

THE GURU AS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL GOOD QUALITIES

RELYING ON THE TEACHER

How to lead students with the actual instructions

How to rely on the teacher, the root of the path

A somewhat elaborate explanation for developing certain knowledge

- a) The defining characteristics of the teacher to be relied upon
- b) The defining characteristics of the student who rely on the teacher
- c) How the students relies upon the teacher

1) How do rely on thought

- a) A general indication of the attitudes needed to rely on the teacher
- b) In particular, training in faith, the root
- c) Remembering the teacher's kindness and being respectful

2) How do rely in practice

- d) The benefits of relying on a teacher
- e) The faults of not relying on a teacher
- f) A summary of the meanings of the previous five part

(Class commenced with recitation of the prayer on Foundation of All Good Qualities and the Refuge prayer)

MOTIVATION

Before we start the actual teaching, kindly set the right motivation, best to set the motivation in bodhicitta. The purpose of one's life and engaging in the practice and study of Stages of The Path (Lam Rim) is it to be the complete course to actualize full enlightenment for myself, which is for the benefit of numberless beings and their enlightenment. For this purpose, we engage ourselves in this one and half hour session to actualize the meaning of one's life by extracting the meaning on

the stages of the path, particularly on the root of all the realization up to enlightenment. May whatever merit accumulated by generating this positive motivation can able to actualize complete understanding on the meaning of the teaching, as well as to actualize the meditation on the understanding; and have realization on the stages of the path particularly on Guru devotion which is the foundation of all the good qualities up to omniscient.

Since our mind from beginningless life times habituated by ignorance and delusion, it is very hard for us to have this cultivation single pointedly. Therefore in order for us to overcome this, we hereby seek the blessings of the Buddha, Shakyamuni Buddha, who is inseparable from one's Guru. To whom you call the blessings in the radiation of light, together with the nectar, entering into your crown gradually into the centre of your heart channel, where one's subconscious mind and awareness reside. The moment the light and the nectar touches the mind, instantly it brings about the single pointed devotion, the conviction and experiences and great joy. At the same time, it inspires oneself to realize how fortunate to have such good karma and opportunity to do this discussion on the Holy teachings of the Buddha. Even though we are born into this five degenerated times, almost at a total lost of direction, due to kindness of the Buddha and the Guru, we have obtained this opportunity and one should be determined to make sure and try his best to understand the meaning, cultivate and habituate on the understanding and actualize the realization. So with this happy mind, we start today's session.

This is the second session of the Foundation course, I feel very fortunate myself, more fortunate that still alive, and given the opportunity to share some understanding in dharma. You have given me the opportunity to accumulate merit and similar to you dharma brothers and sisters, having this opportunity is marvelous!

This 8th course is very, very important. The structure of this lesson is using one of the most condensed teaching ie. Lamrin Chenmo(The great treaties on the stages of the path to enlightenment) by Lama Tsongkapa and many other commentaries based on the "Lamp in the Path" by Lama Atisha. This limited words expressed the complete teaching from the root of Guru devotion to the introduction of Tantra.

Each topic you only need to remember 4 lines. The Lam Rim text cover more than 30 to 40 or more pages but in your day to day life and applying the teaching you need to remember only 4 lines and practice and make a life with that, it makes it very easy.

GURU IS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL GOOD QUALITIES

Today's subject is "Guru is the foundation of all good qualities". There are different aspects of the points for us to actualize in order to cover the subject. Please refer to the first paragraph of the paper distributed; it reads

The foundation of all qualities is the kind and venerable Guru
Correctly devoting to him is the root of the path
By clearly seeing this and applying great effort
Please bless me to rely on him with great respect

In order to rely on a perfect qualified Mahayanic Guru, first of all one has to understand the **characteristic, qualities and qualification of the Guru**. Not only that, there is different stages of qualification in order for us to cognize and recognize and rely on that qualified Guru. Starting from Guru Shaykamuni himself, all the Indian masters and great yogis and the Kadampa masters, including one's own root Gurus within your very lifetime, based on the different instructions on the stages of the path, from all the personal instructions that one has received, the instruction that **DO NOT GIVE UP THE EXCELLENT TEACHER is the supreme instruction**.

The excellent teacher or Guru in the Lam Rim wherever the teacher is mentioned is the Guru, there is no other definition provided. Therefore the excellent teacher is the source of all temporary happiness and certain goodness. Beginning with the protection of the single good quality and the reduction of single falsehood in the student's mind, eventually it encompasses all the knowledge, and all the knowledge beyond that up to full enlightenment. Therefore the way you initially rely on the teacher is important.

So since all the qualities of perfection of the Buddha comes about in regarding the Guru as the foundation, by providing all the different aspects of the teachings such as the 84,000 teachings, therefore Shakyamuni Buddha or the Guru whom you communicate with in your day to day life, is totally in the aspect of all great kindness. Not only that, it brings about perfect stages of the protection, from slight fall up to the stages of six perfections, by obtaining such as 10 powers, 5 wisdoms etc of all Buddha's qualities, therefore it become the respected venerable Guru.

In Short, training and bringing to completion in all the bodhisattva deeds such as the practice of 6 perfections, about engaging in its practice, there is no moment for us to obtain this state of perfectioness, which is again the practice of the 6 perfections! Here, the deeds of the bodhisattvas are the engaging in the practice of the 6 perfections. Likewise, **training and bringing to the completion of the perfection level, such as forbearance, concentration, super knowledge, retention of the teaching heard, dedication, inspirational prayers, continuing to provide you with all the advices, such as the 84,000 teachings, to the others who need the protection of Lama, and all the qualities of the Buddha, are contingent upon the Guru, totally relying on the Guru.** Without relying on the Guru, there is no way that one is able to obtain all these qualities. So, therefore the Guru is the root from which all these qualities arise. The Guru is the source and creator from which these qualities are produced. Whatever slight quality up to the perfectioness, **every single quality by the kindness of the Guru, bring about increases in the realization.** Therefore, the Guru is the complete cause, the complete source, including the slight happiness we obtain, slight virtue we obtain in our ordinary life, up to the practice of 6 perfections, like generosity etc, and bringing up to the great perfection stage, which is Buddhahood, all are sourced by the Guru!

As stated in the Lam Rim, Geshe Potowa said for attaining freedom, there is nothing more important than the Guru” The freedom from suffering in this very life, freedom from the three lower realms, freedom from total cyclic existence, and total freedom from the afflictive emotions, defilements, a state of full enlightenment, is nothing more important than relying on the Guru, there is no other better path. There is no other better solution.

It is sufficient to know and activate this life by watching others, but you will not know them well without the instructor. Even in our daily life, like a carpenter, without relying on an instructor, there is obstruction for us to be perfect. We have success in travelling to the place where we have never been, at the same time, having just been born, just been reborn, from the miserable realm, we have been taking rebirth in this samsaric world again and again, whenever we take rebirth into this cyclic existence, whatever accumulation of wisdom and clarity of our mind in the past, at the time when we are conceived in the womb, it loses about 75% of the wisdom and clarity. The impurity substance within the environment in the womb, as well as the suffering of ignorance, suffering of birth itself, causes us to lose at least 70% of the wisdom and clarity of the mind which we have accumulated in the past. We have been taking such kind of rebirth from beginningless life times up to now. We are trapped in the ignorance of ignorance, we are totally lost, on top of that, by taking rebirth in samsara, we are totally deluded in our sense of delusion, in the sense of our mind, because of that to travel to somewhere where one has never been, like the state of liberation, state of nirvana, more than that the state of holy enlightenment, if without the instructor such as the Mahayanic Guru, one will never reach there! For this reason, Guru again is one of the most important features in our realization.

SEARCHING FOR THE GURU

Since relying on the Guru is so important, one needs to go and search for the Guru, how do you go about doing this? We need to understand the qualification, what kind of qualities that person should possess in order to have the ability to guide you to the right path and bring you to enlightenment.

DEFINING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEACHER TO BE RELIED UPON

Generally in the scripture and the commentaries, many defining characteristics of the teachers are taught, and the view point of the teacher and the vehicle, such as the small vehicle, middle vehicle, great vehicle, the 3 types of practitioners, based on their mental capability, based on different aspects of the teaching particularly in the teaching of Vinaya, teaching of the Sutra, Mahayanic Sutra, and teaching of the

Tantra is three different aspect of the teaching and different aspect of the qualities of the Guru.

Like in Tantra they emphasize slight different than what they emphasize in the Mahayanic Sutra, and Mahayanic emphasize different from the Vinaya Sutra. However, whatever qualities mentioned, the following is the description of the teacher who instructs you on the stages of the path and of the 3 persons of different capacities to guide you on the Mahayanic path. Within the three different capable beings, this qualification of the teacher or instructor, is to be qualified to guide the Mahayanic student to engage and lead to the stages of the path up to enlightenment, which is up to Buddhahood and not just be liberated from samsara, lower realm, or from samsara up to nirvana,

With respect to this, Maitreya Buddha commented in his “Ornament of the Mahayana Sutra” that “Rely on the Mahayana teacher who is discipline” so the **first quality is discipline.**

Second is serene

Third is totally pacified

So have good qualities suppressing those of the students and **energetic.** Good in **scripture knowledge**, possess **loving concern.** Has **thorough knowledge of reality** and **skilled in instructing disciples**, and has **abandoned disparitiness**, abandon lost and indecisiveness within oneself and lost indecisiveness in students. Maitreya said one must rely on the teacher who has these 10 qualities.

It is said that **those who has no disciplines themselves, has no bases in disciplining others!** So **first quality of the teacher is that of discipline** and it emphasized that the teacher should be trained in the ethic of morality. Therefore Gurus who intend to discipline others mind must first themselves have been disciplined. It is just not helpful if they have just done one practice and has the result designated as the good quality of the knowledge. So they need a way to discipline the mind that concurs with the general teachings of the Conqueror’s. The three precious higher training is definitive in such a way. Therefore Maitreya

indicated with these three terms as discipline, serene and totally pacified especially referring to the training of the three higher trainings; such as high training of morality, concentration, calm abiding and high training of the wisdom. **Without the training in morality, the Vinaya, one will not be able to tame one's mind.** Therefore one is not qualified to tame others. As said before, you cannot use all sort of different aspects of the teaching to tame or discipline the mind, in particular one has to use oneself to tame one's mind based on the Vinaya discipline.

In order to gain the serenity, one has to train in the higher training of calm abiding, of the Shamada. Till then one can be able to obtain the serenity, which is very calm and gentle. So, when one is able to be trained in the higher wisdom, one is able to totally pacify the self grasping mind as well as the self grasping attitude towards all outer phenomena, so that one's mind and attitude is completely pacified; totally free from the grasping attitude.

With respect to what Maitreya said, discipline refers to the ethical discipline which is Vinaya, such as training oneself in the ten virtuous actions by avoiding the ten non virtuous actions. This includes taking the eight Mahayana precepts, engaging in the practice of taking refuge vows, practice of five lay vows, ordained vows, novice vows, and fully ordained vows. All these different aspects of Vinaya discipline is the way one has to obtain as the first quality for one self to qualify as the Mahayana teacher or instructor.

It is very difficult to find total perfection in this much degenerated times; **one should be reminded to live a life preserving the five lay vows and individuals living a life with ten virtues.** At least we have to refer to someone to get the knowledge and the blessings into the Mahayana path. Otherwise, as stated before, without taming one's mind, how is one able to tame others? That means there won't be opportunity for one's mind to receive the blessing and one will not achieve the state of subduing one's mind, which is the innate purpose of engaging in the Mahayana teaching.

So now, **serene refers to having achieved the meditative concentration.** Few days ago Choden Rinpoche has already explained in very detail how do actualize the meditative concentration. Without the training in that aspect, one will not be

able to achieve the qualities of serenity. If we don't have that one is not qualified to be the Mahayana instructor.

Meditative concentration is the mental state that the mind remains peacefully with joy. Calm abiding, just these two words fulfilled the meditative concentration of the mental state where the mind remains peacefully and withdrawn. This is achieved with the mind remaining in introspection and mindfulness, based on the remaining of one's body, speech and mind into the ethical discipline, such as remaining in the 10 virtuous actions; and avoiding 10 non virtuous actions etc. Based on that, one applies mindfulness and introspection and will be able to bring about the realization on the concentration, so one is able to actualize the quality of serene.

Through mindfulness and introspection, it will guide one's body, speech and minds' actions including intention, into the virtuous act; and the attainment of not engaging into wrong doings with one's body, speech and mind, and to actualize good deeds and activities such as good actions. **The cause and source to actualize calm abiding again in short is to apply mindfulness and introspection.** So as for detail you can refer to the topic that Choden Rinpoche has just taught.

The third quality, thoroughly pacified refers to having accomplished training of the wisdom. This is done by analyzing the meaning of reality dependence on meditative serenity wherein the mind becomes serviceable. **One should learn the existence of dependence arising in order to actualize the meaning of selflessness, and to actualize the meaning of emptiness, that is emptiness of self and phenomena is oneself should engage in the understanding of dependence arising.** Once one has achieved the wisdom realizing reality, that serves as the basis of all the purpose of liberating oneself and other human beings from the entire aspect of suffering.

However, just to have all the knowledge on disciplining the mind with the three training is not sufficient; ie. Discipline, serene, totally pacify, just these three knowledge or three qualities is not enough in order for oneself to be qualified as a Mahayanic instructor or Mahayanic Guru. Teacher must also have the good quality of scripture learning therefore, wealth of scripture knowledge.

The forth quality is the wealth of scripture knowledge. One must first listen and study from the great learned beings and actualize the realization on listening, not only that, also to contemplate on all the stages of studies, in order for oneself to be convinced of the meaning which is the purpose of the whole study is to actualize the whole meaning. By actualizing on the realization and contemplation, then engaging in the meditation, having the experiential realization within one's mental continuum on the knowledge; then one becomes the person who possesses the wealth of scripture knowledge.

Just by knowing how to explain the scripture is not enough for a Mahayanic Dharma instructor. Just for ordinary knowledge an instructor can just explain the theory. **For Dharma one has to actualize these three points such as having realization on listening, which is study; and realization on contemplation, and realization on meditation on the meaning.** So here, not just having the sighted knowledge, Here we have to actualize every single different aspect of knowledge, such as knowledge in the Sutra teachings, knowledge in the Mahayanic teachings, and knowledge in Tantra. The purpose of the Mahayanic instructor in order to instruct and lead the student is lead up to full enlightenment. In order to gain enlightenment the practitioner has to guide the student throughout the knowledge on Hinayana sutra and Mahayanic sutra and the Tantrayana, all 3 aspects of the teachings.

As said by Geshe Domtonpa" as the Guru of the Mahayana, in the explanation, they must cause the students to have a deep understanding." When you listen to teaching from your teacher, the Mahayanic teacher should have the skill and knowledge in understanding the students, not the more you teach the more your students confused. **The fifth quality of the teacher is, the Mahayanic teacher must be skillful.** Therefore not just having knowledge, must also be skillful to bring about deep understanding of the student to have deep knowledge; so it is said it is the best if the teacher has the perception on reality. The teacher should have direct realization on emptiness. If not, it is reasonable to accept that they have the scripture realization on the reality and at least the teacher, him or herself should be convinced of selflessness of the phenomena and emptiness through reliance on the scripture and by own research by applying one's own reasoning. ie. Not just the

scripture understanding but apply the knowledge with own understanding. This qualifies the teacher per se in the concept of reality. Although the teacher is endowed with the good quality of Sutra knowledge, it is not enough to have the good quality that is equaled or lower than that of the students. So a Mahayanic teacher or instructor must have greater knowledge than the students. If lower, worst, same also not enough. They need the qualities that surpass those of their students.

The 6th quality is that they need to have the qualities and knowledge that surpass their students. The Sutra stated that people degenerated by relying on those inferior than themselves. By relying on equal they stay the same; by relying on superior, they attained excellence. Thus relying on those more superior than yourself, thoroughly pacified, endowed with the ethical discipline, and exceeding wisdom, you will become the superior even than those who are superior. So relying on those have lower knowledge than oneself, even your knowledge will be degenerated. If you rely on the same level of knowledge, you will be stuck and never be able to upgrade your knowledge. When you rely on the superior one, then one will achieve excellence as the knowledgeable or even better.

So these 6 qualities, being discipline, serene, thoroughly pacified, having good qualities that surpassed the students, the wealth of knowledge in studying many scriptures and wealth knowledge of reality, are the good qualities obtained for oneself. The remaining qualities no. 7th is being energetic; **the 7th quality is the teacher has to be very energetic in providing knowledge to the students.** Having skilled instructions, **the 8th quality is having skilled instructions.** The teacher should possess skillful means in giving instructions. **Number 9th possessing loving concerns,** whatever teaching you provide must be with the concern of love and compassion and abandoning disparitiness. The students may disappoint you, maybe due to karma lack of wisdom, or due to laziness, how much you teach, they don't understand or whatever way you teach, they misinterpret. There is danger of feeling hopeless in you or in the student, so one must be somebody who is confident in your effort in providing the knowledge to the students. Therefore, **abandoning the disparity is the 10th quality** in looking after others. Thus these are the 10 qualities that a Mahayanic Guru should possess.

Those Gurus who provide initiations, oral transmissions, commentaries, vows, **MUST** have these 10 qualities. They must possess these 10 qualities. When you go and search for Gurus, you must look at this person whether he possesses these 10 qualities or not. If so, then you are ready to tie the Guru relationship in receiving initiations, vows, commentaries otherwise, better be careful.

As Buddha expressed, "...do not wash away sins with water" Buddha cannot wash our sins or negative karma just like washing dirt with water. They do not clear away beings' sufferings with their hands, same thing with the Guru **they provide the teaching in the truth of reality, which is the antidote that one has to apply to one's mental continuum.** To use that as a tool to purify one's negative karma just like the sins accumulated in the past, and purifying the sufferings which is the result of the sins; and actualize stages of the knowledge which the stages of the realization, stages of perfection up to Buddhahood by yourself in using the tool of the Buddha's teaching which is the truthful complete path i.e. Lam Rim. Therefore "Buddhas perform no actions like washing away others 'sins with water, other than looking after others by accurately showing them the path." Up to today all the 10 direction Buddhas they never bring buckets of water to wash our sins. They are there all the time, tirelessly, timelessly providing different aspects of the teachings, different aspects of the path. That is how he brings liberation is us by putting those teachings in our practice.

Among the four qualities of looking after others, skill in instructing disciples refer to both skill in the process of leading disciple and adapt and causing them to understand. Possessing loving concern refers to having a pure motivation for giving the teaching. There is the teaching that teaches with love and compassion and does not look for gain, respect and so on. The Mahayanic teacher, they provide the teaching just for the purpose of liberating students from the suffering and ignorance, not to gain more students, respect, praises.

If any of you happen to be the instructor in Mahayanic teaching, your purpose is to gain more students, then its wrong motivation. If it is to gain more respect, praises, all are wrong motivations. It has to be totally, sincerely, wholehearted, total concern of compassion and care. How much you can explain how much you can

offer but totally dedicated just for the benefit of the students. So that is very very important.

Energetic means constant delight in others' effort, and has abandoned disparity. When one is happy to help others one will never feel tired. One will not feel reluctant to serve the purpose and others' needs. So here when whoever gives instruction in dharma, a Mahayanic instructor should be so generous to provide the teaching. Here again there is a danger of misunderstanding when you request teachings to the Gurus, they are very tough to provide the teachings, they will say they have no time, or all sorts of difficulties that they face but that has a reason. The Gurus they want to see the sincerity of the student and at the same time to let the student know the preciousness of the dharma. For that purpose they provided 10 or 20 times for you to request so as not to treat the teaching as easy and cheap and with no respect. If even 20 times rejected and you still ask for it, then you will feel very important and expensive.

That is why in Tibet, many of the Kadampa teachings are referred to as **“Golden Dharma”** so difficult to provide the teaching, firstly, it is only passed to one, like from father to the son. That son must also be one of the most stunning among thousands of people, like the most intelligent, sincere, and has to have so much merits and qualities. Normally just happen to one or two, so you see the value of the dharma. Hundreds and thousands of the people want the dharma, but so difficult. So people offer gold, real gold mandala; tons and tons of gold, not that the Gurus want the gold for themselves but that shows how much respect you have, for the Gurus and the dharma, the preciousness of the teaching. Even one word they provide becomes the source of realization. Even one moment they said “Om Ah Hum” you gain the realization because your sincerity, conviction and faith is so strong. Nowadays, teaching is so easy; sometimes it's too much, almost like too many opportunities. It becomes bias, people choose who speaks the best, regardless whether the teaching is pure or not, people are attracted not for the dharma but for the entertainment. Therefore it's very difficult to gain the realization in many ways in today's time due to the lack of good respect.

As to **abandoning disparity** it refers to never tired of giving an explanation again and again and bearing the hardship of explaining the meaning to the students. So

for a Mahayanic teacher even the student asks again and again, in the middle of the night, the teacher is willing to explain many times. You should be there for the explanation without disturbing your mind, even that is not easy!

The Guru who helps you to achieve liberation is the foundation of your deepest aspiration.” Therefore you who wish to rely on the Guru should understand this defining characteristic and strive to seek one who has them.” The Guru should have these qualities. Those who wish to seek liberation in the path should seek for such Gurus. Also those who wish to have students should check if they have such characteristics and start to possess them. Even from the teacher side, if you really want to have Mahayanic students, then first look into yourself whether one possess these qualities or not. It is the job for both the Guru and the disciple. Otherwise there is a danger of wasting the precious human rebirth. You did not achieve the greatest benefit. When you rely on the Guru he is somebody that who truly can bring about liberation and that is the whole purpose. Therefore, the Guru is the foundation of all good qualities and Gurus must possess these 10 qualities and the disciple should have the urge to have such kind of Guru, pray and wish and accumulate merit to be able to meet such kind of Guru. Every single aspect, one should put effort. So this covers, the foundation of all good qualities is the kind and venerable Guru.

Just the Guru having the qualities is not enough; the students must also have the qualities. Aryadeva stated in the 400 stanza “it is said that **one who is non partisan plus intelligent and diligent is a vessel for the teaching**” If you want to be able to digest the teaching, one should possess the 3 qualities. The good qualities of the instructor do not appear So even though how good the instructor is the dharma will not go into your mind, either you misinterpret or let it be the source to subdue one’s mind. So “the one who is endowed with the 3 qualities are suitable to listen to the teaching. Aryadeva also said that if you have all those qualities. The good quality of the one who instructs you in the teaching will appear as good quality not as a fault. If we don’t have the 3 qualification, non partisan, intelligent and diligent, even how good the instructor is we might start to project the fault, or impute the fault. In addition, Aryadeva said “so much fully qualified person, the good qualities of the fellow listener will also appear as a good quality and not as a fault.” So, the 3 qualities are important to us to digest the right

teaching from the right teacher, otherwise even though the teacher is right one might misinterpret. It is stated in the Chantrakhiti commentary that you the listener do not have all these defining characteristics of the suitable reception of the teachings, and then the influence of your own faults will cause even the extremely pure teacher who instruct you with the pure teaching to appear to have faults. Furthermore, you will consider the faults of the one who explain the teaching to be good quality. Therefore although you might find a teacher with all the defining characteristics, it may be difficult to recognize their presence. Thus, it is necessary to have disciples who have these 3 characteristics in their own aspect. In order to recognize that the teacher has all the defined characteristics, in order then to rely on the teacher, so even one happened to find a right teacher, if one doesn't put effort to actualize these 3 qualities then one might loose the purpose.

In respect to these 3 characteristics non partisan means not to take sides, it you are partisan you would be obstructed by your bias, and will not recognize the good qualities. Because of this you will not discover the meaning of good teaching. So taking sides is to have attachment for your own religious system, hostility towards the others. Work for it in your own mind then discard it. As stated in the Bodhisattva vows of liberation, taking side in your mental attitude to the understanding of teaching is very dangerous. One might lead even into the wrong view, so therefore it is very important for us to avoid.

“After giving up your own assertion in respect and abide in the text of the Abbot and the master ‘Even in the Bodhisattva Pathimoksha express “after giving up your own assertion, don't be too stubborn on your own assertion, rather respect and abide in the advice of the Abbot and the master.” Means respect to the comments of the teacher rather than holding blindly to your ignorant and own view. It is also something that occurs many in our life time. Even as a Buddhist practitioner, because of we are Gelug practitioner there is a danger of criticism on the other sects of Tibetan Buddhism. Overall like being Mahayana practitioners there is a danger arising criticism on Hinayana practice, because of not having knowledge in Tantra, there is a danger arising on criticism on Tantra. This is because of lack of knowledge that is why you criticize. Even these are one's ignorance self assertion and belief that one accepts and it is not assertion based on wisdom.

So here there is a question that “Is just that one character is enough? Though non partisan will not have the mental force to distinguish the correct path of the good explanation and counterfeit path of the false explanation, you are not fit to listen to the teachings.” Therefore you must have the intelligence. **“The second quality is the intelligence** to understand both of these, by this account you will give up what is unproductive and then out of there what is productive.” That is what teaching to adopt and what to abandon. In order to do that, one should have intelligence. This intelligence again one needs to engage in studies otherwise this intelligence will not be able to actualize. Thus, even before relying on the perfect Mahayanic Guru, one should engage in the study or exploring the Buddha’s teaching in various aspects.

Once one have certain stage of the understanding in Buddha dharma, in order for oneself to actualize the realization on the stages of the path, through reliance on the perfect Guru, by possessing this quality then one will actualize by relying on the Guru. Otherwise one won’t have the ability to differentiate what is a Mahayanic Guru, whether to adopt or abandon?! So here again, before one commits in the relationship of Guru and disciple, first one should receive the teaching regard as a lecturer, an ordinary normal lecturer, then observe all the different qualities of a Mahayanic teacher, and at the same time gradually one should obtain the 3 qualities of oneself as a student. After that through one’s intelligence, one is convinced that all aspects of the instructions is suitable and to be adopted by you as a student, then one is safe to rely on the Guru, and have the relationship as Guru and disciple.

Again non partisan and intelligence, are just these two qualities enough? Though having both of these, if like a drawing of a person who is listening to the teaching, you are inactive; you are not fit to listen to the teaching. Therefore **you must have the great diligence.** Chantrakhriti’s commentary said “after abiding the 3 qualities of the students, to have 2 qualities by being focused and to have respect to the teaching instructor, there are total other 5 qualities. “

These 5 qualities are summarized into 4 qualifications.

1) Striving very diligently at the teaching,

- 2) **Focusing the mind well when listening to the teaching,**
- 3) **Third having great respect in the teaching and the instructor,**
- 4) **Discarding bad explanations and retaining good explanations.**

So having intelligence is the favorable condition that gives rise to these 4, being non partisan, get rid of the unfavorable condition in taking sides, investigate whether this attribute that made you suitable to be led by the Guru are complete; if they are complete, cultivate delight; if they are incomplete, you must make an effort to obtain the cause that will complete them before your next life. So student side has to put so much effort. After relying on the Guru, whatever way the Guru explain, you have to put so much effort to summarize or to about the actual meaning of the teaching. Either it is complicated, or totally misinterpreting, or totally confused you etc, you as student; have to put effort to construct the stages of the teaching or essence on whatever taught before next life.

Because you have relied on the Guru and convinced of the quality, so whatever teaching provided should be beneficial for you. At the same time by using your intelligence, you have to make sure that brings about the effect. The purpose of which is to subdue one's mind by using whatever aspect of teaching is taught.

Now the quality of the listener, if you do not know their defining characteristics you will not engage in the investigation to see whether they are complete, it will thereby ruin your great purpose. So otherwise there is no purpose for oneself to engage in the relation of Guru and disciple. So, now here, **“correctly devoting to him is the root of the path, by clearly seeing this and applying great effort....”** The second two words are to teach about how to rely upon the Guru.

So how a student is to rely on the teacher? “One who has this qualification of a suitable recipient of the teaching should investigate well whether the Guru has the requisite characteristics as explained above, then this student should receive the teaching as compassionate kind words from the teacher, even so there is a different aspect of reliance on the Guru. You can understand from the biographies of Dromtonpa and Sangpowa, their different ways of relying on the Guru. Sangpowa had many Gurus, and listen to many correct explanations. When coming from Kham (area in Tibet) he even listened to lay practitioners' explained the teaching

along the road side. His disciple said that this was inappropriate way to receive the teaching. To which, Sangpowa replied “do not say that, I have received two benefits...” So for him as long as he has a teacher, explained the dharma, one who teaches the dharma by generating the faith and receiving the two benefits, whatever blessings may have just by listening, and the benefit to bring about greater understanding in different field of the teachings, for that purpose he will go and receive the teaching. He relied on many teachers, so his students complained he should focus on this and that teacher and not receive teachings from everywhere. This is same thing like us, some of us wherever there is teaching we will go and receive, some of us are very particular, and we only receive teachings from a particular Guru. It is the same case happened between the Kadampa masters. Sangpowa replied that he did not do wrong; it is his way of receiving the two benefits. But for us it is more suitable for us to follow Dromtonpa’s tradition. Geshe Dromtonpa is the heart disciple of Lama Atisha, he has not more than 5 Gurus.

So then, Potowa and Gonpawa Renchin the two later Kadampa masters discussed this issue whether to rely on few Gurus or many Gurus, which of these two ways was better? These two Kadampa masters agreed that Geshe Dromtonpa’s way was better in this time. **Those with untrained mind (like us, who still see faults in the teacher and lose faith) are recommended to have few Gurus.** It is more relevant to our life style on the strength of faith. Few gurus are more suitable than having many Gurus.

In general, the teacher is someone from whom you have received the teachings, the great enlightened words, especially a teacher who skillfully guides you with the instructions of all the paths of enlightenment. So, first of all, one should focus on relying on few Gurus by understanding the fragility of one’s faith and mind.

Once you found the teacher, how to accomplish all aspects of the reliance?

There are two; **one is to rely on thoughts and the other on practice.** Therefore the general indication of attitudes needed to rely on the teacher, in particular training on the faith, which is the root! Thirdly, **remembering the teacher’s kindness and being respectful.** You should respect and serve the teacher with the

nine attitudes as in Lama Chopa.(see annex A) This include all the key points of the attitudes that you should have in order to rely on a teacher. The first 4 of the 9 attitudes, which **is like a dutiful child, which means give up your independence and submit to your Guru's will.** “Dutiful children do not initiate an action on their own but instead looking at heir parents facial expression, submit to their will and then do what they say. Look to the teacher in this way.” Do only what is allowed by the teacher. If teacher advised disengage in non virtue that means teacher disagree then one shouldn't do non virtue. If teacher expects one to meditate all the time then one should meditate etc...

The **second attitude is like a diamond. This means “to make the relationship between the teacher and student close and stable, not to be split apart by anyone, such like demons, bad friends and the like.”** So, once you established the relation of the Mahayanic Guru and disciple, one have to make sure that **one's faith will never be degenerated.** Demons such as ignorance, or through your attachment, or through anger, or through laziness, or through the influence of external kind of demon like spirits, Split by spirit entering you and your mind overwhelm and controlled by the spirits, and expressed the faults of the Gurus. Your mind is dominated by the negative mind such as spirit mind, then one give up the relationship with the Guru. Those are split one self apart by the demons.

Split by bad friends, whoever so calls as a friend or family members, ask you to give up the teacher, not to serve or listen to the teacher and talk all the negative qualities of the teachers, and try to influence you to split you so one should set the second attitude which is like a diamond.

The third attitude is like the earth. Remember last year when Lama Zopa Rinpoche was here and the exco members performed an act on the 9 attitudes of guru devotion, so you must be already familiar. **Attitude which is like the earth means to take on all the responsibilities of the Gurus.** Guru's activities and not become dispirited by any of the responsibility asked of you! As like Geshe Potowa told Geshe Chekawa, the monastic monk, “You have met with my Geshe (Geshe Chekawa) who is truly a Bodhisattva which you monk cannot see he who has practiced accordingly to his words and whatever is taught to him, he does 100% practice. You have great merit to have him as your teacher. Now let this be a

privilege not a burden.” Geshe Chekawa has ordered students and advised them constantly to be conscientious in their practice therefore unceasingly reminding the students to be mindful and diligent in their practice so much so it made them feel like a burden, and they start to criticize. Geshe Potowa thus told the monks they really don’t know who Geshe Chekawa is; similarly this also happens in our life and this is relevant advice. Therefore whatever the responsibility given by the Guru we should take upon it like the earth and accomplish with confidence.

How to achieve the responsibility of the Guru? How do assume responsibility? This itself consist of **6 attitudes**:-

- 1) **Be like the foothill** - Any suffering that might arise does not sway you. Does not shake your faith. One should be like the foothill; one would not sway with any suffering arising from reliance on the Guru.
- 2) **Be like a worldly servant** – To perform even the worst task in entirety without any hesitation. Like a maid, a servant. Some of you may know how you treat your maid. Maybe it’s also karma you have to scold them then they behave (laughter). I remember once in Singapore many years ago, I was staying with a family and the maid has to wake up at 3 am and work throughout the day, wash all the clothes even they have a washing machine. Look after the children at night until they sleep and the whole day no rest, and eat left over food if any, otherwise just Maggie mee for meals. I gave her some money like \$100 before I left and was scolded for doing that! So, we have to be better than that, like the maid, cannot complain (maybe inside the heart she did) but face has to be happy, just work quietly maybe for more than 2 or 3 years. So we have to be more than that, we have to gain the inspiration from inside. So attitude like the worldly servant.
- 3) **Attitude like a sweeper** – means to eliminate completely all pride and feeling of superiority and consider your self to be lower than your Guru. So your attitude likes a sweeper. Even if you know more than the Guru one should never express from your heart. It is for your own benefit. That is why when we teach on Guru Devotion, the Westerners they are not happy. This teaching is like telling them to respect us. That is why this teaching is very difficult, when you teach it is you asking them to respect the teacher. Like me I am teaching but I am not the guru, but when you teach it sounds like that, asking them to respect me. So normally many of the Western institute

they skip the guru devotion part.(laughter) Second one is they skipped the teaching on suffering. They said we have enough suffering don't explain anymore suffering! (laughter) This is a very serious comment, be like a sweeper. The thing is our purpose of relying on the Guru is to be enlightened. Therefore one of the obstacles is the pride. When you have pride you will never learn from the person. Therefore in order to eliminate your pride one should regard one self as a sweeper! Concentrate on one self to be lower than the Guru. Even you are higher than the Guru but you should think that you are lower than the Guru.

- 4) **Attitude like a foundation** – means to take on the heavy responsibility of the most abused activities of the Guru with pleasure. So be like a foundation no matter how heavy or how difficult the task that the Guru has, you take upon the responsibility with lots of happiness.
- 5) **Attitude like a dog** – means not to get angry, even when the Guru despises or betrays you. When Guru insults you, beats you, betray, neglect or avoid you. As long as you have established the relation with the Guru, one should be like a dog. Never get angry; never get upset, never loose the faith, all the time from your side, behave loyal to the Guru.
- 6) **Attitude like the ferry** – means not tired of deeds for the Guru. Never tired no matter how many times you engaged in your Guru's activities. Guru might ask you to this, after you finished that, might ask you to do that. After finished that might give you more jobs, more practice to do. After asking you to do Guru Yoga practice, do 100,000 mandala offerings. After that you finished and see the Guru again he says do 1 million Varjasattva mantra, on top of that, maybe now you become the director serve the centre, forget about your job, why not you try to live in the centre not go back home ,,,, even how much extra jobs you are given you should be delighted and happily accept, and fulfill the Guru's wish! So those are the 9 attitudes that one should rely on the Guru.(**NOTE: refer to annex A on details of practicing Guru Devotion with the 9 attitudes**)

In particular training in the root, the faith, most importantly foundation is the faith. **So faith is the prerequisite of all good qualities.** It's like the mothers who provide and bring about all the qualities, no faith nothing can actualize. No faith no Guru. No Guru no stages of realization on the Path.

Therefore one should train your attitude, your mind to bring about the faith towards your Guru. “You treat your faith as your mother, by training your faith and conviction to the Guru who then protect and increase them” So then your devotion to your Guru will be protected. Devotion to your Guru will be increased. “By having faith it clears away the doubts on Guru.” Whenever there are faults that you see in Guru, straight away one will not reflect that as Guru’s faults; rather one will see that this is the projection of my own faults in the Guru.

By bathing in the strong faith in your Guru, it frees you from the 4 rivers: - river of ignorance, river of attachment, craving, wrong views.

By establishing the strong faith, it established the foundation, the strong seed of the city of happiness and goodness, and this will bring about all the good qualities.

Faith cuts through the view and clarifies the mind, by having faith it will cut through the glooms and clarify the mind. **It eliminates pride and is the root of respect. It is a jewel and treasure which bring about from Guru devotion up to enlightenment.** It is like a hand, the basis that gathers all the virtues. **It is the best feet for going to liberation.** It is like two legs walking; if you have faith you will be able to cross by using the feet to walk on the path, ie able to actualize liberation. **Faith is the best vehicle definitely delivering you into Buddhahood.** Without faith it is not possible. **Therefore persons of intelligence rely on the guidance of the faith to relate to the Guru. Virtues will not arise if don’t have faith.** To people who have no faith virtues will not arise. Just as green sprout do not grow from the seed scorched by fire. It is like the green sprout, which is reliance to the Guru, without faith it’s like the seed is scorched by the fire. It is burned by the fire. **Therefore in the light of what you gain in the present and what you lost when it is not present, faith is the basis of all good qualities.**

Geshe Domtonpa said to Lama Atisha in Tibet there are many who are meditating and practicing, yet they are not attaining any special good qualities. Lama Atisha replied “All the significant and insignificant good

qualities that pertaining to the Mahayana arise from the Guru. You Tibetans only think of the Guru as a being of common person. You Tibetans don't have a strong faith seeing Guru in Buddha, only seeing him as a common person, how can good qualities arise?" Why even though there are so many meditators but don't really gain realizations, Lama Atisha replied it is due to the lack of faith in Guru devotion.

Then again when someone asked Lama Atisha in loud voice "Atisha, Where did you gain your instruction? Please give an instruction." He laughed. "My hearing is very good." When someone asked Lama Atisha to give instruction, he pretended that he could not hear. So the person shouted louder. He said "My hearing is very good and hear you clearly. For me to give instruction to you, first you need faith." He chanted faith 3 times. "Faith, Faith, Faith" So, if you have faith the instruction is available. If you don't have faith, instruction is not available. Thus faith is extremely important. **In general faith is of many types:- faith in the 3 jewels; faith in karma and its effect; faith in 4 noble truth.** However here we are speaking of faith in the Guru.

In LamRim in particular in the Guru devotion, whenever we talk about faith even though there is different aspects of faith, we must focus on the faith that talk about the Guru and that also seeing Guru in Buddha. **Seeing Guru as Buddha or seeing Guru in Buddha is seeing Guru inseparable from Buddha.** In regard to **how disciple should view their Guru**, the faith here is how the Mahayanic disciple should view their Guru.

"If you ask how in secret deity, how the disciple should view the master? I would answer that they should view them as they view the Bahgawan." When if you ask Guru Varjadhara how one should view the Guru, the advice is same as you view Bahgawan. If the disciples view their masters in this way, they will always cultivate virtues. They will become Buddha and benefit the entire world. So if you can do that, this will actualize." **In order to sustain the faith keep the good qualities of the master in the mind.** Keeping their good qualities in mind you will reach attainment up to enlightenment."

“Projecting their faults then one will obstruct one’s enlightenment. Your Guru might have good qualities for the most part, and have only slight faults but if you examine your Guru for those faults; this will block your own attainments. Even in the case of a Guru who mostly has faults, you will give rise to your own attainment if you give rise to your faith by focusing on the good qualities whilst not looking for the faults.” So even if one happened to rely on a Guru who possess more faults than qualities, but after relying one only should look to the qualities only. **Whenever the faults appear the antidote is to reflect, to think in your own mind this is the projection of my own faults.** Gurus do not have faults. Guru is Buddha, and Buddha is perfection so Guru has no fault, that is how one should train one’s mind like that.

Therefore once someone is your Guru, whether he or she has a greater faults, contemplate the disadvantage of examining his or her faults. Straight away, the thought, seeing faults arises in your Guru, to avoid that one should contemplate there is no benefits and seeing faults is only disadvantage. It will obstruct my realization. Obstruct my enlightenment, better to avoid it. Rather I should create my mind to see the qualities. So repeatedly think about eliminating that tendency and then stop it. Whatever thought arises in faults of the Guru, again and again, even you put so much effort, one needs to put effort.” **Even of the influence of the factor, such as the over abundance of the afflictions or lack of consciousness lead you to conceive faults in your Guru, take pain to confess it, and restraint you from ever doing it again.** So whenever you see faults in your Guru, you should regard it as poisons went into your mouth, should feel great regret and try to apply the 4 opponent power to purify it immediately. Try to restraint and project yourself never see faults in your Guru because that is the greatest obstruction for one’s liberation. Because of that one must purify. Once you have done this, the influence of that conception will gradually diminish. As ordinary being we might see faults again and again, we have to put effort to purify and try to avoid again and again. By doing that one will totally habituate, such kind of misconception be totally diminished. It will never happen again. **Moreover pay attention to the good qualities he does have, such as ethical discipline, learnedness, and faith and reflect on**

these qualities. Even just have only one quality, quality of discipline one should reflect on that. Or maybe just knowledge which you can see in him or her which you don't have but he or she has. **Just with that one single quality to bring about faith to see the quality in the Guru. Conditional to this you may notice your Guru has a small number of faults.** This is talking about somebody that to whom you have relied upon as a Guru but imminently that he does possess faults, and manifest so many faults. In this case, by training in this, once you have become conditional to this, you may notice your Guru has small number of faults. Gradually through your practice you will start to see lesser faults in your Guru.

However this does not impede your faith because you are focusing on good qualities. For instance although you see that there may be many good qualities in people whom you dislike, your strong perception of their faults overwhelm your perception of their good qualities. So same thing to your Guru, as long as you are inspired to rely on the Guru even the Guru might possess many faults but by training your mind, when you start to look at the qualities you are somehow overwhelmed to see only the good qualities. Similarly even if someone might not have faults but you start to see one single pin point of the fault you all the time project that and your mind will be overwhelmed and see only faults. So again it depends on your self how you see. Otherwise, you might notice many faults in your self yet if the perception of your good qualities is very strong it overwhelms any perception of your faults.

Therefore it is similar to the following example; the great Lama Atisha who possessed the Mahayanic view, Madhyamaka view, and Lama Serlingpa who possessed the Cittamitta view, therefore Atisha viewed what is superior to Lama Serlingpa who is his root Guru but Lama Atisha upheld Lama Serlingpa as a Guru who was unresolved among all his 150 Gurus. Because Atisha has obtained the spirit of enlightenment, and the general presentation of the stages of the Mahayanic path independent upon Lama Serlingpa, because of that even the quality of the view is lower that the student but through the precept of inspiration from Lama Atisha's mind Lama Serlingpa is much more superior. So same thing to your Guru, your Guru might be

lower in a different aspect than your quality but when you rely on the spiritual dependence one should respect that he is superior to yourself.

“Reflect on yourself your Guru’s good qualities; do not look for their faults. You must not discriminate among your Gurus beginning from those whom you have received even one verse, even if they have such a defect as a faulty ethical discipline.” In order to actualize the realization on the stages of the path, even in the Lam Rim it doesn’t differentiate the ordinary teacher and the Guru as two categories. **Teacher is referring to the Guru, and Guru is referring to the teacher. This verse is meant even someone who taught you alphabet; you should put in the merit field as equal respect with the rest of the Gurus.** So as long as you receive one single word of dharma from him or her, for your own benefit, you should put within this equal rank of the merit field from your root Gurus. So you have to provide equal respect to all your Gurus.

In Tibet, there was one Kadampa master doing the Guru yoga meditation and try to gain realization on Guru yoga. He trained for many years and was unable to obtain the realization even though he has the greatest knowledge and greatest faith, all aspects of the teaching. He then asked his master why there is this obstruction. He said there is this little girl who taught you the alphabet when you were young and that little girl is not within your merit field because of that you are totally obstructed in your realization. After that, the moment he brought the little girl into the merit field and respect as the rest of the Gurus, he finally obtained realization on Guru devotion. So this is a very important comment **that as long as you receive even one instruction, for your own benefit, from anyone including your son or daughter happened to provide you with valuable dharma instruction which really hit your ego that is the real teaching!** Even that little girl or boy, for your own benefit, should respect as the Gurus. Same comment as Buddha said for your own benefit, you should respect every single ordinary living being as you pay respect to me. So in that sense we should see every single living being as Buddha and will actualize realization in obtaining yourself in Buddhahood. So that’s about it.

Now relying on the Guru by remembering the Guru's kindness and at the same time providing respect. So “developing the following ideas to respect in your teacher, I have wonder for long time throughout cyclic existence, all the Buddhas in ten directions have been searching for me. I was like in total sleep, lost! having being obscured by delusions for a long time; this Guru is the one who awaken me! They woke me up, pulled me out of the depth of the ocean of existence, from beginningless life time up to now I have entered into the bad paths, and they revealed the good path to me. The Guru released me from being born in the prison of existence (samsara). I have been worn out of illness for along time, illness of attachment, illness of hatred, anger from beginningless life time. This Guru is like a doctor who diagnosed my illness, and who provided the medicine.like the clouds that contain the rain that put out my blazing fire of attachment and anger hatred and so on....” So, one should think of the kindness of the Guru in this manner. One should respect the teacher or the Guru, they are your savior from all the samsaric faults, by remembering his kindness again one should generate stronger faith and try to repay the kindness.

“So thinking single pointedly those whoever provide any form of instructions, which cause us to abandon samsara and bring about awakening from the ignorance. There are many teachers, instructors, in different aspects of instructions. “.... the one who totally review the good qualities of all things and then fully teach the bodhisattva way of life, because of giving birth to these qualities in me, they are like my mother.” Thus now we should also regard the respect of the mother to whom who brings about all these qualities. “As they protect the wars they are like heroes. They are captain, protector, refuge.....” This is talking about the Gurus including the person who taught the alphabet to you; in the aspect that, due to their kindness, today at least you are able to read the instructions, and able to understand. When you think about that, they deserve your respect.”they are an eye providing me with happiness, with such a thought I respect and serve my teacher..”

So how to rely and practice? Do whatever that please your Guru. What have been explained in the above is mentally; now how do rely in the practice physically? “.....Whatever pleases your Guru, eliminates all that displease them, analyzing this strive at it...” **Once you have understood Varjadhara;s statement, attainment follow proper reliance on the master thoroughly please your Guru in all things...** So whatever pleases Guru, whatever appreciates by Guru, one should engage in that action. That is how to put one’s guru Yoga practice into practice. Whatever displeases the Guru one should avoid. **In brief you must strive to achieve what pleases your Guru and eliminate what displease them.**

And offering material gift to your Guru.”**offering to your pledged master constitute continuous offerings to all the Buddhas; offering to them is the collection of merit.** From the collection of merit, sublime wisdom, comes the supreme attainment.” So whatever form of offering, gifts that please either the Guru’s holy mind, the other five senses, we should find those material objects to please the Gurus.

In respect to serving the body and speech, physical action such as bathing, massaging, cleaning, cleaning dirt from the body, and nursing as well as vocal actions pointing out good qualities of the Guru. That is why whenever you see Guru, all the time express the good qualities of the Guru. If there is any good quality, pin point that and say to Guru, it is also a form of relying on the Guru by pleasing through body and speech. So here, when you are an attendant to somebody like a Guru, if you have those opportunities, there is so much merit. You are directly in physical engagement through your respect. As long as the Guru possessed all those 10 qualities there won’t be any misunderstanding, there won’t be any negative kind of interaction. So otherwise if you follow literally there could be danger. As long as the Guru possessed all those 10 qualities, including bathing, massaging, cleaning the dirt, body, these are enormous merit. Like my late master, Geshe Lama Konchok, almost for 7 or 8 years before he passed away, he experienced rheumatism. Whenever there is opportunity, I offer bath, sort of shower and massage. One day somehow, Lama Zopa Rinpoche knew that and Rinpoche called up and he explained for more than

2 hours on the phone the benefits. Even though I get all the complaints about my massage, he all the time said” you try to kill me or what?” the moment I squeezed the feet he said, “ you are trying to kill me..” I don’t know, after Rinpoche said there is so much benefit and good to do, at that time I did not really see the Lam Rim teaching, but from Rinpoche’s words, at least 2 hours he gave the benefit on at least rubbing his feet in the form of dedicated for his good health as my Guru. So like that. Geshela do allow me to do that especially about 6, 7 months before he died, he was very weak. I was cleaning his waste, especially like using the hand; if you really want to accumulate so much merit you should not wear gloves, you should get it like nectar. Really like that you know, shouldn’t feel dirty. You can see in that very moment, instead of feeling dirty, subconscious mind there is so much bliss, happiness arise! After that kind of service, you somehow start to feel like everything is bright, around you there is brightness, not dark. There is so much benefits, it is that!

Practicing according to the Guru’s word means to practice not contradicting the Guru tells you to do. This is most important. Again this is not to say anything about me. In my whole life with Geshe Lama Konchok, since the age of nine up to I don’t know, since 1985 to 2001, he commented to others that whatever he said in my whole life relying on him there is only one word “YES” there is no “no”. That is one of the greatest comforts to me. Maybe he said for the benefit of me! In my entire life I have only said “yes” to him never a “no”, so if I can do that there is no reason you can’t. Whatever you just totally depend on him, even he said wrong ...even through your faith he will never say anything wrong what he advised to do. So every single aspect, even your mind start to feel that is wrong, you will stop your mind from thinking so. That is the genuine pure advice, just say ‘yes’. Another comment he made was the more he scolded me the closer I want to get close to him. He did not say to me but to other students. When he don’t scold me I am already quite near, the moment he scolds I get nearer to him instead of running away. So these are like the simple things but I think it is necessary also which totally I appreciate. Even when the Guru is no longer alive with you but it brings about the bliss, constant blessing of the bliss! So every one of us we have a Guru, every one of us is relying on a

Guru, so if you can able to provide such kind of manner, these are just the “baby’ job; you can do more than that. So if you can do that, I think it’s never lost, really there is a great benefit.

We must practice in accordance with the Guru’s word, what if we rely on a Guru and they lead us to an incorrect path, employ us in the activities that are contrary to the 3 vows? Should we do what he said or advised? The reply is “with respect to this,.... .” Gunaprava who has stated in his **Sutra on the Discipline**, “**If the Guru instruct you to do what is not in accordance with the teachings, you should refuse.** With respect to virtuous act in accord with the Guru’s words, but do not act in accord with the Guru’s words in respect of non virtuous, therefore you must not listen to the Guru’s non virtuous instruction.” So if in case Guru happens to instruct in the negative action, one should refuse to follow but if such kind of Guru per ser with the 10 qualities won’t lead us and give negative instruction. Even if in case, there is a way “**if you cannot reasonably do as the Guru has instructed, excuse yourself with soothing words....**” Such as if Guru asked us to jump from the 13th floor, of course you know very well that you cannot jump, but you know that you can jump from 3rd floor, so then you can say to Guru that “I really wish to jump from 13th floor as you said but I think for today I will jump from the 3rd floor and I will try..” It’s really is soothing to you then you can express, and express with the soothing words. You cannot argue and said ‘How can you ask me to jump, I thought you understand me,,,etc” like that, cannot! You should use soothing words.

Now the benefits of relying on the Guru.

There are 8 benefits by relying on the Guru.

- 1) You will come closer to Buddhahood.**
- 2) You will please the Conquerors, all the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and holy beings.**
- 3) You will not be rid of future teachers.** ie. You will not be obstructed to have teachers in future life times.
- 4) You will not fall into miserable realms, neither bad karma nor afflictions will overpower you.**

- 5) **Through mindfulness of the Bodhisattvas deeds and by not contradicting them your collection of good qualities will continue to increase.**
- 6) **You will reach all of your provisional and final goals.** All the goodness in present life, future lives up to enlightenment will be obtained.
- 7) **After obtaining virtues through serving and respecting the teacher with the thought and practice, you will accomplish others welfare.** That means one will be able to fulfill the happiness of others and the enlightenment of others by relying on the Guru; not only that of others you will obtain one's welfare also.
- 8) **One will complete the collection of merit and sublime wisdom.** So one will accomplish the two merits, merit of merit and merit of wisdom, and will actualize enlightenment.

Furthermore by respecting and serving your teacher will exhaust all the negative karma which brings about the miserable realms, whereby the 3 lower realms will be eliminated. The action of serving the teacher will expense these miserable effects and replace them with only slight harm to body and mind in this life time. This refers to definite karma. **If one has accumulated both definite and indefinite karma to suffer in lower realms, by relying on the Guru, all those indefinite karma will be purified including the root result,** everything will be purified. By relying on the Guru, definite karmas will subside the harm and the pain within the body and mind of your self by being in this life. Therefore, whenever like we practice dharma, sometimes we say that O purification is happening. Like lately after mandala offering you experience so many wrong things, so many difficulties, wow great purification! That expression is correct. The thing is, the practice definitely benefited you, all the definite karma to experience eons of sufferings in the lower realms, **due to the power of the practice it is shrinking the time, and also it brings forth now in the aspect of bearable suffering, not unbearable suffering.** So you experience slight loss or pain in your body, or loss in your business whatever, but that purify eons of sufferings in lower realms and that can able to bring about by relying on the Guru.

To some, even will actualize in the dreams, those suffering of definite karmic result of suffering and have to experience in day time and the sensor kind of experience; by relying on the Guru, it transforms and just have to experience in the dream time. That means the suffering comes in your dreams when you sleep no need to experience it during the day time; and the suffering in the dream is far more different! So, unfavorable things come in the dream but no need to experience it in the actual gross senses.

“In addition the benefit of respecting and serving your teacher are tremendous such as a collection of virtues which suppresses even the root of the virtues you derive from making offerings to limitless Buddhas.” Accumulation of two extensive merits which is only way that one can able to actualize enlightenment. One of the powerful tools is to make offerings to the ten direction Buddhas, **BUT relying on Guru is far more powerful than making extensive offerings to the 10 direction Buddha and Bodhisattvas in order to actualize the 3 countless eons’ merits.** So relying on the Guru is far more powerful!

Notice that all of the Buddhas immeasurable good qualities of transforming others minds arise from the proper reliance on the teacher, therefore rely on becoming closer to serve and venerate the Guru just as you would to the Buddhas.” By knowing all these qualities and benefits then one must rely, one must get closer to the Guru. One must serve to the Guru. One must venerate to the Guru as like how you would venerate and make effort to get closer and how you rely on the Buddha. It should be exactly the same.

Every intelligent person should not distant from excellent being such as Guru, and should rely on these virtuous beings such as Gurus in discipline manner. One will discipline oneself such as one’s faith not to shake. Always rely on the proper manner with unshakable faith. Once you are close to the Guru particles of their good qualities will stick to you automatically.

The faults of not relying on the teacher.

“If you have taken someone as your teacher, and **your method of reliance is wrong not only will you be harmed by much madness and sickness in this life time, but in future life time as well you will experience immeasurable suffering in miserable realms for the immeasurable period of time!**” (Geshela chuckled and laughed and exclaimed Aiyoh!) Here, it doesn't mean by just not relying properly on the teacher it creates such a negative karma. You would think that in the first place I shouldn't rely on the teacher! It would be better as would not cause any karma. So it is worse! It is still better to rely on the teacher. All the benefits we explained just now can be obtained from the Guru. Now the situation is, instead of taking advantage you failed on proper reliance, then you will not experience the worst one but you will experience such kind of faults. If you didn't rely on the Guru you will experience worse of the worst! Now at least you rely on the Guru but mistakenly still have to experience this much. Scary isn't it? In life time, you will suffer immeasurable sufferings, immeasurable realms for the immeasurable period of time!

There is a saying that, I think its in “the essence of nectar”, it said that if you get like kind of **anger towards your Guru for one moment will render one eon of suffering in lower realm. If you are angry for two moments you will experience two eons in the hell realm.** Varjapani asked a question to Shakyamuni Buddha if happened to get angry at the Guru for one moment what will happen, Buddha said don't ask you will not survive hearing that! You will not stand hearing this! Buddha was reluctant to reply. It's too frightening to hear. So that much heavy negative karma is there.

As said in one of the Lam Rim teachings, one moment of anger towards the Guru, one eon of suffering in the lower realm. When we snap the fingers there is 65 sub moments, so when we get angry it could last for an hour, even for one minute it is definitely longer than one snap of the fingers which is 65sub moments! When we get angry we already accumulated the karma to experience in the lowest hell for 65 eons!!! It's

really dangerous isn't it? (Class ask whether can be purified Geshela answered yes and commented one has to be very careful)

One of the great Sutras stated "someone who hears even a single verse and does not conceive its speaker to be his or her Guru, will be reborn 100 times as a dog, and then will take rebirth in bad caste." So if one has heard a single word of dharma and disregard to put this teacher into the merit field, one will be born continuously 100 life times to be a dog. After that if happen to be born as a human being will be born in the low caste. This is still better than not totally rely on the Guru. If you don't you are in total loss, lost either in hell or hungry ghost or at the preta realm. At least here after 100 times as a dog, you reborn as human hopefully maybe somewhere else you meet with a Guru then maybe revive the karma. Who knows? Anyway these are the comments for your own benefit. So at least if you have spiritual reliance on somebody, then you should rely on a good Guru with respect, this is beneficial for your self.

Furthermore, good qualities that have not yet developed will develop by someone who hears a single word or verse; **if you don't rely or respect as a Guru, then good qualities that have not yet developed in you will not develop. Those that have developed will degenerate and disappear.** So if you don't respect as a guru, then those knowledge you have will disappear. If you rely on a non virtuous teacher or bad friends your good qualities will slowly diminish and all of your faults will increase. Then everything that is unwanted will develop. Therefore always avoid them.

This is the final advice for us in order to sustain relying on the right teacher; one of the worst obstacles is demons, spirits, and negative friends. Those are the obstacles and we always have to be mindful to avoid, otherwise instead of increasing in knowledge, it will be total loss. Therefore one always have to call Shakyamuni Buddha or your Guru "please bless me to rely upon him with great respect" So then by visualizing one's Guru or Shakyamuni Buddha or one's deity on your

crown at the end of any form of practice, or at the beginning of any form of practice then one should put palm together and request that **“May I never be separated from the blessings of the Guru, reliance on the Guru with the perfect respect, thought as well as practice and ever life time to be guided by the perfect Mahayanic Guru; and gradually into the sate of enlightenment.”** So one should always do this prayer, so that at least one is able to habituate to avoid all those obstacles.

In the Guru yoga practice such as the LamaTsongkapa Guru Yoga practice is very very effective especially the last verse ...**dissolving the Guru 3 times, dissolving into crown, dissolve through the throat chakra, and dissolving into the heart chakra. That is one of the most powerful practices for oneself never to be separated from the Guru and never fail on proper reliance on the Guru. That is very important, effective and powerful.** So just regard whoever you see, or you learn dharma as stated here including the person you learned one single word or from whom you learned an alphabet. Suppose if you did not study English alphabet from school, today you will not be able to read or understand. If you are really respectful even that teacher it is good to put in the mandala of the merit field, refuge field or your guru devotion practice merit field.

If we cannot remember every single those teachers, figures or beings, then just focus on one Guru which has the most effect in your heart, all the rest of the beings either see as emanations of the Guru, or either every single of those Holy beings who benefitted you dissolve into the centre Guru, which is your root Guru. Dissolved there and that Guru also transform into a light form, not like ordinary flesh and bone but light form. Then shrink into thumb size and that bring on your crown, gradually in the centre crown; let him enter through to the throat chakra, then you welcome into your heart chakra by opening your heart. In fact it is not this heart but the heart at the central channel there .Open into the 8 petal lotus, in the centre there is a sun and moon disc, on top the sun and moon disc your mind in the 6 syllabus form, the HUM or either HRIH or either DI or whatever, here you can just visualize syllabus HUM which is

again in the form of light. Then Guru who is in the aspect of light enters and dissolve into that 6 syllabus HUM and it merge, and it becomes inseparable. So now your mind, and all the Gurus' mind become inseparable. After that, the lotus, the heart chakra, the 8 petal lotus closed and after that in order not to depart from your mind, you should tie with the varja string or any form of mantra you like to use, or the Mitsegme 4 lines mantra, or any form of mantra you can use but in the aspect of varja. So you tie up 3 rounds, than again you visualize any type of mantra in the form of varja at the top of your heart. You place on top and across like that (Geshela showed the hand gesture) It is like a sign of being stamped and never ever to depart. After which you make a supplication prayer” May I ever follow the perfect Mahayanic Guru for every life time until I obtain enlightenment.

Thank you so much and sorry for keeping you so long. When you go back, if there is opportunity try to look into the great Lam Rim Chenmo, in the Guru Devotion verse section. There are not many pages you just go through it and this is the root to bring about all the rest of the understanding, so kindly put some effort on that. Thank you so much. Dedicate this merits again never to be separated from the perfect Mahayanic Gurus...(Dedication prayers)

*****The End*****

Transcript and lightly edited by Elsie Ng. May all the merits created through this work be dedicated fully to the everlasting happiness of all beings especially for the good health, long life and instant fulfillment of all the wishes of Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, and all true teachers of the Holy Dharma. May the noble works of all the teachers continue to flourish with constant blessings from the Triple Gem. All errors in any form appear is entirely that of the transcriber.

