



TEACHINGS ON MINDFULNESS FOR EVERYDAY LIVING

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-CULTIVATING PRECIOUS BODHICITTA AND PRACTICING THE SIX PERFECTIONS

-TYPES OF SUFFERING

-THE ENERRING NATURE OF KARMA, CAUSE AND EFFECT

-METHODS FOR ABADONING NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

***-UNDERSTANDING THE OUTER CONTAINER AND ITS INNER CONTENTS AS
COMPOUNDED PHENOMENA AND EMPTY IN NATURE***

-FREEING THE MIND FROM FIXATING ON PHENOMENA AS REAL

***-CULTIVATING AND RELYING ON MINDFUL AWARENESS TO RECOGNIZE THE
NATURE OF THE MIND***

-ENDURING DIFFICULTIES ON THE PATH

Tonight, in place of the prayers of refuge and bodhicitta, we will simply read the 37 Practices text ¹, as this text is the very essence of all the refuge and bodhicitta generation prayers. Then in the best of all cases, in the future you will be able to recite this text completely from memory.

CULTIVATING PRECIOUS BODHICITTA AND PRACTICING THE SIX PERFECTIONS

To all of you Dharma companions who are present; yesterday I gave a brief introduction to conventional truth and I also spoke about happiness and the causes of happiness by giving an introduction to the practice of loving kindness and compassion. If one wishes to engage in meditation, it is necessary to abandon concerns for this life, and the means to do so is to cultivate precious bodhicitta. If we wish to liberate ourselves from suffering, then there is no way to be able to do so without abandoning the habit of self-clinging. Thus, it is through the cultivation of bodhicitta that we will be able to purify self-clinging.

Some have the following thought when they are introduced to the Buddha's Teaching: What is the benefit of engaging in these teachings since there is no immediate fruition? In the practice of Buddha Dharma, the fruition is something that is long-term and far in the distance. They give rise to doubt such as this. But this is not at all the case; all of the happiness experienced in this life is the result of loving kindness and compassion. For example, we can look at this human body that we have achieved, this has only come about through the precious practice of morality, and on the basis of this, we acquire a human form. What is this practice of morality? It is the practice of avoiding doing harm to others.

Having achieved a human form, if we experience wealth and material enjoyments, what is this based upon? This is based upon the practices of generosity in the past... Likewise on the basis of having practiced patience in the past, we experience in the present good and stable companions, a long life and a beautiful form or physical appearance. Likewise, if we have a mind that is peaceful, subdued, and refined, if we have a mind that is stable and unwavering, these qualities are obtained through having engaged in meditative concentration in the past.

When we engage in worldly activities with success in this life, this is based on having the awareness that recognizes unerringly which conduct is to be adopted and which conduct is to be avoided. We can say that through the 6th of the Six Perfections, (the practice of Transcendent Awareness), we can attain success in worldly endeavors and in spiritual endeavors. Earlier today I was mentioning that all of the progress and benefit and increase that takes place on the worldly level is due to common worldly knowledge and awareness. Likewise we can see that all of the happiness that is experienced through having given rise to precious bodhicitta comes from the qualities of Transcendent

¹ *The Thirty-Seven Bodhisattva Practices* by Ngulchu Thogme Zangpo

Awareness as well. On the worldly and spiritual planes, all success is based on Transcendent Awareness. Thus we can see through cultivating precious bodhicitta, we experience the fruition thereof in our lives through the practice of the Six Perfections.

TYPES OF SUFFERING

There are many different kinds of suffering that are experienced by the beings in the six realms of existence. When we enter the door of Dharma practice, we engage in the preliminaries of contemplation of the Four Thoughts Which Turn the Mind Toward Dharma, and when we do so we think about and contemplate the sufferings of the beings in the six realms of existence. Although there are many different kinds of sufferings they can be condensed into three main categories: *first* of which is the experience of death. Specifically, the experience of untimely death whenever we face various obstacles such as dying at an early age due to illness or poisoning or accident, this is the result of having given rise to anger in former lives and on the basis of this having killed others. The *second* major type of suffering that we experience in this worldly realm is to have our wealth and possessions lost or destroyed or stolen or burnt by fire or other means, or to experience being cheated and deceived. In this way we can experience poverty hunger and thirst; these experiences all come about from having given rise to desire, greed and avarice in the past. And then, the *third* and final of these major types of suffering are when we experience an uninterrupted illness or physical pain which is not benefited no matter how many medical treatments we receive or how many medicines we take or how many long life rituals are done on our behalf. The principle cause of this on-going pain and illness is the result of having sought our own bliss, comfort and happiness in the past at the expense of others.

Although there are limitless types of suffering, I have mentioned these as a means of giving a brief introduction to them. How are these kinds of suffering experienced? The great experience of suffering comes in the three lower realms where the beings experience the fully ripened effects of negative karmic accumulations and although these sufferings are extreme indeed we cannot witness them directly with our naked eyes. When beings experience this fully ripened effect in the three lower realms even though those negativities may not be completely exhausted within that life on the basis of former positive actions that they have engaged in, it is possible for them to take rebirth in the human realm. Even though one may again take rebirth in the human realm one will continue to experience the karmic ripening in various ways.

We have karmic propensities of virtue and non-virtue which are carried forward from our previous lives into this present life; and the qualities of these propensities can even be seen in the behavior of small children; for example, if one has the propensities of being a good and upright person, if one has the qualities of being studious, this can even be seen in small children, it comes from the propensities of former lives. Likewise our negative propensities are also carried forward with us into future lives, thus those who have been thieves in former lives are predisposed to stealing and those who have killed in former

lives even as children will tend to take the life's of cats, dogs , insects and so forth. In this way, we experience the fruition that is actions that correspond with past activities.

THE UNERRING NATURE OF KARMA CAUSE AND EFFECT

It is as if these past activities have planted a seed of negative emotions in our mind stream, and those seeds will continue to ripen and bear fruit until they are completely exhausted. If we merely cut down the sprouts of these seeds, they will not be exhausted. They must be completely purified in order not to experience their fully ripened effect. The second type of ripening that is experienced is the ripening experience which corresponds to former actions; for instance, if you steal in this life, you will experience the ripening of that action which is to be thrown into prison. All of these fruitions come about from negative emotions that are abiding in our mind streams.

As an example of karmic propensities, we can use a cat. We can see that they have the tendencies to scratch people and bite people, and this is a sign of their inborn desire to kill, and this comes from the karmic propensity of anger in their mind streams.

For us gathered here this evening, how is it that we will recognize the creation of karma and karmic propensities? First, the Buddha taught the truth of suffering and this is relatively easy to understand if we look at our own lives and our own experiences alone-- we do not have to look further than that. Some people experience such unbearable suffering that they wish to commit suicide. Likewise after having taught the truth of suffering, we must abandon the causes of suffering who but the fully enlightened ones could comprehend suffering and its causes? The very root of suffering is the negative emotions in our minds. If we understand the workings of karma cause and effect, we will know that there is no one who is recording our negative actions, writing them down in a log; no one who is able to say that on this day, you stole this or that, and on that day, you killed someone. This is not going on at all, yet if on the basis of negative emotions, we engage in theft, for example, we will without a doubt experience the fruition of that negative action. All of the sufferings that have been experienced in cyclic existence without beginning come from first the negative emotions which arise in the mind, thus we should recognize these negative emotions themselves to be like thieves who have stolen away our happiness and well-being. The Buddha taught that phenomena are the nature of suffering but what really is suffering are the negative emotions in our minds themselves. When we understand this law of the nature of suffering then we will be able to look into the causes of suffering. When we understand that the thief of negative emotions is the ultimate cause of suffering then we will be able to understand how to abandon the causes of suffering.

Having taken a human form then without doubt we will eventually die, and at this time, all of our accumulated wealth, our companions, our homes and so forth must be left behind; it is the mind alone with its collected karmic propensities that will be carried forward to the next life and this is the incontrovertible nature of karma cause and effect. It was said by Milarepa that the very root cause of the three lower realms is anger; thus,

at the cost of your life, continue to practice patience. Milarepa was instructing us no matter how desperate our situation becomes, we must not carry over negative emotions with us into our future lives. So we should consider well the following.

It is said that if we want to understand what the actions of our past lives have been, we should look at our present body and our present life; likewise, if we wish to understand what our future lives will be like we should look at our present actions. Thus when we experience illness and suffering in this life we should understand that these have arisen from negative emotions we should analyze well the anger in our mind streams the desire and so forth and the results that they give rise to.

It is very valuable indeed for us to contemplate each of the principle negative emotions and recognize the results that they yield. For example, if we experience poverty this is the result of having had avarice greed and desire in our mind streams in the past. If we do not have stable companions or lovers, this is the result of not having maintained moral discipline in the past, of not having cultivated patience, and of giving rise to jealousy and so forth. In this way, we should really contemplate negative emotions and the various fruitions that they yield.

Every small happiness that we experience is the fruition of virtuous actions such as generosity and moral discipline. Every negative experience of suffering that we have is the result of engaging in actions like the ten non-virtues. What is the very root of these ten? It is the habit of self-clinging. Conversely the mind wishing to accomplish the benefit for others is the root cause of all virtuous actions which result in happiness.

Thus we should investigate our own mind streams to understand the unerring nature of karma cause and effect; how virtuous actions that come from beneficial intent yield happiness, how negative actions that come from self-clinging yield the fruition of suffering.

METHODS FOR ABANDONING NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

If in this way, we are able to recognize the workings of karma cause and effect in our mind streams, then we should engage in the various methods of abandoning negative emotions. Last night, I spoke about some of these methods; for beginners, we should again and again contemplate the sufferings in the three lower realms of existence. When we do so, we give rise to fear of having to experience these sufferings, and on the basis of this fear, we abandon negative emotions. If we are practicing in accord with the Bodhisattva-yana, then these negative emotions will be abandoned through again and again training in loving kindness and compassion. If we pursue the third method of engaging in the practices of Secret Mantra, then negative emotions are abandoned through realizing their empty nature. When we meditate on the empty nature of all phenomena, this becomes the very basis of liberating negative emotions.

Having talked briefly about the basis which is loving kindness and compassion; **tonight I would like to talk about ultimate truth and how to abandon negative emotions in the context of the ultimate truth.** I will offer these teachings for your contemplation.

If we truly wish to abandon negative emotions, first we must contemplate the nature of the outer container which is this worldly realm and the inner contents which are sentient beings. As we interact with the outer container and inner contents, we reinforce our habits of fixating on phenomena as being real and on the basis of this fixation we give rise to the dualistic views of attachment and aversion.

By way of example, we can look at a flower; if there is a real flower before us and it is very beautiful, we look at it and see its qualities thinking this is a lovely flower. In that moment, we are giving rise to the view that this flower is real and on the basis of that, we give rise to attachment and fixation. We see the flower as something inherently existent and has a kind of reality on its own. From this, we have dualistic views of attachment and fixation and so forth. If on the other hand, we are looking at a phony flower, we may think that it looks very beautiful but there will be no basis for the fixation or attachment; we will always hold the view that it is not real. We can also use the example of insects and bees and so forth. They will naturally gather around the real flower, the bees will want to take nectar from the flower and so forth. But if they perceive a phony flower, although it might appear beautiful, still insects and bees and so forth will not gather there because it is not perceived as real, it does not have the same qualities. Therefore we can see that the fault is not with the external phenomena but with our perception of phenomena as being real and inherently existent; this is a great fault.

Likewise I can give an example with the negative emotion of aversion. If we perceive a real poisonous snake in front of us, we will not approach it because we will have great fear that it would bite us and do us harm; on the other hand if we see a phony snake and if we don't recognize it as phony we will fear it as though it is real, and this fear comes about from our aversion. But the moment we understand that this snake is not real, it is only a toy, there will no longer be any fear.

In this way, we tend to fixate on the phenomena of this container that is this worldly realm, and the contents that are sentient beings as being real and as having some inherent existence. On the basis of this, we divide all of our experiences into self and others, attachment, aversion and so forth; but if we wish to understand this well then we should look at the 22nd verse of the Bodhisattva's Practice which reads:

Appearances are one's own mind. From the beginning, mind's nature is free from the extremes of elaboration. Knowing this, not to engage the mind in subject- object duality is the bodhisattvas' practice.

When we really contemplate the meaning of this verse and put it into practice, on the basis of this, we can understand the meaning of ultimate truth.

UNDERSTANDING THE OUTER CONTAINER AND THE INNER CONTENTS AS COMPOUNDED PHENOMENA AND EMPTY IN NATURE

So with regard to this outer container which is this worldly realm, if we have attachment and fixation to this then we should contemplate in the following way:

Due to the collective karma of sentient beings, all outer phenomena appear as this world, yet they are the nature of impermanence, they are fleeting in a single instant like a water bubble arising on the surface of the water, and just as suddenly, disappearing. In this way, all phenomena are compounded phenomena and are of the nature of impermanence.

When people hear this teaching of how this worldly realm has come about due to collective karma of sentient beings (which is based in the minds of all sentient beings), this will give rise to many doubts and hesitations. It will not be easy to understand immediately how this is the case and some people will want to investigate it. But it is not useful to give rise to so much conceptual investigation. Rather, if we simply understand that the outer container is of the nature of impermanence, it is a compounded phenomenon. Through this understanding, the habit of fixating on it as real will be overthrown; this alone will be sufficient.

Likewise, if we have attachment and fixation on the inner contents which are sentient being, then we should contemplate the fact that all sentient beings will experience death and will take rebirth. How is this so? When we do not understand the ultimate state of the mind, when we do not understand the nature of selflessness, when we have deeply ingrained habits of self-clinging, then we fixate on the I as being real and inherently existent. Then even when the consciousness separates from the body at the time of death, due to the power of ignorance (which is not seeing the ultimate nature of mind), we give rise to the karmic propensity of desire. And on the basis of desire, we take rebirth anywhere in the six realms of existence, and having done so, we have obtained another body. Thus we should contemplate that the entire outer container and all of its inner contents are the nature of impermanence, and that they have been manifested through mind itself.

In this way, if we contemplate that the entire outer container and all of its inner contents have been created by the mind, we might wonder how this is so and I can give the following example: When we are training in the six yogas of Naropa, we will engage in the practice of Dream Yoga and by training in the dreams that arise during the sleep state. When we are dreaming, we see places, we see the land, we see the sentient beings therein, and all these phenomena seem real as we are dreaming. Yet, they are not actually physically present; they are mere creations of the mind. Yet if we look at dream phenomena, everything is completely therein; the whole world and beings therein are complete in our dream experiences. Yet when we wake from the dream, we recognize that everything that we thought was so real was truly a dream, false and unreal.

Lord Jigten Sumgom taught that this life, our future life and the intermediate state between the two are all of one single nature. How is this so? Now having been born, we

inhabit this body until the time of our deaths, and from birth to death, this entire life is like one big dream. When we go to sleep, we fail to recognize dreams as dreams. Some people have this recognition, but for the most part, it is only upon waking that we see the phenomena of dreams as illusionary. If we really train well in recognizing the phenomena of this life as being dream-like and illusionary, then without doubt, we will begin to carry that recognition into the dream state. If this is stabilized then it can be carried also into the intermediate state. By engaging in this training, we recognize waking phenomena as dreamlike and dream phenomena as dreamlike, and once this is stabilized, we will be able to recognize all arising phenomena of the intermediate state as dreamlike, we will see the empty nature of the phenomena of this worldly realm. And this will then condition our perceptions as we take our future lives, and we will have the capacity to recognize their illusionary nature there of as well.

So we must in this way recognize the phenomena of this life as being like a dream. When we contemplate the impermanence of the outer container that is this world, our attachment and fixation to outer phenomena will become less and less, we will no longer hold onto our perceptions as being so true and real. When we perceive an external phenomena like a snake, we will not have the same reaction to it as we will perceive its inherently unreal and impermanent empty nature.

In this way we should understand that all perceptions are created through the mind. If I train in looking at the natural state of the mind then my attachment and fixation will begin to loosen, and I will begin to see phenomena as they truly are. Tilopa said that the body is like the hollow stock of a reed; this points to the kind of impermanent and empty nature of form itself. Without the mind and without the consciousness, the body cannot be said to be a person; in a similar way, then we should look at the impermanent and insubstantial nature of all phenomena.

The outer container and the inner contents are compounded phenomena; they are of the nature of emptiness when we look at the nature of the mind we see countless mental arisings just as when a ray of sunlight comes in through the window we see countless motes of dust floating in space.

FREEING THE MIND FROM FIXATING ON PHENOMENA AS REAL

When we give rise to many conceptual thoughts and we fixate on them as real, then we act on them and accumulate karma. Thus we should seek to free our minds from fixation on arising phenomena as real. If I give an example of a cup, before the cup takes on any material form at all, it exists in the mind of someone. They create it in their mind, they have a concept of how it should be made, and then only after this do they use their hands to create the actual material objects. So it is that all compounded phenomena are created by the mind. Thus, it is said that the ultimate nature of the mind is unelaborated. Yet when we fail to recognize this ultimate nature, we give rise to elaborations or conceptual thoughts, and on the basis of these engage in actions.

Even if we get just a gross understanding of the fact that the outer container of this world and the inner contents which are sentient beings are empty in nature and are compounded phenomena, it creates some relaxation in the mind. Then the mind is not so tightly bound by the concept of phenomena as being real. Then beyond this, if we actually put this into practice through meditation, we will understand that mental arisings such as negative emotions are the basis for our actions. When we create karma in this way, then we will experience the fruition; when we actually look at the nature of the mind, we see the empty self-less nature of the mind and we recognize that everything that I had thought as self is actually self-less, everything that I had held to as being I is really without any basis. This direct experience will only come through practice.

So as it says in the 37 Bodhisattva Practices:

Knowing that the mind's nature is free from the extremes of elaboration, not to engage the mind in subject- object duality is the bodhisattva's practice

This term of subject- object duality points to the connection between the perceiver (the subject) and its object. When the perceiver sees outer objects as being real and inherently existent than on the basis of this, we give rise to all of the thoughts than on the basis of this we give rise to all sorts of attachment and aversion and so forth. On the other hand, if we can recognize these thoughts in the moment that they arise (and if we can do this again and again), they will become less and less powerful. When this takes place our minds will not be so bound up by fixation. Then we will finally understand that a snake we had perceived as being real is actually false, then naturally the mind is more open, relaxed and free from fear. In the same way, when we look at the nature of the mind, the fixation in the mind begins to be purified.

When we give rise to thoughts and negative emotions, on the basis of these, karma is created. Yet if we are able to recognize the empty nature of a single thought then we will see that all thoughts are like bubbles that appear on the surface of the water and just as quickly disappear. We will recognize that thoughts manifest like waves out of the ocean and dissolve back into the ocean; thus, thoughts arise out of mind and dissolve back into mind. In the beginning, it seems like mind and mental arising are two different things, but in the future, when we have stabilized our meditation, mind and mental arisings will be seen as one and the same thing just like waves are still the nature of water. Thus, if we maintain mindful awareness, the thoughts that arise will not cause any harm or difficulty. If we lose mindfulness, then again we will fall under the sway of dualistic subject- object duality, and on the basis of this, we will continue to create karma.

CULTIVATING AND RELYING ON MINDFUL AWARENESS TO RECOGNIZE THE NATURE OF MIND

If we wish to recognize the natural state or mode of being of the mind, in the beginning, we must rely on mindful awareness. We will find that we can only catch brief glimpses of the natural state of the mind in the beginning.

Through training in this again and again, looking repeatedly at mind's nature, we will find that the period of time that we are able to sustain awareness grows longer and longer. Eventually through continued effort, we will be able to sustain awareness in a ceaseless unbroken continuity. When in this way we stabilize recognition of the absolute state of mind, then we realize all of the excellent enlightened qualities.

First, we must really cultivate mindful awareness. Once we have done this for many years, relying on mindful awareness as the guru then when it becomes stabilized we should investigate the mindful awareness itself; look at the very face of mindfulness. *When we can do this even the mindfulness is lost, it is then that we really recognize what is call the natural state of the mind.

When one is a beginner, it is easy to talk about and to understand conceptually these teachings on mindful awareness, but when we actually begin to put them into practice, it is not so easy. The wisdom dakini Naguma said: "In the beginning, the tiny flame of awareness is like the ember at the tip of a stick of incense, but then as again and again, one cultivates this awareness and it grows stronger and brighter"² Mindful awareness is the same thing as "Ye-she," and this is commonly translated as primordial or wisdom awareness. When we look at the natural state of the mind, then we experience primordial awareness; we can cultivate that. Within this, whatever thoughts arise, there is clear recognition of the arising thought, and then there is no need to follow after it, the thoughts themselves immediately dissipate. This awareness -- the natural state of the mind -- is changeless in the three times of past present and future. Although we have given rise to many negative emotions and created many karmic propensities, still, on the ultimate level, the mind has never changed. Thus, when we are not cultivating mindful awareness, we fall under the power of arising thoughts, and then on the basis of this, we accumulate karma. When we are cultivating mindful awareness, the thoughts are recognized on arising and liberated on arising, thus there is no accumulation of karma.

When mindful awareness becomes stable and we are able to abide for a long time in awareness, then this awareness is like a flame. The flame is self-radiant, and like-wise, it illuminates everything around itself. Thus, we speak about self-clarifying self-radiance; within this, the qualities of the three kayas are complete. That is to say within the mind itself, the qualities of the three Kayas are all present.

The nature of the mind is empty like the vast expanse of space-- that is without any boundary or center. Likewise, the mind is naturally clear; so although the mind is empty in nature, still it is the clarity. As we cultivate awareness of mind's nature, we see that the nature of emptiness is clarity and that clarity is emptiness. This mind that is the union of clarity and emptiness, is all pervading like the expanse of space. There is no place where mind does not abide, and we cannot say that mind is present here but not there. And within this all pervading mind, the seed of the three kayas is already present. When you cultivate awareness through your own direct experience, you will know and understand the inherent presence of the seed of the three kayas.

² Translator Ari Kiev' note: " I apologize this is a very loose meaning translation of Naguma's words."

All beginners of meditation are encouraged to look at the mind; but if we do so and we have the thought, ‘Oh, I see it’, then we completely have not gotten it at all. In this regard, Mahasiddha Tilopa said “Look at that which cannot be seen.” Likewise, he said, “Not seeing is the supreme insight”. When we look at the empty nature of the mind which is also the nature of clarity, we see directly that the mind is like the expanse of the sky, completely clear and free of obstructions. **Within this direct experience, we look at that which cannot be seen.** If you see this, then you see the mind of all of the Buddhas of the three times of past, present and future. If you recognize this for an instant or even for a minute, that period of recognition is no different then seeing all of the Buddhas of the three times.

If in the beginning we exert ourselves only in effort to realize emptiness, it will be of little benefit because the direct experience of emptiness is naturally and spontaneously arising. Thus, the method that we need to practice is to cultivate loving kindness and compassion for each and every sentient being, our parents our teachers our countrymen, and in this way, thinking again and again of love and compassion, we will give rise to a real sense of the kindness of others. Through this practice, our habits of attachment and aversion will be emptied out, they will be exhausted. Thus, we do not need to look outward at outer phenomena, rather we need to turn our attention inside and look at the mind itself. Negative emotions obscure the mind’s nature. Negative emotions are like clouds that obscure the clear blue sky. When the clouds clear away, the sky itself is seen. Similarly, when cultivating loving kindness and compassion, our attachment and aversion are naturally liberated; this is what is meant when we talk about a very great level of shamatha (calm-abiding) practice. When these negative emotions are liberated then we naturally see the sky –like mind.

ENDURING DIFFICULTIES ON THE PATH

For those of you who are gathered here tonight who wish to practice this, it is necessary to really give rise to a perfect aspiration to liberate yourself and others from the ocean of suffering that is cyclic existence. In order to do this, you must engage in the method of practicing in meditation on the non-dual union of wisdom and compassion. If you develop this perfect aspiration and firm resolve, then however many difficulties you must experience on the path, you will be able to endure them, in the same way that Milarepa followed his guru Marpa, in the same way that Naropa followed his guru Tilopa. We should give rise to real desire, interest, devotion and motivation to follow this path completely. If we have this level of devotion then it is not necessary to speak to others about our questions and doubts, we do not need to ask anyone else. Through the power of our own meditation, we can turn our awareness inward, ask our own questions of our own mind and experience the resolution of those questions and doubts through meditation. In order to do so, we should supplicate the lineage masters of the past such as Tilopa and Milarepa. Thus there will be no questions tonight.

When I speak of giving rise to devotion, I am not talking about giving rise to devotion to people or to me, I am talking about giving rise to devotion to the practice. If you have this

kind of devotion then whatever illness or difficulties are experienced, whatever suffering and happiness that are experienced on the path, still you will not waver from the practice. If you have this kind of devotion then it is no different then supplicating Tilopa for clarification and resolution of questions. In this context, then it is not necessary to ask your questions of other people; people will tell you many different things but you cannot rely on the fact that people's answers will lead you down an unmistakable path. You must rely on your own inner experience.

For those of you who are gathered here who wish to engage well in the practice of Dharma, you should rely for a long time on authentic spiritual guides. We have had the blessings of H.H. Chetsang Rinpoche, Khenchen Konchog Rinpoche; likewise, we can receive the blessings of Drupon Thinley Ningpo Rinpoche and Lama Gyalsten who are present here tonight. If we really wish to engage well in practice, we should rely for a long-time on a teacher and spiritual guides. Just like it is best to rely on a single doctor for a long period of time because this doctor gets to know your constitution, your pulses and so forth, and thus, knows how to prescribe medicines effectively for your present conditions. If someone who is new arrives at the doctor's office, and the doctor has no experience with this person before, he cannot immediately prescribe a medicine, first he must investigate. Thus it is on the basis of relying on a long term relation with a guru that we can really receive the necessary instructions to do good and stabilize our practice.

***This teaching was transcribed by Lisa Lewis, October 2005, at Drikung Mahayana Center, Maryland. May all benefit.*