

**The Path of Meditation Seminar
Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche**

**Naropa Institute, Boulder, Colorado
&
Karme Choling, Barnet, Vermont**

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Talk One: Meditation Instruction
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As the first section of this particular class on study of meditation, I would like to give you some basic ideas. Meditation as a practice is very confusing and, on the other hand, meditation is a way of life might be better to look at. And sitting practice of meditation that we're going to institute at this point is that simplifying, basic psychology, basic problems as it was presented by the Buddha. And simplifying in this case is question of no expectations to the technique, that whether this technique is going to liberate you or going to show you certain particular flashes of excitement, mystical experiences, whatever.

I would like to present this particular meditation situation extremely simply without working on certain particular metaphysical, philosophical overlay as such, but at the same time I feel that if you could go through this particular training that we are presenting throughout this particular course, I think it would be much better than just purely catching short glimpse of it. So again I would like to ask your particular commitment and sit for this particular training program completely as much as you can. Otherwise there's a lot of gaps, missing the point, and unnecessary confusions which might take place. So please try to stick around if you can, that is to say and follow this particular instruction. I'm not particularly saying that certain practice that we present are much more enlightening, much more promising than other techniques that might be presented, you might have experienced before, but what I'm saying here is that if you could stick, go along with exertion and patience and this particular discipline, that you might have chance realize yourself, realize yourself, understand yourself. Maybe such understanding may be extremely boring, such understandings maybe you don't want to do, but nevertheless that is the case that we can't reject ourselves before we know what we are, so I'm encouraging you to be very brave from that point of view. That please don't chicken out, as they say, and reject yourself or congratulate yourself for that matter, but try to work with the techniques, traditions that be presented to you. So this what I would like to present, very simple technique which has been developed throughout the tradition of Buddhism, and tradition that I myself have been trained, tradition that be recommended by Lord Buddha himself.

I would like to present very simple case, simple situation and I want you to try, just simply try. And there will be assistants who had been already trained under my directions who will coach you, so to speak, help you and work with your practice of meditation, and there will be certain particular hours, and situations will be presented, that you can sit either group situations, which would be good, necessary in some sense, and also particularly it is also important that if you can sit by yourselves at your apartment or homes or whatever you have, living situations setup, and meditation basically according to Buddhism at this point it is the idea of "bhavana," which is a Sanskrit word. Bhavana. B-h-a-v-a-n-a. Bhavana, which means exertion, discipline, which is the basic point, unless you are not inspired to discipline yourself, you are hopeless. Once you are halfway through, discipline yourself and try to give up hope is also hopeless because you are creating further congestions, and further indigestions. So this particular course is very demanding as it be presented by the tradition and the lineage and also I would like to stick with that particular process. If you are going to stick with us, please do so, you're welcome. I'm

sure that you will understand certain ways, thinkings, skilled in the clarity. If you feel that you be put off because there's so much effort and demands made on you, I prefer you to cop out right at the beginning, which is some kind of heroism I suppose. So think about that seriously. It's important.

I would like to work with this particular course as a very direct course that I'm working together, with the help of my teaching assistants, that you could work with that particular situation, and you sit regularly, you follow particular discipline and a particular experiences which are by no means dramatic and purely lead to discovering yourself, I'm afraid. And I do not promise on the other hand, at the same time, rather, that you are not going to see cherubs and gods, heavenly realms, colorful mantras or yantras, none of those. It is very simple, extremely down to earth, to the extent that it's irritatingly down to earth, and extremely down to earth so that you could see colors of your own existence. The earth will begin to come back to you [gestures with open hand moving upward], rather you getting messages [gestures in a circle above his head] from the heaven as such. Meditation in Buddhism is extremely severe. What we're doing here is extremely traditional, non trippy if you'd like to use that word, there's no trips involved, no kicks involved, absolutely not. [laughs] So I would appreciate if you could work with us, not that I want convert you into our particular style and approach, necessarily, and not that I want to reject you because you don't accept our style and approach.

It is open situation, but I think it is worthwhile to apply your exertion, and it is necessary. I'm sure you'll learn something out of this, because that I have learned something out of this myself. And this is not supposed to be testimonial session, particularly, but I felt myself that I have gained wisdom and clarity myself from this, and I'm giving it to you as I have learned, as I have gone through myself, throughout the basic training and disciplines that I have received myself. The only difference is that you don't speak Tibetan.

The meditation situation evolved, according to the Buddha, three-fold. The one is called what's called "Shamata," s-h-a-m-a-t-a, sha-ma-ta, and the second process, involves what's called "Vipashyana." V-i-p-a-s-h-y-a-n-a. Those are the Sanskrit terms that be used. "Shamata" means development of mindfulness, mindfulness which we are going to do together at this point, either group situations or individually, and such meaning of mindfulness is up to you. And this particular meditation practice is a paying attention to what's happening, namely, your breath, your ordinary breathing, your breath. To say, for example, when you sit down and trying to rest, first thing you do is, trying to regain your breath, because you pay so much attention and maybe sitting down and relaxing, trying to get to a place when you want to relax, you walk towards your place of relaxation, you walk and then you sit [makes "haah" sound as he relaxes down] - as we ordinarily say, "phew."

The breathing plays very important part in ordinary common experience that we experience. Natural breathing, natural situation, first thing that we could clutch in terms of relaxation and peace. "Shamatha" means development of peace, literally but peace in this case does not mean without war, nothing to do with the politics. [laughs] And we are not talking about a particular sense of peace that you should get off in a, in a, what's the word, um, psychedelic, that's the word I suppose I'm looking for, psychedelic peace or peace that's being uplifted. We are not talking about such peace, but we are talking in terms of peace in this case is non-action that

precisely the feeling that when we say when we sit down, or we have a very heavy time with our friends, heavy time with our parents, or heavy time with something or other business, we sit down and we say “whew.” [again shows relaxing down]. Huuh. [again relaxes] That kind of “flop” that we are talking about, but I don’t want you to misunderstand this particular thing by saying that you could get that instantly. We have to apply exertion, which is virya in a Buddhist term and patience, which is kshanti, or we have to exert such experience and discipline and this discipline I would like you to try in the sitting practice of meditation. From tonight onward, I want you to sit.

If you have leg problems you, could sit on a chair, if you like, but if you have, if you’ve no leg problems and I prefer if you sat on the floor, there be cushions provided or bring your own blanket or cushion, whatever. Sit down on the floor. You don’t have to fold cross-legged in the lotus posture. That is unnecessary. Just form half-legged, half-cross posture, sit down as you usually sit down, like Indian, American Indian version, just sit down is American Indian version, sit on the cushion but don’t make a big deal about that now you’re going to meditate. Just sit down [gestures with hand, waving down; audience laughs]. And relax. And straighten your back spine and straighten your neck, not too extreme, but somewhat extreme, somewhat deliberate as if you’re going to ask your lover that you asking for his or her marriage, “I’m going to ask you, would you like to get married to me?” So that kind of approach is semi-relaxed, friendly, seductive but, but straightforward. And then you can fold your hands in meditation posture if you like, or you can put your hand on your knees, which is also known as “mind relaxing” posture, which is the same thing, doesn’t really matter all that much.

And then I want you to just feel your breath, the natural breath. If the breath comes from result of you running to get to the place or something like that, which would be very rough. Or if you had real relaxed time with your body, your breathing would be very shallow. But doesn’t really matter. Just use existing natural breathing. Then sit quietly. Listen to your breathing first, to begin with, just listen to your breathing. Just breathing coming out of your, out and in your nostrils. Just listen to it, and settle down for a few minutes. And then begin to discipline your state of awareness, state of awareness, state of inquisitiveness. By then, you have nothing to do but breathe, so you’re being inquisitive, have nothing to do with your breathing. At that point you begin to wonder what can I do with myself and so forth, so that’s okay. But then try to focus everything on your breathing. Listen to your breathing. Feel your breathing completely, properly as much as you can, but don’t force yourself. Don’t hold yourself too tight, like an Englishman, [audience laughs] trying to speak to someone with upper lip. But you’re dealing with your breathing very naturally, just natural breathing. You sit there, you’re about to address your lover, you’re there so then just go along with your breathing.

And first step is just follow the breathing, very simply, the out breath particularly. Go along with it and not particularly trying to feel your temperature in your nostrils or breathe especially as for particular set, particular situation as such but breathe out. As you breathe out, you go out with your natural breath, very simply, extremely, very simply, naturally, not a big deal. You’re not actually meditating as such, you’re just breathing. It’s very simple. You are just breathing. Go out with the breath. At the same time I would recommend you to open your mouth little bit wide, little bit open. Don’t hold your tight lips [demonstrates holding lips tightly closed], as if you’re saying the word “a.” [pronounces it “AY.”] Just open your mouth a little bit, as if you

are saying word, “a.” Go out with your breath. Your attitude here is going out with your breath, your attention is going out with your breath, and as your breath goes out and dissolves in the atmosphere, space around you, don’t try to follow too far, just let it be. Then there’s a gap, uncertainty maybe, and your breath comes in automatically, as a physiological function. Your breath comes in as your lung requires. Your breath comes in so at that point don’t try to come back until your lung and your body particularly, just let it be, let it drop there. Your attention is dropped, your lung is coming in, then another breath is coming out and you’re going out with it again, your lung is breathing out as gap, so do that way. Very simple. You don’t have to tighten your body or neck particularly, except there’s sense of simple, simplicity of that whole thing. So I would like you to work on that particular practice and just be.

And there’s another problem which comes up, which is the thought process, thinking process in the midst of those situations, all kinds of thoughts. Thoughts of attitude to your life, future plan, conversation with your friends, your parents or relatives, all kinds of things come through but let them come through. Let them just come through. Don’t try to say they are bad or, for that matter, they are particularly good. Let them come through, just let them come through. Let them come through as simple as you can. Let them just come through. Don’t label them. Don’t say they are good or bad. By letting them come through, you begin to find that there’s sense of openness, that you don’t find them particularly threatening or particularly helpful. They just become the general gossip that you begin to hear through the traffic. If you have settled yourself in a city you begin to hear it through your window. There goes a motorcycle. There goes a truck. There goes a car. And there’s somebody shouting. You begin to find them, just “So what?” And you begin to become involved with them at the same time at the beginning, but at the end you begin to find it just “So what?” So, similarly, traffic of your thoughts and verbosity of your mind begin to become just basic chatter that goes on in the universe. Which is okay, which is not okay. So what? Just let them go through, and I think you’re going to make good job out of this.

So that’s the basic technique and practice of meditation. And this is for the first time I have publicly advised people sit, how to conduct themselves in meditation practice. But I think this particular interest that you have expressed, coming to Naropa Institute, and you have been inspired, you’ve read books and you’ve studied that you thought that you could work with us with such understanding although a lot of you I haven’t spoken to you personally but I have some kind of trust in you that you can do it, that you can work with us, so please try to do that, so that’s the basic point.

So that is the first session of meditation class, and if you have any problems, discontentment, apprehensions of all kinds that you are going to work with my teaching assistants who are I think here, maybe I should introduce them so that you have some understanding of who they are, see them, can you come out on the stage possibly? My teaching assistants, if they are anybody? Please, come along here.

You know Maura? And Bill Indich? And David Darwant? I don’t remember everybody’s name. Rich. Whatever. You changed your first name? And Fran Lewis. And Kenneth Green. Or Krishna Green. And Eric. Michael Cohen. Robin. And Howard (). And David (). So these people are going to work with you. Sorry to be such dramatic about it, but I think you have to catch some glimpse of them, which would be good. Everybody’s going to work with you, and

the time is set up, and then the particular office set up to work with you, so we could discuss and work with that. And this particular meeting at this time if you have any particular questions, you could ask the students here who worked with us, so you can work with them. There. Thank you very much.

Talk Two: Shamata
Naropa Institute, June 17, 1974
Public Service Building, Boulder, Colorado

This is the second session of our study of the practice of meditation. I'm glad more or less that everybody's here. Again, if I may ask or suggest that it is good [tie in? talent?] particularly if you're working on terms of meditation, discipline, it would be very necessary to come back on these particular classes and discuss about the whole thing. Doubtlessly that meditation practice is being one of the most important, and at the same time, confused, subject that we experience, largely because of our own expectations as that as true that the practice of meditation should being about certain sense of tranquility, equilibrium, and a sense of high-ness, which has become one of the biggest problems. I think more or less that with last time when we discussed that I think most of the areas have been covered. But at the same time I would like to make another emphasis again and again, further emphasis on this particular need, that practice of meditation at this point is no more than, or no less than, that you are working with yourself, and sitting by yourself alone, without entertainment, without further feedbacks, encouragement.

So, essentially, whether we sit in the practice alone, or in the group situations, that it doesn't make any differences particularly. That group situation only provides that if you want to stand up and walk out, that group situation somehow provides the group pressure, that everybody's in the same boat. That you can't chicken out. That group situation provides sense of fellowship of some kind, and that's the point. But however, at the same time, that you are sitting alone, that the sanity and enlightened vibrations that has been created in the sitting practice of meditation is not particularly regarded as that inter vibrant trip that when somebody's receiving a vibration that you are going to receive at the same time, so you in turn, even if you are in bad shape, that you be picked up by somebody else. It's kind of cosmic hitchhiking [laughter]. And such a situation doesn't exist and at this point, everybody's in their own little vehicle, which is called a body, and there's no other room for anybody else to come in that particular body. So everybody has their own car, so in fact you don't have to hitchhike. And that seem to be a basic point, which is very important because we have been told, in many cases, that even if you don't have such solid a commitment, the vibrations would pick up. The energy would pick you up and uplift you in this case, it's been said, but somehow we should be very careful on that particular point of view.

I don't think it is possible and we should acknowledge that the sooner we know, the better. For one thing, we don't have any expectations, if you know sooner. And another thing is that we could pull ourselves together, waiting for someone to rescue you. And sitting practice is independent and individual and a very lonely journey. Its aloneness is the basic point. That when you sit either in a group situation or individually that there is a sense of loneliness, sense of basic loneliness. That when you feel you're on the path and your particular path is so special to you, extraordinary to you, that it will take a long time to relate such experience to somebody, verbally. Sometimes a student might feel a sense of that being, you're being completely isolated and cut off. And sometimes student might experience this loneliness is the

basis of heroism in the positive sense. That you are making journey and nobody's telling you to make this journey, but you are making the journey.

The only people that can help you to make this journey is somebody who could tell you that somebody else made this lonely journey. You could do so in the same way. It seems that this process is a very severe one, a very strict one, but at the same time this particular process is quite a happy one because there is a sense of conviction that we don't hitchhike but we can do it ourselves, a sense of celebration which is very powerful and very important. And that sense of celebration is heart of practice of meditation. That the sitting practice of meditation is expression of celebration, rather than you are getting into a traditional trap, imprisonment. So it is very important for us to realize the sense of loneliness when we sit, realizing the separateness, that we are individual entities. And further, we begin to realize that we are even those we don't have even individualities at all. That's further discovery that the rug is pulled under our feet. At the beginning we begin to realize there is house, is accommodation, and part of the house has a rug and a seat provided for us. Then we walk towards the seat where the rug is put and we say to ourselves, finally, phew, finally I have made it, begin to relax. And then, suddenly, the whole floor along the rugs collapses. We begin to realize that the journey we are making towards the rug and the seat is somewhat a false one. That in any case we can't relax all that, as we wanted, and something is after us, which is our own sense of seeking for comfort and pleasure.

I would like to present the meditation discipline also philosophically. I would like you to realize and also study on the topic of "why meditate?" What is meditation in any way, in spite of what we're doing here, sitting down and breathing, and so on and so on and so forth? What is the merit of meditation? And such question comes up, of course, quite rightly, so I would like to put that aside for a while, put it aside for a while. I would like to get into nitty gritty of the actual practice first, then when you have some experience of the actual practice itself, I would like to relate with what it is all about.

You might think this is not quite right, that we have a human right, that we should know before what we are getting into. And Americans usually very political minded, but before you get into the value judgment, you have to have some ideas of the value, before you get into it. So therefore I'm presenting this situation of actual sitting practice, certain techniques that you can develop, work on yourself, and then having some ideas, some kind of exposure. Then you could get into it and we could discuss about the value judgment situation, if you like, so that seem to be basically important.

That first of all I would like to present, "What is gold?" The gold is in yellow in color and it's metallic. It is very heavy, and supposedly it is very expensive. And gold, what's the use of gold is that rich people make ornaments out of these, wear them as status symbol and feels good when you have gold ornaments on your rings or earrings or whatever you have, bracelets, whatever you have. You feel that you have gold ornaments, you feel good, and that's the basic point. And this case, what I'm presenting is just purely telling you what gold is in its own ordinary sense, rather than the social implication of wearing gold ornament, ornament, or the value of the wealth, of wearing gold ornament. But we are just presenting gold as a yellow, metallic thing. Here it is. It's just cold gold, in the English language. And supposedly it's a

special metal. That's all what we are talking about, tonight anyway. And if you know that, then you can branch your research work inquisitive openness, if you like, into all kinds of areas. Then you can research what gold is all about. I would like to leave that later. For one thing, we don't have that much time in this particular course, and another thing is that we had to put a lot of effort and energy, and another thing that it is my responsibility to make you completely highly inquisitive, that you will be looking into the situation what has been suggested, and open skepticism is what I'm trying to work up to, that level.

Sorry about the long-winded introductory. Forgive me, but I think it's necessary, if I may say so. This gold you might have another opinion that what I'm going to say is something extremely gold-like, precious and valuable, but you might find disappointing. It is at all, at all not, special or extraordinary, that we are talking about the practice of meditation. This particular point involves the basic development of simplicity. That our life has become extraordinarily complicated, hundreds of choices, possibilities, and all kinds of philosophy, and all kinds of potentiality. That if you buy, and if you get into this particular trip, that then you are getting the best of the bargain. And that all kinds of things be provided to us, presented to us constantly. That includes that your ordinary life when you relax yourself at home, watching the television, or whether you are enrolled in Naropa Institute, that same kind of salesmanship goes on constantly. That every professor of the Naropa Institute who are teaching various courses, trying to make their best, make sure that you be entertained, that make sure that what you have signed up is the best and meet with your expectations of some kind. That's the pattern of the world, in fact. I'm not particularly blaming on in particular one situation or another situation. That's a general situation that goes on constantly.

So what we're discussing here is simplifying all those choices, all those possibilities. That doesn't mean to say that you have to become a true believer, that you be completely convinced and converted into this particular trip, that you become evangelical. But we are talking in the complete opposite, simply trying to get into what we got to do, what we have to do in terms of practice of meditation, just getting into what it is all about, just simply getting into, before we get reasoning mind function.

So the first step from this point of view is, according to the tradition, it is called "Shamata." Now you can take your notes. Shamata. S-h-a-m-a-t-a. And in Tibetan word, if you'd like to know, just out of curiosity, is called "Shiné." Which is, again, s-h-i-n-e, circumflex on the e, which makes the "ey" sound, like in the French. "Shiné." The word "Shiné" or "Shamata" literally means peace, dwelling in the peace, abiding, more likely abiding in the peace. But in this case we are not purely talking about getting high in the peace, or developing a composure of being in the state of "lovey dovey." [laughter] But when we talk about peace here it's very, if you'd like to call it almost frigid peace, or rigid peace, which is a particular type of state of peace which has no political implications of making peace, opposed to warfare, and has nothing to do with the sexual connotation of making love. But it is a peace in very particular, extraordinary, eccentric way, according to the Buddha, who was a very eccentric person, [laughter] and he attained enlightenment, which is extraordinary. We can't actually accept that but actually he did it, so we have no choice. [laughter] According to the Buddha that one of his statement that he mentioned in one of the Gatas of the Sutras that he says that those who practices in state of dwelling in the peace, Shiné practice, Shamata practice, that he's building

his staircase towards enlightenment. So we are talking about constructing a staircase towards enlightenment, which needs a very precise measurement of carpentry of side boards, completely measured, built properly, and steps be built properly, and angles be looked at, and then finally choosing certain particular, necessary nail which could bear the pressure of people walking over it, then hammering over it, building this particular staircase.

So when we talk about this particular Shiné or this particular Shamata practice we are talking building a staircase very deliberately, properly, according to Buddha. A staircase to what? Doesn't really matter. [laughter] Just a staircase is maybe good, just we are building staircase, no promise, no blame. Let us simplify the whole situation. Just let us build this particular staircase very simply and directly, and building staircase, steps, requires certain amount of commitment.

We discussed the last time that sense of how to work with the breathing, how to work with the basic structure of the situation and so forth. That's fine. We could work with that level, and let us take another step beyond that level. That is to say that when you sit and breathe, work with the out breath and the actual, the question of building steps is enormous precision, enormous subtlety. That general sense of you are *there*. Not trying to become frigid or rigid and solemn about the whole practice. But simply being there when you sit. You actually sit, you don't think that you sit. There's no room for thinking involved. You sit, and you actually *sat*. And you breathe, and you actually do breathe, and a sense of simplicity, almost in the level of naivete, that you do things so completely, whole-heartedly, you do things as they are. You actually get into it, properly, thoroughly and fully. You get into them, completely, correctly as things as they are. Because you have no other choice than that, getting into the situation very fully directly, extremely simply. When you breathe, you actually breathe.

Let me explain you several details about that. Ordinarily, what we do is, when we try to develop our awareness, mindfulness of some kind onto the situation like breathing, we tell ourselves that I'm going to breathe, and be aware of it, and then I'm trying to get my mind together to do that, and then finally, I'm going to focus my attention towards it. Then I'm going to watch what's happening. Then you watch it, then you do it, and then you begin to say, "is this okay? Or is this not okay?" So there's so much processes involved usually. Such processes might only take about five seconds. But still it is process, that what we are talking about here, is a one shot deal, that does not need all those little gossips, preparations of now this, then that, then this is going to happen, but it's just do it. We haven't done anything really actually properly. That is the problem that we are facing. That's one of the basic Hinayana disciplines is that learned how to do things as they are, and samsaric or confused world is concerned that we think we have done a lot of things, but we haven't actually done at all. We haven't really got ourselves together to do things properly. We pretended games within ourselves, let alone others, and when we have chance to play games with ourselves first, and when we feel secure with that game, then we say that we work with others, which is exaggerated game. So consequently we don't have anything actually going, fundamentally speaking. We have faked out the whole thing that dealing with others is highly exaggerated. Dealing with oneself is somewhat exaggerated, with a sense of somewhat guilt and confusion and embarrassment to yourself because there is usually gossip goes between you and yourself, which the other part of you, criticizing you, knowing how fucked up, or how confused, or how

gameful, how playful you are. The other part says it's okay, but let's put it out in public. And one does that constantly all the time. So we are constantly trapped in that particular game situation, that problem situation, and this particular practice of meditation method brings all these problems in a simple way that we don't have to go through exaggerated sociological, psychological, bureaucratic, psychological trip that you have created yourself. But we could get into simply directly starting with the first impression, which is you breathe, and get into it simply. Go along with it and work with it. That's the basic point of Shamata, or Shiné, is basic point. But I think also it is important to realize that having done that deliberate process of relating with one's instant reactions to awareness, simply, directly, without questioning, one begins to associate sound, smell, sight, every experience that you have, in the sensorial world, relate with exactly the same thing. You see things, you're with it, with your breathing, you're simply there, very directly and very simply there. No interpretation. "Is this going to be good enough? Or am I making mistakes?" No such questions arises because if you are simple enough, if you're really simple enough that there is no room for those questions. The questions only come from looking, questioning, lying back, analyzing, trying to make some step towards it. Questions only arises on the basis of how to secure our basic ground of ego. If there is no ego oriented questions, there is no other questions. It is statement somewhat. It is extremely direct and deliberate in some sense. So the basic point of Shamata is a sense of deliberateness, actually you are doing something. You are getting into that particular process without make sure what your doing is okay. But actually things taking place almost in some sense in its own accord, very simply, directly.

Probably we should have some short discussion at this point and maybe that might be helpful. If you have any doubts and apprehension that you feel needs some further discussion and we should get into that. I would like you to ask questions very pointedly and particular terms of technique, how to handle it, rather than any metaphysical situations which we could discuss later on. Okay.

Q. Rinpoche, is physical pain an expression of ego?

CTR. I don't think so, because physical pain is a situation of that you have never sat for such long period of time. Even if you sat for one hour, we have never done that in our life. We sat on the ground without doing nothing for one hour, is unheard. So automatically, the body begin to react to it, and the body begin to become agitated by the whole thing. And similarly, that situation of physical problem has nothing to do with a psychological problem, but it may be there is some implications as to that. Psychologically, you want to project physical pain, then body begin to pick up, and manifest it for your comfort of your mind. That's a possibility, but I think predominantly, in the sitting practice of meditation, it's just purely need physiological rehabilitation so that you can stay still for a lengthy time, which you need a lot of training.

Q. Is it just as good to lie flat on your back?

CTR. Sorry, can you say that again?

Q. If you can stay awake, then would it be just as good to lie flat on your back?

CTR. If you can say what?

Q. If you can stay awake, then, would it be just as good to meditate lying flat on your back? On the ground.

CTR: Well, you see, waiting is a suspension, as much as lying on your back. If you take a vacation, you lie on the beach, on your back. Actually, practically what you're doing is trying to get rid of this particular trip that you took a vacation, so you can get back to your job. And somebody is bored but it feels good, we think feels good. And waiting is different from actually meditational practice, which is not waiting for something else, as such. But you are being on the spot, which has nothing to do with waiting, particularly. It has nothing to do with a vacation.

Q. I didn't speak clearly. I didn't use the word, "waiting." Is it all right to meditate lying on your back? The word I used was "awake." A-w-a-k-e. If you stay awake.

CTR. Well, I don't know. The traditional situation is that you're supposed to sit upright because you should be yourself like a rock. If you lay down with your back on the ground that represents maybe dead tree. [laughter] Or the question is, sort of holding yourself together in spite of the boredom situation that present to you. The uprightness is also that you have sense of horizontal vision of seeing things happening in front of your head and a sense of survival, which is part of the whole situation, so it is recommended to sit up.

Q. Could you talk a little bit about following the breath out? I still seem confused about that. I seem to follow it back in. [laughter]

CTR. Well, it seems to be quite simple actually, that there is a sense of breath as you sit. We breathe in any case. In any case we always breathe. There is a sense of breath, and go along with your out breath, and not try to hold onto it as the focal point of concentration as you breathe out. Not do that, but encouragement that breathing out, that the breathing is sort of helping you or coaching you to experience something, so you keep your sense of awareness or concentration on the verge of the breathing, just purely the verge. You go out as breathing goes out naturally, and the breathing dissolves in the atmosphere. You dissolve and in turn, breathing in, you don't have to suck everything into you like a vacuum cleaner to compensate that you do exist particularly. You do exist in any case, so breathing in is just gap. You go out very subtly, beautifully, with the verge of breathing going out. Your awareness is going out with that highlight of the breathing, is your awareness, and you dissolve, breathing dissolve, breathing in, simply. Then you breathe again in the same way. So the sense of going out constantly, skillfully, no trips involved. There's no sense of survival involved except working with the natural, physiological processes of breathing that does exist within one's state of being. Just doing that very simply and then in this case of Vipashana is coming along as we're going to discuss later on in terms of Shamata. The breathing situation is very simple. It's just trying to be very precise with the visual experience you might have while you're breathing or ordeal (?) situations, simply relate with them, very specifically,

and not trying to pick unnecessary collections. Having heard a sound, you heard a sound, just you heard a sound, beep, somebody shout, yell, cry, traffic, just heard a sound. That doesn't mean anything. Just you heard a sound. You smell cooking food, fried bacon. You smell it, you smell it. Toast. You smell it, just smell it. That's it. Then simplify everything into just that level and you see a red flower on your rug, and you see a spot on the wall, you see flies flying, you just see them, very precisely, directly, extremely simply, just see them as they are, 100% level, if not 200. That's it. And there's no other implications that you have to build your mystical experience or imagination or sense of trust into the teaching. Therefore you should make everything so holy, and no, nothing else involved at all, just purely sensorial literacy, sensorial literacy that you read things as they are. You are literate in that own situation. But just leave it at that level. That seems to be the basic point.

Q. You talk about openness, no interpretations on what's going on, and you talk about skeptical attitude.

CTR. Talked about what?

Q. Skeptical attitude.

CTR. Skeptical?

Q. Um-hm. Think twice. You said something about skeptical openness. I have a little bit of confusion about, you know, how being totally open, and not interpreting anything involves skepticism.

CTR. Well, openness could be blind. When you're open, then anything could come into your way because you are open then therefore situations are uncertain. And if your open situations are that you are trying to create a vacuum system that things could be sucked into your way, and skepticism is also part of the openness, basically. Openness from the point of view of, you're open to all kinds of directions. Like if you drive on the road, you're open to all the signs that say turn right or turn left, and there's a warning, there's a highway coming. You're open to it, but at the same time you are skeptical about the whole thing, because you might misread all these signs. And you might have some problems in you that see those things in visionary or mirage, whatever, psychedelic designs, whatever. And you see them as things as they are, very directly, very simply, so openness from that point of view is somewhat slightly blind and skepticism is the enlightened version of openness, that you are fully awake, open completely, so you have a chance to see, or relate with things as they are.

I think we should go through and discuss that particular process as we go on. And it is very difficult for people to distinguish it because skeptical, when we talk it, about using this particular language, this particular vocabulary, when we talk about skepticism, people have a negative preconception, skepticism is that, relating with a warning, like what is said on a cigarette package, that the Surgeon General says this is not good, bad

for your health, is that there's some sense of warning involved. We are not talking about purely warning, but what we are talking in terms of sharpening your insight, sharpening your intelligence. And you might again say that if you sharpen your intelligence, purpose of sharpening your intelligence, maybe to be prepared to attack, and that's constant infinite possibilities of warfare language is involved in that particular chain reaction for opening, opposed to skepticism. Opening is seemingly naïve and kindly, but when we talk about skepticism in the sense of danger, potential problem and prepare that you could attack. But I don't think we are talking in those terms. We are talking about a self-existing openness, as well as self-existing skepticism, which is there already, and just opening to it. I think we should get into that, particularly we could get into that towards the end of our session when we talk about more advanced topics in Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions.

Q. You mentioned that at this stage of meditation, to approach it with a sense of deliberateness, and get directly into the process without a show. But it seems like that deliberateness could be the show that interferes with the process.

CTR. Could you say that again, sir?

Q. All right. At this stage of meditation, to approach it with a sense of deliberateness, and get directly into the process without a show. But it seems like that very sense of deliberateness could be the show that interferes with the process.

CTR. I don't see any problems there. Could you speak again?

Q. As you're approaching it, that you're deliberately approaching it, that seems to be not being into the process, but being concerned with the approach of the process. In other words, you're dwelling on the approach, or the deliberateness of getting into the process rather than being into the process.

CTR. Well, the process is very literal. And very obvious. You see, the point is, that if you're involved with a direct situation of things as they are, without question, you saw a yellow car go by, you saw it, and it did happen. You can never dispute that with anybody else who said, "no, I didn't see it." Because actually, it did happen. And the sense of literateness, and actually, I said literacy, in terms of on how not to read, which might have some different implication, being just a literal thinking, about being educated, and a person who can read. Literacy is the term I use. From that point of view, you learn how to read words, you know. B-a-d is what? Is what?

Q. Bad.

CTR. Bad? Yeah, that's right. Yeah. I think so, yeah.

Q. [unintelligible]

CTR. Sense of literacy. Sense of literacy rather than literalness. Yeah, a sense of literacy. A person who is educated, as you know, how to read, and the seeing things as they are very directly, very simply. I think you could be literal, but you might interpret things very literally, but that might become too naïve and too misguided, because your naivete is also connected with a literal thinking as things as they are, in a too simple-minded way. But if you're going to read as a, if you can read them properly, and then the sense of things as they are becomes very obvious. You hear a sound, you hear a sound directly, very simply, as you read a word that says, "b-a-d," which means "bad." And there's obvious things happening. That's precisely the basic point of Vipashyana, or Shiné, which is a sense of literacy, that you can see things very directly. And properly. Because once you know how to read, you can't interpret the words, you can't say, "no, no, it's not b-a-d, but it's b-e-d," that means "bad." You can't say that, because it's written. You might want a "bed" so badly, but you can't say that it is "b-a-e-d." It had to be "b-a-d" because it's written. So you can't chicken out, or you can't do anything with it, because it's written in black and white language. That's why literacy is important, rather than interpretation.

Q. Rinpoche, I want to ask another question about physical pain. Is it a good thing to work with, just if you're in a position just to stay in that position, and just deal with whatever pain or itches or scratches come up? Or is it sort of harmful or detrimental to adjust yourself. Or I guess it could be carried a stage further, to get into another position that might be painful.

CTR. I'm not quite sure what you are exactly asking.

Q. When you're sitting, after a while, your legs start, when you're sitting, after a while your legs start hurting or maybe you'll get an itch on your head. Is it good to just let that pain stay there, or is it, does it make any difference if you adjust yourself?

CTR. Ya. In sitting practice?

Q. In sitting practice.

CTR. Well, there's no point in torturing yourself to begin with, because then the whole process, the whole idea is involved with developing some sense of composure from the psychological point of view. And there's no problem, there's no point in the torturing physically, and in trying to sit through pins and needles and things like that. There's no problem, no point in doing that. It is advised, to adjust yourself, resettle yourself as you sit, and don't make a martyr of yourself. Just do it, sit, and if you need to reshuffle yourself, do it, go ahead. But there is a point that if you sometimes such situations irritations are psychosomatic type nature, sometimes it is realistic, real thing, so one had to be very careful and clever and intelligent with that. Whenever there's psychological approach that I had reshuffled myself, rearranged myself two minutes ago, now I want to do it again because I want to be entertained, and then you should sit through. But if actually it is happening, at a physical, bodily level which is obviously

able to distinguish hopefully and then you should rearrange yourself and not make yourself a martyr. I think that's basically an important point.

There are certain traditions of Buddhist schools, particularly that of the Japanese and Chinese tradition that you sit, and you're supposed to imitate like the Buddha for a long time. And you just do it for 24 hours a day and torture yourself, and that has become very dictatorial and somewhat uncompassionate to physical well-being. And we have a quotation for that, which proves that what Buddha felt, that you should be kind to your body. And once, Buddha's disciple Ananda, he decided to fast for some reason, he thought he was straying off (?) or something. Ananda was collapsing and he was very weak and frail, and Buddha says, "if there's no body, there's no dharma. If there's no body, there's no food. If there's no food, there's no body." So he went on a long discourse that you should eat well, sleep well, take care of your body properly, and inflicting pain on your body does not help, and that extend this particular question at this point seemingly.

We got carried away somewhat. Is that keeping fast and inflicting pain on your body in any way does not help because the body and mind are interdependent. If the body is weak physiologically, chemically, the mind cannot function. In turn that you can't attain enlightenment. So that was Buddha's philosophy and attitude. That we should at the beginning of sitting practice, people that people could reach out for themselves up to the level of physiological problems. But I don't think that particular problem particularly if you're young that you could identify yourself or train yourself into suit (?) into a new situation. That students who sit for Dathun, or month long training practice, have adapted themselves after two weeks to completely, physically, they find it completely comfortable as if you're sitting on a chair. That the only problem that they face is the psychological neuroses that coming out and that cannot be helped. That's the problem that we're facing. So I think physically there's no problem, and you can re-adjust yourself, because for a long time and in a lot of situations that in the west nobody just sat and do nothing for 20 minutes. Nobody had ever done that, I mean unless you're complete lunatic [laughter], then you have occupation already going on, so nobody who was completely sane and reasonable, sensible people sat for 20 minutes, it's unheard of. Nobody's done that before. So obviously you have some physical repercussions of that, and maybe some subtle guilt conflict, not making yourself productive, industrious, making telephone calls, writing something at least. You know, people very concerned about wasting time, making yourself useful, and those problems are deep-rooted in our mind. We might have some repercussions of that, but I think at this point if we talk in terms of that sitting still and doing nothing is based on enlightenment. The only way to attain enlightenment is sit still and practice as well as develop sense of awareness in your life. I think people already enough convinced that you begin to feel that there is no guilt involved at least, which might be beginning point that you are okay to sit, you can move around and you can help yourself just to sit. The point is just to sit, don't give up, don't walk out, please. That seems to be the basic point. You can do it. People in the past have done, and you can do it. And so, good luck.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, maybe we should close our meeting tonight here at this point. And I have some farther remarks that I would like to make at this point. Please don't go away, is that there is Nyinthun practice that is taking place on coming Sunday. Nyinthun is day-long sitting practice of meditation. We have somewhat cut down the schedule, planning to cut down

the schedule so this particular Nyinthun is not going to be the ideal, 100% Nyinthun that the members the community in Karne Dzong or Tail of the Tiger, people do it, but somewhat adapted to your particular needs or requirements. Probably it ends somewhere about 7:00, 6:00. I don't remember exact schedule, which could be announced. But however I would like to encourage you to take part. Those who are particularly interested in sitting practice of mediation, it seems to be necessary to do that, sit with us and practice and Nyinthun practice involves alternating sitting practice and walking meditation, which is part of the practice as well. So in terms of walking meditation that the technique or practice is just to use the movements of your legs as the same as you have been relating with your breath. So that's basically the whole point. And it is being requested to minimize unnecessary chatter, and eat mindfully and skillfully, and that seems to be the basic point. I would like you to take part in such Nyinthun situation. And I'm not so sure the Nyinthun programs at Karne Dzong, it's going to happen. Anybody knows? When is next Nyinthun at Karne Dzong? This coming Sunday? So there's other Nyinthun situations available, which is Friday evening, and Saturday, and Sunday. So you're also welcome to relate with that. If you are a married couple, and both of you would like to come for Nyinthun, you're welcome to come to Karne Dzong on Saturday, and your husband or wife could do the other day. So you could set babysitting situations, things like that could be worked out. So it is necessary, and I would like you to feel that a glimpse of when somebody practiced completely, without any entertainment, not even hearing the traffics, and ascetics went up into the mountains and sat for twelve, twenty years, doing nothing. And people have done that. And they are known to be entertained by their own enlightenment. Festivals takes place in their sitting mind. But whatever, it is possible that you could do this in the cities. And I would like you to encourage, again and again, that situation is open. This coming Saturday and Sunday, Nyinthun situations involved here, which probably we have more rooms. It's best to move about. And there is lesser room, but there is more specially organized situations taking place in shrine at Karne Dzong. We have been using that place for a long time. So trying to think in terms of doing Nyinthun, whole day intensive sitting practice, which would be extremely good and particularly since we are doing this particular work together in the class and so forth if you have more experience, more ideas what we are doing experientially, that makes us easier to communicate and cut down the space and time situation if we don't have to argue and re-explain words and concepts any more. It is always good to sit, so I would like you to keep that in mind. Thank you very much. Good night.

Talk Three: Meditation: The Way of the Buddha
Naropa Institute, June 24, 1974
Public Service Building, Boulder, Colorado

In the question of sitting practice of meditation, it is being important that sense of perspective as to how you relate with your phenomenal world, and also how you are relating with your own world, which might project to the phenomenal world. And it might be tempted to reshape the particular phenomenal world. So the question here is, some kind of understanding, intuitively, the state of mind. The state of mind – the word “mind” is very simple one, seemingly. But we have a problem there, of language.

That when we talk about the word “mind,” we are talking about the different levels of state of consciousness. Not necessarily anything to do with a higher level of consciousness of what might be, or whatever that might be. But we are talking about mind in a different function – that literal mind, which is a simple thought process that takes place in our everyday life situation. Before you drive, you check that you have a key in your pocket. And before you smoke cigarettes, you make sure that you have a match in the pocket. And before you eat, you make sure the meal’s been cooked. And the little things like that is what’s called “ordinary mind” or basic phenomena that exist within our state of consciousness, which is intelligent one, still functions its purpose constantly. That some kind of reasoning mind of course depend on adult or adolescent or infancy, that that kind of logic begin to grow and becomes somewhat more sophisticated. And as you become grown-up person and an old man, up to the old man, that your training and how to work things out so that you don’t have to run into unnecessary chaos. That our parents used to train us, that our elders used to criticize us. That finally we think we got our trip together, so to speak, is that those simple situations – that if you going to see somebody, make sure you call them first, make sure they are at home, or the situation is convenient for them for you to visit – and simple little situation like that is basic intelligent that takes place. In the business realm, domestic realm and in ordinary, everyday life situation, whatever you do, that some sense of priorities, in a sense, that you know what you are going to do, and you have a sense of what you are going to do, and everything is planned. Often people make lists of things in notebooks, put in your pocket. Whatever your style of making everything’s okay and everything’s in order that you don’t run into any unexpected chaos and problem. And more important thing is that things don’t bounce back on you, that you might lose control of them so that you are un – you are – you have control over everything, you are making sure that everything’s under control.

I am sure everybody here have experienced that coming to Naropa Institute, for instance, that you have corresponded and you sent your deposit or you whatever. And you let them know what your name is, that you want certain particular housing situations, living in certain places, and little things like that goes on. And whenever there is chaos takes place, the other day some time ago that the administrators had complained that that they were living in house with twenty men. And they would like to switch around, and they feel that that was not quite wholesome or whatever, together, or whatever. And he didn’t want to live with twenty men, living in the house. And whatever. Those little situations come up. But then again, ego is still authority. Whoever is in charge, in control, who he had certain amount of trust and some sense of

communication, and situation is corrected. So everything's in order. That you plan your dinner menus before you eat, or else you decide to go out to a restaurant. If you have no dinner menus worked out, you have no idea what you are going to eat tonight, and then may be nice to go out in restaurant, have fun instead of cooking, and all those hassles be taken care of by the restaurants. And all those little situations, that what's called "function of mind," is the function of mind, that we do everything in a very meticulous, very special, very careful, that we would like to take care of ourselves as much as we can. And although we be abused or blamed by our elders, our parents maybe, by saying that you don't care for yourself, you should pull yourself together. But still, nevertheless, we think that we are doing pretty good job of ourselves. That somewhat the taking care of ourselves, food, housing, clothes, whatever you like to present yourself to the world. You – we just buy appropriate clothes, appropriate haircut, appropriate way of speaking. And everything's being function of situation that is what's called "mind function" that has been taking situation. And the Tibetan word is called "sem", which means "whatever can communicate to the object world" is the function of sem.

And then we have another type of mind, which is seem to be entirely different angle. Or maybe not entirely, but somewhat relatively different than that particular process, which is that we have whole avenues of unexplored area of all kinds. That we have memories of the past, that we have expectations of the future, that we might become somewhat proud of ourselves occasionally, and sometimes begin to feel somewhat humble of ourselves, and somewhat intimidated by . . . [note on screen: "audio missing"] . . . ourselves constantly. That look for resources, maybe through the informations that we have learned in high school level or first grade level. Look back at our grammar, look back at our mathematics, look back on our science, student science course, look back. And if you couldn't find anything on those levels, that we try to work out reasonable logic. And basic sense of reasonable logic that we could probably, usually we can do pretty good job out of that. That we dig up some kind of intelligence, continuity, that we don't have to give up the whole thing as if that we have mental blockage, complete mental blockage to the whole thing. That we usually think, sometimes we panic, we might have a mental blockage, and we are completely freaked out and thinking of dropping out of school. Maybe you have done already, or about to do so. And all kinds of things happens. But nevertheless, usually if we push ourselves hard enough and pursue further, pursue further. The ling, the language of the philosophy and metaphysics may be too complicated to even relate with, and at the beginning turn out to be just a mishmash of all kind of jumbled up large vocabulary which is almost incomprehensible,. Particularly if you have attitude against Greek and Latin when we look back on our language that you find intimidated, that you don't have any understanding about those language that we have used to understand philosophy, science, mathematics, whatever, cosmology.

But once we pushed ourselves hard enough and be diligent, that we usually make good job out of that. That's usually common knowledge, that if you don't freak out and panic half-way through, if we push ourselves hard enough, indulge ourselves into the pride of becoming scholar, one day you are going to make it. At same time at this point I am going to make it at the same time, so. We usually pretty much that we be able to push that situation further across, be able to do it. And there is strong possibilities of doing that.

And that particular stage is called in Tibetan language, called “lödrol,” means “intellect.” And Sanskrit word is “mati,” m-a-t-i. Mati, lödrol is, “löl” is “intelligence,” “dro” is “sense of warming up the intelligence.” That there is sense of warmth, heat. That you don’t chicken out, but there is other possibilities. When we talk about chickening out, in this case we are talking about when we feel cold, as we usually talk about “I’m getting cold feet about something or other.” You don’t get cold feet, but you get warm feet, warm head. It’s heat and warmth that takes place. That we feel we can exhaust ourselves and push ourselves to the limit, that we could pull up ourselves together to understand and study or something or other, is lödrol level, which is intellect, that we can use our mind from that point of view.

Then we have another layer of definition of mind from this point of view beyond intellect, in the Tibetan word what’s called “rigpa.” And that means “sense of fundamental intelligence.” Sanskrit word for rigpa is “vidya,” vi-dya, which means “knowledge that can comprehend subtle scientific differences, demonstrations.” Rigpa is experience as well as also it could be, certain particular disciplines also could be regarded as rigpas of all kinds. The rigpa of scientific language, scientific knowledge, rigpa of metaphysical language or whatever. Vidya, from this point of view, is rigpa which is intelligence point, intelligent. This kind of intelligent is somewhat that mind becomes very sharp and so precise and completely proud of itself, and it turns itself into a computer, in some sense. Not only in the sense of mathematics alone, but in the sense of self-respect. That there is a sense of wholesomeness, sense of complete command to the discipline that you are studying, and sense of complete covering the whole area of that particular situation, which is rigpa. And that particular rigpa, or vidya, usually can comprehend the fundamental sense of survival. That what this particular computer is all about, is that appreciating sense of survival, sense of dualism, sense of survival, sense of dualism, sense of behavior, sense of pattern, but fundamentally that comprehend a sense of being, sense of being.

And Professor Guenther talks about analytic mind in his writings, and that is similar reference, that there is subtle sense of being which brings actuality of sense of being at the same time, because you have subtle understanding, therefore you begin to relax more, you have less fear of your existence, your particular state of mind, that whatever goes on, everything’s going to be okay. I can understand. I exist and you exist, and so everything is going to be okay. There is nothing to panic about. Everything can be worked out mathematically and logically or experientially whatever, that things are workable. That fundamental basic pride of ego, that there is something that’s workable. And that seem to be one of the basic point of mind.

And then the mind is divided in another five types of process. Um, I don’t want to particularly present you with a lot of figures, but I think this one it is necessary for you to understand that. The question that we’ve been talking about the other day on the Path class, the five types of consciousness, which is called five “skanda,” which is “heap of collective thing that has happened in our mind,” that we don’t exist from that point of view. Even our pride of self-existence, or sense of being is by no means one entity. It is collective entity of all kinds of things that jumbled together. That is why it is called “heap” or maybe closest to it, free translation with a touch of humor, is “garbage.” That when you talk about disposing garbage, we have collected garbage, we don’t usually talk about one thing as being garbage, but collected lot of things build a garbage-ness. That there is that air of being garbage and everything is collected and everything is related with each other, and decayed and smelly and

unpleasant and wanted to get rid of that lot of collective things. That's the garbage, skanda, if you like to call it, is similar situation.

In this case, the first skanda is what's called "skanda of form," which is state of uncertainty. There is sense of being is constantly operating in our state of mind, but we don't want to really commit ourselves to it. There is a basic bewilderment as to uncertain who is this being, who we are, what we are, is uncertain, complete uncertain. We think we do exist, we think our name is so-on and so-on, we think we have soul, ego of some kind, but we have no idea actually how and why, what exactly is the case. We are completely uncertain experientially. Of course, logically, we can explain in complete detail, but that seem to be just simply trying to reinforce ourselves constantly. But actually, personally, experientially, that we looked into our state of being. This "me," that seem to be experiencer, I seem to be experiencing me-ness, and I seem to be experiencing this-ness, I'm seem to be experiencing there is something's [could be some things] happening here, there is something's happening here. As we say, something is cooking.

What is this? Well, it could be all kinds of a lot of things. For one thing, I don't feel particularly good. Therefore, I feel very self-conscious myself, and I feel my clumsiness and my up-tightness, and I did this and I did that, and I don't feel so good. Therefore, maybe this is a product of sickness of some kind. Maybe I am freaking out. That is the popular answer that you get, is that bad message, there was something already, but it's gone rotten, so therefore, finally it's giving in itself. Of course not. That is the state of being in any case, all the time, all the time. That self-existing Danish blue cheese [laughter] is constantly fermenting itself, whether you pass store by store or if customers bought it, put it in the refrigerator or whatever. That Danish blue cheese is still fermenting itself, growing fungi after fungus in them. [laughter] It's taking place all the time. There was not because you are badly behaved in a certain particular year, certain particular month, certain particular week, that you have behaved badly, therefore things have gone wrong. It's nothing to do with the sudden chaos, but that was the case all the time. For the basic reason that you don't really exist, and you are trying to make yourself exist. It's like the blue cheese trying to maintain itself by not growing, overgrowing its fungus and becoming dissolved into nothingness.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, that is the case. That is the perfect case that we don't exist as one wholesome, one whole being, one whole entity at all. We are collective, collection of lots of things, and all of those entities are uncertain whether that entity exist or not. So every cell of this consciousness is defeating itself and uncertain to itself. So there is no sense of being really, fundamentally. It's purely a dream we try to put together. And that seem to be the basic point of skanda of form.

And then we have skanda of feeling which is, having had some kind of experience of at least that you have bag of sand in your hand, that you know that each grain of sand are separate, perishable, but still you try to hold onto the bag, which is the state of consciousness in the level of emotion. In this case, emotion is not particularly highly developed state of emotion, but emotion from the point of view of trying to feel out the textures of life. That if I get into this particular situation, would this situation be kind and harmonious. And if I get into this situation, on the other hand, maybe that situation more friendly and harmonious to me. So you are constantly looking for further and further, further strong and solid bag that you can put your

grain of sands that you collected in it, and try to hold together. That chaos that exist, that non-entity that exist, is trying to create a bag or territory, container.

And after feeling that comes is impulse. And impulse is again in the same way that there is a desire to make immediate leap, that we could communicate with that, if there is a message of your existence coming back to you, that this experience is very aggressive to you, trying to fight you, this experience is very yielding to you, that you can include it in part of your system. So we begin to celebrate that, we feel very good about it. We begin to impulsively, very frivolously try to latch onto such information, such reinforcement is coming to you. Either as aggressive or passive, whatever. Doesn't really matter. We are looking for some kind of reinforcement, some kind of respond to that situation. So that's the point of impulse.

And impulse leads us into what's known as "concept." And concept is that we then we try to name, conceptualize certain particular shade of impulse into that quality, this quality. Now we begin to realize that we have at least magnetized enough reinforcement as our friend, as our army of soldier, and we begin to give them authorities of that you be my secretary, you should be my general, you should be my lieutenant, you should be my colonel, you should be my soldier. You begin to label them so you could protect me, my existence. And concept of all kinds is being developed. On the level of spirituality, that a certain religious practice is very helpful, and that is going to reinforce my existence. A certain political move maybe is good to maintain myself. A certain particular domestic move might be good. And certain particular behavior and eating certain particular prescribed diet and food, which might be good to maintain yourself. Experiencing certain particular type of physical exercises that might be good for you. Following certain particular disciplines would be good for me to experience. And we can go haywire on that particular thing, collect so many things that from the tuning into the cosmic consciousness and getting high and tripped out to the point of being kind to your next neighbor. There is a long range of possibilities, spiritually, domestically, all kinds of possibility that is concept-oriented that is possible.

After that, what's known as "consciousness," which is state of consciousness which exist in the realm of past informations coming back to you, memories coming back to you, and present thoughts coming to you, constantly happening all the time. So in order to maintain ourselves to at least hold on to our ego, that we are trying to hold onto something that is there, which is subconscious gossip of all kinds and visual type of discursive thoughts and quotations coming back to you of the past glimpse of experiences and future expectations coming back to you. So thought process act as kind of screening process for you. That finally you have your castle, you have your soldier, you have your army, and you have your subject that you have become king of the ego realm. That everything is worked out from detail to detail. That the emotions that exist in our state of being, which is related with the fifth skanda, the skanda of consciousness, that the emotions of all kinds such as like anger, pride, passion, jealous, ignorant, and all of those are highlights of the thought process. And lesser important thought process is the ordinary gossip that goes on through our mind. So finally we made ourselves completely very solid being out of nothingness.

And those experience that we have been going through in the five skanda process are by no means personal experience. It happens all the time. And that doesn't mean to say that you had

experience already happened before and therefore all those process are purely myth. That once upon a time that you had first skanda, then now you are at the level of the fifth skanda at all. That what we are talking here is this is personal experience that happens all the time, constantly, in our state of being, always, all the time. It becomes very real to us all the time. Every moment is state of first skanda, second, third, fourth, and fifth. Process is taking place all the time. That seem to be the basic point.

And practice of meditation in relationship with that is to undo them, step by step, constantly. Hold back sense of frivolousness, but work with the inspiration. That first step of meditation practice that we discussed in the first day of the course is dealing with the fifth skanda of consciousness, with certain understandings that you have basic mistrust or confusion or bewilderment in your state of being, which is understanding the first skanda, or skanda of ignorance, skanda of bewilderment. Understanding that, taking that as basic point, basic standpoint, then we can work on further skanda process, namely beginning with fifth skanda to begin with.

It seems that there is no other way than practice of meditation that you can deal with a such a vast subject, such a vast state of mind. There is no other way, absolutely there is no other way. That seem to be the only possibility. And otherwise if you look into alternatives of all kinds, we may be able to find somebody who thought up great idea in the corner of the universe. Maybe a fantastic thing to try, absolutely, but however that what's [once?] the relationship to our state of being is concerned, it is uncertain. That we are not quite certain. This project is a huge project, enormous project, and this project is being the battlefield between enlightenment and samsara for billions of years. And this project has become the heart of spirituality.

So it seems that much better, more sensible at this point, to get into the big project first, try to deal with the first one, the greatest problem that exist, difficulties exist, rather than trying to pick up the crumbs first, and then saying to ourselves, "well, let me tidy up the whole thing before we get into this big thing." You find because that means you are chickening out and you find all kinds of little things that you can tidy up, so make sure that you don't have to get into the big project, which is very big deal from some point. So it seem to be necessary to take some kind of leap, jump, take state of heroism from that point of view, and we are launching to the big project without discussing little details.

Even not asking how to do it, what's the way, whenever we talk about how to do it and what is the way, we are talking about in terms of saving problems and pain, and we are trying to buy pair of gloves, pair of pliers so that we don't have to strain our hand to deal with things. So this particular question or approach is, rather, is we can use our naked hand to deal with our naked mind. Very direct, very precisely.

And the attitude is not so much to destroy ego as a villain or evil force, but work with that particular situation as a stepping stone, as a process that the only material we have is ego at this point. There's no other way to spirituality. So ego is the starting point, is the only way, the only path that we have in relating with spirituality and enlightenment. So in fact, from that point of view, we should celebrate that we have ego. At least we have some hope of attaining

enlightenment because we have ego, which is starting point. And that seems to be the attitude of the warriors, seem to be the basic point.

And I think probably I should stop at this point today, that the practice of meditation is dealing with that situation, undoing, unlearning process. And we could discuss next session, next talk, detailed situation of how meditation applies to the particular steps of five skandas and things like that. We could discuss that later, but I thought that since you have already involved yourself in being highly patient and sticking around this particular course of practice of meditation, which is magnificent and very brave of you, and we would like to go on further and we could discuss later on. And maybe you would like to discuss this and would like to ask questions or whatever, that you are welcome.

Q. Rinpoche, do all perceptions, actions, thoughts, feelings, do they all arise from a state of bewilderment? Like if I look off into the mountains, and I bask in the glory of the mountains, does this stem from that same place?

CTR. I think so. [Laughter] But at the same time that doesn't mean to say that that's particularly terrible. And the only sense of bewilderment is the basis of understanding of egolessness, the non-existence. The bewilderment is a confused form, at the same time unconfused occasionally, that sense of realizing that you don't exist. At the same time.

So let us not condemn that state being completely bad or utterly good, for that matter. But whatever you do, you can't get away from it because you have *you*, which is ego. And you can't see mountain if you don't have you, because you are not mountain, mountain is mountain, you are you. And so the duality goes on constantly, all the time. And that's why we appreciate the mountains, because we have duality, because we have sense of no ego. Therefore we appreciate at the same time, simultaneously.

Q. May I ask what thoughts should one entertain?

CTR. No thoughts. [laughter] If you can entertain the entertainment itself, but I think that's rather difficult to do it at this point. And then whole thing becomes no entertainment, at the same time. It's fantastic. That's possibility.

Q. I have a question in two parts. You talked about the three aspects of the mind or three parts of the mind. Um, does one want to perfect these aspects of the mind, the intellect and the vidya, particularly?

CTR. Well, that's just purely state of being. The only way you can develop that is just using that. And particularly the last one, rigpa, vidya, vidya, you can use that and work on that level, but still if you're trying deliberately improve or work on it, then it becomes limiting because you still taking the attitude of poverty standpoint, rather than the richness. So the point is that there are lots of unused vidya is taking place in you and constantly explored and challenge yourself constantly. And so from that point of view, sense of cynical attitude that we talked about earlier on, and sense of openness at the

same time and intellectual activity, is the only way, along with a certain sense of discipline or practice.

Q. Also, would I be right in assuming that these three parts of the mind are like functions of the five skandas? I have the question of how the three parts of the mind relate.

CTR. Um hmm. That happens constantly. These three types of mind is transparent state of being, which either could be used in a confused way or unconfused way. And when the skandas are in operating, operation, that they become slave of that.

Q. You said as part of the fourth skanda, concept, that good diet is just a concept. I'm wondering if there's no value at all to a diet that's good for the physical body. If there's no value to that, or. . .

CTR. The concepts?

Q. Is it . . . well there's more than the concept of good diet. There is good diet. Is that of no value?

CTR. Can you say that word again? I didn't quite . . .

Q. Diet. You were talking about diet.

CTR. Diet. Yeah. Yeah. [laughter]

Q. Is there no value to a diet that's apparently good for the physical body?

CTR. Well, I think that's the point, actually, that if you like to have roast beef tonight or heart of artichoke tomorrow, there is a problem involved. It's not a big problem, but it is at least a concept problem, that you are not eating food but you eating concept. [laughter]

Somebody over there. Topless gentleman over there? [laughs]

Q. Two parts to the question. You said that vidya still stemmed from duality, a sense of survival. If that's so, I would think that any cultivation or development of it could not lead to enlightenment or freedom. And secondly, the sense of will obviously comes from the five skandas and from trying to escape the sense of bewilderment. But is there some way that, since that will is such a powerful energy, is there some way it could be used?

CTR. Well, we have to redefine our dictionary language there. That when we talk about will, that has sense of authoritarian, and that you can be willful because you been already fed and educated, indoctrinated by a certain particular approach, concept, moral standpoint, or whatever. That when we talk about will, it's very strong. And somewhat very unhealthy from that point of view, that when we talk about will, that is very militaristic in some sense. That like, say, you are willing to do this. Immediately when you say

that, that other person would have to come – have to obey under your command or otherwise that person is kicked out. And I think the Buddhist word “virya” or “tsondru” [?] which is entirely different. That we are not talking about willfulness, but we are talking about exertion. By not, not in a particular philosophical standpoint or morality or anything, but you simply enjoy and appreciate what you are doing, and you exert yourself constantly. And there is no point of punishing yourself or making yourself good particularly.

The sense of exertion is word for “virya.” We’ve been working, I’ve been looking for this word for a long time. And often, traditionally has been used word “energy” as being virya. But somehow doesn’t quite make it. Energy is still conditional, energy of something or other, that when we talk about virya, “tsondru” mean exertion, that is the ideal word. Which is sense of basically being and sense that basically you are relating with the whole thing, directly, precisely, and there is some sense of joy is taking place. And I’m sorry, I think I’ve lost the second or the first part of your question. I got carried away. Do you remember?

- Q. To feel that sense of exertion, to finish on what you just said, one must first give up all sense of territory, so that there is a feeling of space. Would that be a safeguard so that that energy would not come from military will, but would just come from joy? Is it, it’s first necessary to give up territory to . . .
- CTR. Well, if you don’t give up your territory, you don’t have exertion, because you are looking in a certain very limited way, and exertion cannot operate and becomes a willful thing. That let us say that if you are working for the large group of people, you are inspired to do that because there are a lot of energies, lot of differences, maybe some people in the community, that particular group, you like it, or some people you don’t like it. But at the same time there is basic group energy is taking place. You like the basic energy the basic vibration is taking place. Whereas if you are working for your father-in-law, mother-in-law alone, but nobody else, and you have enormous problem which is will. That she or he is my father or mother-in-law, I should work for her, and there is a sense of hierarchical red tape that is involved, that my in-law’s on the top, and my own parents in second, and I am the last one. I am working for those people on the top. And there is enormous sense of uncertainty that you find yourself have to push constantly, I mean, that seem to be basic situation that is taking place. So you have to have no territory in order to practice virya paramita, which is transcendental exertion.
- Q. The first question was on vidya, that you said vidya still comes from the sense of duality or survival.
- CTR. Well, I think sense of survival definitely is sense of fascination at the same time. The three state of mind that we discussed today, tonight, are just the vehicle, media. It’s like the water as you use your paint. You put paint in the water and you paint it. So what we are talking about is not the colors, but the actual media, the water of such situation. So that I think those three state of mind consist of transparent state of intelligence which

have been colored by five skandas. So as far as those three types of state of being is concerned, they are neither, um, have allegiance to enlightenment or samsara particularly. They are just state of being which could stretched greater length up to the experience of vajra-like Samadhi of attainment of enlightenment. And from the ordinary state of being, they are at the level of path of accumulation of beginner's point of view on the path.

Q. Rinpoche, what's the difference between cutting through the ego and destroying the ego?

CTR. Cutting through, opposed to what?

Q. Cutting through the ego as opposed to destroying the ego.

CTR. Reassuring?

Q. Excuse me?

CTR. Reassuring?

Q. Destroying.

CTR. Destroying. Oh, destroying. Um, well, I think the situation is if you cut through, your experience of cutting through is like warriors does with their enemy. They slice them into pieces. Which is experience. Whereas if you destroy them, it is like sending them a bomb in the mail. [laughter] Somehow it doesn't quite make it. It's, it's uh, . . . [laughter]

Q. Rinpoche, is there any room, any reason for, or any place for entertainment?

CTR. Any reason for what?

Q. Entertainment.

CTR. Entertainment? Did you say that?

Q. Yes.

CTR. [laughs] Well, um, it seem to be there is no place for it. You see, the thing is that, it is very subtle actually, that when we are entertained, often we don't celebrate. We just be entertained because we be so bored. We be entertained. And somebody is bringing you glass of drink or fantastic cake and make conversation. All those attempt to entertain you, as you usually we say, if you have honorable, honorary guest, that we should entertain this guest, we should take up into the mountains, or to the ocean or to the beach, and show around the city. And we have all kinds of dinner engagement worked out for him or her, whatever. That we think in terms of purely that trying to avoid that

he doesn't, make sure that he doesn't get bored. And that is problem of entertainment, that the guest would feel obliged to go along with what the host has provided for him, and he would say, "thank you for everything," and take part in everything what's been provided for him or her. But somehow, at the same time, we have a problem there, that he can't dance with you, he can't celebrate with you because whole situation is extremely limited.

And I think we are talking about the same situation here as that you can be entertained, but still get bored. And you could be entertained, but still you don't get what you want. Whereas if you are able to celebrate together, a sense of festiveness takes place. That if you forget that you got bored, that you be entertained even, that everything becomes part of the flow. Which is actually what we are talking about of overcoming ego. It's not so much to destroy ego as such, but work with ego, which is celebration. Slicing every piece of skandas into non-existence is, is festival rather than purely entertainment. If you have entertainment still going on, you still have subtle ego left. So if you work from the relationship of festival, that there is nothing to be bored and things are very personal, much more personal be entertained. And I think this is the distinction in terms of terminology, that entertainment is in a very coward level, and festive celebration is much more greater level. And we could say the same thing, hopefully this is true in terms of what we are doing at Naropa Institute, is the level of celebration rather than the level of entertainment. But that's yet to be seen. [laughter]

- Q. Rinpoche, when I sit for any extended period of time, it's not a question of subconscious gossip, it's more like subconscious screaming and ranting and raving, and after a couple of hours of sitting I feel like I've been riding a wild horse, you know. I'm exhausted. I, I can't watch my breath. I can't watch my thoughts. It's just, and I don't know how to deal with that kind of energy.
- CTR. I think that's still gossip. It's very powerful gossip, but it's still gossip. And gossip could be very powerful, that gossip could change the course of the universe. And gossip could be very powerful because it goes back to the past and it talks about the potentialities of the future constantly. And I think the drama that we might experience, we think we might exist, are still at the level of gossip. That we might think that I nearly murdered my enemy last night, or I nearly destroyed the rest of the world this morning, or whatever goes on, it's, it's still *you* doing it, so therefore it's gossip. And nobody else is doing it, it's you are taking part in it. So as long as it's you doing that, it's gossip level, which is level of fifth skanda we've been talking about. Emotions and subconscious mind are working hand in hand. The emotions, outstanding emotions, intensive anger, intensive passion, are part of exaggerated gossip, but no longer separate. So the point here is that we don't have to panic about that intense emotions that taking place are no longer regarded as a problem, particularly, but it's just part of subconscious gossip or conscious gossip or whatever.

The lady in red?

Q. Rinpoche, one of the problems I've found, encountered with long-term sitting is, um, falling asleep, and, you know, through boredom, and I was wondering what your feeling is about stimulants such as coffee and tea, you know, to sort of keep you awake.

CTR. Well, I think that's a very humble request. And the point is that make yourself somewhat well-fed and physically you are dressed comfortably for sitting practice, and don't try to punish yourself in any way, ascetic trip of anything at all. But asceticism comes later when you begin to sit. Even if you feel completely comfortable and well-fed, and still problem begins afterwards. So that's what is said by the Buddha, "if there is no body, there is no dharma. If there is no dharma, there is no practice." And that was one of the situations with Ananda, Buddha's disciple, attendant, and decided to take ascetic trip of that he is not being eating too well, and he has been taking bad care of his body, and having ordinary, normal food. And Buddha said, "if there's no body, there's no dharma. If there's no dharma, there's no enlightenment." So I think from that point of view that it is necessary to make yourself reasonably, sensibly comfortable, and prepare your cushions as much as it's comfortable to you. But it is not advised to try and find a place to lean back, because that invites further deception of some kind. So make yourself comfortable and presentable for *yourself* and I think there's no problems. We shouldn't worry too much about details from that point of view. And it seems that if you've gone through that kind of basic, basically that you are taking care of yourself physically, then sitting practice becomes much more healthier rather than using it as another way of torturing yourself spiritually.

Q. Can you tell me how prug-nya fits into the kind of knowing you've been talking about tonight?

CTR. How what?

Q. Prug-nya? Shay-va [shenpa]? How . . .

CTR. Pregnant, yeah. You mean literal pregnancy?

Q. No, no! Laughs] No. No.

CTR. Impregnance or impermanence?

Q. Prag-nya. The Sanskrit word "mug-nya"?

CTR. Oh, prajna! Yeah.

Q. Oh.

CTR. Nyeah.

Q. Can you tell me how that fits into the kind of knowing you've been talking about tonight?

CTR. Well, I think it's, prajna is knowledge that how to, how to take care of everything. And I mean it's simply, the whole approach here is, is not being dumb, and being intelligent. And we have those potentialities, whatever level of IQ's or whatever records you might have, it doesn't make any differences. But everybody is intelligent and potentiality is always there.

So that was interesting slip about talking about pregnancy and prajna. And I think actually, prajna is a way of impregnating yourself of knowing the situations and experiences with enlightenment. And there is definite understanding, there is definite direction, how to take care of your life and how to not too much analyze yourself and how to relate with your day-to-day situations of everything. And I think prajna is not regarded as wisdom, but it is regarded as knowledge. That that knowledge comes throughout whole thing. And even the bewilderment could be said as knowledge.

Taggie. [tries to climb up on the stage] Daddy! [is lifted up on stage, giggles, runs back and forth, is rescued and lifted from the stage]

CTR. Maybe one last question?

Taggie. [climbs back on stage] Eee, eee, eee. Daddy!

CTR. [to Taggie]. Do you want to speak in there?
[to person asking question] Yes?

Q. I was wondering how you would fit?

CTR. Where are you? Yeah.

[Taggie keeps speaking.]

Q. I was wondering how you would fit the experience of boredom into the system of the skandas and how could it be described and understood in those terms, particularly the boredom that you feel when you sit, when I, that I feel when I sit to meditate, which I assume is felt by a lot of other people. I, I seem to be dealing with that, I've been dealing with it for a very long time. And I don't know whether it does any good to understand it in those terms or not, or whether the only thing to do is just experience it over and over again until you somehow dissolve it. Is it, would it be any help to explain it, to understand it in terms of mechanics of mind?

CTR. Well, you see, that's the point, is it is necessary to understand at a certain point, to understand the mechanics of mind. It is necessary, and it is part of the process. It is absolutely important. But at the same time, that if you don't experience them [loud wail from Taggie in the side of the room, everyone laughs] You see, the point is that intellect goes along with experience at the same time. Otherwise there is enormous gap between the whole thing. That it is possible that intellect and intuition are completely in

opposite pole. They disagree. Intuitively you feel entirely different, intellectually you feel entirely different. And the point is to let them have exposure, to meet them together. Then some kind of spark begin takes place by the relating with opposites, getting together in a disagreement situation. But I think it is necessary to have personal experience always, rather than purely analytical and purely theoretical one, which doesn't really help.

Q. I'm doing really good on the experience part of boredom, but I don't seem to have a handle on the intellectual part of it and understanding of it. Could you give me any tips on that? [laughter]

CTR. It's up to you. I think you have to work out. Good luck, sir!

Well, good night, everybody.

Talk Four: Vipashyana
Naropa Institute, July 1, 1974
Public Service Building, Boulder, Colorado

Hopefully, that we have established some basic understanding about practice of meditation on the basis of shamatha level of simplicity and directness. Seem to be necessary to also present the question of vipashyana, which comes after shamatha practice of meditation. According to the tradition, that vipashyana is regarded as further experience of egolessness and developing prajna, which means “transcendent knowledge.” That compared with shamatha, that vipashyana is more concerned with, in dealing with one’s inquisitive mind and taking full advantage of it, and exploring that and developing and so fundamentally or finally that sense of exploration of one’s mind become openness, egoless.

That there is a problem that we have a general concept or idea that one should control oneself constantly until the point that one begin to obey one’s basic given training, and accomplishing training is trying to tighten up unnecessary habits and trying to create a different form of imprisonment. And that has become problem and misunderstood a great deal. So the question here that what we presenting in terms of vipashyana, is sense of freedom, sense of enlightenment, if you like to call it. That sense of freedom is exploring the sense of basic awareness which is basic, fundamental state of our mind of inquisitiveness. That when we talking about inquisitive mind, we are talking about sense consciousness, which includes the sixth sense, that is, the “sem” that we talked about the other day, the mind. That you’d hear sound, you would smell smell, that you would taste, that you have a feeling, bodily sensations, and you have the sense of being alive. That there is a mental faculty also functions, that those six sense consciousness are need to be used. As so far what we have been discussing in this area, is that those sense perceptions are disregarded, sense consciousness are disregarded. And we haven’t even got that level yet. That we are simply just working on the basic simplicity of keeping our attention with the breath and keeping our experience as simple as possible.

Having developed already some sense of simplicity, and some sense of accuracy in our practice, that thoughts come and go, but however, that they are expression of simplicity. They come and they go, and so what? However, I am sitting here on a meditation cushion and practicing meditation, which is boils down to absolutely doing nothing, and watching your thoughts come and go and then disappear, they come back. And you have your basic breathing is taking place, that sense of precisions as to what’s happening there is completely wakeful, because whenever you are drifted your mind into thought patterns of the past, present or future, conceptual memories, or whatever, you come back. You come back very simply. Just come back to the breath and very simply to the breath, not analyzing, not visualizing breathing but just simply doing it, precisely, very ordinarily doing it, very consciously, conscientiously in fact doing that. And day to day and repetition after repetition, years and years and weeks and weeks and days and says, hours and hours, that we keep on doing that.

A lot of problems come up which seemingly to be complicated, confused, but however, if you could get back to that particular practice level of simplicity, that complication is dissolved by itself. Because things are so complicated, therefore they take care of themselves. And what you

have afterwards is nothing. Very simple situation. That complication took care of themselves being complicated, and there is nothing left behind, anything at all. So things become somewhat encouraging.

But on the other hand, there is possibilities of memories, emotions, aggression, passion, fantasies of all kinds begin to churn up. But even though those are also part of the complications, they take care of themselves. We have nothing to do with them, or we have everything to do with them, whatever. Doesn't matter who is who, what is what, but just simply, simply keep sitting and doing it. That's the vipashyana, that's the shamatha experience of simplicity that is taking place there. It's very honest thing to do. We are not taking advantage of our emotions. We are not dreaming up any new experience or exotic, rich, fantastic dreams, spiritually or otherwise. We are not inventing anything new at all. We are simply just *being* at what we are, what we have. We have our body, we have our breath, we have our mind, and just deal with those three principles. Just very, very simply.

And because of that simplicity, then you begin to find new dimension of experience, what is known as the vipashyana experience, or "lhagthong" in Tibetan, which literally means "development of insight," or, literally speaking, it means "clear seeing, seeing things very clearly, very precisely, extremely clearly and precisely." Lhagthong. "Lhag" means "superior" or "clear" or "exquisite," "thong" means "looking, seeing." So "seeing things exquisitely, very precisely." And a shift between shiné and lhagthong or vipashyana, shamatha, is: in the level of shamatha, that there is very specialized attentions be put on your practice and just breath and breath. Very direct and very simple. Very narrow from that point of view. And in the case of awareness of vipashyana is concerned, it's a slightly extended version of openness. That you begin to find that there is lots of room apart from the object of concentration or breath or your bodily sensations or your whatever you have, that there is lots of more room, great deal of more room that there is, is experiencing the environment, as well as experiencing the object of our attention, namely our technique of breathing.

According to Buddha, that he described the state of lhagthong or vipashyana is state of clear seeing, egoless, because that we don't have to concentrate on our particular thing too heavy-handedly, but we begin to realize the environment around our practice, around our breath. So when you start with your breath, you begin to experience that environment around you is also part of the breathing, part of the whole basic being. You begin to feel the space around you, sense of being-ness is extended at the level that there is also state of awareness that we all have our antenna sharpened constantly. That you begin to feel that if you sit and meditate very honestly, earnestly, you begin to find somebody is watching behind your back, and looking at your neck, and examining you. And you begin to feel that there is heavy, heaviness coming down to you. You begin to feel that your bodily sensations are as if you are wearing heavy coat or turban, and all kinds of tensions happen in the back of your neck and your buttocks, your legs, and your arms feels awkward. And your body becomes more than there is, at some point. But those are the vanguard of that of the vipashyana experience. That there is something is taking place around you apart from the object of concentration, which is breath. There is something more than that is taking place, more than that is happening. Extended version of that is taking place.

And vipashyana is the seed or beginning point of developing meditation-in-action attitude. That you are able to extend your state of awareness to everyday life situation constantly. That being watchful, being aware of whatever you are doing in your life. But we can't just simply practice on the meditation-in-action level immediately, because we begin to find ourselves not practicing meditation, but we begin to find ourselves entertaining ourselves. That there is tension that is taking place. If you wash up dishes, that you begin to feel entertained by it. You have little spots of dirt to relate with, that you have a plate, that you have the soap, you have the faucet, the water tap. There is lot of things happening there, and the whole thing becomes somewhat delightful experience, and entertaining. That is become the problem, so we shouldn't try to practice meditation-in-action in early stages, which people would say, "well, whatever I do is meditation. I feel good about it. I do everything deliberately. I do my gardening, I do my piano, and I do my washing of dishes, I cook for my husband, my wife, whatever. And I take ride in countryside, I read books, and I feel that I am doing everything very consciously, and I feel very good, and I think I'm meditating." Well, that's very tricky, and there is a lot of deceptions taking place in such kind of naïveté experience, that things hadn't happened in 100% level. Things be happening in 50 – 50% level, which is not so good. If we are going to trod on the path and going to practice meditation properly and thoroughly and fully as the Buddha had experience, or given the message to us, we got to do it much better than that, much simpler than that, much more orthodox than that. That room for meditation-in-action is possible *of course*, but we have to prepare the ground for that before we do anything. We have to first find out what is the span of our awareness, span of our concentration, span of our watchfulness.

That there is a term "mindfulness" applies to shamatha experience, which is being fully there with our techniques and everything, being completely watchful. Then we have the term "awareness" which applies to vipashyana experience, the second stage. If you being too watchful, too mindful, it is possible you will lose your awareness. That is to say that if you are watching your highway more than necessary, you begin to miss the sign-posts around the highway, because you haven't been aware of them, aware of that you are driving, but you have been mindful of your driving, watchful of your driving, mindfully driving that you are so much concerned with your driving, and watching the guy in front of you or behind you too much that you lost your exit, because you haven't been *aware* of it. So that's the situation relationship, that it is necessary, to *begin* with, to develop that kind of caution and directness of watching the guy in front of us and behind us as we drive on the highway and keep your speed limit or whatever, and watch for cops. [laughter]

But then you need something else than that, that that is just adolescent level of being careful; but you can be much greater being careful is developing *awareness*, aware. In Tibetan term, there is two words. First one is called "trenpa," which literally means "recollection, memory, sharpness," like our mindfulness, trenpa. And then there's another word called "sheshin." "Shenpa" is "knowing." "Shin" means "as it is." So "knowing things as they are." There is some kind of sense of perspectives involved, and so it is necessary to have both trenpa and sheshin working together, and particularly paying more attention to the sheshin experience as you develop later on in your practice of meditation.

But I wouldn't suggest students to shift their practice of meditation at this point, but I would recommend still that you should stick to the shamatha practice of the concentration practice at the beginning that we have been discussing, and working with the outbreath and so forth. That seem to be necessary. But if you keep doing that, certain period of time, and maybe at some point that you begin to find that you, that's not the only thing that's happening to you alone, but you begin to developing some sense of expansion, some sense of greater awareness, greater mindfulness taking place, which is awareness. And that is possible, that should happen, that would happen provided if you keep faithful to this particular technique was presented to us, and what we are doing. So sheshin, or the "knowing as it is," "knowing things as they are," which is sharpening our antenna, perceptual, visual, smell, sound, feeling, and everything, sense of expansion is taking place.

Taking second look at same analogies of driving motor car on highway, that if we rent a car, at the beginning we are concerned about the accelerations of the car, and how to work with the little gadgets goes with on the dashboard, and sense of power, and sense of speed at the same time. If you are experienced driver, then you begin to feel you can tune yourself immediately into the size of the car, how big is the car, how small is the car. Your whole awareness becomes car, as if car is your body, if you are good driver. And you don't miscalculate your size of your being there on the highway. Or even for parking, for that matter. And you begin to get instant knowledge of awareness, rather than mindfulness at that level. That you know how to handle your car, how to park your car, how big is your car, how big you are for that matter, at this point. And that is the question of the awareness of vipashyana that we are talking about, is that we should adapt ourselves to that particular situation of sense of perception, sense of radiation, how far our feelings extend, and so that working situation becomes also appropriate and applicable to our every day-to-day running situation.

So the question of vipashyana at this point is sheshin, or the awareness experience. And when you have that sense of awareness experience taking place in you, you begin to find new discovery, which is that it is not new, that exp, that operating, necessarily. That you really don't exist particularly. It is *that* is operating, the relationship, the vibration is operating, rather than *you* are conducting that particular show. And one begin to feel a sense of hollowness inside you. At the same time, sense of being and very careful and sense of, sense of being appropriate and real, at the same time, of course. But nevertheless, there is sense of hollowness, that you feel that you are not operating that, but it is taking happen, it's happening. That in fact the car is driving you rather than you are driving the car, in some sense. That car goes by itself, and you just put little energy, but it is not up to you particularly. Whereas if you are bad driver, that you begin to feel lots of *you*, because you are taking all kinds of chances and you do all kinds of dangerous things, and there is more a sense of *you* involved. Whereas if you are confident driver, you have a proper relationship with your motor car, that you have a sense of being there, that you just move a little bit and the car just goes. Which is not *your* movement, but it's movement of the car dictates to you. So awareness dictates to you, from that point of view, that awareness becomes part of your basic being, part of your behavior, that you don't have to meditate as such, but meditation is conducting you, rather than you are conducting practice of meditation as such. That there is a sense of delightfulness taking place and a sense of openness taking place. And that level maybe then we could look in terms of meditation-in-action, in terms of lhagthong or vipashyana experience.

In the experience of vipashyana, there is sense of dignity, there is sense of completion, definite completion and definite sense of dignity, sense of knowingness, somewhat familiarity. That as if you've done this in some time ago, many times in your past you've done this, and now you're doing it again. That sense of familiarity begin to come. And awareness is that not only pointing your attention to a spotlight alone, but space around that spotlight, maybe it's the darkness that around that spotlight. Or if you are concentrating on piece of stone, piece of pebble, that you not only see the pebble, but you only see the, also you see the environment around the pebble. And sense of expansion, sense of openness begin to take place.

And one of the interesting point about vipashyana experience is that the sense of exertion, sense of discipline is not so much of *your* discipline, but it is self-existing experience. And that seem to be the basic point that we should understand. That certain point that you have to of course hassle yourself and push yourself into situation that you are going to meditate. Those are just common problems we all have, even if we are advanced medita for that matter. Once we get into the practice, we might find it different but before we begin to push ourselves into the practice, we have all kinds of hesitations as if we are naughty child. That you try to calculate that anything that you could make excuses that why you are not meditating seem to be valid point to us. That I have to make phone call to my friend, or I have this and that to do, do my laundry, or wash up the dishes, or take the meat out of the freezer. Any little point that comes to us, that usually we usually play against ourselves, particularly if person is living individually rather than at community level, that meditation becomes mandatory. That we usually play games to ourselves all those areas which we have to cut through anyway, whether we are practicing the shamatha level practice or vipashyana level practice, whatever we do, doesn't really matter.

But once we begin to get into the practice and begin to break the ice, so to speak, then we begin to feel that there is a definite sense of difference. That we could glide in, into it, we could swim into it. Sense of familiarity, maybe sense of slight irritation that you are doing the same thing all over again, and sense of slight being bored, and being lonely that you are doing this thing to yourself rather than you are doing with anybody. Even if you are doing with group of people, it's same thing. That you are doing this practice by yourself, although the others doing same thing, but they are doing their thing, I am doing my thing. So there is sense of loneliness, sense of individuality takes place. But nevertheless, there is general notion of sense of gliding into, having, into the practice of meditation of vipashyana type. Whereas at the level of shamatha type, it is actually struggle; training ourselves, we can't glide in ourselves, we have to catch ourselves constantly. And there is lot of struggle, there are lot of personal effort is involved, keep yourself alive, that particular meditation. But in the case of vipashyana level that there is a sense of gliding into it because of your training.

So that seem to be the basic point, that students should start with vipashyana experience. Before you start vipashana experience, by the way, that one should get into the shamatha experience thoroughly and completely and fully and being very faithful to your technique, which is absolutely important. And sense of fearlessness and sense of cutting through your boredom, whatever. And having done that already, then it is possible to glide into your technique, your experience. At some point, students find things are very easy, very

comfortable, that your physical, physiological situation is adapting itself to the sitting practice, that you are used to sit down on the cushion cross-legged and straighten your back and everything is a natural thing, that it comes very naturally to you. And psychologically much simpler, much easier, because you can glide yourself into that situation.

But, however, there is need to keep the basic sense of openness, awareness, the basic sense of what we could almost say cleanliness, the cleanliness, that things done properly and literally, that meditation becomes a real thing. There is no areas left that we are deceiving ourselves no longer. In fact, that sense of wholesomeness and healthiness into the practice which ignites further light into the experience of vipashyana experience. The experience becomes very personal, very real, very healthy, and very direct. And the purpose of this training is being eventually that you are going to become warrior. That warrior should keep his basic being intact, including his alertness; otherwise, that warrior doesn't become warrior.

So therefore, practice of meditation at this level could be regarded as the experience of training your mind, and training your sense of feeling, sense of touch, sense of smell in appropriate level. That no mysterious areas left at all; that every area has been explored and trained and worked on, so that we have different kind of sense of pride, in the positive sense, that no mysterious dark corners left. That there is sense of enormous pride, enormous wholesomeness, completeness, that the universe or spiritual search does not become still mysterious any more. It's, it's very real to us. And one begin to develop also sense of intellect at the same time, that you can cut yourself, or cut others for that matter, and it becomes a very real experience.

I think that's the purpose of vipashyana experience, vipashyana technique, is to bring us, ourselves down and down and down to the ground, much more than those of the concentrated experience of shamatha, which is okay, but still needs more down-to-earth level. That finally we begin to realize that sight, smell, sound and all the other experiences are very direct, very literal, and very simple. And of course maybe it's beautiful, but no longer mysterious as such. And perhaps you would like to ask questions, maybe. That's better than me talking.

Q. You say "the way of the warrior," and in the next six months, maybe a fifth or a quarter of the world will be in extreme hunger, if not famine. And meditation seems very necessary, but action, skillful action, also seems necessary. If the people are governed by immorality at the top too long, a great sickness stays. And meditation-in-action, I am waiting for the action in myself and in the world around me, perhaps too impatiently.

CTR. Perhaps what?

Q. Too impatiently. The sensation of helplessness in the face of great suffering brought to you on color television.

CTR. Well, I mean, the point here is that before we talk about all hands on the deck, we got to have hands. [laughter] And the first measure that we taking is maybe a long-term project and may not happen, or we may be able to practice our awareness and meditation-in-action experience immediately, the next six months or so. But the important step to begin with is that we could develop ourselves in such extent that we

don't become a nuisance. And that's, that's the starting point. That to begin with, we don't become nuisance to society. And that is helping great deal, and it cuts the bureaucracy enormously. And there is less paper work, there is less typewriters, there is less telephone calls if you become, stop being nuisance. And there is less number in computer machine. And then probably we can, you know, extend from that level. Having not been nuisance, then maybe you are full-fledged meditation-in-action person. But it takes time, it takes enormous time, and therefore it is necessary to apply some sense of exertion in one's practice.

Q. Is there a technique that we use to practice what would be the equivalent of our shamatha practice in our regular life? Some object or technique for concentrating in our daily lives so as to gradually develop the vipashyana, or is it all supposed to come just from the basic sitting meditation practice?

CTR. I think it's basic sitting practice, actually. I'm afraid so. But at the same time that your vipashyana experience could develop from the shamatha experience as you've become more confident and familiar with what you are doing. That organic thing, rather than changing shift of gear or you being up-lifted another technique as such. That technique grows, and you begin to abandon the previous technique as already useless and you begin to develop new way automatically. That your crutches becomes unnecessary. You begin to learn yourself you can walk.

Q. Rinpoche, you talk about the dangers of entertainment in the carrying out of daily tasks, in thinking you are meditating on them. What does one attend to when carrying out daily tasks?

CTR. When what?

Q. What does one attend to, what is one mindful of, in the carrying out of daily tasks, like washing the dishes or walking?

CTR. Well, you see, the thing is that we have been brought up in such way that we be told we have to have purpose of life. We are doing for some particular reason or some particular tasks involved. That somebody might say that you are washing your dishes on behalf of the God. Or on the other hand, the Mahayanists might say that you are washing up your dishes on behalf of all sentient beings. [laughter] And all kinds of little doctrines developing around that. And "I'm doing this in order to develop wisdom," or goodness knows, or. . . [laughter] All kinds of little things that being pushed on us underneath the door. Little notes. [laughter] But the purpose of this particular practice from this point is [here the tape skips] not to follow those particular instructions, little messages that coming to us, but simply do it properly. In fact, we are no longer, we can't be open enough or radiant enough to do anything if you don't have ourselves get together, together. And tight and trained properly. So the point here is question of no purpose particularly, but just do it for its own sake. Doesn't matter about the philosophy, doesn't matter about the conduct or the purpose or the moralistic thing, but you just do it because it happens and because it is there, you can't chicken out. It's

already there with *you*, so why don't *we* do it? And that's the basic point, not for you, particularly, or not for other, but just simply doing it. That seem to be the basic point.

Q. Is there any difference in, between the technique of shamatha and vipashyana? Is the technique the same?

CTR. Well, as far as the technique is concerned, it's pretty much the same, but in the vipashyana level, you watch the boundaries more than point of concentration. The boundary of feeling around you. That you are not purely working on your breath, but you are working on the boundary around the breath, that sense of expansion is taking place, the radiation is taking place. That's simply question of attitude. You see, the point is that there is literal teaching, and as literal, direct, simple teaching begin to develop, then you begin to expand yourself greater and greater, more and more wider level. And one begin to get a sense of you begin to use your intellect subconsciously and imagination at the same time subconsciously as well. So at the time that attainment of enlightenment, that you got everything together. [laughs]

Q. I have two questions. Um, In the practice of moving from shamatha to vapassana [sic], does, does one just move in that or is there, does it, does one need to push in some way? In other words, is there danger of becoming comfortable in the practice?

CTR. Well, I think as we have discussed already, that it is necessary to have someone to check your practice and we make, develop a personal friendship or reference point with somebody is necessary. But at the same time, you could develop your own intelligence for that, is that when you begin to feel that you have to expand yourself, rather than your practice is strictly at the level of being too faithful. And you begin to feel slightly different, that you can expand yourself. And at that level, if you examine yourself, your particular style of experience is concerned, you begin to find yourself actually doing vipashyana experience already, vipashyana technique already. That you transcended the shamatha experience in any case, so one has to take that kind of, it's like growing up, you know. When you grow up, you have this ceremony called "birthday party," which isn't quite really so. You haven't suddenly become a different person by the time when you blow your candles off or when you get your presents. But you have been growing up all the time. So and I think it's forced you to make just to make random and maybe specialized time and moment. That now everything's okay, you have become different because you had bar mitzvah or whatever, you know.

Q. Also, um, where do these two techniques fit in terms of Hinayana and Mahayana paths?

CTR. The vipashyana experience is still in Hinayana level. And the sense of the inspiration and sense of awareness is preparing yourself to become Bodhisattva in the Mahayana level. That you need more requirements of awareness and egolessness. That's just a first hint. But basically technique is included according to the doctrine, is that you are doing Hinayana practice still, but preparing yourself to become a Boshisattva.

Q. Rinpoche, you said in *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* that vipashyana is working more with the emotions. Could you explain that a little bit?

CTR. Well, emotions at this point is concerned, it's experiential. That awareness that you have around you is also part of the emotions, at the same time. That you can't have emotions without being aware of something. If you hate somebody, you dislike somebody intensely, you are not only disliking that person as such, but that black fume that person has created for you around it. So sense of openness is there, that general how the emotions work. So your practice work at that level. And you are not trying to particularly destroy or subjugate your emotions, suppress them particularly as such, but you are in tune with the style of the emotions taking place at the same time. So you have also antidote, anecdote of some kind is taking place. That emotions, the way the emotions functions, how the practice functions at the same time, so the hand-in-hand, side by side. And still that you who have kept up with your emotions, that usually what happens is that when we have emotions, we find ourselves undermined by our own emotion, we lost track of it, we feel bewildered by our emotions. But once we have sense of actually we are in keeping with the contact with the emotions, what's going on, there is a sense of familiarity, sense of openness taking place. So that precisely the practice is relate with that. But if he particularly refer to this thing about emotions being specially trying to work with the emotions, you are going to get relief, freedom from your emotions, and that's precisely reason I haven't discussed tonight about talking about emotions, and that seem to become too much of a trip of some kind. That you have that problem, now I am going to present you this technique so you can control yourself precisely. But give people some sense of experience, that awareness could work with general dealing with environment, which emotions are, basically.

Q. I was wondering like when you sit in a dathün or meditate for some period of time, um, is there any emphasis placed on physical exercise or do your muscles just start to atrophy or what?

CTR. You should what?

Q. I mean like, what happens to your body when you sit for a month or three months or something. Is there any emphasis placed on physical exercise?

CTR. Well, you sit and you walk all the time. And that own practice is based on half and half sitting and walking. And there is a lot of emphasis on how to handle with your body in the sense of relating with vipashyana type experience automatically. But at the same time, I don't think we have to re-crank up ourselves particularly because of that our body is just about to get out of practice in running around the world. And I mean that's been taken care of already by our mind. That we usually run around much faster in dathün situations. That first few weeks you run around so much, you dig up your record of the past and your future plans of the future, you know, and you done so much hard work already and that in fact the muscle system in your body you find yourself seeing as if you are running. You are sitting, but still you are running. And you get a lot of exercise out of that. [laughter]

- Q. I have another question. That is, um, in sitting meditation, um, I get really distracted by visual images and colors, with my eyes open, you know. I wonder if that will go away with time, you know, if out of this happens thoughts or what.
- CTR. No promise. No promise. But you probably will give up some point, rather than that it will be that you will solve your problem as such. But that the, you might give up. It's question of you might give up, you might surrender rather than the problem will be solved as such.
- Q. The idea of warrior is usually associated [laughter], the idea of warrior is usually associated with a purpose, territory, or at least a sense of danger. If we're to give up all sense of territory and purpose, I would think danger would also fall away. What's the motivation for having the spirit of a warrior? Is it the spirit of inquiry, to see?
- CTR. Well, you are not hired as a samurai who is out of a job. [laughter] You are not hired by anybody, or even not hired by yourself. And idea of warrior is sense of fearlessness, basic fearlessness, that there is no reason why you should be coward. As simple as that. And you are not being warrior because there is a state of war exist in your country, that we are trying to win over against the rudras of the egohood people, we are trying to fight with them. But you are being warrior because you *are* warrior. It's like being, saying same thing, "are you twenty-one years old?" "Yes, I am." And you might ask question, same question by saying that why you are twenty-one years old, and how come you have done this, but you have no answer to it. You are just twenty-one. That's what I am. And there is basic sense of unshakeableness, obviously, not because you feel that someone is going to shake you as such, particularly immovability, sense of dignity, sense of self-existing situation rather than you are trying to fight something else. It's different concept that we have to become more familiar with that particular situation rather than purely relative point. I mean that needs a lot of training actually, that the question of attaining enlightenment as well, and question of controlling ourselves and question of being generous, being disciplined, that "if I be generous, what I'm going to get back?" "If I be well disciplined, what I'm going to achieve?" and those questions doesn't apply, that you are doing things just because it is the case. That's what's called "sabdia" or the truth, you know, ultimate thing. The truth doesn't depend on anything. That's the problem, I'm afraid. Not very glamorous. But still it's the case, nevertheless. [laughs]
- Q. There are some meditative techniques that begin with vipashyana on the basis that mindfulness increases mindfulness which extends itself into prajna. I, you seem to be saying that that comes naturally, or you shouldn't start at that point? Is that a valid technique?
- CTR. Well, I think it have to organic. You see, I mean again we have some problem, that if you decide to present some situations as such, that you are going to gain prajna, that becomes spiritual materialism. And you have goal, you have idea. That sense of boredom hasn't been presented to you yet. So the point is that to begin with just very

simple technique without any purpose, idea, almost naïve and absurd in many ways. And then you begin to grow because you, it's, it's it's question of training your mind, that how to become more awake person. That as you fall asleep at the beginning, and then you go to sleep, and let you be that way, and then you begin to wake up, you begin to open your eyes, and then next thing is just to get out of your bed and wash your face or whatever you do. It's organic process. And I think that's the problem in the introducing vipashyana in very early level, it's become problem. And that has become problem within the Buddhist traditions as well already. There is a lot of disagreement is happening or agreements taking place within the great meditation masters in the Buddhist tradition already, as well: that if you introduce the juice or the meat of this particular soup too early, that you don't want to drink your soup, you just want to have the anecdotes. And the result is you end up being very thirst.

Q. It seems as though mindfulness would encourage the awareness of even that problem, wouldn't it? Which would become an object of mindfulness.

CTR. Um, well, you see, we have a problem with mindfulness. And mindfulness is if you present person mindfulness on the first batch just like that, to laymen, so to speak, that mindfulness is just being mindful, is having attitude to mindfulness, rather than experience of being right there. You see, it's mindfulness, from that point also means awareness. But true mindfulness, not particularly awareness, but simply communicating with things as they are very simply, very literally, very directly. And becomes very personal. That mindfulness, you see, the situation is that when you are being mindful, you have certain pride and certain sense of security, but you have to include all of those in your mindfulness. Otherwise your mindfulness is a game, and that is the problem, always that's the problem that's been faced. There is a new tradition developed in the Burmese method of mahasi sedo [?] is developed [or possibly, "is the verb"] and so forth that also developed in Tibetan tradition and what's called the indivisibility of shamatha and vipashyana experience. And that's particular training what we are talking about. That even when we talk about shamatha experience, there is some sense of vipashyana experience as comes along, that whole thing is included but we don't make particular reference point as to promises are concerned. That seem to be the basic point. You just do it, you just do your donkey work, and if you ask about enlightenment, you know, you be told to shut up. Just do your thing.

Q. Intellect develops alongside the development of meditation, I would guess.

CTR. I think that's right guess!

Q. Could you say something . . .

CTR. That's no guess, but that's experience what you said. And it is possible, it is true, that when there is experience that that makes your mind much sharper beyond confused word level. That you begin to learn to think more objectively, more directly, for the very reason that experience, what experience you had, is experience of egoless constant diminution [or, possibly, "concept domination?" it's at 1:03:54 on the disk] because

there is less ego territory. Therefore, there is more room to develop intellect at the same time.

Q. I assume that, uh, through the process of meditation, the egolessness increases, but I wonder if there is any point or any sense to trying to do or act our day-to-day acts with the view to reducing ego, view to doing things that are less from the ego.

CTR. Can you say the last part more?

Q. I wonder if there is any point in doing our day-to-day acts with a view to doing acts that are less directed towards the ego, to satisfying the ego.

CTR. Well, um, you got to eat, you got to go to the bathroom, um, you need roof over your head, maybe earn money for that, for your food as well, I suppose. So things becomes very problematic. But on the other hand, things are very simple, because one has to do these things. Those not particularly hassles of the universe, but those are the facts of the universe, the truth that we are talking about, dharma, chattya. And that's necessary, I think. That if we are seeking truth, we have to work, eat, shit, sleep. That's the expression of truth, and we got to do it, we have to earn money to do that as well at the same time. [laughs] Good luck, sir! [laughter]

Q. When you talk about cutting through so there is no more mystery,

CTR. Huh?

Q. When you talk about cutting through things so there's no more sense of mystery, it seems to me like Don Juan, even though he's very clear and very strong, he still sees in the world around him mystery.

CTR. I'm trying to figure out what you are asking me.

Q. Um, it seems like what you are doing is making everything very cold, very dry, you know, like cutting through things so there's no more sense of mystery or beauty.

CTR. Thank you. [laughter] Well, you see, it's a old story, actually. If you open somebody's stomach, cut through their skin, you've got blood and all kinds of juicy things coming out. And it's not particularly, the approach is not so much of make things sterile and vacant, but we have a lot of stuff in us all the time, and we can't use them because they be bottled up. And by cutting through or the breaking the bottle is the only way that they exist, and it is possible once you cut though the skin there are lot of things coming out, gushing out. And that's possible. And I think even your question is, feels very juicy, because you feel something had been cut through, at the same time that you have a lot of ideas coming out of that, and what you did, and that's a perfect demonstration of it. Thank you, madam!

Maybe it's time to stop. Thank you.

Talk Five: The Dawn of Enlightenment
July 8, 1974, Naropa Institute
Public Service Building, Boulder, Colorado

I think we got to follow up what we discussed the last time in the subject of awareness and mindfulness, in connection with the, the thing we discussed about, of the fourth moment. Seem to be necessary for us to realize that some kind of understanding of our state of being, state of mind, is a very ordinary and a very simple, basic situation. That the mechanics of mind functions in the sense of a basic existence, and also functions in the sense of a basic fascination to prove one's own existence. Those are the two basic situation that takes place. To reassure oneself that you exist and then also reassure that your environment does exist, so you can exist at the same time. That seem to be the general process of function of the mind. It is necessary to have some training to cut down the need for securing your situation, by proving that environment exist.

But on the other hand, the whole thing is being that completely and truly, fully way of describing the state of mind, and at this point we could say quite safely actually that the mind doesn't exist at all. It doesn't exist. But, on the other hand, then, then what is this? That's the, precisely the point, what isn't this? Or we have to work under that particular area in which that we could have some kind of comprehension, as to that even this doesn't exist, but that may be too advanced for us. Before we get into that, we could discuss that *that* doesn't exist, the things around us doesn't exist. Environment that we have created doesn't exist. Because the environment is largely based on assumption that you exist. That environment's largely based on assumption that you can manipulate your world, that as if world is a flexible, yielding phenomena, that you can manipulate the world. And that's the whole thing what, what's known as "game" begin take place. That you have developed some understanding, some idea, as to that you could create this particular game by pretending that the phenomenal world does exist and you exist. And that is the problematic area that we have to look into it, not so much to cut down the root, but trying to cut down the branches to begins with, to begin with.

The basic sense of that you can hold on to something, that things are tangible, not only tangible alone, but things can be manipulated constantly, is becoming a enormous problem for us. That phenomenal world is not *there*, actually it is not [laughs] there [laughter], truly and fully it's not there. Then you might say, "What is there at all? What is, why can you say that we're, that phenomenal world is not there? What's, why the negation at all?" Well, we do not know. It is up to us explore that negation, rather than that you've been given package deal course study to prove that what you should understand is being purely presented comprehensively. But one has to look into that problem, that the problem has been raised. It is up to *you*. It is in your turn to look into that possibilities of the phenomenal world doesn't exist and moreover if you want to brave, be brave, or if you want to be a more explicit and a complete or perfect that you don't

exist either, but that's later. That comes later. Maybe that's too heavy a burden to discuss this point. But let us discuss the, the beginning, that the phenomenal world doesn't exist.

Why not? That's it. Why not? Why did you say, "why?" That we have to find out why we said "why?" and who's saying "why?" and so forth. That there's lot of conclusion that we can come to, which might be falsity, that you're trying to come up to conclusions that trying to find out, trying to have easy way out. And all kinds of problems evolve there. But however, it is worthwhile pursuit to relate with that particular situation by seeing that phenomenal world doesn't exist, and that search that you be experimenting doesn't exist. And you being the functioning on the level of non-existence. That is to say that there's no territory. There's no maker of the universe. There's no functioning organism that takes care of you, or destroy you at all. We are talking this concept altogether in terms of phenomenological level, experiential level. And that is very important, key point, that we are not talking in terms of existentialism at all. We are talking purely phenomenological level, level that we could experience and we could explore ourselves, but not in existential level. That's very important. And meditation practice is in the level of dealing with the phenomenological world, if there is any at all, in a very naïve way that you sit and practice as much as you can, and trying to find out if there's anything to find out at all, and disciplining ourselves, if there's anything to discipline ourselves at all. And therefore the whole question here is that you're dancing the space, if there's space at all. We say there is space. It is intangible and attributes of space is that and this, but we're talking about existence of space purely from the point of view of boundary, reference point, rather than the existence of space as it is.

So what we're talking here is that we are trying to do impossible, trying to understand the impossibility. And is this complete nonsense? Maybe so! It doesn't make any sense. Glad to hear that. We've been thrown back and forth so much in the world of reality and phenomena, and world of emptiness, constantly, that we're trying to make something out of it, which has become the crux of the matter. And the problem itself, that we've been trying to find out meaning of life, and "what is *me*?" "who am *I*?", and "what is this all about?" Actually, there's nothing that we can talk about, or explain in great detail, or even anything at all. That we do not know who we are, what we are, what is all about is uncertain, not only uncertain, but it is non-existent. Why are we talking such nonsense? [laughter] That is the point, why, I mean, why are we doing this? You and I are here sitting down, and we make a big deal about that we have microphones, we have a sound systems, and you have a hall, and we trying talk about nonsense. [laughter] That is the point. [laughter] Actually, that *is* the point. [laughter] Why are we doing this? Why? [laughter] even the question of should we do it, or shouldn't we do it, is not applicable, but *why* we're doing it.

We might find ourselves that I can't not help, I cannot help not doing this. That's very rather feeble and somewhat strong logic, but it's a feeble answer. On the other hand, you might say that I'm like to find out why I am doing this. That's also very feeble and very weak point. That why we're here, why we're doing all this doesn't have answer, or, for that matter, does not have any questions. That the questions are non-existent. It is true that if there is nothing at all, then how could there be questions at all? Nonsense, uncertainty, maybe confusion, sense of complete at-lost. That we do not know why we're here, we have no idea why we're doing this at all, even if there's anything to understand, and we have no idea who's understanding this, for

to, to begin with. So things become outrageously gibberish, nonsense, absolutely nonsense, and doesn't make any sense. Absolutely not. And to begin with, this is contradictory statement, but I would like to say it still. I would like to make sure that you understand this [laughs, laughter] is that we are doing this because we have nothing to understand. I would like to make *sure*, hundred percent that, make sure that you *understand* [laughter] that we have nothing to understand [laughter]. I would like to take you that very seriously [laughter] and this is no, by no means con-man-ship and chickening out, or speaking gibberish at all. But this is fact, this is philosophy, doctrine, dharma, the truth, [laughter] and all the rest of it [laughter] that our[?] need face this fact, painfully deceptive or not, whatever. [laughter] That we are trying to understand that we have nothing to understand. That's very important stepping-stone to begin with. That is absolutely important, otherwise, without that, we have no idea, at-lost [laughter]. Whole thing is gone and lost [laughter] in a negative sense [laughter].

If you understand that particular logic, particular positive statement, whatever, then you begin to feel the sense of environment, sense of totality, that sense of something's lurking behind your intellect and intuition, that there is empty ground, empty space. Vacant space is hovering and wandering around your state of being, basically. That there is that vacant space is taking place, and if you would like to look at closely into that vacant state, that what we're trying to do is that we make sure that we don't look for any understanding, any understandable situations.

But we are just trying to be. Even not that. Even that's bad way of putting it. We're not trying to be either, because there's nothing to be. Sorry about that. [laughter] And that enormous vacuum, enormous space, enormous outward space that you begin to experience, that there is a dawn of enlightenment, just a dawn. The message says that sun is going to shine, because there is a little glow in the eastern hill. That is what's known as, in the Buddhist tradition, as "dawn of enlightenment." And the dawn of enlightenment cannot take place unless there's sense of desolateness, and meaninglessness, and being fool, to begin with. Then the dawn of enlightenment take place, actually takes place. Properly you begin to experience traditional Western language is, we might could say the Star of Bethlehem, whatever. There is birth of some things [something's?] taking place. There is a star up in the midnight sky, which is black, deep blue, but there's a star shining. There's a hope in the positive sense. There's some things [something's?] taking place. Such thing cannot take place unless there's nightfall, darkness.

And unless there is a sense of destined, desolation that you cannot, you cannot mend or correct anyway at all, that there's a fantastic depression. In fact, we could call it a transcendental depression. [laughter] It's a so powerful depression, even you can't feel that you are depressed. [laughter] But you feel somewhat higher than nonexistence, that rug is pulled under your feet. It's complete vast, and vacant experience. And when, when we talk about practice of meditation and awareness, we are talking in terms of the, the practitioner should be based on that particular experience of vacantness, non-existence, that you have emotions, basic emotions of aggression, passion, fantasies of all kinds are taking place. But however those situations that take place in you are expressions of that particular dawn of enlightenment. It is mere dawn of enlightenment. That there is some things [something's?] taking place, that you could work with your awareness, and that point state of awareness is very cool and very quiet, and at the same time, it is very outstandingly bright, outstandingly outstanding. It's real, that

there is consciousness which comes up to us, that we could experience ourselves in that level. There is something that we could communicate ourselves. We have already understood that there's no me, no self, no ground.

But however nonexistence with those begin to make some sense, that non-existence of self, ego, being, become Star of Bethlehem, dawn of enlightenment, begin take place. It's, it's real at that point because unreality has created a reality at that point. It's, it's real at that point, because unreality has created a reality at that point. It's, it's real experience. It's, it's true experience, true as far as we can relate with the truth, that we have, since we have lost the truth, therefore we could understand the truth from that point of view. That there is a sense of sadness that we have lost any kind of sense of grasping on anything at all, whole thing's gone and lost. There's nothing to hang onto, because of that sense of desolation, that sense of enigmatic qualities of, of dawn of enlightenment is taking place. That's possible. That's reality in the very solid, ordinary, business-like sense. If you'd like to feel that way, you're welcome. We don't have to try to treat on a different pedestal.

Such experience is begin of what's known as Buddhist tradition of experience of *shunyata*. *Shunya* means "empty," *ta* means "ness." Emptiness. And why we call emptiness by name is because of that, there is whole thing's empty, non-existent, therefore it does exist by itself. The basic point in the particular, the Mahayana Buddhist type of practice is concerned, is that there's real sense of loneliness, aloneness, sense of desolation, therefore that you become enormous powerful hero, samurai. That's the basic point. That's why we refer this point, this particular experience, as *shunyata* experience, because there, there is a sense of complete nothingness, complete nonsense, and doesn't make any sense. Because doesn't make any sense in the whole together, doesn't mean anything at *all*, therefore, *that is it*. Actually there is point, but there isn't point at the same time, and that becomes a very lonely discovery, extremely lonely discovery, and very sad, because that you can't share with anybody. It's your discovery in the most of your heart, and it's, [laughs] it's, it's so painful to discover that truth, that fundamental truth of non-existence, and loneliness on the top of non-existence. It's okay if you experience the truth of non-existence, you begin to feel, "Okay, if I don't exist, if I could dissolve into some cosmic galaxy, then I don't have [feel? fear?] individualities myself."

That's kind of suicidal mentality, sort of attitude that we begin to take. And that is the one way of getting rid of that pain. But if you are particularly interested, inspired into the path, then you begin to feel that, *that* non-existence is not quite *it*, there's some sort of self-denial is involved. Then after that you begin to realize that even dissolving whole ego mentality, ego-hold, self-existence, whatever, then you begin discover another Star of David. There's being coming out of darkness of complete desolateness, and there's beautiful, wide-ranged desert. Doesn't even grow trees or grasses. Complete open and complete, even desert. That in the middle of night in your being in the desert, you begin to see a star when you look up at the sky, which makes you more painful, because the star seem to say to you is that, "Ha, ha! You're in the desert. You're helpless. And I'm up in the sky, and I'm doing okay, because I can float. But you can't float. You are just end up on the solid, on your, on your ugly bottom, sitting in the desert being [laughter] yecch. Ha, ha to you! [laughter] And don't you see how, don't you see how ugly you are, how lonely you are, and how terrible you are, your state of being? That closest place you

can make telephone calls is maybe hundred miles? [laughter] Can you walk? Oh, you can't." And the star is begin to tell you some kind of message. Truth, actually.

The sense of shunyata from this point of view is extremely desolate situation that can be only experienced in by sitting practice, going through vipashyana experience. And then you begin to realize the techniques that you've been hooked on to in vipashyana experience somehow doesn't make any sense. They are further con-man-ship at matter of fact, and you begin to realize that can't depend on anything at all, none whatsoever. You find yourself sitting on the meditation cushion and absolutely doing nothing, but that even doesn't help. You try to rise above of those little domestic concerns, physical concerns of trying to make your practice best and good and take a philosophical view that "I'm going to attain enlightenment," whatever. But still you haven't [have?] seen the experience of the dawn of enlightenment, and that dawn of enlightenment is a very desolate one. Once you begin to experience that you begin to feel that, that universe is begin to segregate you from your existence, or other way around, whatever, that you become completely ripped off. They even don't leave your heart or brain and you have nothing to hang on to, but still they wouldn't let you die. [laughter] It's, something's holding onto, and that is what we call it in the Buddhist tradition is *tathagatagarbha*, Buddha-nature, that is hanging onto which is a brave and powerful state of existence which doesn't want to give away anything, although it lost its reference point all over the place, down, up, here and there, right and left, hot or cold, happy or sad, whatever. That there is a something's been, everything's been ripped off from where you exist, but still there is something is *there*, which is so sad, somewhat. [laughs]

Depends on your point of view, I suppose. But desolate and non-existence and lonesome. That is dawn of enlightenment, which is been made according to the scriptures and the books that is available to us, that everything's juicy and colorful. That you begin to feel that as if you are out of your bar mitzvah or your college degree or something that, that people will give you, congratulate you with gold wristwatches or fountain pens or, or fat checks, or what have you. But somehow at this point, that there's nobody cares for you, even to present you with anything at all, except your own discovery that there's nothing exist. Therefore that's greatest gift maybe, when you think back later on maybe, but at the time, somehow this experience is very lonesome and very unreal. I think one of the problems that we face is that we have never experienced our true sense of loneliness. That when you don't experience the true sense of our aloneness, loneliness, lonesomeness, whatever you like to call it, that you begin to find entirely different prospect. That you begin to discover the whole cosmos, whole universe is so empty, absolutely empty. It's utterly empty and it doesn't help you, doesn't keep you company. It's so much so, that it becomes a companionship. Is contradictory in some sense, but it is experience that you can feel that, that is what's known as state of shunyata, that point.

And I think it is important for you to understand and realize that there is what we are talking about throughout the practice of meditation is we are not talking about particularly getting better and getting enormous reward because you sat so much, you practice so much, you being truthful to the technique and everything. We're not talking in terms of getting reward of anything at all, but we are talking in terms of further desolation, further dissolving process necessary, and it is absolutely important point, and that's the seem to be the issue, seem to be tonight anyway. Whether tomorrow, or the day after, or tonight after this is, I leave it up to you

people. Well, however, we should continue, and maybe in order to continue, that you could ask some questions if you like, and we could discuss, and exchange. That if I should say too much, it becomes a further security, I suppose. [laughter]

Q. If all we have in store is further desolation, why do we keep sitting?

CTR. Because of it. Precisely. We sit because we haven't experienced ourselves. We sit because we haven't experienced our, our desolation. We sit because we haven't experienced enlightenment. And you have to sit until at end, you don't have any body any more.

Q. Rinpoche, assuming you do exist [laughs], what, where does the action of the bodhisattva come in, in, in this? It seems that in, at this time, practice only involves sitting and everything else is just [laughs], um, nothing then. It doesn't seem there's any, there's any purpose at all, at this point. There just doesn't seem any room for the bodhisattva. I mean there's, there's a definite difference when you take the vow of the bodhisattva, isn't there?

CTR. Well, I mean, that seem to be the basic point, that when you take a vow of a bodhisattva, and that you have an experience of that further desolation and further energy. That such desolation and such energy becomes a part of your existence, that you have no particular project. Therefore you become useful to society and sentient beings, and you just experience, express yourself as far as you could, you can. It's, it's question of that you can't be efficient. I mean it that's general sense that if you have, if you really like to be efficient, you have to be ego-less. To be really efficient, otherwise that efficiency gets in the way, or ego-hood gets in the way, and compassion becomes a problem, rather than inspiration.

Q. Thank you.

Q. After, after or when one has experienced or confronted one's aloneness, who's left? Or what's left? Who's the one that's [laughs] left alone? [laughter]

CTR. I think that's the, that, that which non-existent. That which doesn't exist. But at the same time, we have to be very careful here, when we talk about that which doesn't exist, which automatically by saying that that which doesn't exist, conditioned by existence, because therefore you can exist, you cannot exist. That there is the kind of flickering back and forth takes place, basically. But fundamentally, that the person who's experiencing whatever, is experience of non-existence, because there had to be too much boundary, too much scenery, that experience cannot take place unless there is non-existence scenery, non-existence boundary.

Q. Is there any such thing as grace in the Buddhist tradition?

CTR. Patience. Forbearance. Exertion. Which brings a sense of dignity, which is precisely what grace means. Is that some kind of sense of sanity begin to enter into your system.

From that point of view, Buddhist way of approaching the whole thing is very pragmatic, rather than mystical in terms of mystical schools of the theistic traditions.

Q. Un . . . Hello? [laughs] Until I am fully conscious, will, will there always be a teacher around, you know, inside my head, that . . .

CTR. Can you say that again?

Q. Until I'm fully aware, until I'm fully centered and fully always telling myself what to do right and doin' it [laughs], will there always be a teacher, you know, somewhere, even though I don't see him, or I do but I just don't, you know? Do you know what I mean?

CTR. I'm not quite sure what you're saying.

Q. Do you have to have a teacher until you're fully conscious? Is there always a teacher?

CTR. Well, I think teacher is expression of your duality, obviously. That there's you and the teacher. Until your notion of duality is completely fall apart, that you do need some teacher who's very personal and individual, who behaves like you in some sense, shares your human need, and who also dwells under the sky, rather than above the sky.

Q. Okay.

Q. Rinpoche, would you say that the hermit tradition of extensive retreat . . .

CTR. What tradition?

Q. Hermit. Hermit tradition of extensive retreat practices is a dead tradition?

Q. Hermit tradition.

CTR. Oh, hermit tradition. I think that depends on that if a hermit becomes a hundred percent hermit, that he goes into hermitage, and he, he died in it, he got buried in his hermitage itself, then he's somewhat a nuisance to society. But if hermit goes to hermitage and take his retreat, and then he going to share his experience with others, then that become a contribution of sanity to society.

Q. Rinpoche, is it important to read books and to study about shunyata? Or is it enough to just sit and do it?

CTR. Both. That's the recommendation. I think you have to do both, because you have learn how to read a book. In order to learn how to read a book, you have to experience what a book says so. So they both come together somewhat.

Q. When speaking about shunyata, you seem to be emphasizing the “form is emptiness” aspect, and you’ve touched upon that, in emptiness, there’s some form. But you haven’t said anything about form as form, and emptiness as emptiness.

CTR. I think *you* said it. [laughs, laughter]

Q. Okay.

CTR. You saying the same thing all over.

Q. Um, . . .

CTR. Sky is blue and blue is sky. Sky’s sky, and blue’s blue [laughter]. Saying the same thing. [applause, laughter]

Q. When you speak of the non-existence of things, what existence is there to compare them with? And . . .

CTR. Compare with?

Q. Yeah. When you speak of non-existence, what then exists to make it reasonable to speak of non-existence?

CTR. [laughs] Well, because non-existence exists. [laughter]

Q. Is, how is this different than the model of just speaking of the oneness of things? Say that non-existence is, or existence is, but either way, it’s one.

CTR. Well, if you have to prove by existence, you have to prove by one exists, because two exist, zero exist. Whereas if you have experience of existence and non-existence, they both work together. And when we talk about a oneness, we talk about a hundred million thousands billions and trillions, that we have introduced another issue. But if you talk about existence, non-existence, it’s just a life and death situation, and what’s could be beyond existence, there’s no serial numbers involved with that. There’s no computers necessary to sort out the problems.

Q. Okay.

CTR. Good luck, sir. [laughter] There’s lady over there.

Q. Is there a correlation between shunyata and the fourth moment?

CTR. Well, fourth moment is a part of shunyata. And shunyata seem to be much more violent and more desolate experience of the fourth moment. The fourth moment is coincidental, some kind of joke, somebody reminds you what’s happening. But shunyata is actually *it*, which is that’s why it’s more frightening and more desolate and more devastating.

Q. What is the fourth moment?

CTR. You tell me. That's it. [laughter, laughs]. There's gentleman in red over there.

Q. Well, like the first few times I came here it was really great. I thought I was getting something. I thought I was really understanding you and the, the last few talks have been kind of painful. [laughter, laughs] The quality of non-existence, could you say that, that although nothing exists, and it's a sense of an absolute, there is a relationship between the non-existence? Who knows? [laughter] That maybe in a, in a sense that like what you were saying about like we're, being here, like what we've come to understand, that maybe there's no, there's no meaning in that, but there does exist, some kind of meaningfulness in the relationship of us being here. [laughter, laughs] Right . . .

CTR. Well, I think we are beating the bush. [laughter]

Q. Okay. Um. How about this? [laughs, laughter, applause] That out of the [laughs, laughter} . . .

CTR. Yes? [laughter]

Q. [laughter] the fundamental, the quality of loneliness, or the fundamental quality of, of loneliness, within that, or in that is there, is something like a relationship with yourself born out of that?

CTR. Yourself?

Q. Yeah. [laughs, laughter]

CTR. Well, that's the point. . .

Q. 'Kay, may . . .

CTR that you don't exist, therefore you can't even be lonely. Usually when we talk about the superficial loneliness, is that you feel lonely because you don't have a companion or entertainment, things are too desolate, but this gets where we talk about there's consistent and continual knowing that, that exist in you, which means you begin to feel that, that you don't exist, so anything else might try to entertain, play music, entertain you, give you food and shelter, and crack jokes around you, but still, that there's a big hole inside you, which is, which can't, can't contain anything, and that's the basic loneliness that we are talking about, rather than purely situational loneliness. We are talking about bigger scale this point. That, that, that your stomach is has big hole, you can't contain anything, your breath or your food. That everything goes through.

Q. Thank you.

CTR. Good luck, sir. Think about it. I think it's important to look into that particular fundamental loneliness is the basic point of understanding shunyata experience, but you know, just don't abandon the idea, but just experience yourself, trying to find out how exist within your state of being. And it does exist in anybody's, everybody's state of experience. It is possible. It does happen all the time, including animals, doesn't have to be human being, particularly. That sense of a big hole, that you can't contain anything, that you're trying to ride your horse, that horse doesn't have a back. [laughs, laughter]

Q. If we are totally alone, how do we take refuge in the Buddha?

CTR. Because of it. Buddha was once a lonely person. He still is. That's possible that you can identify with the Buddha, that he doesn't exist and so do you. [laughter]

[message on screen: video tape runs out]

Q. Rinpoche, would you liken what seems to be going on to most of us in this room, in this room, more to a dream, or to a vacuum? You know? What kind of non-existence is it more like? [laughter]

CTR. More to dream?

Q. Excuse me?

CTR. More to dream, did you say?

Q. Yes, I said, would you liken it more to a dream, which seems very real to the dreamer until he wakes up, or to a vacuum, which just isn't there at all?

CTR. Well, I think I prefer to be in the vacuum, [laughter] than, than . . .

Q. I was afraid you'd say that. [Laughter]

CTR. . . . than, than to the dream. And we have too much dreams that been presented in the, in the course of Naropa Institute's program. [laughter] And there's not enough vacuum [laughter], that's been created in the programs of Naropa Institute [laughter] and I'm glad you're beginning to experience, appreciate that. Good luck, sir. We're talking [laughs] about vacuum probably we should close at this point. [laughs, laughter] There's some announcement I think need to be made, so please don't leave, which might concerns you.

Talk Six: Practice Day Talk
July 19, 1973, Karme Choling
Barnet, Vermont

Meditation practice is, well, from knowing oneself, rather than shielding oneself from one's neurosis. So therefore, it is not particularly regarded as pleasurable. But on the other hand, this does not mean a way of inflicting pain on ourselves, either. And it is a way of preventing further karmic seed, sowing in our being. That any activity, generally, any activity that we're involved, have a tendency to increase further activities, sowing seed for further activities. And this gives sitting meditation practice, is benefit [?] of doing nothing. And related with oneself. Particularly if you have a whole day practice, there it is, you find there is the less hassle, because one doesn't have to plan out what you are going to do after certain fixed term of sitting. And you have a whole day for yourself. And the idea is there to trying to find way of dissolving the sitting in the non-sitting stage. Your boundary becomes fuzzy. And so non-sitting practice becomes also sitting, somewhat. And also, such is like, a lot of people engaged in going to retreat, in terms of several days or months, also is similar idea, that dissolving the boundary between sitting and not sitting. Often, in many cases, sitting meditation brings up irritation, and all kinds of replaying one's experience of pain or pleasure, or memories of pain and pleasure, in reference to yesterday, or what will be tomorrow. And resentment as to why you are sitting and inflicting discomfort to yourself here. All kinds of questions. Who am I? What am I doing here? And those things are regarded as a natural thing to come up, rather than something that we should avoid.

One wouldn't expect a complete stayed with our thoughts in meditation practice in any case. The idea is being that thoughts become transparent, and they become livable, they become a natural part of the pattern rather than the heavy-handed, outstanding thing overcrowding. So the idea is to accommodate all the thoughts, and thoughts become somewhat transparent and neutral. And also there are some disciplines that it might be good for you to observe today. Trying to minimize unnecessary chatter, and also, if you have a tendency to quit later, try to stick. The day's not all that long. It would be good to throw ourselves back again and again, to ourselves. The whole thing is not a particular desire to develop a special kind of wariness, but it should be a natural intelligence pervading all the time, rather than being aware of some particular thing. So it would be good to remain present, rather than watching oneself.

I hope this sitting practice will inspire anyone who hasn't done it before, further sitting practice, which you want take part in with other friends or by yourselves. It would be good to repeat again. I wish you good luck.