and they swim away, and I can't do anything. In fact my life's quite boring. And I do this ritual every morning and I'm getting tired of it and nothing's going on. I can't figure out what's the problem. I can't even figure out why I can't meditate well. And it all comes down to {pratimoksha}. So {sem jak chu}. In Tibetan they say {sem jak chu}. Keep it in mind. This is the way to have all those amazing things happen to you. If you're not happy and nothing's happening to you, which is a real drag, then keep not examining your ethical life.

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah. Does it mean that you cannot reach the higher schools of Buddhism unless you take full ordination? No it doesn't mean that. Your odds are much better if you take full ordination. Does it mean that you cannot reach the highest schools of Buddhism if you do not take full ordination? No. If you take full ordination and keep it in a half-arsed way, or if you take lifetime laymen's vows and keep it very strictly, then the second person would have much more amazing realizations. They'd have a much more exciting life. Much more things

happening. Anybody can take the secret vows. If you, if you ... minimum you have to be keeping the ten non-virtues, you have to be keeping away from the ten non-virtues. You don't even have to be a lifetime laymen's vows to take the secret vows. To have them. That's in the realm of possibilities. But I'd say its like {powa}. This thing about {powa} where in the last five minutes of your life you do what you didn't do for the last forty-five years. And somehow its going to work. It's unlikely. It's very unlikely. 'I mean, your odds of getting somewhere if you take at least lifetime laymen's vows, are infinitely better. If you keep them and if you take them seriously. Infinitely better of having wonderful things happen. And the higher you go the better. On the other hand if you don't really have the heart for it, and you don't really understand it, which probably means that you don't have enough renunciation and you're not fed up enough with your bad thoughts, you shouldn't take ordination vows. You shouldn't take them if you don't think that you can keep them. You should wait until you're ready. You know. And that's why Rinpoche is very reluctant to give people vows. It's very bad to break them. It's very bad to give them up. So better to examine yourself. When the time's ready you'll know it. But you should always have it as a goal in the back of your mind. Because it is a goal. Personally speaking, it's a wonderful wonderful way to live. It's fantastic. And its liberating. You know, Mathew Richard a famous French monk, a good French monk, in Tricycle they interview him and they say 'doesn't it feel very constricting to be a monk'. And he said 'Are you kidding? I feel the most free I ever have.' And he's kept his vows very nice for like twenty years. So if you can do it its very cool.

[student:[unclear]]

Yeah. It's ... there's two things to say about that, because you see it a lot in the world now a days. One is that we can't judge that person. We don't know why they did what they did. Maybe it looks like they wanted to get married or something like that. But you can't be sure. There are famous stories. {Gantapada luipa} from whom we have the main teachings on {Chakrasambara}, pretended to give up his vows in order to do some special things. You know gave the appearance. You have to be very careful, you can't judge the person unless you can read their mind. {Tibetan} Buddha said: Unless you can read another person's mind, lay off judging them. You can judge the action. You can say 'I shouldn't do that action myself'. And you shouldn't. Technically speaking, you just lose the vows from your mental stream, but don't forget you have vowed it's a{gi se ... pa du} its in the vow {gi se ... pa du} 'as long as I live in the presence of the Buddhas'. You swear that as long as I live I will keep these vows. I mean, we didn't really mention that but don't forget that all of the {pratimoksha} vows except for the one day vow, you swear before the Buddhas

to keep it for your whole life, until you die. Then to go and give them back would be like you'd be collecting this extraordinary bad deed of lying in front of all the Buddhas. So it's a very bad...it's very bad for your mental state. You can't judge that, but we wouldn't want to do it ourselves. Alright meditate for a few minutes.

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COURSE IX-THE ETHICAL LIFE

CLASS SIX -TAKING AND KEEPING THE VOWS

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I wanted to go on to the ten non virtues, you know. You hear about them all the time. They are the basis of vinaya practice. Avoiding the ten non virtues is the basis of all ethical living. So I thought it would be worth it to go over it one more time. You think you know them but then you read Tsongkapa and you find out you didn't quite know them. So I'm especially going to cover the points that might not be so obvious in each one. Then second part of the class we'll discuss the actual effects of the ten. Like what are karmic consequences of the ten, you know. Supposedly if you lead an ethical life you can reach nirvana. What's the opposite? You know, if you don't lead an ethical life why does it cause samsara and how does it cause samsara. And especially what connections are there between certain bad deeds and certain experiences in your life. So, you know, I don't like to teach it from the point of view of ... Oh if you do this, this is going to happen. I like to teach it from the point of view of ... if you have something in your life you don't like, maybe you should figure out karmically what you did to cause it. And then you can try to purify that karma. And then that boss would go away. [laughs] [laughter] Or you know, that problem would actually go away in your life. So I think that's more fun than you know, this threatening thing ... of if you do that you're going to get that, you know. I think it's more fun to go backwards and say ... I don't like having my boss scream at me ... so I'd like to find out what causes ... what's the karmic cause of screaming bosses and then try to remove it. So an ethical life for me is as much removing the past as it is preventing the future, you know. I would like to know how to remove the problems that I have now. So we're going to cover that. So first we have to talk about the ten and then we have to talk about the karma of the ten. First one is ... there are three invol ... that you do with your body, right? And what's number one? Killing, okay. I'm not going to do the Tibetan because I think we'll run out of time at the end, so, all right? So Tibetan is {solchur} Say {solchur} [repeat] {solc} means life. {chur} means to cut. Cutting life. What's the diamond cutter? {dorje chupa} [laughs] {dorje chupa}, okay. So killing is number one. Killing any living thing. For a full karmic path, we have to have a lot of other things. For example, you have to have pre-meditation. This is talking for a full karma. You can still get a partial karma. But to get a really powerful karma

and this is going to apply to all the other ones as well, there has to be pre-meditation. You have to understand that the object is alive, okay. If you don't believe the object is alive, then the karma is a lot less. Like some people don't think a fetus is a living being. It is, but if you truly don't think it is ... like I grew up being told it wasn't. And and if then ... if you have an abortion or something you so collect the karma of killing, but not the full karma, not the complete karma. So there is there is an element of recognition involved. Normally there should be some kind of mental affliction going ... like you hate somebody ... or you desire something ... or you don't understand karma ... something like that. Pearl, don't start yawning yet. Just kidding. What else? Should be undertaking the deed. Like you're actually undertake to do it. Like if you're contemplating it but you never do it ... if you never stab somebody ... you don't collect the full karma. If they don't die, you collect ... you don't collect the full karma. So there has to be this completion. That completion normally has to happen during your own lifetime. If you stab somebody and they stab you and you die first ... and then they die later ... you don't collect a full karma, okay. There's nobody around to ... to collect the karma ... full karma. You do collect the karma of attempted killing, something like that, okay. That's killing. I think a few kinds of killings that you might wonder about ... and by the way, everything I say tonight is not Michael Roach, it's all Je Tsongkapa. I can show you the scripture. If anybody ... there's gonna to be some things that you wish were not in the ten. [laughs] And I'm just quoting, okay. I didn't make this up and I can show you the scripture. It mostly comes from sutra. He quotes sutra a lot and he quotes Atisha a lot, he quotes other ... Asanga. This is the real Buddhist viewpoint. It's not ... I'm not making it up. It's not Tibetan. It's it's Indian Buddhism. It's what the Buddha said, okay. Abortion is one kind of killing. We mentioned it already. Suicide is a kind of killing, okay. Inducing someone else to kill for you is a kind of killing, okay. And actually as you know in the [b: Abhidharma] if you are ... like if you join an army and even if you're in the back ... in the back cooking food for the army ... you collect the army ... you collect the karma that the army collects when they shoot somebody ... when they kill somebody. Yeah you collect that. You are involved in that karma ... according to the [b: Abhidharma]. If you're contributing to a war effort, you have killed someone as much as the person who who pulls the trigger, okay. Lot of implications I guess [laughs]

[student: Even if you're not stationed?]

Right, if you're contributing, you know. Like ... right ... right, if you're in the back. What do they call it? Then it's less. Then you're being forced to do it. But you still get some karma, okay. Yeah?

[student: What if you're paying taxes to [unclear]]

It's partially the karma and you have to ... I mean, I've always thought it was my responsibility to at least write my congressman and say, "I don't agree that my taxes are being used for that. I understand that I have to pay them. I'm not willing to go to jail because I'm involved in some useful stuff, but I hereby object to it, you know. I think that's important to do. Yeah?

[student: Right now conscientious objective is forced to do...?]

Yeah, I know. But, I think, that if it's if it's as a conscientious objector, I don't think it's the same karma. Because you expressed that you don't want to do it. There's a thing in the [b: Bodhisattva vows] about wrong livelihood ... where it said that if you were forced into it ... and your full intention is not to do it any more. But you can't ... like you can't get out of it right now ... but all day long you're `thinking how you would like to get out of it ... you don't break your Bodhisattva vows, for example.

[student: Is there any correlation between karma and dreams?]

Karma and dreams? And dreams, right? You mean dreams at night, like that. Oh yeah, ultimately those dreams ... those visions that you see ... although they are not real ... the reason that you have those particular visions is absolutely because of karma. Anything's because of karma. Everything in your life is because of karma, you know. The freckles on your arm are because of karma, you know. The hot, the room, the heat is the room is because of karma. Do you want to open a window? Do you want to? [laughs]

[student: [unclear] because of my past karma or my present [unclear]]

It's always past. Even if it's only one minute past, okay. Karma can ripen in three stages. In this life, in the next life, or in any life after that. So there is karma that ripens in this life, okay. Yeah?

[student: What if it... [unclear] say you're fighting something like Hitler or [unclear]]

The Bodhisattva vows ... where it comes in the Bodhisattva vows is ...it says, you're allowed, for example, to kill if you have been on the path and you have

mastered the path for millions of years. And in that instance it's not only not a non virtue, it's a tremendous virtue.

[student: But if you haven't mastered the path and something that is suicidal?]

You also required to resist violence and you are required to help other people who who are having violence done to them. And I think you have to judge your motivation. If your motivation is truly to protect someone's life ... normally I think Buddhism would say ... find another way. You know when someone asks the Dalai Lama, "Suppose somebody's but ... hand was on the atomic weapon button and you were twenty feet away and you had a gun and you knew he was going to push the button ... what would you do?" you know. This was in the Santa Monica, when he gave the Kalachakra initiation. And he said, "I'll let you know when it happens." [laughs] [laughter] You know. What it means is that, I mean, a Buddhist has to think of other ... I mean ... I think in America one of our greatest faults ... we have many great virtues as a country ... but one of the greatest faults is resorting to violence when you don't have to, you know. I mean, we see violence as a ... national violence as a very acceptable means of of resolving problems. And and I think it's an illness. It's a sickness that we have. And we don't recognize it, you know. Like we're very good in democracy and things like that. That's our virtue. But but about violence ... we resort to violence too, easily. I think often times there's another choice. Some kind of restraint. There's a part in the Bodhisattva vows where Je Tsongkapa says, "Imagine it was your mother who had gone crazy and gone at you with a knife, you know. Would you kill her? Would you just stab her that easily or would you try to restrain her even if your arm was cut or something." I mean, he says that, he goes into that. He says you would probably figure out a way to stop her without killing her. And he says that. I don't mind, okay [laughs] what's going on? okay.

[student: Even in Vitenam during the war, Indian monks...themselves, now that's suicide, how does that compare?]

I think there's a lot of different things, I mean. It depends greatly on the motivation. In general suicide is a bad deed. On top of that ruining a body which could have reached enlightenment in this life, it's a very bad deed. On the other hand if their motivation was truly and if they believed that by doing so the other people would stop fighting, I think it's a great virtue. The Buddha himself fed his body to a hungry tiger who later became his first diciple, you know. Fed him... himself alive to a hungry tiger in the [b: Golden light sutra] {tibetan -unclear

sutra) so there's a precedence [laughs] Yeah?

[student: [unclear]]

There's always a different way. If you really want ... if you felt it was your mother ... you would find ... if you thought Saddam Hussein was your mother you would find a different way to restrain him then shooting things at him, you know. Okay. Let's see if there's anything else here. Stealing anything of value. The only thing I have to add here ... I mean, I went through Je Tsongkapa's description in the great [b: Lam Rim] and I just tried to pick out things that you might wonder about. The rest is obvious, you know. But he does include in his description shady business deals and cheating on your taxes or your rent or anything else or your phone bill. He didn't say phone bill. But he said [laughter] ... he did mention things like that. He does mention things like that. Like as a as part of your business, you know, cheating people or underpaying things or underpaying what is due to your local government. He includes that. He mentions that. This is a long story. It's not very popular when I teach it [laughs] but I'll tell exactly what the scriptures say, okay. This mainly refers to adultery with another person's spouse. But it also includes the following...and they they classify them in sections. So one would be sex with the wrong part of the body and that include oral sex or anal sex or any kind of sex other than in the vagina of the woman, okay. It includes homosexuality. It includes masturbation. It includes sex with someone to whom you are related and I think it like six cousins or something like that, okay. I'm not sure but with whom your your related more than cousin or something ... more than distant cousin. Sex with someone who's too young and a lot of that depends on the custom of the country you're in. So the laws for the mores of the society in which you're in also play a role as deciding who's too young ... who's improper. With someone who's ordained, obviously. Sex with a woman who's menstruating. Or with someone who's been pregnant more than a month. Sex with a woman who is caring for a very young infant and for example breastfeeding that infant. Sex with someone for whom it would hurt them ... cause them some physical pain. Sex with someone who has a an illness ... you know, a sexually transmitted disease. Excessive sex, which is defined as more than five times, okay. Sex in an improper place which means, you know, on a temple ground, in a room where there are images, in your altar room, in the presence or in the near environment of a great lama, like that. And finally, Tsongkapa says Lord Atisha also mentions sex in the daytime, okay ... during the day. You know, you may or might not know ... I mean, in our society not all of those are sexual misconduct, but I think it's really my serious duty to tell you all of them because they are and not

everything that's a bad deed looks like a bad deed or feels like a bad deed and that's the whole point of vinaya. It's having an omniscience being saying, "This particular thing is harmful and will get and will cause you bad karmic results." It's not like saying, "God gonna get mad at you" or anything else. He's just saying certain actions are going to cause you pain ... karmically. So don't do them. I mean, someone who is omniscient is saying that these actions lead to trouble ... for you and there's no other reason not to do them. I mean, that's the main reason. Is renunciation. That's the reason to do vinaya. Renunciation means I'm tired of living in a world where everything goes wrong and I can't explain why it's going wrong. So now you have some clues as to why it's going wrong. That you might have not guessed, okay. And that's the whole point of vinaya. That's why there are so many [b: Jataka] tales, for example, in the vinaya scriptures. There're not just stories. They are the Buddha saying, "I know that these hurt you karmically because I did it and that's what happened to me.", okay. So, at least don't reject it. At least consider it, you know. Put it on a shelf. If you can't do it right now or accept it right now, at least put it in a shelf of things you would like to learn more about, you know. This is one of those things that Buddhism says that maybe I don't believe it or I don't want to believe it but I won't reject it. I'll just let it wait for right now, okay ... put it like that. Yeah?

[student: This is sexual misconduct, how does this relate to the adultery of the life-time lay mans vows? Is this broader?]

Yeah, much broader.

[student: [unclear]]

I don't remember that specifically. [laughter] Okay, I think it would probably count as sexual misconduct. I believe so but I don't remember him mentioning it specifically.

[student: At some point you mentioned, you referred I guess to the youth section of the social mores, how do you know what's dictated by social mores and which is cut and dry?]

Yeah, I know I mean in some countries maybe the age will be different but he does say that the mores of your society do play a part you know, especially in the ... if the idea of a of a young woman being still under the protection of the government, you know ... still being considered a ward of the law ... you

know ... too young to be considered legally an adult. You know...That's what he is trying to say in that country.

[student: You know with adultery, is that only if you're married...like in our society [unclear]]

Someone asked Rinpoche that ... he's very hesitant to talk about all these things but somebody had asked him, "If I'm still legally married to someone but she and I both feel that we're not leg ... you know ... we both feel that we're not married any more and I take another girlfriend am I committing adultery?" And he said, "No", he said, "It's a matter of attitude." So the converse of that would be, I guess, if two people feel that they're committed to each other and even though they're not married and you're cheating on the other one, I think that would count, you know. I mean, logically ... something like that. Yeah

[student: attitude toward the other one [unclear]]

In what sense?

[student: In the sense of recreational sex.]

Oh no, they wouldn't say that. No problem with that. No problem with that. [laughter] Honestly, no, honestly. It doesn't have this thing that sex can only be done for procreation or something like that ... it's not mentioned. [laughter] There is a thing, I mean, about the benefits of celibacy and and what it does for your spiritual health and your and your mental health and your bodily health, but that's another story. I mean, so it's not wrong but it may but it may be draining your energies that you could use for other things. But it's not a bad karma.

[student: [unclear]]

Doesn't mention anything like that ... doesn't mention that you, you know, have to do it thinking that you're making children or don't make children or you're just having fun or something like that. In Buddhism, consenting adults who don't fall into any of those ... that's fine ... no bad deed.

[student: I was thinking that the menstruating thing would be the procreation aspect but you're saying that's not so...]

It means while while she's actually menstruating

[student: It's not procreation [unclear]]

Maybe because it would be ... I don't know. I mean, Tsongkapa, it has about the most detailed description I've found and that's all it says. I mean, it doesn't go into ... I mean, I can't claim that I've found scriptures that go into greater detail than that. They don't. Atisha talks a lot about it and in fact Je Tsongkapa spends more space on this than on anything else but he doesn't go into any more detail than that. Mostly mostly ... most of these kinds of sexual misconduct are wrong or bad karma because they increase in you a worldly desire which will lock you in samsara. You know, which will which will prevent you from getting correct renunciation. They hurt you. That's all. That's the main the main idea behind it. Okay and we'll see...we'll see about the karmic consequences also. Okay. Four in speech. You guys let me off easy. I usually get a lot of [laughs] ... okay, yeah. the only to say about lying is that it is defined as giving someone else a misimpression which is a little difficult ... like in business ... it's like ... half of business is trying to trying to give someone else [laughs] a misimpression. Like I don't need that diamond. I can't pay more than that. You know, actually you're dying for it, you know ... like that. There's this thing about lying about what you've seen, lying about what you've heard, lying about what you know, giving someone a misimpression, giving someone an impression which does not exactly correspond to your own impression. If you define lying that way, it's kinda strict. It's kinda tough, okay. And and of course there's all these exceptions, you know. If it would there's this famous example of a guy comes to the door and says someone is chasing me, about to kill me. You let him in, hide him in the closet. They come to the door. They bang on the door. They say, "Did you see the guy" and you suppose to say what? No, okay. So it's not like crazy, you know what I mean. If you're protecting life or there's an important reason not to do it ... if it would hurt really hurt the other person's feelings or crush them for life or cause them great agony or ... so there's all these ... it's pretty much all all the things you would expect but we lie a lot of the times when there's no benefit and there's no purpose and there's no excuse at all ... we just feel like lying ... or we believe that we would get some benefit from lying. The trick about all of these is to try to get into the mood ... to try to understand that if you lie and you get something, it's not because you lied. And you just have to get that drilled into your mind, you know. It's the thing in Central Park ... spray paint you know. We spray painted out, you know ... we proved that if you lie on a diamond deal and make a profit it's because you were generous in the past and not because of the lie. The lie is going to create its own bad karma and and

we'll see the consequences of the lie. So they're unconnected. They seem to be happening at the same time and then we get tricked. People ask me, "Is it okay to kill roaches?" I say, you know, "If your own ribs broke as you smashed them, then you wouldn't ask me and it's it's going to be worse than that. It's just a time lapse causes problems.

[student: Would you eat food that fertilizers were sprayed on or [unclear]]

Yeah. You can't ... you have to be ... yeah, it's almost impossible to ... I mean, the Jains believed ... the Jains whose religion began as Buddhism began, believed that you could never reach enlightenment because it's just impossible not to kill something as you move, you know and ... or that maybe one person in a trillion years reaches enlightenment. But we believe that if you're if you're not intending to go out to kill ... like if you get in a car and you squash bugs ... you don't get in the car and say, "I'm going to the store so I can kill a lot of bugs on the way." You know, you say you're going to the store and you hit bugs on the way and there's a difference in the karma. You do collect some karma but we believe that you can overcome it if it's not intentional.

[student: I was camping and this bug kept trying to bite me and I said I'm not going to kill this bug, and then finally after the third time it bit me, it was just natural, it seemed natural.]

[laughs] It's it's not natural and you can over come it and it will seem unnatural later. And you can just blow it off or brush it off, you know. Later you'll change. Yeah

[student: Are there people that...[unclear]]

Oh yeah. I mean, there's this thing of the {shi}. {shi} is one quarter of the power of the karma and and it goes like this ... lama ... mother, father ... human, animal, you know ... it goes down like that ... someone who has helped you, bodhisattvas up there ... arhats up there. There are very ... there are different seriousnesses of the object. The object makes a big difference. Lying to your lama is is a thousand times worst than lying to a normal person. Okay. (writes on blackboard) People have translated it as slander. I don't think it ... slander means to talk bad about somebody. It's not really that. This is saying things that are meant to alienate two other parties, okay. You talk to one person about another person in such a way that they will like a person less than they did when

you started talking, okay. You're you're saying things to somebody to make them feel less close to someone they like. Or more far away from someone they don't like, okay. And the thing you say can be either false or true. There's a big debate about it in the scriptures. It could be something true but your intention is not to enlighten that person, it's to make sure that they like each other less than they did before. If it's in the top ten, which I already ... all I'm doing tonight is the top ten ... out of ... eighty four thousand variations ... it must be something that we're constantly doing. The top ten are things we're constantly doing. All day long we are hinting, implying with our tone of voice, you know, that this person doesn't quite like you as much as you thought or this guy didn't quite perform the way he was supposed to at work, and this guy isn't quite as honest as everyone thinks or I'm a little bit better, you know...I mean...This is ... our speech is sprinkled liberally with this thing, okay. And if you get good at watching them, you'll will shut up a lot [laughs]. You know, you find out that the only thing you can do is keep quiet, you know. I mean, you can't carry on a normal conversation anymore cause it's like twenty of these things are happening in five minutes, you know and and it would actually be quite nice and refreshing. The only thing to say here ... I think there are two points that may not be obvious. One is that even sweet words spoken with harmful intent qualify as harsh speech, you know. I always give the example ... you're sitting in the checkout line and they want to get you and they say, "Have a nice day" which means, you know, "Move it!" you know "Get out of here" you know. The other thing to mention is that harsh speech doesn't have to be spoken towards an animate object. If you stub your toe and you curse, that's harsh speech. Because it's bad, no. Because it's evil, no. Because God doesn't like it, no. Because it has a karmic effect on you. Yeah.

[student: Does that mean swearing?]

I depends ... the motivation is very important, you know. They ... it says in the scriptures you can use ... I mean, I often use very bad language to my close friends in an endearing way. I can tell you some of the nicknames we had in college for each other. And that's just ... that's not harsh speech at all. Those are sweet friendly words, you know. But then to use nice words with with really malicious intent and you know the person is going to be hurt, is harsh speech. So obviously, it's from the intent and from the effect, okay. Je Tsongkapa has the following to say about idle talk. It does not have to be directed toward any animate object. Even if you're just muttering to yourself or singing pieces of song to yourself or stuff like that, it's idle talk, okay. Includes words spoken in arguments, criticisms, disputes. Reciting useless non-buddhist texts. [laughter]

Useless joking. Whining, complaining or kvetching. [laughs] [laughter] The word he uses is very much like kvetching. It's ... {maynot dimpa} means you know, ah ah ah ... ah poor me. Wasting your time like that. Gossiping about politics, sex, etc. Crime, he mentions. Excuse me? ... I'm sure sports would qualify, yeah. Any talk of a person engaged in wrong livelihood is, you know ... as you cheat the person in the deal that talk ... because the whole basis is wrong livelihood is ... qualifies as idle talk. He gets to the most extreme version of idle talk is to recite your prayers while not thinking about them. Which I think all of us do. And that's something to watch out for. I think a very extreme form of idle talk occurs among dharma students. And I think it's when you are ... you know, I was out in California ... lot of the students have been dharma students for twenty years ... they know all the gossip about every single center, every single lama, every single practitioner, what every single western monk or nun has done bad, you know. And they go on and on about it ... and it's just a torrent ... and it never stops. And it's just like your head is wizzing, you know, and you say stop. They say ...Oh, I know about this tantric thing you know, and they go on and on and on about all these details about, you know, and they're just talking for the sense of talking. It's not like they want to instruct you on what it means or they want to point out a fault that we want to avoid ourselves, or something like that. It's just because they want to talk. And that's what they talk about because that's what their life is, you know. These are people who spend their whole lives ... who don't have any other activities in their lives but dharma so there ... so what they gossip about or what they do idle talk about is all dharma and it's like ... it's like overwhelming. It's like it's like a huge wave of water, you know, smashing on you and it's really really bad, you know. It's really really bad for idle talk about dharma. I mean, as you get more educated in dharma, you should ... it should become more sacred to you and it and it should be something that is almost spoken about in whispers, you know, like ... especially tantric stuff. I mean, it should be like so holy that you just want to talk about it in private with one person on special nights or something, you know what I mean. I mean, it's very very holy. Everything should become more and more sacred and not more and more ordinary. You know and that's the whole point of those teachings. So I hope we avoid it. As a group I hope we avoid it. As you become more educated in buddhism, as you make contact with other dharma practitioners, I hope you don't sit down and just blab for the sake of blab ... dharma blab, you know. It's very distressing and I was getting into it, you know, I was doing it too, and it was very distressing to see myself doing it. And I'd go home and I'd say I shouldn't do that. And the next morning I would ... what else happened?, you know. [laughs] [laughter] and it's really really bad. You have to be really careful about it. I hope we can be careful about it. I hope

that dharma is a thing we only speak of in hushed tones as something very sacred and beautiful and meaningful and if someones is not doing it just right well anyway you can't ... you never know their motivation. You can't read their minds. Even if you could, is it useful to be talking about it? You know, or maybe we should be talking about someone's ... what someone is doing right, you know . There's plenty of inspiring people to talk about, you know. So we could talk about them, you know. We could talk about the Dalai Lama, you know, something like that. Yeah.

[student: What do you to sorta adjust your outlook when your in the work world and you're with people and your way of getting by everyday is to talk about ...]

Tsongkapa talks about it. Tsongkapa addresses that question. And he says as a bodhisattva ... he mentions it in the bodhisattva vows, {chapa ...{tibetan} it's one of the bodhisattva vows ... you're not allowed to {chapa chema temla ten} means out of attachment to it, to engage in in idle gossip or idle talk. Idle chatter is the meaning of the word. And then he explains, "What do I mean when I say {chapey}" because all of the texts say {chapey}. I found this as {chapey}. It means if you're in a work situation and the only way to make everyone comfortable ... I mean, I used to work in a trucking company ... you can't talk about sacred holy things in hushed tones, you know ... people want to know what the Jets did and the Giants and why the hell didn't they ... and you're not ... and you don't want to make everyone uncomfortable. The point of a bodhisattva is to blend in in the world and Je Tsongkapa says, "Blend in, know about those things, talk about those things and when the time is ripe without being missionary try to try to swing it towards something meaningful. And if you can't it's okay." But then just blend in. The point of a bodhisattva is that you're supposed to blend in and not and not jar with the world. You're suppose to blend in and when the time is ripe you you make your move, you know. [laughs] [laughter] okay. And he talks about it. He said that. His commentary on the bodhisattva vows is very useful and I hope some day we can translate it. It's there. We can read it. He done it. We've finished it. But it would help a lot of people if we could do that. Three in mind. There's a word in the ten commandents, what is that?

[student: coveting]

Coveting. It's very much coveting. It's exactly the same thing. In the ten commandents, the one I grew up with it said your neighbor's ass and your neighbor's wife and there was a list there. I guess it means car in these days. Je

Tsongkapa points out that this refers not only to their personal possessions of another person but to their personal characteristics such as ... he lists, intelligence, health, fame, and even spiritual fame ... and even spiritual acclaim, you know. Then he mentions five conditions. He says, "This this state of mind always always invites ... involves five different conditions." The first condition he gives is that you are very attached to your own possessions or to whatever personal characteristics you already have., That's number one. Number two is that you desire to accumulate more. Number three is you find out what another person has and gets some taste for it. Number four is that it occurs to you that you would like to make those things your own. By the way does it necessarily mean taking them away from the other person? Sometimes yes, not always, okay? And then lastly that desire reaches such a point that you're no longer able to manage it and it and it takes over and then you ... you're about ... this is all mental, right? ... then at the point where you do something about it that's gone out of this mental part. So that's taken us up to the fulfillment of this bad deed. Is where mentally you don't have any more shame about it or embarrassment about it and you're ready to do whatever you have to do to get that thing, okay. Normally implying in an improper way, okay. But even in a proper way, I mean, to freak out and to spend your whole life trying to get rich in a proper way is also number eight, okay. I don't know what to call this. Ill will? How about ill will? Did you ... I don't know ... did you guys ... some of you were here when {Chompa?} Rinpoche came and talked. He he came on a Friday night ... we didn't find out about it ... he was at the airport for three hours. We stole him. We brought him here. He talked for like twenty minutes and then he ran away. Anyway, he was on his way to Morocco to be {Ling Rinpoche} in the new movie and I remember distinctly when I was first learning Buddhism and he was the translator ... in the very first days that I was learning Buddhism and we were in the back of a jeep together and I turned to him and said, "What does number nine exactly mean?" And he said, "It's when you are pleased when other people fail." It's when when other people are going through some kind of misfortune and you're getting some kind of pleasure out of it. And this is very very prevalent. I mean, if it's in the top ten we must be doing it on regular basis. I even see people at work who are in charge of a department or even own the company but still feels good when someone screws up. You know there some kind of human thing which you know ... "Oh, I'm really sorry ... you really screwed up that deal, didn't you, you know" [laughter] You know, and even the boss ... even this thing about competitiveness or something that kinda enjoys it when someone else messes up and people [laughter] ... and people hear that someone else has done something wrong and they're like, "Oh, tell me more about it", you know. I mean. Lama Zopa said that ... often times Americans

react to someone's spiritual failures with this kind of you know, curiosity , you know like ... Oh, tell me more, you know. Just exactly how did they mess up? You know and and that's number nine. That's ill will, okay. I like to call it wrong world view. For me it's more ... it means more ... I even call mistaken world view. the classic two are what? Not believing in the laws of karma which means you will gladly do the other ... nine. So this is the worst one to have. This is the catch twenty-two, you know. Once you ... which came first the chicken or the egg? But once you have this one you'll do the other nine, okay. I mean, I think for us the only reason we don't do anything bad is because we grew up being told it was bad and our parents ... I mean there's are a couple of reason why we don't do bad things. Our parents mostly taught us that it was wrong. The society said that it was wrong. If you went to church, they said that God didn't like it or God punished you for it. Some of it is just flatly illegal and you could get arrested for it. But then there's this thing of whether you do in public or private, you know, and I think we all have that. You know, there's some bad deeds that if you do it in private or if no one finds out about it, somehow it's a little bit better. But in karma that's all irrelevant, you know. Karma ... the only witness you need for a karmic action is yourself, you know. The karma is collected when you're there which you always are [laughs] so, you know. I think those are the myths you have to overcome. It's not bad because your parents said so. It's not bad because the country likes it or not ... your society likes it or not. It's not bad whether it's legal or illegal. It's not bad whether ... because you did it in public rather than doing it in private ... it's bad because it creates a seed in your own mind which causes you to suffer later. It's bad because it it does not allow you ... it's bad because it blocks you from reaching nirvana. It's bad because it it stops your own happiness and your own contentment, you know ... primarily. If you don't reach contentment nor happiness yourself you can't help anybody else and so it's also bad for others, you know. I mean, the main reason bad deeds are bad for others is not so much that it hurts them. It's that it prevent you from getting to a place where you can bring other people to contentment or happiness. It blocks you so then therefore it blocks others. It's irresponsible. It's like having the aids vaccine and throwing it out the window, you know. Or or holding it and waiting, you know. It's irresponsible in that way. So those are the ten. I'll start to explain the karmic results. We'll do one and then we'll take a break. There's about four different kinds of karmic results that you get from doing one of these ten, okay. And again, I'm not talking in terms of the fear of God. I'm talking in terms of "Let's figure out why the particular screwups in my life where they came from" You know, it's interesting. What made my boss like that? You know, why is my other boss kinda sweet? What what caused it? What made New York so

stinky? You know, what made New York dangerous? What makes the East Village kinda cool at night sometimes? You know, I mean what is it ... where does it all come from? Why am I depressed sometimes? Why don't I have energy sometimes? You know, this is very interesting. All of it comes from this. The first one is called ... I'm going to give a little bit of Tibetan. Say {nam min} [repeat] {nam min} [repeat] In sanskrit it's like {pacha tier} or something, which means to cook and {nam min} in Tibetan means to ripen. Like {nimba} ... like a blister when it's just ready to pop is called {nimba}. I means ripe and ready to pop. Like if it's just a little bump, it's not {nimba} yet. A fruit which is all nice and red and soft is {nimba} and when it's all hard and green and small, it's not {nimba}, okay. When a person has taken a Tantric initiation, they are {nimba} ... to learn the secret teachings . If they've studied sutra well and they've taken a proper initiation. If they haven't studied sutra well and have'nt taken a proper initiation they're called not {nimba}. So {nimba} has all those meanings. Being you're ready, ripe ... properly ripe, okay. Here it means a ripen result. This is the result that you normally think of. And there are three flavors. If you do a bad deed ... BIG ... okay [laughs] ... a big version of a bad deed ... you know, like killing your mother or or stealing from a temple ... sexual misconduct with a nun, something like that. If you if you do them in an extreme case the {nam min} is to a birth in the hells, okay. the {nam min} is a birth in the hells. If you do them to a medium extent ... you know medium serious ... it causes a birth as a craving spirit, a hungry ghost, {preta}, okay. And small, what do you get? Leads to a birth as an animal. That's one kind of karmic result from the ten, okay. That's only one of the kinds of karmic result. There are going to be four karmic results. But number one has three flavors. Big , medium and small. So basically {nam min} means what kind of rebirth are you gonna to take, okay. {nam min} is referring to what kind of a rebirth are you gonna to take. Some scriptures, Je Tsongkapa says, reverse these two ... animal and {preta}. They consider animal worse than {preta}. It doesn't much matter. Do you want to do one more? Okay. It's not that hot. I'm going to call this {gyu tun} number one because there's a {gyu tun} number two. Say {gyu tun} [repeat] {gyu tun} [repeat]. {gyu} means cause and {tun} means consistent with. So it means ... it's the kind of karmic result which is similar to the cause and I like to call them a consistent karmic result ... a consistent karmic result. The great scriptures lists two each for each of the ten and I'll give them to you very briefly. By the way these are mostly referring to your own person. These are karmic results which are occuring in your own person ... or from your own point ... personal point of view. They are personal karmic results which resemble what you did and the and the scripture always say at this point, "If you do get to be born as a human then" ... okay ... then {gyu tun} is almost assuming that you got back to a human

realm. But then you have all these other problems. For the first bad deed, which is what? Killing ... there are two. Your life is short. You die young. I'm going to give two and the great scriptures give two for each ... you get sick easily. Somebody asked me, "What the karma of not having any energy? You know, and that seems to be it. It seems to be that you threatened other people's lives or other beings' lives and you don't have energy. At this point I think it's worth it to say, "How could you improve your energy?" There's there's two things really. I mean, very very important. I mean I'm talking about changing your environment. Changing your life. Because it would be very cool to to treat the karmic causes rather than just taking geritol which may or may not work [laughter]. By the way if it works it only works because of what I'm about to say [laughs] [laughter] okay, seriously, seriously. That's why medicine doesn't always work for the different people or even for the same person on different days. Because it's still up to your karma, whether it works or not. So, first of all, if you're a person who doesn't have energy or or or who does have health problems or does get sick easily you have to recognize what it's coming from which is that you were not careful

[cut]

...a path. We talked about it in California. We talked about here a lot, too. The four powers, okay. We will go over the four powers. We will talk about the four powers. There is a way to clean out your old bad karma, once you identify it from this class. You know, once you identify the causes for not having energy or for getting sick easily you can actually try to short circuit the rest of that karma. You can actually manipulate that karmic energy and you can wipe out most of it. It would be very cool. What I'm talking about is is ... this is getting into something very cool. Tonight's class is meant to say ... look at your environment ... look at your person ... look at your own mind and your own body ... understand where all those things come from and then go back and tinker with it and things will actually change in your life. It's kinda it's kinda interesting and it works ... it's the only thing that works, by the way, okay. Number two. If you steal then you'll be one of those people that can never have enough money to live on. No matter how much you struggle, how much you work, how much you put forth effort, you just never make ends meet, okay. That spell ... I don't know. This means even if you do own something you really don't own it. You know, like you have to share it with your sister or something like that. You don't enjoy the private use of anything, you know. Everything you own is tied up with someone else's interests and you can't really use it the way that you would like to use it. It's always like, you know, like you're

married to somebody and you have a car and you can't quite take it out when you want to take it out because they might need it or your kids need the car or your mom needs the car. And you can't really enjoy the exclusive use of that object. That's a result of stealing.

[student: What about racism or institutionalized slavery?]

In what sense?

[student: Well if someone is slain or someone is the object of racism [unclear] then there's a class thing or race thing]

Oh, we're going to come to that. We going to come to that. I you mean what is the karmic cause of being treated with racial prejudice or something like that?

[student: What is the connection between the institutionalized aspect of these things [unclear]]

No, that's that's a karmic common karmic cause. Yeah, if all the women in the world are being discriminated against ... or if all the women in one Muslim country, for example, are being dumped on, then according to Buddhism, they all at one time in the past communally committed some some act of dumping on another people and that and that happens in the scriptures. It is described in scripture, you know. Is it right? No. Should we fight against it? Yes. Does it have a cause? Yes. You know, it doesn't mean it's right and it doesn't mean you shouldn't fight against it. It's not talking about that. But the real way to fight against is that every person involved should try not to do it. But the natural reaction to being dumped on is to dump on other people and that why samsara is called the wheel, okay ... the circle. Seriously, okay. The natural reaction is normally the one that perpetuates your own con ... bad condition. That's why you learn Buddhism so you can react unnaturally with knowledge and with compassion, okay. Okay, number three. People around you are unreliable, okay. Meaning you have not been reliable to your spouse, okay. This is the result of sexual misconduct, particularly adultery, okay. I don't know. I was a manager at work for years and I had two kind of supervisors, you know. One was ... you just ... you could just ... you didn't have to do anything and they would do everything and you would get credit for it and you would get all these bonuses and everything, you know. I mean, these are reliable people. And then there were these other kinds of managers that didn't do anything and they were unreliable and everytime you gave them something to do you would have

to chase them and make sure that they did it and everything else ... it's my own karmas fault. I created the reliability of half those people and I created the unreliability of the other half of the people. And if you're surrounded by people who you can't count on, it's because you committed sexual misconduct. And that's interesting to know. Because then you can fix it. You know...And not all the connections are very obvious. And that's why we rely on the Buddha, okay. Second one.

[student:Which part of sexual misconduct?

This is mostly adultery. It's mostly referring to adultery. You have not been a reliable spouse. People are always coming on to your girlfriend or boyfriend, okay. You walk down the street and ten people are [laughs] making your girlfriend an offering, you know. I had a girlfriend once. We 'd go to restaurants and the waiters would drop cards in her lap, you know. [laughs] [laughter] That was from adultery,okay. [laughs] [laughter] Okay. I think maybe we'll take a break there. [laughter] True confessions.

[student: Are we going to talk about how to clean up [unclear]]

You know, we will. We have to. Okay. By the way I have the homework and stuff up here which I just got so ... you want to hand them out.

[cut]

No one believes what you say when's it's true. It's kinda an obvious question . It's a children's question and it's a question that you don't ask after your mom tells you three times, "Don't ask stupid questions?" Why do people believe other people who lie all the time and why don't people believe people who are telling the truth? And there's the answer, okay. Because those people individually didn't lie or did lie in the past, okay. Whether or not people believe you has almost no correspondence to what you're saying is true or not. As you've seen throughout history, okay. And other people are always trying to deceive you. Other people are always lying to you. And you see people who go through life,you know ... I know people who go through life and everytime they go to the store somebody is cheating them [laughs] and everytime they have something done at their house, the contractor is, you know, cheating them and they buy a car and the guy cheats them and then you know ... I don't feel like I have this particular karma and I just can't understand why they feel so wary of everyone. But that's why. They should because they [laughs] [unclear], you

know, okay. Number five ... which was what? Why are the people in your office always struggling against each other? Or why are the people in your office always getting along with each other? Why when you got your new job, they're all fighting with each other and then when you went to the new job, the other job, they weren't, anymore? And why would your family fighting with each other and later they patched up and why did they start fighting again? You know. It's really the result of that. Yeah.

[student: [unclear]]

Right, exactly. But there's one thing I have to mention is that the definition of good karma what's the definition of bad karma? Yeah, it has to involve suffering. Like if people are fighting around you but it doesn't bother you in the least it's not a bad karma. It's not the result of a bad karma. It's very interesting, you know. It all depends on your personal reaction to it, you know. If things are falling apart in your life but you are blissful that's the result of a good karma. It's very interesting. It's really the effect that it has on you that determines whether it came from a bad karma or a good karma, okay. And then secondly ... this is ... I mean, I had a brother who committed suicide and they always said that it was because of the people he was hanging ... I think it really was, the people he ended up hanging out with ... he was a good guy but he used to hang out with some really bad types and I think this would be that ... that you just fall into a group of friends or associates who are ... who are bad, you know or you know ... you gotta get stuck in a business where the boss is telling you to lie or cheat or stuff like that or you get involved in a career where cheating is part of that business or something like that. That would be a result of this karma. Result of harsh speech. The whole world around you is making lousy noises at you. Silence, jackhammers [laughter] ... people fighting, okay ... music that you don't like ... your neighbors won't turn off their stereos ... seriously. It's very interesting. [laughter] No, it's very interesting and if you want the neighbors to turn off the stereo, don't call the police ... watch your harsh speech. Very interesting. I mean, it works and it's very difficult. It takes great knowledge. It really does take great knowledge to act correctly. If you want the guys to turn off their stereo, never again say any harsh speech ... AND do the four forces with your old harsh speech, you know. And the and the stereo ... the guys will move out, okay. If you're stuck in this lousy little dharma center in the basement of thirty-ninth street [laughs] you know, keep doing virtuous deeds in that place and then sooner or later someone will force you to move to a [laughter] East Village apartment based on that ... seriously. That's the way to get there. Seriously. I mean, that's not nirvana. We have work on that.

That's a different thing, okay.

[student: So even when you're in the country and the crickets bother you]

Yeah, it's the result of bad karma. Result of harsh speech. And and and remember at the beginning of the class I said, "Think about the thing that bothers you" ... well maybe you can reconstruct it now. That's the whole point. You can reconstruct it ... find out why it happened and this can be anything from your physical appearance ... to the world around you ... to your own thoughts, okay. If you don't like you own thoughts, then fix your karma. Because that's also a karmic result. Other people speak to you in an argumentative way. I mean, wherever you go, people are always challenging you, fighting with you, talking to you roughly, okay. What's number seven? Idle talk. I've seen people at work. They come up with great ideas and you'll be at a meeting and someone will raise their hand and give a really great idea and everybody will go ... you know, it's like who cares ... you know. The boss will just blow him away. Like just ignore them and go on to the next person, you know. That's the result of idle talk. Other people ask me, "What causes low self esteem?" or a lack of confidence in yourself. And it comes from idle speech. Very interesting. If someone taught you some kind of special practice ... you know, like some kind of psychiatry thing ... and it overcame your lack of confidence ... it would be because your karma for idle speech had worn out simultaneously. And if they taught you this method and it didn't work it would be because your karma from having spoken idle talk had not worn out yet...and that's why different psychological methods or treatments work for some people and don't work for others, cause it doesn't have anything to do with that. And that's serious. And if they did ever work, they should work all of the time. You know? If you were getting better because of that new idea in psychological treatment, therapy I guess you call it, you know if there was some new therapy method that worked...because it worked by itself independent of your karma which would be self- existently working it should work for everybody...but it doesn't...so that's not what cured you. It was that your karma for having spoken idle talk alot had finally worn out. It's cool. Yeah?

Course IX: The Ethical Life #120A.txt.
Class Seven: Taking and Keeping the Vows

Proofread by: Summer Moore

(cut) We have we finished the eight classes of doubts and then we have reached a section on the {ten}. Now say {ten} {repeat}, {ten} {repeat}. {ten} means something upon which something is based. So like this is...

(Student: This is supposed to be what?)

This would be the {ten} supporting you, the pen. The eraser would be under the pen. So this is the {ten}. This is called the {tenpa} line, it's spelled differently. But, but the {den} is the thing that's providing the foundation, okay? In Vinaya {ten} can refer to a appropriate body and mind to take the vows. So, if you are, if you are a {ten} you can take {Pratimoksha} vows. And if you're not a {ten} you cannot take {Pratimoksha} vows. For example animals can't take {Pratimoksha} vows. You have to be a human, okay? Only, only humans, of, the five realms only humans can take it, {Pratimoksha} vows, okay? Not even gods can take {Pratimoksha} vows. A god cannot become a (ge lob) or a {gelob ma} Diva, pleasure being, that's because they, they cannot have required motivation for taking them which is what?

[students: Renunciation]

Renunciation. You can't be sick of life because their life is too fun. Alright? (laughs) Seriously. So, in, in any realm where they're having too smooth of a life they, they are not a {ten} for {Pratimoksha} vows. In any realm where they have too much suffering to think straight, like the Hell Realms, they cannot take {Pratimoksha} vows. Although they have some kind of natural renunciation. And then if they're too stupid, in the case of animals, or {pretas}, or things like that, they cannot, it, it's not a mental thing. They can't understand why they're taking the vows. They can't understand how to teach the vows, okay? So that's the idea of a {den}. Je Tsongkapa's root text says the following {Gling su kepa pune}. That's where he explained the {ten}. So their first requirement he mentions is (Gling su kepa)... {Ling su}, you know what {Gling} means? {Gling}? I'll just yell. How's that? Can you hear okay?

(Student: I don't know how to get the speaker to work.)

Okay, Ill talk louder. {Gling su kepa pune} {Kepa Pune} means man or woman. Human...has to be a human. {Gling su} means on the three continents. Okay? How many continents are there?

[students: seven]

What? There's four main continents. And then each main continent has a sub-continent. So there's twelve or four, whichever way you want to look at it. Okay? Four main continents. North, south, east, west. Okay? We live on the southern continent. And {gling su kepa pune} means men or woman humans of the three continents...meaning the first kind of being who's a human who cannot take {pratimoksha} vows, is someone who lives on the northern continent, which is known as "Unpleasant Sound." {Tibetan} What's the reason is that their life-spans are fixed? They always live to five hundred. They never die early. They have some kind of strange karma where they don't die early. So people don't get renunciation. So the reason that that continent is called unpleasant sound, is that just before they die they hear some voice in the sky saying "tomorrow's the day..." No...and then they draw unpleasant sound from that. So, through their whole lives they have this pretty...they have some kind of feeling of stability or some kind of feeling of what do you call that? Where you think everything's okay? Like security...they're not going to die prematurely...and so they don't get true renunciation. Yep true renunciation you have to be aware of your death. The real most basic reason to be a Buddhist is to be aware of your death. The minimum motivation is to be aware of your death. So they can't do it. So if you had to make...if your homework said, give me seven beings that can't take {pratimoksha} vows, cannot be a {ten} to {pratimoksha} vows, the first one would be, someone who lives on the northern continent.

{Chardmesugibu Za ma Tibetan- unclear}, wanting to change its elements. {Za ma} means, {Za ma} means somebody's who's impotent in the sense that they cannot engage in sexual relations. And they cannot take {pratimoksha} vows. There's a kind of energy in the human beings, either a male energy or a female energy, and they're described in the [B. Ahbidharma] second chapter. The (b. Ahbidharma) in the second chapter, there are twenty-two powers or energies in the body which are discussed and two of them are the male and female energies. And you might call it hormones or something, okay, but if you don't have them or if there's something wrong with them you cannot be a {den} for

{Pratimoksha} vows. Apparently if you're deficient in, in either male or female energy your mind cannot be strong willed enough to keep a vow. Somehow that, those hormones give you some kind of firm mindedness or willpower to, to keep a vow. And, and they say that a, if you don't have that if you don't have those two powers then you, you somehow lack the sufficient will-power, or decisiveness to keep the vows. So you have to have one of those two vows. {Za ma} means a being who, who's, who's incapable sexually. Who just doesn't have sexual energy. {Za ma dang}, that's number two. {Ma ning}. {Ma ning} means a neuter okay? A neuter. There's ten different kinds, five of them are female {unclear} neuters and five of them are male {unclear} neuters. And basically it's just someone who, who again does not have either one of those energies. Or something's wrong with those energies. They don't really have that energy in its proper form. In the sense that they are neuter. Like they could have been born neuter, neither male nor female. Or the could of been, they could of had an accident and, and lost their sexual organ or something like that. It's somebody who's, who's been neutered that way, doesn't have that energy. Doesn't have that hormone, hormonal energy to, to keep the vows. Okay? So that's three so far. {Za ma Mtsan Gnyis(unclear)}. {Mtsan Gnyis} means hermaphrodite, meaning somebody whose has both sexual organs at the same time. And they also, they don't have a, a pure sexual identity or energy, and that, that's required for the vows. {Mtsan Gnyis...Tibetan}. Then he says {sok}. {Sok} means what? {La sok pa}.

(Student: Etcetera.)

{Sok} means etcetera. Okay? (laughs) And then you have to go through one of the etceteras. Let me see if I can remember. One is the {Sa nem}. Somebody whose committed a {sa may}. What's the {sa may}?

(Student: The five bad deeds.)

Yeah. One of the five ultimately bad deeds. Which are...

(Student: Killing...)

Killing your...

(Student: Mother...)

Mother. Killing your...

(Student: Father...)

Father.

(Student: Hurting a woman...)

Killing an arhat. Killing an Arhat. What's an arhat.

(Student: (unclear))

Someone who's reached nirvana. What's nirvana?

(Student: (unclear))

Permanent cessation of you mental...

(Student: Afflictions.)

Afflictions. Yeah, okay? Now whether they have suffering or not is a big debate. They have suffering but not the truth of suffering, something like that. (laughter) I mean they can die and they can have their heads cut off and something like that. But they don't get upset. Okay? Which would be interesting. Forth one?

(Student: (unclear))

Technically it's called trying to draw blood from a Buddha in anger. So I guess that's to eliminate nurses who are drawing blood, you know. Stuff like that. Trying to hurt a Buddha. Trying, because you can't. Okay. And then the last one...

(Student: ...Sangha)

Yeah, causing a schism in the Sangha during the time of the Buddha. So we can't do number five. During the time of The Historical Buddha, we can do a {unclear}, which means a close one but we can't do a real one. We can't do the real one, right now. We can do something which is like ninety-nine percent as bad, which is splitting up people in a Dharma center...but we can't commit the ultimate one. Only one person in history (unclear), they're in the lowest hell.

Okay, that's how many?

(Student: Five.)

Okay. Six, say {Rku Thabs Su Gnas Pa} {repeat}, (Dupsu) (repeat), (Rku Thabs Su) {repeat}, (Gnas Pa) {repeat}. {Rku Thabs Su Gnas Pa} means someone in, in, this is historical and India, I guess it could also happen now-days, who goes into, who hears there's gonna be a Buddhist ordination ceremony... I, in fact I have a lady last week who was like this... and she wants to write her PHD thesis about it and ah, that ceremony is secret, cannot be attended by anyone who's not taking the vows, or giving the vows, and, and she wanted to know if she could, you know, like stand behind a curtain and hear the whole thing, then she could write about it for her doctoral thesis. Or, and in ancient India the idea was that someone would pretend to be taking vows just in order to, to hear, you know, what's it's all about, and, and, and. you know, how can they use it for their PHD thesis and stuff like that. And that's called {Rku Thabs Su Gnas Pa}. {Rku} means top rip off. To steal something. {Rku Thabs Su Gnas Pa} means to, to be somewhere with the intention of being an imposter with the intention of stealing this knowledge through some lousy motivation like a PHD for instance. In...instead of what? Renunciation. Instead of taking them or learning them or studying them because you are feed-up with the ups-and-downs of life. That's {Rku Thabs Su Gnas Pa}. Um, seven... Say {Log Lta}, say {Log Lta} {repeat}. {Can} {repeat}. {Log Lta Can} (repeat). Okay, someone who really doesn't really believe in...

(student: Karma?)

Karma...laws or karma or past and future lives. Those are the two classic ones... also the Three Jewels, things like. That would be {Log Lta Can}. Okay...and those are certain types of people who cannot support their min...their state of mind and their body, either their state of mind or body and or both, okay? Cannot support the {Pratimoksha} vow. They cannot take the {pratimoksha} vow...in this life. So I don't think...I think all of us can take them, right? Right?

(student: Right.)

Alright, so that's the discussion of the {ten}. Now we discuss the {tongway gyu}.

(silence)

Say {Tongway} (repeat), {Gyu} {repeat}. {Tongway Gyu} {Tongway Gyu}. {Tongwa} means to lose your vows. {Gyu} means generally cause, but here it means what can make you lose your vows. Things that can make you lose your vows. It's a very depressing subject, okay? I don't like this subject much. But we'll go through it just so you know what, what the rules are. Okay? {Tongway Gyu}, the ways you can lose your vows, can be divided into two types. Okay? The first type are general ways of losing any {Pratimoksha} vows. In other words if you do one of these and it happens to be like five, it doesn't matter what vow you have, you'll lose it. Okay? And then there are specific ways to lose specific vows and there's like three examples of those. You know like, for certain kinds of vows you would lose that particular vow but not a different kind-a vow if you did that particular thing. Okay? So there's general ways to lose any vow and then there's specific ways to lose specific vows. Okay? And that's the big division of two ways to lose your vows. So the root text says {Lappa Pul...}.

(silence)

Say {Lappa} (repeat), {Pul} (repeat). {Lappa} (repeat) {Pul} (repeat). {Lappa} means generally advice or instructions. Sometimes it means precepts. Here it means precepts. {Pul} is a, what's that word, what's that word for a polite word for a nasty thing?

(Student: Euphemism.)

Euphemism. (laughs) Okay? {Pul} means to offer. Okay? Another {Pul} means to give your vows back. Formally. Ah, that's why you, you, you can either do it in front of another ordained person or you can even do it in front of a Buddhist statue and there's a, there's a ritual, short ritual where you say...Okay, I'm, I can't keep these vows any longer. I formally give them back. The motivation for that he doesn't discuss but in my own mind, you know, I, I see it like this, when you take most of the (Pratimoksha) vows, you know all except the first two, you swear to do so for the length of...

(Students: Your life.)

...your life before all the Buddha's and bodhisattva's of the ten directions, you know? When you're making a solemn vow in front of these enlightened beings, and according to all, according to three kinds of Buddhist belief they are there in the room. They are listening when you take the vow. And what's the only

motivation you're allowed to have? I mean is it you wanna look nice or you kinda like the other people who are monks and nuns or you wanna go along with your friends, what they're doing, or, you wanna seem to people to be more, more norm or something, you know? What is it? The, the only motivation is that you're sick of, of, of this kind of life where your body is doomed, your relationships are doomed, your possessions are doomed, you know? Your intellect is doomed. You're gonna be, you're gonna end up senile if you live that long. You know? There's no future in any of it. There's no, there's no way any thing about this world can go right because it's all created by karma inclinations. If those things, if those things are generating your world everything has to screw up sooner or later. Just give it some time. Okay. It's not screwing up now give it another couple of weeks, or six months or a year, you know? It cannot go right. You know? Quit struggling to make it go right through external causes cause it cannot work. It will not work. Something will always go wrong. And that's renunciation. That's a recognition with which you take the vows. It doesn't seem to me possible to give the vows back if you still have any kind of understanding of what's going on. You know, because you took them to get outa that and, and that doesn't get better. It's not like, you know, samsara suddenly gets nicer when you're thirty or forty or something, you know? It doesn't work that way. It will always be screwy. And it will always be, everything will be, there's this African novel I had to read in high school, it was called the Things Fall Apart. (laughs) And a, it's very famous, is a just, things fall apart, you know? And things fall apart, you know, everything falls apart, so, and it doesn't change. I can't understand why anyone would, would give the vows back. That, that situation doesn't change, okay? Until you use the vows to reach nirvana and Buddhahood. So I, I don't understand. I, and secondly the thing I'd say about it is that you can't judge those people who do give their vows up. I've known great Lamas, who I still consider great Lamas, who have given their vows back. And they've gone on to do some other extraordinary thing and maybe they have some extraordinary insight into the future and what they could do if they gave the vows back. And maybe they had, or maybe some Tantric deity appeared to them and said you're problem is pride, I want you to appear to mess-up in front of everybody so you can overcome your pride about being pompas. And I can imagine that that's possible. So I don't say that we can judge people but I'd say that if you take them, and if that doesn't happen, then (laughs), then, then I can't understand any reason to give them back. I, it doesn't make sense. If you, if you took them for the right reasons. So that's the first reason.

(silence)

Say {shi pu} {repeat}, {shi pu} {repeat}. There's a couple of words in Tibetan for dying. This one is a little more exotic, okay? {Shi} means to die, but {pu} means to move on, to transmigrate, okay? So {shi pu} is an idiom that means to die and go on. What it means is die, okay, die and move on. Die and move on to your next life. Die and move, okay? And that, if you die and move you lose how many of the eight kinds of vows?

(Student: All of them.)

All of them. (laughs) Okay? Remember, remember where we are, we're talking about the general causes for losing any vow. Any of the eight vows. Okay? What about one-day vow? (laughter) I think if you died in the, half way through the day you'd lose it. (laughter) And then it's gone, okay? {Shi pu tang tsen nyi jung}.

(silence)

Say {tsen nyi} {repeat}, {jung} {repeat}. {Tsen nyi} {repeat}, {jung} {repeat}. {Tsen} means a, normally {tsen} means name. It can also mean mark, like a mark on the Buddha. But sometimes it means sexual organ, okay? That's when Rinpoche says "sign", that's what he's talking about, okay? {Tsen} means sexual organ, {nyi} means two, {jung} means if they appear. And what it means is if you took a vow with only one sexual organ and then your body changed and you had two sexual organs you would lose the vow. {Tsen nyi jung}. This is only the Vinaya so apparently it's (laughter), apparently things like this happen more, more often in the past. You know? Apparently things like this were not unheard of in ancient India.

(Student: Do they have to be different or can they be the same?)

I think something's that they're the same, that they're different. Cause that would mess-up, mess-up the energy of either male or female.

(Student: Are there some people who have three?) (laughter)

Excuse me?

(Student: Are there some people who have three?) (laughter)

We'll have to debate this more. (laughter) By the way those things are all covered in the, in the more extensive text.

(silence)

Say le... yeah?

(Student: On number three {Nyi Jung} what's the meaning of that?)

{Nyi} means two and {jung} means they, they appear on your body. {Len}, say {Len sum gyur} (repeat), {Len sum gyur} (repeat). {Len} means, in this case, time, like one time, two times, three times. Okay? {Sum} means what?

(Student: Three.)

Three. {Gyur} means change. Okay? If you change sexes once it's okay. You know like if you're a {Ge long} and your sex changes to female and you become a...

(Students: {Ge long Ma})

Okay. If you're a {Ge Tsul} and you change to a female and become a {ge tsul ma}. If you're a {ge lob ma} what happens? You become a {ge tsul}. Okay? You become a {ge tsul}. Because there is no {ge lob pa}. Alright? Ah, so you can change sexes once and even twice and you still keep a vow. Okay? But if it happens three times, apparently, or more, apparently there's some kind of...

(Student: Three strikes you're out.) (laughter)

Oversexed. (laughter)

(student: unclear)

I don't know, I don't know, somebody asked me if it was three or after three and to tell you the the truth I'm not sure. (laughter) The Dalai Lama always says I'll let you know when it happens.(laughter)

(silence)

Say {Ge Tsa} (repeat), {che} (repeat). {Ge Tsa} (repeat), {che} {repeat}. {Ge Tsa} is

a very specific concept as {ge} means virtue, {tsa} means root. Like your root of virtue. And people have been, you know people have translated it as like hard virtue or (unclear) virtue or elementary virtue or something like that. And I was in the monastery and we debated about it, I asked all my teachers, I, I couldn't see much difference between, I didn't understand what was your rudimentary virtue and what was not your rudimentary virtue, you know? Cause this subject comes up a lot in the dis..., in the discussion of the {Paramitas}. Like when you get anger. Extreme anger at a bodhisattva or something that can, can hurt the {Ge tsa}. And {Mokda}, wrong views, like this is all garbage, when you say this Buddhism stuff is all garbage, like I've met students who, you know, they, they got into a bad frame of mind and it got worse and worse and worse and then they went to Rinpoche and said this is all garbage, I give it up, you know? And they leave. That's {Ge tsa che}. You cut your virtue root. Now what's the difference between {Ge Tsa} and Ge wa)? You know, virtue and virtue root. I, I can't get it very straight. I'm still working on it. Tell you the truth. Apparently {Ge tsa} means your whole accumulation of virtue and, and it's not like elementary virtue, virtues or something like that. It doesn't seem to mean core of virtue so much as your general accumulation of virtue, through your life for example. And if you, if you get a extremely bad wrong view you somehow destroy that whole accumulation. And that's the {Ge Tsa che}.

(Student: What is {che}?)

{Che} means to cut like {dorje Chepa} is the present tense. {Shepa} is the past tense. {Dorje che}. {Che} means to be cut, cut off. Okay. To, to cut off your root of virtue. Meaning destroy, destroy your, your accumulated virtues. As far as I have been able to work it out, various Lamas... {Ge tsa che}. Those are general ways of losing your vows. Those five. Now we'll go to some... you got a question?

(Student: Yeah. In Theravada Buddhism you can't become a monk if you're missing a limb. I don't know if that's true?)

You need, our group, our, our, monastic code is (Theravadan). And technically if you have certain gross physical deformities you're not supposed to become a monk. We're not supposed to make you a monk. I don't know, I don't think you, it's not listed as losing you vows if you become deformed after you...

(Student: (unclear) if you're a monk and you stepped on a land-mine or something?)

Yeah. I, I don't think you lose your vows. I have never seen it listed as a, as a reason to lose your vows if you've already taken them. And, and I think in practice I've seen many kinds of monks with many kinds of handicaps, granted vows, they kept it very nicely. So I don't, I think it might be a cultural thing. I think in ancient India they didn't want to collect all the handicapped people in the country and all the, all the retarded people. And they were certain, ancient rules about who you could make a monk. But, Je Tsongkapa doesn't go through all those. But there, there's a long, long list and there's a point in the ordination ceremony where the assistant vow giver, who's called the {Tsang tin}, has to take a candidate to a room and ask him these like thirty-forty questions, you know? Do you have this, do you have this, I mean, do you have this disease, do you have this disease? Are you, are you here to steal something, you know? Do you have a large debt that you're avoiding by coming in the monastery? Are you in the service of someone that you're trying to run away from, you know? Stuff like that.

(Student: (unclear)) (laughter)

I can't tell you all the details. (laughter) They, they take care of that. (unclear)

(silence)

These are the, these are the specific causes that can make you lose certain vows, okay?

(silence)

Say {Nyi shu} {repeat}, {malun} {repeat}, {dershe} {repeat}. {Nyi shu} {repeat}, {malun} {repeat}, {dershe} {repeat}. {Nyi shu} means twenty years old. {Malun} means didn't reach it. {Dershe} means to find out. And, and this is a very specific thing. Ah, you thought you were twenty, you have to be twenty years old to take {Ge long} vows, full monk's vows. Okay? So if you, if you thought you were twenty and took the vow and be..., but you weren't twenty yet and before you turned twenty you found out that you weren't twenty then you lose your vows. Okay? Then the vows disappear. Very interesting. Okay? You got it?

(Student: And if you didn't find out?)

Then you would keep the vows.

(Student: (unclear))

Yeah, before you turn twenty. Counting time with the moon the text says. Okay? Don't forget that those nine months are considered, in, in Buddhism, they're considered lifetime, you know? So you, when you're three months out of the moon you're already, you can have your first birthday. Conception date. Anyway. Okay...

(Student: (unclear))

Yeah, to take the full monk's vows you must be twenty. You have to be twenty. You can't make that decision

(Student: And that's the maximum right?)

Oh no, no maximum. And in fact, in Tibet, there's a, there's a custom for people to take them when they're seventy or something like... People who have gone through the whole family life thing but they want to die in the robes. In, in fact my first Tibetan teacher did that. So he was a, he was an aristocrat. A very famous aristocrat and wealthy aristocrat and he got renunciation about six months before he died and he... (laughter) No, and he wanted to die with his robes on. So he, he took the, he took his robes and then his wife still took care of him because he was bed-ridden and every night she'd go out and sleep on the porch.

(Student: I was going to bring this up earlier, but going back to impotency... (unclear))

Which is (unclear) ...not, not able to have sexual relations.

(Student: Could they impotent now but unable to perform when they were younger?)

I don't, you know I'd have to check out the, the fine points, which are you know, the Vinaya texts are sixteen thousand pages long. I think you'd have to have... be... have that in you when you take the vows.

(Student: When you take the vows?)

It's not listed as a reason to lose the vows in this very brief text. Now maybe in a more detailed text. Yeah?

(Student: The monk who died six months after taking the vows?)

Yeah.

(Student: Was there a provision made for his wife in terms of his wealth?)

Yeah. Normally she would get it, you know. I think... Tibetans are very, and Tibetan Buddhism, don't forget they are bodhis..., they are normally people with bodhisattva vows and with Tantric vows which is much different from the monks in these southern countries, you know? Normally a monk in a Tibetan monastery has all three sets of vows. So your behavior, your motivation, is much more broad. You know? You really, it's, it's, be...renunciation is why you're a monk. But normally you have bodhisattva vows which, which mean you're supposed to take care of everybody. And if that means, for example, collecting wealth and using wealth, you have to, you know? And that's a big difference between the southern and the northern traditions. Most monks in...in Tibetan monks they tell all three sets of vows. And there are certain provisions in the higher two sets of vows which require you to do things which..., if you only had the lower vows would be breaking those vows. {unclear}

(Student: (unclear))

Do you know? Yeah. He says yes. I, I don't, I...

(Student: What was the question?)

(student: For a full nun you have to be twenty.)

(silence)

Which seems to be a really wise rule, right? Cause, I mean in ancient India you were halfway through your life by then.

(silence)

Say {Ten Chir} (repeat), {Ke lang} {repeat}. {Ten Chir} (repeat), {Ke lang} {repeat}. {Ke lang} means to take it up with your mouth. {Ka} means mouth,

{kay} means with the mouth, {lang} means to take it up. It's the Tibetan word for, to agree to do something. Or to accept something. To agree to do something. {Ke lang} means to agree to do something. {Ten Chir} means here, in part, to have sex. To have sexual relations. And this is a specific way for being {ge lob ma}. An intermediate nun loses her vows, all her vow immediately, if she does this one action. Which is only agreeing to have sexual relations with a man.

(Student: What about sexual relations with a woman?)

Say it again.

(Student: What about sexual relationships with another woman?)

The text I read said it was with a man.

(Student: (unclear))

Let's not go into the detail now.

(Student: Venerable Elle: No I don't say that. I'm saying that if you break a root vow (unclear))

Normally, yeah.

(Student: So that this one (unclear) if it were a root vow.)

Seems to be. (laughter) Yeah. You learn in these debate (unclear) to be very cautious. (laughter. Say {Nyin Shak De} {repeat}, {Nyin Shak De} {repeat}. {Nyin}, {Nyin Shak} means one twenty-four hour period. {Shak} means one twenty-four hour period. {Nyin Shak}. {De} means past, finishes. So why do you lose your vows if in one twenty-four hour period you?

(Student: (unclear))

Yeah, this refers to the first two of the eight vows. I'm sorry, the first one. Alright? Which is what?

(Student: One day vow.)

One-day vow. Okay? So very specifically in the one day vow you lose it when the day finishes. When the sun comes up the next morning, okay? When you can see the lines on your hand. And that's, that's the {Nyin shak de}. So here you have three specific causes for losing your vows in the case of a full monk, in the case of a {ge lob ma} an intermediate nun, and in the case of a one day vow. Specific causes, specific ways to lose it. Just that vow.

(Student: (unclear))

Right, right. That's why I said things make you, make you lose a vow.

(silence)

Now there are two groups, there are two Hinayana groups that have, that add two more causes. They say there's two other ways you can lose a vow. Those groups are the sutras...

(silence)

Which are the second of the four great schools of India. {sautantrika} And, the...

(silence)

There's a group called {Neyopa} which means under the sun. And they, they, they lived in some land which is like in central India, or something like that. Refers to their geographical location. They are a group of the {Vibashika}, you can call them detailists.

(silence)

And they, they have two more ways to lose a vow.

(silence)

Say {Tsa Tung} {repeat}, {Jungwa} {repeat}. {Tsa Tung} {repeat}, {Jungwa} {repeat}. {Tsa Tung} means a {pamba}. What's a {pamba}? Defeat. There's five groups of vows, right, for {ge long} or {ge long ma}... we had six because we split one of them into two... there's five groups, this is that first group called the defeats, okay? The very, most serious. When the full monk there's how many? Four, (unclear) And full nun there's eight, okay? So the most, the, the very most

serious four for a full monk and the very most serious eight for a full nun. It's called a {Tsa tung}. And {jung wa} means if you have a {chatzu}. If one of them, if you break one of, one of those first groups of vows. The very most serious ones. So according to these two groups, if you commit one of those, you break all your vows.

(silence)

Say {Damchu} {repeat}, {nuppa} {repeat}. {Damchu} {repeat}, {nuppa} {repeat}. {Damchu} means the Holy Dharma, meaning the Buddhist Dharma. Buddha Dharma. {Nuppa} means if it declines in the world. If in the whole world Buddhism like starts to disappear. Then they say, these two schools say you would personally lose your vows, also. Your vows would disappear. Buddhism in general disappeared in the world your vows would also disappear. The other schools say come-on! That is the Holy Dharma (laughter), and if some person still has vows and still keeping them well then the Holy Dharma didn't disappear in the world did it? So then there's a disagreement among the schools. These are, these are the, these two viewpoints are not accepted by the, the school of, of Vinaya in Tibet. Which is called the {Kajneri} detail of school. Okay? We, our, our Vinaya follows the details of the school of what's called {kutchnees}. Of, of northern, northwest India. Of the, of those days.

(Student: So this school say what about (unclear))

You lose all your vows. You..

(Student: (unclear))

All. Hey, good question. Lets do that. She says well what does happen to you in the, in, in the school that we do accept, if you do break one of your root vows? Most seriously.

(silence)

{Kashmiri...} means {Kashmiri} detailist which is what we are. {Dondeng etc} means if they, if somebody with monk, with full monks and nuns vows commits a, one of the defeats, {Bulun Norden Shin}. {Bulun} means to have a death. Okay? {Bulun} means to have a death. {Norden} means to be rich. {Nor} means wealth. {Den} means how you spend, and related obviously to the word {Norbu}, for example. {Shin} means the metaphor. You can use the metaphor of

that. So they say a person who for example breaks the vow against killing. They become like a rich man with a big debt, okay? And I always give the example of my boss. (unclear). He started out with fifty thousand dollars, he built it up to a hundred and fifty million, he's down to a, I don't know what, let's say fifty million, ah, and he owes about five million. Okay? And he doesn't have any cash and the company might fold because he's worth fifty million but he can't liquidate fifty million so he's, he can't pay the bills, I mean... So, that's a little bit of {Bulun Norden Shin} okay? That's if you have the vows at all you are like a very, very, wealthy person. If you broke one of the root vows, in that sense, you really have a huge debt. But the debt is much less then, in what you have. And, and then Chone Drakpa Shed...

(Student: Who's the commentator on that?)

Dharma Badhra says (laughs), I get confused. Dharma Badhra says you are poor from the point of view, if someone says How's your job against killing doing, you have to say I'm broke. You know I really messed up. And if they say how's your other vows doing, you have to say I'm really a lucky person. I'm, I'm rich in the vows. Because I'm keeping all of them. So from this point of view you're a pauper. From this point of view you're like a rich man. Okay? But you don't, according to, to the school that Je Tsongkapa follows and that we follow and all the traditions in Tibet follow you don't lose, you don't lose all your vows. You don't, it's not a {tongway gyü}. It's not a, it's not, you don't lose all your vows like that. It's very, very, very serious. It destroys that vow. I mean it, it, it practically wipes out your vows. It, it, destroys, it, it damages that vow irreparably. You cannot ever bring it back to its full strength as it was before. And, if you, and I believe you, it's only if you don't hide it that you don't lose your vows. You have to admit, admit it to people. And then all sorts of bad things happen to you in the monastery. Like you get demoted and all sorts of things. But you don't, you're not thrown out of the monastery. You don't lose your vow.

(Student: (unclear))

I'll write it, okay? How do you spell that? (laughter)

(silence)

What's that?

(Student: We were thinking English spelling.) (laughter)

I'll do both.

(silence)

Generally {Kashmiri} means Muslim. I mean in modern Tibetan it has come to mean Muslim. But in ancient Tibet it meant someone from Kashmir. And most of the Muslims who came into Tibet were from the Kashmir. Were traders from the Kashmir (unclear). And their work, there was a large Muslim community in Tibet. I mean especially in Lasha...And, they, they were very well accepted and people got along very well. Now-days they're getting much more powerful in Tibet and there's some problems there. There, there were Tibetan monks in (unclear), very interesting, I met and spoken to them, they're very interesting people. (unclear) Alright, {Atchinchinamaw etc.}, maybe a good time to take a break? We don't have much more.

(cut)

...is really just (unclear). Which is the permanent ending of your mental afflictions based on having seen emptiness directly. Because you saw emptiness directly you're able to remove your mental afflictions permanently. Then you can either sit there or you can go up, get your rear end up to the bodhisattva track. Okay? And, and there's this whole sweet thing in the scriptures about how the Buddha's and bodhisattvas knocked these people out of it. It's called peace. It's called, during this very blissful state, where they, they don't care about other people and they're just sitting there and enjoying nirvana. And then there's all, this beautiful description of how the Buddha's and bodhisattvas wake them up and get them to go up to the bodhisattva track, you know? What they whisper in their ear, you know? It's very sweet. Like how, how does it happen, you know? What kind of karmic cause would make you leave this Buddhist nirvana? And then somebody's like trying to push you (laughter). Like, you know, let's go. Gotta get to the bodhisattva track. Bodhisattva track, first path, true renunciation aimed at yourself and others. Which is otherwise known as?

(Student: Bodhicitta.)

Bodhicitta. Okay. The wish for enlightenment. But now you know it means the wish for total enlightenment. And, the second path is a bodhisattva's understandings of emptiness and (unclear). Third path, a bodhisattva's direct

perception of emptiness. Forth path, a bodhisattva going through the process of removing their mental afflictions and their obstacles to omissions. And then fifth path, total enlightenment. So those are the three enlightenments. Two of them are nirvanas, one of them is pure and total enlightenment. When you reach nirvana it's just a state of mind. Your mind is just totally clear. Clean. No dirty thoughts ever again. Nothing. No irritation, no stressful thought, no unhappy thought... Your mind cannot be shaken out of a very, very stable kind of contentment and happiness ever again. Period. Cannot happen. The outside world can be all chaos and it probably will be for a while. You know your boss is still screaming, the company is still going to belly up, you know? Friends are still being bad to you sometimes, you know? You think...all sorts of things can still happen. Your finances can go up-and-down (laughs), you know your health can go up-and-down but your mind is just totally like in this golden window and, and nothing can shake it out of that state. You are in a state of total contentment. You can never really be irritated or anything again. Ah, that's nirvana. And then enlightenment is when you go on beyond that and, and you have this experience of taking other people... Your whole viewpoint of being in that golden window is to turn around and bring other people there. And, and, your whole, the whole feeling that you have as you're, as you're entering it is that you stop and you hesitate and you look back and you think I should bring other people here. If you hesitate and didn't stop, you know, not enter it, no. You enter it. But as you enter it you're thinking I'm doing this so that other people will meet me and they'll sense what I have and they will, then I'll be able to teach them and take them to that same place. So that's bodhi, that's bodhicitta. And I'll take them out, out, as I, I will enter nirvana and I will stay in nirvana and I will reach that state of mind... other people will smell it and they'll be attracted and then I'll, I'll teach them how to do it, like that. And that, that's, becomes, that becomes the motivation which turns into full nirvana. And, and if you do it with the, with a tantric teaching, if you have initiation and if you had a proper transmission from, a personal transmission from a, from a qualified tantric Lama then you can do that in this life. You can do it very quickly. Very quick and very subtle and very... if you don't do it just right it's a disaster. So it's a very delicate thing. That, that last step of accelerating it needs total purity and devotion and a, and if you don't pull it off then it's a disaster. So ah, that, and that's a very secret thing and a very private thing and you can't talk about it. (laughs) So we had a question. Yeah?

(Student: We just did on the homework and on the quiz the consequences and the ah...)

Yeah, good.

(Student: The environmental consequences of the two you know...and you were saying that when you reach nirvana you can have all these things going on around you but it doesn't affect you but the fact that they're going on around you has is that related to the consequences and the karmic results that you just went over?)

Yeah, good. It's, it's the external world is still absolutely result of bad karma and... mental afflictions. So you didn't purify that yet. All that you purified was your own life. So, so your body is still getting old, your relationships are still screwing up, your business is still going up and down, your finances are going up and down, your body is getting sick or not getting sick, your meeting people that scream at you or don't scream at you... You mind is totally holy but other people see whatever they have the karma to see and they react to you whatever way they have the karma to see. And so it's possible that a person could reach nirvana and still be embroiled in controversy and people still attacking him and you know, in fact it also happens with religious people. But from their point of view in, in their own mind they, they don't have any hatred, or any bad feeling or, they're incapable of it. Because they, I mean if you want to know the punch line, because they understand they understand the emptiness of the situation. The perfect, and they trained themselves not to respond to it, but that's a long story, that's a different class.

(Student: But it's their karma or your karma?)

What you see is your karma, what they see is their karma. They are forced by their karma to see a mind, to enjoy a mind, to live in a mind, which is totally free of any kind of mental affliction. They cannot get mad. They cannot hate anyone. They cannot be jealous. They cannot even be irritated or, or stressed out again, period. But the, they can be on the Titanic and the Titanic can be going under and, and they are doing what they have to do but they're not feeling bad or, or, or hurt or, or stressed-out or irritated or agitated or anything.

(Student: Are they saved?)

(laughs) Not necessarily. I mean the first Dalai Lama in his commentary on {B: Abhidharma} relates the story of many arhats who suffered terrible deaths. Uneama himself, for whom the wheel of life was painted, suffered a terrible death. It's not, he didn't have any mental afflictions, but he, he bod, his body

was, was murdered. So, so {arhats} are in this weird schizophrenia where the mind in total happiness and contentment but the body is still going through a lot of disasters. Just like us. (laughs) Yeah?

(Student: So how does feeling compassion for someone if you're an {arhat} and you see someone suffering then do you feel some kind of that pain which would not be contentment and happiness?)

Right. I, I debated this, you know, I had the honor of being the person, person, I, it was my turn to debate Pabongka Rinpoche when he took his geshe test. So I was a senior monk in our house and wasn't a geshe yet. So I, I had to be the first one. And that was the question I asked him. You know I said "How can a Buddha be aware of other people's suffering and not feel some kind of mental distress. I mean how can an enlightened being be aware of other peoples pain and not feel some sort of pain themselves? You know empathize." And we had this huge debate. We had a long debate, and all these geshe got up and joined and I think at the end what we all decided was ah, which is how it happens in a debate, was, was that they're aware of your suffering but all they feel is compassion and that compassion is a kind of bliss for them. You know that compassion is the kind of good feeling from them. I mean it's a, it's a kind of a sweet sadness where they're aware of the suffering, they're very, very concerned about it but it doesn't make them feel any pain. They, they, they love you and, and they want you to be free from suffering, but their, the emotion to them is some kind of sweetness. Alright? They can be aware of your suffering and not be in suffering themselves.

(Student: Call that total detachment. Wouldn't you?)

I don't know, detachment kinda to me seems like they don't care and it's not like that. They really care. They're attached...

(Student: They care but at the same time you don't care because it's emptiness.)

Because it's empty you should care. (clap of hands) (laughter)

(Student: Because they want to free them right?)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. But, but not being attached that's a delicate idea. You gotta be careful. We gotta talk more about that. Yeah?

(Student: You mentioned once about repairing a vows about the powers (unclear)).

Yeah, yeah. Yeah we're gonna have it in the Lam-rim which is coming up now. After this class. We're gonna go through the four powers. Yeah?

(Student: Can you restore these vows through the four powers?)

No. Chone Drakpa Shedrup says the ritual for restoring {pratimoksha} vows, especially through the higher vows, is the Sojong Ritual. Is, is the bi, bi-weekly, every two weeks. Yeah? Ah...(unclear)

(Student: Two months.) (unclear)

Ah, two times a month. (laughs) Ah, you have a ceremony to restore your vows. And that's a method for restoring your vows. And then Chone Drakpa Shedrup says What happens if you can't get the sojong? You know? Can, do, do the four powers do the same thing? He says absolutely yes. He says you can do the four powers anytime. And in fact when you break a vow you must repair it immediately. If you have any means to do so. The karma doubles about every twenty-four hours or so. And it's exponential. So, you know, you must, you must open it up, admit it to somebody and then, and then immediately take steps, you know? I, I like to do it right at point, do the bad deed, you know? Do the bad deed and then I'll, doing the four powers and then about five minutes, you know? And, and admit it to somebody. And try to straighten it out. Try to remove the power. You have to act immediately. It, it has some kind of very instant exponential growth and karma. It's very well-known. So it's important to try to, try to, stop it immediately. Before it grows too strong. What did you say?

(Student: Nip it in the bud.)

Yeah, nip it in the bud. Perfect.

(Student: (unclear))

Atisha carried around a little {stupa} to confess to. And every time he had a bad thought he would get off his horse. The village idiot traveling on horseback to (unclear) from Hoffa, you know like a three day trip and it would take them like

twenty days. (laughter) You know here's this great, pure, spotless, Indian pundit, you know, who every time he had the slightest bad thought about somebody he would stop and get off his horse and put the {stupa} down and (laughter) and do his confessions, right there, you know? And his entourage used to get a little irritated with him, can't we get there? you know. (unclear) So Tontu, these are the two results of keeping your vows. And... I worry about this class. This class didn't quite come out the way I thought it would. The way I hoped it would. I thought by the end of this class everyone would be inspired to, you know, everyone would, we'd probably have somebody shaving hair at the bottom of the stairs, you know. (laughter) I thought (laughter) I thought it would come out like that. I don't think you've got this overwhelming urge to take, to take ordination. (laughter) And somehow I'd want you to at least get a little taste of it. And, and you don't have to full ordination, in fact it's a very bad idea if you're not totally ripe for it. And very few people are. It's a very, very, bad idea if you're not totally ready for it. But I, but I going to try to talk you into at least taking lay vows, okay? Lay vows meaning, very simple, like come-on, you know (unclear) (laughter) no stealing (unclear). No pure, straight, clear, adultery with another person's wife or husband, you know? No lying about seeing emptiness (unclear). You can, no drinking, you can keep those. Ah, and, and, very, very, what I'm trying to say is that you can get to that nirvana if you keep these vows. It's very interesting. People always coming up to me and saying I've been meditating for ten years, nothing's happening, I've been doing my tantric {sahdana} every morning, I didn't miss a day, nothings happening. Um, I can't concentrate, my back hurts, I can't keep my mind on this visualization I'm supposed to be doing. Ah, I don't feel any sweetness in my life, or any great, I don't have, I'm not seeing Angels every night come down to me during my prayers and Manjushri hasn't appeared to me yet and, and ah, nothings popping, you know? I mean, really, if you're doing really good spiritual work you should be like popcorn and, and, and things just going off all the time, great wonderful things all day long like boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, you know? These great things happening. And then, then, you get in these long dry spells where nothings happening at all and, and you say why? You know? I've been trying to do everything you asked, supposed to do. And I always tell people go back to your a, especially with tantric stuff, I mean if you're not happy, you're doing some {sahdanas} for ten years or five years or two years and, and it's just like these long empty words and it's boring and you can't, nothings happening! And it's not very much fun. And go to Tsechu and sit through this two hour thing (laughter) And ah, nothing happens. I always tell people go back to {Pratimoksha}, you know? The secret, the key is in your {Pratimoksha} vow. You know, take some, take some {Pratimoksha} vows.

Have that invisible cloak on you called the {Pratimoksha} vow. And, and it has, I mean honestly, really truly, it has some, it's like a super, it's like a Hidden power, or something. It's a Hidden energy that, that changes everything about your spiritual practice. If you take them, if you take on this invisible energy which covers your body like a cloak, and if you keep them it, it effects the spiritual body immensely. You know things start popping. Things start happening. I, I would almost assert, in public, the, the un-assertible in the secret teachings that you don't need an initiation. People ask me should I go take another initiation? I say, I say I don't think you don't even need any initiations. If you keep your {Pratimoksha} perfectly well you, you will meet that deity and they will take you and initiate you. You know? You don't have to go to, you don't have to, you know, go on the A-train to such-and-such a street and wait for this guy to come from India, you know. Keep your {praktimo...}, take those vows, keep them really, really, sincerely. It's just fun. It's not a drag. I mean try to be honest at work. It's very refreshing. I've been trying it real hard this week. (laughter) I mean there's things I wasn't supposed to tell my boss, you know? He's, he wrote me a memo praising me for something I didn't do, you know? When I wrote to him I said It's really a nice thing you said to me this week but I have to admit I didn't do it, you know? And he's like well, but you're great anyway. You know what I mean? (laughter) (laughs) That's the kind-a thing that happens. I mean you're just totally honest. Just keep them, it's fun. It's really fun. It's a lot more fun than trying to hide things. And, and you get these incredible results. There's some kind of combination of having that invisible vow that you don't get if you don't have the vow. It's some... it's, it permeates your being and, and there's some sort of catalyst created if you, if you have that and you keep them nicely something amazing will happen to you. I promise. It really does and it's sweet and it's wonderful and it's what you always hoped for when you came to a Buddhism class, you know? It's not like these boring tests and quizzes and more facts, you know? This is like real thing happening. And a, try it, just try it. If you don't like it you can always give 'em back. (laughter) What-a you got to lose? There's this Lama who said, you know, everything you've been doing so far didn't work so might as well try it. You know? (laughs) You have a question?

(Student: Do you feel your place of work, and expectations for you to be this cynical person that you've always been. Then maybe the time to say goodbye to that sort of place that's so ingrained (unclear?).

It depends on, the answer is in the bodhisattva vows, and they say take an action which fits your capacity. So if you have, if you feel that you can be strong

enough then you should stay there and learn from it, you know? It's much more invigorating to be pure in the, in mud, which is the ideal, of lotus. You know? Lotus always grows in the filthiest kind-a, if you've ever been to India and see where the lotus grow... I've never picked a lotus cause I could not get to the lotus because it's always in this big pool of crap, you know? You can't get to 'em. They're always growing about twenty feet away in this big pool of ugly, horrible poop. And that's the, like, that's why a lotus is so important in Buddhism. A bodhisattva shines in the worst crap. You know? I mean a, in, a bodhisattva can really do their thing in the worse kind of offness, surrounded by really lousy people, and doing really cynical things. That's when you can really show your stuff. And, and so if you have the strength stay there. If you feel, if you find that it's affecting you and you can't prevent it, and you find yourself not being able to resist those temptations that'll be cynical and, and, and other things then you have to be, then you must get out. Then you must get out. So then there's this idea in, in bodhisattva, Shantideva says about the perfection of giving, he says don't give away your arm at the beginning because you'll regret it later. He says start out with some vegetables, okay? (laughter) (laughs) (unclear) Start, start with carrots and potatoes. (laughter) Try to figure out, try to give em a potatoes. And then when you're ready, a real bodhisattva can reach into their eye-socket and rip out their own eye and hand it to someone, if they asked for it. They can, they actually have the will power to, to reach in their own eye-socket and rip it out and give it to somebody. And not feel the slightest disturbance about it. Like, oh, you want my eye? Okay. You know? I mean, but he says don't do it at the beginning, you know you gotta build up. (laughter) He says, he says start with vegetables. He really does say that. You have to do it when you have capacity. It's very important bodhisattva principal. If you over do it you'll quit. You know? Many people do that, say Oh, I'll give all my money to this Lama, you know, then three weeks later they're like you know man, what did I do? You know? And, and they blow it. You know? So...You had a question.

(Student: What's the actual progression (unclear) being enlightened and taking ordination?)

Well we, we talked about {nay me puntso}, right? {Nay me puntso} means the, the ideal way. The ideal way is take, is take your {ginya}, just take your layman's vows, and, and when you've done pretty well with them and you feel like you're ready to go on you take your novice vows. Which is like thirty-six vows if you count it that way. Ten vows if you count it simple way. And then if you, if you feel strong enough with that then you take your full (unclear) vows.

That's the normal. that's the {nay me puntso}. And it starts with a, and then between the {gaystiil} and the {gainyan} you take a vow to, you take a commitment, (unclear) commitment, to, to leave the family life. Say, I'm, I'm gonna give up on the family life. And that's the normal place. But I, I know that Rinpoche for example, there was a ten year period when he only ordained one person. And. and, he's very, you know, I think that's very wise. He's, he wants people to be totally ready to do it. And it's very, very wonderful and you love, you know have to do it sooner or later, you might as well do it in this life, okay? It's very wonderful if you can do it. It's really, really good. It doesn't solve all your problems. You know changing your suit doesn't change a single in..., inch of your mind. But it's a commitment. You know? And, and, and it helps. So I'd say start with medium vows and keep them for like a year or two. Really strict and keep thinking about them. And then when you're really, really ready then, then go to Rinpoche and he'll say naw. (laughter) And then the, and then you say can I come back and ask in a year? and he'll say okay. And you know I mean, if you proved that you're really serious then it's good but to, to give them up is really, really terrible. So, you know, I think the, the real, they say there's one great thing about samsara, you know it's in the scriptures, it says samsara is, I, I wanted to say sex but I didn't want to curse, they say samsara's like that. But there's one great thing about samsara, they say, all the scriptures say there's one wonderful thing about samsara, is that sooner or later it will reveal its true nature to you. You know? It, and sooner or later it will, it will tell you the complete truth about its own nature. You know? So sooner or later your life will screw up big time. You know? And, you know sooner or later life will reveal itself to you. You know you have these little, fragile, lousy happiness right now. And, and sooner or later they'll get smashed by samsara. And then you'll say oh, man, you know, that, it was all right, now I have to take ordination. (laughs) (laughter) But keep it in mind. You know, {Sem jokshu} it's in Tibetan. Keep it in mind. I mean, they'll come a time when you're ready, when it's very, very comfortable, and, and then, I hate this thing in the West as thinking about it as like a punishment, or scourging yourself, or you know, Oh, I can't have ice-cream anymore, you know (laughter), can't watch movies, you know? It's not like that. It's like very joyful. It's very cool. It's very fun. I mean if you really go to work and you really be honest for one day, try it. You know. It's really kind-a fun and people smell it and the whole place starts to work better. It's really weird. Just try it. It's a lot more fun. It is fun, it's not like some, you know, I can't do that, I can't do anything. It's not like that. Take, take laymen vows at least. Yeah?

(Student: When are you going to have layman's vows?)

I think we're gonna try to get Rinpoche to here in November. And we're negotiating. (laughter) Very hard to get him to, to go anywhere.

(Student: If you've taken them can you take them again?)

No. Okay? It's a, it's a {pratimoksha} vow. It's {unclear}. You don't have to take them again, you can't take them again. Bodhisattva vows you can take all the time. And secret vows if you're ready. You, you got either, once you got it, you got it unless you have one of those causes to give it up. Unless you die or, etcetera. Okay, last thing on your homework, there's a colophon to the text. Which is where Je Tsongkapa says I wrote this book. You know? Or somebody says Je Tsongkapa wrote this book. The great poet Je Tsongkapa wrote this book, and what else did it say, there's something in there... anyway, then a {Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra}, which is kinda cool, he explains why his name is so Tsongkapa. Which, which I've never seen before. And you're seeing these people translate, I mean Mister Onions, something like that. (laughter) {Tsong} does mean onion. But apparently it doesn't have anything to do with that. {Tsong} is the name of a river that goes through a province of Tibet called {Dokan}. And ah, and because Je Tsongkapa was born in that area of the river he was called (Tsongkapa). So that's, that's one thing that he says. Oh, and then he gets into the explanation of why did Je Tsongkapa name his book, is it The Essence of the Ocean of...of discipline? The Essence of the Ocean of Discipline. Okay. And the...and the explanation is as follows. The discipline part you had in the first class. Do you remember the two parts of why, why is Vinaya called Vinaya? {Dulwa}. There were two parts...

(Student: To taint (unclear) the sense of your wanting...)

Yeah, that was number two. Taint your sense powers. You know, you'll no longer be living in the world of the senses exclusively which is ice-cream and sex, okay? And then (laughter), and then, what's the first one? {Yungmotu}, which is what? It, it, it, it controls your mental afflictions. It destroys your mental afflictions. And if you keep the {nyva} it's (dulwa) or discipline in the sense of it knocks out your mental afflictions and it, it controls your senses. That's the first, that's why he calls it the essence of the ocean of discipline. That's the discipline part (dulwa). {Vinaya}. Why is it called an ocean. Ah, Dharma Bhadra says it's called the ocean because understanding in detail all these principles about what you're supposed to do, what you're not supposed to do and what you're allowed to do. You know things like that. The great, the great structure of the

Vinaya precepts, the great detail of them is like the ocean. I mean to get to the bottom of it is extremely difficult. You would have to devote a lot of study to understand every aspect of the Vinaya. To, to really understand why, why you should do this thing like confession, why you shouldn't do this thing like hurting other people. Why you're allowed to do this thing like dancing after {dakkye} which happened last week. Ah, for eight days you're allowed to goof-off. You know why you're allowed, all the details of those three are, are in the... to really grasp all the fine points, it's like an ocean. It would take you a long time. Sixteen thousand pages to study. In the canon, much less the commentary. Now why is it called an essence? The only thing that's famous in Tibet for being being the source of what? It was believed that all jewels came from the bottom of the ocean. All kinds of jewels. Because coral came out of the bottom of the ocean. Things like that. Coral's very valuable in Tibet. It's like the number one jewel in Tibet. So they said I guess all jewels come from the bottom of the ocean. And the, and the most essential jewel in, in all the world is what? According to Asian beliefs.

(Student: (unclear))

Well really is a diamond but, it's also this other, that's true, but... (laughter) This other jewel called the wishing jewel. {Mishimogu}, okay? {Mishimogu}. And this some kind of jewel, that if you find one, and you if rub it a certain way, it's like an Aladdin's lamp. If you rub it a certain way and put it in a certain place then you can make a wish to it, you get whatever you wish. It gives you your wishes. So this is supposed to be the ultimate jewel. The essence of the jewel. The essence of the ocean. It's the, it's the ultimate jewel, and since all jewels come from the ocean, this is the essence of the ocean. So what is the wish giving jewel of {Vinaya}? And then that's the end of this class. Okay?

(Student: (unclear) enlightenment.)

(unclear) Understand this, it's the jewel and not the wish. It's the thing that gives you your wish. It is the Aladdin's lamp and not the thing you wished for.

(Student: The balance.)

The balance, yeah. Cool, {pratimoksha} vow. They are the wish giving jewel. I mean they, you cannot imagine now, what you can get from them. I mean you have to keep them to find out. It's very, very cool. What I mean, you cannot at present moment, imagine how cool it would be to keep them and get, and get

those things happening to you. I mean what will happen to you, you cannot imagine right now. It's, you, you really can't imagine it. You have to keep them to find out. You know? It's something no one can, can convey to you in words. Okay? You have to take them and keep them and then, and then things will happen to you that no one can ever describe to you and that you would even even have dreamed of. And that's the major {unclear}. And that's {unclear}.

(Student: It's much different to take the vows and to keep them then to just live them.)

Extremely different. Totally different. Totally different. Totally different effect. That's, that's one big principle of the (Vinaya), you know? Some kind of catalyst of having them in your being, form..., having them form in your being and then, and then protecting you. And feeding them. Has a totally different effect then if didn't ever take them. And, and if you did the same things. Totally different. Okay? Ah, meditate on that for a few minutes, okay? And then ah, you know just rejoice. I don't think anyone got a good Vinaya class in America up to now. I mean, I suspect, maybe that's a kind of egotistical to say that, I, I'm not sure that anyone's (unclear). Maybe a few people... But to really have a, a pure Vinaya class, and to really appreciate what could happen if you took them and you kept them, I mean, it's very precious understanding to have in your mind. It's very, we're very fortunate to have done it. Okay? So, it's a big vow. We're gonna have, for desert, we're having three Lam Rim classes (laughter) after that. From Je Tsongkapa's own personal life. But but just rejoice, okay? Supposedly if you're happy about doing a great thing, which you just did, it, it enhances it a lot. A lot more energy. So, just meditate for a few minutes, gonna think about meaning, think about how lucky we are that we did it, you know? And that, and that someone in America is, is rejoicing about this holy thing called taking the vows (unclear). Okay?

Course 9- Class 8

Geshe: [inaudible] I thought it would be good for dessert to do a thing called {Lam Rim} Say it {Lam Rim}

Class: {Lam Rim}

Geshe: {Lam Rim} is good in that its like grounding yourself. I think that the idea of these classes is that it's a five year course, or I don't know how many years its going to take, [laughter] the idea is that you could learn to translate or to become a teacher {inaudible Tibetan 00:24} its good to go back and to ground yourself every once in a while in {Lam Rim}. {Lam Rim} is like the basis of everything and we'll talk about its benefits tonight. But its important that as we go through the whole process, that we go back to lam rim every once in a while. {Lam rim} keeps your,...especially your motivation in the right place. And it gives you also a view of the whole Buddhist teachings. So I thought that every few courses we should go back to {lam rim} ok. {lam} means path. And {rim} means steps. Steps along the path. Okay. Buddhists teaching is like a big...I like to compare it to an automobile engine. You can open up the hoods of various cars, and especially if you're like me and you don't know anything about engines much, they all look the same. You know? You look in and there's a little bit of difference, but you look in and it looks like an engine, and then you get behind the wheel and you put the key in and you turn it and sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't . When it doesn't work it means that something big is missing. You know like a battery or. You like a carburetor you can do without almost, it will go for a while and you can get to where you're going, or like certain types of filters , you know the car won't breakdown it will still go someplace for a while. Pistons .. I once took apart a Volkswagen and wrecked one of the pistons and they still work. You can run on three of five pistons. It doesn't go very fast but you can get there. And in other cars you can open it up and everything looks normal but something really important is missing and the thing doesn't work at all. {lam rim} is like that. {lam rim} is a presentation of all the steps that you need to get to Buddha hood. And it's a specific number of steps, its just like a car engine. If any one of the major steps is missing you can't get to Buddha hood. If you have all the essential steps but you don't have like all these accessories it'll still get there. So its important to know what {lam rims } are really...by the way {lam rim} refers to the whole kind of literature that is called {lam rim} or the whole idea of a teaching where you get all the parts in one teaching, but also each separate step is called {lam rim} a {lam rim}. So the {lam rim} teachings have maybe ten, twenty, thirty {lam rims} inside. Meaning steps

that you must have. Sometimes they say that this is a {lam rim}, meaning one part of the whole {lam rim}. So you got to watch out for that. Some time {lam rim} means the whole presentation on the steps to the path to Buddhahood, which means the whole engine, And sometimes when you're talking about a certain type of meditation like death meditation, that's a {lam rim}, meaning one of the steps of the path that you need to have. So its important that you go back once in a while and that you find out and you review just what is the essential structure of Buddhism. What you need to know. If you go through the whole monastic course, which is the idea of this five year program, you start out in the monastery doing perfection of wisdom, you do that for twelve years. Then you do supplemental topic on the perfection of wisdom, and it might take you another 3 or four years. Sometimes its included in the twelve years. Then you do {madyamika} that's two years. The you do {abidarma} that's two years. Then you do {vinaya} two years. Then you have about {eight} years of {pramana} which is logic {tsema}. And then as you get towards the end of the whole course you begin to see the structure of Buddhism. Its very interesting. As you get towards the last three four years. You know up 'till then its all these this great mass of things to learn you know. And you keep going and going and debating and debating . And you don't really see a lot of tie in with the other subjects. You would think like Buddhist logic, perceptual theories, psychology, cosmology, and how do you know---epistemology. They all seem like different subjects, but then somewhere around the fifteenth year or something you finally get it. And you see how everything is one huge interconnected spider web and how everything forms like a huge network of light like I like to think of it as a big sphere and each of the different subjects is like a point of light on the sphere and together they all make one of these "AT&T" spheres. (you know?) And it really is like that but you don't get it till like the fifteenth year. And then you finally see the structure of the whole thing you see how Buddhist logic relates directly to seeing emptiness. And you see how psychology relates directly to karma. And you begin to see how past lives relate to a teaching on something that would seem completely unrelated. And suddenly you see how everything connects with every thing else. That's like a {lam rim} realization. You can either go to the monastery for fifteen or eighteen years or you can study {lam rim}. {lam rim} is like pre-packaged fast-food [laughter]. And you can get the whole structure, the whole vision, that take almost fifteen, seventeen, eighteen years to get in the monastery. You can get that whole vision by studying one good {lam rim} . And that's the point of the {lam rim} . it was revived by Atishara and we'll talk about the history of it. It was taught by the Buddha. The Idea was taught by the Buddha in the "perfection of Wisdom sutras" and then it was carried down through the centuries. So I'm going to go over a very brief {lam

rim} . Like Three classes worth. This is known as the 'brief {lam rim}' its name is the brief {lam rim} . say it: {lam rim} {Du dun}. {lam rim} means {lam rim}: steps on the path. And then {du dun} means very very brief. Brief presentation. A brief presentation on the steps to the path. It was written by...you tell me.

Class: [inaudible]

Geshe; Written by Jetsun Kappa. 1357-1408. Jetsun Kappa wrote about ten thousand pages of Buddhist commentary. And I think that I've mentioned it many time but, in the monastery we study maybe a few hundred pages of {nyag}. For example in the winter monasteries they study a commentary on some of his work by one of his disciples. That commentary, the first chapter is maybe a hundred pages long, it takes eight years to get through the first chapter. It takes almost a month to go over about ten pages of it. I mean you can debate for about a month, one small section from the first chapter. This is the pramana where I took a commentary by {Gel Sut Jey}. Like the last two chapters nobody's gotten to in recent history. Someone just wrote a commentary on it. The teacher of my teacher at the monastery. And it was a big event, and everyone was really happy. Because no one had gotten to the thirty-fourth chapters in recent history. Jet sun Kappa wrote ten thousand pages of text on commentaries like that For him it was like cutting through butter. And he just perceived these thing perfectly, quickly and he just wrote ten thousand pages of commentary. You could spend a month on thirty of them, forty of them . You could never, ever master all of them. You could never read all of them. And here's this person who didn't spend much of his time in writing, he spent most of his time in meditation . He was a great tantric master, very secretive about it, and he spent a lot his time communing with his lamas including {majusu}. But in his free time he was composing these scriptures. He also founded the great monasteries of Tibet. {Gan den} he founded himself. {Sera Gey bon} was founded by his disciples. Dashi limbo by his disciple the Dali Lama. That was in his free time you know? So how he did it is incredible. But basically his great {lam rim} I would say that most people agree that it's the greatest scripture every written in the Tibetan language, and the greatest piece of literature in the Tibetan language. That's a thousand pages long. He wrote a medium sized {lam rim} I think that it's a couple hundred pages long. He wrote some briefer {lam rim}s. and then he wrote this very very brief {lam rim}. The other {lam rims} that he wrote are very very detailed , very scholarly, very deep, {lam rim chamo} no one has translated it well yet. It means that people are still waiting for someone to translate it. Its extra ordinary. And then only once in his life he wrote a {lam rim} based on his own personal experiences. The other

{lam rims} were mostly collections of other things that came before him. He collected the knowledge from ancient India, he organized it in a {lam rim}. And was very famous for that. But only on one occasion he said, he took all his own experiences and put them into {lam rim}. And you won't find quotations in this {lam rim}. He's not quoting other people. He's actually giving it from his own experience. So it very cool. I mean, often times in Tibet it's the first thing that a lama will teach you. It the very first thing that a lama will do, is teach this {lam rim} just so you have it in your mind. This lama's personal experience. So sometimes its called the song of my spiritual life. [car alarm goes off] you know you're doing something important if the demons come and try to interrupt it. [laughter]

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Geshe: If everything is peaceful then you know that its not going very well. Say it {jey yam gur}

Class {jey yam gur}

Geshe: {Jey} Means the lord. What's a {dor jey}? Yeah; the lord of stones. {Jey} means stone {dor} means stone. The diamond. So {Jey} means lord. {Yam} means personal experience. And {gur} means a song. So this book, the lam rim that we're about to study, is also known as {jey nem jun} which is the song of my spiritual life. Where he actually recounts the events of his own spiritual life. At the beginning of the {lam Rim} you try to show how its coming directly from the Buddha. And you tried to summarize it and show how the lineage came down to you. We consider it very important in Buddhism that what you're learning is not...that is not only a bunch of books that have been passed down from person to person. Its actual experiences and actual blessing of a human being teaching a human being. And that blessing coming down through the centuries from person to person. Its not just that the books were handed down one by one. The knowledge and the blessing of that knowledge that can only be transmitted from one person to another, live, so I'm a little bit worried about the correspondence part. It has to be from heart to heart. It has to be that the knowledge has to go from one person to the next person. So we think its important that you show where that lineage comes from. If it is ever broken then it will die in this world. People have to continue to...you have to be a receptacle and a lama comes and pours water into you . And You keep that water and you go and pour it into the next person that you teach. And the water has to be poured on from heart to heart like that. Its important to show how that lineage

has not been broken. Yes?

Class: [inaudible question]

Geshe: Yeah so we'll show how it comes down from person to person. It starts with who? Buddha. Ok. I mean on this planet. Say it {shakya tupa} . {shakya} a lot of people confuse it with {sakya}. {sakya} is actually a place in Tibet that means 'great earth' . And there was a great school of Tibetan Buddhism that grew up in that area. And it reached its peak in the thirteenth century, around the twelve hundreds. In the {sakya pandika}. And that is one of the four great traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. {shakya} is a totally different thing. Sometimes that spell it like {sakya} and the hide a little diacritical mark on top of it. And people think that {sakya} and {shakya} are the same thing. This is {shakya}. {shakya} refers to a race of people that lived in India around 500 B.C. And the king of the {shakya} actually he was the prince was Gautama Buddha. You know he grew up as a prince and the {shakya} were his people. {tupa} means 'able one, capable one' {muni} . So his name is {shakya muni}. By the way during his own time, what happened to his own people, the {shakya}? Do you know? They were totally wiped out. They were totally destroyed. And he was present at the time. And this slaughter was taking place around him. And some of them came and took refuge to him physically. You know? Came into his house, in his room and tried to hide behind him, hide near him. And they were all slaughtered. He couldn't protect them. Which gives you an idea about the meaning of refuge. The meaning of refuge is not going and hiding behind the Buddha. It's a mental thing that you do. And it's the mental thing that protects you. It's not a physical thing of going for refuge or something like that. The opening lines of Jet Sun Kappa's song of his spiritual life, I'll just say them to you and you repeat them, I'm not going to write them on the board. But they also happen to be the opening lines of his great lam rim. The {Lam rim chumbo} . So must be important. Say it: [5:50] {punsal geleg chewey jumbe cu tay-eh do-eh rewa kongwey sun manu sujak shishin sicke tup shakya songwa gu-le guchatsan} this is important because it describes the quality of a Buddha. Especially a Buddha's body speech and mind. Where do the body speech and mind come from. {punsal geleg chewey jumbe cu} It's a very very famous verse. We have to recite it all the time. In the monastery. What does {punsal} mean? Yeah {punsal} means excellent, culmination, something like that. {geleg}? Virtues good deeds. {Chewa} is ten syas. {sayas} is ten {boons} {boon} is ten {tis} {ti} is ten [yas] and a ya is ten {chus}. And {chu} is ten {chicks} Chick is one. Chews is ten million. Ten million virtues. {chewey jumbe cu} Body was produced by ten million separate virtues. And that's just a metaphor. It's actually much more than that.

Ok. But anyway a Buddha's body has been created by a certain number of virtues. And you have to get out of the mood... You know when we were in California we had a ten day teaching on the Diamond Cutter Sutra. And I think that people towards the end, really got into the mood of perceiving the production of a Buddha and a Buddha world as not being something self existent. Meaning that its not external forces that are creating this Buddha and this Buddha's world. You have to get in the mood....Its hard in a class that we only have twice a week. But you have to get in the mood of think how do you produce a Buddha's body. I mean where does a Buddha's body come from? First of all you body is a reflection of your spiritual life. And in fact the body that you have now, whatever it looks like...you know people say 'what was I in my last life' you can tell almost everything just from your own body. Your body is a footprint of the mental state of your past life. Its very interesting. The fact that you have a human body means that your past life was very virtuous. The fact that you're in a dharma class, means that your past life was virtuous to the extent of one person in a million. I mean, that person was extraordinarily virtuous. If its easy for you to understand dharma and you react to it well then that person was even more virtuous. I mean, you come into a dharma and you have certain reactions, that means that that person was extraordinarily virtuous. Was and extremely fine person. IF you react to dharma with certain reactions like it freaks you out and you cant think about anything else and you cry every time you hear it, or something like that, its even more virtue. I mean these are indications of what you were in your past life. But since you have a body like this, and assuming no one is a tantric deity, and I don't know who is. But assuming you are who you seem to be, every detail of your body is a reflection of your mental state in your past. Ok. So If I have bony arms or hands , or a lousy complexion , or if I have a bald spot or something, there's things about my body that I don't like, and we talked about it in the last class, these are all a production of something in my past life. If I'm in an office where my boss is always screaming at me, if I'm surrounded by people who some of them are good and some of them are not good. If my world is like that. And especially if I'm in a body which is going to be destroyed by some kind of disease, which is inevitable the kind of bodies we have. That comes from something negative. Those things come from something negative. So your past life did a lot of good things, but didn't pull of the ultimate goal. Seriously. And that's why you're in a body like this. This body does not fit the human potential. The human potential is something totally pure and is has the potential to become totally enlightened and when you do the body will reflect that.

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Geshe: even if you do it in this life. I mean the point of the secret teachings is that if you reach ultimately that ultimate potential in this life than in this same life your very body will start to change. And it actually become a wholly different kind of body. Not...This kind of body does not reflect the kind of potential that each one of us has. This body is a failure. You know...this body speaks of a former failure of a person to study the secret teachings and reach the ultimate goals of Buddhism. And that's why we have a body like this. If you change the insight, the mental part in the heart, and they become totally pure in this life, then this body will start to change. And it won't look like the way it looks now. The way it changes and the way it ends up looking have certain typical ways, If you reach enlightenment in this life then it has certain qualities. That life...that body will start to reflect the inner state of the mind. And that is a Buddha's body. And that's the first line of this text. So even in the first line of his text he saying something really really extraordinary. {punsal geleg chewey jumbe ku} you have the capacity to create virtues mentally , especially through the secret teachings that could create a totally different body for you. Before you die. And In fact you have to try. Its like a race against death. You don't know who's going to win actually. { chewey jumbe cu} that's the body of a Buddha. {tay-eh do-eh odewa kongwey sun} . {tay-eh do-eh } means limitless numbers of beings. { odewa} means their hopes. {kongwey sun} means what that Buddha teaches fulfills the hopes of limitless numbers of beings. . And this is the idea, even if what I just said is true, you know, if what I just said about the Buddha's body is true then the kind of person who came into this world and taught that for the first time, how to get into a body like that, how to reach a body like that, then those words have the ultimate capacity to fulfill the hopes of every living creature on this planet. If they could listen and understand what that person's saying they could escape that thing called death. They would not have to die in a body like this. That's { rewa kongwey sun}. Those are words that fulfill your hopes. So that's the other quality, the second quality of a Buddha. A Buddha knows how to convey the way out of this defective end here. {rewa kongwey sun}. {manu sujak shishin sicke tup} Means the quality of that Buddha's mind is that it can see all existing objects at once. It means everything in the past, everything in the future and everything that exists now, on every single planet. And every detail. Like every single thought that you're having now or ever will have, or ever did have a Buddha can see at this one moment. The Buddha sees all of those objects in one moment. Simultaneously. Also all the emptiness of all of those objects that we cannot see,. You know if we ever do reach a point where you can see emptiness directly, it can't focus on other objects. They are totally different realities. The Buddha's vision can encompass both realities

simultaneously. Sees all those objects simultaneously. What drives, what drives that ability? You know, why did the Buddha get that ability? Where did it come from. What's the karma that's forcing the Buddha to see his or her mind that way? Its compassion. Its caring for those living beings. If a person could see every existing object. If a person you see into every person's mind, and if that person could see the future of each person who is here in this room, as clearly as you see this pen, then they would know exactly what to say to you. And how to move you along. So its that motivation they have. The motivation is that they could look into your mind and see what motivation you had at any given moment to push you along as quickly as possible to getting to a better life and mind ...body and mind before you die. I mean that's ... the shakya tupa is one of the only Buddhas in history who taught tantra. Its very rare. Not all Buddhas teach the secret teachings. I mean its extremely rare. Buddhas are extremely rare. You know how long it takes Buddhas to become a Buddhas. Among those, there only very few who teach the secret teachings. There's only very few worlds, and very few planets and very few kinds of beings who can learn them, who can relate to them. And you have that capacity. Most people have that capacity. If its cultivated to the right way you enter into those teachings. And in this life you can reach those goals. So the Buddha's mind has the ability to recognize those beings and then to give them exactly the right teachings at the right time to push them into that. And get them to do that before they die. { shakya songwa gu-le guchatsan} {shakya} means shakya-muni . { gu-le guchatsan} means...Tsongkapa at the very beginning of this text is saying 'I'm so lucky, I met a Buddha like your. I mean a lot of his writings is like a love letter to Buddha. You know. He wrote a very famous {tendo tupa} it's a love letter to the Buddha shakya-muni. Not because he's so sexy, you know. Its because he taught dependant origination. It like [laughter] you're so ...way do I love you so, because you taught dependant origination. And it's a whole beautiful book on emptiness. Its an incredible book on emptiness. But its this love letter to shakya-muni. Its very weird to read a lama writing...it feels just like a love letter to shakya-muni Buddha. We kind of see shakya-muni Buddha as this ancient historical figure you know, with the weird head and everything. Who sits strange and seems very cold. And here to Tsongkapa shakya-muni Buddha is like a girlfriend or something . really! And when you read it, its like somebody dutching about their lover. Its really beautiful and touching. So you get this feeling of shakya-muni Buddha being a real being who's there waiting for you, and loving and waiting for you to see him. And like that. Its very very beautiful. So {shakya tupa is the beginning of the lineage, of the lam-rim. This is were it all starts and those are the qualities of the Buddha that come down to the lineage. That are transmitted through the lineage

Audience[inaudible]

Geshe: how a Buddha teaches is really beautiful. And the way they teach has sixty different qualities. The most famous of the sixty is that no matter what language they speak, they speak Sanskrit. But as they speak Sanskrit each being hears their own language. Including other beings. So they do teach in other realms. But very rarely because they cannot relate to a Buddha. They can't hear a Buddha. You know, like in a hell realm, we don't in our tradition there is not in the vinaya any custom of drawing the Buddha in the hell realm, in the wheel of life, there are wheel of life painting where you'll see the Buddha and it looks like he's teaching in the hell realm. And we think that that's really inauspicious. He's outside of the whole circle. He's standing outside because he's not in there any more. And they say 'well he's compassionate, so he's taking birth in a hell to help those beings' but in the Abidharma and all the scriptures it say that your mind is ...Nagarjuna says imagine someone stripping you naked, tying you to a pole, and like a thousand people running at you and stabbing spears into your body and like your whole existence in the hell is spent with that kind of feeling. And he says much greater pain than that. So you can't even frame a thought in hell, you can't frame a straight thought. You can't have a straight thought in hell. Just suffering, Just pain. Agony. And So they can't consider the benefits of dharma. there's no such thought. No being in the hell realms is able to frame a thought like that. Their just suffering. And animals cannot normally frame a straight thought either. Their minds are like water compared to cream or something. You know. They can't hold up a straight thought. Their just mainly running on instinct and trying to prevent themselves from being eaten. And that's their main life. That's their whole.... And [inaudible] can't see them but their just consumed with the search for food and drink. Their whole life is spent to just search for food and drink. You can't study dharma if you're starving, you know.

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Geshe: when you can't get something to drink. And then deity realms are like people in the East Village enjoying a coffee outside and night. And if you could enjoy a nice café on a wonderful fall day or all evening with good friends, beautiful friends, people you know. It would be very hard to think about a dharma class. Extremely hard. But they're even more extreme, their experiences are even more extreme. So they can't do it. So they do try. And there have been instances where Buddhas have taught in other realms, but very

difficult. And there's a beautiful presentation in the prajna paramita of all the different ways in which they can teach. Like a wind blowing through a tree. Or like a flower just opening up for you and teaching you something. I mean, Buddhists are not restricted to the [choke chu ku] which means the ultimate [numana kaya] they have all these other [numana kayas]. It not impossible at all for a wave...for the moonlight on a wave on the beach at night to be an emanation of the Buddha and teaching you something as the wave rolls and as those little diamonds sprinkle through the wave. There's something ...its quite possible that that's an emanation of the Buddha. There's something they're teaching you right then. And there's this beautiful outline of all the different bodies they can emanate. Its really cool. And there's names for all of them. We'll study it some day. Ok. And by the way in the homework you're going to have to have five of these. That's level number one. That's great great great great grandfather. Say it [jetsun jampa] in Sanskrit Maitrea. and jampa and Maitrea means love. Jampa is in fact a special kind of love. There's tow kinds of love in Buddhism. One where you want to remove people's suffering. And the other where you want to give people a good time. This is the second kind. This is the kind where you want people to reach nice things. The other is the kind of love that wants to remove the suffering of all beings. But [jampa] is the kind, its like a party love. It wants to spread happiness. Its like this very Santa Claus love. It wants to give things to people. Want to make people happy. That's [jampa] . you met him out in Jersey. {laughter} and [jammeang] is Manjushuri . Also called Manjugosha. [jammeang] Means Manjugosha. And [jambel] means Manjushuri. [jampa] means very gentle and soft. And [yang] is a very beautiful word that means like a melody or a song. So sometimes we call him 'gentle voice' . [jetsun jampa] Maitrea has another name which is [nipam]. {nipam} Meaning 'undefeatable', 'the undefeatable one'. So sometimes you see {nipam}. I used to get really really confuse about these tow dudes, alright. You read sutras and they are bodhisattvas and they are studying with the Buddha and the Buddha is teaching them , and they are involved in all these wonderful events around the historical Buddha. And then you read other scriptures and there's this guy named Maitrea in a Buddha paradise, teaching a sangha , and who's going to come as the next Buddha. And you get really confused. And sometimes they say Maitrea is a Buddha and sometimes they say he's not a Buddha yet. And then you look in the [tengur] . his works are in the commentaries, they're not in the [congur]. [congur] is the words that are spoken by and enlightened being. And you find Maitrea's books in the [tengur] which means that he's not enlightened yet. These are the commentaries by an unenlightened being. And you get really confused, and you're wondering who are these guy really. And then in the monastery this was my pre-Geshe debate. You do two pre-Geshe

debates. Its like you have to pass B.A. then M.A. then Geshe. The debate for the pre-Geshe there's sometime a debate about Jampa, you know is he a bodhisattva or is he a Buddha. And it's a huge debate. It's a great debate. The bottom line is...do I tell you or not. Hmmmm. [laughter] The bottom line in the secret teaching is that he is already a Buddha. Ok. And the same for Manjushuri. And in fact there are branches of the secret teachings that are devoted to these two beings. You have to have initiation and then you get instructions on how to meet them and how to get to their level. So that's really the highest interpretation. Ok. In the secret teachings they are already Buddhas. And they are masquerading as bodhisattvas. They have come to this planet. They are pretending to be plain old students of the Buddha. And they are asking stupid questions of the Buddha. And the Buddha is giving them enlightening answers. And then the Buddha is teaching sutras and tantras, because these 2 bodhisattvas are asking him questions and there's situations, and like that. But in the ultimate interpretation they've been enlightened a long time and they are total Buddhas that are pretending to be bodhisattvas. And that's why the confusion. You can boil down all of Buddhism into two things. I mean if you really only had five minutes to tell someone about Buddhism, then all you'd have to tell them would take about two minutes. Which would be all you really need is two different things. I mean you need the bodhisattva ideal. Ok. On one hand you need the bodhisattva ideal. Which is...I'm in the mood because I'm going to do it tomorrow night at the open center, I've been reading this mental training. And its this crazy bodhisattva wisdom I don't know what to call it, but... bodhisattva behavior. Which is according to the world crazy, you know? Which is just spending your whole life thinking about other people. Like Jampa out in New Jersey. And can I give you another tea. And just totally think about the other person all the time. And forgetting about yourself, and dedicating your whole life to taking care of other people, and watching out for what other people need, and thinking only about other people. And it's a great great great medicine to the mind. I mean if you ... The more you can do it the happier you are. Its just automatically create happiness. Automatic instant happiness. I mean, forget about yourself and dedicate yourself to other people and watch how, and give up the things you want, and make sure that the people around you are happy and make sure that everyone gets exactly what they want, you know spend your whole life acting like that. And its instant happiness. Its instant gratification, you know? It really cool. And that's fifty percent of Buddhism is the bodhisattva behavior. And its totally un-natural for human beings. You have to get into it. And you have to learn about it. And if you had only five minutes to teach some one, you'd really want to press on them this cool behavior called bodhisattva behavior. And how happy it would make them. You know.

Immediately if they would just break through that obstacle of thinking about themselves, just think about other people. That's bodhisattva behavior. And in Buddhism that great branch is represented by Maitrea. There's a code word for it and I don't know what you want to call it, you know. It means wide. Its called {gy-ya chen chupa} I don't know how to ...it means like something ...I don't know. Its like ...[laughter] {gy-ya chen} its like United States, big or something. Its wide...wide spreading literally but I don't think that it gives the meaning. Maybe you can come up with a better word. Its just this Santa Claus, you know, giving of your whole heart. But the word in Tibetan means 'vast'. Something like that. Something like 'vast behavior' but I don't think that it really...its vast giving behavior. Ok. Call it 'vast giving behavior' . [laughter] we need a consultant. But its just some kind of very very, I don't know generous heart. Wide spreading heart. That just goes out and spreads all over everybody and gives them everything. That's {gy-ya chen}. And that this whole wing of Buddhism represented by Maitrea. Is that. And then on the other side you must have what we call the vision of emptiness. And that's the other great wing of Buddhism. And you know you needs people who only have bodhisattva behavior. They are very very generous and compassionate and giving and it overflows with you. And you feel it, you sense it . They are very very generous people. But they lack the knowledge of emptiness. Emptiness is a very very special idea. It did not reach to the west I think. In our spiritual development of the Western World , I don't believe, I mean I know from my spiritual development as a child going to church , and I loved church, and I loved all the things that they taught. but I think that you'll maybe agree that what we call the explicit teachings on emptiness, where somebody actually sits down and explains it in detail are missing.

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Geshe: We don't have it. Its like some great gap in the Western spiritual life. You can say that maybe its been implied in different traditions, or maybe its been experiments with in different traditions, but what we call the explicit, clear, outright, detailed presentation of Emptiness, it think is alack. Like if you could be...if you're a very very good person in the western spiritual sense, you can be this giving person, you know, this vast giving mind , and you can do that. But I believe, personally what I found in Buddhism that most helped me, that I felt a lack of before, was this understanding of Emptiness. I mean, and together they are an unbeatable combination. Buddhism is saying that if you only have five minutes to explain to somebody the essence of Buddhism it would be these two ideas. One is just give up living for yourself and start to live for others. And

then understand Emptiness at the same time, as you live for others, and as you go through that crazy Bodhisattva behavior of just taking care of other people first, do it with an understanding of Emptiness. Because then the results are like gasoline and fire, you know, I mean then the results are explosive. The results are something extraordinary. And either one by itself...you also need people who intellectual have spent much of their life on the concept of Emptiness. But you can feel a real dryness in them because they don't have this. And you can sense it, and you can smell it. And you can sense what it would be if you had that without that. And if fact {Chana Kirti} gets into this huge thing of Buddhism is like this great beautiful bird, and these two wings are like the two wings of a bird, and if you took one wing and you broke it, if you broke the bone and the bone was sticking out, then the bird would be useless. The bird could walk around maybe, but couldn't soar, and couldn't go to the moon or whatever. He says that you need both of them, you have to have both sides. So obviously Manjushuri knew about love and taught a lot about love. But the emphasis, the essence, of Manjushuri's lineage is Emptiness. And the essence of Maitrea lineage is love.

Audience- [inaudible]

Geshe: There are like thousands of like beings like this. Who are both ...who are masquerading as Bodhisattvas in this time. Avlokitishvara is another one who is really a tantric deity. And each of them has their own specialties. And for {chen re sek} Avlokitishvara is also compassion. Its {ning Jey} which is the other form of love that I was talking about. Which is love that wishes to remove suffering from the object. Like a mother, the child is cutting itself with a knife and who wants to get the knife away, or something. That's Avlokitishvara. And each one there's hundreds and they for the four great classes of tantra. And they each have their own places in the four great classes of tantra. And you have to study them. And you have to meet them. And you have to become them. But that's another story.

Audience- is this related to what we were talking about last week when you were saying that somebody who has the absence of afflictions, that is at total peace, that they are able to emphasize that sadness, to the point that they are knocked out of their vision of peace, so what I think you are saying here and you can correct me , you can't really have that true benevolence, that true generosity, unless your in a place where you have your own stuff together, as they say. And so it would have to happen simultaneously, because if you're in a

state of peace and tranquility, then of course you can live this very benevolent life. Otherwise you're just doing it because you want to be nice. You're not doing it from a place where it's comfortable.

Geshe: so that's how it starts. That's in the time of the Buddha. 500 b.c. then historically there comes a point, where there comes a being, who's not a Buddha, who comes into this world and the function, their job of coming into this planet, is to begin the process of explaining what these people said to other people. These are called the {shing da sul jey}. {shing} means 'wood'. "da" means 'Horse'. What is a {shing da}? a wooden horse; a wagon. Which was a big deal in ancient India. Whoever thought up the idea of a wagon was really smart. And if you look at the Indian wagons even now they are extremely simple and extremely efficient. They're like a work of art. They're a wonder. I mean they haven't changed in, I don't know, how many thousand years. But they're just cool. They work extremely well. They're made with simple things. And they get people and things all over India. And they're still like they were a thousand years ago, so nothing has changed. And just they're so cool. And they're all made of wood and there's nothing fancy and they just work. That's a {shing da}. {sul jey} means the person who thought it up. The person who introduced this idea for the first time. So historically, this is an expression in the prajna paramita, and it's used to describe two beings who came into this planet and thought up a way to present this information and give it to people in presentation that they could follow in a more easy way. If you try to study the sutras, forget it. You know. I mean, if you go and try to study sutras, forget it. It'll go over your head. You won't get anything out of it. I mean you could study Tibetan...by the way if you study Tibetan, this Tibetan, you can read sutras. Tibetan has not changed in a thousand years. If you can read a newspaper, then you can read the early sutras. The same. Tibetan has not changed. The Tibetan that you're learning, you can use it to debate and you can use it to read ancient sutras. Same thing. But if you read those sutras you'll say 'I don't get it', you know. It's deep! So you have to have these commentators. These are the two great commentators who came into this planet. And usually there's only one, for each side of the lineage. There's only one. On this side, it's Nagarjuna. On the emptiness side. Did Nagarjuna teach about love? Of course! But what did he emphasize, what did he teach explicitly? What was his explicit teachings? Mostly on emptiness. And over here is Asanga. They're called {zar men gen ye} the 'two jewels in our planet'. They're like precious jewels that appeared in this planet. And they begin the commentarial tradition. They begin the process of explaining in words that we can understand. As your Tibetan gets better, you'll find that you can't understand what they wrote either.

[laughter] and you have to read the early Indian commentaries. Which come... they go from about the sixth century to about the ninth century. And you'll try to read those and you won't understand those either. And then you go to the kadarma writings. And they're very brief and very deep and you won't be able to understand those either. And then you go to Bu Jen Rimpoche's time just before Tsongkapa and to the great sakya kagyü masters before Tsongkapa, and you won't be able to understand them either. And then you get to {Jet Testungapa} in 1357 and you can read that too, but you won't be able to understand him either. And then you'll read the commentaries by the first Dali Lama and by his disciples, they are deep and you cannot get them. And then you go to the monastic textbooks written by Tronedarpa Rimpoche and people like that, by Chöne Lama, and you begin to read the textbook that were written in the 1800s to the seventeen hundreds. And you can understand those. If you have a good teacher.

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Geshe: So you have to work backwards and it's very very cool. You learn the monastic text books, they open up Tsongkapa's era, which opens up the great early sakya kagyü masters. Which open up the first Indians who came to Tibet, which open up the earlier Indians which opens up Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga, which opens up the sūtras. And it's just like doors opening. just like that. And then you can pick up the sūtras and say "oh, I get it". But you have to go through that process. So that's their place. Asaṅga and Nāgārjuna are starting that process. They're starting to help people to understand the sūtras.

Audience [inaudible]

Geshe: How many levels have we got? Two... There was a great Indian Master, named?...Atiśa. Do we have the dates anywhere? It was 982 to 1052? There's a long story about Atiśa. He was studying in India, he was a great great master. He knew about these two great lineages, and went to seek out lamas who could teach him these lineages in India. Indian Pandits. Great Indian masters. And he met, on the wisdom side, someone named Vidyakokila. Which you don't have to know, okay? {Vikytochönku} in Tibetan. And this Indian Buddhist master taught him the emptiness stuff. Totally mastered it. Then he went all around India seeking someone to teach him the bodhisattva behavior stuff. And he could not find a person who really held the lineage perfectly. Then he heard that there was somebody over in Indonesia, Sumatra, who had that lineage. And he goes, and gets on a wooden sailing boat, and goes twelve

months journey to Sumatra, Indonesia. And looking for {Serlingba} 'Serling' means 'the golden isles'. And from him he learned the Bodhisattva behavior. That lineage. Very famous that when he got there he did not go to Serlingba, he went to check him out. Like a private-eye, and he actually spent a long time trying to figure out if this was an authentic teacher. And it tells you something. He spent all these years looking in India for a teacher. Got on a boat. Spent twelve months on a very dangerous sea voyage. Got to Sumatra and didn't go to see Serlingba. He went to check him out first. And he spent a long time checking him out. And then finally he decided that this is an authentic teacher. And he went and learned from him. So Atishara combines the two lineages for the first time in this total way. And he wrote the first Lam Rim text as we know it. Its called "the lamp on the path' {bodhi prakti pad ika} "the lamp on the path'. So that's really...jetsunkapa he's bowing down to each member of this lineage. And then number five, and then we'll take a break. Number five is all the lineage lamas up to you. Down to you. Down to Ken Rinpoche. So if you go back from Ken Rinpoche, you can go backwards. There's Ken Rinpoche, then there's Chejey Rinpoche, before him Paboka Rinpoche, and then you can go back. You can go back like that. You can go back to Jetsonkarpa. And from Jetsonkarpa you can get back, it's very easy to get back to Atishara, Lord . You can go back through the whole lineage. The point is this. Why does Jetsunkarpa spend five whole verses of his extremely short book, it looks like he's wasting five verses on going through this lineage. Why does he go through this lineage like that? The point is this; you have to get in the mood of this being an unbroken lineage or wisdom, being poured from one being into the next being. Up to the present time. Up to His Holiness the Dalai Lama , Up to Ken Rinpoche, up to Kejey Rinpoche. IT has never been broken . This transmission, of this kind of wacky behavior, where you are devoting your life to other beings...I mean the whole idea is so unnatural for a human being. And this. Unheard of. I mean, if someone didn't ever mention it to you could you ever come up with it on your own? Impossible. I mean the point is to recognize that these are two very very VERY precious knowledges that are being passed on from being to being. And they are very fragile in a sense. You know? I mean how many people in this room? And how many people in this room will pass it on to another person? So its very very fragile. Its very very...especially after Tibet was lost it became extremely fragile. The connection, the thread is in great danger at this moment. You know, It looks like we're having a nice Buddhism class on Sixth Street in New York City. What's really happening is... Immense historical events are being decided at this moment. You know. Will the thread go on? Will this knowledge be passed on, especially in another culture. Its really, every person here is the next link. And its not a small

responsibility. If you lose it at this point it will be lost forever. Essentially. I mean I get up and give this lecture to the monks in the monastery. At it looks like there are a lot of monks. There's a thousand monks in Sera Me. It looks like a lot of monks. Its nothing! I don't know how many people are in the world... Three billion? What is it? Five and a half billion people. You're talking about a thousand people holding this water. Holding the wisdom in their hearts. And its very very close to breaking. It extremely in danger right now. These are historical moments. People will either look back and say this was the days when it was lost, or they'll look back and say 'oh, those great Americans. They did it again. Finally they did something right! They captured Buddhism and passed it down and it wasn't lost. I mean, according to the..us what do you call it... according to the prophecies of the ancient scriptures another two and a half thousand years. We're only half way through. And it will be passed on by you people. According to the sutras, it will come to this land, and this is in the sutras and I've shown it to people and you can read it. But it will come to this land. And this story is that we shall succeed. But that doesn't mean that you don't have to try. But the prophecies is that it will be passed on, and that it will continue for another two and a half thousand years. Through the Western people. It will be passed down. And this is about the time that its supposed to be. This is exactly the time that its supposed to be transmitted. This IS the time. So its very cool. So think about it. Think about the lineage. Appreciate the lineage. And think about yourself as being a conduit through which this knowledge...its an historical moment and that's it. Those two great currents of wisdom are passing down through us and we have to take care to hand it on nicely. You know very beautifully, and very perfectly and not corrupting it, and understanding it well, and passing it on.

Now we'll pass on to tea and coffee and do a little bit more about Jetsun kapa's lam rim that was written by Chöne Lama Darpa Tseduk. I Think that some of you already know that Chöne Lama Darpa Tseduk who lived 1645-1748.

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Geshe: As I mentioned to you, you really do need the monastic textbooks in order to get back to the earlier books. They open a door back to the earlier books. And at our monastery, Sera Mey monastery, we have two sets of text books. One was written by {Keta Demba Darge}, and another set was written by Chöne Lama. Sometimes we just call him Chöne Lama. Those book, twelve volumes, with maybe a few hundred works in them, were closely guarded in Sera Mey's library in Tibet. And we kept them very jealously. If other colleges get a hold of your text books, they can debate you much more effectively.

[laughter] so its like carefully kept in your monastery library. That library took a direct hit by Chinese artillery in 1959. And all of those copies were destroyed. And it took us 30 years to locate another copy. We found a partial copy in Beijing. Somebody photocopied it, really bad photocopy, And then we found a beautiful copy in St. Petersburg Library. Where we have a couple monks working to catalog those books. So you're very lucky. The commentary you have has been missing up until now. And we just discovered this about two years ago in Saint Petersburg. So you're studying Darpa Chedu's commentary. His commentary is called {Ningbo sordu sewa} . Sewa means illumination, like shedding light on something. Bordu means brief, and you can see Jetsun Karpa's book is that; brief. And {Ingbo} means 'the essence'. So his book means 'the illumination of the briefer essence' or something like that. And that's the commentary we're studying. And that's being translated by students from the Tibetan track class. They have almost finished the whole text now. So you'll be studying the commentary that they've translated. And I think that that dream of students being able to translate is... we have now five or six student translators. Commentaries and stuff. So its cool. You ...some of them thought that weren't going to be into that. So you never know, ok.

We went through the lineage. I'm not going to answer...there's a question on the homework about 'why is a lam rim like a wishing yule' and why is it like the ocean. And I'm going to leave that. You read your reading and you'll find out.

I'm going to just do finally ...There's four special qualities of the Lam Rim teachings. I mean, the most obvious one, which is not one of the four, the most obvious one about having a class about lam rim, is that since the Lam Rim incorporates every major Buddhist subject. You know every part of the engine that you really really need , then if you just have one brief class on the lam rim , and if you cover the whole lam rim, then you covered all the Buddha's teachings. I can tell you that if you do one good lam rim course you have covered the essence of everything I can teach you in five or six years. That's the quality of the lam rim. So virtue is also like that. If you go through a lam rim you cover every major point and you get the virtue of going through the whole {cang jur} and {ten jur}, you know thirty-five hundred works. You can cover like that. Just in one session, in three nights we will cover the essence of Buddha's teachings. So its kind of cool. You get that effect. The virtue of it is that we'll talk about more. So here are the four qualities. When you get close to the end of the Geshe course at the monastery, you've done all this work and you get close to the end , and suddenly you see that this is like one big , I want to say plot but ... what's the word? what's another word there's another word for that? Conspiracy,

yeah! Its one big conspiracy. I mean all these different things, you start when you're like thirteen years old they start teaching you formal syllogism;. What is a good logical reason. And for a thirteen year old its like pretty boring stuff. And then they go through all this stuff about outline existence, causation, the idea of negation and positives, then they get into Buddhist psychology, then they go into this long long long stage of other subjects like prajna paramita. Then they get into all these subsets about {madyamika}. All these non-Buddhist schools. Then they go through the other three lower schools, and they go through the {thra ma hat} schools. All these years and years of study and you're getting all these, seemingly unrelated teachings and suddenly, after about 15 years its like ..Boom. Something hits you in your mind and you say 'oh my god, its all a big conspiracy!' and its all connected, its all totally interconnected, and they all have their own place and they are all complementing each other. And you see that there's not a single teaching that you ever had in fifteen years, which in the slightest way doesn't fit like a crossword puzzle, in with all the other teachings. And they all ...some genius has set up this monastic course, and its all...basically it was Jetsun Karpa, and they all just fit like this very very intricate puzzle, and then you suddenly see the whole picture for the first time. Its just incredible, When it happens in your mind you gain this appreciation . It doesn't mean that for example the lower schools don't say things which the higher schools don't accept. They do say things that the higher schools don't accept. But who taught them, the Buddha taught them all. why does the Buddha teach the lower schools things that the higher schools don't accept? Its to get you along a little further. You will find in your career as you start teaching people. For example when you teach emptiness, certain people wont be able to get it. You can lay the Diamond Sutra for ten days on someone who's just fresh. You can't do it. It won't help them. They won't get it they will be frustrated. Something will happen wrong. You need to start doing these...talk about causation, and how things are interconnected, and things like that. You have to start like that. That's the idea of the four schools. But once you master the four schools you'll see that they're all consistent with each other. Totally, totally perfectly interlocking puzzle. That is all designed to get anyone to the goal of enlightenment. And you really appreciate that. If you study a lam rim it'll come to you how the lam rim has all of that in it. There's no subject that we've studied in the last four or five years, that you won't find in a lam rim. That doesn't have its place, somewhere in the ladder we call the Lam Rim. And suddenly it will dawn on you. 'oh man.' This is all this five year thing , each rung on the ladder, is all interconnected and they all have its own place.

We did typing in the Buddhist books on computer in India with a couple

{unintelligible } with fifteen monasteries for ten years , and we've input like a hundred thousand pages now. We have finished eleven percent of the cannon. We have not finished any percent of the Tibetan commentary. I don't think that we've finished one percent yet. It'll take another hundred years or two hundred years to input all of the sacred texts. But you can take that database as it exists now and in the laptop you can search for some idea, or you can almost almost like type something in at random, and you can let the search program go though and it'll make hits, three-hundred thousand pages. And depending on how rare what you're hitting on is you might get five times in a hundred pages. It takes like five times and you can take that sentence, if that's all you see, you can take that sentence and if you reach a certain point in your study, which can either go through a Geshe course for fifteen sixteen years, or study lam rim, and you will immediately see, oh yeah, that's that place in my practice. You know. I'm supposed to do that in that part of my practice. That relates to that part of my personal practice. And its incredible. Once you get to that point, which you can do if you just learn the lam rim well for the next two or three classes, it will immediately say, oh yeah I know where that fits into my practice. That fits into meditation number four that I'm supposed to do that's lam rim number four. That fits in right there. What I'm saying is that once you get a good grasp of the lam rim, the whole structure of Buddhism, you could take a search program, you could hit any sentence in a hundred thousand pages, and you would immediately know where it relates to your personal meditation.

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Geshe: its very cool. That's a quality of the lam rim. Once you study lam rim you have that overview of the whole Buddhist teachings. Because otherwise its kind of frustrating. I mean, You can sit with Ken Rinpoche and learn for thirty years and you don't see any... he's not slowing down, I mean what he knows. And there's nothing ...there's this joke. Steve Foster came to him in 1974 and said to him 'how long is this going to take Rinpoche?' and he says "twenty years...ask me in twenty years' ok. And Steve says 'right' and twenty years later this joke Steve Foster came to him and says 'how much farther do we have to go?' [laughter] because he's not even slowing down. There's things that you never heard of that he knows. He's still revealing things. He still hasn't gotten to a lot of things. And you're like ...the Buddha's teachings are vast and very profound but if you study the lam rim well there isn't one sentence that you will learn that you won't know where it fits into your personal meditation. And that's a quality of the lam rim. There's also this quality that if the relationship with the lama is going well, and if its clicking , then the thing that you most need

next and the thing that you were wondering about, comes up in the next class or something. You know. That's a sign that the relationship is going well. And exactly what you were curious about and exactly what you needed to know, and exactly what you needed for your own practice, came to you personally in the next moment. Its just a quality that if the lam rim is flowing the right way, it happens like that. Number three {Tibetan} and this third one 'easily grasp the intent of the Buddha' As you go through Buddhist scripture, and as you read different subjects, and as you get different teachings, if you study the lam rim well, if you have a good basis in lam rim and [inaudible] this little lam rim is enough, you'll know exactly, you'll be able to figure out very very easily, why did the Buddha teach this particular teaching. You know, why did the Buddha get into this. Why does the Buddha go through twenty different kinds of syllogisms. You know, what's the point? And you'll immediately be able to grasp why. For example, the whole purpose of Buddhist logic is very interesting. Its to learn not to judge others. I mean you have to study syllogisms for like six years, to figure out that you don't know what other people are thinking when they act the way they do. You know it take six years of studying syllogisms to really grasp that you really don't know why other people are doing what they do. They could have all sorts of sacred thoughts in their mind when they do things. How do you know? I mean, you come to a place where you know by studying every kind of corner of logic that exists in the world, that you cannot logically know...that you can't judge other people. Period. You know I could prove it to you logically. And you can go through all this logic and suddenly you realize, 'oh, that's why the Buddha taught logic' and the opening lines of these incredibly intricate logic books are {Tibetan} 'Don't judge other people if you are not like me'.-this is the Buddha 'because you will screw up' [laughter] very adamant. And that's the opening of the logic text. In other words, every little thing you study you will understand easily why did the Buddha teach that. I mean you'll grasp all these things very easily. It's a virtue of the lam rim, if you really study lam rim well, any scripture you ever study will just blow your mind. And you'll just suddenly see ' oh, that's the point. That how it relates to my personal practice.' And that's why the Buddha taught it. Nothing will seem to you to be a waste of time. Nothing will seem to you to be something that's not very important. That's exactly what the Tibetan says. {Tibetan} Save you from the great abyss. The great abyss is this. Its to say that particular Buddhist teaching is stupid. That particular part of Buddhist teaching, of Buddhist scripture , I don't see any point to it, I don't see that its true, I don't see that it has any relevance to modern man, you know, I think its kind of superfluous. I don't know why they're spending so much time on that right now. That doesn't strike me as very cool. We had a classic example. We sent

Nagarjuna's *suleka*. We translated it and we sent it to a very major publisher on the west coast. And we got back this letter saying 'could you spice up the emptiness and cut the morality part.' [laughter] So like we're supposed to improve on Nagarjuna. We're supposed to edit Nagarjuna for modern times because the morality part doesn't seem to be relevant. That's the {*yasa chem bo*}, that's the great abyss.

And if you study the lam rim nicely, like if we study the Diamond cutter Sutra, the way we studied it, you really really see why an ethical way of life is totally perfectly helpful and useful and necessary because....what? Because things are empty. Okay. And that's a great insight. And that takes lam rim. You have to know the lam rim. You know. And to think that you must act like a crazy bodhisattva, your life must be totally and irrationally loving and giving, and taking care of other people first, because things are empty. I mean, you have to appreciate every single corner of the Buddha's teachings. They all have a place, they're all helping each other, they're all supporting each other. Does it mean that you're supposed to accept things that you can't accept right now - absolutely not. We've been through that many times. As a Buddhist you're not allowed to accept something just because the guy stood up there and said it. You're not allowed to do that. You're a lousy Buddhist if you do that. You're a stupid Buddhist. There's even a word for it. {*debe dejun*}. You're a stupid Buddhist if you just accept it because the person up there said it. Because then if the guy gets up there and says the opposite tomorrow, you'll do that too. So it has to be reasonable to you. It has to be acceptable to you. It has to make sense to you. But the point here is, if it doesn't make sense to you right now, don't reject it. Just shelve it. There's a beautiful line from Maitrea where he says 'I know that you can't accept everything I say, so take the thing that you can't buy yet, and just leave it. But don't make the great mistake of rejecting it.' Don't say 'I don't like this part, or this part isn't written so well, or this part not so interesting, or this part seems irrelevant. Or this part is okay for historical India, we don't have to act that way nowadays. He was just writing that for ancient India, you know.' Things like that, ideas like that. If you hold that kind of viewpoint you've fallen into the great abyss. If you study the lam rim, even just a three class lam rim, even the shortest lam rim ever written, you won't make that mistake. Sometimes they call it the great mistake. You know, you won't reject off hand something. You'll see that everything has its own place in that beautiful...think of it as a big ball of light, made up of pins of light, pinpoints of light, and each one of them has its place in the whole structure. By the time you reach the end of Buddhist study you will start to see the whole setup like that. As one huge network of light. And every teaching you ever got...by the way there's a place in the path of preparation, {*djor lam*} where you reach a kind of samadhi where you

remember every single teaching you ever had, as direct as day. Every single teaching you ever had, comes back to you, and takes its place in this huge...its called {Tibetan} . you remember ...the stream of your memory goes back infinitely far, and you remember all the teachings you ever had. And they all take their place in this huge beautiful ball of light. It'll come like that. And the lam rim gives you a taste of that. And if you study the lam rim it keeps you out of making the mistake of rejecting some of those lights just because you can't see the connection yet. The vision of the connection is made by studying the lam rim. And those are the qualities of the lam rim. Those are the four qualities of the lam rim. That's about it.

End of class 8

Course 9

The Ethical Life

Class Eight

Transcribed by: Karen Becker

(cut)

and we came to the end of Je Tsongkapa's vinaya teachings. I thought it would be good for dessert to do a thing called (lam rim). Say (lam rim) (repeat) (lam rim) (repeat). (Lam Rim) is good in that it's like grounding yourself. I think, you know, the idea of these classes is that it's a five year course, or I don't know how many years it is gonna be, (laughter) but the idea is that you could learn to to translate or to become a teacher of Buddhism and it's good every once in a while to go back and ground yourself in (lam rim). (Lam rim) is like the basis of everything. And we'll talk about it's benefits tonight, but I, it's important I think that as we go through the whole process that you go back to (lam rim) every once in a while. (Lam rim) keeps your...especially your motivation in the right place and it gives you also a view of the whole Buddhist teachings. So, I thought every few courses we should go back to (lam rim), okay? (Lam) means "path" and (rim) means "the steps, steps along the path", okay? Buddhist teaching is like a big...I like to compare it to an automobile engine and you can open up the hoods of various cars and especially if you're like me and you don't know anything about engines much, they all look the same, you know, I mean you look in and there's a little bit difference but but you look in and it, and it looks like an engine and then you get behind the wheel and you put the key in and you turn it and then sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. When it doesn't work it means that something big is missing, you know, like a battery, or or, you know like your carburetor you can do without, almost...it'll go for a while and and you can get to where you're going, or like certain kinds of filters, like the car won't break down...it'll still go some place for a while. Pistons...I once took apart a Volkswagon and and wrecked one of the pistons and they still work. You can you can run on three or five pistons. It doesn't go very fast but you can get there. And in other cars

you can open it up and everything looks normal but something really important is missing and the thing doesn't work at all. (Lam rim) is like that. (Lam rim) is a presentation of all the steps that you need to get to Buddhahood, and it's a specific number of steps. It's just like a car engine. If one...any one of the major steps is missing you can't get to Buddhahood. If you have all the essential steps but you don't have like all these accessories it'll still get there. So, it's important to know what (lam rims) are really...by the way (lam rim) refers to the whole kind of literature called (lam rim) and the whole idea of a teaching where you get all the parts in one teaching, but also each separate step is called (lam rim). A (lam rim). So the (lam rim) teachings have maybe ten, twenty, thirty (lam rims) inside. Meaning, steps that you must have. Sometimes sometimes they say this is a (lam rim) meaning one part of the whole (lam rim), so you gotta watch out for that. Sometimes (lam rim) means the whole presentation on the steps of the path to Buddhahood, which means the whole engine and sometimes when you're talking about a certain kind of meditation like death meditation, that's a (lam rim) meaning one of the steps that you need to have. So you...it's important once in a while to go back and find out and and review just the essential structure of Buddhism, what you need to know. If you go through the whole monastic course, which is the idea of these five year program, you start out in the monastery doing (b: Perfection of Wisdom), you do that for twelve years, then you do supplemental topics of the perfection of wisdom, it might take you another three or four years. Sometimes it's included in the twelve years. Then you do (b: Madyamika), that's two years, then you do (b: Abhidharma), that's two years, then you do (b: Vinaya) two years and you have about eight years of (b: Pranama), which is logic, (tse ma). And then as you get towards the end of the whole course you begin to see the structure of Buddhism. It's very interesting. As you get towards the last three-four years, you know, up to then it's all these...all this great mass of things to learn, you know, and you keep going and going and going, debating and debating and debating and you don't really see a lot of tie-in with other subjects. You would think like Buddhist logic at the perceptual theory, psychology, cosmology, and and how do you know, you know, things like that, epistemology...those are all...they all seem

like much different subjects, but then some where around the fifteenth year or something you finally get it and you see how everything is one huge interconnected spider web, you know, and how everything forms a huge network of light, like...like I like to think of it as a big sphere and each of the different subjects is like a a point of light on the sphere and in together they all make one of these AT&T (laughter) you know, (laughs) spheres, you know, and and it really is like that, but you don't get it until about the fifteenth year and then you finally see the the structure of the whole thing, and you see how like Buddhist logic relates directly to seeing emptiness and and you see how psychology relates directly to to karma, and and you begin to see how past lives relate directly to to a teaching on on something that would seem completely unrelated, and suddenly you see how everything connects with everything else. That's that's like a (lam rim) realization, you can either go to the monastery for fifteen or eighteen years, or you can study (lam rim). (Lam rim) is like prepackaged, fast food (laughter) you know (laughs) and you can get the whole structure, the whole vision that takes you know almost fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years to get in the monastery, you can get that whole vision by studying one good (lam rim), and that's the point of (lam rim). It was revived by Atisha, and we'll talk about the history of it, it was taught by the Buddha...the idea was taught by the Buddha in the in the (b: Perfection of Wisdom Sutras) and then it was carried down through through the centuries. So I'm gonna go over a very brief (lam rim), like three classes worth. This is known as the (b: Brief Lam Rim) also...it's name is (b: The Brief Lam Rim). Say (lam rim) (repeat) (du dun) (repeat) (lam rim) (repeat) (du dun) (repeat). (Lam rim) means ("lam rim"), steps on the path, steps of the path and then (du dun) means "very very brief; brief presentation". Okay. A brief presentation on the steps of the path. It was written by...you tell me (laughter)

(students: Je Tsongkapa, 1357 to 1419)

Written by Je Tsongkapa, 1357-1419. Je Tsongkapa wrote about ten thousand pages of Buddhist commentary and I don't...I think I've mentioned it many times, but in the monastery we study maybe a few hundred pages of that. For example in the winter debates we

study a a commentary on some of his work by one of his disciples.

That commentary... the first chapter is maybe a hundred pages long. It takes eight years to get through the first chapter. It takes almost a month to go over about ten pages of it. I mean, you can debate for about a month, one small section from the first chapter. This is the (b: Pramanavartika Commentary) by Gyelsab Je. So like the last two chapters no body's gotten to in recent history. I...someone just wrote a commentary on it...the teacher of my teacher in the monastery, and and it's it was a big event, you know, everybody was really happy and they because no one has really gotten to the third or fourth chapters in recent history. Je Tsongkapa wrote ten thousand pages of text on commentaries like that. I mean for him it was like a hot knife cutting through butter. And and he just perceived these things absolutely perfectly, quickly, and and he just wrote com, ten thousand pages of commentary. You could spend a month on on thirty of them, forty of them. You could never ever master all of them. You could never even read all of them and here's this person who's...didn't spend much time writing, he spent most of his time in meditation, he was a great tantric master, very secret about it and he spent a lot of his time communing with his his Lamas including Manjushri, but but in his free time he was (laughter) he was (laughs) composing these scriptures. He also founded the great monasteries of Tibet, Ganden, he founded himself, Sera de bum he...was founded by his disciples, Tashilunpo by his disciple the first Dalai Lama, like that. That was in his free time, you know, so how he did it is is incredible, but basically he he wrote his lon...his great (lam rim) is suppos...I I would say most people agree it's the greatest Buddhist scripture ever written in the Tibetan language and the greatest piece of literature in the Tibetan language. That's a thousand pages long. He wrote a medium size (lam rim)...I think it's a couple hundred pages long. He wrote some briefer (lam rims) and then he wrote this very very brief (lam rim). The other (lam rims) that he wrote are are very very detailed, very scholarly, very deep, (b: Lam Rim Chenmo)...no one has translated it well yet, it means people are still waiting for someone to translate it. It's extraordinary. And then and then only once in his life he wrote a (lam rim) based on his own personal experiences. The other (lam rims) were...he...are

mostly collections of things that came before him. He collected the knowledge from ancient India, he organized it in a (lam rim), and that was very famous for that. But but only one one occasion he said, he took all his own experiences and put them into (lam rim) and you won't find quotations in this (lam rim), he's not quoting other people. He's actually giving it from his own experience. And that's the (b: Lam Rim Du Dun). So it's very cool...I mean often times in Tibet it's the first thing a Lama will teach you. This is some (unclear). It's the very first thing a Lama will do it's teach you the (b: Lam Rim Du Dun) just so you have it in your mind, this song of pers personal experience, 'cause sometimes it called "The Song of my Spiritual Life". And I give (unclear). You know you did something important if the demons come and try to (laughter) interrupt us (loud sirens in background). (laughs). If everything's peaceful then you know it's not going very well (laughter). Say (je) (repeat) (nyam gur) (repeat) (je) (repeat) (nyam gur) (repeat). (Je) means "of Je" meaning "of the lord", okay, the lord's. (Je) means "the lord's". What's a (dor je)? Yeah, the Lord of Stone. (Dor) means "stone", (je) means "lord" and that's a diamond. Okay. So (je) means "lord". (Nyam, nyam) means "personal experience". And (gur) means "a song" (Gur) means "a song". So this book is...(b: the Lam Rim Du Dun) which we're about to study is also know as (b: Je Nyam Gur) which is "The Song of my Spiritual Life" And he actually recounts the important events in his own spiritual life. At the beginning of the (lam rim) you try to...you try to show how it's the...how it's coming directly from the Buddha and and you try to summarize it and and show how the lineage came down to you. We consider it very important in Buddhism that what you're learning is not only, I mean it's not only a bunch of books that have been passed on down from person to person. It's actual experiences and actual blessing of a human being teaching a human being. And that blessing coming down through the centuries from from person to person. It's not just that the books were handed down one by one. The knowledge itself and the blessing of the knowledge that can only be transmitted from one person to another in...live...which is I'm a little bit worried about the correspondence course, it has to be from heart to heart, you know. It has to be a knowledge has to go from one person to the next person. So we think it's

important that you have to show where that lineage comes from. It if it is ever broken then it will die in this world. People have to continue to, to...you have to be a receptacle and then the Lama comes and pours water into you and then you you keep that water and then you go and pour it into the next person that you teach, and then the the water has to be poured on from from heart to heart like that. It it's important to show how that lineage has not been broken. Yeah.

(student: I had a comment about that. I I dare to presume that that is the difference between knowledge and wisdom. What you're describing is the difference between knowledge and wisdom because we have a lot of knowledge through the medium of technology which you become addicted to that medium, we become addicted to that knowledge. But we don't really have wisdom in the way that this from person to person transmission occurs.)

Yeah.

(student: So I think that that might be one of the components that differentiates between the two terms.)

Yeah. So we'll show how...we'll show how it comes down from person to person. Starts with who?

(students: Buddha)

Buddha (laughs) okay. I mean in this planet, okay. Say (shakya) (repeat) (tuppa) (repeat) (Shakya) (repeat) (tuppa) (repeat). (Shakya) a lot of people confuse it with (Sakya), okay. (Sakya) is a...is actually a place in Tibet that means "great earth". (Sak ya.) and there was a great school of Tibetan Buddhism that grew up in that area, and it reached it's peak around the thirteenth century, around the twelve hundreds and with the Sakya Pandita, and and that is one of the four great traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. (Shakya) is a totally different thing and sometimes they spell it like (Sakya) and they hide a little diacritic mark on top of it, and people think (Sakya) and (Shakya) are the same thing. This is (Shakya). (Shakya) refers to a a race of people that lived in India five hundred b.c. And

the king of the (Shakyas), or the...actually he was the prince, was Gautama Buddha, you know, he he grew up as a prince and the (Shakya) were his people. (Tuppa) means "able one: capable one; muni". So his name is Shakyamuni. By the way, during his own time, what happened to his people, the Shakyas, do you know?

(student: They were destroyed.)

They were totally wiped out. Okay. They were totally destroyed. Even...and and he was present at the time and this this slaughter was taking place around him, and and some of them came and took refuge to him physically, you know, came and and came into his house, into his room and tried to hide behind him or hide near him and they were all slaughtered. He couldn't protect them. Which which gives you an idea about about the meaning of refuge. The meaning of refuge is not going physically and hiding behind the Buddha. It's a mental thing that you do and and and it's the mental thing that protects you. It's not it's not the a a physical going for refuge or something like that. The opening lines of Je Tsongkapa's song of his spiritual life, I'll just say them to you and and you repeat them...I'm not going to write them on the board, but they also happen to be the opening lines of his great lam rim, (b: The Lam Rim Chenmo) so must be important, okay. Say (punt sok) (repeat)(ge lek) (repeat) (che way) (repeat) (tum be) (repeat) (ku) (repeat) (tay ye) (repeat) (jor way) (repeat) (a ru wa) (repeat) (kong way) (repeat) (sung) (repeat) (ma lu) (repeat) (she ja) (repeat) (she shin) (repeat) (si te) (repeat) (ku) (repeat) (shakye) (repeat) (tsong wa) (repeat) (de la) (repeat) (gur chak sa) (repeat). Okay. This is important because it describes the quality of a Buddha. And especially a buddha's body, speech and mind. Where do the body, speech and mind of a Buddha come from? (Kun sok ge lek che way dum be ku), it's a very very famous verse. We have to recite it all the time in the monastery. What does (kun sok) mean?

(student: Excellent?)

Yeah, (kun sok) means like excellent, culminations, something like that. (Kun sok). (Ge lek, ge wa)?

(student: Virtues)

Virtues, good deeds. (Che wa)? (Che wa) is ten (sayas). (Saya) is ten (booms) (Boom) is ten (tis). (Ti) is ten (dongs). (Dong) is ten (gyas) and a (gya) is ten (chus) and a (chu) is ten (chiks). (Chik) is one, okay? (laughs). (laughter) (Che wa) means ten million, okay, ten million different virtues. (Che wa dum be ku), (dum be ku) means "produced", the body was produced by ten million separate virtues, okay, and that's just a metaphor. It's actually much more than that, okay. But anyway a Buddha's body has been created by a certain number of virtues. And you have to get out of the mood...you know when we were in California we had a ten day teaching on the Diamond Cutter Sutra and and I think people really towards the end, they got into the mood of perceiving the production of a Buddha and a Buddha world as not being something self existent, meaning it's not external forces which are creating this this Buddha and this Buddha's world, you know. It's you have to get in the mo...it's hard in a in a class that we have only twice a week, but you have to get in the mood of thinking that how how do you produce a Buddha's body? I mean where does a Buddha's body come from. First of all, your body is a reflection of your spiritual life, you know, and and in fact the body that you have now, whatever it looks like, you know people say what was I in my last life, you know, you can tell almost everything just from your own body. Your body is a is a foot print of your mental state of your past life. It's very interesting. The fact that you have a human body means that your past life was very virtuous. The fact that you are in a Dharma class means that your past life was virtuous to the extent of one person in a million. I mean, that person was extraordinarily virtuous. If you if it's easy for you to understand Dharma and if you react to it well, then that person was even more virtuous. I mean you come into a Dharma class and you have certain reactions, it means that person was was extraordinarily virtuous. Was an extremely fine person. If you react to Dharma with certain reactions like like it it freaks you out and you can't think of anything else and you cry every time you hear it or something like that, you, it's even more virtue, you know. I mean these are indications of what you were in your past life. But, since you have a body like this, and assuming no one's a

(tantric) deity and I don't know who is, okay, but assuming you are who you seem to be, every detail of your body is a reflection of your mental state in your past, okay. So like if I have bony arms or hands or lousy complexion or or you know, if I have a bald spot or something, or if there's things about my body that I don't like...we talked about it in the last class, these are all a production of something in my past life. If I have an office where my boss is screaming at me, if I'm surrounded by people who are some of them are good and some of them are not good, if I'm...if my world is like that, and especially if I'm in a body which is going to be destroyed by some kind of disease, which is inevitable, the kind of bodies that we have, that comes from something negative. Those things come from something negative. So your past lives did a lot of good things but didn't pull off the ultimate goal and seriously, and and that's why you're in a body like this. This body does not fit the human potential. The human potential is something totally pure, and and and it has the potential to become totally enlightened and when you do the body will reflect that. Even if you do it in this life, I mean, the point of the secret teachings is that if you reach mentally that ultimate potential in this life then in this same life your very body will start to change. And and it will actually become a a wholly different kind of body. Not...this kind of body does not reflect the ultimate potential that each one of us has. This body is a failure of (laughs) you know, this body speaks of a former failure of a person to study the secret teachings and and reach the ultimate goals of Buddhism and that's why we have a body like this. If you change the inside, the mental part and the heart, and if they become totally pure in this life, then then this body will start to change. And and and it won't look like the way it looks now. The way it changes and the way it ends up looking have certain typical ways and if you reach enlightenment in this life then it has certain qualities. That that life that body will start to reflect the inner state of the mind and that is a Buddha's body, and that's the first line of his text. So even in the first line of his text he's saying something really really extraordinary. (Kun dzog gey lek che way dun be ku). You have the capacity to create virtues mentally, especially through the secret teachings there could create a totally different body for you

before you die, and in fact you you have to try. It's like a race against death. Okay. You don't know who's gonna win, actually. (Che way dun be ku), that's the body of a Buddha. (Tai droway re wa kong way sung). (Tai dro way) means "limitless numbers of beings". (Re wa) means "their hopes". (Kong way sung) means "what that Buddha teaches fulfills the hopes of limitless number of beings. And this is the idea...even if what I just said is true, you know, if what I just said about the Buddha's body is true, then then then the the kind of person who came into this world and taught that for the first time, how they get into a body like that, how to reach a body like that, then that those words have the capacity ful, to fulfill the ultimate hopes of of every living creature on this planet, you know, if they could listen and understand to what that person's saying they could escape that thing called death. They would not have to die in a body like this. And that's that's (re wa kong wa sung). The those are words which fulfill your hopes, you know, so that's the other qual, the second quality of a Buddha. The Buddha knows how to convey the way to get out of this defective end here (laughs) okay, (re wa kong wa sung). Okay. Then (ma lu she jya ju shin jik pa tu) (ma lu she jya ju shin sik pe tu) means "the the quality of that Buddha's mind is that it can see all existing objects at once." It means everything in the past, everything in the future and everything that exists now on every single planet and every detail, like every single thought you're having right now or ever will have or ever did have, a a Buddha can see at this one moment. The Buddha sees all of those objects in one moment.

(student: Simultaneously?)

Simultaneously. Also all the emptinesses of all those objects which we can not see, you know, if we ever do reach a point where you can see emptiness directly, you can't focus on other objects. They are totally different realities. The Buddha's vision can encompass both realities simultaneously. Sees all those objects simultaneously. What drives what drives that ability, you know, why did the Buddha get that ability, where did it come from, what's the karma that's forcing the Buddha to see his or her own mind that way, it's compassion. It's caring for those living

beings. If if the person could see every existing object, if the person could see into every person's mind and if that person could see the future of each person in this room as clearly as you see this pen, then then they would know exactly what to say to you. And and how to move you along. So it's that it's that motivation they have. The the motivation is that that they could look into your mind and see what you need at any given moment to push you along as quickly as possible to to getting to a better life and mind, body and mind, before you die. I mean, that's...the (shakya tuppa) was one of the only Buddha's in history which taught (tantra), who taught (tantra). It's very rare. Not all Buddhas teach the secret teachings, I mean, it's extremely rare, I mean Buddhas are extremely rare, you know you know how long it takes a Buddha to get to be a Buddha. Among those there's only very few that teach the secret teachings. There's only very few worlds and very few planets and very few kinds of beings who who can learn them, who can relate to them, and and you have that capacity. Most people have that capacity, if it if it's cultivated to the right way, you can enter those teachings. And and in the this life you can reach those goals. So that's the...the Buddha's mind has the ability to to recognize those beings and then to give them exactly the right teachings at the right time to push them into that and get them to do that before they die. (unclear) (Shakya tso wa den la guk chak tso. (Shakya tso wa) means "Shakyamuni"; (den la guk chak tso) means Tsongkapa at the very beginning of his text is saying, you know, I'm so lucky, I met a Buddha like you...I mean a lot of his writing is like love letters to Buddha (laughs) you know. He wrote a very famous (Den drup tuppa). It's a love letter to the Buddha Shakyamuni because...not because he's so sexy, you know, it's because he taught dependent origination (laughs), you know, like "oh man, you're so" (laughs) you know, (laughter) you know, cause you...why do I love you so, oh you taught dependent origination (laughs), you know (laughter) and it's a whole beautiful book on emptiness. It's a it's incredible book on emptiness but it's this love letter to to Shakyamuni. It's a very weird to to to read a a Lama writing...it it feels just like a love letter to to Shakyamuni Buddha, I mean, we kinda see Shakyamuni Buddha as this ancient historical figure, you know, with the weird head and everything, and sits strange and seems

very cold (laughs) and you know, and and here to Tsongkapa, Shakyamuni Buddha is is is like a girlfriend or something, and really, and when you read it it's like somebody gushing about their about their their lover, you know, it's it's something, it's really beautiful, it's really touching. So you get this feeling of Shakyamuni Buddha being a real, you know, being who's who's there, waiting for you and loving you and waiting for you to be able to see him and and like that. It's very very beautiful.

So, (Shakya tuppa) is the beginning of the lineage of the (lam rim). This is where it all starts. And those are the qualities of the Buddha that that come down through the lineage and are transmitted through the lineage. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

It...how they...how a Buddha teaches is really beautiful, and and they teach, they have...the way they teach has six dif sixty different qualities. The most famous of the sixty is that no matter what language they speak, they speak Sanscrit, but as they speak Sanscrit, each being hears their own language. Including other beings, so they do teach in other realms, but very rarely because they can not relate to a Buddha, they can't hear a Buddha, you know, like in the hell realms it's pretty famous that...we don't in our tradition ever...and it is not in the vinaya, any custom of drawing the Buddha in the hell realm in the wheel of life, for example. There are wheel of life paintings that you'll see where the Buddha is, you know, looks like he's teachings in the hell realms, and and we think that's really inauspicious, you know. He's outside of the whole circle, he's standing outside because he's not in there any more, and they say "well, he's compassionate so he's taking birth in the hells to help those beings." But but in the (b: Abhidharma) and all the scriptures it says your mind is, you know...just imagine...Nagajuna says, imagine someone stripping you naked, tying you to a pole and like a thousand people running at you and stabbing spears into your body and and your whole existence in the hell is spent with that kind of feelings...he says much

greater pain than that, so you can't even frame a thought in hell. You can't frame a thought a straight thought, you can not. You can't have a straight thought in hell. Just suffering. Just pain. Agony. And and so they can't like consider the benefits of Dharma or something like that, they're not...there's no such thought, no being in the hell realms is able to to frame a thought like that. They're just suffering. And and animals can not normally frame a straight thought either. They their minds are like water compared to cream or something, you know, they're just, they can't hold up a straight thought. They're just mainly running on instinct and and trying to prevent themselves from being eaten. And that's their main life. That's their whole...and then pretas you can't see them but they're just consumed by by the search of food and drink. Their whole life is spend trying to search for food and drink. You can't study Dharma if you, if you're starving (laughs), you know, or you can't get something to drink. And then beings in the in the deity realms are like people in the East Village (laughter) enjoying a cafe outside at night, and if you could enjoy a nice cafe on a wonderful fall day, you know, all all evening with good friends and beautiful friends people, you know, it'd be very hard to to think about a Dharma class, extremely hard. But they're they're even more extreme. I mean their experiences are are even more extreme. So they they can't do it. So they do try and there are...they have been instances where Buddha's taught in other realms, but very difficult, and there's this beautiful presentation in the (b: Prajnaparamita) of all the different ways in which they can teach. Like a wind blowing through a tree, or or like a flower just opening up for you and teaching you something, I mean it's Buddhas are not restricted to the (cho kyi trul ku) which means "the ultimate nirmanakaya". They have all these other nirmanakayas that you know, it's not impossible at all for a wave...for the moonlight on the wave in at on the beach at night to be an emanation of the Buddha and and teaching you something as the wave rolls and as those little diamonds sprinkle through the wave, you know, there's something it's it's a it's a quite possible that that's an emanation of the Buddha and that there's something they're teaching you right then. It's not impossible at all. And there's this beautiful, you know, outline of all the different bodies they can emanate, it's really cool,

and there's names for all them and we'll study it someday. Okay.
So by the way, in the homework, you're gonna have to have five of these. That's num...that's level number one. That's great great great grandfather, okay. Say (jet sun) (repeat) (jampa) (repeat) (jet sun) (repeat) (jampa) (repeat). In Sanscrit, Maitreya, and Jampa and Maitreya means "love". (Jampa) is in fact a special kind of love. There's two kinds of love in Buddhism. One where you want to remove peoples' suffering and the other where you want to give people a good time. This is the second kind. This is the kind where you want people to reach nice things. The other kind of love is the kind that wants to remove all the suffering of beings, but (jampa) is the kind, it's like a party love, and it (laughs) it wants to spread happiness. It's like this very Santa Clause kind of love, you know, and wants to give things to people, wants to make people happy. That's (jam pa). You met him out in New Jersey, right. (laughter) And then (jam pay yang) is Manjushri, also called Manjugosha. (Jam pay yang) means "Manjugosha". And (jam pel) means Manjushri. (Jampa) means "very gentle and soft." And (yang) means...(yang) is a beautiful word that means like "a melody or a song". So sometimes we call him Gentle Voice. Okay. (Jet sun Jampa), Maitreya, has another name, which is (Mipham). (Mipham) meaning "undefeatable". The undefeatable one. So sometimes you see (Mipham). I used to get really really confused about these two dudes, okay? You you read sutras and they are bodhisattvas and they are studying with the Buddha and the Buddha is teaching them, and they are involved in all these wonderful events around the historical Buddha. And then you read other scriptures and there's this guy named Maitreya in a in a Buddha paradise, teaching Asanga and who's going to come as the next Buddha, and then you you get really confused, you know, and then sometimes they say Maitreya is a Buddha and sometimes they say he's not a Buddha yet, and then sometimes but but then you look in the kang, in the (tengyur), his works are in the commentaries, they're not in the (kangyur). (Kangyur) is the wor...the books that are spoken by an enlightened being, and then you find Maitreya's books in the (tengyur) which means he's not enlightened yet. These are the commentaries by unenlightened beings, and and you get really confused, you're wondering "who are these guys really", you know, and then in the in the monastery...this was my

pre-Geshe debate, you do you do two pre-Geshe debates, it's like you have to pass BA and then MA and then Geshe. And and the debate for for the pre-Geshe is sometimes, there's a debate about Jampa, you know. Is he a bodhisattva or is he a Buddha. And it's a huge debate, it's a great debate. The bottom line is...do I tell you or not? (laughter) (laughs) The bottom line in the in the secret teachings, okay, is that he is already a Buddha, okay. And the same for Manjushri. And in fact there are branches of the secret teachings devoted to these two beings. You have to have initiations and then you get a special instructions on how to how to meet them, and how to get to their level, so that's really the the highest interpretation, okay, in the secret teachings they are already Buddhas. And they are masquerading as bodhisattvas. They have come to this planet, they are pretending to be plain old students of the Buddha, and they are asking stupid questions of the Buddha and the Buddha is pretending to give them enlightening answers and and then the Buddha is teachings sutras and tantras, because these two bodhisattvas are asking him questions and there's situations and like that. But in in the ultimate interpretation they've been enlightened a long time and and they are total Buddhas who are pretending to be bodhisattvas. And that's why the confusion, okay. You can boil down all of Buddhism into two things. I mean if if you really had only five minutes to tell somebody about Buddhism, then all you'd have to tell them would take about two minutes which would be, all you really need is two different things. I mean you need the bodhisattva ideals, okay. On one hand you need the bodhisattva ideal which is...I I'm in the mood 'cause I'm gonna do it tomorrow night at the Open Center, I've been reading this mental training, right, and it and it's this crazy bodhisattva wisdom, you know, I don't know what to call it...bodhisattva behavior which is which is, according to the world, crazy, you know, which is like...just spending your whole life thinking about other people, like Jampa out in New Jersey, you know, "can I give you so, another tea", you know, And and just totally thinking about the other person all the time, you know, and and and forgetting about yourself and dedicating your life to taking care of other people and watching out for what other people need, and and and and thinking only about other people, and and it's it's a great great great medicine to the

mind, I mean if you, the the more you can do it the happier you are, it's just automatic happiness, tot...automatic instant happiness, you know, forget about yourself and and dedicate yourself to other people and watch out and give up the things you want, make sure everyone around you is happy, make sure everyone gets exactly what they want, you know, spend your whole life acting like that. And it's instant happiness. It's instant gratification, you know. It's really cool, I mean, that's fifty percent of Buddhism, is a bodhisattva behavior and it's totally unnatural for human beings. You have to, you have to get into it and and you have to learn about it and and if you had only five minutes to teach somebody you would really want to press on them this cool behavior called bodhisattva behavior and how happy it would make them, you know, immediately, if they would just break through that obstacle of thinking about themselves. Just think about other people. That's bodhisattva behavior, and and in Buddhism that great branch is represented by Maitreya. There's a code word for it, and I don't know what you want to call it, I mean, it means like (laughter) (laughs) you know, like that, I don't know, it's it's called (gyal chen, gyal chen chu pa), I don't know how to...it it means like, you know, just something, I don't know...it's like (laughter) (gyal chen) it's a (gyal chen) is like United States, you know, big, wide, wide, it it's wide spreading, literally, but I I don't think it gives the meaning, maybe you can come up with a better word.

(student: (unclear))

It's just this Santa Clause, you know, giving of your whole heart, you know, but the the word in Tibetan is "vast" or something like that, something like vast behavior, but I don't think it really, it's vast giving behavior, okay. Call it "vast giving behavior" (laughs), I don't know, you know. We need a a consultant. Very...it's just some kind of very very, I don't know, generous heart, wide-spreading heart that just goes out and spreads all over everybody and gives them everything. That's (gyal chen chu pa). And that's this whole wing of Buddhism represented by Maitreya. Is that. Okay. And then on the other side, you must have what we call the vision of emptiness, and that's the other great wing of Buddhism, and and you know you

meet people who who only have bodhisattva behavior. They are very very generous and compassionate and giving and and it overflows with you, you know, you you feel it, you you sense it, they are very very generous people, but but they lack the the knowledge of emptiness. Emptiness is a very very special idea. It did not reach it to the east...to the west, I think, in our in our spiritual development of the western world, I don't believe...I mean in...as I know from my spiritual development as a child, you know, going to church, and I loved church, and I and I loved all the things that they taught, but I think you'll maybe agree that that the...what we call the explicit teachings on emptiness where somebody actually sits down and explains it in detail, are missing. We don't have it. It's some like great gap in the western spiritual life. You can say that maybe it's been implied in different traditions, or maybe it's been experimented with in different traditions, but what we call the explicit outright, clear, detailed presentation of emptiness, I think is is a lack, and like you could be...if you're a very very good person in the in the western spiritual sense you can be this giving person, you know, this vast giving mind, you know, you can do that, but I I believe, I mean, personally, what I found in Buddhism that most helped me that I felt a lack of before was this understanding of emptiness, I mean, and together they're an unbeatable combination. Buddhism is saying that if you only had five minutes to explain to somebody the essence of Buddhism, it would be these two ideas. I mean, one is, just give up see...living for yourself and start to live for others, and then understand emptiness at the same time. As you live for others and as you go through that crazy bodhisattva behavior of of just taking care of other people first, do it with an understanding of emptiness and then the results are are like gasoline and fire, you know, I mean, then they the results are explosive. The the results are something extraordinary. And either one by itself, I mean you also meet people who intellectually have spent much of their life on the concept of emptiness but you can feel a real dryness in them because they don't have this, you know, and and you can sense it and you smell it and and you can sense what it would be if you had that without that. And in fact Chandrakirti...I mean they get into, he gets into this huge thing of Buddhism is like this this great beautiful bird and and these

two wings are like the two wings of the bird and if you took one wing and broke it, if you broke the bone and the bone was sticking out, you know, then what the bird would be would be useless, I mean the bird could walk around maybe (laughs) but couldn't soar and couldn't go to the moon or whatever, you know, he says you need both of them. You have to have both sides. So, obviously Manjushri knew about love and taught a lot about love, but the essence, the the emphasis of Manjushi's lineage is emptiness. And the essence of Maitreya's lineage is is love. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

There are like thousands of beings like this

(student: Right)

who are who are bodhi...who are masquerading as bodhisattvas in the Buddha's time and Avalokiteshvara is another one, and who's really a a tantric deity, and each each of them has their own specialty, you know, and for for Chenresig, for Avalokiteshvara it's also compassion. It's (nying je) which is the the other form of love that he talks about, which is the love which wishes to remove suffering from the object, like a mother who wants to...the child is cutting itself with a knife or something and you want to get the knife away or something, that's that's Avelokit...and each one there's hundreds and they form the four great classes of Tantra. And and they're each have their own place in one of the four great classes of tantra and you have to study that and you have to meet them and you have to become them. That's another story. Yeah?

(student: Is this related to what we were talking about last week when we were saying that somebody who had the absence of kleishas, you know, and that they were in a place of total peace, they're able to empathize with somebody else's sadness but it doesn't upset them to the point where they're not (unclear)

Yeah, yeah.

(student: So I would think that what you're saying here,
(unclear) to correct me, that you can't really have that true
benevolence, that true generosity unless you're in a place where,
you know, you have your own, you know, stuff together)

Yeah

(student: You know, and so it cou...it it has to happen
simultaneously. If you're in a state of peace and tranquility
then of course you can give in this, you know, very benevolent
way, so it's simultaneous. Otherwise you're just doing it
because you want to be nice, you want (unclear)

Yeah.

(student: You want (unclear) you know, you're not doing it from
a place where it's comfortable (unclear)

Yeah. Like that. So that's how it starts. That's in the time of
the Buddha, five hundred b.c. Then historically there's a point
at which there comes a being who's not a Buddha, okay, and and
who comes into this world and the function, you know, their job,
of coming into this planet is to begin the process of of of
explaining what these people said to other people, you know.
These are these are called the (shing de sul je). (Shing) means
"word", (de) means "horse". What's a (shing da)? A wooden
horse, which means "a carriage". A wagon. Okay, which was a big
deal in ancient India. I mean whoever thought up the first wagon
was really smart (laughter). And if you look at the Indian
wagons, even nowadays, they're extremely simple and extremely
efficient. They're like a work of art. They're a wonder, you
know, I mean they haven't changed I don't know how many thousand
years, but but they're just cool. They work extremely well,
they're made with simple things, and and they they get people and
things all over India. And it's it they're still as the same as
it is thousand years, but nothing has changed, and just they're
so cool and they're all made of wood and there's nothing fancy
and it just works. That's a (shing da). (Sul je) means "the
person who thought it up", okay. The person who introduced this
idea for the first time. So historically...this is a an

expression in the (b:Prajnaparamita) and it's used to describe two beings who came into this planet and thought up a way to present this information and and and and give it to people in a in a in a presentation that they could follow in a more easy way.

If you try to study the sutras, forget it, you know. I mean if you go and try to read sutras, forget it. It'll go over your head. You won't get anything out of it. I mean, you could study Tibetan...by the way, if you study Tibetan, this Tibetan, you can read sutras. Tibetan has not changed in in a thousand years. If you, you can read a newspaper, and you can read the early sutras, The same. Tibetan has not changed. The the Tibetan that you're learning you can use to debate in modern Tibet and you can use to read ancient sutras. Same thing. But if you read those sutras it'll go...you'll say I I don't get it, you know, it's deep. So you have to have these commentators. These are the two great commentators that came into this planet, and that, and usually there's only one, for each for each side of the lineage, there's only one, okay. On this side, it's Nagarjuna, on the emptiness side. Did Nagarjuna teach about love? Of of course (laughs) but but what did he emphasize, you know, what did he teach explicitly? What was his explicit teachings? Mostly on emptiness, okay. You know, over here is Asanga. They're called (dzom ling gen nye), the two jewels in our planet. They're like precious jewels who who appeared in this planet. And they they begin the commentarial tradition. They begin the practice of explaining in words that we can understand. As your Tibetan gets better, you'll find that you can't understand what they wrote either. (laughter) (laughs) and you have to read the early Indian commentaries, which come...they go from about the sixth century to the ninth century and and you'll try to read those and you won't be able to understand those either (laughter) and then you go to the Kadampa readings, the writing, and they're very brief and very deep and you won't be able to understand those either, and then you go to up (unclear) Rinpoche's time, just before Tsongkapa, and to the great Sakya-Kag kagyu masters, before Tsongkapa and you won't be able to understand them either and then you get to Je Tsongkapa in 1357 and you can read that too but you won't be able to understand him either. And then you'll read the commentaries by the first Dalai Lama and by his...Gyaltsup Je, Kedrup Je, by his disciples...and they are

deep, and you can not get them. And then you go to the to the monastic textbooks written by Choney Drakpa Shedrup, people like that, by Choney Lama, and and you begin to read the textbooks that were written in the eighteen hundreds, the seventeen hundreds and you can you can understand those. If you if you have a good teacher, so you have to work backwards. And it's very very cool. You you learn the monastic textbooks, they open up Tsongkapa's era, which opens up the great early Sakya-Kagyu masters, which opens up the first Indians who came to Tibet, which opens up the earlier Indians which opens up Nagarjuna, finally, which opens up the sutras. And it's just like doors opening, you know, like that, and then you then you could pick up a sutra and say "oh I get it". You know, but but you have to go through that process, so that's their place. Asanga and Nagarjuna are starting that process. They're starting to help people to understand the sutras. How many levels we've got? Two?

(students: three)

Three, this goes up to about...there was a a great Indian master named?

(student: Atisha?)

Atisha. Do you have his dates with you? It's nine eighty two to ten fifty two?

(student: (unclear))

Is that it?

(student: Nine eighty two to ten fifty two.)

Nine eighty two to ten fifty two. Yeah. Af...there's a long story about Atisha, he he was studying in India, he was a great great master, he knew about these two lineages and he went to seek out Lamas who could teach him these lineages in India, Indian pandits, great Indian masters, and he met on the wisdom side, someone named Vidyakokila, which you don't have to know,

okay, (rik de ku chu) in Tibetan, and and this in Indian Buddhist master taught him the emptiness stuff, totally, mastered it. Then he went all around India looking for someone to teach him the?...you know, bodhisattva behavior type, and he could not find a person who who really held the lineage perfectly. Then he heard there was somebody over in Indonesia, Sumatra, who who knew of, who had that lineage, and so he goes to, gets on a sh...on a wooden sailing boat and goes twelve months journey to Sumatra, to Indonesia, and and goes looking for Serlingpa. (Serling) means "the golden isle", and from him he learned the bodhisattva behavior, that lineage. It's very famous that when he got there, he did not go to Serlingpa. He went to check him out, like a private eye, and and he actually spent a long time trying to determine whether or not this was an authentic teacher, and it tells you something, you know, he he spent all these years looking around India for someone, he got on a boat, went twelve months on a very dangerous sea voyage, got to Sumatra and didn't go to see Serlingpa. He went to che...he checked him out first. And he spent a long time checking him out and then finally he decided this is an authentic teacher and he and he went and learned from him. So Atisha combines the two lineages for the first time in in this total way, after that time, and and he wrote the first (lam rim) text as we know it. It's called (b: The Lamp on the Path). (b: Bodhi pata pradi pa). Okay. Lamp on the Path. So that's really...Je Tsongkapa, you'll see in the reading, he's bowing down to each member of this lineage. And then number five...and then we'll take a break...number five is all the lineage Lamas up to you. Down to you. Down to Khen Rinpoche, okay. So if you go back from Khen Rinpoche, you can go backwards, you know, there's Khen Rinpoche, and then there's Trijang Rinpoche, and with him Pabongka Rinpoche, and then you can go back, you can go back like that, you can go back to Je Tsongkapa and from Je Tsongkapa it's very easy to get back to Atisha, Lord Atisha. You can go back through the whole lineage. The point is this. Why does Je Tsongkapa spend five whole verses of his extremely short book (laughs), you know, he spends a...he he wastes, I mean it looks like he wasting, five verses on on going through this lineage. Why does he go through this lineage like that? The point is this. The point is really that you have to get in the mood of this being an unbroken lineage, of of

wisdom, okay, being poured from one being into the other, the next being and that it has not been broken, up to the present time, up to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, up to Khen Rinpoche, up to Trijang Rinpoche, it has never been broken, this this transmission of of this kind of wacky behavior where you're where you are devoting your life to other beings. I mean the whole idea is so unnatural for a human being. And then this, I mean unheard of...if someone didn't mention it to you, could you ever come up with it on your own? Impossible. I mean, the point is to recognize that these are two very very very precious knowledges that are being passed on from being to being and that they're very fragile in a sense, you know, I mean how many people in this room, and how many people in this room will pass it on to another person, so it's very very fragile, it's very very...especially after Tibet was lost, it became extremely fragile, the the connection, the thread it's in great danger at this moment, you know. It looks like we're having a nice Buddhism class on Sixth Street in New York City. What's really happening is, I mean, immense historical events are being decided at this moment, you know. Will the thread go on, you know. Will this knowledge be passed on, especially in another, in another culture. It's really every person here is the next link and it's not a small responsibility, you know, if you if you lose it at this point it'll be lost forever. Essentially. I mean, I get up and give this lecture to the monks in the monastery every time I go through, you know, they...it looks like a lot of monks, there's a thousand monks in Sera Mey, you know,...it looks like a lot of monks. It's nothing. You're talking in a in...I don't know how many billion people are...three billion, I don't know what is it? Five and a half billion people, you're talking about a thousand people holding this water, you know, holding the the wisdom in their hearts and it's very very very close to breaking, it's extremely danger right now and it...these are historical moments. I mean people will either look back and say this was the days it was lost or they'll look back and say, oh those those great Americans, you know, they did it again (laughs) (laughter) you know, they, you know, finally (unclear) they did something right and they they captured Buddhism and passed it down and it wasn't lost, I mean according to the to the, what do you call it, according to the prophecies of the ancient scriptures, Buddhism

will last another two and a half thousand years. We're only half way through and it will be passed on by you people, according to the prophecies, it will come to this land and this is in the sutras and I've shown it to people and it's in, you know, you can read it, but it will come to this land. I mean, the story is that we succeed. Now it doesn't mean that you don't have to try.

Okay, but the prophecy is that it will be passed on and it will continue for another two and a half thousand years. Through through our through through the western people it will be passed down and this is about the time that it's supposed to be. This is exactly the time it's supposed to be transmitted. This is the time. So it's very cool. So, think about it. Think about the lineage. Appreciate the lineage and and think about yourself as being a conduit through which this knowledge is is...it's a historical moment and and that's it. The (lam rim)...those two great currents of of wisdom are are passing down through us and and we have to take care to to hand it on nicely...you know, very beautifully and perfectly and not corrupting it and understanding it well and passing it on, okay. Now pass on some tea and coffee (laughter) and we'll do a little bit more, okay.

(cut)

to Je Tsongkapa's little (lam rim) that was written by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup. Okay. Say (Choney) (repeat) (Lama) (repeat) (Drakpa) (repeat) (Shedrup) (repeat). I think some of you already know, but Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup who lived 1675 to 1748.

(cut)

As I mentioned you really do need the the monastic textbooks in order to get back to the earlier books. They open a door back to the earlier books, and in our monastery, Sera Mey monastery, we have two sets of text books. One was written by Kedrup Denpa Dargye and then another set was written by Choney Lama. Sometimes we just call him Choney Lama. Those books...twelve

volumes with maybe a few hundred works in them, were closely guarded in the Sera Mey's library in Tibet and we kept them very jealously. If other colleges get a hold of your text books they can debate you much more effectively (laughter) so it's like carefully kept in your monastery library. That library took a direct hit by Chinese artillery in 1959 and all of those copies were destroyed and it took us thirty years to locate another copy. We found a partial copy in Beijing, somebody photocopied it and really bad photocopy and then we found a beautiful copy in St. Petersburg library, where we have a couple of monks working to catalog those books. So, so you're very lucky. The commentary you have is has been missing up until now and we just discovered this about two years ago in St. Petersburg. So you're studying Drakpa Shedrup's commentary. His commentary is called (Nying mo) say (nying mo) (repeat) (dor du) (repeat) (sel wa) (repeat) (nying mo) (repeat) (dor du) (repeat) (sel wa) (repeat). (Sel wa) means "illumination" like shedding light on something. (Dor du) means "brief" and you can see the the name of Je Tsongkapa's book is there...brief, and (nying mo) means "the essence", so his book means (b:"The Illumination of the the Briefer Essence" or something like that. (b: Illumination of the Essence). And that's the commentary you'll be studying. And that's been translated by students from the Tibetan track class. They almost finished the whole text now, so you'll be studying you'll be studying the commentary that they've translated, okay. And and I think that dream of of students being able to translate is...we have now five six students translating commentaries and stuff, and so it's cool, you...some of them thought they weren't gonna be learning Tibetan, so you never know. Okay. Okay. We went through the lineage. I'm not gonna answer...there's a question on the homework about why is the (lam rim) like a wishing jewel and why is it like the ocean, and I'm gonna leave that...you you read your the reading and you'll find out, okay. I'm gonna just do finally on this four special qualities of the (lam rim) teachings. I mean the most obvious one, which is not one of the four, okay, the obvious one about about having a class about (lam rim) is that since the (lam rim) incorporates every major Buddhist subject, you know, every part of the engine that you really really need, then if you just have one brief class on the (lam rim) and if you cover the whole

(lam rim) then you've covered all the Buddha's teachings. I mean I I can tell you that if you do one good (lam rim) course you have covered the essence of everything I can teach you in five six years, you know, that's that's the quality of the (lam rim) So the virtue is also like that. If you go through a (lam rim) you cover every major point and you get the virtue of going through the whole kangyur and tengyur, you know, thirty five hundred works you can cover like that, just in in one session, in three nights of studying (lam rim) we will cover the essence of Buddhist teachings, you know, so it's kind of cool, and you get that effect, the virtue of it is that. Okay. We'll talk about it more. So here are the four qualities. (den pa tum den (unclear). When you get close to the end of the Geshe course in the monastery...you know you've been studying all these different subjects and then you get close to the end and you suddenly, as I mentioned, you you see you stop to realize that this is one like big...I want to say plot...what's the word? (laughter) What's another word? There's another word for that.

(student: Conspiracy?)

Conspiracy, yeah. It's one big conspiracy, I mean, all these different things, you know, you saw it when you're like thirteen years old, they start teaching you formal...syllogisms...what is a good logical reason and it's like for a thirteen year old it's pretty boring stuff and and then they go through all this stuff about outline of existence, causation, the idea of negation and positives, then they get into Buddhist psychology, then they go into this long long long things about all these other subjects, Prajnaparamita, then all these subjects about Madyamika, all these non-Buddhist schools, then they go through the other three lower schools, they go through the three third and a half school, they go through all these years and years and years of study and you're getting all these seemingly unrelated teachings, and then suddenly after about fifteen years it's like boom, something hits you in your mind and you say "oh my god, it's all a big conspiracy", you know, it's all it's all connected, everything is connected, you know, everything is totally interconnected and they all have their own place and they're all complimenting each other, and and you see that there's not a single teaching that

you ever had in fifteen years which in the slightest way doesn't totally fit like a crossword puzzle in with all the other teachings, and they and they all...some genius has set up this monastic course and it all like...basically it was Je Tsongkapa, and they all just fit like this very very intricate puzzle and then you suddenly see the whole picture for the first time and it's just incredible what it happens in your mind is you gained this appreciation. It doesn't mean that, for example, the lower schools don't say things which the higher schools don't accept. They do say things which the higher schools don't accept. But who taught them? The Buddha taught them all. Why does the Buddha teach a lower school that says things that the higher schools don't accept? It's to get you along a little bit further. You will find in your career when you start teaching people that, for example, when you teach emptiness certain people won't be able to...you can't lay the Diamond Cutter Sutra on for ten days on someone who's just fresh. You can't do it. It'll it'll it won't help them, they won't get it, they'll be frustrated, something will happen wrong, you know you need to start, you know, doing these talk about causation and how things are interconnected, and things like that, you have to start like that. That's the idea of the four schools. But once you master the four schools you'll see that they all they're they're all consistent with each other, totally totally perfect interlocking puzzle that is all designed to get anyone to the goal of enlightenment. And you and you really appreciate that. If you study the (lam rim) you, it'll come to you how the how the (lam rim) has all of that in it. There's no subject that we've studied in the last four five years that you won't find in the (lam rim), that doesn't have it's place somewhere in that ladder called the (lam rim) and you'll you'll you'll suddenly it'll dawn on you, oh man, you know, this is all, this whole five year thing and it, each rung on the ladder is all interconnected and they all, it all has a place, it has it's own place, okay. We've been typing in Buddhist books in the computer in India with a couple, you know, in fifteen monasteries now for ten years, and we've input like a hundred thousand pages now, we have finished eleven percent of the canon. We have not finished any percent of the Tibetan commentaries. I don't think we've finished one percent yet. It'll take another hundred years or two hundred years, to

to input all of the sacred texts, but you can take that data base as it exists now in the laptop and you can search for some idea or you can just almost type something in at random and you can let it do the search program go through and it'll make hits through the hundred thousand pages and depending how rare what you're hitting is it might hit five times in a hundred thousand pages. It hits like five times. And you can take that sentence, if that's all you see, you can take that sentence and and if you reach a certain point in your study which you can either go through a Geshe course for fifteen sixteen years, or study (lam rim) and you will immediately see, oh oh yeah, that's that's that's that place in my practice, you know. I'm supposed to do that in that part of my practice. That relates to that part of my personal practice, you know, and and it's incredible, once you get to that point which you can do if you just learn the (lam rim) well for the next three, two and a half classes, it'll immediately...you say, oh yeah yeah, I know where that fits into my practice. I know where I, I know that fits into meditation number four that I'm supposed to do. That's (lam rim) number four. That fits in right there. And what I'm saying is that once you get a a good grasp of the (lam rim), the whole structure of Buddhism, you could take a search program, you could hit any sentence in a hundred thousand pages and you would immediately know where it relates to your personal meditation. It's very cool. That's a quality of the (lam rim). Once you study (lam rim) you have that, you have that overview of the whole Buddhist teachings. 'Cause otherwise it's kind of frustrating, I mean, you can sit with Khen Rinpoche and learn for thirty years and you don't see any kind of...he's not slowing down, you know, I mean what he knows and and there's nothing...there's this joke...Steve Foster came to him 1974 and said, you know, how long is it gonna take, Rinpoche, and he says twenty years. Ask me in twenty years, okay? And Steve says, yeah right, you know. So twenty years later this joke Steve Foster came to him and said, "how much farther are we gonna be going (laughs) 'cause he's not even slowing down, you know, I mean, the things that you've never heard of that he knows he's still reviewing things, you know, and still hasn't gotten to a lot of things, and you're like, you know, the Buddha's teachings are vast and very profound, but but if you study the (lam rim) well, there isn't one sentence that

you'll ever learn that you won't know exactly where it fits into your into your personal meditations. And that's a quality of the (lam rim). There's also this quality that that if if the if the relationship with the Lama is going well and if it's clicking, then the thing that you most need next and the thing that you were wondering about comes up in the next class or something, you know, I mean that's a sign that the relationship is going well and and, you know, exactly what you were curious about and exactly what you needed to know and exactly what you needed for your own practice came to you personally in the next moment, you know. It's just a quality...if the (lam rim) is flowing the right way, it happens like that. Okay. Number three. (Gyalwa gom pa de la nyepa dong) And and this this las third one, easily grasp the intent of the Buddhas, you know, as you go through Buddhist scripture and as you read different subjects and as as you get different teachings, if you've studied the (lam rim) well, if you have a good basis in (lam rim)...and (b:Lam Rim Du Dun) is enough, you know, this little (lam rim) is enough, you'll know exactly, it'll you'll you'll be able to figure out very very easily, why did the Buddha teach this particular teaching, you know, why did the Buddha get into this? You know, why does the Buddha go through twenty four kinds of syllogisms, you know. I mean, what's the point. And it's you'll you'll immediately be able to grasp why, you know. For example, the whole purpose of Buddhist logic is very interesting. It's to learn not to judge others. I mean, you have to study syllogisms for like six years to figure out that you don't know what other people are thinking when they act the way they do. You know, it takes six years of studying syllogisms to really grasp that you don't know why other people are doing what they do. They could have all sorts of sacred thoughts in their mind when they do things. How do you know? I mean, you you come to a place where you know by studying every kind of corner of logic that exists in the world that you can not logically know. You can't judge other people. Period. You know, I could prove it to you logically. You know, and and you can go through all this logic and suddenly you realize, oh, that's why the Buddha taught logic and the opening lines of these incredibly detailed intricate logic to books are (la da lan dau me imba shing gyi tsu su mei ja de nyem ba gye ta le). "Don't judge other people if you're not like me". This is the Buddha,

'cause you will screw up, you know (laughs) okay? He's very adamant, you know, and that's the opening of the logic text. In other words every little thing you study will...you'll understand easily where...why did the Buddha teach that. I mean, you'll grasp all these things. Very easily. It's a virtue of the (lam rim). If you really study (lam rim) well, any scripture you ever study will just blow your mind. And you'll just suddenly see, oh, yeah, that's the point, that's how it relates to my personal practice. And that's why the Buddha taught it, okay. Nothing will seem to you to be a waste of time, nothing will seem to you to be something that's not very important, okay. That's exactly what the Tibetan says. (nei chi chim pa yel sang we gang sung) okay, saves you from the great abyss. The great abyss is this. It's to say, "that particular Buddhist teaching is stupid", you know. "That particular part of the of Buddhism, of Buddhist scripture, I don't see any point to it, it, I don't see that it's true, I don't see that it has any relevance to modern man, you know, I I think it's kind of superfluous, I don't know why they're spending so much time on that right now, that doesn't strike me as very cool". We had a classic example. We sent Nagarjuna's (b: So le ka)...we translated it and we sent it to a very major publisher on the west coast, and we got this letter back saying, "could you spice up the emptiness and cut the morality part?" You know, (laughter) (laughs), so like we're supposed to improve on Nagarjuna, you know. We're supposed to edit Nagarjuna for modern times 'cause the morality part doesn't seem to be relevant, you know. That's the (ya sa chen mo), that's the great abyss. And if you study the (lam rim) nicely...like if we studied the Diamond Cutter sutra, the way we studied it, you you really really see why an ethical way of life is is is totally perfectly helpful and useful and necessary because what? Because things are empty, okay. I mean and and that's a great insight and that takes (lam rim). You have to know the (lam rim), you know. And and to think that you must act like a crazy bodhisattva, you must, your life must be totally irrationally giving and loving and taking care of other people first, because things are empty, you know, I mean, you have to appreciate every single corner of the Buddha's teachings. They all have a place, they're all helping each other, they're all supporting each other. Doesn't mean that you're supposed to

accept things that you can't accept right now. Absolutely not, we've been through that many times. As a Buddhist you're not allowed to accept something just because the guy got up there and said it. You are not allowed to do that. You're a lousy Buddhist if you do that. You're a stupid Buddhist. There's even a word for it (de be ge rang). You're a stupid Buddhist. If you just accept it because the person up there said it, because then if the guy gets up tomorrow and says the opposite you'll do that to. So it has to be reasonable to you, it has to be acceptable to you, it has to make sense to you. But the point here is, if it doesn't make sense right now, don't reject it. Just shelve it. There's a beautiful line from Maitreya where he says, "I know that you can't accept everything I say, so take the thing you can't buy yet and just leave it, but don't make the great mistake of rejecting it. Don't say "I don't like this part, or this part's not written so well, or this part's not so interesting, or this part seems irrelevant, or this part is okay for historical India, we don't need to act like that nowadays, he was just writing that for ancient India", you know. I mean things like that, ideas like that. If you if you hold that kind of viewpoint, you've fallen into the great abyss. If you study the (lam rim)...even just a three class (lam rim)...even the shortest (lam rim) ever written, you won't make that mistake. Sometimes they call it the "great mistake", you know. You won't reject off-hand, you know, something. You'll see that everything has it's own place in that beautiful...think of it as a big ball of light made up of pins of light, pinpoints of light and each one of them has it's place in the whole structure. You by the time you reach your end of Buddhist study, you'll start to see the whole set up like that as one huge network of light, and and every teaching you ever got...by the way, there's a place in the path of preparation, (jor lam) where you reach a kind of samadhi, where you remember every single teaching you ever had, as direct as day, you know, every every single teaching you've ever had, you know, comes back to you, and and takes it's place in this huge...it's called (chu ding nen ting ying dzin), you remember the the stream of your memory goes back infinitely far and you remember all the teachings you ever had and they all take their place in this huge beautiful ball of light, you know, and it'll it'll come like that, so the the (lam rim) gives you a taste of

that, and if you study the (lam rim) it keeps you out of making the mistake of rejecting some of those lights. Just because you can't see the connection yet. The vision of the connection is made by studying the (lam rim). And those are the qualities of the (lam rim). Those are the four qualities of the (lam rim). That's about it.

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ACI Course 9, Class 9: Description of the Lesser Scope

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Say {de ne} [repeat]. I'm not going to write the whole [B: Lam Rim] up here okay, but this one verse is so important that I'd like to spend some quality time on it. Alright. So say {de ne} [repeat] {di chiy} [repeat] {lektsok} [repeat] {jinyepay} [repeat] {tendrel} [repeat] {lekpar} [repeat] {drikpay} [repeat] {tsawa ni} [repeat] {lam tun} [repeat] {she nyen} [repeat].

Okay, {de ne} means, "and then"...meaning he's finished with the preliminary prostrations, he's gone through the whole lineage, he's acquainted you with lineage and now he's moving onto the actually body of the [B:Lam Rim]. There's a part of the [B:Lam Rim] that comes before all other parts of the [B:Lam Rim] and it's the first {Lam Rim}. Remember [B:Lam Rim] can mean the whole book and it can mean each step. So the first {lam rim}, the first step is called {she nyen densul}. Say {she nyen} [repeat] {densul} [repeat] {she nyen} [repeat] {densul} [repeat]. {she nyen} is a very hard word to translate in sanskrit it's {kalamitra?} and {she} is usually a word that's used for your realations, blood relations in tibetan. And {nyen} means like, well they both mean like blood relations or friend. So it's kind of strange word. {she nyen} is sort of like blood relation brother, friend, blood brother friend, you know, family or something like that. It's a very usual word. But it refers to your lama. Okay, it refers to your teacher {she nyen}. {den} is also a very difficult word to translate. It's the verb with what you do with medicine. Like they don't say take medicine in Tibetan, they say {den} medicine. And it means to use it or to rely on it or to take yourself to it or take it to you. All of those things, so it's very hard to translate {den}. {Sul} means how to do it. So, this whole section, the very first {lam rim} is how to take yourself to a lama, how to take a lama, how to use a lama, how to rely on a lama, how to serve a lama, you know...they're all expressed in one word. And there's no good word in English that I know of. It's how to relate to your lama okay. How to relate to your lama. And this is the all important first part of the {lam rim}. If you never got any further it would probably be enough. And even up to the highest teachings; in the highest teachings it is the essence of the highest teachings, in the secret teachings. So you know, if you never got past this verse and if you practiced it well, it would be more than enough. So, very

hard to explain it in a really...it's hard to express it, but we'll try. So {de ne} means, "and then", by the way if anyone's transcribed Rinpoche's tapes he's always saying {de ne} which means, "and then". Which like in english it's like "well ah" it's like going onto your next subject. So {de ne} means," and then". This is Tsongkapa right, it's five hundred years ago. {Di} means," this", and meaning, "this life". And {chiy} means later life. So {di chiy} means what? This life and your later life. Meaning all of your lives. All your lives to come. How many to come? It's hard to tell, I mean...we talked about it in California. You can tell at a certain point, what point? When you've seen emptiness directly you can, actually at that point you see how many lives you have to go. Seven lives is very typical at that point. It takes an infinite number of lives to reach that point. You don't even know that there exist future lives until you reach that point. So it's kind of a difficult thing to talk about because you don't believe it until you've reached that point. When you reach that point, you see how many you have to go. Then you really believe in a future life, because you saw them. And then you know Buddhism is correct, by the way. Which is actually...you don't know until you see them. Okay, kind of difficult. [laughs] {Di chiy} means, this life and future lives. {Letsok} means, "all the good things". Okay. {Letsok} means, all the good things. {Letsok}. {Jinepay} means," however many happen to you". {Jinepay} means whatever happened to you...how many ever happened to you. So this first line says, and then for however many good things are going to happen to you in this life or your future lives {tendrel}. What's {tendrel} mean? {Tendrel shuwa} it means, dependent origination but not in this verse. In one time out of a thousand this word as a completely different meaning. And I've heard great...I mean it was my great pleasure of being jealous of those who were better than me to hear all these great translators screw it up when they were translating for the Dalai Lama. {Tendrel} means...in this case it means to get off to a good start or an auspicious relationship. Like it's very difficult to explain but for example {tendrel} is the feeling of a tibetan new year {Losar} The first day of the year is {tendrel}. You have to have a good day of the year, then the whole year's going to go well. So that's why tibetans are so intense on {losar}, on the new year. It's very important that the new year go smoothly. Today's new year's right? It has to go very very smoothly. That's {tendrel} that's a good {tendrel}. And there's a famous...I think it was Marpa. Who was Marpa's student? Milerepa came to Marpa? Marpa came to Tilopa?

[student: [unclear]]

Okay, anyway, one of those guys went to his teacher and as a beginning act of the relationship offered him a pot. And it was empty and they say that just because of that one...it's considered very inauspicious in Asia that you offer someone an empty vessel. Like when you borrow a plate from somebody or a

cooking pan, in Asia after you wash it and give it back you have to put a little piece of candy or something. It's considered very inauspicious to give something back. So he offered Marpa an empty pot and then there was a big {tendrel tupa} means the {tendrel} was messed up. And it didn't work out right. It's almost like geomancy with spaces in Hong Kong you know? And it has to be just right. Everything has to be just right. And he messed up his {tendrel}. And then one of the lamas said "fill it up beer and give it back to him and said drink it." He didn't have enough faith. He hesitated but then he decided...you know because you're not supposed to drink a single drop of alcohol but then he, then he decided to take it and the {tendrel} was fixed or something like that. Anyway, {tendrel}'s very important like that. So {tendrel} means, auspicious, I don't know what you call it, vibrations or something okay. The right, the right, I don't know. What do we call it? [students: unclear] Vibes; the right vibes, okay. {Tendrel}. {Lekpar driipay} means, to- {driipay} means, to get it right ;{lekpar} means exactly right. So,{Lekpar driipay} means just right. {Digadupay?} means what? In Tibetan, {diga} means what? It's a Tibetan word for okay. And they use it as often as we use okay. {dik} {dik} {diga} okay. {dik} means everything's alright, everything's just right. So, what it means is, the pivot point, you know, the very most important moment of your whole life swings on whether or not this life is going to go well and whether or not all your future lives are going to go well. All of them turn on this one very very crucial pivot point of , and that's what {tsawa} means. {tsawaa} means generally, "root", but here it means like, there's one...this verse is very difficult. There's one pivotal moment and one pivotal part of your whole life which if you get it right, if it goes just right, if all the vibes go just right, everything in your future lives and this life will go absolutely perfect. And if you mess that up, just the list bit, if you, if you have a little bit of a problem there, then it'll enlarge and something will go wrong. I don't know how to say it. It's like atomic energy point where, you know, if everything goes right you get a nice, you know, nuclear power plant and if the slightest thing goes wrong it blows up the country, you know. It's like fission or something. I heard that fission, if they don't get it quite right...it's going to cause every atom to split, meaning the air would turn into, oxygen would turn into nuclear fire. And they're very concerned about it. They're doing it at Princeton, they're holding this thing up with a magnet because they're afraid if it touches the earth it will go down to the earth. And they're, and they're trying to keep it up in the air with a magnet and trying to make sure it can't get any oxygen to it 'cos it'll, it could ignite the atmosphere. And it's like that. It's like if you get it just right, it's a, it's a source of limitless power and if you screw it up a bit, it's source of limitless destruction, okay. And what is the {lam tun she nyen}? {Lam} means, path. {Tun} means, who shows you. And {she nyen} is that word for

your lama, your spiritual friend, spiritual guide. They call "spiritual friend". Spiritual friend sounds a little wimpy to me. This is like blood brother or something. The word in Tibetan is more like, you know, it's family, it's blood family. It's some kind of a relationship that you have with that lama which is beyond blood, it's deeper than blood, you know. And I don't know how to express that either. So pretty much this verse, is untranslatable, okay. We can just forget it...no. But the point is that the whole crux of whether this life and your future lives go well, infinitely well or whether they are a total disaster, all swings on your relationship with your lama. And it's that much at stake you know. There's that much at stake in the equation. Either everything's going to be perfect or, or, or it's going to be something...you're going to be stuck in samsara for a long time. So it's a very very crucial point. {tsawa} means very crucial. And that's, that's your relationship with your lama and that's the first step of the {lam rim}, okay. And it gets even more intense as you get up higher in the school and in the teachings. When you get to the secret teachings, it's, it's the whole show, is just how you relate to your lama. Since it's so important I'm going to spend a little time on it. And I think the most important thing at the beginning is to list the qualities that that person should have. In other words, you have to, you can't really practice Buddhism, you can't ever really get any deep results from Buddhism and you'll never get what you dream of, unless you find this person. I mean you have to dedicate your life to finding this person. You have to find your {she nyen}, you know. You have to find your lama. You will have other people in your life who teach you things, you know, who teach you scripture or who teach you meditations, or who give you initiations or even things like that but there will be in your life a {she nyen}. You will find a {she nyen}. And it's your most important job is to find the {she nyen}. And I'm going to list the qualities, the classical qualities of a {she nyen}, just so you know what to look for but, but your heart will tell you also. I mean you...it's almost like when you find them, you know it. I'll list the qualities but you'll know and don't...I don't know what to say, we'll talk more about it, but when you find them...you'll know it's right and once you know then you have to throw yourself into it and just close your eyes and give yourself to that relationship. That's why you have to be very careful about who it is. So you have to, you have to know what to look for. But in a sense when you find them, you'll know anyway and then you have to really give yourself to them, your whole life, you know. People say, you know, "should I give a hundred dollars to this and that?" and it's just...Rinpoche and I were talking about people, you know, who charge for classes and stuff like that. I mean it's not a question. I mean money is not enough for these classes, you know. What you give to your {she nyen} is your life, you know. If the {she nyen} says jump out a window, you jump, you know.

If the {she nyen} needs ten thousand dollars, you give. I mean from the first moment when you meet your {she nyen} there's no sense of you owning anything. You give everything. So it's kinda crazy to say, okay, you have to pay thirty-three dollars for class, you know. I mean, you give your whole life to your {she nyen} and that's how you get your life back, you know. They don't need anything. They don't need anything. They don't need your money. They don't need, they've achieved their goals. If they're a real {she nyen} they, they don't need...they only thing they want out of you is one thing which is what? They want you to be happy, you know. They want you to get out of samsara and they want you to reach enlightenment. That's the only payment they want. I mean you do the rest for your benefit but they, they actually, what are you going to give to a person who sees their future, who knows their own enlightenment, you know, who knows, who lives among angels all day? What, what can you give them, you know? What are you going to offer them? What do they need from you, you know? You can't. There's nothing to give. All they want from you is that you stop being in samsara, you know. So the idea, you know, how much should we charge for class is kinda funny. It's priceless. Totally priceless. And when you meet this {she nyen} you give everything. Everything doesn't mean your bank account. Everything means your whole life and your whole practice, your whole attention for what he needs, and your, the, your Buddhist practice. You offer that and that's what they really want. So we'll try to, we'll put up ten qualities of a good {She nyen}. Yeah?

[student: Is there any discussion of what to do when your {she nyen} dies?]

We'll talk about that, okay.

[student:...on {tsawa}....unclear]

Yeah, {tsawa} means, "root". But here it means like, it's the switch, you know. Like, if your switch goes right, the, you get an endless source of energy, which is what fission promises. It, And if you screw it, oh, fusion sorry. And if you mess it up, it'll blow up the atmosphere and everybody will die. I mean it's this kind of a crucial point. The rest of the {lam rim}, you know, we can cover in a class and a half. We will. But the {she nyen} part is totally crucial. The whole thing turns on this {she nyen}. The whole world for you, your whole future, revolves around this one tiny point which is your relationship with your lama. Finding that {she nyen} and then and then giving yourself...devoting...I don't know how to say it, you know, reaching some kind of a communion with that {she nyen}. Yeah?

[student: unclear]

In Russian it's, {seya?} at the end of a verb and it makes it reflexive and it's used with washing yourself and drinking [unclear]. And in Tibetan they, they use the word for receiving which is {chun?}.

[student: unclear]

No. No. It's not used with this verb. Alright, this list comes from the [B: Sutralamkara, Mahayana Sutralamkara]. Which was written by who? By whom, sorry? Dictated, good. Who said that? [laughs] Dictated by Maitreya to Asanga, okay, 350 A.D. Spoken by Maitreya, okay, who is what? A bodhisattva? [laughs] There's a big debate about it. Anyway, future Buddha is I guess, good enough. I'm going to give you ten qualities that are listed there that you should look for in a {she nyen} okay. And you have to look. That's what I'm trying to say, you know. I mean, that's your main activity in life at this point, is to find this holy being, you know. You've gotta go find this {she nyen}. If you don't find the {she nyen} you're a dead duck, you know. You have to go find the {she nyen}. That's the point of this class, okay. But we'll, we'll start through the qualities to look for but it's not like there's going to be a big debate when you find them, okay. Say {dulwa}[repeat]. {dulwa} [repeat]. This is the past tense of a noun or a verb that you know very well, which is {dulwa}, which means what? {Ten} which is the Tibetan word for? [students: unclear] Vinaya. Vinaya, okay? {Dulwa}. This the past tense so this means vinaya-sised. Okay? {Dulwa}, someone whose been vinaya-sised. Which means what? I mean, they have got the result of keeping up an ethical way of life. You can say, in English, "controlled". Controlled. And it's a code-word for someone who is leading a very good ethical life. They are keeping their three sets of vows. Okay? First thing to look for. First thing to check. What are the three sets of vows? [students: unclear] Yeah. First is Pratimoksha which was the subject of our, first half of our class. Okay? At the most basic those ten non-virtues. They are, they are avoiding the ten non-virtues very well. Then if they got a little bit higher they took layman's vows. If they got a little bit higher they took novice vows. If they got a little bit higher, intermediate nun vows, a little bit higher they took full ordination vows. But whatever they have, whether it's vows, or whether they are laymen who hasn't taken any vows and who are just keeping the ten, keeping out of the ten non-virtues, they must be doing a very pure job about it. Okay? First kind of vows, Bodhisattva vows. And then, you know, those are the sixty-four vows and they must be keeping them very, very pure. And that's a different, that smells and looks a lot different than the Pratimoksha vows, okay? It's a different angle. And you have to get used to that. I mean, if you're looking for a Pratimoksha morality person that's one thing. Then, Bodhisattva is like, you know, throwing flowers and champagne for people, you know. [laughs] And then you get up to secret. And that's secret. [laughs] [laughter] But once you learn those vows, I mean, they, if you know what I'm talking about, they must be avoiding to the ultimate extent the great enemy of the secret teachings. The single thought which is the enemy of all the secret

teachings. If you took an initiation you know what I'm talking about, hopefully. They must be a master of overcoming that, that enemy. And you can smell that once you know what it is, you know. You can see it, you can smell it and there's three different sets. They're all like very fine, they call it the scent of mortality, in Tibetan. The perfume of morality. They are keeping their Pratimoksha vows and you can sense it. They are keeping their Bodhisattva vows and you can feel it. And they're keeping their secret vows and, and you, and you get this, you get this incredible joy and electricity from them 'cos they're, they're keeping them. And you can feel it. You know? Yeah?

[student: How do you know [unclear]]

Yeah.

[student: How do you know if they're keeping their [unclear]]

Right. I think in general most people guess what the major vows are. You, I cannot go into the finer points in detail. And that, I can't answer that. I mean, you can't. Somebody, you know, many people ask me at this point, how do you really know if someone's keeping their vows and, etcetera, etcetera. I mean, you just, to the, you have to satisfy one person, which is yourself. [laughs] I mean, you have to, to the best of your ability, and to the best of your knowledge, you have to check if they are leading an ethical way of life or not. And if they are not, stay away from them. They can't help you. They will never make you happy. Just stay away, you know. Don't, don't get into it. They can have a lot of other good qualities, but if they don't have this first one, it'll never, ultimately, work out, you know. So watch out for that. Yeah?

[student: [unclear] have to be a [unclear]]

Not at all. Lama could be male, female, could be ten years old, could be a hundred years old, could be ordained, could be not be ordained, could be Buddhist, could be, I mean, a real Tantric master could pretty much look like anything. And you don't know. So keep your eyes out. [laughs] Okay? Alright. But they have to have these ten qualities, okay. It's a very tricky subject as you well know. So if you know, {dulwa} refers to their practise of the first of the three trainings, which is ethical way of life, morality. But don't think of morality just in terms of Billy Graham, you know. It's much broader. It's Bodhisattva morality which has a whole different flavor. And then secret morality which has an, another incredible flavor, okay.

Say, {shiwa} [repeat] {shiwa} [repeat]; "shanti", what's it mean? Peace, okay. {shiwa} means, peace. {shiwa} means, die – obviously related, okay. [laughs] {shiwa} means, peace, okay. {shi wa} means, peace. This refers to the second of the three trainings which is the ability to concentrate deeply, okay. They must be a master of concentration and meditation. By the way, the thing about

knowing the monk's vows or not, I think you could go to another monk that you trust. And I think that's what, for example, Atisha did, you know, when he checked out Dipamkara, Serlingpa in Indonesia. You know, it took twelve months to get there and then checked him out. He was like a private eye. He was like a big detective and he, he went out and got the poop on this guy, you know, and you should do that. You shouldn't be satisfied, you know. I see people, I was in a centre, which I won't name, recently and there was a flyer being circulated: tantric initiation, no preparation necessary [laughter] and from so-and-so who's, who's a great master, teacher of this such-and-such illustrious person, knew so-and-so. And, and they had a picture. And that was it. And, and you're supposed to go and take this ultimate commitment from this person on the basis of this, you know, fluorescent flyer, you know. And it's not enough. You need to go check that person out, you know. That, that particular relationship requires years of, of intimacy with that person's characteristics before you get into that. Say {nyer shiwa} [repeat] {nyer shiwa} [repeat]. The {nyer} is like an emphasiser, in Sanskrit, 'upa' and it just means, "really peaceful", okay, [laughs] okay, ultra-peaceful, max, mega-peaceful. In Wendy's they say, "biggie peaceful", [laughter]. And it means, it refers to this person must have mastered the third training which is what?

[student: unclear]

Training of wisdom, okay. This does not, at this point, refer to the direct perception of emptiness, okay. It's referring, you can have the training of wisdom before you enter the first path. Which means, you can, you can be practising the training of wisdom before you even enter the first Buddhist path. So, the training of wisdom is, can be a much more basic, general understanding of something than, what comes later, when you perceive emptiness directly. So this is much more broad and much more general, okay. It's like a, a general understanding of wisdom.

Yeah?

[student: unclear]

Yeah. Okay. [laughs] People yawn when I teach [laughs] and then I always calling on them, you know? [laughs] Okay. Say {Yunten} [repeat], {Hlakpa} [repeat]. {Yunten} [repeat], {Hlakpa} [repeat]. {yunten} refers to spiritual qualities like compassion, or ability to perceive emptiness, and things like that. Okay? {Hlakpa} means excessive. And it means that the, the person whose your {she nyen} should have spiritual qualities which very far exceed the ones that you have. They have to be way ahead of you. They have to have qualities that, that you would like to gain. They, they have to have already been over that territory that you want to pass over.

Say, {tsunche} [repeat] {tsunche} [repeat]; {tsun} means, "effort", {che} means,

“has”, “possesses”. So the {she nyen} that you’re looking for should have, possess effort, okay.

Here, effort means they are obviously dedicating their life to reaching the two goals. Which is what? It’s, it’s the ultimate benefit for themselves and the ultimate benefit for others. This is called, the two goals, okay. They must be dedicating their whole life to these two goals: reaching an ultimate enlightenment whereby they can help both themselves and others to the ultimate point, okay. They must be living for that, obviously living for that. That’s what effort means here. Rinpoche always says, it doesn’t mean that neighbour of ours who spends all night under his car fooling around with carburettor. That’s not effort. Effort means they’re obviously working, they’re obviously devoting their life to that goal, okay.

Say, {lung gi} [repeat] {chuk} [repeat] {lung gi} [repeat] {chuk} [repeat]; {lung} means, scripture; {chuk} means, it probably comes from the ancient word for ‘cow’ but it means ‘rich’. In the old days, when you had a lot of cows, you, you had bucks, you know [laughs] okay. I remember this aristocrat that I, who taught me to speak Tibetan, and he said, you know, in Tibet I had nine hundred and forty-three sheep [laughs], you know. [laughter] And I’m, like, okay. [laughs] [laughter] So {lung gi chuk} means, you know, cow-rich in scripture, very rich in scripture, wealthy in scripture, scriptural knowledge. And this means that the {she nyen} must have a mastery of the three collections of scripture, which are? Vinaya. The three baskets. Vinaya, Abhidharma, Sutra. Okay. Meaning, the scriptures which relate to living an ethical life, learning to concentrate, and learning wisdom, okay. They must have a broad knowledge of those three baskets.

Say, {de-nyi} [repeat] {rabtok} [repeat] {de-nyi} [repeat] {rabtok} [repeat]; {de-nyi} means, “suchness”, meaning emptiness; {rabtok} means they must have a , a great realisation of emptiness- infinitely preferable if they have seen emptiness directly. How do you know? [laughs]

[students: unclear] Yeah, generally you’re not allowed [laughter], generally, there’s a part of the experience of seeing emptiness directly is that you’ll never state, in outright terms, that you have seen emptiness directly. It’s part of the experience and, and, and, and the scriptures address this question: how do you know that a person knows emptiness if you’re so far away from knowing anything about it yourself? How can you judge whether they’ve seen it? I think, as the person describes emptiness, you have to see, there’s these tests of a person’s learning, you know. Do they contradict themselves internally? Do they contradict other sources of scripture and Buddhist knowledge that you’re aware of? Do they contradict your direct knowledge and your direct experience, you know? Are they internally consistent? Are they consistent with Buddhist

teaching, totally consistent? And are they, and is what they teach, totally consistent with everything you have already experienced? And that's about all you can do, you know. It's this consistency question. Also, there's a test of are they, are they devoting themselves to knowledge which is meaningful? In other words, are they in the right ballpark, you know? Are they playing the right game, you know? Do they spend their time struggling with spiritual things or are they out doing something else, you know? That's, that's a general test, you know. Especially, do they understand suffering? Can they describe suffering well? And are they working to destroy the actual suffering of, of, of living beings which is their whole existence, you know? Do they appreciate that and do they address that and do they, do they spend their life addressing that, you know? That's a, one of the classic tests. And that's about all. I, I would say, personally, about the subject of emptiness, that if a person is incapable of describing the relationship between emptiness and karma or emptiness and leading an ethical life, then they probably don't know very much about emptiness at all. And, and, and of course, the corollary of that is, if they somehow think that emptiness means that nothing matters or that emptiness means that you can ignore ethics then, then I would stay away from them like poison, you know, 'cos that is an ultimate sign of ignorance about emptiness. The more a person has, is intimate with emptiness, the more they should be talking about ethics and, and compassion because one must go along with the other and if they don't grasp that then they don't know anything about emptiness and I would avoid that person. If they're not talking about compassion and living a good life in the same lecture where they're talking about emptiness I'd say it's suspicious. Okay. Say {make den} [repeat], {make den} [repeat]; {ma} means, "to profess" or "to teach". It's the 'bashika' in Vabashika, for example. {ke} means, a master, okay, "master"; and {den} means, "possesses". So, possesses the mastery of teaching. A master teacher. The person is a master teacher. The commentary that I am using, which I believe is Dharmbadhra, but I always get confused about these things. [laughs] Commentary number S-6237. We have like hundreds of, we have thousands of commentaries now on the computer, [unclear] it's hard to figure out which one is which, you know. Anyway, {make den} means, two, two points: one is that the person has an ability to grasp the capacity of the student. In other words, they are sensitive to the capacity of the student. The ones who can handle it they feed them more. And the ones who can't they're aware of it and they feed them less. Like that. They regulate the heaviness of the teaching to the person. Okay. The second quality that is mentioned in the commentary is they go at the right speed for the particular student. They, if the student needs to be taken along slowly they don't exceed the proper speed limit with that student, which would ruin a student. Okay.

[student: So that would imply a one-to-one relationship, wouldn't it?]
I, pretty much if, if, yeah, pretty much really need it. And, you know, by the end of this I'm gonna say what Tsongkapa says, which is, you know, these people are extremely rare. We'll talk about that.
Say, [tseway] [repeat], [daknyi] [repeat] [tseway] [repeat], [daknyi] [repeat]; {tsewa} means, "love", love. And {daknyi} is a difficult word. 'atma' in Mahatma and it means, you know, it's the other part of the 'maha'. [student: soul.]

It means soul, but in Tibetan it means, 'the embodiment of love'; the very image of love. This refers to the person's motivation for teaching you. Okay? It refers to why, why do they want to be a teacher? Okay. And there's four possibilities. Alright? [laughs] First one is they want to get some material gain out of you; they're hoping that you will give them money or property or, or, or anything else that they want, okay. That's the first possible motivation. Obviously a bad one. Second possibility is they have an attachment to being respected or looked up to by other people and that's why they're teaching. They want other people to say. oh, wow, okay. [laughs] Third possibility, they hope to get famous, which is sort of connected to number two, right? They, they hope that many people hear about how great they are and stuff like that. Motivation number four is the only reason they are teaching is because they care about you. They really care about you. And, and they are really concerned about you. They're really concerned that you succeed spiritually. And, and, that, they re, they're whole reason for teaching is, is that you don't waste your life and that you reach the highest goals of Buddhism as smoothly and efficiently as possible in this life, okay. And that's, that's the (tseway daknyi). So (tseway daknyi) refers to number four, motivation number four. The reason they're teaching you is only that they are concerned that you stop suffering.

Say, {kyowa} [repeat], {pang} [repeat], {kyowa Pang} [repeat]; {kyowa} means, distaste for something. Sounds related to the word {kupa} which means, 'vomit'. [laughs] [laughter] Sorry. Ah, {pang} means, gave it up, okay, "gave up distaste", which means, they never get tired of teaching you. And they don't care how much they have to repeat something. And they don't, I mean they don't get discouraged. That's what {kyowa pang} means. They, they, they keep teaching no matter what happens, and no matter how you react, and no matter what goes on, and they, they don't get discouraged. They don't get discouraged with you personally, and they don't get discouraged with situations, or things like that. They, they are teaching for a specific reason, which is that they love you, and, and they're like a mother. You know, somebody who really loves someone can really ignore a lot. [laughs] Rinpoche's always quoting this channel nine broadcast, news broadcast where the, the kid has just shot four people on

the subway and, and they interview the mother, cause he's in jail and they can't, you know, and they say, what about your kid Johnny, you know? And she says, he couldn't do it, you know, he's perfect. He's wonderful. He's so sweet, you know. And then you see Johnny on TV and, you know, he's like, you know [laughter] [laughs], he's got [unclear] But it's this love blinds the, the person, I mean the mother, mother never, a real, you know, classic mother never, never gives up on their, on their child. And just, the, the love just blinds them to everything. I mean, you know, your mother wouldn't resign being your mother because you were bad, or something like that. You know, it's... I mean, a real classic mother would not tender her resignation as your mother because you, you didn't get it fast enough, or, or you were bad to her, or something like that. I mean Lama really, really loves you and all they want is your happiness. And they will put up with any kind of bad things that you do. And, and they do, okay. And that's, those are the ten qualities of a Lama. Somebody asked about what if their {she nyen} had passed into nirvana? That's what you said, right? [laughter] The, the karma to keep, we talked about it many times but I'll repeat it. You know, sixty-four karmas [snaps fingers] and they, and they, and they pass on but who, what happened? Did they pass on independently? Did they pass on self-existently? I'm setting you up, okay. What's the answer? [student: no] No. I mean, if they die, quote "die", you know, you know they got some disease, some germ came into them and attacked their liver and they died, you know. That would be self-existent. What really happens is that your karma wears out. And, and they dependently-originatingly pass out of your life because you don't have the karma anymore to maintain that vision. And, and you, you don't have the goodness anymore to be around them. Which brings me to the, someone once asked me, well how do I regenerate, what's that? How do I regenerate this karma, you know? How can I be around my {she nyen} and have some kind of confidence that I'm not wearing out this karma? Is there any way to achieve fusion? Less energy in, more energy out. And that is, you know, a very worthy goal, and a, and that is probably one of the most important questions of Buddhism. And it's to really appreciate that {she nyen} for what they are. According to every Buddhist scripture that {she nyen}, who's in your life as a normal person is, for you, infinitely more valuable than all the Buddhas in the universe, you know. Whatever they are, good or bad, bla, bla, bla, they are your one and only connection to all the Buddhas of the universe. They, even just logically, are representing millions of enlightened beings for you, because they're that only window to, to that realm is that person. So, so you have to recognize who they are. You know, treat your Lama as a normal guy, for a day, and you'll use up tremendous amount of karma and it won't be replaced. Appreciate who they

are, you know, just reflect on how blessed you are that this being is, is alive in your life and, and reflect on how they, for you, they, they are meeting an enlightened being, then you will regenerate the karma. That regenerates the karma, that, that emotion that you feel towards them. And it's logical, it's, it's based on logic. There's all these logic texts that prove your Lama is a Tantric deity, you know. I don't get into it. I'm not, I'm not gonna get into it.

But they're based on, that you, just to know them is almost enough to keep them. How's that? [laughs] Just to know who they really is almost enough to keep them. Yeah?

[student: Is there any indication on how many students it will not, would have because he's, he will be fully dedicated to the student so, it could, I cannot take care of one hundreds]

[laughs] It's, it gets into the question of the Lama passing away. If they are a real Lama, I mean, a, qualification number eleven, I guess. It's absolutely no problem for a being like this to appear in another body for you, you know. It's absolutely no problem for them to be in New Jersey, and to be in New York, and to be out on the West Coast at the same moment. Absolutely no problem. You just have to find them, okay. Don't, I mean, it's almost an act of ah, sacrilege, if you don't believe they can, they can do that, you know. Of course they can do that, you know. They are not a normal being, you know. Of course they can be three different people at once. No problem, you know. Don't, don't, doubt it. If you doubt it you will screw up that

{tendrel}. And you will blow up the atmosphere. [laughs] Don't doubt it at all. Maybe it takes time to find them, you know. Maybe it takes a lot of virtue to find them. And it will take a lot of virtue. But much of the virtue comes from believing that. And if you doubt it you will burn off a lot of virtue. So don't doubt it. And it really is true. They are extremely capable of being a young lady in New York, an old man in New Jersey, and somebody else on the West Coast. No problem. What, why not? You know? What, what-a you think? What did you think, you know? You want to find a Lama hopefully who's enlightened and, well you think that's a problem for them? Or, or you don't know what a Buddha is? You don't know the function of a Buddha? Was, you know, the Buddha, like, stuck in a body with a bump on his head, and ears, and can only walk around in Bodhygaya, you know? [laughs] I mean, are they restricted to that, you know? What, it wouldn't be much of an enlightenment if that's all it was, you know. So don't doubt it. I mean seriously don't doubt it. Find them. When the virtue is enough, when your goodness is enough, you will find them. And much of the goodness, especially in the secret teachings, coming, comes from simply believing, or understanding, how that's true. It's all empty, you know. Every being you meet is empty. What you see is what, up to? [students:

unclear] Your projections. They are determined by? [student: Karma.]
Your good or bad deeds. They have no reality on their own. Don't, don't diss Nagarjuna, you know. You tell, you know, you, you can't say, logically understanding emptiness, that any particular being could not be your Lama, you know. You're not being logical. You're saying they're not empty. Yeah?

[student:[unclear]]

I'd say, I'd say it's a sign of very, very good practice.

[student: What's the question, sorry?]

[laughs] He, if things start happening to you that are very special, and more and more objects in your life seem special, he said is that being close to nirvana? I said, well being close to nirvana means that specifically that object called your own mind starts to get special. You know, because nirvana is the absence of mental afflictions. So if find your mind getting sweeter and sweeter and more and more moments of, of mind without mental afflictions, then, yeah. You're projecting a mind without mental afflictions because of your past good deeds. That's getting closer to nirvana. If you, if your practice is going very, very sweet, and, you know, special things are happening to you, otherwise- which they are supposed to- I would say the opposite. I'd say if they're not then you're screwing up your practice. Something's wrong with your practice. And I like to say that in most cases it's your praktimoshā, you know. It's, it's as basic as that. It's not your tantric initiation short- fall, or your emptiness deficit, or your [laughter] [laughs], you know, it's normally that you engage in idle talk too much, which is a great destroyer of virtue, you know, or something like that. Idle thought, or idle magazine reading, or something like that. I'm not saying evil, I'm just saying they don't, they, they, they're obstacles from the realm of bliss, you know. So, you know, Sakya Pandita said don't get attached to little pleasures like the Sunday Times, you know, go for the Big Time. [laughs] You know, if, if you have to get at the Sunday Times to get the Big Time, then, then what's the comparison, you know? Go for it. {Dewa}, Sakya Pandita. One more question then we'll take a break.

[Fran Dayan: unclear]

It's a bad, self-existent question. [laughter] Why, why did I say that? [student: unclear]

She said, would the Lama stay in your life if you knew you really wanted him to stay, or her to stay? Yeah?

[Fran Dayan: unclear. If a Lama didn't know that, that he was passed on, or if you neglected to tell him that they loved him, when he passed on. So that's the basic points I'm making.]

You guys tell me. Is that why the Lama passed on? It is in a way because, but not in a way. In one way it is, in one way it's not. If you have the devotion to

ask, that devotion would keep the Lama there. The karma would, would, the karma of asking would keep the Lama. It's considered, I forget who it was, [unclear] you know, made the ultimate mistake, did not ask the Buddha to stay. There was, one of his disciples, it's, it's listed in the, yeah?, [unclear]. It's listed in, like, the five great mistakes of all time. And ah, [laughs] [laughter] and it was like, he hesitated. But, by the way, one thing about {she nyens}, don't hesitate. Just don't hesitate. Just go for it, you know. When it, when you find this just do not hesitate. The time is very, very short. There's no time. And if you're on the verge of a {she nyen} just go for it. I mean that's one of the most precious things I can teach you, is that, you know, when you're on the verge of, of establishing this link with this being, you know a lot-a people are, like, they hold back a little bit or they, they just hesitate and the hesitation kills them, yo know. When you're close to that connection just close your eyes and jump, you know, 'cos, 'cos that's the most valuable thing you can get, you know. Cool.

[student: and what does 'go for it' mean?]

It means give your whole devotion to that being and, and establish the connection and, and hang onto that connection, you know, and don't,... Generally, we are very logical: my classes and, and my way of teaching and my training is called {tsennyipa} which means, logician, you know. But when you get to {she nyen} it's total devotion, you know, and let them know and, you know, let them know and beg them for that relationship. And keep it very precious and cherish it in your heart, okay. You know it's, like, just do it, you know, just open up and embrace the {she nyen} and give your whole life to that {she nyen}. And you will never never ever ever regret it. There's no more smart thing to do. It shows you are an Einstein of spiritual things. You know. [laughs] And, and nothing but good things will come. And, I'm saying, when you hesitate or you hold back a little bit or, you know, you're not quite., you knowthat's okay, but go find the {she nyen}, you know, but don't hesitate in that search. Devote your life to finding the {she nyen} and do it as quickly as you can. When you get close, then totally devote yourself to that {she nyen}.

[student; And so why did it take Atisha so long?]

He checked out the {she nyen} because you have to make sure they have these qualities. And it's hard to know because you don't have them yet yourself and you're going to the {she nyen} to get them so you don't really recognize them yet. And that's the catch twenty-two. But here you have some general advice. More specifically, in our present condition, we can not recognize a {she nyen} for what they are, and, and we can't relate to the {she nyen} in a, in a pure way after we ... I mean, if we think someone's a {she nyen}, we don't even know how to embrace them in the right way. We hesitate, we do the wrong things, we, we don't, we know, we say please be my teacher and the next day we do the

opposite of what they told us to do. And I can tell you. I'm an expert in it. [laughs] You know? I mean, we are, we're like children. And it's, it's hard to recognize a {she nyen}, and then it's hard to have the right relationship with that {she nyen}. But this is a guideline. But be aware that your own mental afflictions will, will get in the way sometimes. I mean your own, it's, it's a very famous thing that within, within a certain amount of time of knowing anyone, you start to see faults in them. And they're largely your own faults. It's just a very famous thing about psychological projection in Buddhism that, they say if they put you in a room with ten people within two weeks you'll like three of them, you'll hate three of them, and four of them you won't care about them. And, and it doesn't matter which ten people you go in the room with. Because it's not the people, you know. So there's this, it's a very difficult. I mean, what I'm saying is, there are such {she nyens}, they are sitting there waiting, and it's, it's on the homework, okay, and I'll, it's, why does the {she}, if the {she nyen} has these qualities why, why is the {she nyen}, and if the {she nyen} is aware of having those qualities, why? Where's it coming from?

[student: If the {she nyen} is aware?]

The {she nyen} has these ten qualities. And they're aware of the, having those ten qualities. Where's that coming from?

[student: From your perception of...]

Whose perception?

[student: Your own perception.]

Yeah, from the {she nyen's} own perception. You know, they look down and see a person who is keeping all three trainings, who's doing all those ten things right. They can look down and see that on an otherwise empty screen, okay. They are forced by their past good deeds to see a, a being who is keeping perfectly all ten of those things. What about the student?

[student: It depends on their karma]

No, I mean, if the student focuses on the same being, what does the student see? It actually depends on the student's own karma, you know. You could see seven of them or six of them or four of them or none of them or maybe ten of them or maybe ten of them not so strong or something like that. I mean, and if the {she nyen} passes, seems to pass away, that's whose karma? That's your problem, you know, if you think they saw themselves die. If they're enlightened they didn't see anything like that, you know. That's the emptiness of the student relation, teacher relation. That's a little deep. But the bottom line is this, I like to think of it, have you seen those Flemish paintings where they lay on varnish, you know. Like, here's this angel in the Bruges museum, you know [laughs] okay [laughter] maybe not just like that [laughter] [laughs] I'm spitting on those Flemish masters. And they put on all of these layers of lacquer. You know,

layer after layer after layer and they lay paint in between the lacquer at different levels and so it gives this, I mean after four hundred years or five hundred years there's still this incredible intensity to the colors and, and, and three dimensionality to the colors. Extraordinary. But I would like to think of a {she nyen} like that, you know, what level your eyes are picking up on. There are all of those levels there. It's not contradictory to say that one person can be a rascal and a half- rascal and a quarter- rascal and a not rascal at all and then a holy being and an angel at different levels of the varnish. And what level your eye catches on depends totally on your own projections. They are all of the above, simulatenously. It's not contradictory to say they are all of the above. Which perception is correct?

[student: All of them.]

All of them are {tsema}. All of them are pramana, okay. They are all based on, they're all valid in that you are really seeing what you're able to see. And that's pramana; that's {tsema}, that's a valid perception. Okay. Which one would you rather have? [laughs] We'd rather live around enlightened beings, okay? And if you want to look at that level of the varnish, you know, if you want your eye to stop at that level, you have to do one thing...[student: [unclear]]

Good deeds, I mean, and ultimately good deeds. And what is the highest good deed?

[student: [unclear]]

It's {she nyen ten tsul}. I'm telling you that, okay. It's very simple. I don't say it in front of a lot of people. The highest good deed you can do is to find that {she nyen} and give yourself to that {she nyen}. And don't hesitate, you know. Go for it.

[student: ultimately.]

Huh? [student: ultimately if your relationship with that {she nyen} is evil, that {she nyen} [unclear]]

No, couldn't, wouldn't [student: [unclear] Ultimately [unclear]]

No they wouldn't, why would they want to leave you? I mean, why would they do that? It would be a very cruel thing. [student: unclear] If, if you had a..., of course [unclear] But I'm just saying there is no, what I'm trying to say is, and I know we want to take a break [cut]

[end side A]

[side B]

Ah, there is nothing more precious that I can teach you. I mean, find a good, find a real, find your {she nyen} and [cut] , you know, let them do their thing.

[student:and it's not an attachment?]

Oh no. [laughs] Not at all. This is a path. This is the path. This is the first {lam rim}. This is the first and the most important {lam rim}. There's nothing

sweeter. I mean, there's nothing more wonderful. You just can't imagine it. And, you just have to find them, okay. Those are the clues for looking, okay. But for each person it will be something special. And you'll know. But what I'm saying is where, when you know, don't hesitate, just do it, you know. Give yourself to them, you know.

[student; [unclear]]

Yeah.

[student: ... and what happens if that's not the case does the {she nyen} tell you to go somewhere else?]

[laughs] By the way, you're talking, that's a very serious question. And ah, it's called breaking {damtsik}, breaking the relationship. I mean, that's why you have to be so careful before you get married. But after you get married, you know, it's, it's forever, you know. That's, that's not for one life, you know. That's a, you, you, you, it's a very serious search. And you have to find one that can, this is talking future lives also, you have to find one that will stay with you for your future lives. You have to find one who has the power to stay with you throughout all your lives. And they do. And they will. If you find a real one they will never leave you, you know. [unclear]

The eighteen leasures and fortunes and then I'm supposed to do the [laughter], three refuges and then I supposed to the four powers, you know. Okay, and it's nine o'clock. So, the eight leasures you will get in the Principle Teachings of Buddhism book, note number forty-three, [laughter] seriously, okay. It's on your homework so [student: unclear]. Principle Teachings of Buddhism. I believe it's footnote number forty-three. You check it out. But I think that one says the eight lacks of opportunity. The opposite of those are the eight spiritual leasures. And the homework says, what are the eight spiritual leasures? And I'm not going to go into them. Simply enough to say that to be a human in New York City in the very year that Buddhism begins to knock on the door of America or, you know, within that twenty year span or whatever, to have a mind that's half-intelligent, to have any spiritual yearnings at all to bump into this, to one of the only places where they're teaching it, you know, to have any attraction to it at all, to, to bump into the lineage of it makes you, I've, I've calculated it, it's something like one in a million. It truly is one in a million, maybe a little more; one in one point three million or something people in the United States. You are very, very different and you have some extraordinary virtue, each person in this room. The one thing I've realised teaching was that I, I, I really believe that every person who gets as far as walking into this building has some extraordinary seeds in them and if we take good care of them that

each one of those people could be a great teacher. I really believe that. From my experience so far each person who has the karma to walk into this building has some extraordinary role to play in the, in the preservation and in the spreading of this holy knowledge, you know. I really believe that. I believe each person in this room has some kind of destiny to do that and I just encourage you to go for that also. You know, just go for it. There's nothing else worth doing actually, which you'll find out now or later. You know, take my word for it or live a few more years, you know. [laughter] You, it's an extraordinary, extraordinary opportunity and I believe that if you had the karma to get here that, according to my own observation in the last few years, that each, it amazes me. I mean, someone this morning handed me a piece of paper, I mean last, yesterday, of a translation they were working on. You know, we went over it for a couple of hours. This is somebody that I didn't even think their Tibetan was very good yet. And I was walking on my way to work and I open up this paper and I had to stop and look at it. And this is extraordinary. You know, I was just, like, like that. And, and then it dawned on me that, like, everybody can do that, you know. I mean, like, everybody in the class if they really, I don't mean you have to be a Tibetan translator. I'm saying, each person here if they carefully water the seeds which you already have within your own mental continuum from your past lives then that, then it really could be a place where Buddhist teachers are trained and that each person here could go out and, and benefit many, many people. And I, I just urge you to think in those terms. Please don't think of this, I mean, the homework is deceiving. It looks like high school, you know. It makes it feel like high school. It's not that. I mean, it's a very holy transmission and I believe that each person here will come to have their own circle of devoted followers and that each person here would, um, would be saving people's spiritual lives, you know. And I, don't, don't think anything less of these classes. Don't, don't think anything less that that is going on. It's a very historical moment and it's also a very holy moment. And I don't see, I see that each person here could do that. That's the leisure, okay. [laughs] How do I get out of refuge? [laughter]

Refuge is very simple, you know. We recovered an ancient book by a kadampa named {Drolungpa, Geshe Drolungpa} and it was missing. And His Holiness found a copy in Siberia about ten years ago and it's badly defaced. You can't read it very well. And then we found a copy in South India and then we recently found another half a copy in Russia. And, and, and he, and he truly reveals in that book the meaning of refuge very clearly. And, and it is that way in the Prajnaparamita. And I've never seen a, such a good presentation, I mean, I've never seen it presented so clearly in accord with the Perfection of Wisdom. And it says, we're talking about how you take refuge, okay. And I'm, there've got,

it's very to me, very clear and simple. Refuge means two things. What are the two requirements for refuge? Why do you go to your mommy? Why do you go to ... Yeah. You're afraid of something and you think someone can help you. These are the two requirements for refuge. Something bad is happening and then you're running to someone who you think can help you. Those are the two things going on, okay. The bad thing that's happening is called your life. [laughs] Seriously. Okay. If you don't think so yet, I mean, you're in for a rude awakening. I mean, you've had a low-level of suffering so far and it will accelerate and it will get deadly serious like for Laura Seigel. I mean, what was a joke has become very deadly serious now. She is in danger of her life and she was one of the best students in these classes. She was the straight-A student, straight hundreds. Now, she's fighting for her life and it has become no, it's not like a giggling thing anymore. It's deadly serious, you know. She's thinking of Buddhism in terms of , of how can I do what I have to do before the cancer kills me, you know. And she's doing it and she's ... It's a very serious thing. So that's refuge. Refuge means life is going to kill you. In the meantime, things are going to go in their old depressing way. Ah, and on the other hand, there's this incredible bliss and incredible, ah, paradise sitting there under the veneer of the, you know, twelve layers of lacquer, you know, and you just have to see it. You just have to be able to experience it which all depends on?

[student: your karma]

Your own karma. Which is, you can either create karma with a inefficient machine called Pratimoksha, not inefficient but very slow. Or you can use a little bit faster machine called Bodhisattva behavior. Or you can use a jet engine called secret teachings. But you, before it gets to the Laura Seigel stage you must create enough virtue to change the reality you're in. And if you don't do it fast enough it'll, the old reality will just wrap you up and kill you. And it'll be too late. You will not be in a human life like this anymore, probably. You won't have this opportunity anymore. So that's refuge. What is the one thing you really have to pull off before you die? Is to see emptiness directly. Okay. And everyone in this room has that capacity. And it's extremely difficult. The odds are not very good you know. You have to really take it as a serious goal. And you have to time it right before, before things [laughs] collapse, you know. It takes a certain amount of health and, and wisdom, and etcetera. So, what is refuge? The ultimate refuges are as follows: Buddha Refuge. You know if, if on your homework, it says, what's the essence of Buddha Refuge? It's the Dharmakaya, okay. It's the Dharmakaya.

What's the Dharmakaya made of? What is the real Buddha Jewel? I mean there's a difference between Buddha and Buddha Jewel. Buddha Jewel is the thing you go for refuge to. Three Jewels are the three objects of refuge. The

Three Jewels are the thing, three things that you're running to. Okay. As opposed to just general Buddha. The Buddha Jewel is much different from general Buddha. Buddha Jewel is what? [student: unclear]

There's the real Buddha Jewel and the apparent, you know, and the representative, what do you call, symbolic Buddha Jewel. Symbolic Buddha Jewel is here, you know, up here, over there... Those are symbolic Buddha Jewel. The real Buddha Jewel is dharmakaya. Who's, who, which is made of, mainly, emptiness, okay. When do you meet that dharmakaya, directly?

[student: [unclear]]

Path of Seeing. If, if it was as easy as dying we would have done it a long time ago 'cos we've died countless times. Okay. [laughs] You meet the dharmakaya when you see emptiness directly because it is emptiness, mostly. So, so one refuge is intimately tied up with seeing emptiness directly. It is the emptiness that you see really. And then, that dharmakaya and the mind connected to it, have the ability to emanate all these pictures and all these guys walking around. That's not the real Buddha. The real Buddha is that dharmakaya, okay.

What's refuge object number two?

[students: unclear]

Dharma Jewel. Which is also symbolic or actual. What's the symbolic Dharma Jewel?

[students: unclear]

The books. Where's they go? I don't know. Oh, those books, okay. [laughs] Those books, alright. They are not the Dharma Jewel. You could run and hide under those books and death would still pull you out by your leg and kill you, you know. Doesn't help. The real Dharma Jewel is two things. [student: unclear] Realisations. Realisations and? [student: unclear]

The cessation you get from them. What's a cessation? I'll give you two examples. Cessations can be divided into cessations that you get from seeing emptiness and cessations that don't depend on seeing emptiness directly. We call them { so so tango } and { so so tang mi .. }. The one that doesn't depend on seeing emptiness directly is, for example, during the Path of Preparation which is path number two, you reach a point at which you are so good you will never again take a birth in the lower realms. That's a cessation. And you own that cessation for ever. You can never lose it. Which means, you can never be born in a lower realm again. You have not seen emptiness directly yet. That's a cessation that doesn't depend on seeing emptiness directly. Then there's a thing called nirvana, which is the cessation of your [students: unclear] mental afflictions, permanent end of your mental afflictions. That absolutely depends on? [students: unclear] Seeing emptiness directly. That's part of the definition of nirvana. They're two

kinds of cessation. That's the real Dharma Jewel: cessations and the paths of those cessations. What's the number one path of those cessations? The most important path?

[student: unclear]

Oh, seeing emptiness directly. [laughs] Okay. The most important one. You getting a picture here? I mean, a lot of emptiness is in here. Refuge object number one is emptiness itself that you see for the first time directly when you see emptiness directly. Real refuge number two is mostly seeing emptiness directly at the path of Seeing. What's, what's refuge object number three?

[student: Sangha.]

Sangha Jewel, please. Which is different from the Sangha, okay. What's the symbolic Sangha Jewel? People wearing red clothes. They are not the Sangha Jewel. You can take refuge in anybody who wears red clothes you're gonna get in trouble 'cos most of them are just normal people probably. But they represent what?

[student: Seeing emptiness...]

Yeah. People who've seen emptiness directly, okay. Aryas. Okay, and that's the real refuge. I'm sorry, Sangha Refuge, Sangha Jewel. The day you see emptiness directly how many refuge objects do you become? [students: unclear]

It's cool. You become two of the three jewels. You know, when people around the world light incense in the morning and, and go I go for refuge to the Three Jewels, they are going for refuge to... you. [laughs] Okay. And the day you see emptiness directly you are already two of those refuge objects. All people all over the universe are taking refuge in you.

Yeah? The third one you have to get to a Dharmakaya.

[student: [unclear]]

That, you mean number three? I mean number one, Buddha Jewel?

[student: [unclear]]

Oh, you become, you, you gain the state of mind which sees emptiness directly. So you have become the, the Dharma Jewel because you, you have the state of mind which sees emptiness directly. You've experienced it and you become the Sangha Jewel because you are one of those people who has seen emptiness directly. So you automatically become two of the jewels. You don't get to be jewel number one, Buddha Jewel, until you reach enlightenment and get your own, very own [students: unclear] Dharmakaya. [laughter] [laughs] Alright? Ah, that's refuge, okay. Why the hell should any one of those three things help you? What is to go for refuge? Do you have to see emptiness directly to go for refuge?

[student: No. You have to aspire to see emptiness directly.]

You have to be running to them for protection. It's, it's called {ushin la etc.}: definition of refuge. To put all your hopes in another object in order to save you from something that you don't want. That you don't like. So you're putting all your hopes in reaching this state. That is the state of refuge, okay. But real refuge would be some kind of knowledge, okay. Like, what happens when you see emptiness directly is that you become aware that all of the things in your life are projections. Forced on you by? [student: Your karma.]

If you saw emptiness and if you became totally convinced that every single experience in your life and every object in your life was created from your own past deeds, good or bad, you would automatically act good. And that's the only protection. There is no other protection. No person can protect you and I've mentioned it many times: Buddha was sitting in his living room, his fellow countrymen, running away from enemy soldiers, ran behind him for his protection and they were cut down holding onto him, you know. Can't protect you like that. The only thing that can protect you is, is understanding emptiness and acting on it, which is, being good. And, and which habit, eventually, forces all your mental afflictions out of your mind which is, reaching [students: nirvana] nirvana. And if you keep that up long enough your world changes into a Buddha paradise and then you got protection. So, protection means, refuge means understanding emptiness and, because you understand emptiness, leading an ethical life. And that's all 'cos nothing else could ever protect you. It's not, like, oh help me Buddha, you know. It doesn't help. Can't do anything for you. Okay.

Got out of refuge. Now, we've got to finish the four questions. Sorry it's a little late. We tried to do a whole Lam Rim in three nights. We'll do this in five minutes. [laughter] It'll be deva five minutes, okay. It's said that one day in the deva realms is equivalent to a million years on a human realm, [laughs] something like that. We'll do a deva five minutes. Okay.

One of the questions that came up during the vinaya part was, can you wipe out your old karma? People who were in California, they studied the Diamond Cutter Sutra and in the Diamond Cutter Sutra the Buddha says, there is a way to short-circuit your old bad karma. You can wipe out your old bad karma. It's of great interest, you know. Refuge means, do what you have to do, go ahead [student: unclear, did you turn it off?] [unclear]

Cool. Okay, very quickly, we're going to go over the four powers. Je Tsongkapa specifically says in this text, what is this text? [students: unclear]

Yeah, it's his own record of his own spiritual experiences which is unprecedented. He doesn't say it about this stuff anywhere else. And, he says in there, "you must do as I did". In other words, you must keep using these four powers over and over and over. Every day you have to keep using them, doing

them, doing them, doing them. Okay.

Refuge can take away your future bad karma but what about your old bad karma? [laughs] Okay. You need something to clean out that. If you take good refuge, you understand emptiness, and therefore, understand that all your experiences are coming from projections forced on you by your past karma, you want want to do anything bad, but you still have to deal with all the old stuff. You know, the collection, the accumulations of garbage from past lives, okay. These are the way to clean it out. Very, very, very important. I'm sorry we don't have much more time to do it.

Say, {ten gi top} [repeat] {ten gi top} [repeat]; {ten} means, "basis". This is the 'basis force' and they say that it means that you fell down and, you know, you're like that, and, and you push against the floor, you know. You're pushing, you need something to push against to get, you need something to get back, push against to get back up. And that means, go back to the basics of Buddhism, which are two. Which is what? [students: unclear]

Take refuge and, and bodhichitta, okay. Take refuge and, and review bodhichitta, okay. Take refuge as we just described it, in emptiness. And then, bodhichitta, think about other people. I, you know, I don't, I used to have trouble, a lot of trouble getting compassion or feelings of compassion, you know. Like, I could think about Laura Siegel but it wears off after a day or two. But if I really think of five billion creature crawling around the face of this planet, driven relentlessly by the inability to be satisfied with anything, and that the whole human commerce is based on this, it's pretty compassion, arising, you know, generating, you know. That's sad. That's really sad, you know. A whole city of eight million people burning out their lives for something that cannot make them happy, you know, and driven to the next day, you know, the next pay cheque. You know, driven to the next possession by this problem in their own mind. It's very, very, ah, you know, it's very sad. It's a very sad thing. I think, I don't think you need to think of more than that: Panchen Lama's human suffering, number one, you know, that people can not be satisfied. And this dissatisfaction will drive them in the millions, on the subways, to go to these little places where they spend fifty weeks a year to get money so they can get back on the subway and come back and spend fifty more weeks, you know. And it's so, it's so sad. I think it's enough. It can make you sad, you know. So, that's bodhichitta. Two things: refuge and bodhichitta.

Say, {nambar sun jinpay tob}, not that fast. Say, {nambar} [repeat] {sun jinpay} [repeat] {top} [repeat] {nambar} [repeat] {sun jinpay} [repeat] {top} [repeat]; {nambar sun jinpay} means, totally waste something, to destroy it completely. I like to call it the 'destruction power'. {top} means, power, destruction power. I think [unclear] [laughter] sculpture [laughs] is {nambar sun jinpay top}. The

destruction power, and this is, the intelligent regret of an educated Buddhist, okay. The intelligent regret of an educated Buddhist who knows that in the very moment that you think a bad thought, or that you say a bad thing, or that you let your eyes go to the wrong thing, in that very moment, you have planted something in your mind that is extremely difficult to get out and it will only make you suffer. And you know it, you know. You become very schizophrenic, you know. Like, the minute you get mad at your boss you're, like, you know, hitting yourself. [laughs] [laughter] It's really weird. It's really weird. The more you learn about Buddhism the more scary it is, you know, as far as what's planted in your mind. As soon as you think something, you know, as soon as you have the least bit of .. I saw this guy, homeless guy, this morning. He's like, up in my face. I just walked out, you know. I just got up. My [unclear] wasn't ready to meet this guy. He's, like, in my face, he says give me some money, like [laughter] [unclear] [laughs] And I'm, like, I hated him for that moment. I was, like, I hated him. And then I said, oh, my god, what did I just plant in my brain, you know. I mean, what did I just plant in my mindstream? You know, the more you know about Buddhism, that's a tremendous future suffering for me, you know. So, {nambar sun jinpay tob} means just to realise that. To regret it at that moment is very, very good and it wipes out a lot of the energy of the, of the bad deed.

[student; So you have this bad thought you acknowledge it and protect yourself and then you have the same bad thought [unclear] very seriously , unclear] Yeah, I know, we ll talk, it's coming next, actually. And this is the last thing tonight so take, take hope.

[cut] [repeat], {le larn} [repeat], {dokpay tob} [repeat]. {neypa le} [repeat], {larn dokpay} [repeat], {tob} [repeat]; {nyepa} means, bad deed. {Nyepa le larn dokpa} means, to restrain yourself in the future, okay. To restrain yourself from the bad deed in the future. It is driven by number two. Number two says, you know, that moment of anger at this poor guy is, is frankly gonna cause me much suffering in the future. I, it's very hard to get that seed out of my mind now. Thirty seconds later you can realize, if you're really well educated Buddhists, that you've just planted a very, very strong seed in your mind and it's gonna be very hard to clean it out. And if, and if you don't clean it out it's gonna make you suffer. I mean, you ll be depressed for weeks or something. People say, why am I depressed? Well that's the cause, you know. You won't be happy for weeks. Something will make you unhappy for weeks. You'll have this feeling of unhappiness or depression. It's from an instant of anger at this, at this poor guy, you know. {Nyepa le larn dokpay tob} means, you, you decide not to do it again. The great Lamas of our lineage have said set a time limit, because if you don't you will collect the additional bad deed of? [students:

unclear] Lying. [laughs]

If I said tonight in front of all you dear people who come here and make me teach so I can learn things myself and if I got up and said, I promise, you know, [unclear] tomorrow, I'm never going to get mad at that guy again. If he shows up tomorrow I'm definitely going to be compassionate, you know. It would be, I would lie because, you know, two days later I would forget myself and, and I'd get angry again. And then I've collected a new bad deed. So they say set yourself a time limit. I like to tell people that I can honestly say that in a meditation session before finishing the fourth power I have broken it again, you know. So, some of them, maybe you want to put a ten minute limit on it. [laughter] Okay. I mean, ideally, I think that except for mental ones that you feel strongly about like getting irritated with your boss or something, you can probably keep it half a day or day if you concentrate. Pick one. Restrict yourself to one and say, for twenty-four hours I won't do it again. It has a lot of power, you know. You think that just avoiding it for twenty-four hours and then doing it again for three hundred and sixty-five days is not very powerful, but it is very powerful. It has, it has a profound effect on you to decide not to do it and then not do it. This is the main force. This is, this is the one that drives everything. This is the one that purifies your karma. This is the one that stops your karma, okay. People accuse me when they hear about this, especially non- Buddhists, they say, oh yeah, you Buddhists like it's the morning-after pill, you know, very convenient. You know, you can do a bad deed the night before and then the next morning you can just do your four powers and then everything's okay and then the next night you go do it again. But then I say, no, you don't understand power number three. If it's your intention to do it again, and if you're happy about doing it again, you didn't, you're not purifying the karma.

If you, if you don't feel really bad, and if you don't really strongly intend to try to stop yourself in the future, even if it's only for one day, this does not work and you will not purify the karma, okay. So, it really hangs on that, hinges on that. Okay. [cut]

[end side B]

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ACI Course IX: The Ethical Life

Class Ten: Description of the Medium and Lesser Scopes

8/26/96

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transcribed by Joe Weston

Proofread by: Summer Moore

And these are the Pretas, the hungry spirits, and these are animal... and this goes on forever and goes back forever. Actually, there's an end somewhere over there, with... relative to any one person, but it goes back this way forever, and your mind has been, you know, this is human realm, and your mind has been traveling like this, you know? Really, through different realms. And it's just projections, you know?, but because it's projections, it's very easy to move between realms. So, if you think of the most chaotic time in your life, you know, and how you move into chaotic depressions, and stuff like that. I mean, imagine the mind going even deeper, I mean, like the history of our mind so far in this life has been, you know, you feel better and then you feel worse, or you get really sick, and you almost feel like an animal. I mean the mind state almost goes to an animal. Like if you were in a really bad war, and fighting for your survival with bayonets, face to face, you know... Or if you were really, really depressed, uh, or, you know, you have really bad cancer or something, and your mind state was just getting down to something super-depressed and manic and chaotic, your mind would be getting close to this. And then according to Buddhism, it doesn't take much time, it doesn't take much for it to slip down under that line and become an animal state of mind, when you see yourself as an animal, and you think like an animal, and your life is very, very crazy. It's like a super-hallucinogenic thing, where your whole existence is just fear and terror at everything that moves, you know? And that's how you spend your life. And then if a human gets a hold of you, it's like the worst thing that can happen. They just strip your skin off you and eat you, or they steal your fur or your coat, or they hook you up to some machine and make you do work or they milk you or they shave you, or, you know... most animals end up, many end up, being used by humans 'cause humans are smarter. They can outwit them, and lock them up and use them and kill them for what they want. Uh, and then, so your mind, it doesn't take a lot for your mind to slip down. Apparently, according to all the scriptures, it can slip down really easy. And then, this is just a... this is just a chart of the state of your mind, you know. Your mind, it's not restricted to

these boundaries. You shouldn't think of it anymore that way, you know, your mind is not restricted to the boundaries of a human state, you know. It can slip down very easily. It doesn't take a lot. It just takes a few breaths. It takes a few exhalations and inhalations to become an animal. So, you know, don't think it's like impossible. It's just the mind slipping to another state, and it can go down really fast. Um, and the purpose of the Lam Rim, if you think about the Lam Rim, um, it has three great divisions. They are called The Person of Lesser Capacity, Person of Medium Capacity, and Person of Great Capacity. And each, those three are defined by their spiritual goals. Okay? And the people of lesser capacity, all they want to do is draw some kind of a... in computer programming, what do they call it, a fire wall? They want to draw a fire wall here. 'Fire wall' is what you do to your computer that hackers can't get into it. It's some kind of a, like a wall that you put between your computer and these crazy kids who like to blow up your computer. Like calling in and figuring out the passwords, and stuff. And so they want to, I mean... {kibu chung}, which means, people of lesser capacity. They want to create a wall here, where their mind can no longer slip under that line. Okay? And if you chart the five paths, you know, here's... this is pre-path, and this is when you start getting interested in Buddhism, and you can actually at this point already have, be practicing the three training's. So you don't have to have reached the first Buddhist path to be practicing the three training's. You can practice an ethical way of life. You can practice concentration. You can practice an elementary form of wisdom, uh, even before you reach the first path. Then how do you get to path number one which is called, accumulation?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, it's when you truly get set up with life. So you could say the path of accumulation starts here and goes up to here and that whole period there is called path of accumulation. It can take millions of years. So you're accumulating energy to become, to reach the next path, which is what? So, by the way, how you get from pre-path to first path... this is path number one.. is you truly, truly get fed up with this mode of living, you know. And it doesn't mean like you have to be like a St. Francis, or something like that. I mean, you don't have to go into... you know... you can be quite easily disgusted with life and still be working in an office and still be eating and walking around New York City, and you know, I mean, the feeling of renunciation can be, can be with you, and will be with you as you walk through your life. And it's just that you don't want to be unhappy. It's very simple. It's when you get tired of being unhappy. And it'll start. It'll start to happen wherever you are. It's not like there'll be a big change

in your life and you'll run away to somewhere, or something like that. You'll just get tired of being unhappy. You'll get tired of this up and down, up and down, up and down, and they'll get some kind of just tired of it. I'm trying to find a pen that works. How about this one. I'm tired of these pens. Number two. Number two is called path of preparation. And during that path, you are... it is marked by reaching certain levels of an intellectual understanding of emptiness. Okay? You are understanding emptiness intellectually. Number three is called path of seeing. This is the big time. This is when you see emptiness directly for the first time. A big, a big milestone. Take a couple of zillion years to get there. Path number three. Uh, path number four, habituation. Getting used to what you saw. Using what you saw to remove what? Your mental afflictions. Okay? Using what you saw to start removing your mental afflictions. Path number five is called no more learning. No more learning. There's a point here... it's right about here... into the path of preparation, where you achieve a cessation for taking a lower birth. You can never again take a... you can never again go below this line, this human line, if you reach this point. Okay? If you reach a certain point in the path of preparation. Which implies that you've reached a certain understanding about emptiness, and a certain level of virtue, uh, you can no longer, ever go below this line. And that is the goal of what they call {keba chung}, the lesser capacity. Okay? Sometimes they call it lesser scope. Sometimes they call it smaller person. There's all these different words for it. {Theg-pa chung} in Tibetan means smaller person. It means their scope is not as wide. All they want to do is definitely draw a line in the sand here and not go under here any more. That's... their whole practice is aimed at that. All they want to do is prevent that mind stream from slipping below this line. That's their goal. And we've finished that. The teachings we've had so far in the lam rim, like going for refuge and studying karma... karma sometimes goes either way, but... are basically directed at keeping yourself out of these three lower realms. Okay? Those are {lam ki rimba}'s. Those are steps that are used by people of lesser capacity. Yeah?

[student: Does that also mean that you couldn't come back, say, as Hitler, or something?]

Nope, Nope. The only cessation is for going below this line.

[students: [unclear]]

Well, he could do the four powers and be fine. [laughter] Unlikely. Extremely unlikely. In fact., I think it's probably impossible by that point. You know.

Maybe it's [unclear], but I've never seen in a text that you achieve a cessation for being a bad person. You achieve a cessation for ever becoming an animal, {preta}, or hell birth. Yeah...

[student: Say that you become a {deva}, then you don't have [unclear]]

Right. After this point, if you ever again become a {deva}, which is unlikely, you would never have that almost natural roller coaster down. Okay? You just... You can't. You can't take birth below that line again. Which means that your mind can't slip below that line again. I prefer to think of it that way. It's very easy for me to imagine pure chaos. I mean, I had a bad day at work. That's medium chaos. You know, I've been in airplanes that were gonna crash and stuff like that. I've been... had guns pointed at me, shot at, my mind was in like near chaos, you know. And I can imagine total chaos, like being in a car-wreck and fire, and stuff like that. You know, you can imagine it. But this is where your mind slips a little lower, and you enter a realm of complete chaos, pure chaos, and I can... I think you can imagine it. It's a mental state. It's the mind dipping lower and lower. And you've had those moments of chaos in your life. You know. Think of the worst one and then double it, and that's your mind going below this line. And it's not such a big deal. It's not so impossible. Um... It's a mental state, and your mind can slip below that line. People you meet, people who are not much different from animals, like in extraordinary circumstances. I've seen it, you know. They just turn into like an animal, and they look like an animal and they're probably thinking like an animal. And then for the mind to go below that line is not such a big deal. You have to believe that to be a {gewa chumu}, to be a person of small capacity, you have to really be worried about that. And it's extremely difficult to reach this path. It's very hard to get to path number one. It's a great spiritual achievement to be worried about your mind slipping below this line. Most people never get there. Most Buddhists never get there, in this life. They never get to this first path. They never really believe that their mind could slip below here. They're not really worried about it, you know. In fact, you're not a, you're not a Buddhist until you're worried about it. You're not practicing, strictly speaking, Buddhism until you're afraid and you're taking refuge. It's very interesting. If your reason for being a buddhist is connected with some kind of this life going well, you're not a buddhist. It's not Buddhist practice. It's like some kind of a better form of desire, or something. It's very hard to be a Buddhist. It's very hard to reach this step where you really are worried that your mind might slip below this point. Uh, those are the path of seeing. Now, you can cruise through here, and you have all those sufferings that we talked about. We talked about the six sufferings in the last course. Uh, there are certain mental sufferings

that you are always undergoing. We talked about, for example, that the human mind can not be contented. In it's present form, the human mind can not be contented. You know, you get something, and then you want more, and you keep wanting more and more and more. Your mind cannot be contented. Your and my mind is of a nature that it cannot be contented. And there's five other sufferings like that. There's six sufferings which are pretty much mental. And they're just... they force you to be unhappy, you know. They force us to be unhappy. You can decide, I'm not gonna be discontented anymore, and then like two days later, you're, you're discontented, you know. It's, it's really funny, you know. You say, I'd like to meet a buddhist... I'd like to get into buddhist class. You get into a buddhist class, and then you like... after a couple of classes, you're like, I wonder if they could like spice it up a little bit, you know. And then, and then, they say, Okay, you're gonna be the leader of the class. And then you get interested again for a couple of weeks, and then you're thinking, well I'd rather do that, and your mind just goes on and on, and wants more and more, and there's no end to it, you know. Your mind will make you... I've heard people go up to Rinpoche and say, Why do you teach this {lam rim} stuff, you know, could you do something more interesting, you know? Uh, and, [laughs], no really, and I've thought it myself, you know. I've said, Yeah, gee, I wish he would teach some advanced logic, or something. I've heard this before. You know. And, you just get used to it, you know. And here he is, you know, the abbot of Sera Mey, he's the... in the year that he graduated, he was the highest monk in Tibet to graduate, uh, and you want more. You know, it's like, Well maybe I can find someone even more interesting. You know. And you... your mind wants more and more, and that's, that's our condition. So, there's a point where you want to overcome those mental afflictions, and that happens around... it depends. Normally, here, okay? That's called, what?

[students: Nirvana.]

Nirvana. This is a point where you get no more lower birth.

[student: [unclear]]

Um, we're gonna talk about it. We're gonna talk about it. But, nirvana implies no more coming back to the, to the samsara. You will never be born into samsara again, okay? Uh, so, a person who reaches nirvana has gone like this, and is out for the first time. You know, you can think of this whole area here as suffering, you know. And this whole area here is extreme suffering. And, so, you have to conceive of the {lam rim} as being three different states of mind. This... from here

up to here is, is, is the lesser capacity. You know, from there up to there is... that's a person of lesser capacity. From entering buddhism and starting to study, up to the point on the path of preparation where you have no more lower births, you are, what we call, a person of lesser capacity. If that's your goal. If your goal is just to stop here. That's a person of lesser...All... That person, at that point, all they understand is that they don't want to go under this line. That's their goal. After that point, a person figures out that even if they stay above that line, things are not happy. And the main suffering is your own mind makes you unhappy. Your own mind drives you to be discontented. You cannot be happy. We don't have the capacity to be contented. You just can't do it. You can go sit on the beach and watch the sunset, and after two hours you want to go do something else. You can't, you can't be satisfied. It just doesn't work. Um, you can go have an excellent, ultimate dinner, and, and then it's not an ultimate dinner cause you want another one. You know. And you go, try to go back to the same restaurant, and the same thing doesn't happen cause you meet a different waiter and they yell at you, and, you know, this is...This person here, who reaches here, has decided that they want to get out of it altogether, and that would be nirvana, okay. So, they, they work really hard and they get out of it. So, you can call up here, you know, like nirvana. And that... from here to here, you're working on the motivation of a medium motivation. This person, this person wants to reach happiness. This person wants to reach contentment. This person wants to overcome their mental afflictions, and not, and not live this kind of existence anymore. What happens beyond that? Um. If you reach nirvana, under the influence of bodhichitta, which is the wish to help other beings, it turns into enlightenment, okay. In fact, in the text, Tsongkapa talks about it as a {tsirgyur gitsig}. Say {tsirgyur} {repeat}, {gitsig} {repeat}. {Tsirgyur gitsig} means... uh, there's a thing in alchemy, uh... you take a piece of steel, iron, and you put certain things on it. In Tibet, they believed it was related with quick silver, with, uh, mercury. Something to do with mercury, and there's all these other things. There's like, uh, twelve different substances, and you mix them together. Nagarjuna was good at it. He got kicked out of Nalanda for doing it. Um, cause it's not a proper monk way to make a living. He was trying to raise money for a monastery [laughs]. And, you do this special thing and the iron turns into gold. Uh, and they say that bodhichitta is like that. Like the wish to... that wish that all other beings should reach happiness and stop suffering. I mean... and again, I... the way it helps me to imagine it is... I mean, I've been in Hong Kong, and I think about New York and Hong Kong usually. When I think about suffering, mental suffering, and then think of, you know, in Hong Kong it's maybe six or, six to eight million people, and when I think of New York, it's about eight million people. And I imagine eight million mind streams driven by

eight million inabilities to be contented, you know. Eight million separate instances of discontentment driving eight million people to wear out their bodies on things that are worthless, you know. And it's called human commerce, you know. It's called, it's called the economy, you know. And eight million minds driving eight million poor, tired bodies, you know, to run around this city and try to make a buck, you know, or try to do something that is gonna, it, it's without question, it must be lost, you know. If you think for five minutes without any kind of, uh, without any kind of, uh, doubt, whatever they're working for, they must lose it. And there's no question about it, there's no debate about it. There's no other career path for them, except to wear out the body. The mind is hyperactive, and it wears out the body and the body dies and then the body loses all the things that the mind wanted. And that's human life. And if you just think about it for a while, you... that's bodhichitta. Bodhichitta is like thinking, you know, eight million poor bodies being driven by eight million unsatisfied minds into the ground, you know. It's just sad. There's no future for anybody. There's no future for all eight million people, except to have their body wear out. And then they're in a hospital somewhere, and, and that's it. And that's just the only future. So, if you think about it that way, that kind of thought is called alchemical elixir in Je Tsongkapa's text. You know, you can do good deeds, you can provide people with homes. You know, like we do for the monks in India. Nine hundred monks. We're feeding them and clothing them, we're making sure they have a place to stay, um, but if you don't do it, with, uh, the, in the back of your mind with the idea that you would like to see these people reach enlightenment, you know, that you would like to see them get out of this suffering. Monks in the monastery suffer as much as anybody. I mean, a thousand minds running a thousand bodies around a monastery. Maybe many of them just in a worldly way. You know, and there bodies are being run into the ground also. And, and to... if you feed them and clothe them and if that is all you think about, it's like iron. The only karma that can come out of that is, is that you yourself will have certain material things in the future. And they will wear out. The karma will wear out. The things will wear out, and the whole thing was a wasted exercise, you know. But if you do it with the intention that, I want to provide things for them so that I reach my own paradise, my own enlightenment, and then knowing how to do it, I will turn around and help everyone else do it -- that has to be at the back of your mind, that turns the action into, into goal -- is bodhichitta. How does that work as you understand projection right now? What's the way it works? How does it work? I mean, what's the difference between way the future projections of a person who doesn't... who feeds and clothes a lot of monks and doesn't think about enlightenment, and then a person who feeds and clothes a lot of monks and does

wish they get enlightened, or wishes that he gets enlightenment, or she, so they can achieve... what's the difference, what's happening...

[student: The motivation.]

The motivation is different, but how does that change the result? I mean, one person gets a house, a big house and nice clothes in samsara, in the future, and they wear out, and they end up with a net zero. And the other person is doing it so they get enlightened, and then they are starting to have, if they did it with a real strong motivation, tantric experiences in this life. They are, they are starting to... I mean, getting to a Buddhist paradise, which means your projection's shifting, doesn't happen all at once. I mean, you start getting experiences. You know, they start to accumulate. And, so what's the difference between these two people? What's the difference? The result is quite different. You know, one person's getting something which wears out, and they end up back where they were. And the other person is getting...

[student: They're getting further along that line.]

Is getting to a Buddhist paradise. But what's... is it... what's the difference?

[students: Perception?]

Yeah, it's the perception that's going on while they're doing it. For some reason, okay, focusing on other's needs as you do a good deed, and dedicating it to the ultimate benefit of them completely transforms the karma. So, that's what the text means. You know, think about doing any good deed as steel. And if you do the good deed with a certain motivation, like, I would like this to help me become enlightened, I want this to help me reach my own Buddha paradise so that I can show people how to get there. If that's your motivation, for some reason it totally changes the experience. You, you think about it. I'm just throwing it out to you. It's a homework question, okay? What is it about being concerned for others that changes an activity from what we call a simple good deed to what we call a perfection? A {paramita}, you know? What's the difference, you know? What is it in the emptiness, in the karma of it that's different? You know? You think about it. You have to think about it. It has something to do with focusing on the other people while it happens. And...

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, bodhichitta is being driven by a concern for their ultimate welfare. Like, as you give someone clothes and food, you're thinking, okay, I'm paying for this guy's room, but I'm not... I don't want it to be... I'm not just doing it to pay for the guy's room. I want this guy to, to reach a... I want to reach a Buddhist paradise for myself out of this, so that I can take this person there. Something like that. This... you have to think about... think about, that is the dependent origination of the event. It's very interesting, you know. It's going to lead to a certain projection in the future. You're gonna collect a karma in your mind, a karmic seed, and it's gonna flower in the future and make you see yourself as an enlightened being. As opposed to see yourself as a person who just got a big house and a big car. The action is the same. You're giving something to somebody. But there's something about it that transforms the steel into gold. So, you have to think about it, okay? Yeah...

[student:[unclear]]

Exactly. That, that's part of the key. But we won't go into it much. She's talking about the... as you do a good deed, seeing the emptiness of the giver, the gift, and the, and the giving itself, and like that, uh... it seems to be something about the perception while you're doing it, that you are concerned for their ultimate benefit. Having that thought in your mind changes the karmic collection. It changes the planting of the seed into a planting of a seed for ultimate nirvana, ultimate enlightenment, rather than planting a seed for a temporary result, like a big car or a big house, or that kind... So, that's the key to that verse. In that verse, he's saying, this motivation can change a normal good deed into a cause for your own paradise. But think about it.

[student:[unclear]]

Uh, we're gonna talk about it at the end of the class, okay? But, I... think about it in terms of the highest school's explanation of dependent origination, which is what? Things are dependently originating because...?

[student:[unclear]]

That's the lowest school's. If you say because they are caused, that's the lowest school's presentation.

[student: Because they are your projections?]

Because they are your projections, forced on you by your past karma. That's the meaning of dependent origination. So, if on your homework, it says, connect dependent origination and Je Tsongkapa's statement that bodhichitta turns a deed from steel into gold. You know, you have to work on it. It's a koan, okay? Fran Perla will like this one [laughs]. Bonsai [laughs]. Think about it. I think it's better not to give you any answers. You have to think about it. But just remember, that the Prasangyika presentation of what dependent origination means is that all things are dependent on your projections. Somehow, that's got something to do with bodhichitta turning a good deed from steel into gold. Okay? Think about that. Why did I get into this? Oh. Okay. Um. We talked about taking refuge, and taking refuge is the main {lam rim} that prevents you from going below this line. Now, we've reached the medium person's capacity. What do they want to do?

[student: [unclear]]

They want to get out of all these lives. They don't want to be at any strata. They don't want to be at any [unclear]. They want to be out of the music, okay. They want to get out completely to a place called nirvana. Because they perceive that no matter where you are in... no matter where your mind goes up and down here, it's all suffering, okay. And to do that, the classic instruction for the medium capacity person is {Pakba denpa shi}. Say {Pakba} [repeat], {denpa} [repeat], {shi} [repeat], {Pakba} [repeat], {denpa} [repeat], {shi} [repeat]. {Pakpa} is what? Arya, okay, an Arya. What's an Arya? Master race? Yeah, okay [laughs]. It means anyone who's perceived emptiness directly is an Arya. So, {pakpa}, which was mistranslated, like everything else practically by the early Buddhist scholars, who were pioneers and did a great job but we're lucky that the Chinese pushed the Tibetans out and we got better teaching. How did they translate {Pakba denpa shi}? {Denpa} means truth. {Shi} means for. They said what? They said four noble truths, and we're stuck with this. Arya doesn't mean noble. It means Arya, meaning someone who's seen emptiness directly because you perceive these four truths directly in the aftermath of seeing emptiness directly. On the day that you see emptiness directly, after you come out of that experience which takes like fifteen to twenty minutes, for the rest of the day you have all these spiritual realizations. They can be grouped into four groups, called the four Arya truths because they can only be perceived by...

[students: Aryas.]

People who have just become Aryas, okay. And then nothing to do with noble,

okay? And I'm gonna talk to you... we're gonna go over the four noble truths, which is the method for people of medium capacity to do what they want to do, which is what?

[students: [unclear]]

They just want to get out of those six births, they want to reach nirvana, okay. Reaching nirvana and getting out of the six births is the same thing, or not? Is reaching nirvana and getting out of those six lousy births the same thing?

[student: No.]

What's the definition of nirvana?

[students: [unclear]]

Through...

[students: [unclear]]

Through the realizations that follow seeing emptiness directly.

[student: [unclear]]

Uh, there is ultimate nirvana, and that's Buddhahood, but we're... forget that one. Yeah? You had a question? So, is nirvana... is getting out of the six realms and nirvana the same thing? Cause I mean, it's... it gets pretty much... it gets blurred, right? I mean, Arhats are getting into nirvana, nirvana's no more suffering, they're out of the six realms...

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah. There's two flavors of nirvana. One is called {fak che}. Say {fak che} [repeat]. One is called {pag ne} [repeat]. {Fak che} means you're still stuck with an old body, okay. You're still encased in this doomed flesh, okay. I mean you've reached nirvana, which means you've finished off your mental afflictions forever. But you're still stuck in this body. That's called {fak che}. That's called nirvana with a remainder, with something left over. And then when that body dies off, when that body wears out, you reach nirvana which is {nyang de}, and you don't... and that means you no longer have any impure body left, okay. And

then you take on a different body. Yeah?.

[student: [unclear]]

It is hinayana. This is a hinayana motivation.

[student: [unclear]]

Um, it's possible... there's a whole huge subject in the Prajna Paramita about that, and it's a huge flow chart called {genden nishu}, the twenty permutations. Okay? But, basically, a person who's on a lower track... there's three tracks, right, of five paths each, and these two are hinayana number one and hinayana number two, okay. And you can start out here and then go to here and then go to here, you know? You can get to here and then degenerate, you know? Stuff like that. There's a lot of movement between them. You can even get to here on this track and have to start it back here again, okay. Yeah, all of those are possible. And it's quite possible for a hinayana person to see emptiness. Now up until the lower half of the Madyamika school, they believe that they perceive a different emptiness than they perceive on the bodhisattva track. But the higher school says that's not true because emptiness is emptiness. It's either emptiness or it's not emptiness. It's not like there's three flavors of emptiness, you know. It's either pure emptiness or not. And they say these people can see emptiness directly. And they can reach nirvana, a lower nirvana, in which they personally don't have any more bad thoughts and they have gotten out of suffering and that's what a lower... that's what a medium capacity person is working for. One of these two lower nirvanas, okay, that's all they're working for. Yeah.

[student: But before you said if you get between path two and path three, like between preparation and seeing, you...[unclear]]

No, that was a lower track of the five paths. There's three tracks, two of them are hinayana, one of them is bodhisattva, and you can get all the way to the end of track, of the hinayana track and reach hinayana nirvana. And then you might have to go back up to here on the bodhisattvas track to start over again. That's why they say don't waste your time, you might as well start here. You've gotta come back here anyway. And there's a huge debate about whether these two tracks end there, or whether ultimately they both come back up here. And the answer is, yeah, that ultimately, you have to come back and start up here, so you might as well start here from the beginning.

[student: [unclear]]

Um, you can roughly say that. I'm not gonna get into it tonight because we've got places to go. Okay, four Arya truths, which is the teachings by which medium capacity people get their rear ends out of samsara, okay.

[silence]

Say {duk ngel} [repeat], {denpa} [repeat], {duk ngel denpa} [repeat]. Now, you can teach the four noble truths in two different ways. And this is from the [B: Perfection of wisdom sutras]. You can teach them in the way that they happen in reality. So, if I tell you that the four Arya truths are suffering, where suffering comes from, end of suffering, and how you get to the end of suffering, I mean... Which of those comes first, logically, in the way things really happen?

[students: The cause of suffering.]

The cause of suffering. First something causes it. If you're gonna teach the four Arya truths in the order in which they actually occur, you'd have to teach the truth of the source of suffering first, the cause of suffering first. Then you would teach suffering. And then you would teach...

[students: Path.]

The path, and then you would teach cessation. If you were gonna do what we call {gyunde gyi rigpa}, which means cause and effect order. But that ain't the way it's normally taught. I mean, there's two different ways. It is taught both ways. This is the order in which a normal person figures it out. It's called {numba torpe rimpa}. Which means the order in which a person figures it out. Because first they bump into...

[students: Suffering.]

Suffering. And then they start to wonder...

[students: [unclear]]

Where did that come from, okay. And this is called the order in which a person understands this, you know, ultimately, okay. So, the first one is {duk ngel denpa}. The first noble truth, Arya truth, that you ever bump into is suffering,

okay. There's two flavors of this suffering, okay. I'm giving you four groups... I'm giving you four pairs of divisions, just cause it looks nice. You can do it a lot of different ways. But, on your homework, it's like two, two, two, two, okay. This first one is called... say {magdag pe} [repeat], {nyurki} [repeat], {jigten} [repeat], {magdag pe} [repeat], {nyurki} [repeat], {jigten} [repeat]. {Mag dag pe} means impure. {Ne} is a difficult word to translate. It means any kind of vessel' like a frying pan, a vase, a cup, a pot, any... a kettle. Those are all {ne}'s, okay. So, I'll say vessel. Of the world. The place in which the second half is all contained. Okay, who's the contents? What are the contents? Say {magdag pe} [repeat], {cho} [repeat], {ki semchen} [repeat]. {Cho} means contents. {Semchen} means...

[student: [unclear]]

Living beings, okay. Those six kinds of beings, okay. Beings. Living beings. By the way, when we say living beings, it's a code word in Buddhism. It does not refer to enlightened beings, okay. They are living. Yes. But when I say living beings, I mean suffering living beings, okay. So, you can divide {duk ngel denpa} into two things: The world in which you live, and the living beings who live there, all the living beings who live there. Those are both the truth of suffering. It's very interesting. I don't like the name truth, and there's a huge debate about it in scripture. And I ask you, is this eraser the truth of suffering? It is the truth of suffering. See, truth, in this context, means fact, okay. It does not mean, oh, this is true or false. It doesn't have to do with that. It means fact. If I were gonna re-translate Buddhism and start it all over again in English, I would have said the four Arya facts, or something, okay. This is {duk ngel denpa}. This eraser is {duk ngel denpa}, okay. Excuse me?

[student: [unclear]]

It's part of the world which, in which those suffering beings inhabit, and it is the truth of suffering. This is the truth of suffering. This eraser is the truth of suffering.

[student: unclear]

huh... [unclear] It's very interesting. Every object in your world is the truth of suffering. Except, you know, some spiritual realizations you have, or anything like that. Your eyeball is the truth of suffering, your ear is the truth of suffering, your watch is the truth of suffering, your car is the truth of suffering, your job is the truth of suffering. I didn't have to say that, right? [laughter] Everything is the

truth of suffering. Everything around you is the truth of suffering. We'll see why later. I mean, basically, it's gonna make you suffer, you know. This thing will wear out. If you like it, you will lose it, okay. You can not relate to this object without losing it. Period. And that's suffering, okay. If it's useful to you, and if it performs a function for you, and if it makes your life a little easier, it's the truth of suffering because you must lose it. You will be... someday, me and this eraser will separate, okay. It's, it's indubitable. It's undebatable, it's uncontestable. I will have to lose this eraser. I will have to lose all of you, you know. I will have to lose this place, you know. We must disburse on some occasion. There will be the last class with us, and that's that's the truth of the suffering. You must lose your body. Your body... this arm. I must lose this arm. It must happen. I mean, normally speaking. Not if we do some special things, okay. Anyway, impure vessel of the world and impure contents, living beings. And we'll see why later. I mean, there's an innate defect which makes me lose everything. There's something wrong. There's some kind of corrupt energy behind all these objects which makes me lose them. And there's some kind of corrupt energy even behind my own mind which prevents me from ever being contented in this life, okay. There's some energy driving my mind and my world and my body which is defective. And I must lose them. And they must make me unhappy, okay. That's the nature of it. So, that's {duk ngel denpa}. It's everything around you. {Sak che lang}... uh. [B: [B: Abhidhamakosha]], opening line. {[unclear]}

[cut] ...good it seems to start out. And you may have noticed. Something will happen. And it's not their fault and it's not your fault. There's a defective energy running the thing. It could never have been perfect. Don't feel guilty, okay. It's not your fault. It's samsara. It's the energy that's running the show. Even if it goes smoothly between you and somebody else, you'll get ripped apart by some events. It has to. It will. And that's {duk ngel denpa}, okay. Next one is what?... in the order in which you figure them out? Yeah, what caused it? Say {kunjung} [repeat], {denpa} [repeat], {kunjung} [repeat], {denpa} [repeat]. Okay, two [unclear] here. {Kunjung}, {kun} means everything. {Jun} means can come. {Kunjung } is a word in Tibetan that means where everything can come. The thought, the sense of suffering. {Denpa} means that truth or that fact.

[silence]

Say {le} [repeat], {le} [repeat]. {Le} means what? Karma, okay. The first troublemaker, okay. Then our old friend and intimate acquaintance... Say {nyon mong} [repeat], {nyon mong} [repeat]. Mental afflictions. Jealousy, hatred, desire, anger, eighty four thousand assorted flavors, okay. {Ledang nyon mong}.

Is this pen {kunjung denpa}?

{student: [unclear]}

Yeah, I mean, that's a pretty good answer. It's not really mental. I mean, {le}, {le} is an action, right? Of body, speech or mind. Karma is an action of body, speech or mind. It's a thought, or a word that you said to somebody, or some kind of thing you do with your body. {Nyon mong} is just a bad thought. But, this {nyon mong} is a little tricky. When it's part of {kunjung denpa}, it's {nyon mong pa}. Okay, we have to change it, we have to fix it. We have to add a {pa}. {Nyon mong pa}. That changes it completely. Those of you who are aspiring to be translators, be aware of this distinction. It's a huge difference between {nyon mong} and {nyon mong pa}. {Nyon mong} is a mental affliction. {Nyon mong pa} means a mentally afflicted thing.

Now, {[unclear]}, [B: Abhidhamakosha]. Because you get mental afflictions towards this object. Then there's a huge debate: well, is an Arhat {nyon mong pa}? Cause isn't it possible for someone to get mad at an Arhat? I mean, it gets very tricky. We won't go into it. But in a monastery, when you debate it, if you debate it for a long time, you come out with this thing where anything that's Arya truth number one is also Arya truth number two. Anything that is suffering is also causing suffering. And you gotta think about it. It's difficult. It's a huge debate. But the bottom line is that. Yeah? Yeah. One is the contents... the world that holds the beings, and the other is the beings who are held in that world, who inhabit that world, yeah, okay. So, those are the two parts of {kunjung denpa}. So, {Kunjung denpa} is all around you also. Everything in your life is {kunjung denpa}, except for the few good moments in your meditations, or something, or if you're able to do {tong len} while you're walking down the street, but I'd say for me, from nine to five thirty, you know, I don't think there's a single event of non-the first... that's not the first two noble truth. Except, unless I hold my anger at work, or, you know, unless I have some opportunity to practice Dharma at work, if my mind is on the business, it's all samsara. It's all suffering. Everything is suffering. The thought, the object, the activity, everything is suffering. And it's causing more suffering. Maybe I shouldn't do that. I gotta eat, right? By the way, there's no reading for tonight because we couldn't finish it. Cause it was too hard. It was too long. And we'll try to give it out at the review, which will be on Monday, okay. Say {gok den} [repeat], {gok den} [repeat]. {Gok} means cessation. I'll give you all the... {gok} means choke, aaah... that's {gok}. {Gok} means constipation. {Gok} means, you know, stuck at the border, the guards won't let you through. You know, {gok} has all these meanings of obstruction and stopped up and stopped, you know. And that's

what {gok}... Cessation, is like... I don't like the word so much cause I don't think it's ever used in normal English, you know. You don't say, I have a cessation of my boss, he finally left, you know. You know, or I have a cessation of income because I got unemployed, you know, or something like that. You know, I mean, you don't... But, anyway, I think we're stuck with it. {Den} means truth, which means fact, okay. You remember what {gakja} is? Oh, by the way, how do you translate that, the end of suffering? Okay, the end of suffering. I mean, the first thing you think... first you think about suffering, then you think where did this come from, and then you think, how could I stop. I'm sorry, I'd like to stop. Okay, which implies cutting off number two, which is what?

[students: Cause.]

The cause of suffering. Okay, number three is related to number two because number three is cutting off number two.

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, {gakja}, say {gakja} [repeat], {gakja} [repeat]. {Gakja}, sounds like got ya, right? {Gakja} is the thing that we deny, okay. It's the thing that we deny. It's the thing we would like to prove doesn't exist, okay? Now, there's two very, very different flavors of {gakja} and they are gonna be here. They're gonna be gulped in part one and gulped in part two. What do you want to call {gakja} cause I don't... I don't... translators fight with each other about this one. Let's say {gakja}, how's that? [laughs] Uh... there's two {gakja's} and they're very, very different, and most people never figure it out. okay. There's the {gakja} which is stopped by the path. For example, is believing that things are self-existent something you would like to stop?

[student: No.]

Excuse me? [laughter] Yeah, no, I'll say it again. Is believing that things are self-existent something you would like to stop?

[student: Yes.]

Of course. [laughter]

[student: But...]

Does believing that things are self-existent itself exist?

[student: Yes.]

Of course, it's the source of all suffering. It's dependent origination, link number one. Go down and look at the painting. It's the blind guy. Believing that things are self-existent. So, of course, it's something we would like to stop. It's the source of all evil. And that's not money, but it's related maybe, okay, so, the {gakja} is stopped by the path. A good example of that kind of {gakja} would be believing that things are self-existent. And that {gakja} exists, okay. That {gakja} really does exist. That belief in self-existence, it exists. And causes all our trouble. When you stop it... now, I'll put here is stopped, that is {gokden}. That is the third noble truth. When you stop the belief that things are self-existent, you have reached {gokden}. Yeah...

[student: [unclear]]

Not yet. Not yet. Okay? We'll get into it. We're gonna get into it. You know what {gakja} is from California. I'm expanding on your knowledge of {gakja}, okay. I'm introducing you to another {gakja}. There's actually two {gakja's}. I've never told you about the second one, okay. {Gakja} is stopped by the path, is stopped, which means you are able to stop the intellectual belief in self-existence. You never again believe that it's the right thing to think that it's self-existent. What path stops that?

[student: Path of seeing.]

Yeah. The path of seeing, right here. Okay. The first time you see emptiness directly, at the path of seeing, and you come out of it, when you come out of that experience, you can... you begin... you start again to see things as self-existent. But you know you're wrong, okay. So, the intellectual belief in self-existence has been stopped forever. You will never again believe yourself when you think things as self-existent. Even though you can't stop yourself from thinking things are self-existent, okay. But at least you know you're wrong, okay. At that point, you have reached {gokden} for the intellectual belief in self-existence. So, that is an example of the truth of cessation. That's one example of the truth of cessation. Now, I'll give you another one. If there was a two-headed, pink elephant, full-sized, two-headed, pink elephant in this room, and I'm not counting Leon's part, okay, would he or she be behind this blackboard or in front of this black... I mean, are those the two choices? Either behind the blackboard or in front of the

blackboard? If there was, I'm saying. If there was a two-headed, full-sized pink elephant in this room, not counting Leon's area, would he or she either have to be behind the blackboard or in front of the blackboard?

[students: [unclear]]

Well, or on, okay, but kinda... I'm saying a full-sized couldn't probably sit on it, okay. But, I mean, it's reasonable to say that they're either in front of this line or in front of this line. And if you look in front of this line, and they're not there, and then you look behind the line, and they're not there, you can safely say there's no two-headed, pink, full-sized elephants in this room. That is Madyamika reasoning. Madyamika reasoning works the same way. Exactly the same way. Madyamika reasoning defines an area, splits it into two or three places, you know, sub-areas, and says let's go look for what?

[students: [unclear]]

[Geshe Michael: [unclear]]

I'm gonna go look for a so-called, self-existent thing in the front of the blackboard and behind the blackboard. Those are the two choices. Let's see. Any self-existent things in front of the blackboard? By the way, they don't exist, right, anyway. They are exactly like a pink, two-headed, full-sized elephant. So, I look around. No self-existent things here. None behind here. I guess it doesn't exist. That's exactly how Madyamika reason works. Madyamika reasoning is seeking to prove the non-existence of something that never could have existed, and never did exist, and never will exist, by looking for it in all the places it could have been if it did exist. I mean, you've gotta think of it that way, okay. This {gakja} is one of those, quote, so-called self-existent things which never existed anyway. That's this {gakja}. {Gakja} number two, okay. Can you stop that {gakja}? No. How can you stop something that was never there anyway. I mean, how can you kill a pink elephant, full-sized with two heads, in Leon's classroom? You know? You can't. I mean, that's why you have to say stopped in quotation marks here. And then middle path reasoning proves that that thing that never was isn't there, okay. But you are grasping to that thing in every instant of your existence. You are grasping to that thing.

[student: Did you ever see a pink elephant?]

Uh, the imagination of a pink elephant exists.

{student: Yeah, but did you ever see a pink elephant?}

Nope

[student: How can you be sure that it's not here [unclear]]

Full-sized, meaning six feet tall.

[student: [unclear]]

Because I can imagine what it would look like if it did exist. And you can imagine what the self would be like if it did exist. And that's...you see, the imagination exists. That's the {gakja} here. The imagination of the self does exist. To believe in it, does exist. But the thing you believe in doesn't exist, and never did, and never will, okay. But somehow believing in it causes you trouble. These are both called {gopden}. Very interesting. Number two is equivalent to what? When you stop it. And I'll state it differently. When you establish the non-existence of a self-existent thing, you have established emptiness itself. Number two is exactly the same as... the absence of a self-existent thing is called emptiness. That's {shunyata}. So, {gokden} number two, the truth of cessation number two, is emptiness itself. It's the fact that that thing that was never there, ain't there. Emptiness itself is the second part of {gok}... that's very subtle, okay. And when you reach {gokden}, a certain part of you is {gokden}. Which is called by another word. When you're enlightened, it's called what? Dharmakaya, okay. That's kind of cool, okay. Okay, number four, and then we'll take a break. It's getting a little heavy, right? This is the easy part. Truth of the {lam}. Which is path. Truth of the path, number four. It's a very natural progression. You become aware of suffering, your first reaction is you know, nobody asked where did this raise come from, but the minute they don't give you a raise, you're like, why? , you know. I'm very familiar with this. So, first you have suffering, and the natural reaction to suffering is to ask yourself why me? , you know, why me? And then you want to stop it. And then you figure out how to stop it. And that's the truth of the path. You can divide into two, for convenience's sake. It really consists of five different paths. Have you ever seen them written down somewhere? The five paths? Sound familiar? Oh, right there, okay [laughs] Right here. These five paths, okay. If you want to divide them into two, you could put number one and number two together, and you could put three through five together, on the basis of what?

[student: [unclear]]

Has this dude or dudess seen emptiness directly or not, okay? If they have not yet on a single track, cause there's possible weird things, but if they're on a bodhisattva track, and they haven't seen emptiness yet, you can group them into paths one and two. And then all the people up here who have seen emptiness directly, you can group them into three, four and five, okay. So, the first part of the path, the truth of the path, consists of the first two paths. Accumulation and preparation. The second part consists of the last three paths. In reality, if all you want to do is get out of suffering, if all you want to do is get out of this kind of unhappy life, you have go through these four truths. You have to understand them, okay. You have to go through this process up here. First... the first thing to do is to recognize what suffering is. It's extremely difficult, you know. We are suffering, and everything in our world is suffering, so it's very hard to recognize it. It's very weird, you know. But basically, just think of your own unhappiness, you know. In fact, if you're... your own unhappiness, okay. Your lack of bliss, okay. And that's... that's really all it takes. And then you go through understanding emptiness, and you see emptiness directly, and then you use that knowledge in your day to day life to wipe out your mental afflictions. That's it. That's the four noble truths, okay. And if you study those well, and if you master them, you will reach nirvana. Nirvana being like a golden porthole out there in space. Sometimes I think that's the meaning of a halo. And once your mind reaches that place, you can never again be unhappy. You can not be jealous, you can not have desire, you can not be irritated, you can not be stressed, you can't be anxiety... you can't have anxiety, you can't have low self-esteem. You can't have any of those things. They're out of the question for you. You can not even have those thoughts. And your mind can never be budged out of that light. Your mind is in that light and nothing, no external event can budge it out. When I say external event, is it still possible for that person who has reached that golden light state in their mind to have a lousy day? Absolutely. And you will, okay. They don't... they're not unhappy, and they are not disturbed by the lousy day. Their mind is totally free of any kind of irritation, or sadness, or upset, or not capable of being budged out of that state of happiness. But they can still get hit by a car, they can still have the boss yell at them, they can still, you know, not have enough money, you know, stuff like that. Totally possible. For a while. But if you stay in that place for a reasonable amount of time, those other things wear out, and they don't come back. They never come back. You're out. And it will... before you die, you're out. I mean, that's the limit. Your body. Then your body goes into a different body. Take a break, five, ten minutes. We'll cover Mahayana in ten minutes. [laughs]

[cut] Freedom from fear. I mean, helping people out of depression, anxiety, helping people getting mugged. Helping countries who are getting eaten up by other countries. Stuff like that. Teaching people how to get out of their suffering. The best kind of giving. I see... I meet some people who say, I'm just gonna do number three so I don't have to do the other two, and it's very suspicious [laughs]. So, I think, normally, bodhisattvas are doing all three. If you took secret vows, you're actually supposed to do a fourth one, which I'm sure you know about. So I don't have to go over it. That's the perfection of giving. I don't have to do the morality one cause you learned about it in the first part of this course. All I have to add is that it includes bodhisattva morality and tantric morality, if you have those vows, okay. What's perfection number three? By the way, are they perfections? Nobody who went to California can answer.

[student: No.]

No, they're not. You're not perfect at giving. You're not perfect... We can practice the perfections, by the way, but they're not perfections for us, right? So, technically, the real perfections are had by an enlightened being, okay. We have what is called, making perfections, making perfect-tions, okay. And what we do is those. So, they're called perfections, but they're not really perfections. They are trying to become perfect. They're called {paro tu chinche} instead of {paro tu chinsin}., Making you perfect instead of getting... instead of being perfect. Did you have a question?

[student: [unclear]]

Yeah, a Buddha has perfected all six. In the mental stream of a Buddha, those six are true perfections. We call them {paro tu chinsin}, which means gone to the other shore. Gone. And then in ours, {paro tu chinche} which means getting us to the other shore. And so there's a big argument about the scriptures, and they finally come up with that. Technically, for it to be {paro tu chinche}, it has to be done with a pretty good understanding of emptiness, but, if you're really doing it for the benefit of others and to reach Buddhahood, even just in a rough, conceptual way, it's already a perfection. So, the bottom line is that you and me can practice perfections if we have even a little idea as we do it that I'm doing this so that I can become a Buddha so I can help other people, okay. Alright. Perfection number three is called what?

[students: [unclear]]

Yeah, I like to call it not getting angry. They call it patience. I don't know. For me, patience doesn't quite do it. Patience means not getting antsy in the dentist's office. I don't know what, but... Anyway, it means not getting angry. It can also be at inanimate objects, like if you stub your toe and you curse.

[student: [unclear]]

It's not getting angry about anything. And I'm not gonna go in to much more detail about it. Our dream is that in nineteen ninety seven, this class will have four courses on the [B: Bodhicharyavatara. On the Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life], which is extraordinary. And we are gonna use the best commentary ever written, never been translated, by Je Tsongkapa's main student, Gyeltsup Je, who's on the left up there, under his right knee. So, we'll cover it then, if we're still here. Next perfection, what?

[students: Joyful effort.]

Joyful effort. All I have to say about that is have a good time with your Dharma. You know, there's a certain point in your practice that you can reach where it's just fun. And that's the whole idea. It's where you're really having a good time doing your Dharma practice. And you get to a certain point, and we can help each other do that, you know. I think there's been times when we really got into it, and I think it'd be cool if we try to stay in that, you know. I know in California, I just felt this joy the whole time and we were all just... we knew we were being really good, and it felt really good, and we were really happy being good. So, I think, it's just being happy about Dharma, you know, instead of resisting it or something. Just throw yourself into it, have a good time being good. That's the definition. {Somkan drela dro o}. That's the chapter from Shantideva. What is the fourth perfection? It is to have a good time doing virtue, okay. That's number four. I want to talk a little bit about five and six, and then we'll stop. We didn't touch Je Tsongkapa's... I mean, you know, we didn't scratch it. Maybe we have to do it again. I don't know. But that's... I just wanted you to get the {lam rim} feeling a couple of times every year, okay. I'd like to talk about the advanced forms of last two perfections, okay. What's the fifth perfection?

[students: Concentration.]

Concentration or meditation. The ultimate form of it is called... People put an H here and call it shamatha because the Sanskrit is aspirated. It doesn't make any

sense in English. It's not tha, it's ta. English is fine. It's a real English T. No reason to put an H there. Some people leave out the H here because there used to be a diacritic there, and they left it out when someone printed it, and they call it samatha. Samantha. This is the correct pronunciation. So, we say {shamata} [repeat], {shamata} [repeat]. In Tibetan, {shiney}. I'm gonna give you the definition of {shamata}. {shamata} is like, {shamata} is like the ultimate evolution of the fifth perfection, okay. And I'll give you the definition. People are always talking, {shamata}, {shamata}, {shamata}, and they don't know any idea what it is. This is the definition from scripture: meditative concentration, which is infused with the extraordinary pleasure of agility, and I'll talk about that, brought on by being in deep one-pointed meditation upon the particular object of focus, upon the particular object of focus. That's the definition of {shamata}. So, what are the elements there? It's a kind of meditative concentration, okay, first of all. It's fixed one-pointedly on its object, secondly. And it leads to what we call agility. It causes what we call agility. And that agility brings you some kind of deep pleasure. And those are all the elements of {shamata}. That's what distinguishes {shamata} from other kinds of meditations. What does it imply? You're so good at keeping your mind on one object, that you reach agility... it's called agility of mind and body. The body part means that you could sit for very, very long periods of time and your body is totally used to it. Agility here means your body, and Je Tsongkapa says it very strongly in his {lam rim}, in this {lam rim}, he says, your body is like totally under your control. If you want to keep it there, sitting without moving for two, three hours, no problem. It's totally... you have mastered your body. And your body... you've been in meditation so much, that you can make your body do whatever you want, okay. You're so used to meditating, that... it's called agility of body. You can tell your body, okay, now listen body, we're gonna sit here for three hours and you're not gonna move. and you're so good at it, and you're so used to it, that it just does it. And then you have this mental agility. Mental agility in this case means you decide to fix your mind on an object, and you can keep it there at will, you know. At will. It means, it means, I don't know, like some kind of total mastery over your mind and body. You say, mister body, we're gonna sit here for three hours. You're not gonna move. Mister mind, you're gonna focus on this thing, and you're not gonna think of another thing. And they do it. And as a result of that, you get some very, very pleasant sensations. It brings on a bliss of body and mind. That bliss is not a goal, and, in fact, in the bodhisattva vows, it says...

[student: [unclear]]

[[unclear]]. Do not get attached to this, to this elation of body and mind. It is not

a Buddhist goal. But it's cool [laughs]. And, you know, you can enjoy it. You can enjoy it. Don't get attached to it. Don't mistake it for any kind of spiritual goal. It's not. But it's a very nice side effect. And that's {shamata}, okay. Now, I'll go on to the ultimate form of wisdom, and then I'm gonna stop. Which is called what?

[student: [unclear]]

Uh, that's the object. Pali is a corruption of Sanskrit, and in Pali it comes out {Vipashayana}. Okay. This is the Sanskrit form, this is the original form of the word, {Vipashayana}, okay. In Tibetan, it's {hlak tong}. {Hlak} means special, or extraordinary. {Tong} means to see. I like to call it the vision of emptiness, or something like that. Some people call it insight. I'm not quite sure about that translation because insight to me implies some kind of thinking. Like I have insight into that problem, or something. So, it's not restricted to that. It can be a kind of analytical thinking, but it also refers to the direct perception of emptiness, okay. So, I feel a little uncomfortable about insight. Vision to me like means it could be either one. A deep understanding of something. Something like that. I'll give you the definition, okay? This is one of my pet peeves in Buddhism, along with, you know, noble truths and stuff like that. There are schools in America that do {Vipashayana} retreats, and they, I believe that they understand {Vipashayana} to mean the meditation part, which it's not at all. That's the {shamata} part. {Vipashayana} is the other half, which is the... Well, you'll understand it from the definition from scripture, okay? A state of wisdom which is infused with the extraordinary pleasure of agility brought on by analyzing its particular object of focus, all based upon a platform of quietude. Quietude meaning {shamata}, okay. What are the elements here? I mean, I'll go through the elements. First of all, you've already established a platform of {shamata}. In other words, you are able to put your mind up to a certain level of concentration, and stay there. That's the first element here. Then you are taking a particular object, and you are analyzing it. Is this self-existent or not? You know. Did this come from karma or not? You know. Is this a projection or not? You know, it's analyzing that, that... its object of focus. And that analysis brings on a kind of again agility of mind and body. Meaning that you are able to tell your mind and body what to do perfectly. You know, Okay, mister mind, you focus on this thing and you think about its nature for twenty minutes. Mister body... In the mean time, you stay still, okay. And you have the absolute ability to tell them what to do. That's agility. It's called {shinjam}. You're able to tell your body and mind what to do, and they will listen to you. And that brings on again a state of bliss. You know, a state of mental and physical well-being, which is a byproduct and not to be something to be attached... But the point here is that

your mind is analyzing the real nature of a thing, and it does not have to be a... what do you call it... discursive analyzing. It can be the analyzing of perceiving emptiness directly in this case, okay. There is {Vipashayana} going on during the first part of the path of seeing, for example, okay. And you must have these two together. And it has to come in the following order. And now I'll refer to the direct perception of emptiness. The first time that you see emptiness directly. Path number five, right here. So, I'm talking about here, okay? And this is the whole point of these two perfections. These two perfections, meditation number five and wisdom number six, these two, {shamata} and {Vipashayana}, are their ultimate evolution. These are the ultimate forms of those two perfections. With regard to the direct perception of emptiness, and I've said it many times before but I'll just tie it again, you must be able to reach up to a platform of perfect concentration, called {shamata}. You must be able to get there. Your mind is not in the desire realm any more. It's actually at a different level. Your mind is at a totally different level. Your sense consciousness' are totally shut down. You cannot be aware of seeing anything, hearing anything, tasting anything, feeling anything. So, your mind must be able to get to that point. And I repeat that you cannot get to that level if you don't practice an hour or two a day without fail. You cannot. You will not be able to get there. People say, well, what am I gonna do. I only have forty five minutes before work. Go find yourself another job, okay. What's more important, you know. What's more important as you're dying, you know? That you got that extra half hour of pay? Or what? Go find a job where you can spend an hour or two a day. You must. And where you're not exhausted the next morning, that you can't do it. You must. There's no choice. There's really no choice. As a Buddhist you're required to have a good livelihood, an honest livelihood, and not to grub off other people. You're required not to impinge on other people. But you must find a livelihood where you can meditate an hour or two every day. You must find a livelihood like that. You have to decide. If you don't, you won't be able to see emptiness, okay. You just won't be able to do it. And if your job exhausts you, that you can't really meditate properly, then find another job. Find another occupation, you know. There's no question of what's more important. So, you have to be able to reach that platform, and stay on it at will, and that's {shamata}. And then based on that platform, you start to gain the ability to see the emptiness of an object. And very typically, it comes from a lot of classroom hours. That's a requirement. A lot of classroom hours, and specifically you have to study the subjects of Madyamika, and the perfection of wisdom. You must study those. You must spend many hours learning them. And then it has some effect on your brain. If you just do it once or twice, nothing will happen. So, you must have these two combined. And that's the whole point of the last part of Je Tsongkapa's {lam rim}. And that's all I

have to say about his {lam rim}, okay. At the end, he says, you must find a union of these two. You must come to the union of these two. You must gain that platform, and then you must, based on that platform, you must perceive emptiness. Okay, you must. Very important. Last thing, he gets into a little bit of the secret teachings. And what he says is, once you've studied the paths which are common to the secret and open teachings, which refers to... What paths are used in both the secret teachings and the open teachings? What particular teaching is used in both the study of the secret Buddhism...

[students: [unclear]]

{Lam rim}, okay, what you just learned is indispensable in both the open teachings and the secret teachings. When you get to the secret teachings, they will not work unless you are a master of lam rim, okay. You can take all the initiations you want, you can keep all the weird ritual objects you want, you can have all the weird rituals you want, you know, you can have all the holy substances you want, you can wear any kind of weird costume you want, and nothing will happen. Guaranteed. You must have {lam rim}. You must have everything we just talked about. And then it says, {dorje...[unclear]}, find a diamond master, and then enter the secret path, okay. And then you will achieve the goals in this life. But you must have lam rim. Did you have a question?

[student: Yeah. The ability to just command your mind and your body...]

I like that word, that's cool. Yes?

[student: I remember speaking to somebody who was a hatha yoga practitioner, and they did some study in Hinduism, and they said that originally hatha yoga practice... the word yoga means union, and you used the word union before, and originally the hatha yoga practice was a way to tame the body so that people could sit quietly in meditation. There was a need to do those practices so that people could sit for meditation purposes, and they would fidget, [unclear], and that was an off-shoot of that. I was wondering [unclear]]

Nope [laughter]. No, I don't know. In meditation, it's very common to get... we talked about it last Saturday. If there's a disruption of the breath, that affects... if the mind is disturbed, it affects the inner winds, which subject is secret, and I can't describe it much. But if the inner winds are affected, the breathing is then affected. So, it's like, if mind affects wind, winds affects breath, and then the... so, when you're excited, your breath is faster. When you're agitated or stressed,

your breath is un... it's not smooth. It's jerky. And that's just a sign that your mind is agitated. The opposite also happens. If you are trying to meditate hard, and you're working on your breath, for example, it can affect your mind. It screws up the inner winds, and then the inner winds affect the mind. And you start to get what we call {lung}. {Lung} means inner wind, but in meditation, it means a problem of the inner wind. And you start to get... people go crazy, or get nervous, or... you know, can't sleep and they have to stop their retreat, or something. Very, very common, okay. In order to prevent that, there are certain diets you can follow, and some kinds of exercises. So, there is a place for that, particularly when you are trying to develop {shamata}. Like even if you go on a special retreat [unclear], and, in that case, it's important to ... if you start to have that problem, ...

Course 9
The Ethical Life
Class 11, Course Review

Transcribed by: Karen Becker
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Side B Transcribed by: Angie Overy

(cut)

a year for two, a year or two from now. Then the course has been successful, so treat the final like that. It's not like some kind of punishment or something like that, I...just things that I really want you to know and to pass on to your own students, okay? All right. The way I usually do this is I just go around the room and embarrass people in order, and people people pull out their notes and start reading them and that's the whole idea. So I'll start over here with Fran Dyan. These are the points that I think are important, most important, okay? Sanskrit word for Buddhist discipline?

(student, : the {{vinaya}})

That's tough. (laughter) Tibetan word?

(students: {dul wa})

{dul wa}, means what?

(student: to tame something)

And 'to tame' in in two senses. Dharmabhadra says to tame in two senses. Remember? You're taming two things, basically.

(student: the senses)

Yeah, that's number two. Control your senses. Your your desire for sense objects, which will make you a lot happier even if you never do anything else. And number one was...the ultimate

purpose of {vinaya} is what?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, which is controlling the?

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, which is taming the mental afflictions. That's just logical. I mean, if the goal of {vinaya} is to reach nirvana, then the word {dul wa} or {vinaya} which means "to tame" if you're taming the mental afflictions, you are taming them in the sense of wiping them out. And you're also taming your sense, your sense desire. Okay. Those two things. That's what Dharmabhadra says. And and what you use to tame your self is primarily the first seven of the ten, avoiding the first seven of the ten bad deeds, that's primarily what the {vinaya}'s all about. Okay. Bernard. It says, describe the relationship between the Buddhist discipline, Lord Buddha and his teachings. Remember anything like that?

(student, Bernard: (unclear))

And we had a quotation in {vinaya} the other day, what was that? We we looked it up. We we looked up the sutra which which gave the answer to this question. And we were concerned because we we were reading a text with the monks and nuns and the text didn't seem to read very well and then we found another Tibetan commentary that had the quotation in a little bit better form and then we finally found it in the original sutra and it was even more complete and then we finally figured out what the quotation meant and remember? Come on. Really? It said, {dul wa ni ten dang tunpa ngu yin. dul wa ni ten dang tunpa ngu yin. Ten dang and tunpa} both...{ngu yin} Remember? Nah. We spent a long time on it. Anyway (laughs) the point is that the {vinaya}...there's a statement in the in sutra where the Buddha himself says, "the {vinaya} is the teacher and his teachings; the {vinaya} is the teacher himself and the teachings themselves", okay. Why? Why is the {vinaya} the teachings of the Buddha? I mean there's this part in the sutra where it says, if you were

stuck on a desert island and all you had was a book of {vinaya}, you could say, I have the whole Buddhist teachings. (Go chu pa) means, in Tibetan, "one book of {vinaya} can be a reasonable approximation of the entire Buddhist teachings" Period.

(student: The essence of the practice. (unclear))

Yeah.

(student: And your, concentrative level and everything (unclear))

Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, so but...that's just a direct quotation, that the Bu...if if all you had to take was...if you could only take one book out of the whole [B: Canon], if you took one book of {vinaya}, it would represent the whole [B: Canon]. That's from sutra. It would be the same as having the whole [B: Canon]. The whole teachings of the Buddha. And then after that, the Buddha says, and by the way, it also represents the, the presence of myself, you know, one book of {vinaya} represents the presence of the Buddha himself because it teaches you what to give up and what to follow; what to follow and what to give up. Okay. And that's just a very famous sutra. It says the {vinaya} is the teacher and the vine, the {vinaya} is the teachings. All of them, okay. It's, it's an advertisement for {vinaya}. Okay. Mr. Siller, since you halfway answered it already, name the three extraordinary trainings and then explain how the tra...extraordinary...by the way they're called extraordinary trainings, right, we don't just call them the training of morality, for example. Why? Remember? They actually don't call them the three trainings. They call them the three extraordinary trainings? Do you remember why?

(student, Mr. Siller: (unclear))

Yeah, but also that it's to distinguish generally the general practice of an ethical way of life from a Buddhist's practice of an ethical way of life. So these are the three trainings as practiced by a Buddhist for the purpose of reaching nirvana and Buddhahood. And that makes them extraordinary. Other people can

practice meditation, other people can practice an ethical way of life, other people can try to understand reality, but that doesn't qualify as training. As a Buddhist training. Buddhist and extraordinary here are the same thing. They have to be...if they are aimed at reaching nirvana and Buddhahood, then they are extraordinary trainings. How does...what role does the extraordinary training of an ethical way of life play in developing the other two extraordinary trainings, and say it again, you said it pretty well.

(student: Well, the three trainings (unclear))

The training in? Ethical lifestyle.

(student: ethical lifestyle.)

A. B?

(student: Right thoughts)

Concentration.

(student: Concentration. And wisdom.)

Yeah. Ethical way of life, concentration and wisdom. And how are they interconnected?

(student: You could never get to the second and third without having an ethical way of life.)

Yeah, and you can't you can't get into the third without the second, and you can't get into the second without the first, basically, like that. And Je Tsongkapa in his letter to, in the first letter you had, in that epistle to Ngawang Drakpa, okay, he said he said the same thing. He said by his time, 1400, people had forgotten what?

(student: An ethical way of living.)

They had forgotten the wa...the connection between

(student: between the ethical way of living and (unclear))

Living good, a good life in your day to day life, and in your meditation, that you can never learn to meditate well if you didn't do, if you weren't good during the day (laughs), you'd never be able to meditate at night, period. Can't do it, and...you know I've had a lot of Americans come to me and say, "you know, I've been practicing for ten years or twenty years I've never reached {shamanta}, I don't even know what it's like, I can't concentrate, nothing's going right, you know, I do all these{sadanas} and nothing's happening and I, I, I believe that it's mainly connected to not following {{pratimoksha}}and I believe among them for Americans the ones of speech are the most difficult, you know, that we just...it's almost considered a virtue in our country to blab, you know, idle talk, and and I'm speaking from experience (laughs) okay. And I think that's a big obstacle for us. Okay. And then Je Tsongkapa in that letter ex...he compares an ethical way of life...I'm sorry, he compares.. he says, an ethical way of life leads to a calm state of mind and the calm state of mind is necessary for the moon of what? Emptiness to reflect in it. So it's almost like you either have to speed your mind up or slow you mind down to the speed of emptiness, and that we are all constantly on a different wave length than emptiness. I mean a different si..we can never get in sink with emptiness 'cause our, either 'cause our mind is too fast or too slow and there are emptinesses all around you all the time and you just don't...they, they go over your head because your mind's moving at a different speed and that speed is regulated by your morality. Okay. So the idea is to clean, clean up your life which puts your mind at a different speed and then it, it becomes like a mirror and then emptiness can reflect in that mirror as the moon can only reflect in a pond which is still, and if it's choppy you don't get a nice moon. Okay. Senior. Name the early Sanskrit commentary which forms the basis of the study of Buddhist discipline in Tibetan monasteries. Give the author and his approximate dates.

(student: [B: Vinaya Sutra] by Master Guna Prabha)

Okay. Approximate da...this is the [B: Vinaya Sutra] by Guna Prabha...and try to say Master, oka. It's considered impolite to call somebody 'Nagarjuna' or 'Tsongkapa' or like that. Approximate date which we we don't really know very well. Do you know the...five hundred a.d. Okay. Approximately. Okay. I'll ask you another question. Is the [B:Vinaya Sutra] a sutra?

(student: (unclear))

Is the [B: Vinaya Sutra] a sutra? Huh?

(student: There are different meanings of word sutra.)

Oh good, that's a good way to answer. If I define sutra as as in it's normal way which is as an as an open teaching of the Buddha, as opposed to tantra which is a secret teaching of the Buddha, the open teaching of an enlightened being. Is the [B: Vinaya Sutra] an open teaching of an enlightened being? Which means is it in the [B: Kangyur], for example? The the [B: Canon] has two parts, [B: Kangyur] and [B: Tengyur]. [B: Kangyur] is the is, is the part that we have in Tibetan which was spoken by a an en...by enlightened beings, normally Shakyamuni, but not necessarily Shakyamuni, and that's about fifteen hundred separate works; then we have the [B: Tengyur] which is the early Sanskrit commentaries before before about nine hundred a.d. and those were written by non-enlightened beings, so where does the [B: Vinaya Sutra] go, in the [B: Tengyur] or the [B: Kangyur]?

(student: [B: Kangyur])

Huh?

(student: [B: Kangyur])

Is it? Was it spoken by a Buddha?

(student: No)

No, so it's in the [B: Tengyur], okay. It's a shastra. It's, it's a commentary on a sutra. Okay. It's a commentary on the (b: {pratimoksha} Sutra). Okay.

(student: (unclear))

On no, sure. But what I'm saying is that, the [B: Vinaya Sutra] is not a sutra. It's a misnomer. Okay. And you should know. The [B: Vinaya Sutra] which is the main book used for the study of {vinaya} in Tibetan monasteries is not a sutra. It's called sutra because sutra also means short book and it's a short book. So be careful, I mean, if somebody says, "what're you studying?", you say " [B: Vinaya Sutra] , you know, and they say "is it a sutra?" and you have to say "no", it was written a thousand years later by Master Guna Prabha. It's not a sutra. It used to confuse the heck out of me. I would search through the [B: Kangyur] catalogues for this sutra and it's not there, (laughs) you know, okay? Carol (unclear) Carol (unclear). Describe the motivation with which one should engage in the study of Buddhist discipline. Yeah, renunciation. Okay. you...renunciation. And in fact there's this big debate in the {vinaya} scriptures about if you don't have vin...renunciation and you try to take monk's vows, if they even ever form in you, you know. If you don't have a single thought of renunciation during the ceremony, is it possible for the vows to form? And I and as I un...remember it said, no. They don't ever form. So it...the the reason to do {vinaya}...Je Tsongkapa, another quote from his letter, he says "if keeping up this ethical way of life becomes for us something motivated only by a concern about how we look to others, or about the honor and gifts we might obtain thereby, then the real point of ethics is lost". In other words, ethics which is motivated by how you look, by a by a concern for conforming to what other people do, or or or worrying about how other people might like you or won't like you, or something like that, it's not it's not the proper motivation for practicing {vinaya}, okay, for taking {pratimoksha} vows. It has to be that you are tired of being unhappy and that you want to be happy (laughs). I mean everybody has that but it has to be why you take the vows and you, if you follow the vows you can be happy, okay. The whole {pratimoksha} teachings, the whole {vinaya} teachings and especially [B: Vinaya Sutra] has, has three sections. I mean you can break the whole thing in, down into three sections...three main sections that relate to the {pratimoksha} vows. Do you remember what they are?

(student: How to get your vows?)

Yeah. How to get them if you don't have them, number one.

(student: How to keep them.)

How to keep them if you do get them.

(student: How to restore them if they're damaged).

Yeah, how to fix them if you break them, okay, and, and there's nothing in {vinaya} that doesn't fit into one of those three categories, so I think it's just good in your mind to, to have that that overview of, of the {vinaya} teachings, you know, that that's that's all there is in the {vinaya} sutra is those three sections, okay.

Tess. When you get to the part about how to keep your vows from being damaged, there's four, four main sections. And do you remember what they are?

(Tess: Inner support)

That was number two. How...what was number one? Logically.

(Tess: Outer support)

Yeah, outer support which is what?

(Tess: Remembering the pure intention of taking the vows.)

No, that's the inner support. How's the outer support? When a monk first becomes a monk...

(Tess: Oh, being under the guidance of their {ne lama})

Yeah, you have to go find a {ne lama, a ne lama}. {Ne Lama} means "a personal monastic preceptor"; a personal mentor. So when you become a monk you have to go look for a {Ne Lama} and it's it's considered extremely important. When you study the

subject of prioritization of ethics in the monastery, which means, if two events come together at the same time, like if you're supposed to do two things at the same time, which do you do first, you know? You have to drop one of them and the classic example is, you lost your {ne lama}, you lost your preceptor, and it's also time to go to {so jong}, it's also time...you know, it's 7:00 and it's time to go do your {so jong} with all the other monks. What do you do? I mean, do you wait the two hours until {so jong} is over and then go find a preceptor or do you drop {so jong} which is which is one of the three great basis' of all monastic practice, do you drop that...which is almost unheard of, and go try to find this preceptor...I mean is two hours that important and the answer is?

(student: (But you know)

Don't "but you know"

(student: (unclear) go to {so jong} too)

(laughs) not necessarily.

(student: (unclear) go to {so jong})

No it's not...it's not contradictory to go into {so jong} to look for your {Ne Lama} and not do {so jong} but, the answer is...I mean, in the...this is the theory of prioritization, which we did not get into, it's called ({dom}), but it's what what's more important. You always have to do what's more important at any given moment and that's true of all your Buddhist practice. I mean, there may be very good things to do which are not ultimately important at that moment, and the answer is you go find your {ne lama}. You drop {so jong}, even if it's only two hours. Even if it's only saving you two hours, you go find your {ne lama}, you know. That's how important it is. {so jong} is one of the three great foundations of all monastic practice along with the summer retreat and, and the end of the summer retreat, but but on but but you'd drop it like a hot potato and you'd go find your {ne Lama}. So it's that important...the outside support for keeping your vows. And I repeat, you know, there are

two things you are allowed to do without your {ne lama's} approval which is, brush your teeth and go to the bathroom. Everything else you have to ask your {Ne Lama} for ten years. And then you're considered stable. (Den po) it's called, okay?

(student: (unclear))

Same thing. Okay. Inner support?

(student: The intention that you had when you first took your vows.)

Yeah, and that's very important, I mean it...I always say that, you know, we don't...I can't judge people who have given up their vows. I don't, I don't, I'm not judging the people in America, for example, who have given up their monks vows and nuns vows. I can't know that there isn't some special thing going on where some tantric deity appeared to them and said it would be useful if you gave up your vows today. You know, and, and in such a case I think you would have to give up your vows. And so I believe that's possible. But if that's not the case, I don't understand why anyone would want to give up their vows because the motivation with which you take your vows is what? You're just tired of being unhappy and you recognize that, that those worldly activities can not make you happy, and so, it's impossible to give up your vows for for that reason...to be...it's impossible to give up your vows to be happy. It's in...it's contradiction of terms. It's impossible. If you understand anything about the vows, and if you took them with any kind of renunciation, then it's impossible to want to give them up to be happy. It's impossible. I mean it's so, conversely, if you always remember why you took your vows, which is because you don't want to be unhappy, you'll always keep them, and that's why they're considered the second force that keeps you from from having your vows damaged. And, and they really do make you happy if you if you understand them and you understand the theory behind {vinaya} and if you keep your {vinaya}, it just makes you quite, quite content and quite quietly happy your whole life, quite cool, you know, okay. I mean, you meet monks and nuns who are not happy. I would say they're not keeping their vows probably, and I don't

mean they're out partying and stuff like that, but I mean, that they've lost somehow the spirit of keeping their vows. But if you find...but, but if you're keeping your vows with the with the full spirit and if you understand why you're keeping your vows, that just makes you extremely happy, your whole life. Extremely contented, very...your mind is just in some kind of great happiness most of the day, except for when your boss is right in your face. Okay. Number three.

(student: Understanding what factors damage them?)

Yeah, which means to know what the vows are. I mean you'd be amazed how many monks, even in the monastery, and myself, I mean I can't list for you off the top of my head the two hundred and fifty three vows that I have. And the, the nuns, I mean a full nun has three hundred and sixty four. You're supposed to be able to. And you must study them so that you know your vows, and that's that's the important for those of you have bodhisattva vows and and secret vows. I don't believe that most of the people in our group, including New Jersey and Washington, who have tantric vows understand all of the vows or their bodhisattva vows, and and that...then you then you're gonna break them. So the best way not...one of the most important things not to break them, I mean obviously, have a have an external support which is some kind of guide, some kind of spiritual guide, have the internal support which is your own intentions of of not wanting to be unhappy anymore, and then thirdly, learn your vows well, you know. Take the time to study them carefully. And then you won't break them. And then number four?

(student: Monastic practices?)

Yeah, which is, which relates to people who have taken vows, and specifically to novice monks and nuns and full monks and nuns, which means, there are like a hundred special rituals that we do as...there's like a hundred special monastic practices. I've mentioned the top three which is keeping your confession ceremony, doing your summer retreat and then the practice of coming out of your summer retreat. Those are the great three monastic practices but there are like a hundred of them, hundred,

total of a hundred and something, okay? Okay. Miss Elly. In the opening lines of his text, Je Tsongkapa mentions that the vows of individual freedom, which is {pratimoksha} vows, okay, constitute the subject matter of the scriptures on Buddhist discipline. I mean, {vinaya} is the {vinaya} is the subject, {vinaya} is the book, {vinaya} is the teachings and what they teach is the {pratimoksha} vows. Their subject matter is the {pratimoksha} vows. Why are they called {pratimoksha}?

(Elly: (unclear))

Yeah, very simple. They're called individual freedom vows, {prati mok sha} because if you keep them you get free. And if you fail to keep them you don't get free. Free means, free from your mental afflictions, okay, free from samsara. Okay. There is also an explanation, which you do not have to write on your homework, or I mean, on your exam, but just so you know, there's an alternate explanation that says, prati means...prati also means "for the first time", moksha means "free" and when you take these vows, you are for the first time, in this life, freed from the condition of not having vows and then there's this huge debate about well, should we not call them {pratimoksha} from the first minute on, you know (laughs) and then, you know, big debate. Okay. Anyway. In some of the ancient {vinaya} texts that's the that's what they say for {pratimoksha}. Bill Gross, you ready? In his little book about {vinaya}, which is the shortest text on {vinaya} I think you can find in the universe, which is all we got through, Je Tsongkapa covered six different subjects. In, in the text it says, {ngowo dang ni rabbye, rabbye dang sosoy ngundzin keyway ten tongway gyu dang pen yun}. Those are the six subjects. You remember any of them?

(students: Role. Basic (unclear))

{ngwo} meaning what what is a, what is the vow, what is a vow, what is a {pratimoksha} vow, okay. And then he said {rabbye} which is, do you remember what that is? Then he said "divisions", then he said {ngundzin} which is what? You guys want to help.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah,{ngundzin} means are you gonna describe what the vow is,
then {keyway ten}

(student: Who can take them)

Yeah, {ten} means, "who can take them", okay. This is what our
study of {vinaya} covered. We covered these six subjects. Number
five? {Tongway gyu}.

(student: How they're broken)

Yeah, how you lose them. And number six was {pen yun}.

(student: The benefits of keeping them)

The benefits of keeping them, okay. So whenever you're thinking
{vinaya}, you can think of it like that, you know. What is a
{pratimoksha} vow made of. What, what is {pratimoksha} morality, and then
{ngowo dang ni rabbye, rabbye dang}. How many different
groups of {pratimoksha} vows are there? {ngowo dang ni rabbye, rabbye dang
sosoy ngundzin}, what are the vows for each of those kinds of people, like what
are the one day vows, what are the novice vows, like that, {sosoy ngundzin
keyway ten}, who can take them and who can't take them, {tongway gyu},what
makes you lose them, did I miss one? No,{tongway gyu dang pen yun}. (pen)
means what happens if you keep them, you know, what are you gonna get out
of it, all right, why should you take them. All right. Okay.

Those are just the six categories. When we get to role, which is
means what are the...what is {pratimoksha} morality, go ahead, he,
he had two and a half lines. He said {Ngenjung sampe gyujene shenmu shidang
chepa le dokpa, dokpa, le dokpa} that's his
definition. {Ngenjung sampe gyujene shenmu shidang chepa le dokpa} There's
four elements there. First is (ngenjung).

(student: (unclear) You want to take them because of
renunciation?)

Yeah, you're tired of being unhappy, okay. You're just tired of
being unhappy. {Ngenjung sampe gyujene}

(student: (unclear))

Excuse me?

(student: You want to refrain from hurting others?)

Yeah {shenmu shi} {Shenmu} means refrain from hurting other people, other living beings. {Shenmu} And then it says, along with the basis.

(student: Which is the last three of the non-virtues.)

Yeah, because technically speaking the {pratimoksha} morality refers to the first seven bad deeds of body and speech. {shidang chepa le dokpa} means "to refrain"; to stop. Okay. And that's the...I mean if somebody asks you, "what is the essence of {pratimoksha}?", you could say {Ngenjung sampe gyujene shenmu shi dang chepa le dokpa}{Ngenjung sampe gyujene shenmu} means "for the reason that you are tired of being unhappy {Ngenjung sampe gyujene shenmu shidang chepa le dokpa} "to refrain from hurting other people, other beings, and to refrain from the basis of that which is the lousy thoughts that make you hurt other beings, okay? All right. Cool. Where are we next? Are we up to Bansai yet? Okay.

(student: (unclear))

Oh, Vilma's hiding back there. (laughter) All right. It's pretty cool. (laughter) Four primary rules of the one day vow.

(Vilma. No sexual activity.)

Good, number one.

(Vilma: No stealing)

Okay.

(Vilma: No killing and no lying.)

Good, okay. I'll repeat them. {mi tsang chu pa} means "any

sexual activity at all", during the whole day. It's a one-day vow. The four principle rules of the one day vow. No sexual activity at all. {ren pom tsa way mye pa ma jin pa len pa} which means "to steal anything of value", okay. Number three someone asked me about, and I checked it, okay, it does say {me ya mir chak pa sok chu pa} which means, to kill a human or a human fetus, okay, I 'cause I remember I chopped that right out of the text, you know, I used a computer so I I be...I don't think I even...I didn't even change it, I just chopped it out, stuck it in the answer column there, so, you know technically...but of course it's, on that day it's important to refrain from any kind of killing, but technically, according to the commentary we've studied, it's to kill a human or a human fetus. And then, {ni che la ma dzun de ma wa}, he takes the time to mention the ultimate form of lying, which is what?

(students: Spiritual realization)

To lie about your spiritual attainments, particularly having seen emptiness directly.

And and then by implication, you know, claims that you could only make if you would...claims which you could probably only make if you had seen emptiness directly. For example, claiming that you could see your future lives or your past lives or things like that, okay, when you had not. Okay.

(student: So this one day vow, no killing, would imply that you are for this day refraining from eating meat, no?)

Normally, in the Mahayana version, we do, but eating meat and killing...I mean the classical answer is that I don't go to the McDonalds to kill a cow. I go to McDonalds to eat a hamburger, and th...and so that's the...they say that that's why they can eat meat and it's not killing. Now, you know that if no one ate meat, no one would kill any animals, and that you have to work out. But but in and in the...takes in {tekchen so jong} in the Mahayana version of these vows, we'd we refrain from eating meat, I don't recall anything in the text about in in this Hinayana {pratimoksha} morality of of

not eating meat for that day. I don't recall anything like that. I think the principle in ancient India was you'd, you eat what they give you, you know. You go to a house, and you're, you're not allowed to refuse...if they throw shrimp in your bowl and you, you have to eat it and...I think that was why the monks were eating meat in, in ancient India. Okay. But I'm not a great {vinaya} master and I hope to become (unclear) I'm working on it. Okay. Mr. Wang. The five rules and the one additional part of the lifetime layman's vows.

(student: Would it be that same four plus alcohol?)

Yeah, I guess so, let me see.

(student: Not to commit adultery or variations of it)

Yeah, Yeah. (laughter) You can have sexual activity but you can't have adultery. Yeah, not killing a human or {su ka ma da lo pa yam}; {su ka} is killing, {gu} means "stealing anything of value, {ma} means "stealing of...lying about your spiritual attainments especially, {lo pa yam} adultery instead of just any kind of general sexual.

(student: And that specifically means not having sex with someone who's married?)

Yeah. Normally.

(student: And then intoxication, or not drinking. Is that (unclear) intoxication)

Or any kinds of intoxicants. The text says, {che ma} or {che ma Mayimba} meaning, "chemical or or natural". (unclear) {lo ca nyem ba} can, doesn't have to mean just adultery, okay, it can mean all those other kinds of sexual misconduct too. I think the primary one here is adultery.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah. Yeah.

(student: Sometimes he says this way, sometimes he say (unclear))

Yeah, Generally the word {loca nyem ba} refers to all the ones I mentioned when we went over karma, you know, all those kinds of sexual misconduct. But I'll check it. I'll check it for you.

(student: (unclear) the time of day you do things (unclear))

How do you mean attitude?

(student: That you're approaching sexual activities.)

Oh no, if it's between consenting adults it doesn't matter why, I mean I never seen a thing, unless you're intending to hurt someone or something like that, you know. They...whether it would hurt somebody was listed in the, you know...if it's done with malicious intent, you want to ruin their reputation, or something like that, yeah.

(student: (unclear))

They don't say. Doesn't say, you know. Let me see there. Yeah, but, I believe it's, I don't know...I'll see if it's if it's specifically adultery...maybe I'll do it right now. Elizabeth, can you get my computer out of my briefcase? Okay. (laughs) Okay. Oh wait, it's here, hang on. Yup. It's adultery. (laughs). laughter) No, I have the Tibetan here. It's {rung nyi pu mi mayimba la lopa ma yema} which means to have sex with someone who's...it says "not your wife", but what it means is someone else's wife.

(student: Does it mean like this, if you are single or you are not single, you know, like)

No, well you can be single and have adultery with someone else's wife, for example. And that would be...

(student: And there's this other. What about if you are married and the, and the woman is not married?)

It's still adultery. Yeah. Yeah, it is specifically adultery.
It's not the other kinds of sexual misconduct, okay. In, in his
commentary, in Dharmabhadra's commentary...it's here in the
Tibetan. Okay. What was the extra part, which we almost forgot?

(student: Never breaking the advices on going for refuge)

Yeah, do you remember some of them? Did we go over some of them?
I don't remember. The advices for taking refuge.

(students: Intention of virtue (unclear))

Yeah. (laughs)

(students: The Dharma Jewel. Not harming others, something like
that?)

We better get it out. Can you...I, I better give you a little
course in that, okay. We'll do that. We'll do that after the
break, okay. It's something you're all supposed to be keeping if
you take this up. Okay. I think I'll give this one to Elly.
(laughs)

(Elly: (unclear))

That's okay. It's {vinaya} right. The number of full monks vows
by naming each of the six groups...by the way, it's classically
five groups but one of them is normally split into two,
right? And stating the number of vows in each group.

(Elly: Eu-u-u-u. (unclear))

{Pampa ge da, hlakma, tung sun ban je su pang tung, tung je bashik
ku chu do, so shak pa che chu do, nye je}

(Elly: That's it, that's it. (laughter))

What is it?

(Elly: (unclear))

{Pam...pam bashik}

(Elly: Oh yeah, four {shis}, eight downfalls.)

Wait. What? Four defeats. (Pampa shi da), how many? How many
Hla...how many remainders?

(Elly: (unclear))

{Hlakma}

(Elly: Thirteen)

Thirteen. {Tung je bashik}), how many? {chu sung pang tung}
(unclear). How many?

(Elly: Thirty)

Thirty {pang tung}, okay. By the way, we'll go through...why is
it called a {pampa}? A defeat?

(Elly: (unclear))

Something like, you've been defeated by the mental afflictions.

(Elly: Oh yeah.)

And and pretty much your vows are pretty much really seriously
damaged, extremely, immensely damaged, okay? Thank you. Thanks.
That's all, yeah. (Hlagma)? Remainder?

(Elly: I want to say that it was thirty but I'm not sure.

No, why are they called remainders?

(Elly: Why are they called remainders? Because there's a
little bit remaining (unclear)

There's a little bit left to confess (laughs) okay? There's a

little bit left that you could restore, okay? How much {chu sung}, thirteen for a monk, {pang tung, sum jung}? (laughter)

(Elly: Downfall, right?)

You can say 'downfaller', okay, downfall, but the kind that involves giving up something.

(Elly: Oh, ah)

The kind that involves giving up something, which is, (laughs) {pang tung sum jung}, thirty, okay. What does it mean to give up something?

(students: (unclear) Something you do like an antidote. (unclear probably good if you had (unclear)

Yeah, it's something, you know, it normally involves some kind of possession that you weren't supposed to have that long or, you know, like cloth that you weren't supposed to keep. A monk is not allowed to keep cloth more than ten days without using it for robes or...basically not allowed to possess things which we didn't get into much, but it's a very, it's a very sweet part of the {vinaya}, you know, that monks just, I mean, the whole point is that you don't possess things. And you're not allowed to possess cloth unless you use it, and if you don't use it you're supposed to get rid of it, okay. So {pang tung} and then? {Tung je bashik}? Which means just a, a downfall, meaning you don't have to give up anything.

(Elly: (unclear))

{Tung je bashik}...what's that? It just means...it, {bashik} means, just a downfall which means you don't have to give up something to to fix it. {Tung je bashik gyu chu}, ninety. (unclear) {Sor shak sha pa chu chik}

(student: What needs to be confessed individually)

Yeah, have to be confessed individually by each monk before (so

jong), during {so jong}. (So sor shak pa chup chik), I think it's eleven, right?

(students: Four)

{So sor shak pa shi} okay, that's for a nun, {so sor shak pa shi nye je nyi ga dang chu nyi} a hundred and twelve {nye je's}, which are what?

(student: Bad deeds)

Yeah, they're sort of, they're sort of more minor, you know, mistakes or bad, bad deeds. Okay. Whose turn is it now? Ora? Ready? Ora. Five things that can make you lose any one of the {pratimoskha} vows. Any one of the five ki...the eight kinds of {pratimoksha} vows.

(Ora: Giving them back?)

{Lappa pul dang}, yeah, give them back.

(Ora: When you die)

{Shi pu dang}

(Ora: Changing sex three times.)

{Tsen nyi jung} that's the one everybody remembers. {Len sum gyur}, missing two.

(Ora: (unclear))

{Tsen nyi chu jung}, yeah.

(Ora: (Unclear))

{Ge tsa che}

(Ora: Lose your root of virtue)

Yeah, Roo...lose your root of virtue. Cut your root of virtue. I asked Rinpoche, as I promised I would, if there's any difference between {ge wa} and {ge tsa}. {ge wa} means "good deed". {ge tsa} means "root of virtue". And you know, I asked my scripture teacher in the monastery if there's any difference between them, you know, and they both said "no, there's no difference between them". So {ge wa} and {ge tsa} are pretty much the same. Rinpoche added...I mean, so {ge wa} represents your accumulated good deeds and if you get, for example, some very extreme form of wrong view, you, you cut those good deeds, {ge tsa che}. He said the word "root" is meant to emphasize the causal part of virtue, meaning that if you cut them they'll never flower or they'll never mature into something desirable, okay. All right. Mr. Gross. No. Mr. Kish. I got a Bill Gross and a Bill Kish, okay. Two results of keeping the vows. (unclear){Nekap drebu hla mi dang, tartuk drebu jangchub sum. Nekap drebu hla mi dang, tartuk drebu jangchub sum. Nekap drebu} means the short term goals, the short term benefits. It's {hla} and {mi}, which means what?

(student, Bill: {Hla} is a pleasure being)

Yeah, or {mi}.

(student, Bill: A human)

Yeah. To become a pleasure being or a human, short term result. It's that first motivation where you don't want to slip below that line called hu...animal (laughs) okay? I mean, we're animal enough (laughs) okay? Doesn't...mind doesn't have to slip below that. {Ani pak, ani ani} means what? "And then". {tartuk drebu jangchub sum, tartuk} means "ultimate result". It's {jangchub shum} which is what?

(student: Types of bodhi?)

Yup, {sum}. Why does it say three kinds of Buddhahood?

(students: It has...that there's (unclear))

Nah.

(students: (unclear))

Yeah, the three tracks, the three tracks. And, and most people never know that. I mean, there's three bodhicitta's also, there's three forms of {sem kye}, and, and that's why they say Mahayana bodhicitta, because that's the bodhicitta of the third track, but there's also bodhicitta of the first two tracks, meaning, the the wish for enlightenment, of that track, which in the lower two tracks just means nirvana; a lower nirvana, okay.

(student: Are they the same?)

That's a good question. I can't think of any difference between them to tell you the truth, okay, I mean the state of...they're both Hinayana nirvana. In Madyamika Svatantrika system you get there by seeing different levels of emptiness. They don't call them 'emptiness', they call them 'selflessness'. And, but I don't see...I don't think there's any difference in the result. In the nirvana between those two, okay. So tho, those, if somebody asks you on a on a final, for the (laughs) two results, you say, short-term result, human or pleasure being rebirth, long-term...by the way, which is, you know, we skip over it like blah, blah, blah because you have not seen your future life, you know, because you are not aware of your future life. And you, frankly, having grown up in America, you don't believe in future life, and it's not part of your psyche. And when I say, "hey, if you kept your {pratimoksha} vows you could reach...you could stay a human", it'd be, it doesn't click, you know. You don't say, "wow, great," you know, "that would be wonderful", you know, but it's really a huge accomplishment. One...probably as the people who live in America at this moment die, less than four or five hundred of them will be born human or or a god, or a pleasure being, okay. If the two hundred million people living in America, as they die, most likely less than five hundred would be...would retain this kind of a life. Okay.

(student: Any kind of human, like you're starving somewhere?)

Yeah, I mean that would be a great achievement. And, and most

people never...it's very depressing (laughs) fact, okay.

(student: (cat meowing) Is it better to be a house cat?)

No, no. 'cause a house cat can't achieve enlightenment and nirvana in this life, okay. All right. So it's really a big achievement. It's really not just something you should skip over on your...you know, and say, oh you know, I'll just become a human or a or a pleasure being. According to all the scriptures, that is about the odds of the people living in the United St...you know. And people call me up all the time and say, you know, will Aunt May become...is she is Kansas or is she in Minnesota, you know. And I'm like...she's (laughs) in neither one, you know (laughter) and it...

(student: (unclear))

...You know (laughter) and then, and you don't want to tell them the truth, and it's very hard to tell the truth, you know, yeah.

(student: (unclear) What sort of karmic things are going to ripen as human but (unclear) as someone's favorite cat (unclear) normally, say like Hitler, or you know)

You, you know. You finished class number seven, right. I mean, it's the habit of enjoying killing. So, killing in this life. Killing things. Disrespecting the sacredness of life. Okay. Then the ultimate, I mean {jangchub sum}, to reach enlightenment in this life... nirvana or enlightenment. Nirvana you cannot even imagine. I mean, you can, you can imagine coming back as a human and only one in a million people will, but I, I it's very hard to imagine nirvana. It's almost uni, unimaginable. The pleasure that it would be to be happy the whole day. I mean, to to not have any kind of irritation or jealousy or anger or desire for days, you know, to be freed from that, from that torment of having those thoughts in your skull is some kind of a extreme pleasure, and you can't imagine it. You can't imagine what it would be like not to be irritated or stressed or have any kind of anxiety, or any kind of selfishness, or any kind of, any kind of bad feeling about another human being, I mean, you can't even

imagine what it would feel like. That's a sh...that's a smaller goal. And then the ultimate goal, you know, Buddhahood, just...being in a Buddha paradise and, and having the capacity to show up wherever any single living creature in the entire universe needs it at any given moment...that would be kind of cool, you know. So like that. You're gonna get...there's there's ten bad deeds...I'm not gonna go through them. You know them. You are assiduously avoiding them. We need two, two consistent consequences for each of the ten. What's called consistent consequences. (unclear) What's that?

(student: Asualdo.)

Asualdo. You ready? (laughs)

(student: (unclear) (laughter)

By killing, there would be two, two consistent consequences. Do you remember either one, any of you?

(student: Short life)

Yeah.

(student: Yes, your life is short or you get sick easily.)

Yeah, you life is short and you get sick easily. Okay. I think we'll just do these as a group, how's that? You life is short or you get sick easy. The point...the reason why I really spent a long time on these ten is that. It's not, I don't...I'm not into this thing where you're threatening somebody, you know, where you're saying "oh you shouldn't do bad things (unclear) you know, you met (unclear) (laughter), I don't...it doesn't appeal to me...I don't think it appeals to anyone, but, but the point is this, you can reconstruct the causes for your world, you know. You can be like an archeologist or a detective. You can figure out what it was that got you here. If you don't have energy you can figure out why you don't have energy. If you health is lousy, you can figure out why your health is lousy. And you fix, you can do a lot to fix it, you know. So that's, that's why I spent so much time on these ten. It's really the real causes of for the messed up things in your own life and you can fix them or you can a you can address them, okay. So if your life is short

or...which you don't know yet (laughs), or if you get sick easily, a avoid killing. Okay. Stealing? Don't have enough money to live on and what was the other one?

(student: You have to share with everyone.)

Yeah, whatever property you do own is never...you never get to have the unique use of it yourself, you know, you know, someone can cut your head off and, and if it, if it just doesn't bother you at all, it's not a result of bad karma. Okay.

(student: Isn't the desire to have something yourself a mental affliction? Uniquely yourself?)

Yeah, it is. It is. But it's more fun to use it for yourself, you know. (laughs). Anyway, of course, of course there could be afflictions by want...by being, you know, attached to having it yourself, but, but it's also the result of a bad karma if, if in a bad way you have to share it with other people. You don't get the use of something, the exclusive use of something yourself. It's a lot more fun to have a limousine than a New Jersey transit bus, okay. Sexual misconduct?

(student: The people that are around you are unreliable?)

Yeah, people around you...you can't count, count on the people around you. The're, they're inconsistent because you were inconsistent and that's a big one, you know. I mean...I tend to get upset or angry or disappointed when the people around me are not...when I can't count on them, or I don't, I don't get help that I think I need, but, but the point is that I can't get angry 'cause I did it (laughs) okay? All right. And that's the whole point, you know. I can't be angry because it was the result of my own sexual misconduct. I don't remember the sexual misconduct but it doesn't mean anything, you know, and if I if I don't like having that problem, I, I could concentrate more on on my own sexual misconduct, okay. And the second one?

(students: Competition for your partner)

Yeah, people are always coming on to your wife or your girlfriend or your husband or like that. You, you don't...your partners...I should say, people are attracted to your partner. People are always fighting with you to get your partner. Used to happen in high school a lot. (laughs) Been there before. Lying.

(student: No one believes you)

No one believes you even when you're telling the truth. And you know, if that bothers you, and it does happen, you can either get ang...we're gonna do [B: Bodhicharyavatara], we're gonna do Shantideva, next year, probably the whole year, and it's full of this kind of thing, but if you're...if if people don't believe you, don't get mad, don't get angry, just stop lying, okay. That's what caused it. It's not them, you know. There's this big thing in the Madhyamika literature, it says, Shantideva says, "what do you think", you know, "that some somebody sent a construction crew down to hell to make hell?", you know. Who made hell?, you know. Who put all those pots of molten- steel there, and who put all those demons with these spears to stab you, and do you think, you know, that they were drafted somewhere and sent down there by somebody, and you know, and construction crews went down there and nailed hell together and stuff like that. It was created by your deeds. And, and, and by extension the people around you at work, you know. You can't blame them for anything. You created those, you know. If you're tired of people who don't believe you or if you're tired of people who don't help you, clean up your morality. Okay. What was the second result?

(student: People are always deceiving you.)

People are always deceiving you. People are always lying to you, like that. And I, I don't know about you, but I have met people in my life and, people who have been close to me, I can think of one in particular, and and we would go around together to different places and the other person would constantly be lied to and there'd be people who'd tell me the truth, and it was really weird, it was quite strange, you know, and this person was always paranoid that people were lying to them. And they were

(laughs). (laughter). And then I would talk to the same person and they'd tell you the truth, and it was really weird, you know. It was really weird. And, so the other person was getting this paranoia about the whole world and and I'm trying to say, "well, that's not what happens to me", you know, but, there's a reason for it, okay.

(student: So if he gets mad, it will just come back?)

Yeah. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

Oh no, normally the anger would create some kind of other, in fact, I think anger leads to ugliness, physical ugliness, you know. If you're not as pretty as you'd like to be or handsome as you'd like to be, I believe the cause is li...is is anger, okay. But you have to study these things. Lying, slander, oh splitting up people, devisive talk.

(student: People are fighting around you)

Yeah, the people around you are always in conflict, and you know, you've been in offices where everyone is struggling against everybody else, and then you've been in offices where everyone seems to be working together as a team, and what causes it? It's you, okay. Second one.

(student: (unclear))

Yeah, you're around people who are bad, you know, and, and that's a big, that's a very bad karmic result because then they make you worse, you know. To be around people who are not honest or who are not thoughtful or sensitive, or who are, you know, not straight, and who are cruel, is a very bad karmic result 'cause then they make you...they affect you, you know. Nobody in this room would not be affected if they stayed for any length of time around somebody, you know...I've been in business and I've had years where I was...where I had to work closely with people who who just their their idea of, of, of what lying was and what

honesty was, was quite bizarre, you know (laughs). And, and it starts to affect you, you know, you start to think, well, maybe that's not so bad, or that's pretty smart, they seem to be successful, you know, and it's a very bad karma, okay. Harsh words.

(student: Hearing (unclear))

Yeah, don't get mad at the garbage trucks and the Indian guys pulling down their metal shutters at midnight, you know (laughs), it was created by your...and by the way, this is, it's for real. If you study karma and the way karma is planted in your mind, you'll see that this is not just some kind of...I've seen many western books where they've said, "oh the Buddhists, they're just trying to explain why the world is like it is. They just made this up. It's a very interesting thing that Gautama made up to make feel people feel better about the world, you know, they'll understand the world better. They'll be able to explain why someone's yelling at them, and it comforts people (laughter). It was a real, you know, a real great advance in thinking that Gautama made this up, you know, to make people feel better." It's not like that. I mean, the, the garbage truck's in New York really were created, if they bother you, by your harsh speech. And if you don't like it, then don't do harsh speech anymore. And the whole environment is like that. Your whole world is like that. Everything in your world is like that, including your own nature, including your own thoughts, including your own moods and emotions. Yeah.

(student: (unclear))

It's the irritation at the garbage trucks, how's that? (laughs)
Yeah, okay. Irritating garbage trucks. Um. And then second one? For harsh speech?

(student: People are argumentative around you)

Yeah, and I've seen that too. I've seen people...I know people who just, you know, their first interaction with anybody is that the other person starts to attack them (laughs) and they're like,

you know, and they start to get defensive 'cause their first experience is always getting attacked, you know, and it is, it really is. They're not crazy. And then they start attacking all the time and then it becomes like a habit and like that, okay. Number seven, idle talk.

(student: No one respects what you say)

Yeah, I mean, you...I, I don't know, I always see it in business meetings at work, you know. And there's always like two or three people who, who have a really good idea and they, they raise their hand and they give this really good idea, and the boss looks at them like, "are you stupid or what?", you know (laughs) and, it's...to everyone else around the table it seems like a really good idea, and it is a good idea, but because they have done a lot of idle talk, just nobody nobody considers what they say to to be important, okay? And then what's second one?

(students: Low self-esteem)

Yeah, yeah, you have low self-esteem, okay. And that's a very interesting karmic result. You don't have confidence in what you're going to do or say because no one thinks it's worth (laughs) anything anyway. And, and it may be exactly the same thing that somebody else does that everybody praises. It's very, it's very funny. That's the emptiness of what you're doing. Okay number eight. Yeah?

(student: So when you're spending an hour or two with your shrink one a week, are you (unclear) to cure yourself (unclear) are you perpetuating this (unclear)?)

I don't think so, if the, if the cure is gentle and positive, because then, the reason why some cures may work, the reason that some therapy's may work is that actually you may be performing some kind of four powers, you know, and, and if the cure, if the therapy is gentle and constructive then you are, you are collecting new good karma instead of reacting to it with anger, hatred or something like that, you know. But it's very interesting because you, you...it means that you have to be

patient with your own faults, you know. You have to be loving about your own faults. You can't react to them with anger. You can react to them with a desire to change, a strong a strong repulsion to your bad thoughts, but not with some kind of anger, or...

(cut) [end side a]
[side B]

.... frustration in that sense, it's very interesting. It says in the [B:Abhidharma] that the only negative emotion which is virtuous is regret. It's very interesting. Craving. The result of craving, number eight.

(student: (unclear))

You want things. Okay, and you meet people...you know, I think all of us have...this is most beings in the desire realm which is all of us are here because we have some kind, we had some kind of overwhelming desire. They say, the people who are here because of anger are one in a hundred and the other ninety-nine are here because of their desire. So that's much more common to be afflicted by desire than by, by continual desire, is like low- level radiation you know? They still don't know the effects, you know like I deal in topaz, blue topaz, it's created by low- level radiation and gives off low level radiation. And try to get the NEC to tell you what it does and they can't. They say, "we don't know. Because you're exposed to all this radiation all day long so we don't know what the effect of being around this stone all day. We can't say." But desire is like a low level radiation. You know, you have it all day, anger comes up, it flares up once a day or twice a day but low level desire is supposed to be much more weakening and damaging to your heart than these outbursts of anger. Okay so your personality is dominated by desire and what's the second one?

(Student: you never find any satisfaction.)

You never find any satisfaction. So we know what caused that. Number nine, ill will – being happy when other people fail. [student: unclear] Yeah, never get what you need, or, the first one was, yeah, never find the help you need. And then, secondly? [student: unclear] Yeah, you're always hurting other people or being hurt by others, okay. Last one, wrong view. [students: unclear]

Yeah, you have wrong views and? [student: unclear], deceitful. I don't what's the connection with deceitful. I'm not quite sure. I, I don't quite, I don't see... Does anybody have a proposal about the logic about the deceitful thing? I mean, that's what the text says but I'm just curious. [student: unclear] Mmm. Maybe it's a kind of lying or something. I don't know. I don't know. By the way, a lot of them are like that which means you have to study Vinaya to learn all the connections. And only a Buddha can see them perfectly. Yeah. [student: unclear] Killing. Yeah, not respecting life. Do you guys want to take a break or do you want to [student: unclear]. We're pretty close to finishing. You want to go straight through and have a night off? Okay. Environmental consequences. Let's do those together. Killing? [student: unclear]

Yeah, the world that you live in is dangerous. People around you die young. And, and food and medicines don't have much power in your country or in your area, things like that. You take, like aspirin, and nothing happens [laughs] [unclear] can tell you. Or you take a [unclear] and nothing happens. You know, you take three and nothing happens, okay.

Okay, stealing. I mean, he gives, like a dozen different kinds of things that happen with crops and I've, I've seen it related to urban American life. You know, I've seen it related to urban life in the scripture, to where you try business and it doesn't go right. You know, you meet people who, you know, struggle to make a business run and it just never goes quite right. And then you meet other, you meet other people that have the golden touch and everything's going just right. And the people who have the golden touch it wears off, like Donald Trump. You know, I remember his book came out. It was called, "The Art of Negotiation, The Art of the Deal" and when it hit the news stands, the newspaper came out and said he was bankrupt. [laughter] It was kind of funny to see the book and newspaper next to each other in the news stands, you know. It wears out. That wears out. So, basically, from stealing, all your attempts to, to make a living don't go well, okay. And, and just the business economy, you're in an economy ... It's very interesting, according to Buddhism, the idea of sharing wealth or the distribution of wealth is what? The idea is there's a limited amount of wealth and that people have to figure out the best way to distribute it, is what? It's just false. You know, there's no reason why the whole world economy couldn't be great forever, you know. There's no reason why some people have to be poor and some people have to be rich. It's not, it's not like there's a limited amount of possessions and that the problem is that they're not distributed properly. That's not the truth. The truth is that everybody in the planet could be poor or everybody in the planet could be wealthy and comfortable if they collected the right karmas, okay. It's interesting. Um, number three: wrong sex causes what? [student: unclear]

Yeah, stinky and shellfish [laughs] okay. I always think of this fruit container on Thirty-Ninth Street, outside the door there. [laughs] Every time I went past there I was thinking what kind of sexual misconduct did I do, you know. And, and there's this thing about your life where, I don't know if you've experienced it, but in certain times of your life where nothing tastes good, nothing seems enjoyable. You know, you go to a movie, it doesn't seem to be quite exciting. You go on vacation, it doesn't quite work out. You go to a restaurant to have a good dinner, it doesn't quite click, you know. And then, you have other periods in your life when everything is vibrant; colors are vibrant, music is vibrant, food is vibrant, your friends are vibrant. You go somewhere and it's like electricity. Those are all the result of sexual misconduct or keeping your sexual mores. Okay.

Number four: lying. These are mainly broken down into two things. One was any kind of work you do with other people, cooperative efforts, like a project that you undertake with a group of people, they don't work out, okay, if you've been lying. And then you live in a world where people are cheating each other and they also mention fear in a lot, in a lot of these. And they mention it here, like, there's a lot, there's muggers, there's robberies, there's natural disasters, there's, you know, dangerous things in your environment, okay, because of lying.

Because of trying to spilt up people, what? [student: unclear]

Yeah, it's very interesting. We were talking about [laughs] a certain Dharma center in California where, I mean, the road is like this and the whole place is like this, you know. And they wanted to know what karma would fix that road, you know. [laughs] And it was this, you know. It was not divisive speech, not engaging in divisive speech. They wanted to, I, we wanted, we were exploring in a class in California the karmic reasons for having a dirt road that goes to their house which is very dangerous. It's on the edge of a mountain. It's likely to be washed out and stuff like that. And, ultimately, it's divisive speech and if they wanted to fix it should they go to accounting and ask for it to be fixed or should they do the four powers and work on divisive speech, you know, clearing up divisive speech karma? And that's, that's the answer. That's how to fix that road. Then accounting would come out and fix it, you know. And that's the only thing that would make accounting come out and fix it. And that's kinda cool.

[student: unclear] What's that? [student: unclear, same karma to be born in Tibet?] Oh, yes, if it bothers you, if it hurts you. Like, Rinpoche's whole life in Hlasa, as I, as I understand it, it was pleasant walks from Sera to Hlasa on a flat road and that he didn't have that karma but he did when he ran away from Tibet if he was a normal person which he's not, but you know. It's when they ran away and then they had to go over these huge mountains and suffer. Yeah, if it

bothers them, yeah, okay.

Yeah. [student: unclear] Excuse me? [student: unclear] You never know. You never know. Can't, you don't know. Alright.

Harsh words? Harsh words: the ground is covered with dangerous things – glass, thorns, things like that and again, there's many things to fear okay.

Talking meaninglessly: nothing ever ripens at the right time and there's no place for you to take your rest, you know. There's no quiet place in that city where you can really go safely and hang out on the grass and enjoy the trees and things like that, okay [unclear] and again, many things that make you afraid.

Number eight, from coveting, it's very interesting. From coveting other people's things, the things which yourself come to have just are constantly deteriorating. Like, if you get a house the plumbing's always breaking. You know people who have houses like that. [laughs] You know, and it ends up to be this huge suffering as the house starts to deteriorate. Or, or you get a car, you know, you get the one out of a hundred that came off the assembly line with everything that's going to break and that. And you know people who go crazy with the new car that's causing them all this suffering 'cos little things keep breaking. Then there's Rinpoche's car, you know, ten years later never been fixed for anything, you know. It's a different kind of karma, okay.

Number nine: ill will. You live in a world of chaos where there's a lot of disease and counties are fighting each other and hurting each other. And also harmful things like insects or snakes or muggers or things like that in your world. If you want to wipe out crime in New York what do you do? For you? [student: unclear] Yeah, don't be happy when other people fail, okay. That's the real way to wipe out crime in New York. It's very interesting. This is the truth by the way. I'm not just joking around. I mean it's not to hire more cops and it's not to pay them more and it's not to give everyone more money or something like that. It's to stop having ill will towards people and there won't be crime in New York. Very interesting.

Number ten, basically number ten is you'll be born in a place where there is no Dharma and people where you live will have wrong view. Specifically, they'll think that things which are unhappiness, are happiness. Like, they'll think that worldly things will make them happy. I mean, I guess it's trying to say you'll be born into a material culture. [laughs] Okay.

Alright, we're almost finished. Elizabeth, do you want to do one?

The five, the five main persons in the lineage of the Lam Rim, starting with? [student: unclear]. Okay, and then second level? [student: unclear]. Yeah, Maitreya and Manjushri. [student: unclear] Yeah, Asanga and Nagarjuna. [student: unclear] Atisha, who combines them and then all the other lamas, yeah. Okay, cool.

Almost finished. Four special qualities of the lam Rim. {denpa} I'll go over them quick 'cos we're almost out of time. {denpa ...} means, you will see, you will see that no teaching in Buddhism contradicts any other teaching in Buddhism. And I admit, and I openly admit that it doesn't seem to you that way now but if you study the Lam Rim deeply it'll, it'll dawn on you that it's all perfectly consistent with each other, okay. Number two is { Tibetan ...} which is, any teaching you pick up seems to be personal advice to yourself. {} means, you begin to see why the Buddha taught different things and you begin to see the place they have in getting you to enlightenment, okay. And I gave you the example like Buddhist logic. According to Gyeltseb Je, Tsongkapa's greatest disciple, the kindest thing Tsongkapa ever did for him was to teach him Buddhist logic. I've been afraid to teach Buddhist logic in New York because everyone would die of boredom, you know. [laughs] But if you come to a point where you can see where that applies to your enlightenment, directly, you've achieved the third point of the lam Rim. You've understood the third benefit. And the fourth great characteristic is {.....}, which means, if you study the Lam Rim which gives you this incredible overview of all the Buddhist teachings you will never again put down any of the Buddhist teachings - which would be a huge mistake. You'll never again say, I like ninety percent of it but that stuff's stupid, you know. That Vinaya stuff it's not like emptiness and bodhisattva stuff. It's kind of boring and I think it's for, I think it was meant for ancient Indians. I don't see really where it has a place in the modern times, you know. That's called the "great chasm", the "great mistake", thinking something like that. If you study Lam Rim well, you'll study the inter-relationship of all the Buddhist teachings. You'll never fall into that, okay.

Qualities of a proper lama, okay. I'll go through them real quick. Controlled: in the sense of having an ethical way of life. Peaceful: in the sense of knowing how to meditate. Completely peaceful: in the sense of understanding emptiness, having wisdom. Exceeding qualities: in the sense of having personal qualities which are much greater than the student's qualities. Having effort: in the sense of being dedicated, having dedicated their life to achieving what's good for themselves and what's good for others in an ultimate way. Rich in Scripture: having studied the three collections of scripture. Having understood emptiness: infinitely preferable if they have seen emptiness directly. There's no comparison between a teacher who has seen emptiness directly and one who hasn't, okay.

A master teacher: in the sense of knowing the capacity of their students and following it well. The image of love: in the sense of not being, not teaching because of wanting to gain anything from their students but teaching the students whatever will benefit them the most at any particular time. {kyewa pang}, overcome distaste, which means they never get tired of teaching, okay,

no matter how bad the students are. [laughs] Okay. Alright. The next two questions have to do with where do, what are the karmic causes of these qualities in the lama? And why, why, you know, a lot of people ask me, what's the point of this question, you know? And it was this, it was that, it's to point out the emptiness of those ten qualities, okay. What is the emptiness of those ten qualities? It means that the teacher may have the karma to see all of those qualities in herself or himself. I mean, the teacher may, for example, have seen emptiness directly, and the teacher may, for example, only be motivated by concern for the students in everything they do. And everything they do they do only to teach their students something. And so, from the teacher's point of view, maybe these two things, for example these two things - (a) they really have seen emptiness directly, (b) whatever they do even if it seems strange is only motivated for, in order to teach their students something, but the karma of the student may be to see, to look at that same person and not understand that they have seen emptiness directly and also to think that some of their activities are improper or seem strange, like that. And that, that would be the student's karma. It's very interesting. So, that would be the emptiness of these ten qualities, you know. Does that mean you should follow a teacher who's breaking their morality? No, okay. And, and that's the other thing that you have to say in the same breath, you know. I mean if, you have to make a judgment based on the best of your knowledge but you also have to be aware that if your mind was more pure you might be seeing something completely different. I mean, at this level, you should not follow a person who is breaking their morality but also be aware that like Maitreya and Asanga and the dog, did we [unclear] yet? [laughs] Yeah. I mean, just be aware that, that as your own mind becomes more and more pure you will be seeing more sacred qualities where you never expected them, and where you could not see them before, not because they weren't there. Not because Maitreya wasn't sitting in the cave for twelve years next to Asanga but because Asanga wasn't pure enough to see it, you know. So, be careful in how you relate to, be careful in judging people. I guess I want to, it's the difference between judging and, you can't judge another person's activities, but if they are unwholesome you must avoid them, okay. Like, I can say I don't know why monks and nuns in America are disrobed. I can't judge them but I can say it's a bad activity, you know. Disrobing is a very, very bad thing but I can't judge those people who disrobe. I can't tell. I don't know. I don't know what they're thinking, you know. I can tell you it's a bad activity. I can tell you that. I would not want to, to be too close to those people, you know, that I might be affected by them or something like that. So that's the distinction I'm trying to make. When your own mind is pure enough a lot of the things that you think you see now you'll realize are defects in your own mind.

But, in the same breath I'd say you must follow these ten rules for seeking out your {shen nyen}. But eventually, I mean, find a good {shen nyen} and eventually the things that you think are wrong you may find out that they're, they are very holy person. Really, I mean can I say "really"? That they are really very holy people, can I say that? Can I say the liquid was really water? No. It's not contradictory for them to be a drunkard and a holy man at the same time. It's not contradictory. You cannot follow a drunkard. You must follow a holy man. Which one was Trungpa, Chogyal Trungpa? Which one was he? [laughs] [students: unclear] Yeah. I mean it's a very difficult thing. You can't follow a drunkard. [student: unclear] Well, we've said, how do you find a {shen nyen}? And that's the whole point, I mean ultimately that's the point of this question, how do you find that incredibly holy being who will take you personally to a Buddha paradise?

[students: unclear] Huh? [students: unclear] Yeah, clean up your life, clear up your own mind. And what we said was you don't have to get on a plane and go to India, okay. If you clear up your own life they will be forced to come to you. It's like putting out honey for flies. [laughs] Clean up your mind, they have to come. They will appear sometimes in whom and where you least expect it, you know. But that's how you find your {shen nyen}. Finding your {shen nyen} is the holiest thing I can teach you, you know. The holiest thing I can say in all of these classes is, you know, clean up your heart to the point where you, where your {shen nyen} will come to you, can come to you, like Maitreya could come to Asanga, you know. He was there all the time. He couldn't see him. You have to find a {shen nyen} so put out the bait of your pure activity and mind. [unclear] [student: unclear] [laughs] Okay. Alright. I'm not going to go through the four powers. We just went through it. But the four powers should become for you something very, very important to you, okay. It should become a daily practice. You should constantly be applying it to the last time you got mad at your boss, which was today, okay. Last time you had desire for such and such a thing which was this afternoon, you know. And before the karma gets too powerful apply the four powers. I can't do it for you. I can tell you it works. And you have to just get to where it becomes an automatic reaction. We just did the four noble, sorry [laughter] Arya truths, so I don't have to go over those. And the last question is the sweetest question. It's why is bodhichitta like the alchemical elixir and how does that relate to dependent origination? What's that? [student: unclear] Go ahead. [student: unclear] That's true but also a good deed becomes like gold [student: unclear] yeah, they're just temporary, yeah. They're just a temporary [unclear].

Okay, that's that. First of all I also wanted to thank, there was a lot of people working on all, this stuff has become, as the classes got larger, this has become a

lot of work and this was the first time when I really had students helping me translate the text. Ora and Elizabeth did a lot of it. The monks who live here helped with a lot of it and that was really nice. It saved me, well, it was a great help first of all. Secondly, a lot of people spent a lot of time typing them up, cleaning them up, xeroxing them. They're not self-existent, okay. And that was Ora did a lot, Tashi did a lot, John Stilwell was involved. I think there were people involved that I don't know about. Elizabeth helped. Ani Pelma did a lot of them. Elly did some. And I don't know everybody else but what's happening is, and then I want to thank [unclear]. You know the papers are being graded, these monks stay up all night and do the papers. I mean it's a lot. There's hundreds and hundreds of papers and they're also doing hundreds of papers for correspondence students so they don't get anything out of it but the work, you know. So I think if you could thank those people as you see them as you meet them, you know, thank them.

Last thing to say is that I really believe in Vinaya and I look forward to Vinaya being very strong in the United States. I think it's a good time for it to start. I, myself, as I taught it got a lot more appreciation for it and began to, I don't know, it just started to make me happier and happier as I started to get in more and more into the mood of pratimoksha, you know. And I couldn't have that happen or I could never get those results without my teachers. And, also, I couldn't have all those results unless I had people who come to help me talk about it. And that's you people. I just want to thank you very much for that 'cos I need that and if people come who, we call who are of the same spiritual aspiration, you know, and if I'm around people like that for me it's a great blessing, personally. It's a very great blessing. So I have to thank you very much for that 'cos it makes my life very happy. I thank you for that. Yeah. [student: unclear] [laughs] [student: unclear] So rejoice, okay, rejoice for three minutes, okay and then we'll, then we'll go home.

[student announcement: unclear]

[laughter] [laughs]

[unclear] be happy, okay. [laughter] [student: unclear] [unclear], {...}, the ultimate offering to your teacher is to keep your practice. So, try not to lie, try not to steal anything, try not to say anything bad to people [unclear]

last thing, I would really hope in November that we could have some kind of a ceremony. It'll probably have to be in New Jersey. Rinpoche has said he doesn't feel well enough to travel [unclear], that he could grant at least lifetime layman's vows. No reason not to take them. You're not going to kill anybody. You're not going to steal anything. You're not going to commit adultery and [unclear] is a waste of money and time. [laughter] So there's no reason not to do it. You're not going to lie about emptiness so [laughter] you just might as well take

them anyway. It's a lot more powerful. And consider taking higher ordination if you [unclear]. I think it looks like, maybe, tomorrow we will close the deal in Connecticut. We'll have a place for a monastery and a nunnery and as you get older in life you might want to consider it. There's not much else to do and [unclear] tried everything and it looks like your life is gonna start heading toward spiritual things [unclear]. Keep it in mind. {...} in Tibetan means, keep the possibility in your heart that you could do it. Anytime's okay, alright. And we have a nice place for you and it would be wonderful, be wonderful to have a nice solid group of monks and nuns so don't think it's impossible. You never know. Keep in one corner of your mind the possibility [unclear] [laughs]
Yeah. [student: unclear] Just be happy. You create a lot more merit if you're just happy [unclear]
[prayer: mandala]
[prayer: dedication]

Course IX: The Ethical Life, NYC, jul-sept 1996
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