

**Introduction to Tantra – 2024**

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## Welcoming and thanksgiving note

Hello, Ni Hao. Tashi delek! I am **very happy to be back in the Land of Bodhicitta and so happy to see some old friends' faces, new friends, and also friends from other parts of town, from other cities**, like KL, maybe from Johor, Malacca, Kalatan isn't it? Klain. And also, I see some other friends **from overseas**, from Australia, from Europe, Singapore etc.

Even though in one way, it has been a long time: a whole year, in another way, it is like seeing you again from yesterday.

So, I am **very happy to be back and especially to see Venerable Sonam la and Venerable Jampa la: they look very healthy, radiant**, and am sure **so many meaningful developments of the projects have already been actualized here**. You can see it from the entrance, there are so many projects that are developed. For some of them, the grounds already even started.

**Everyone's focus on the preservation of Dharma and being in the service of all sentient beings is very lively here**. So, really rejoice in all of our merits.

**On that basis, starting from tomorrow onward, on this very land and with the very environment, many individuals will come with positive purposes to develop themselves**, become a better person, to heal themselves, bring success in their spiritual journey, and in all those different activities.

**The teachings discourses and all the activities** throughout the day, from morning to night, every activity is meant **to purify ourselves, to purify the environment, and accumulate merits, for our own well-being and also for the well-being of the rest of the sentient beings**.

So, so many amazing opportunities are lining up for us to be part of that favorable event and be part of those fortunate beings, **I think it is something to be really excited about, to be really looking forward to, and be happy about it**.

And also, **I would like to express my appreciation on behalf of all the people that are going to enjoy and benefit from the event to all the people behind the scenes who from a long time ago started organizing this**.

**During the event** there are so many areas that need to be comfortable to answer everyone's needs, and even **after the event, there is so much work to do behind the scenes**, things that need to be wrapped up and a lot of conclusions jobs that need to be done.

So, **because of your immense compassion and great care for everybody**, that is how many people **will have the opportunity to enjoy the Dharma and meritorious activities, without needing to be distracted by other matters**. Because the volunteers will take care of everything.

A lot of hard work for all of you but meaningful. You are not just volunteers who just offer shelter, meals, and give medicine for temporary hunger, pain, etc. **Here, you are facilitating to offer Dharma and meritorious opportunity which will serve as the ultimate medicine to overcome Samsara and its causes, karma, defilements and delusions**.

**That will bring benefit not only to our happiness now at the present time, but it will bring benefit to all the future lifetimes until we actualize Bodhisattvas and Buddhas' lives** just like Chenrezig, Kwan Yin, and all the others Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. All these are the direct causes of that.

**Therefore, your heart and dedication to make us comfortable and the organization for everybody means a lot.**

**It is so beneficial, not only here, but also, if there is any individual who assisted, who offered transportation** to those attendees who are coming from overseas, coming from far, they may not have transportation, and even once they are here, not necessarily everybody has a room to stay at the center.

So, they need transportation to come here, and our event ends a bit late and starts early. So, those who have transportations assisting those who do not have; and also those of the locals, and those of the volunteers, **who are looking after the newcomers**, who came from other station, who came from far, who are not familiar with the place, familiar with the culture here, **giving them a sincere welcoming expression through speech, facial expression**; so that everybody feels and experience like a real family reunion here after one year being apart; thank you.

**Everyone joining the retreat is family, more than conventional family. It is a spiritual family; it is our Gurus' family. So, thank you and welcome.**

## **I. Morning session – 11.30.24**

### **A. Taking refuge in Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha who are free from any limitation**

**While reciting the refuge prayer, those of you who already have refuge in Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, you can refresh it.**

**Those who have not taken refuge yet in Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, you can simply acknowledge Buddha nature as one's innate nature, one's own true being.**

**And place confidence in the fact that, this Buddha nature will one day be fully awoken as a resultant Buddha, which is the ultimate refuge, through the cultivation of the path and the precepts.**

Then, understand you have gone under the refuge of Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, because Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha **are the straightforward quality free from all the limitations.**

These are the straightforward qualities:

- which accomplished **all the perfections**, all the goodness, all the virtuous qualities,
- which has **all the wisdoms**, all the skillful means,
- and most of all, has **omniscient wisdom**, which directly understands the entirety of one's past, present and future, including of the subtle karmas, mental dispositions, whose compassion, love, blessings, is all pervasive, without any bias. All pervasive.

**Because of that reason, we go for refuge to that ultimate refuge without a doubt** that it will cause our total purification of our own limitations and conditions us **to actualize the same achievements than Buddha** himself.

That is the reason why one took refuge in Guru, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha and the qualities of immeasurable love, compassion, blessings, omniscient wisdom. These qualities are the most inspiring qualities, the most inspiring virtues.

### **B. Setting a Bodhicitta motivation with the four immeasurable thoughts, the very purpose of one's life**

You truly aspire to actualize them **for your own ultimate benefit, as well as the ultimate benefit of the rest of the sentient beings; as well as your temporary benefit**, the benefit of this mundane life of this very lifetime, for the benefit of this very moment; **as well as bringing a secure, positive, beneficial environment to the others**, starting with the person who is sitting next to you that fly that keeps flying all over your face, and the ants which are crawling everywhere.

**That is what you aspire for.** And thinking about these boundless immeasurable qualities of the Guru Buddha is so inspiring. **It is truly heart-touching.**

**Therefore, the very purpose of life, the very purpose of existence and the very purpose of this retreat, of this right very moment is to actualize that benefit.**

**On that basis, you set firm, correct, most beneficial motivation now through the guidance of the four immeasurable thoughts**, you express that from the depth of one's heart, wholeheartedly, sincerely. **You generate Bodhicitta motivation in that way.**

**C. Salutations to Shakyamuni Buddha who is kinder than all the Buddhas (let's remember all that he went through specifically for us and let's 100% practice)**

The verses to pay salutations to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha must be recited **on the basis of understanding how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is to us kinder than all the past, present and future Buddhas.**

**Among the thousand fortunate Buddhas** who will come into our world, the Southern world, for us, the people of the five degenerated times, **not all Buddhas will teach the complete path.**

**Shakyamuni Buddha provides the complete Dharma, which is uncommon, special,** compared to those thousand fortunate Buddhas who are going to display similar kinds of deeds, coming to this Southern world to turn the wheel of Dharma.

**Most of the Buddhas, 997 Buddhas, will not teach the complete teachings of both Sutra and Tantra.**

**Most of the Buddhas will only reveal the Sutric teachings, not because there are limitations in those Buddhas in their omniscient capabilities.** It is because of their karmic connections with the sentient beings of that time and era, **in relation to the aspiration that the Buddhas themselves made when they were on the path of training.**

Shakyamuni Buddha, countless eons of lifetime before becoming a Buddha, when he was just similar like us, even from the very first time when he was as a beggar, when Buddha passed by Him, even though he had nothing to offer, whatever food he had been given by others, He offered it to the Buddha.

He rejoiced in Buddha's qualities and made this aspiration: **"May I be just like Him and may I come to the world during the five degenerated times".**

**Among all the different times, he chose to be back during the most distracting time**, in the most distorted world, when not only intelligence is degenerating, but also the lifespan is degenerating, even the delusions become more stubborn, and environmentally there are so many distractions.

**a. In those degenerated times, it is so hard to understand the Dharma and take it as personal instruction**

One of the most tragic times. **It is so hard to help. Even if you provide help by teaching Dharma, it is so difficult to understand:**

- Firstly, it is so difficult to even meet the Dharma.
- Secondly, it is so difficult to be inspired by the Dharma.
- Thirdly, it is so difficult to understand Dharma, even if you learn it.
- Finally, even if you understand, it is so difficult to understand as an instruction to yourselves.

**You always listen to the Dharma thinking this teaching is for somebody else, not for me, seeing limitations in that somebody, thinking this Dharma is an antidote for that somebody, instead of seeing this limitation is within me and this teaching is for me.**

**This human intelligence becomes so corrupted that the smartness of the intelligence interprets everything in a hallucinated way or wrongly, with a lot of misinterpretations, even when you are actually hearing a profound and a correct nectar of the Dharma directed at you.** That kind of position.

#### **b. Shakyamuni Buddha got enlightened specifically for us (karmic connection)**

So, in short, **that very lineage, that very first reincarnation of Shakyamuni Buddha**, who first time aspired with all his heart in bodhicitta, in particularly dedicated to the beings of the five degenerated times like us; from that point of you Shakyamuni Buddha is **extremely closely connected to us.**

**He enlightened for us, specifically for us, for each and every one of us.**

And on top of that, **there are so many Buddhas who remained in Dharmakaya. They do not openly illustrate in the Nirmanakaya form as Shakyamuni Buddha**, which is more accessible to the ordinary beings, more accessible to the limited merits, people like me.

#### **c. Benefitting us in the three kayas forms and in the Guru form**

**So, Buddha is not only benefiting and inspiring from the Dharmakaya existence;** but he also manifested in the form bodies:

- **In Sambhogakaya form** who resides within the Bodhisattvas realms and extensively turns the wheel of Dharma,
- and at the same time manifests in the **Nirmanakaya form** of the Buddha, such as the historical Shakyamuni Buddha.

Then, on top of that, **he manifests into a Guru form**, in the most ordinary aspect, with whom, even us, we can directly engage in face-to-face conversations.

We are able to enjoy the Dharma directly without needing to go through any other channels, with direct transmissions. **The Guru manifests at the same level as us, conventionally, so we do not feel too much of differences in every level.**

**Through the heart of compassion, and the aspirations that he made, he even manifests that way.**

**So, Shakyamuni Buddha is not only special and kinder than all the rest of the three times Buddhas, but also special and kinder in relation to the karmic connection even among the thousand fortunate Buddhas.**



Remembering that, pay salutations to Shakyamuni Buddha.

#### **d. A life of renunciation and hardships to benefit us**

So, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha for countless eons of lifetimes, worked for us, for each and every one of us.

**He observed all the precepts, accumulated and accomplish three countless great eons of merits then brought about all the benefits of the Dharma that we are enjoying, the nectar.**

From that very first reincarnation [that beggar], and then for numberless lifetimes [some of the reincarnations are highlighted in Jakarta tales: five hundreds fortunate lives of Shakyamuni Buddha, five hundreds unfortunate lives reincarnations of Shakyamuni Buddha] throughout his journey on the Bodhisattva path, **it is all started from that one aspiration “may I be just like the Buddha, may I be just like you the Buddha and be able to bring benefit to all the sentient beings”.**

It started from there, then he worked life after life.

We can read the deeds of those lives and learn how many sacrifices he made, how he renounced his own comfort, and how many dedications in virtue he did, just for that one purpose.

In order to help us, to benefit us, to be able to reveal the purest wisdom, the most beneficial attitude, such as altruistic wisdom, and altruistic attitude, and reveal the complete path, the Sutra and Tantra, he took upon him all that just for our benefits.

#### **e. Can we afford to still get distracted while the Buddha gave us all?**

So, now let's think and evaluate if we are wasting our life by not practicing Dharma, even though we have access to it. Now let's think is there any room for us to get distracted by any worldly concern, by any minor samsaric day-to-day obstacles.

While someone out there, like Shakyamuni Buddha, worked from countless eons of times for us and provided everything for us, yet we are not taking it. Even when we encounter Dharma, we take only a very little fraction of the teaching, of the practice, not the complete teaching.

We also never really pay full attention, put full concentration, full mindfulness, into the practice.

**So, when we think of the effort that Shakyamuni Buddha invested for our temporary well-being as well as our ultimate well-being, now let's ask ourselves: “can I afford to waste my life? Can I afford to still get distracted?”**

**When we think of Shakyamuni Buddha, we need to feel that.**

#### **D. The real entry to practice the Dharma**

**That is the entry to the real practice of the Dharma, otherwise, there are so many distractions:** superstitious distractions, ego distractions, delusional distractions, worldly concerns distractions. So many meaningless distractions that come in the form of so-called happiness, in the form of so-called pleasure, those sensual pleasure distractions.

Even if we chant mantra, we try to do some meditations, read some Sutras; **most of time, it is from here (gesture of showing the brain), not from here (showing the heart), not from a very settled heart.**

Then, when the prayer does not work, mantra does not work, our worldly concerns are not fulfilled, we complain to the Buddha, we complain the mantra has no power, Sutra no power, puja no power. Until we even say, “ok I think Buddha also no wisdom”, until we may arrive to that position.

Therefore, **it is so important day-to-day to pay salutations to Shakyamuni Buddha**, remembering that value:

- it really makes you so grounded, so settled

- it also brings so much contentment, so much gratitude, so much inner peace, so much refuge, protection, blessings.

**Then, everything makes sense:** you start to see meaning in all experiences, you start to see meaning even in samsara, you start to see meaning in obstacles, in suffering.

**If you start to see meaning in suffering, in obstacles, in samsara, then what can be better than that? Isn't it?**

#### **E. The purest Dharma, how fortunate are we**

So, we normally give the example of the source of a pure stream that you trace all the way back to the snow mountain, isn't it? Then, you can have some confidence in the minerals of that water. No matter how muddy it may be, there is purity there, because the source came from the snowy mountain.

**Similarly, no matter how limited our practice may be**, in the way we are conducting it in our spiritual Dharma practices; **as long as the lineage is clear, that it can be traced all the way up to the Buddha** [every day to day our practice very much starts from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, remembering his presence, remembering his blessings]; **then, any form of practice** I think will not go wrong, **it becomes very impactful**.

#### **F. A life of renunciation, dedicated studies and training to benefit us – how humble**

When Siddhartha came to display the deeds of the Nirmanakaya Buddha, he renounced all the material comfort for our benefit. **He was born in the most luxurious rich family of the King Siddhodana, who was during that time in India one of the most powerful and richest king.**

There were no limitations of any kind of needs, services, sensual joys. But for our benefit, **he renounced completely**. And he did not just pop-up suddenly and say, “I am Buddha, now I want to teach you”. He did not do that.

**Even if he was a manifestation of the enlightened one, the reincarnation had to go through tremendous hardships, tremendous training, extensive studies, extensive meditations.**

Nowadays many self-arisen Buddhas pop-up from here and there and “I am this and that”.

When we think of **his thirst for knowledge**: he related to the best scholars of the earliest teachers. There were so many scholars, Brahmins scholars, practitioners, he learnt with them. Then, analyzed, not just taking it because someone said so, no! He did not do that.

**He learnt with an open mind, then he analyzed, not just in debate, he analyzed through the application of those techniques in his day-to-day life.** Then, those which worked, he took it. Those which did not, he put aside, move on, and learnt and learnt and learnt and learnt and learnt and learnt and learnt and learnt and learnt.

And, still not satisfied. Then, **he did six years of meditation, he almost lost his life.** The meditation is so strict until he did not let his meditation to be distracted by hunger, pain, even death.

**That much courage, that much focus.** He was only then able to overcome the four maras. **He overcome the first mara, the mara of distraction, then secondly the mara of delusions, then thirdly the mara of the aggregates, then the mara of death.**

Then, he was able to overcome the entirety of the delusions and to actualize absolute Buddhahood. He did this for each and every one of us.

**From the Mahayanic tradition understanding of Buddha coming into this world, it is a display of his deeds, even though he had enlightened countless eons of lives before.**

**From the Theravadan tradition, he actually enlightened in this lifetime through the training.**

**As far as the training is concerned, it is the same.** But whether he is a manifestation or whether he actually overcome samsara and actualized liberation in this lifetime, these are the difference from the different points of view, different cultures, different philosophies.

But whatever it is, it is literally a teaching we must follow. There is no interpretation needed, which is for every one of us: **the importance of renunciation, the importance of dedication, the importance of consistency, the importance of humility, importance of studies, importance of analysis, importance of meditation, importance of precepts.**

#### **G. Displaying the deeds in the renounced form of a fully ordained sangha**

There are so many Buddhas out there, they emanate in different forms than Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

**He displayed the deeds in a renounced form, a fully ordained sangha form.**

There is a meaning there: we cannot take lightly about that: **without the individual liberation vows (even if you have all the higher vows), without the complete three vows, you cannot enlighten.**

The three vows of the entirety of the Dharma:

- the vows of individual liberation from the refuge vows, five lay vows, up to fully ordination vows (when you reach up to that then it is complete)
- then, the Bodhisattva vows,
- then the tantric vows.

**Even though the Bodhisattva vows and tantric vows are higher, the more individual liberation you have, they serve as a greater foundation to the two higher vows.**

#### **a. The importance of precepts and to uphold them purely to become a Buddha**

Shakyamuni Buddha had the choice to display different forms. But he displayed it in a renounced form.

Even though not everybody can afford or has the opportunity to become a sangha, everybody has the choice to become sangha in their heart. **Everybody can become a monk and nun in your heart.**

Some monks and nuns wear robes, they cut the hair, **but do not uphold the precepts. That is even worse.** But the opportunity to become a sangha everybody has. **Every lay person can become a sangha.**

**Conventionally we call this the sangha community** (gesture of showing all the people in the gompa). All of us. It is a community of sanghas. **So, you can become a sangha by upholding renunciation, upholding detachment to sensual objects, to sensual worldly concerns.**

**When you uphold that, you uphold the precept of renunciation, right there you become sangha.**

When you realize renunciation, you are sangha. **Then, on that basis, it is only possible to realize emptiness.** Then, you become Arya Sangha. **When you realize emptiness directly then you become Arya Sangha.** On top of that **you realize your real being is bodhicitta then you become Arya Bodhisattva.** Not just sangha, not just Arya Sangha, Arya Bodhisattva. This is an opportunity for everybody, every lay person.

**To become a Buddha, you need to uphold all the three vows, isn't it?**

**This is the basic principle of the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha.**

Let's talk about liberation, which is common to Hinayana, Mahayana. **Liberation is only possible upholding the individual liberation vows. Then full enlightenment is only possible upholding only the three vows.**

So, not everybody would become a monk and nun, isn't it? **Tara** is one of the most famous meditational deities: she got enlightened not in a monk and nun form. **She enlightened because of upholding the three precepts.** We label her as Arya Tara, isn't it? It means Venerable Tara. Arya Sangha.

**Even though the topic is Tantra, ultimately it is how much purity and upholding the three precepts that will define what kind of label of practitioner we are, and what kind of label of the Yanas we are cultivating (and that is based on the three precepts).**

**b. The importance of practicing purely free from superstitiousness, upholding all the precepts and placing the refuge in the Buddha, otherwise how can we reach Buddhahood...**

My point is: look at Buddha's life: **so many sacrifices!** He did this for us, which is very important to meditate on that, to remember that.

Most of time honestly speaking, **sometimes we remember worldly gods more than the Buddha,** maybe more than all the Buddhas, all the deities, the worldly gods.

Then, we will place **more connection and practices in relation to ordinary Dharma protectors than Arya Dharma protectors, then no question about deities and the Buddhas.**

It is a very profound teaching. This is the profundity of the teachings.

If we want to see the profundity of the teachings of Tantra, it is right there. The profundity of the teachings of Sutra, of Mantra is right there. **If you do not see profundity in there, then even if you have a tantric idea of the teachings, then it is superstitious.**

**Superstitious is one of the main negations to the Dharma, main negation to emptiness, main negation to the Tantra, superstitious.** Now we know we are living in a very superstitious world,

isn't. **We say we meditate on emptiness, but actually we meditate on superstitiousness, emptiness is just the excuse, just to make ourselves feel comfortable.**

Actually, we are very uncomfortable, because of too much superstitiousness. Anyway, I am not here to complain. It is good to know.

### **c. The only ultimate healing**

**Then, we may think we never ask Buddha to work so hard for us, therefore, nothing to do with me.** But the reason is we only aspire for true, lasting, complete happiness. We do not aspire for even a moment for any inconvenience.

**We do not aspire for delusions, karma to arise in us and overpower us. Whether we say or not, we aspire to be adorned with all the wisdom and beneficial attitudes, but we do not know how to do that.**

We are like lost in Triang rubber plantation, or maybe durian plantation where there is no direction in the middle of the night. It is filled with snakes, wild boars, wild peaks, and they are very hungry. If they see you, you are going to be their feast.

There is no light, you do not have a way to go out, completely surrounded by darkness. So, our life is in the same position. There are certain teachings emphasized that we are completely overwhelmed, trapped in the nest of the grasping and there you are completely tied with the ropes of the karmic bounding, so difficult to released and that particular chain, box, is carried away by the heavy flood of lust, attachment grasping, right in the middle of night, in the complete darkness of ignorance.

Even, conventionally, in relative life bound by aging, sickness, death, but we do not know what the solution or antidote are to come out from that.

**While being in that position, then, beings like Shakyamuni Buddha overwhelmed by great compassion, and through his countless lifetimes of effort, of gathering meritorious resources, skillful method, ability like omniscience, revealed complete and direct antidote like the wisdom of emptiness, and the tools of boundless compassion and love; which no other teacher, no other great religious leaders have even revealed, only Shakyamuni Buddha revealed that.**

It is the only solution, not by choice, it is reality, the truth to be liberated from that bondage and all the limitations I was talking about before, no other solution or method, whether spiritual or not, other than the wisdom and method that has the elements of the wisdom of emptiness and Bodhicitta is able to eradicate that, to purify that.

So, all the methods we are gathering in our lifetime to bring lasting happiness, true happiness, to overcome troubles, like aging, sickness, death, all those limitations: who do not have shelter, work so hard to buy a home, those who do not have transportations, work so hard to buy a car, then eat hundreds and hundreds of health supplement to stay healthy and work so hard to buy that, the house filled with gym equipment.

We do all sorts of things. For generations and generations, they applied all that and it did not work.

They are also many spiritual methods related to Nagas, to gods, maybe related to the Buddhas but **without that element of direct antidote, the altruistic wisdom and attitude, any**

**meditation, even the practice of Tantra, of the Highest Yoga Tantra can lack that direct antidote.** It is just the ritual aspect of the Tantra that is practiced.

Historically it never worked. There are labelled in the society high practitioner born in the lower vajra Realms **because of lacking those elements, then the mantra becomes lower energy, the tantric yoga becomes a gathering of offensive energy, instead of nurturing the chakras, channels, drops, it corrupted them and destroy the spiritual system.**

Even in the practice of guru devotion, which is the foundation of the path, the root of the path, one of the essence practices, but lacking the elements of altruistic wisdom and attitude **turns into attachment and the relationship turns into Guru-disciple attachment, then instead of nurturing the Samaya, it destroys it. It happens.**

Then, any form of other spiritual practice until it lacks those two elements will be incomplete. **Every stage of the spiritual practices from the beginning to the end, in all Yanas, when those two are lacking, still carry limitations.**

So, the teacher like Shakyamuni Buddha, only him revealed those most profound, complete, powerful dharma, the antidote of not only the secondary problems in our life, but it is antidote to the root cause of all the problems makers.

Karma and delusions bring problems to us. They are the problems makers, but they are the production of ignorance.

So, no matter how much antidote you apply to karma and delusions, it does not work, because the root cause is not affected. The ignorance is not affected. Ignorance can only be destroyed through altruistic wisdom.

#### **d. The essence of all practice is true altruism**

**Why am I saying altruistic wisdom and not just wisdom? The tendencies of delusions, the obscurations of defilements, until you destroy that, even if you achieve Nirvana, still carry limitations. Still there are a lot of flaws.** Even if you do not commit karma again, even though you do not have delusions anymore, even if no more aging, sickness and death, but you are still obscured.

**The ultimate purpose of your innate being is not fulfilled.** In order to fulfil that, you need to overcome the subtlest negations, the subtlest obstacles, the root, the creator of all the limitations in us: the tendencies of ignorance we call **the innate ignorant.**

**We talk about the circumstantial ignorant, which is the ignorance created through wrong philosophies, wrong beliefs, wrong cultures.** The innate ignorant is there as long as your system is not fully occupied by wisdom.

Even though we have Buddha nature, **even though our initial existence is pure, because there is a pause of being fully aware of the wisdom, then, that void, that period is occupied by the innate ignorant.** And that is the ultimate root cause, not only to the delusions, but also to the defilements.

In order to destroy that, you need the wisdom of emptiness that is supported by Bodhicitta. That teaching, not all the Buddha will reveal that. Not because they are stingy or because they do not know, **but because the living being have no resources of the meritorious karma.**

**Like us, our previous life worked very hard, and we keep pulling our previous life efforts,** maybe not you, at least me. **Every moment we are distracted, we waste our time, we are ruining all the great efforts that our previous life worked so hard for.** The greatest loss, the greatest disaster.

**Buddha revealed that with the most clarity, completeness. That has to be understood as the greatest gift that Shakyamuni Buddha did to us.** If we take that, we will be able to overcome death.

By overcoming that, we will be able to overcome birth. We will be able to overcome aging by overcoming birth. We will be able to overcome sickness by overcoming birth which is by the power of delusions and karma.

We will not only overcome those three tragedies, but we will also overcome the entirety of all the limitations, the limitations of the six realms and the limitations of Nirvana. **We will achieve the highest spiritual goal, which is Buddhahood.** So, again remember the kindness of Shakyamuni Buddha.

So, if we truly love ourselves, we should take at heart what Shakyamuni Buddha offered to us, the whole of it. **He prepared that help for countless eons of lifetimes, which has no mistakes, no flaws.** If you take it then there is no doubt, we will attain all our aspirations, all our goodness will be accomplished.

All our limitations, including our fears about death, aging, sickness, rebirth, everything will be overcome.

**e. Practice wholeheartedness, complete refuge and the spiritual benefit can be very fast**

It has already been proven to us that the rest do not work. We should at least give a wholehearted chance. **Practice wholeheartedness, complete refuge and the spiritual benefit can be very fast.** We do not need to wait for so long until our next life. We do not need to wait until we become Buddha and Bodhisattvas. Immediately.

When you start with altruistic wisdom and attitude, it is very instantaneous, the problems are solved. Problems are the creation of our mind. **There is no ignorant substantial permanent problem or limitation that exist from its own side. It is a hallucinational phenomenon created through hallucination. They are created by our mind which carries the limitations lacking that most beneficial wisdom and attitude.**

**So, when the creator is resolved, then the creation is not there.** In our conventional ways we are always trying to fix the created one. We never fix the creator.

**Since there is nothing that is there inherently and the problem exists from the object side, no matter how much we try to overcome the problem there,** since you do not know the truth, since you did not manage to diagnose the exact problem, **you will not be able to overcome that.**

From this point of view, those wisdom and methods are so powerful. When your heart is adorned with this genuine wisdom of emptiness and genuine bodhicitta, right there you lost the fear of death, aging, even sickness.

It does not mean you will not get sick, you will not age or die. **Death, aging, sickness happen in a very superficial level. It is very gross. Death is not happening to your innate being.**

**Your innate being is vajra. It is indestructible. Your innate being is dharmakaya, it does not die. You fear as if your innate being, inner self is dying,** that is why you are afraid when this superficial death comes in our way. Similar goes with aging, and all the obstacles that come in our way.

If you apply that you will be surprised how effective it works. **All the masters, high realized practitioners proved that.** Just like when you take Panadol when you have a headache. It is quite effective; it is a liberation. They all experienced sickness and death but without fear.

On top of that, **they are forever living, all pervasive in everyone, all time, because of altruism.** Yes, it is so hard to understand this. It sounds like impossible, irrelevant for us now, because we try to understand with our ordinary mind, ordinary way.

#### **f. Experience the taste of altruistic wisdom**

You have to understand with deeper levels. **If you start to meditate, you start to experience in a more obvious way in deep meditation, deep cultivation, on emptiness. Then, you start to experience the taste. Same with bodhicitta.**

Up to now, even when we do meditation, we do not really do deep meditation. Still so much dependent outwardly. We never really meditate inwardly. You cultivate emptiness at a more conceptual level, philosophical level, never really at a meditative level.

**We never manage to get the point, to get the instruction, the essence. That is why it is so difficult to experience. Similar goes with Bodhicitta.**

It is not just a nice thing to say, it is proven. Shakyamuni Buddha is the living example but maybe we think it is too far, maybe not in our time. But then, how about our Gurus like Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche. We witness their day-to-day way of living.

Conventionally we saw. Of course we cannot enter his body, speech and mind but by analyzing you could see it in all his lifetime how he had overcome all the limitations, even in sickness, in death, the bliss, enjoying the Dharmakaya. Same with my late Master Geshe Lama Konchog, same with former Koan Abbot, Lama Lhundrup.

**Not only did we witness the signs of their enlightenment, their wisdom, their relics, but through their wisdom and attitude they were able to transform all their experiences from limitations to complete bliss.**

Sometimes we may think maybe it works for this high Lamas but maybe not for me. It is not like that. **These teachings and practices are valid even for us ordinary practitioners or most beginners like me.**

In life the troubles are always there, because being a samsaric person, with samsaric aggregates, living in samsaric environment, whenever an obstacle comes and that all the help is not working, then, you use the wisdom of emptiness, the wisdom attitude of Bodhicitta and that works.

There is not a problem that cannot be solved. **Even at a beginner level, if we sincerely wholeheartedly apply them, it genuinely works.** So, we do not have any excuses. If it works for me then it works for everybody.

**So, for any level of practices you do including Highest Yoga Tantra practices, if you have the bases of true altruism or ornamented by true altruism, then, all the levels of practice carry the weight, firmness in the practice.**



Otherwise even those practitioners of Highest Yoga Tantra when reality kicks in our ordinary life, then, you are shaken. **So, the essence is true altruism** for all the practices including Tantra.

**g. Even if you are already a high level of practitioner, one thing we cannot put aside is the Lam-Rim**

**When there is an element of true altruism, all the leakages in any practice are sealed. Otherwise, there will be a lot of leakage, limitations.**

Of course, here there are a lot of serious practitioners and experienced practitioners, but if there is any beginner like me, **the main focus is Lam-Rim, especially the great Lam-Rim** and especially the topic I was talking about, **the true altruism: the wisdom chapter and the Bodhicitta subject.**

You truly have to master that. **If you really want to master the path and Tantra, that has to be done.** Even if you are already a high level of practitioner, one thing we cannot put aside is the Lam-Rim.

## **II. Question & answer 11.30.24**

I hope you had a good lunch. This is “questions and answers” time, do you have any questions?

**A. The exact definition of superstitiousness**

**The mind that is lacking wisdom of emptiness and bodhicitta is superstitiousness.**

**All conceptual minds are superstitious. All conceptual minds are false. So, anything which is not viewed from the point of view of emptiness is superstitious.**

This is really important. It is really important to make sense of it within yourself: you need to meditate, you need to analyze deeper on that, in order to make sense to it.

**a. Emptiness is the essence of Dharma: the whole purpose of it is to overcome superstitiousness (conceptual mind)**

**Emptiness is the essence of Dharma.** Dharma in fact refers to emptiness whether in Sutra or Tantra. **Buddha taught the entirety of the Buddha’s teachings for the purpose to understand, realize and bring into application the wisdom of emptiness. It is about overcoming superstitiousness.**

**Even the meaning of Tantra, Mantra, Secret Mantra, is “to protect the mind”.**

“Man” in Sanskrit is mind. “Tra” means to protect. Protection from what? **Protection from being superstitious, from impurities, from impure view, impure mind, conceptual mind. As long as there is an imputation of concept, superstitious influence is already there.** By being so, then conceptual mind also becomes superstitious and false.

In Tibetan word Namtok: nam is referring to “conceptual”, and tokpa is referring to a “particular type of mind”.

In English, it is “conceptual mind”, which expresses the fabrication of dualism: **an inherent substantial dualistic object that obstructs the manifestation of wisdom.** And when there is no wisdom, you will not be able to see the truth.

**So that is why the namdok has to be purified from superstitiousness, the conceptual mind has to be purified.**

Here we need to do the differentiation between the conceptual mind and the non-conceptual mind:

- **In general philosophy understanding**, it is the difference between **the mental factor which is dependent on the sensual organs (which are the non-conceptual) and the mental factor dependent on the six mental consciousnesses (which is the conceptual).**
- **But here**, we have another term: even though the sound is the same, it is referring to something different. Here, **the difference between conceptual and non-conceptual is the difference between the gross and subtle level of the mind, the meditative level of the mind and non-meditative level of the mind.**

**Here “meditative”**: we are not talking about an analytical state of the mind. We are talking about **the comparison between the absorption meditation state of the mind and then the rest of the mind.**

**Or in another words, the wisdom aspect of the mind and the non-wisdom aspect of the mind.**

In relation to practices of purification, **here when we are talking about “purifying the conceptual aspect of the mind”**, it is not about the earlier one: it is not about purifying the sensual mind, which is the non-conceptual mind; **here it is about purifying the fabricated or hallucinated aspect of the mind.**

#### **B. The dissolution of the 80 conceptual minds during the death process in relation to the clear-light practice**

First comes the dissolution of the four elements and after that, there is the dissolution of the white appearance, of the red appearance, the black-near appearance and then clear-light.

Then, throughout this dissolution, **there is a section where the occurrence of the dissolution of the 80 conceptual minds happens.** The conceptual thoughts we are talking about come into 80 kinds of framing, 80 kinds of portions of the hallucinated mind, which are called the conceptual minds, from gross to subtle.

In my notes, maybe I did not mention clearly where the dissolution starts, but I mentioned where it completes the dissolution.

**So, the 80 conceptual thoughts are already subtle levels of mind.**

The gross levels of the conceptual mind are already degenerating when the four elements start to dissolve, because those gross minds depend on the sensual minds. **When the elements are dissolving, the sensual mind starts to degenerate. Due to that factor, the gross mental factors are dissolving.**

So, the 80 conceptual minds are a subtle level of the mind. **But that subtle level of mind is not as subtle as the clear-light mind.** It is subtler compared to the gross mind that we utilize now.

Still, clinically **these 80 conceptual minds are the mind of the clinically dead person’s mind, which is experienced before occurring the spiritual death. The spiritual death occurs with the clear-light experience.**

That portion of mind also goes to the grosser to the subtler.

**a. The dissolution of the 80 conceptual minds starts with the fifth stage and ends up at the seventh stage of the dissolution**

So, the dissolution of that happens with the fifth point, the fifth dissolution which is the occurrence of the white appearance. After complete occurrence of the clinical death, the breathing completely stops, clinically it is pronounced that the brain is completely dead. The pulse is dead.

Then, because of losing the gross nervous system, which holds the grosser level of the basis of the aggregate (especially the physical aggregate, which brings life to the brain, the nervous system), that dies.

**Because this external system is dying, then the melting of the grosser fluid occurs, that starts from upwards which are the grosser substances in relation to our brain which we received from our father, that brings the effect of the white appearance.**

After that the loss of the life of the substances we received from our mother, which also goes from the gross to the subtle, happens. **The blood flow, all the flows, stops. That will cause the loss of the subtle channels, and because of that there is an occurrence of the red appearance.**

When it comes to **the black near appearance** (the third level of appearances, which is the seventh level of the dissolution periods), by then, **even the subtler level of the life force within our channel are dead.**

**That brings about the fact that the life force is now here (showing the level of the heart chakra)** not at the level of the crown, no more to the level of the feet, only at the level of the heart. That matter of life is only living and that light also disappears.

**When the occurrence of the red and white appearances brings about the push of the exhale of the subtle wind** (because of the meeting of the two elements), **then that activity of the subtle wind breaks the indestructible drop.**

**The breaking of the indestructible drop causes the innermost subtle wind (which holds the life force, which holds the clear-light mind) to come out. When that occurs, the spiritual death occurs. The complete death occurs.**

In order to reach there, all the grosser phenomena in relation to our aggregates die, which is called “dissolution”, including the mental aggregate, such as the conceptual mind.

**So, to answer the question of the dissolution of the eighty conceptual thoughts, it starts from the number fifth and ends with number seven.**

**b. Until you reach the white appearance, there is still an arising of negative emotions, there is still the ripening of the negative imprints**

Once the white appearance occurs, red appearance, black-near appearance, and including the clear-light, serve as the antidote to the dissolution of the eighty conceptual minds.

**Due to that reason, when white appearance starts, there is no occurrence of negative emotions, no occurrence of the ripening of the negative imprints during that period.**

Because of that, the dying person is able to sustain through the meditative exercise, the absorption meditative exercise. The person is able to stay focused on the virtuous mind meditation up to the completion dissolution of the wind element.

Once you have reached that virtuous mind at the time of the fifth dissolution, which is the white appearance, **you are safe from conditional obstacles such as the arising of negative emotions.**

**Whatever others' factors that are still possible to arise are only virtuous imprints.**

### **c. The different kinds of opportunity to take the clear light experience onto the path**

For a practitioner who has a high level of training in virtue, like the wisdom of emptiness, during that period, the mindfulness of the wisdom will be at its highest level. **That will serve as a direct cause when the clear-light occurs, for the clear-light experience to result as the Dharmakaya. There you enlighten.**

**For a slightly lower level of practitioner:** if you manage to maintain the mindfulness during your meditation on emptiness until the moment when the wind element dissolves; then naturally during the three white, red and black-near appearances, you will have a higher quality of absorption state of mind. **Because of that, when the clear light occurs, you will be able to realize directly emptiness** (even though you may not be able to achieve enlightenment).

Then, **slightly weaker practitioner** than that, **if you are able to manage to meditate on emptiness, or any other virtue**, like Bodhicitta, remembrance of the Guru, the deity; **and to secure it up to the dissolution of the wind element;** then after that, naturally by the others' forces of the virtuous imprints of the past, that will condition the practitioner to travel steadily up to the clear-light. **When you experience the natural clear light, you will actualize a conceptual realization of emptiness.**

Then **the lowest ones, if you manage to die with a virtuous mind** and able to transit through the stages of the dissolution, when the clear light occurs, **you are able to manage to secure a great number of virtues and that will result in virtuous intermediate state.**

And in that virtuous intermediate state, **there is even the possibility of different stages of benefits you can actualize during the intermediate state:** at least you are able to secure the intermediate state of human precious life, intermediate state of gods and demi-gods, or intermediate state to be actualized in Pure Land. **Then the rebirth will be auspicious rebirth.**

### **d. The factors to develop to take the clear light onto the path**

The different qualities of the results described above depend on at least three kinds of factors:

- **One is familiarity with the practice**, especially to result in the highest result, the Dharmakaya
- Then the greatest **familiarity** should be **with emptiness**. In order to result the Dharmakaya you need similar and direct cause. Even Bodhicitta cannot play that role, you need emptiness' wisdom.
- Then, another factor is **the great purification of negativity and a great accumulation of merits.**

By just familiarizing ourselves through meditation, the force is not good enough to result in Dharmakaya. In the same way, just purifying is not good enough. You need conducive conditions

such as merits. **Therefore, the very much job of following the Buddha's path or practicing the Dharma is to do these three things: to repeatedly exercise in those three.**

To familiarize yourself with the path: study and practice the wisdom of emptiness, Bodhicitta, all other virtues as much as possible, especially the wisdom of emptiness. Then, consistently, every day, there is an aspect of purification practices. Then, there is the aspect of day-to-day accumulation of merits.

**So, if we are able to live a life in this meaning, then, at the time of dying, the death in fact is not an obstacle, death in fact becomes one of the most favorable conditions to manifest one of the most important conditions to be enlightened which is the arising of the Dharmakaya, which is the arising of clear light.**

**e. Very limited other methods to activate clear light (the importance to train and prepare for death)**

**It is very difficult to activate clear light in a lifetime, unless your level of practice is so advanced, your concentration is so advanced, your meditation is so advanced, then you can use the tools of Tantra, such as the four joys.**

There are very limited methods of clear light occurrence when we are living.

Sometimes **when we faint or with certain shock**, clear light occurs. **But if our concentration is not stable, when we faint, we lose our mind; we will not recognize it.**

Because the time of the occurrence is so short, it is like a glimpse, and there you have to be able to catch it through your very very sharp concentration, **which rarely happens, even to the very high level of meditators.**

But the clear light at the time of death, especially if you have meditated long and if you observe pure morality in life; due to the habitual imprints of the repeated exercise of the emptiness meditation and with the secure protection of moral ethics, when the clear light occurs you will be able to manage to meditate onto it. **We call it clear light meditation.**

Many practitioners, when they pass away, just go into meditation. The clear light already expresses, but instead of the clear light getting out of the bases, the channels, chakras, your system; **you are able to keep that and continue to experience** for one week, sometimes even for one month, sometimes even for a few months. **It is very much how long you need to accomplish the path.**

If there is **an intense natural habitual meditation within your lifetime** [like the moment you sit down you are going into meditation, the moment you lie down, also naturally you are going to meditation, even while you are talking to somebody you are actually into meditation, very much your mind is totally into your control, in the fully awakened state of meditation], then **that will impact your subtle system.**

**During the clear light, you will be naturally able to abide in that meditation, especially if you exercise in the death process meditation, and you exercise into the dissolution, imitate experiencing the clear light, especially when you go to bed.**

Because while you are awake, you have to put extra effort to shut down your gross faculties. **When you go to bed, there is a natural shutting down of all the sensual minds, even the gross minds. It is very similar to what we experience when we pass away.**

By the time of repeated exercise of the clear light meditation, at the time of death, you are able to utilize even the dream state as a dream yoga. If you manage to do that, then you are able to manage to wake up into a wake-up yoga. **So, sleeping into Dharmakaya yoga or clear light yoga, dreaming state of dream yoga, wake up state as arising yoga.**

Of course, initially you may fail. **But eventually, the flow of the meditation at the time of going to sleep will be able to continue even as a dream state and the next morning when you wake up you do not wake up from sleep you wake up from meditation,** until you know how you conducted meditation during the dream state and you also remember how you have channeled that even before you went to bed.

**These are things we need to exercise now, every day,** especially if you sleep many rounds that would be even better. So, you can have excuses to take many naps. That would be a favorable occasion. Those who cannot sleep, that is a big problem.

### **C. The three Kayas of a Buddha: are they sequential or simultaneous?**

First of all, **when you actualize one of the Buddha's bodies, the rest of the Buddha's bodies are simultaneously achieved.** They are simultaneous attainments. So, when an individual actualizes Dharmakaya, at the same time, simultaneously, that individual actualizes Sambhogakaya, Nirmanakaya, even the two wisdom bodies, they are all simultaneously actualized.

Now, whether one is bringing that into engaging directly with sentient beings or not, that can have a time difference. **Dharmakaya can manifest according to the mental dispositions of the sentient beings, different times, certain emanations as a Sambhogakaya aspect, certain emanations as a Nirmanakaya aspect.** But the first time achieving they manifest simultaneously.

#### **a. How ordinary practitioner can achieve enlightenment using the clear light of the death process while tantric practitioner like Lama Tsongkhapa only achieved enlightenment in the intermediate state**

There are many examples of practitioners who actualized full enlightenment during the clear light state and who enlightened **in Dharmakaya such as most of the Kadampa masters.**

As for **Lama Tsongkhapa, he enlightened in Samboghakaya,** in the intermediate state, not at the clear light of the death state during the lifetime.

**Here comes the importance of tantra. Without the four initiations, especially the word, wisdom; you will not be able to utilize the subtlest consciousness, the subtlest level of the mind base. Without that you will not be able to actualize the highest level of wisdom which will act as a direct cause of omniscience.**

Even though you may be practicing Sutra up to the very last moment of the ten Bhumis of the bodhisattvas' path following the sutric path; in the Sutra, there is no method to actualize the innermost most subtle wisdom. **That can only be utilized through the activation of the subtlest wind, subtlest chakra, subtlest energy. In Sutra there is no method to do that.**

**All the four classes of Tantra have the tools or the practices that will lead individual practitioners to actualize enlightenment within one lifetime.**

But the difference between the earlier three classes of Tantra and the fourth one, the Highest Yoga Tantra is **Highest Yoga Tantra has the practices or the tools, such as the practice of generation and completion stages, which has the tools and practices that can actualize enlightenment in one brief lifetime.**

**As for the earlier three classes of Tantra, one can achieve enlightenment in one lifetime but not in one brief lifetime.** So, it requires a longer period by consecrating, extending the life through the practice of Long-life deities, etc.

**Only in Tantra. That comes from the practice of the completion stage.** The name means completion of the cause for the Dharmakaya. “Generation” means preparation to the completion stage of the tantric path.

“Completion” means total **completeness of the final causes** required for the channels, the chakras, the winds, and the mind (which is the most subtle) to enlighten. Then, you actualize Dharmakaya.

**Lama Tsongkhapa did not use this intendedly. He had the ability.** He already had accomplished the three great countless eons of merits before he passed away. He even has the opportunity to experience that even before the occurrence of clear light.

**But he observed Vinaya precepts.** Before Lama Tsongkhapa came to Tibet, there were many practitioners, especially tantric practitioners who let go of the Vinaya precepts in order to utilize the four initiations.

In reality, **at a conventional aspect**, yes, **when you have the Vinaya precepts**, you will not be able to harmonize the actual fourth initiation, because **you will not be able to actualize it on this human body, using the human body for the union of Father-Mother. If that happens, the Vinaya precept breaks, the transgression happens.**

**But without that, you cannot activate the subtlest mind and chakras.**

**But in the intermediate state**, you do not use this gross body, **you use the subtle body**, which still has five aggregates. **The subtle body is already released from the Vinaya precept which is one life-time precept. When the clear light concludes the period of the Samaya to the Vinaya precept is complete.** Now you transition like a lay man practitioner in the intermediate state.

Still there is a body, a bardo body. **Still, you have to use the clear light, but you use the bardo clear light.** So, when you use the bardo clear light, or intermediate state clear light, you enlighten as Samboghakaya.

**So, Lama Tsongkhapa enlightened in Samboghakaya in order to observe the completion of the three great countless eons of merits.**

He had the ability, but ordinary practitioner misinterpreted before. So, in order to answer that, **he enlightened in Samboghakaya, while his all lifetime, he manifested the preservation of pure Vinaya precepts.**

**As far as Nirmanakaya is concerned, the reincarnation of Mother Tara, the lady Yeshe Dawa became Liberator Tara, while she was living.** She was a princess. She was the first reincarnation of Tara many countless eons of time before, during the period of the Buddha of the Sound of the Drum.

She was a princess of a kingdom, and she learnt the Dharma. She accomplished the three countless eons of accumulation of merits, purified all the limitations, and **she actualized Tarahood in living human body.**

You can also regard Guru Padmasambhava, even though some legends say he is a lotus born, not born from mother's womb. Other legends have some understanding he was also a Prince. Whichever legend you follow, he illustrated enlightenment in Nirmanakaya form.

**As for Dharmakaya,** there are many examples. Even in today's time, many great masters, like Geshe Lama Konchog and Lama Lhundrup, showed the signs of relics, they manifested five colors relics. As explained in Heruka Tantra, Kalachakra Tantra, there are many tantric deities Buddha who have illustrated the symbolism of different relics. **When the master manifests the five colors relics, they manifest the five Dhyanis Buddhas state.**

**The relics occur right after cremation after the clear light process.** You may say he also must have gone through the intermediate state, but the practitioners who achieved a high level of practice do not go through the intermediate state, unless they choose to go to.

If you have the ability to achieve enlightenment in Sambhogakaya, then with your storage of merits, you can also understand you also have the ability to enlighten within the dharmakaya, within the clear light, isn't it?

So, it is very clear that even though in the scriptures it is not said that "when you actualize enlightenment in the dharmakaya, then the relics are produced"; when you actualize enlightenment and accomplish all the storage of merits to enlighten, then such relics are the symbolism of that.

**There is also another sign which is quite common in Tibet to check the level of the Masters who are passing away whether during the cremation they leave behind the through the heart, tongue and eye without being burnt, leaving being fresh.**

For example, **Geshe Lama Konchog, the cremation site burnt for three days and three nights, the heart, tongue and eye remained fresh in the ashes, but in the scriptures, it is said that the heart, tongue and eye, even in the fire of eons, the hottest fire, as long as it is burning, heart, tongue and eyes remain do not burnt.**

**That is a sign left behind to inspire followers that whatever practices are not just words, there are such results, the Buddha has prophesied that.** All that is regarded as the Masters has achieved enlightenment in Dharmakaya, like Marpa, Panditas like Nagarjuna. Most of the Kadampas Masters I think they illustrated enlightenment in Dharmakaya, in clear light.

**D. What would you recommend to prevent the spirit of a dead person to stay around: a burial or a cremation?**

From Tibetan Buddhist practice, cremation. **If it is a high realized master, maybe there is not much difference between cremation or burial.**

**But for ordinary beings, cremation, because cremation will condition the spirit of the being to be less attached to the environment when you burn the body.**

**The best thing is if you are able to burn even the ashes.**



If not, if there are any remains, especially if there are parts like bones which did not burn, or even ashes, there is a ritual of consecration of the bones: one of the main purposes is to release the tie from the spirit to prevent it seeing it as a belonging, to be attached to it.

That helps the spirit to **be reborn easily** for the next reincarnation.

It also helps with an **easier transition in the intermediate state**. The strongest object of attachment are the aggregates, especially the physical aggregate. It helps the intermediate state beings to release attachment or a feeling of belongings. So, it will help the spirit to easily take rebirth. So, cremation is the recommended choice.

Embalming the body is very rare. Bury underground also. In Tibet there are sky buriers who through rituals practice as a charity of the most attached body. It is regarded as very meritorious for the deceased spirit. But that also needs to be conducted by individuals who really know how to perform the rituals.

Still from every aspect, cremation is the best.

#### **D. Geshela when we do our sadhanas, the visualization is very important. What is the best for visualization, to use a picture or our imagination?**

Yes, the visualization is important and the most important is whatever picture you visualize whether is 3 D, 1 D, 4 D, 6 D, **it has to be mental picture, not a physical picture out there.**

Of course, first, you need to study so you use your eye senses. **Visualization is meditation so whatever object of meditation you take; it has to be a mental picture.**

Then, of course, the more vivid, the more the clarity, the greater the knowledge of the visualization, the better. So, 3 D is better than 2 D. If you are able to see all 360 degrees, it is even better.

### **III. Evening session 11.30.24**

Lamp for the path is the root text of all the Lam-Rim texts and commentaries.

In relation to the gelug tradition, there are 18 great treatises composed by Lama Tsongkhapa as a commentary, as a clearer interpretation to the teachings of the Lamp for the path of Lama Atisha.

**It is most right to introduce the Tantra in accordance with the direct words of the teachings directly revealed by Lama Atisha.**

**Those teachings were composed upon the request of his good disciple Jangchup Wö**, who was one of the principal disciples of Lama Atisha who made possible for Lama Atisha to live in Nalanda monastery, turning the wheel of Dharma and residing there until he passed away.

He did not compose these teachings in fact, it in the earlier stage. Lama Atisha composed it in the later stage, after observing the earlier culture of Buddhism which are based on Tantra and including the culture of the religion that existed before Tibetan Buddhism, the Tibetan Bon tradition.

**He composed it in a very skillful way so that not only the scholars can understand, but also the ordinary people. Even the illiterate can understand when the teacher gives even just a reading out of it.**

**Even the requests that was made by Jangchup Wö aimed for something which would be easy to understand:** lesser words, lesser poetry, lesser elements of philosophy, and answering all the questions that all the practitioners may have on their journey on the spiritual path.

So, there were seven questions that were presented by **Jangchup Wö** to Atisha. The Lamp of the path answers those:

- **The first question is: what is the practitioner of the great vehicle alike?**
- **The second one is: can the altruistic intention arise in an ordinary practitioner or ordinary person?**
- **Do one's individual liberation vows serve as a basis for the Bodhisattva vows?**
- **Fourth question is: when someone is holding the individual liberation's vows take the tantric vows, does the individual liberation vows become the tantric vows or does that person then holds two vows?**
- **Fifth one is: do skillful means and wisdom need to be combined or not in order to complete the two great stores of merits and insights?**
- **The sixth one is: what is the correct view, the Cittamatra or Madhyamika?**
- **Then the last one: how does one enter the doors of the Mahayana Secret Mantra?**

To answer those seven questions, Atisha composed 68 verses of teachings whose title is The Lamp for the path.

I am going to ask those questions to all the participants, especially those who attended all the past retreats because they all have been answered, except to the last question. So better be prepared.

I may also finger point some of the advanced practitioners, especially those of you who completed the Lam Rim studies, the Middle Length Lam Rim, especially those of the Basic Program students.

#### **A. The first question is: what is the practitioner of the great vehicle alike?**

The first question is: what is the practitioner of the great vehicle alike? So, this is very easy, isn't it? In another words, what is the practitioner of the Mahayana alike? What is the practitioner of the Bodhisattvayana alike?

Because it is very easy, I will answer:

- When someone who takes the **aspirational Bodhisattva vows**, who treasures the importance of altruism, who takes the aspirational Bodhisattva precepts and commitments, directly under the motivation or aspiration of Bodhicitta
- and those individuals who live in the practice of the six Paramitas by taking **the engaging Bodhisattva vows**

then those practitioners are what the practitioners of the Great Vehicle alike.

**There are practitioners who have not entered into the path yet, but they took the aspirational Bodhisattva precepts, they cultivate altruism at least in thoughts and conduct their life accordingly with altruism.**

**And there are practitioners who entered into the Mahayanic path, those ordinary Bodhisattvas, those who abide in the practice of the path of accumulation, path of preparation.**

Then, there are practitioners who are **Arya Bodhisattvas on the path of seeing, the path of meditation, who are training in the ten levels of Bhumis.**

**Such kinds of practitioners are the practitioners of the Great Vehicle alike.**

Both practitioners are Mahayanic practitioners, Mahayanic Vehicle practitioners, and their main body practice, main basis for the practice is again Bodhicitta. From here, you can understand that.

**B. The second one is: can the altruistic intention arise in an ordinary practitioner or ordinary person?**

All the difficult questions I am going to ask you and all the easy questions I am going to answer.

Yes, the altruistic intention as aspirational bodhicitta can arise in people like us. Any ordinary people can take the precepts, at least aspirational Bodhisattvas precepts.

**The moment you take the Bodhisattvas precepts, you become a genuine Mahayanic practitioner.**

**C. Do one's individual liberation vows serve as a basis for the Bodhisattva vows?**

This is also very easy so I will answer.

First of all, we need to know what you mean by individual liberation vows. **“Individual” is talking about the purpose of the spiritual practice aims for individual oneself alone, freedom up to the level of nirvana, cessation from samsara and the delusions. Here there is no mention about enlightenment.**

**That is the individual liberation, the individual self, liberation referring to Nirvana, and the path that will lead to that is the vow or precept and that is called individual precept or vow.**

For that, there are stages for the precepts out there. It starts from **refuge** in Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. It falls in the category of individual liberation vows, even though the refuge has many levels: in the context of self-liberation, in the context of Mahayana, in the context of Tantra:

- In the context of liberation, just Buddha, Dharma, Sangha.
- In the context of Mahayana, Bodhisattvas.
- In the context of Tantra, deities.

Then, the second level of individual precepts are the **five lay vows**.

Then, above that, the **sangha vows, monastic vows**.

There are at least three categories. The entry to the renounced vows, then novice vows, then full ordination vows:

- The entry to the novice vows: three to be abandoned, three to be adopted.
- Novice vows: 36 vows and precepts to be cultivated.
- Full ordination, 253.
- Then, we have full ordination for monks and nuns. The earlier are the same, the same number of vows. But for full ordination, then for women and men, it has a few number differences.

**All these are for the main path, to eradicate samsara, delusion and to lead to self-liberation, the Nirvana.**

So, just now I already lay out what the individual liberation vows are. In order to have Bodhisattva vows, all of these individual liberation vows have to be preexistent in individuals 'continuum'?

I heard an answer "no need all, only one of them". Everybody agrees with Dr Bipin? Does anybody disagree? I laid out all the individual liberation vows. So, the question is does one need to uphold the individual vows as a basis for the Bodhisattva vows? Yes, isn't? So, you need to hold individual vows in order to receive the Bodhisattva vows. Dr Bipin says not necessarily all, one of them. Does everybody agree with that? Yes, that is true, that is the correct answer.

**So, if you say you need to have all of them, then, in order to have Bodhisattva vow everybody would need to become monk and nun. That is not possible, isn't it?**

Now, Dr Bipin says either of them. Then, if this is the answer to me, then I can choose either one of them to discuss further. Any or either of them must serve as a basis for Bodhisattva vows, yes or not? So, you said "one of them", so anyone of them. Only refuge.

**The five lay vows come in the practice together naturally when the individuals take the Bodhisattvas vows.** There are cases where you have refuge but did not manage to take the five lay vows, then straight away you take the Bodhisattva vows. You can receive them. You do not take separately the five lay vows. It just naturally includes the five lay vows.

**So, the refuge is a must. The sangha vows not necessarily. The five lay vows also if you have then it is even more conducive.** If not, in order to live in the practice of the Bodhisattva vows, you need to practice the five lay vows.

**The refuge vows serve as a basis for all the other precepts.**

**In order to receive lay vows, do you need to have received the refuge vows before? Not necessarily, because refuge vows and lay vows can be received simultaneously, at the same time also.** But that does not bring any contradiction to the earlier statement for the refuge vows as a basis for all the other vows. Best, you receive the refuge vows first. Then, after some time of cultivation of that, you take another level of precepts like five lay vows.

But they can also be obtained simultaneously. So, when it is simultaneously, when you are granted the refuge vows, you can receive the five lay vows at the same time. So, when you say something is a basis to receive the other, it means that eventually it has to go before so that is not necessary.

**D. Fourth question is: when someone is holding the individual liberation's vows take the tantric vows, does the individual liberation vows become the tantric vows or does that person then holds two vows?**

So, question number one and two bring the elaborate teachings that cover all the extensive aspects of the dharma in the Lamp of the path which were more interpreted, elaborated in Lama Tsongkhapa Great Lam Rim, many pages of elaborate teachings on Bodhicitta.

Question number three aspires to illustrate the teachings in relation to the two earlier scopes: the Small and Middle scopes teachings.

So, now the fourth question is very easy, **that person holds two vows.**

**E. Fifth one is: do skillful means and wisdom need to be combined or not in order to complete the two great stores of merits and insights?**

This question is also very easy, **yes, the two need to be combined.**

#### **F. The sixth one is: what is the correct view, the Cittamatra or Madhyamika?**

For question number six, I need help especially from those who did the Basic Program, who already finished the Lam-Rim, wisdom chapter and many philosophical studies. So, you are masters of that. I think it might take on full session.

**Of course, the straight answer is Madhyamika view is correct,** Madhyamika referring to Prasangika Madhyamika.

**Cittamatra, the mind-only school negates dualism. From that point of view, it is categorized within the higher school. It does not mean it falls into the two absolute Madhyamika school: Prasangika and Sautantrika.**

That is why not only Prasangika but Sautantrika too finds limitations: “we do not amazed the Vaibashika and Sautantrika have a flaw on their understanding of the meaning of interdependent arising, even you as someone who negates dualism, still asserts true existence and that is shocking”.

So, Cittamatra is categorized within the higher school, but it carries a very heavy false.

There are a lot of debates about whether Cittamatra should be qualified to be middle-way follower school or not. Some assert as qualified, some as not. Some Cittamatra philosophers themselves assert they are qualified.

There are Cittamatran philosophers who claim they are. Some even claimed they are even better than Sautantrika, other say they are equal to the Prasangika.

Sautantrika assert external phenomena. Cittamatra do not. They say everything is imputation of the mind. But they assert inherent existence even though they do not assert true existence.

So, they include themselves as Madhyamika.

The final school’s negation is not a negation. **Prasangika asserts true existence, inherent existence, substantial existence, dualistic existence has the same meaning. For Cittamatra they have a different meaning. Asserting different meanings is a flaw.**

**That is why you assert inherent existence, even though you do not assert true existence.**

But Prasangika Madhyamika sees their view as carrying great limitations to be classified as middle-way follower schools, as Sautantrika and Prasangika. But from their side, some Cittamatra claim they are.

So, to understand and answer to this question, **the philosophical view on emptiness, the characteristics of emptiness, the characteristics of dependent arising which are asserted by Prasangika Madhyamika surpasses the interdependent arising meaning of emptiness asserted by the earlier school, especially Cittamatra, because Cittamatra accepts the false of asserting true existence; otherwise, it is very close to Prasangika Madhyamika view.**

**Prasangika Madhyamika’s view on emptiness is: everything arises depending on the imputation of the mind,** so it is very much saying everything arises from the mind, isn’t it? Everything exists depending on the mind.

**Cittamatra also uses the same language but with a different meaning. Cittamatra says everything arises from the mind, everything is an expression of the imprints of the mind.**

**So, when you do not define the differences in relation to true existence, the meaning of true existence, substantial existence, inherent existence, ultimate existence as the same meaning, then if you do not highlight the flaw from there, the language sounds the same.**

**Both say everything exists arising from the mind.**

**But Prasangika Madhyamika does not assert true existence on both subject and object.**

**For Cittamatra, they do not assert true existence on the object but asserts true existence on the subject.** For Cittamatra **the existence is possible because the subject, the mind carries the characteristics of true existence.** So, in fact, true existence in fact is the main source of existence.

From there comes the difference, the great flaw. And Prasangika Madhyamika school carries a more subtle negation, a more subtle level of negation to negated. As for Cittamatra the negation is very gross compared to the Prasangika, so that is why they cannot reach to the absolute truth, the absolute emptiness.

Anyway, we covered quite in details last year, during the previous retreat, there was a subject on emptiness. This particular question brings a great exposition of the great teachings of the wisdom chapter, which is the profound aspect of the teachings in relation to the Sutra.

In short in order to understand the wisdom of emptiness:

- **you need to understand the definition of interdependent arising in relation to the four schools,**
- then you need to **understand the different levels of negation** presented by the four schools
- and that will bring about **the different level of wisdom of emptiness** in relation of the four schools,
- and that will make us understand **why Prasangika Madhyamika understanding of emptiness surpasses all the earlier schools.**

#### **IV. Question & answer session 12.01.24**

##### **A. What to practice between the protector puja and following the advice of His Holiness the Dalai Lama who advised to do some special protectors' practices for the swift return of Lama Zopa Rinpoche**

When the students of Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche practice what was advised by His Holiness, **it has a special effect.** Of course, you can do other protectors' prayers, but you can do at different times, different sessions.

So, when you dedicate for Rinpoche, just do whatever is recommended because **it has its own reason to create auspiciousness, the meritorious conditions from Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche students 'side, for the Guru to manifest into the world, especially reincarnation, the success of Rinpoche's legacy, there is a great dependency also from the environment, the students.**

There must be the students' karma which makes it more special, more effective, so just do that.

**The protectors, the list for the general protectors ‘puja is common, universal, within all traditions. But then, for that individual institution, individual practitioners, they may have their special karmic protector. Sometimes it might be defined in relation to a meditation deity.**

Let’s say if you have Yamantaka as your meditational deity then Kalarupa is your protector. Otherwise, you can also check with an observation, with clairvoyant or omniscient advice of great high realized beings to determine which protector is your karmic infinite personal protector.

**So, when you perform the protector puja on top of that you can perform the rest of the common protectors. So, if you know then it would be very beneficial.**

Then sometimes, let’s say you belong to a **great institution** like a Monastery where it is already defined, or **your Guru, especially your main Guru**, if you know the main Dharma protector of your Guru, then, the disciple can also take that particular protector as your main protector.

For example, Sera Jey’s main Yidam and dharma protector is Haryagirwa and since my main monastic university for study is Serajey my main protector is Hayagriva. Since I belong to Sera Je, Hayagriva is naturally my main protector. Then I belong to Serajey Tsawa Khamtsen the Thawo Chogyal Chenpo is its main dharma protector: so Thawo is my protector too even though Thawo is entourage of Haryagirwa, but it has special karmic connection to Serajey Tsawa khamtsen. So, those who have special karmic connection to the khamtsen, it naturally has special karmic connection to the protector.

If you want to know your protector, you trace the lineage, the Guru, the Monastery, or, unless you feel a certain special connection to a certain protector you can define like that. **If you want to know your protector, you trace the lineage, the Guru, the Monastery, or, unless you feel a certain special connection to a certain protector you can define like that.** Thank you.

**B. Is it correct to first practice Bodhicitta and later compassion? Through my analysis my reason is because Bodhicitta is very subtle and since it is very subtle then it is free of conceptual thoughts and as for compassion it is not as subtle as Bodhicitta, and even though you practice compassion to a certain degree you still have conceptual thoughts, compassion still comes with conceptual thoughts. Is my analysis correct?**

**For the training of the method aspect of the path, then compassion serves as a cause to Bodhicitta.**

You have to train in compassion first and Bodhicitta later. **First you have to train in equanimity, then after that you train in compassion, then compassion also there are levels, you train in stages.**

First, train in generating genuine **true kind of loving compassion towards yourself**, then taking that important reason of genuine love and compassion to yourself **you apply that to others starting with the closed ones, then to the stranger, then to the enemy, then to the rest of the beings.**

Then, that small compassion will develop into a **great compassion**, then that great compassion has to be developed until it becomes the **most courageous, the higher level of courageous state of mind, which is very much a quality of great love.**

Then it results in **Bodhicitta**, then, Bodhicitta also has to continue to be developed: **at the beginning, even though it is an actual realization but still not that stable, when the obstacle occurs, then the Bodhicitta can get lost.**

**Until you achieve the path of the second ordinary Bodhisattva path, the peak of the Dharma, Bodhicitta can be lost even though it is a genuine realization of Bodhicitta, it can get lost.** So, you have to steadily train in that.

Then, your Bodhicitta grows up in **Aryas Bodhisattvas 'level of Bodhicitta**. Then the Aryas' level of Bodhicitta also has to be **developed through the ten Bhumis**, gradually, even though there is no degradation, if you do not train, you stay stocked there.

You have to train, one of the ways to train is the application of the six Paramitas. **Then, you surpass the ten Bhumis, then, you result in omniscient Bodhicitta.**

**Until you achieve omniscient Bodhicitta, it requires effort, diligence, discipline, very much the discipline of the six Paramitas**, that is how we progress. Thank you.

### **C. What is the eternal drop?**

Eternal drop, what is that? I am hearing this for the first time, due to my limited knowledge, limited studies.

The subtle drop? **So, there is the indestructible drop. The content within the subtle drop is very much the subtlest wind and the subtlest mind.** That is what we call the subtlest drop. **This primordial drop is accompanied by the life force carrier wind, the subtlest wind and that lives within**, of course the mind can go in and out, the consciousness can go in and out.

**But this life carrier wind stays one lifetime within this drop, that is why we call it indestructible drop.** The moment you are conceived, until the death, unless you exercise through the concentration and you can bring it out and back; otherwise, it never comes out that wind, **because once that wind comes out then death occurs, the drop is destructed. There is no more indestructible drop.**

**So, indestructible in one life frame, one lifetime.** So, are you referring to the primordial mind just now you said "eternal" drop? "Eternal" sounds like permanent drop. So, I think eternal drop is not referring to the primordial mind, because there is the name "drop" is there.

I think it refers to the indestructible drop. So, why is it called eternal? Eternal in one lifetime. That particular drop, the subtle drop, is permanent but within one lifetime. So, not the mind, but rather the house, the owner. The drop, not the consciousness, the drop.

My notes are the ones which are saying that?

**It is a continuum. It goes to the next life. Its continuum goes to the next life. That subtle wind, that subtle consciousness does not go to the next life.** Its continuum goes to next life. It is an impermanent phenomenon. The mental consciousness, its continuum goes to next life. The subtle mind also but its continuum. It is not that that mind (gesture of something solid) goes to the next.

No, how possible. Not separately, it is a continuum. **The subtle consciousness 'continuum. It has its own potential; it carries its own potential. That is why the potential comes to the next new rebirth.**



It manifests fully in whatever rebirth you are taking, using that as a main base, **the consciousness as the main base among all the aggregates, whichever realm you are reborn in. But that consciousness in a manner of its continuum. But it carries the potential we call karmic imprints.**

But **consciousness itself lives momentarily** but it is not that that first moment of consciousness exists in that second moment of consciousness. It has already passed.

Now you may debate that **the dharmakaya mind is called a mind but actually it is the emptiness of the mind. That is permanent. Omniscience is not permanent. The omniscient mind is not permanent.**

**The Dharmakaya mind is permanent. But it is not talking about the mind, it is talking actually about its nature which is impermanent.**

“Eternal” drop, you cannot let go of the drop? If you do not put “drop” then you can relate to the primordial. If you put “drop” then it has to refer to the indestructible drop. And also, you say “eternal” like permanent, isn’t it? That “permanent” is referring to one lifetime fixed in nature.

Of course, by force, by meditation, you can distract. But without that by nature, it remains one lifetime without disturbances, that is why is called “indestructible”. That frame is expressed as permanent within one lifetime, that is why it is called eternal.

**Clear light is permanent, but the clear light mind is not permanent. Clear light refers to the emptiness, the emptiness of that subtle mind is called clear light.** But when you use the term if you do not interpret, it is as if it is referring to the mind, the clear light mind. The clear light mind meaning the emptiness of the subtle clear light mind.

**That is why the emptiness of the subtle mind is called the clear light mind. And that clear light mind can turn into Dharmakaya.** How possible consciousness to turn into Dharmakaya? It cannot. **Dharmakaya is the emptiness nature. It has to have its own similarity, the similarity before which is the emptiness.**

So, mind is not emptiness. **Saying “everything is emptiness” is saying everything is in the nature of emptiness.**

**It is also the nature truth body and wisdom body.** The truth body is the cessation, whatever quality you achieve as a cessation by overcoming the negation. The wisdom body is the emptiness. The emptiness body is the wisdom body. So, the emptiness body and the cessation body by overcoming the negation is two things.

It still has to do with emptiness. We do not call it cause because it is not causes and conditions. **It is its origin, which is not the cause and the conditions, but it is its base,** when you develop the wisdom body and when you develop the cessation body, which are the two emptiness bodies of the Buddha.

By the way, if there is any terminology error, Venerable Ani Kunzang is the one who transcribed this teaching I gave in Perth, Hayagriva center. She transcribed it within a short period of time for this teaching.

And of course she transcribed, sent it back to me and I do not really look at it. So, we will go after her. Then, all the translations in Chinese, Kenn did them. He worked very hard within a very short period of time, all those notes translated into Chinese, he worked very hard, day and night.

So, if there is any mistake, I can get away from it (*laughters*).

So, I have to be very very careful with basic program students. Now LDC scholars are wow. And I also have the tendency of not doing preparations and blablabla, so luckily, I have a few people to blame. I need to do more retreats to sharpen my mind. Otherwise, I cannot catch up with you all.

By the way, I see so many new friends I met last retreat, and also this time so many new friends showing so much interest in learning the Dharma. Of course, Venerable Jampa is doing extensive sharing of the Dharma. Then, Venerable Sonam. And you may have other teachers.

But at LDC, they offer the BP, is called basic, but it is a very advanced studies program: with detailed studies in Lam-Rim, in philosophical studies, Lojong, also Tantra (Tantric grounds and paths). Very much a complete package of extensive learning. Not always easy, some of you may have tried, then had difficulties with the exam. Not to worry about exams, failing does not matter, unless for the certificate.

They are designed like that for you to at least study more rigorously, that is the main thing. Unless you want to be a teacher, when you graduate from the basic program, when you go to the exams, you get a certificate, and you can even teach in different centers.

But most people are not here for that. You want to learn complete, detailed Dharma, that is the main purpose, isn't it? They also have online facilities, never get distracted by the exams. It is still a plus. If you fail it means you tried. That is a good quality.

So, those of you who want to really systematically acquire knowledge, check with them if you can join, I do not know where they are in the program. But otherwise, qualified teachers. The courses are designed by Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche over 50 years.

When I was at LDC, I was always rebellious. I also taught some of the subjects in, I do not know two or three years. Actually, it is a five years program. We covered quite a lot of subjects. My purpose was not for the certificate, we also went through a lot of exams...

But now it is really according to the system. So, it is a great opportunity.

#### **D. Do chanting the mantras in Tibetan, English, Chinese carry different number of merits? Is it offensive to pronounce mantra or sadhana in a wrong way?**

**Try your very best to pronounce the mantra in the correct way, but if you are not able to, I do not think it is an offence. The main thing is faith and respect for the practice.** That is the main thing.

**On top of that of course if you can pronounce correctly that is the best. And also, if you are able to recite in the original language that Buddha used like Pali, Sanskrit, then, it is the best.**

Compared to English, Chinese I do not know. Chinese is also quite similar like Tibetan language. The Chinese Masters directly learnt from Sanskrit then they traveled to China then brought the Dharma.

But one thing extra in comparison to many languages is that they (Tibetan) copied as it is the Sanskrit language. The Chinese language is different from Sanskrit. With Tibetan there are only few extra letters added, otherwise it is all Sanskrit. **So, reciting in Tibetan is quite equal than reciting in Sanskrit. So, because of that there are some extra benefits.**

Otherwise, the main thing is respect and faith.

In Tibet there is this one long-life umbrella deity practitioner who was circumambulating around the Potala. His Holiness saw a White umbrella on top of his head. But when His Holiness listened to his chanting of the mantra and prayers, it was all wrong pronunciation. His Holiness how wonderful even when he recites wrongly, he has a White Umbrella on top of his head, maybe if I correct him, it will be even more amazing. Next day His Holiness taught him the right pronunciation. On the third day, His Holiness saw the White Umbrella had disappeared. His pronunciation was correct.

So, instead of focusing on faith, respect, visualization, he must have focused on the pronunciation, then the essence is lost. So, His Holiness called him again and told him “don’t recite the way I told you, better recite your own way”. Then, the umbrella came back.

**I think through some analysis, reciting in Tibetan language, especially the prayers and mantras, I think there are a great number of blessings coming from it compared to recite in other languages.**

**One of the reasons is there a great store of blessings in the lineage of the transmission. Dharma is all about transmission. It is not just about information. The real Dharma blessings we enjoy is through the lineage blessings, through lineage of commentaries, lineage of oral transmission, lineage of initiation, lineage of instruction.**

So, during the period of 2500 years, Buddha taught the teachings in Sanskrit, but after Buddhism arrived in Tibet, even before that, there were not a lot of practice of, especially with mantras, of transmissions, not as serious as the Masters of Tibetan tradition practiced.

**In Tibetan Buddhism, all the 4 traditions, there is a great emphasis on the transmissions preserved up to date, very purely.**

So, the lineage, how they recite, the language they recite, the pronunciation they use, if we are able to follow, I think there are extra benefits, more than just simply reciting. It is the lineage blessings, the Dharma blessings. Thank you.

## **V. Evening session 12.01.24**

### **A. How does one enter the doors of the Mahayana Secret Mantra?**

#### **a. The resultant vehicle**

First of all, the Buddha-Dharma very much come in the practice of the two Yanas. One Yana that was based on the Pali tradition and the Yana based on the Sanskrit tradition.

**We call Tantra, the Mantra Vehicle, the resultant Vehicle.**

The path, the vehicle, the teachings are tools to experience the full resultant purity. **The four purities are the purity of the form body, the four purities of possessions, the purity of the place, the celestial place and the four purities of the activities.**

- **Buddha’s body purity is Buddha’s form body:** through the tantric yoga you have to become adorned with Buddha’s body, even in the causal stage, and are able to function fully in a similar way to the actual resultant Buddha’s form, such as the practice of the self-generation as the deity.
- Then, **the possessions:** you see as the divine celestial possessions, everything pure nectar, such as the food, drinks, clothes, adornments, everything you use regarding as your possessions you purify as pure as celestial objects.

- Then, **the environment**, such as the world where you live, through the deity yoga you have to turn it to a celestial mandala, even on your spiritual journey you have to experience the celestial environment as Buddha Pure Land.
- Then, the fourth one are **the deeds**. Using self-generation then all your activities are pure, even at the causal stage you have to perform just like the Buddhas deeds of body, speech and mind which taking in the Sutra, there is not.

**Only the Tantra, especially Highest Yoga Tantra, carries that technique. Because of that, you call as a resultant vehicle, that is also one of the key differences in comparison of Sutra and Tantra.**

Then, another interpretation is for actualizing the four resultant purities of four resultant stages:

- the first one is referring to the **Nirmanakaya**, the form body of the Buddha, through the Highest Yoga Tantra, you become the deity, then you manifest in the ordinary form, the look that you have and engage in benefiting sentient beings, the Nirmanakaya, only through Highest Yogic Tantra you can do that, through the self-generation.
- Then, second form is **the Sambhogakaya** form, the resultant Sambhogakaya body through the deity yoga you are able to become Sambhogakaya form, actually in the causal stage after receiving as I mentioned a Highest Yogic Tantra initiation. Then you receive for example, Tara initiation, then you become Tara. You become Tara, you are doing like Tara, manifest looking like Tara. There is a Sambhogakaya like Chenrezig 4 arms, one thousand arms Sambhogakaya form, Medicine Buddha Sambhogakaya form. You become that. You are able to become not just in visualization, the Highest Yogic Tantra carries that.
- Then, next is the **environment**. All the environment becomes Tara's mandala, Buddha's mandala, then Zhambala's mandala, the deeds of the body, speech and mind, all become deeds of Tara. After you become Tara, whatever activities you do even though you are eating, you know, going to job, everything becomes Tara's activities, the deity's activities, you see.

That is the profound meaning and that is the ability of the Highest Yogic Tantra practice it carries.

**So, in Sutra, the Nirmanakaya form body, the Sambhogakaya form body, and also the purity of the celestial and all the deeds, only can become a realization in visualization, in imagination:** you can visualize like that. You can visualize "I am oneness with Tara, with the deity".

**But actually, becoming the deity there is no way.** In front generation you visualize Tara on top of your crown like in Sambhogakaya form or in the space in front of you. **But actually, yourself becoming Tara there is no chance in the Sutra.**

**Then, the celestial, again for the purpose of training, you apprehend with pure view, but not actually the environment becoming the celestial, because the subject has not become the deity.** So, you are not able to make it become the celestial, the environment as the celestial. Only through visualization or imagination.

**And, similar goes to the activities:** in Sutra, you imitate as the deeds of the Guru, the activities of the three doors imitate the deeds of the Buddha, the deeds of the deity, the deeds of the Guru but not actually performing this or that. Only Tantra does.

Then, the Tantra is also called Vajra vehicle. What is it called the Vajra vehicle? **The enlightenment is delivered through the union of wisdom and method, the ultimate union of**

**wisdom and Vajra sattva, the Vajra mind, and that is the essence of the wisdom, and that is the essence of the Six Paramitas, and the essence of the Six Paramitas is the essence of the Mahayanic vehicle.**

**In Sutra, the wisdom and method, you cultivate separately.** There is no union, no in one form, union in the same moment, when you practice wisdom, method has to be rested, when you practice method, wisdom has to be rested. It goes all the way up to the ten Bhumis.

**As for Tantra, in Highest Yogic Tantra, from the very beginning, even from the generation stage, you cultivate the Dorje sattva, Vajra sattva, the vajra mind, which is the union of wisdom and method and that brings the swift result of enlightenment and that also highlight why Tantra is the swift path.**

**b. What are the prerequisites?**

I will read a few quotations here that give the answer to the second question.

In Vajrapani initiation Tantra, it is stated:

*This very vast, very profound mandala of the great retention mantra of the great Bodhisattvas [the Tantra], difficult to penetrate, most secret then the secret which is not fit to be shown to sinful sentient beings has been mentioned very rarely by you, Ó Vajrapani, how can it be explained to the sentient beings who have not heard it before.*

Then, Vajrapani replied:

*Manjushri those of Bodhisattvas who practice the Bodhicitta deeds through the approach of Secret Mantra when they have engaged in and achieved cultivation of the altruistic mind of enlightenment may enter the mandala of the great retention mantra where the initiation for great wisdom is bestowed. Those who have not completely achieved this are not to enter.*

*They should not be shown seals (hand symbols) nor secret mantras (Tantra).”*

**So, the entrance to Tantra is Bodhicitta. If you have not matured sincerely and cultivated Bodhicitta the heart is not fully dedicated.**

Best you realize it. If not, at least you have dedication, wholeheartedly dedicated training in Bodhicitta and taking the precepts such as intention and engaging Bodhisattva precepts, then training in it, then someone ripen that and can enter. Without that he is not qualified to enter.

**So, if you want to practice Tantra, then great compassion has to be your mental system, great love has to be your system, your attitude. Then Bodhicitta has to be your system, whether the aspirational one, or the ripened one. It has to be the center of your heart, your central motivation, your central dedication, the whole objective, the whole meaning of your life is all engaged in altruism.**

**Then, if that makes sense to you, the tantric blessings will be received.**

Then, the fifty stanzas of Guru devotion practice say:

*It is to be explained to one who has refuge [so someone who has a quality practice of refuge, the prerequisite in Tantra] train in pure thought [which is the Bodhicitta], then, who has taken the common refuge.*

This is basic in terms of Highest Yogic Tantra. The refuge also has to be genuine, **the uncommon refuge, not just the refuge in Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, it has to be the refuge to the Guru, the refuge to the deity** through initiation in relation to the earlier tantra, which are action tantra, performance tantra, yoga tantra, also during the gradual stages of the practice, **all this has to be intact in order to enter into Highest Yoga Tantra.**

So, to enter the Highest Yoga Tantra, you have to have the uncommon refuge, **you need to have the Bodhisattva vows.**

The Bodhisattva vows are also offered during the earlier three initiations, the Bodhisattvas vows and refuge vows can also be received even while practicing the Sutra. But then, when you are practicing tantra, even for the three earlier schools of Tantra, the refuge and the Bodhisattvas vows are a must. It is the main precept.

**So, in order to enter into Highest Yoga Tantra, one has to gradually train into these precepts, and gain maturity to succeed in the practice of Highest Yoga Tantra.**

### **c. Are we mature enough?**

Then, as a main manner of process when you aspire to enter Tantra, then it should be like that, that is what Rahulashrimitra's advice state like this:

*At a time of joy, the student with pressed palms and bending down, 27 should confess all his sins and take refuge in the Three Jewels. He should practice well the mind of enlightenment and take the lay and bodhicitta vows; engage in purification and renewal of damaged vows previously taken. In concordant stages, he should rely in excellent ways on a Vajra master. Having done all this he should ask his guru, "Please bestow initiation on me".*

So, this is the manner. So, therefore, taking an initiation that is publicly organized sometimes can go wrong. Just publicly organized then you are either just dragged by your friends or pushed there without directly requesting to the teacher with all the earlier prerequisites preparations.

In fact, in the treatises, it is mentioned that for tantric disciples, twenty, ten, or five, or three, usually you do not go up. It is stated in the treatises.

**It is the responsibility of both the Master who will bestow the initiation, the institution, which is organizing, and the students, for it to be really perfect.**

**Receiving the initiation from His Holiness**, there is almost no way to have a personal permission but then a Guru like His Holiness is universally established, universally known, **universally honored Guru.**

So, now whether you have the chance or not to directly have permission, the request to bestow the initiation. **But otherwise, if there is a way, especially for Highest Yogic Tantra initiation, to have at least one audience with the Guru and request the initiation for you, maybe not just for a personal level, even organizing for a future time with the Guru may conduct such an initiation, that is auspicious tradition.**

Then, if you already know the Guru well, you know the mandala, you have to have an irresistible faith in the initiation, irresistible faith, once you have taken the initiation, especially in Highest Yoga Tantra initiation, there is **no U-turn, no second thought.**

After that, even if the Guru behaves in a completely opposite way from what one would expect from him, the Guru acts like a street dog, **you still from your side as a follower you still have the ability to see the Guru in Buddha, Guru in that deity.**

**After you take the initiation, the slightest imperfection either in thought or either in action arises and there is no greater obstacle than that for your spiritual journey.**

**There is a Malaysian saying that would say “don’t play play”. At that level you cannot play play.**

So, if you are really looking for enlightenment then that seriousness is needed.

If you are just looking for some gateway, like holidays with the initiation, get away of so many years of studying the Sutra, get away from superstitious, thinking that by being touched with the vase on your crown you will be purified, just with the initiation the enlightenment will be delivered, no need to do any homework from your side, then it is completely mistaken.

For example, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha throughout his lifetime, all his initiations have been done secretly, all the initiations he conducted, actually he did not conduct them openly. The first initiation during Shakyamuni Buddha lifetime was conducted when he was turning the second wheel of Dharma, in Rajgir. Simultaneously he manifested the Kalachakra in Amaravati, turning the tantric wheel and granted initiation.

**Even Buddha did not go public.** Then, all the rest of the initiations Buddha did not even do them with his Nirmanakaya form, he manifested Vajrapani, he manifested different deities, like Heruka, Yamantaka, etc etc. He manifested in the form of a deity to initiate. **So, from this you understand how sacred it is, how serious it is.**

**For our own benefit, when it comes to initiations, then it should not be taken so easily like that.**

**So, if you take a tantric initiation, you have all the prerequisites, and after you take an initiation, with pure samaya, you keep pure samaya, and uphold them accordingly, then, on that very cushion, in that very session, also enlightenment is possible, that much power.**

**When the prerequisites are there** like emptiness, renunciation, bodhicitta, then, the earlier precepts like refuge, bodhisattvas vows (if you think about the bodhisattva precepts, 18 root vows, 46 secondary vows) serve as a basis to receive the blessings of the initiation, **then it is so powerful, like any other power, truly in that very session, on that very cushion, enlightenment, full enlightenment is possible.**

**Otherwise, obstacles: if you do not do the commitment properly, then if there is any misperception that occurs, then that obstacle can be ignorance, during eons it will be so hard to dispel it out, very heavy obstacle.**

So, it is like playing with a sharp knife edge, if you are not skillful you will cut your finger, or playing with fire, if you are not skillful it will burn you, but if you are skillful, fire can even cut the metal, like a sharp sword, like many other tools will cut.

**The tantric treatises taught the practitioner who should aspire to practice Highest Yoga Tantra the best is fully ordained sangha, observing purely the fully ordination vows.** Then after that, on top of that, you must Bodhisattva vows; then five lay vows purely, then no question

of the refuge vows purely. If not the first one, at least the second one, the second one is a must. That much seriousness.

So, looking to ourselves, see “am I truly matured to practice like that”? Are we not going to fast to enter tantra?

**Also, after taking the initiation for beginners like me, also we have to be careful,** we have to be really really steady to gather the prerequisites, when you are really mature, then take the initiation. Then, it will be really meaningful, otherwise, you go there, you criticize, you misinterpret, misuse, then, almost you went to a zone where you can accumulate obstacles, you went to that zone to accumulate greatest obstacles, it becomes like that.

Like talking to myself, a beginner like me, it is very serious. Because it is precious, isn't it? So rare. **Especially human life with six elements, you should really take one lifetime enlightenment potential.** The four element and the two elements of the indestructible drop, which is so rare, which is also adorned with all the eight freedoms and ten endowments, is extremely most rare than being born in the Pure Land, in Buddha Pure Land. **Much harder much greater to take that life that we have now is much greater than being born in the Pure Land.**

So, it is almost like one lifetime chance, opportunity, you really want to make sure you do not to enter into that to accumulate great number of obstacles that will obstacle for eons of lifetime's future. So, that seriousness. **I am not scaring you like “don't enter into tantra”, you should as quickly as possible, it is so rare, but don't rush to gather all those prerequisites.**

**Those who are already practicing quickly purify the obscurations, retake the vows, practice as pure as possible, and make sure one lifetime enlightenment will be delivered like tomorrow, as if there was no next life, as if it was the only chance to get there.**

#### **d. The process to prepare: the common and uncommon practices**

**In all lineages, here I speak about Lama Tsongkhapa lineage, who achieved one lifetime enlightenment, in order to enter into Highest Yoga Tantra, he emphasized the importance of himself conducting the common preliminary practices, and the uncommon preliminary practices, the Ngondros.**

The common preliminary practice is Lam-Rim, the three principal aspects of the path starting with renunciation. When you do study and practice the Lam-Rim, there you learn about the **Guru yoga** which is the foundation of the essence of the tantra, which is the root of the tantra.

Then, **renunciation**, if you study and practice Lam-Rim, you learn the reasons or the tools to make you generate renunciation to samsara, without which the tantric practice cannot become a path, until renunciation becomes a path, until Lam-Rim becomes a result.

Then, Lam-Rim will also bring maturity in the practice of **Bodhicitta** without which enlightenment will not be delivered. Then, Lam-Rim also teaches the wisdom of emptiness without which you cannot actualize the wisdom body.

**So, once you properly learn and practice Lam-Rim on the common preliminary path, then you need to conduct uncommon preliminary practices, uncommon preparatory path.**

And that is the four major Ngondros, the four preliminary practices, which all traditions take so seriously. It is Lama Tsongkhapa's lineage, in order to ripen the potential for enlightenment



conducted the refuge preliminary, a minimum of 100.000. He conducted a retreat physically, verbally, environmentally, and mentally, he conducted the **refuge**.

And after that, even if there is a seed ripen, in our system, the seed for enlightenment, but then, if the basis is occupied by obstacles and negativities. So, in order to purify that, those limitations, then you conduct the Ngondro of **Vajrasattva**, with a minimum of 100.000 recitations of the long mantra syllables of Vajrasattva, in retreat.

Now, the seed is there, the obstacles are cleared but then if you do not nurture it by the conducive conditions, the seed will not grow. In order for the seeds to grow, the conducive conditions are the merits. So, the mandala offering retreat. Lama Tsongkhapa himself when he conducted the **mandala retreat**, all this flesh (gesture of showing the wrist) is gone, even the nerves are gone, until he reached the bones.

That much seriousness in the practice. He conducted that to realize the path. Minimum 100.000 mandalas offering practice, with a physical mandala base, not just with the hand mudra or the mala. Lama Tsongkhapa at that time, he was conducting a strict retreat with all his practice, he did not have material gold, silver, copper, brass metal, he used a rock plate to offer mandala, some of you have been to Tibet you must have visited those places.

Now, the conditional elements. Now you need the easiest channel to ripen the blessings, the blessings of the deity, the blessings of the deity yoga such as the realization of the generation and completion stages of the path, such as including the wisdom body within your system.

The nearest channel, the medium, is the Guru. There comes **the Guru yoga practice**. 100.000 guru yoga retreat practice. So, the lineage of Lama Tsongkhapa, of course he conducted a 100.000 guru yoga in relation to his guru. So, following his disciples up to today, very strictly abide in discipline, the Lama Tsongkhapa guru yoga four – five lines Migtsema 100.000 recitations, always based on the sadhana led in a retreat manner.

Then thoroughly you propose to your Guru. By then, of course, by studying Lam-Rim you would have already found a Guru, you already know how to practice guru devotion to the Guru. Then, you report to the Guru, I have completed this common practice, now I have also completed the uncommon preliminary, please grant me the initiation. That is the process.

Anyway, as a follower of Lama Tsongkhapa we try to do even if it is very minor, we try to do our very best. If in one lifetime knowing Lama Tsongkhapa's progress on the path if we at least try his way. He also did not live one hundred years. He had a short life, yet he followed this path, so we also before we pass away we complete learning the Lam-Rim, then we practice it as a path, purification, guru yoga, then also conducting those retreats, then, by the time when we go from this life, at least "I have done the way Lama Tsongkhapa has done when I have already achieved the quality resultant or not, at least I have done the discipline.

#### **e. Geshela's Ngondros program of transmission and retreats**

So, therefore, for a long time I had in mind, at least myself am following me, I do not know whether anybody really spiritually follows me or not. At least I am following me. So, for me to discipline myself, my requirement to learn is the people who face me.

So, for so many years, let's see just in this place, I think for almost eight or nine years, we have been going through the Lamp for the path, we can slightly more elaborate, try to get in the Lam-Rim, Lam-Rim Chenmo, Middle-Length Lam-Rim. Then, at least like myself, until next year,

whether you can or not, try to repeatedly try to study Lam-Rim, maybe even try to meditate, try your very best, like in Lam-Rim retreat the whole year. Try to do that.

So, this year, we very much completed this Lam-Rim aspect. So, from next year onward, if there is an auspicious environment, we will start the uncommon Ngondro. I already started that in Australia, there are a quite number of students who are taking a week-end teachings on Ngondro, the first Ngondro, the rest of the year, they are going to do minimum one session of the refuge retreat a day, as a discipline, and whenever they are free, they are doing three sessions, four sessions, like that. But the commitment is until we meet next year.

Then, once it is completed, then Vajrasattva. Then, mandala. Then, Guru yoga.

Then, there is another uncommon preliminary, which is to receive a Father Tantra, like Yamantaka, Kalachakra, Guyasamaja, conduct the retreat. Then, for me, my lineage Gurus they settle into Mother Tantra deity such as Heruka, Vajra Yogini. For me, I settled there.

Let's say an example, when you settle in Vajrayogini practices, there are endless treatises, or commentaries, oral transmissions, initiations, even if it takes many many lifetimes also will not finish.

So, this is just the rough idea, which is also, like what is said here, like Aryadeva says:

*In the name of the practices, it is said that one should train in stages [...].*

#### **f. The different kinds of initiations**

You train in stages.

Even when we talk about four classes of Tantra, first, you receive blessings initiations, not even an actual initiation, a blessing initiation, the **blessing initiation** is the blessing of the body, speech and mind, still, it is named as initiation, it is a Jenang, but, Jenang goes as a very initial one, like such as even in relation to Chenrezig, in relation to Vajrasattva.

There are many deities that are still received as a blessing in terms of initiation. It is the access to at least the retreat, like for Vajrasattva, without the blessing initiation you cannot do the retreat. You can still recite but it is not like qualified to become a retreat.

So, blessings initiation, then, there is a **second level of Jenang**. In the notes on top of the initiation section, I put each of the Action Tantra, Kriya Tantra, Yoga Tantra, Highest Yoga Tantra, or what kind of different initiation we are provided.

**So, first Action Tantra, then Kriya Tantra, then, you practice also Yoga Tantra, then, you practice Highest Yoga Tantra**, even that you would go gradual, first practice common path, then uncommon path, then, even the Tantra, the four classes.

Why is it designed in four classes? And not straight away to highest yoga tantra? **It is for us to go gradually**. Like in philosophy, the first of the four schools, why? Why do not go straight away to Prasangika. It is to first study lower school, that will make sense for the higher school. So, similar like that.

Here Aryadeva says:

*Train in stages like this. First, one training in the thought as a causal vehicle, the Bodhisattva vehicle. When one has done so, train in the resultant vehicle, the most subtle meditation...of Secret Mantra.*

I have already taken enough of your time. Actually, there are those points in other notes that I taught in LDC actually long time ago when I was a resident teacher there, so, I compiled them in a small note, and it is on the blog. I think the SPC has shared with you.

There are certain points that are covered by the first note, others in a second one, so, it is different notes that come together. Even the earlier I talked about the different initiations, all the details, which form, where, for Action Tantra, Kriya Tantra, Yoga Tantra, Highest Yoga Tantra, everything is there in all those notes.

## **V. Morning session 12.02.24**

### **A. Rejoice rejoice rejoice**

**Take one moment to rejoice** in the most favorable conditions of one's life that you have now, the life in relation to the outer favorable conditions for the dharma, such as I mentioned two days ago, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's kindness towards us, as well as compassionate Buddha himself being among us in a living human Guru form and following the dharma matter without any pause and complete transmission of the complete aspect of the dharma.

Then, such as most precious Guru like Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, and all your other spiritual Gurus, whose dedications in the service of the dharma, bringing the blessings onto us, without any kind of false even just for a moment, since the day that you had a connection with such a Guru when you think of the commitment that is bestowed on us, the teachings that are given to us, the place like the center here, provided for us, the sangha community, the dharma brothers and sisters, that it brings together, under their refuge guidance and immeasurable homework of the guru yoga practice through extensive learning, extensive practices, extensive service through meritorious activities, then on top of that, yourself who understand the meaning in all those favorable conditions.

**We have the merit. It is not an ordinary merit. It is a very profound merit that you carry because of that you have the wisdom to understand the meaning in it and in the midst of a very distracted environment you are able to stay focused.**

**In relation to that, the concentration that we have has far higher quality than the concentration in those fortunate times**, amid so much distraction, still you are able to stay focused on the observation of precepts, keeping daily practices, staying intact in guru yoga practice, and refuge, etc. Not an easy time. But you manage to do so.

And, you also have this, not by force, but **by joyous effort. At the same time, you do not do it occasionally, you do consistently, and you have a long vision. The vision is the altruistic vision.** It does not matter even if the enlightenment may take countless eons of lifetime, you still have a vision, you still have the commitment to stay on the path.

And at the same time without a doubt there is a **boiling great compassion** in you in the concern of numberless sentient beings, suffering, you really find every ways to make possible to achieve enlightenment, to find all the resources even how risky it is you choose to take the highest level of practices, most profound practices, the way to do is like even if I need to be born in the vajra hell, but for the sake of numberless sentient beings, to free them from the ocean of samsara I am going to get into the tantra. I want to practice the highest yoga tantra. I want to get initiation, then practice.

**Many of people here, your motivation to practice tantra is the cause of so much deep voice of compassion to all the numberless sentient beings. You cannot wait even for a moment, or delay to effectively benefit to the sentient beings, the way you will bring effect to the sentient beings is by achieving the ultimate benefit for yourself and others by achieving the two bodies of the Buddha, the wisdom body for yourself and the form body for the sentient beings' benefits.**

So, these are just a few points like highlights. There are many. What can be more favorable life than this. What can be more favorable than a whole life like this. **Even in the fortunate times, there is no comparison with the Chenrezig came into their life as a human Guru form.** But in our lives, we have that. Just one example.

**And looking into our lives there are so many ups and downs emotionally, environmentally, physically. The world is not quite an easy place to live. But still, you are practicing, still you dedicate your time here, at least those two days.** You are very serious. That is not a simple thing, not a simple position, not a simple practice.

Then, **on top of that, how sincere you are, how wholehearted you are, for the practice of the dharma, how pure you are, there are no concerns on worldly concerns while you are here, while you are practicing.** Just to talk about these two days from your serious dedication practice without any doubt there is nothing to do with worldly concerns, nothing to do with fame, you are here because one of the reasons is because I am here. I am nobody. There is not any worldly expectation that you would achieve from me.

There are no worldly matters that you can relate to me. I have no name. I have no status. Even from the spiritual point of view, I am not a high Lama. I am not a Yogi. The honest, the real thing, I am a thousand hundred times more ordinary than you. If there is anybody here. But you still come. Ultimately you come here because of the dharma, not because of me, not because of my name, not because of whatever whatever.

**Because you treasure Dharma, you understand the meaning of retreat, you treasure the Lam-Rim, you treasure the sangha community, you respect the Guru, like Lama Zopa Rinpoche. That is why you are here. You came here to preserve this place which was established for us. If we do not come what the use of this place, isn't it?**

So, from the eternal favorable point of view truly how to have that kind of mind? In materialistic? Very habitual worldly way of thinking, how to get attracted? To this kind of event? When there is no high Lama. Sometimes, even when we approach the dharma, sometimes we go for status, we go for names. Sometimes also not sure whether if I am going for the dharma or if am going for name, isn't it?

So, unbelievable. So, that is why this **must be acknowledged** that what can be more favorable than to really achieve the whole meaning of the dharma? When from your side you are so pure? Which is so hard to be. **From the external conditions as I mentioned, it is almost like it never happened, but it happens to us.**

So, really rejoice to your extents, your life in this position is really, from this point of view, your life is huge, your life is like ocean-mind like, your life is so bright, your life is not small like this one very lifetime meaning, isn't it? Because your heart is very much purty in great compassion.

## **B. Make your life an ocean to reach all beings**

**So, that makes your life so ocean-like life, so profound, so great, space-like life, so vast, so pervasive.** Because of that great compassion. Everything you do is directly or indirectly reaches out to the rest of the numberless sentient beings.

**Even one moment of your practice, you can reach out the rest of the numberless sentient beings, it becomes a condition for their happiness, it becomes a condition for their enlightenment.** That much great life.

So, from this point of view, really, how problematic life is going on, compared to this is so tiny problems, so small. So, we must be wise enough not to be distracted by them, distracted by, even if death is coming, the death is just the experience of one lifetime's episode. It is not just an episode of all your existence. Then, no question about getting sick, even that life-threatening chronic disease, compared to the ocean-like life is just a tiny dot.

But if we are not wise enough, we put ourselves as if this is the wholeness of our life, as if that defines your life, that defines your existence. Then, you become so miserable, so depressed. So, similar now, how big the obstacle there may be in relation to job, in relation to relationship, in relation to the loss that you had.

There are some people who really hang on to this loss of your loved ones, you cannot move on, with meaningful virtuous, joyful life, if you are not able to move on, very much you are trapped into a very tiny, small kind of hole or box. It is as if your connection to your loved ones is only for this lifetime.

**It is so obvious your loved ones came in this life as your closed ones, that naturally proves that there is a special karmic connection, and within this lifetime you already created so much of close karmic connection, without any choice next life, it will come back to you.** How close you want to become you can have, like me, I lost my father, and I lost my teacher.

Maybe my father may come back either as my sister-in-law, a niece, a nephew, or maybe as a close friend, or maybe one of you. It will just carry on like that. So, it is not like completely you lose it the closeness.

Otherwise, there are people who suffer so much after the loss of their loved ones, as if you were losing them forever. So, I am just giving some examples. So, we really cannot afford to make so small of ourselves, make so small purposes of our life.

**Our life purpose is altruistic: live like an ocean, so in depth, so profound, live like space, so spacious.** So, this is very important. There is more to say but as I need to do my job, which I have not started, done at all. So, before some of you leave by lunchtime, I would like to finish the text, but the thing is the message of the text we will read, whatever study we would have done, it can be consolidated into just now what I have just said.

You can translate to yourself according to your own situation, your own scenario of life. And, when you move on from this retreat and try to consolidate all the teachings into this and try to really live a life like the ocean, spacious as space alike life. And do not get distracted, yes when the distraction comes know them, put your best ability to overcome them, to transform them, but do not invest entire energy in doing that, because that is a tiny matter only. You have much greater thing in life such as happiness, virtue, Dharma, like that.

So, I will just read the verses. A more detailed explanation is in the notes, so, you can read them.

### C. The four activities of the deity to accumulate the three great countless eons of merits necessary to enlighten

Verse 60

*If you wish to create with ease*

*The collections for enlightenment*

*Through activities of pacification,*

*Increase and so forth, gained by the power of mantra*

**So, in order to enlighten you need to accomplish the three countless eons of merits, the merits that are connected through wisdom and method.** If you want to create that, easy way and with less taking time, the number of efforts, mainly the time, and also efforts in many numbers, like in the sutra path, the time it takes three countless eons, numbers, there are many numbers to perform to accumulate these two types of merits.

**But, for Tantra, if you want to accumulate that would ease engaging into the four activities of the deity: increasing, pacifying, controlling, wrathful.** It is talking about that.

### D. Gather the conducive conditions to practice until we reach enlightenment

Verse 61

*And also, through the force of the eight*

*And other great attainments like the “good pot”--*

*If you want to practice secret mantra,*

*As explained in the action and performance Tantras*

And, to gather powerful conditions to swiftly accomplish, quickly accomplish the collection of three great countless eons, in terms of merits, **such as the conducive conditions like the eight attainments such as good pot.** Those are regarded as yogic conducive conditions. There are eight specific attainments, eight yogic conducive conditions which are listed there.

If I point out something that is not listed there, there are many more such as consecrating long life through the action and kriya tantric deities such like White Tara, Namgyalma, Amitayus, you consecrate a long life which is enough to complete the whole path within this very lifetime, to complete the collection of the three great stores of merits.

Then, to be able to practice with a single-pointed focus to be able to do with the place, to do with the body and the mind, without needed to depend on external resources, which would define where to leave, where to conduct the practice, how long you can conduct the practice because of supply, like food and drink supplies, and then, such as the weather conditions.

So, through the actions of Kriya Tantra even just like that, just entering into the actions of Kriya tantra, you are able to gather the techniques to actualize those, even developing inner heat, so then no need to worry about the weather and we can develop chulen practice, extracting essence like food and drink from a leave, stone, etc...so you do not need to look for food, so we can stay put in one place, no need to depend on a shelter, food, etc, weather protection etc. until you complete the whole path.

**Then, you should enter gradually Action Tantra, Kriya Tantra, Yoga Tantra. Then, you learn all those techniques, what is explained in the action and performance tantra, gather all those resources, then, gradually entering Highest Yoga Tantra. Then, dedicate the rest of your time doing retreat without any obstacles, until you complete the path.** So, this is what Lama Atisha is talking about.

So, we commonly practice the good pot, like the wealth vase, hosting wealth vase at home, we create a vase cabinet, we do practice but then sometimes, if not effective, there could be either due to the motivation is wrong, or either there is a lacking of the ingredients to be placed in the vase, in the cabinet; or, there is a limitation in the consecration practice.

So, therefore you learn, if you invest through pure Dharma motivation, the best, of course, what can be purer than emptiness and bodhicitta motivation, isn't it? Then, you engage those real lineages practitioners, there are a traditional four points regarding as a tradition really authentic, to create those.

Then, you engage if possible realized masters, if not, someone that who is straight-forward focused on rituals to consecration your practice with this pure motivation. Then, without a doubt, that does not mean your wealth will overflow, it does not mean like more than your needs. It does not mean like that.

**You will always have enough.** Even, you may have one dollar, one ringit, but what you need is that. But in case you need one million ringit, the million timely will come in your way. But if you do not need, they will not simply throw money into your house, because of your practice.

You will come to a position where you do not need to worry at all about all the conducive conditions: wealth, health, life. All the time is enough. You have enough. That is the richness, isn't it?

Even living a long life, a very negative life, what is the point? Even if you overflow with wealth but you misuse it what is the point? It is truly enough. When you start to dedicate genuinely to the practice you have these resources, like never to worry. Buddha prophesized through his own words, you go and look for businessmen, skeletons dying of starvation, you will Mont Merus of piles of skeletons businessmen dying of starvation.

But if you go and look for a genuine practitioner who is dying of starvation you cannot find even the tiniest skeleton, even one person, one skeleton dying out of starvation. So, here you have to have that purity, free from superstitiousness.

Genuinely the three principal aspects of the path are there in essence. You practice it, it is not something that is happening to somebody, Lamas, great Yogis, it can happen to you, it can happen to me the very beginner.

So, many of you may have wealth's vases, so now you readjust. If it was not working after now, now you readjust the motivation, you reconsecrate, especially the motivation, how you relate to it. Sometimes you just ask for wealth. It does not work. You ask for the success of this, and it does not work.

**Sincerely, wholeheartedly, think "I need to completely pay off all my responsibilities because I want to enlighten" and dedicate wholeheartedly. Then, you relate to the vase, things will start to be solved, all the debts will be paid off. Truly, seriously.**

#### **E. Guru devotion**

Verse 62

*Then, to receive the preceptor initiation,  
You must please an excellent spiritual teacher  
Through service, valuable gifts and the like  
As well as through obedience.*

**This talks about the importance of receiving initiation in order to practice even the earlier tantra, no question about highest yoga tantra.**

In order to do that then, you need to **first meet with a qualified Vajra Guru. Then, you exercise in guru devotion, even before receiving initiation**, exercise in guru devotion, the teacher-students relationship through cultivating the practice in actions and thoughts.

**The essence of the practice is pleasing the Guru. What pleases the Guru is the progress in your spiritual practice. That is the best gift to the qualified Guru. The Guru will never expect anything else.**

The Guru's expectations to the disciple are the progress on the path in their continuum and if you are able to do that, then it is the best. Like Milarepa said I have no material possessions to offer to the Guru and please the Guru, but I have the best gift which I offer all the time which is my practices, dedications of the practice, and the progress in the practice.

Now, if you have material resources, then, the Guru is the most powerful object where you can accumulate the practice of offerings, charity, generosity. Guru is regarded even among all the Buddhas, compared to the three times Buddhas, Guru is the most powerful object to practice that.

Then, the result of that is you enjoy the abundance of merits and if there is abundance of merits, then, there is abundance of happiness, of harmony, and prosperity.

#### **F. The initiations**

Verse 63

*Through full bestowal of the preceptor initiation  
By a spiritual teacher who is pleased,  
You are purified of all wrongdoing  
And become fit to gain powerful attainments*

**There are many different numbers of initiations** that very much start with two main initiations.

Then, together with the concluding initiations, about three initiations even from the very beginning: initiation to bless the body, speech, and mind.

Then, the preceptor initiation, even in the preceptor initiations, there are nine different kinds of levels of initiations.

There are within the earlier three tantric schools (action, kriya, yoga). It is more a preparatory practice to the Highest Yoga Tantra. Most of the deities' practices of the earlier tantra also are preparatory practices to the Highest Yoga Tantra.



There are deities for gathering resources, like Tara, gathering long life like long life deities, gathering good health, like Medicine Buddha, etc.

There are different Dhyanis Buddhas initiations to ripen our five aggregates and then eventually when you receive the Highest Yoga Tantra initiation, there the five aggregates transform or actualize the results in the five aggregates which are the actual five Dhyanis Buddhas which is the enlightenment.

**Each school has many kinds of initiations, so, it is also in the notes so you can refer to that.**

### **G. Secret and wisdom initiations & precepts**

*Verse 64*

*Because the Great Tantra of the Primordial Buddha*

*Forbids it emphatically*

*Those observing pure conduct should not*

*Take the secret and wisdom initiations*

**The Great Tantra of the Primordial Buddhas is referring to the Highest Yoga Tantra and the pure conduct is referring to the monastics vows holders who cannot take the actual performance of the Secret and Wisdom initiations.**

Then, during that time, if the merits are ripened to take the Secret and Wisdom initiations, then in actual form, in the actual performance of the mandala, then, you offer your monastics vows back to the Guru and during the period of taking the precept and you take back. Right after that, you take back and you continue to observe the precepts.

So, the Secret and Wisdom initiations, even though there are three highlights of the initiation, Secret, Wisdom and Word; but here specifically, there are Secret and Wisdom initiations are the one.

The detailed understanding of that, when you study the generation and completion stage, then, there you get the whole picture of the point that there is no need to discuss here.

**This statement by Atisha is in the context of a fully ripened disciple whose definite enlightenment is happening, after all the causal merits are matured then without the Secret, Word and Wisdom initiations, you will not be able to enlighten.**

**That is the same for anybody but conferring to the actual initiation it is talking about the definite ripened disciple, which is very very rare, conventionally such could happen openly is very very rare, almost none.**

**If there are, then it is very very well secured environment. Can you imagine even Lama Tsongkhapa did not do that. He was a monk, a fully ordained monk.** Because of this particular actual initiation he enlightens in Sambhogakaya, in intermediate state.

**And, if your merits are so much then you just conclude this life and go to the intermediate state and enlighten there.** With those high merits, maybe after just clear light, you kind of stay, and just like that in one moment you arrive. So, there is no excuse. Now I need to offer my monks and nuns vows back then after that then you are free to do any form of wrongdoing? Not like that.

So, now, this is also for the lay practitioners: **for the actual Wisdom and Secret initiations, the actual mandala performance, no: there is almost none. We cannot say none. There may be. But conventionally, openly, there is not such a thing.**

**And if in case that happens, you need to have the secure environment of the Guru, the ritual attendant, all the sangha community's set to perform that. So, that is why here it is about misunderstanding. Those immatures did not study the exact teachings and carry the name of initiator, Lama, did not really understand what it is and then, take advantage of students.**

It happens. It happened in Tibet before Lama Tsongkhapa it happened a lot. Then, Lama Tsongkhapa taught the discipline, explaining the actual meaning. It does happen in Chinese communities; it happens in Western communities.

**So, in fact that is why it is said when you go in Tantra, and you get the greatest obstacles. That is the way it happens. And sometimes it happens due to a combination of unripen Guru and unripen disciple, and then, this can happen. Otherwise, none. This cannot happen. So, whenever it comes to this particular section, the auspicious conferring of the ceremony of the initiation are provided but not the actual actions of the mandala like that.**

Then, you may ask a question. When we receive a Highest Yoga Tantra initiation, we did not receive the whole complete four initiations? No. you receive it. **You receive all the complete four initiations.**

Then, how about the Wisdom and Secret initiation? **That process happens with the Wisdom consort, not an actual human consort.** The actual human conferring is not talking about the actual initiation with the actual usage of a human consort. We do receive complete initiation.

For Lama Tsongkhapa came to a stage where he can actually display like many of the earlier Tantric Yogis. They display that. Lama Tsongkhapa can choose to display that also, **but he purposely chose not to say upholding pure Vinaya precepts, you can accomplish three great countless eons of merits.**

So, why recall Lama Tsongkhapa, because of his example of the individual achievement of one lifetime enlightenment. But he displays the intermediate state's enlightenment by the time that he is within the clear light, in this lifetime, he had already accomplished the path.

So, there are a few reasons why this aspect is being shown.

**So, therefore for those of you who attended a Highest Yoga Tantra initiation, from the very initial stage after a certain level of preparation you are asked to arise as a deity, during the whole initiation. So, once you arise in the deity then, you are able to go through this initiation of Secret and Wisdom with a wisdom consort, wisdom father and wisdom mother.**

**So, through that, you accomplish the actual whole four initiations.**

After you had done the commitment retreat, then you do the self-initiation, you initiate by yourself, isn't it? So, you go through all the initiations, and you accomplish the entirety of the initiation. **Then, one of the exercises of the four joys, that you do not do with a physical human consort. The four joys must be exercised in relation to the Wisdom consort.**

Verse 65

*If those observing the austere practice of pure conduct [the monastic conduct]*

*Were to hold these initiations,  
Their vow of austerity would be impaired  
Through doing that which is proscribed.*

Again, here Lama Atisha is talking about the actual human activities.

Verse 66

*This creates transgressions which are a defeat  
For those observing discipline [monastic discipline].  
Since they are certain to fall to a bad rebirth,  
They will never gain accomplishments.*

So, here again the restriction is in the treatises it is talking about **the highest standards to receive Highest Yoga Tantra initiation who is someone who is holding the complete two major vows: the whole individual liberation vows, up to monastic vows, then the entire Bodhisattva vows. That is the highest standard.**

But, at the same time, here Lama Atisha is saying, based on the highest individual liberation vows, if you receive the four initiations, then you will transgress. It sounds a bit contradictory. Here, **it is all talking about human initiation, the Secret and Wisdom initiation utilizing a human father and mother.** It is all about restriction of that about only.

Otherwise, you hold the whole complete vows, and you receive the whole complete initiation.

### **G. The responsibility of teaching Tantra**

Verse 67

*There is no fault if one who has received  
The preceptor initiation and has knowledge  
Of suchness listens to or explains the tantras  
And performs burnt offering rituals,  
Or makes offerings of gifts and so forth.*

In order to give tantric teachings like explained, and also to listen tantric teachings, explain tantric teachings, first one should **have received the preceptor's initiation. At least have received the Kriya Tantra, Action Tantra, Yoga Tantra initiations** as much as from the start, from the earlier schools, and also have learnt the practices; then on top of that, has an unmistakable understanding of emptiness, that which one will not explain falsely.

**Also, when listening to tantric teachings, you will not hear wrongly. When you interpret, you will not misinterpret. Without emptiness, very much all the aspects of the implements, tantric rituals, can be explained mistakenly, misinterpreted, misrepresented. So, the emptiness will protect that.**

A clear understanding of emptiness will make valuable virtuous dharma sense to all the different figures of the deities, including the union of the deity father and mother. If you have an understanding of emptiness, you will know exactly what it means otherwise you will misinterpret.

Why is a deity holding a skull cup and holding a human heads mala or holding so many starves? It is quite scary, isn't? If you know emptiness, then each of them has an interpretive meaning and a definite meaning. You will be able to illustrate that. Otherwise, you will not.

Then, when you listen also, that is why before listening to the tantra we need to mature, with the common preparatory practices, which is learning about the three principal aspects of the path, and one of the main teachings is emptiness. Then, even if the teacher just read and do the transmission and do not go with too much of explanations, which is quite boring, isn't it? Not straightforward, like not what I did go around, go here, like during the whole retreat I actually went somewhere else, there is a purpose for doing that.

Otherwise, it is quite straight forward, you just read the text, we can within one – two sessions easily. So, that is why the understanding of the three principal aspects of the path, especially emptiness, is highlighted here.

Then, you are qualified to make fire pujas, it is so powerful. Fire puja is one of the most powerful tantric rituals for purification, for accumulation of merits, etc. All the purposes. There is always an element of fire ritual, which is fire puja.

Then the “making offerings” and so forth, then you can also offer initiations, you receive the valid lineage of initiation, you conduct the commitment retreat, then, uphold all the precepts without even breaking one day, you hold them more precious than your life force.

You can forget about your life force one day, but you cannot forget the commitment you receive after initiation, even for a day, that much seriousness. If you break one day, unless you restart everything, otherwise you do not carry the qualification to confer the tantric initiation.

Generally, to confer a tantric initiation, especially blessings initiations, Kriya Tantra, Action Tantra, once you receive you conduct commitment retreat, you know the ritual, you are ready to offer.

I would say a hundred thousand times, maybe a million times much easier than teaching Lam-Rim. Teaching renunciation, teaching emptiness, commentary or Sutras, a million times easier to do the ritual initiation, one and half hour I counted and easily counting. And also you do not go here and there, you do not squeeze your brain, you just read and just read for you, and somehow if I have the best translator, like Kenn, I just read, he is the one that makes sure you will understand and I just ring the bell and throw the water from the vajra vase, no need to squeeze that at all.

So easy.

To really explain the teaching, that is the hardest. Giving initiations, the easiest. If you take the seriousness of the meaning of what the initiation is, then it is the easiest ritual. But, when you think about the actual and true purpose of initiation, you really know what the meaning of the initiation is, not just to draw disciples, have big gathering, then the initiation is the hardest.

**Initiation puts the initiator into the greatest responsibility in relation to the receiver and also your own principles as a practitioner, you cannot do anyhow. So, if you really understand the seriousness of the initiation, then, it is so hard to offer initiations.** It does not mean that the Lama is stingy and also Lama knows if you are really consistently accumulating merits whether it

is through Sutra or whatever, when you accomplish the three great countless eons of merits, then **Buddha Vajradara volunteer without invitation, he will come and initiate you.**

**If you are only stuck there because of one initiation, he volunteers. The deities who volunteer to initiate you.** So, that is why sometimes you also think oh no it is so rare, whether I am prepared or not, I will take it, as if my accumulation of merits is so fast, my enlightenment is so fast, and I may be stuck for long time because of no initiation.

**There are no worries. There is no such a way. When the merits are accomplished, the purification happened, Buddha Vajradhara himself will voluntarily say please be sit down, I will do all the work even without your request.**

Therefore, sometimes, the Geshes, because the Geshes, every teaching, whether to do with Sutra, whether to do with Tantra, they went very very rigorous studies, they dig until there is no more thing to dig, they dig the profundity of the teachings, extensively. So, they know. It is not a simple thing. So, they are very reluctant to give initiation because of knowing the seriousness.

If you do not know the seriousness, if you do not know how to teach, that is when you scratch your head. If you are asked to do initiations, oh easy ok. Anyway, the tormas ritual the attendants will make, the implements for the ritual, the attendant will put, then the text, because you have to read the text, you just read the text. Right there, nowadays, it is written even the vajra sign, the bell sign how to ring, where to throw the vase water, everything is there.

Somehow, for the Geshes so difficult. Sometimes, people misunderstand. In the West, I hear “Geshes no value”, they do not know anything, because they do not do initiations. Even in our centers, I remember there is one who does all sorts of things, I know the person, but he always gives initiations, even very serious senior practitioners go there. So, then they say our teacher is “empty”, because he does not give initiations, some people misunderstand.

This is why not just some of the great Lamas are so serious, so difficult to give initiations. You have to request and request, because they are very very serious. It is good to know. Again, because it is an introduction, we need to say all these points. There are many new fresh practitioners. You want to start, you start very firm, very carefully, and also there are many senior practitioners, so they can also give examples.

Otherwise, “initiation” sounds like the ceremony that purifies everything and also initiation sounds very interesting, during the initiation, also the disciple does not need to squeeze too much of the brain, and there are a lot of things going on, sounds, music going on. It is very busy. You are giving this, giving that, sometimes you are given something to drink, something to put on your head, something here and there.

So, it is very exciting. It is like quite a nice get away. Not knowing the actual meaning, then you think this is wonderful and some more because it is always described as “secret”, so the moment you get into the secret, all your problems will be solved.

**And sometimes when you come out people get even more confused.** For a lot of people, they are completely lost and, in many cases, when you go for initiation, it always goes with commitment.

**In fact, whether the Guru gives you the commitment or not, every stage of the tantric path, when you receive the initiation, as a commitment such as for the Kriya and Action Tantra,**

**you have the tantric deities minimum of 600.000 recitations of mantra commitment. It is common whether the Guru says or not to do 600.000 as a minimum.**

Let's say you receive Chenrezig initiation, and you are not really told "do a retreat", but the general commitment is a minimum of 600.000. And we thought after receiving initiation, you go back, and you do not even recite Om Mani Padme Hum. It happens. Then, similar goes to Medicine Buddha. Similar goes to Tara and the action Tantra. Then, no questions about Highest Yoga Tantra.

It is for preparing not to just say how wonderful, beautiful, blissful. If you know how to prepare, then, the benefit is huge isn't? So, there is a reason.

**Otherwise, here, those who already have initiation it is truly truly rejoicing. Really you are most fortunate.** Some more have Highest Yoga Tantra initiation, some more have many initiations, so, truly truly. I am sure you are practicing so seriously which what can be more meaningful than that. The existence of Tantra is so rare. Having a qualified tantric Guru is even rarer than the teaching itself. So, so rejoicing.

**And also, we have newcomers who have also much eager to practice Tantra. This is the expression of your huge merits, which is also so rejoicing.** Since, you already have that base, you will be able to do all the preparations and when you are really practicing you are really a disciplined one.

Then, can you imagine, in one lifetime enlightenment is definitely made possible. So, that is my point. That is the reason. Otherwise only rejoicing. So, since this retreat it seems like many of us are going to have a lot of investments to do, very high number of investments in our practice. I think many of us have received quite many Action and Kriya Tantra tantric initiations, so now, quite a great number.

**Anyway, my late Master Geshe Lama Konchog says that to really initiate you have to have the capability to initiate.** So basically, it is not a ritual. The receiver has to receive the authority to cultivate the practice, so it is not just a ritual. Geshela used to say, "just knowing how to perform the ritual, just receive the initiation, just doing the commitment [which is the conventional basic criteria] that is not good enough".

**He said "even if you offer just a blessing initiation [this is just a personal instruction – from Geshela to Geshela] minimum completeness of all the Ngondros retreats [so there are about twelve of them like water bowls, tsatsa offerings, prostrations, etc], on top of that a minimum of one father tantra deity great retreat commitment, the amount of mantra, of sessions to accomplish the great retreat for one father tantra, and great retreat of one mother tantra. Then, after that you conclude, just for this deity yoga, besides the Ngondros, 8 years you discipline in it, you really are inseparable with the practice of the deity father tantra, mother tantra.**

Then, you offer the blessing initiation. The receiver will definitely be able to receive the purpose of the initiation, you will really be able to initiate. So, since Tantra initiations are the most secret, most needed practice, most profound, it is so powerful, the initiator has to at least mature a minimum to initiate. Otherwise, how to grant the blessing.

When his disciples first requested initiations, of course he refused. Then, after that, finally, he accepted and said as nuns and monks if you take the commitment to do retreat the rest of your life, that is the commitment. As a lay person, minimum to taste the actual taste of realization, you

have to do retreat for eight years around me, his hermitage. Eight disciples were able to commit to doing that. Mx of nuns, monks and lay practitioners.

I encountered many many Gurus. Geshela Lama Konchog used to be extremely strict about that.

That completes the Lamp of the path from Lama Atisha. We complete I think almost eight retreats which I find really really auspicious so rejoice and thank you for RJI to provide the facilities.

Sounds got totally blurred. Thansgiving to all the people that made possible the retreat.

## **VI. Afternoon session 12.02.24**

### **A. External and internal yogas in the four schools of Tantra**

For Action Tantra, **the yogas focused more on external practices. Of course, it has both external and internal yogas, but the main highlight is the importance of the external environment, activities, external main manners when you conduct the practices in relation to the Action Tantra.**

An example of the deities of the Action Tantra and Kriya Tantra is the compassionate Buddha Chenrezig in relation to the practice of the Four-Armed Chenrezig, Thousand-Armed Chenrezig, Eleven-Faced Chenrezig, and the practice in relation to the Two-Armed Kwan Yin.

One of the main practices in relation to Chenrezig, **the Nyung-nay fasting practice.** There is a great sadhana that involves the retreat that which one session complete with the seven sessions. One set consists of seven sessions. Each session has extensive preliminary practices. Then, the front generation practice is part of the main sadhana then the concluding practices.

And it is a practice that involves a great deal of the environment where to conduct the practice. You have to choose a place which is pure from many aspects, pure in the sense places which are not used for killing, war, butchering, misconducts, sexual misconducts, etc. As pure as possible.

Then, there is a great deal of having the merits field as a front generation, even the object whether it is a statue or whether it is a painting, a tangka. Not just a visualization, but it is a great deal to have that.

Then, the offerings. It is a great deal about it too in relation to the arrangements, to the substances you use, the ritual implements involve the completeness of the ritual implements. Then, during the process of the actual sadhana practice of the preliminaries, there is a bath offering practice.

Then, there is a great deal of physical engagement with the prostrations. Then, when taking the precepts, at an external level there is a lot of discipline. Then, during the conducting the session, the strictness of the discipline of sitting, the discipline of walking, the discipline of sleeping, the discipline of eating; that comes from the 8 Mahayana precepts: not just the mind, but physically, verbally, there are a lot of external outer importance of the yoga, even physically fasting, through eating food, drinking. It is of great importance.

Then, cleanliness: on top of a clean environment, you make it very neat, tidy, even the person who is doing the practice, like showering, not only a normal shower, but at the beginning of the session you are showered through the nectar from the bath offering practice, after you do the ablution to the deity, then you sprinkle and taste the vase nectar. There is great importance of that.

Even the vase water nectar, you must have an Action Tantra Pill which contains specific ingredients, not any kind of pills, that which helps to really bring purification in relation to the vase nectar water, etc.

This is what it means to focus on external practices. Of course, there is a meditation, but the great deal of the focus is on that.

**Then, the second one, Performance Tantra is a balance between the outer and the inner activities.** Then, Yoga Tantra is more focused on the inner and Highest Yoga Tantra is unsurpassed, his main practice is absolute even more subtle level of practice in relation to the generation and completion stages of the practice.

So, the Performance tantra and the Yoga Tantra, the example of the deity is Vairochana. Then, the Highest Yoga Tantra is like Kalachakra, Yamantaka, Guyasamaya, Heruka, Vajra Yogini like that.

### **B. The lineage of the four schools and principal deities**

**Action Tantra, the lineage came from Shakyamuni Buddha himself. Action Tantra was taught while he was still holding the monastic precepts as a monk while he was in the 33 Gods Realm when he was visiting his mother's reincarnation to repay the kindness of his mother.**

After his mother Maya passed away, he realized her reincarnation was born in the Thirty-three Gods Realm. During one of the summer retreats, before the period of the summer retreat starts, he traveled using miraculous powers. So, he traveled to the 33 Gods Realm. There, he conferred on initiations.

Then, as well as in the Southern world, during that lifetime, he also conferred on initiations in relation to Action tantra. So, during that time, his main disciples, the Bodhisattvas, like the 8 Bodhisattvas such as Manjushri.

**Then, Performance tantra was taught again in the Gods Realm which name is Based and essence adorned with flowers celestial Realm. The disciples were Bodhisattvas and Gods.**

**Then, Yoga tantra was taught when Buddha arose in the form of each central deity of the initiations, such as Vairochana. He arose in the main deity. Then, he initiated. So, the first one where he did that was the fifth celestial realm which is the Desire Realm, which is also at the summit of Mount Meru.**

**Then, Highest Yoga Tantra was taught in the human realm, in the land of Urgyen, which is regarded as where Guru Padmasambhava was born from a lotus. He turned the wheel of Dharma. He taught the lineage of the initiation of Guyasamaya. Buddha manifested into the central deity of Guyasamaya then the initiation lineage passed out from there.**

Guyasamaya was taught also in the human realm. The main ripened disciple was Indrabhuti.

Yamantaka's practice was requested, and the main disciple was Yamantaka's consort, Chamundi. This was done during the subduing of the great forces of demonic forces.

Then, Hevajra tantra was requested by Hevajragarbha who the main disciple was, then taught by the Buddha at Madghada while destroying the four maras.

Heruka Tantra was requested by Vajra Yogini, Vajra Yogini's main disciples; then, he manifested into Heruka and taught that at the summit of Mount Meru.

### **C. The four joys**



Then, the four classes of tantra are also defined in relation to the stages of **taking attachment onto the path**. It also has the element of taking anger onto the path. Here, in relation to taking attachment onto the path, like it was once said in Hevajra tantra that “**through looking, laughing, embracing, uniting the tantra are of four types**”.

**So, this is the practice also in relation to the four different levels of joy, which are stimulated by the attachment, bringing about the full quality of wisdom and bliss. Developing full quality of wisdom and bliss and that brings about the highest level of concentration and utilizing the union of method and wisdom and bring about the eradication of negations such as the attachment.**

The yoga of the four joys from the Highest Yoga Tantra and the common categories of the four schools of tantra in relation to the four joys are different. The four classes of tantra in relation to the four joys, very much meaning that for Action Tantra you can manage to transform without transgression up to the joy that you drive in relation to your wisdom consort or wisdom father or wisdom mother, just simply by looking at it, not further.

**For Action Tantra, you are able to exercise the purification in relation to attachment by stimulating the wisdom and method and the concentration by attachment that drives by simply looking at it, father to the mother, or mother to the father. Not further, not beyond that.**

**So, then Performance tantra, on top of the looking, then it also includes interaction of seeing and laughing. On top of looking “father to mother”, “mother to father”, there is then an expression of laughter. That again stimulates the attachment and again in a similar way, it brings about bliss and method, then, that will lead to concentration, and that concentration acts as an antidote to purify the most subtle level of attachment.**

**Then, with Yoga Tantra, you add on top of the earlier two, embracing.**

**Then, Highest Yoga Tantra, then, you utilize the all the basis of the earlier three, then the fourth one, the union of wisdom and method, the union of father – mother. That brings an intense desire, and that intense desire brings about intense concentration, the most subtle level of bliss. Then, that union with the method which brings about the highest quality of concentration, that concentration arises from the union of intense bliss and method.**

**Then, you purify the most subtle level of attachment through the exercise of the four joys.**

**So, it has to be conducted with an absolute wholeness overwhelming wholeness arising of Bodhicitta, then, the great quality of wisdom of emptiness; and also of course those two have to be built on a basis of the absolute understanding of the limitation of the delusions, limitation of samsara. Then, clear objective of full enlightenment that which is overwhelmed by seeing the conditions of unbearable suffering of numberless sentient beings.**

The initial condition lively are the three principal aspects of the path. Then, one begins and exercises in the yoga of the four joys. Then by then of course, you have to have received a proper initiation, then you have already done the commitment retreat, very familiar with the self-generation, then by generating oneself as the deity. Then, bringing the actual wisdom consort through emptiness, a wisdom consort, not a person. Then, in relation to that then the yoga of the four joys’ practice comes about.

**So, one begins by generating oneself as the deity eliminating one's ordinary appearances. From there, one meditates on emptiness. From that wisdom state arises a visualized wisdom consort by looking at the visualized wisdom consort, bliss is generated, melting sensation is felt from the crown to the throat. When the wisdom consort expresses his/her laughter the non-conception greater bliss is generated from throat to the heart chakra. When oneself embraces the wisdom consort that drives even greater bliss. From the heart chakra to the navel chakra, when one is in meditative union with the wisdom consort then the greatest bliss is experienced from the navel chakra to the tip of the secret part generating supreme great bliss.**

**Then, after that you have to withdraw from the tip of the secret part all the way up to the navel, then to the heart, then to the throat, then you have to place it back to the crown. Then, if there is any fluid lost then there is a transgression. So, in order to stay within the boundaries of the yoga, you have to manage to bring back to the crown and then you have to repeat that many rounds.**

So, the whole purpose is to withdraw from the arising of conceptual gross to the even most subtle conceptual mind which is obstacle to the arising of clear light. **So, the whole purpose of this practice is to gain the subtlest aspect of concentration, through the subtlest greatest aspect of the wisdom and subtlest and greatest form of method, in a form of bliss.**

**Void and bliss that is stimulated by desire. Ultimately to overcome the entirety even from the root of the desire.**

These stages of practice are described like "in the manner of insect" (the name of the practice) meaning that there is one particular insect born from the wood. The whole purpose of being born from the wood is to eat the wood. So, when the insect is born, the entire wood which produced the insect is totally consumed.

So, the whole purpose of using the attachment, the attachment is the cause to born great bliss and that great bliss blocks, because the mind becomes more concentrated, the more gross mind, the conceptual mind, especially experienced through meditation, otherwise you cannot experience that. That helps to experience the void, emptiness.

**Then, through the yoga in relation to the deity, you are able to unite wisdom and method, bliss and void, and through the uniting of the subtlest level of bliss and void, the highest quality of bliss and void help to generate the quality of one-pointed concentration.**

Because of that therefore you are able to **take the clear light onto the path to actualize Dharmakaya, to actually realize a direct realization of emptiness, if not, at least a conceptual realization of emptiness, if not, it is a cause for so many purifications, even from the root, and so many purifications**, so that even if liberation is not successful, but at least you are able to secure great quality of virtue to be able to have the opportunity to practice again. The main purpose to do this is that.

Why the practice of the four joys came about it is mainly for that. We should conclude there.

So, please have a safe drive, safe return home and please be happy with the Dharma. With the Dharma we can be happy in samsara. In the Dharma we can be happy even if there is suffering. Each and every one of you, I may not be able to meet again, but each and every one of you are in my heart, we made a connection, and every day, there are practices that I have no choice I have to do and without doubts there are some merits in them, then, I will dedicate for each and every

one of you, and your families' well-being, and whenever there is the opportunity to be in holy places, in monasteries, among the Gurus, then, I will request their prayers for all of you, whoever I met along the way, usually I request the Gurus to pray for all of you, I trust the Gurus' ability.

So, definitely there will be some impact. So, thank you so so much.

## **Acknowledgement and dedication**

Rinchen Jangsem Ling

With the understanding of the three spheres of emptiness, and just as all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the three times and ten directions did it before or will, the merits are dedicated to the good health and long life of all our Gurus, for the swift and unmistakable return of Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche; as well as dedicated to create the complete causes and conditions for all the rest of the sentient beings to see all their inner, outer and secret obstacles dispelled, so they can practice the complete Dharma, wholeheartedly, steadily and swiftly, achieve the two tantric stages of generation and completion within this very lifetime, according to the teachings and instructions received from their precious teachers, for the welfare of all beings.

May it all be auspicious and may Geshela's program be successful with no obstacles of any kind so we can all achieve enlightenment in this very lifetime for the benefit of all.

(Transcripts: Ven.Tenzin Kunzang: all mistakes, errors, omissions are mine only. Please refer to the original videos)

## Care of Dharma Materials

Dharma materials contain the teachings of the Buddha and thus protect against lower rebirth and reveal the path to enlightenment. Therefore, they should be treated with respect.

Printed Dharma materials, as well as phones, tablets, laptops, and hard drives containing Dharma, should be kept off the floor, beds, chairs, meditation cushions, and all other places where people sit or walk.

Dharma materials should not be stepped over or put in places where the feet or buttocks will point at them. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials.

Other objects, including statues, stupas, ritual implements, malas, reading glasses, and so forth, should not be placed on top of Dharma books and devices containing Dharma materials.

Avoid licking the fingers to turn the pages of Dharma texts. If it is necessary to dispose of printed Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash.

When burning Dharma texts, visualize that the letters transform into an A (ॐ) and the A absorbs into your heart. Imagine burning blank paper. As the paper burns, recite OM ॐ HŪṀ or the Heart Sutra, while meditating on emptiness.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche recommends that images of holy beings, deities, and holy objects not be burned.

Ideally, if undamaged, they should be put in a stupa.

Otherwise, put them high up in a tree inside a well-sealed structure, something like a bird house, so that the images are protected from the weather and do not end up on the ground