

Mahamudra Aspiration of True Meaning  
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[Slokas 9 through 13]

Let's continue with this fantastic text. I'd like to remind us that our motivation should be for the attainment of enlightenment for the benefit of all beings, which is the reason why we are now participating in this session. If it doesn't come naturally, we have to do it manually. It is extremely important, as all teachers say, to take care of our motivation. Especially in the mahayana, the motivation is what rules.

The next verse, we have seen how in the context of ground, path and fruition, then we are now at the time of the path, because we haven't realized the ground and what to speak about the fruition. We have learned, received information, about the ground, but we have to actualize it. For that, we have to apply something. We remember in the previous verse that we said that which purifies is the vajra yoga of mahamudra. Here in a very few words he says, which we saw last time, the view meditation and conduct. These are the tools that we use in the path to dispel the obscurations that prevent us from perceiving the ground, our buddha nature, this empty lucidity. And then the meditation is that we become familiarized with the ground. In that way we are practicing the actual vajrayana system, which is that we sustain the view, the view meaning this vision that we've had of the ground. By sustaining that view then all that are untrue, invalid cognitions, kleshas and everything, start to fade away. So finally we started by recognizing the view and then we sustain that view, and that is the meditation, and finally by being familiarized with the view, we attain stability.

Meditation in this context is more related to the word *goms pa* [gets used to, familiarization], instead of *sgom pa* [meditating 3:07]. It means to grow accustomed to the view or become familiarized with the view. In other systems, particularly in mahamudra, they use mostly *semjungwa* [Tib. *sems byung wa* 3:27], which means to bring out the potential of the recognition of the view, but it's mostly referred to as being like familiarizing oneself with the view. Right now, we are not at all familiarized with the view but are extremely familiar with the view of "I", which rules absolutely all the different aspects of our life, cognition and emotions and feelings and so forth. But now we have to become familiarized and grow accustomed to a new view, which is the view of mahamudra, tgs or rigpa.

What is rigpa in the path? Rigpa in the ground is buddha nature. Rigpa on the path is somehow gap has been opened and our cognizance recognized its own essence of empty lucidity. That might last a few seconds, maybe more. It's a like glimpse of the ground, a glimpse of buddha nature. That is rigpa of the path. But because of habits, it will be covered again by dualistic notions and concepts and feelings and so forth, but then we have identified, which is very important. We have identified out of all the mind states that we have, which is rigpa, tgs. Therefore we can go back and

re-recognize rigpa again and again and by doing so it is extended which is the process of meditation.

Of course, meditation has to be of a certain kind. It cannot be the same as the meditation we applied in shamatha practice, or in deity practice of visualization and so forth. That is actually meditation. We are meditating. There is a state and it is something that does not accord with the meditation on the nature of mind. Why? In a few words it is because that meditation requires effort. Here it is a matter of knowing how to extend the rigpa, the nature of mind, in such a way that we do not intervene. The only way for that to happen is to allow rigpa, because rigpa itself has all the capacity to extend its continuity, as long as we don't intervene and try to extend it purposely and deliberately. That is called non-meditation.

Finally there is conduct. Conduct is not to be only understood as in daily life, when we resume our activities, which is the usual way that most teachings emphasize. And of course, that is also important, but conduct is a matter of how we respond to whatever happens. When we are sitting in formal meditation, many things are happening. Thoughts can arise. Emotions can arise. Perceptions can arise. How are we going to react or respond to whatever arises, in such a way as we do it from the presence of the view, within the stability of the view that we provide through meditation or non-meditation. Therefore conduct, in that sense, has to be a totally unified way of responding to whatever happens that has within that conduct the presence of the view, which is most important.

View is extremely important. It is so much emphasized. It is like the eyes that lead us where to go. Without the view, we will go to some other destination that we don't really know. There is a lot of emphasis on trying to understand what the view is, what the nature of mind is. That's why we take teachings and reflect. We need to have at least a mental image of how the nature of mind is and how the nature of mind is not, and what delusion is and what delusion is not. This will give us an idea of a mental image of what rigpa or tgs is. We know that if we do not have direct realization of recognition beyond words and concepts, which is only done through meditation, and also through pointing out instruction from a teacher, then we will never know exactly what the view is and we will remain with a conceptual representation of that view. That is called fabricating the view. It's not so uncommon. We've heard so many times and so many things and read so many books that when we sit in meditation, it may happen that we think that we are resting in a kind of fabrication, a contrived kind of view. That is something that we have to avoid.

We will go to the next verse because these three lines, view, meditation and conduct, actually explain the basics of the vajra yoga of mahamudra, which we mentioned before. We mentioned that we need to apply something, so in a very few words, the view, meditation and conduct are what we have to apply. Actually what happens is, actually the view is nothing. When the mind is there, the mind when we are meditating is the art of not doing anything. Rigpa, tgs, is really like an empty lucidity. From many points of view it is something that is quite non-productive. We invest so

much time in things that are productive and produce things. We produce money and all kinds of things, something that is a product of our effort. Here, it is something different. The whole door to wisdom is not doing anything and just remaining in this state, which is not blank, but also there is nothing to it. It is just lucidity, just cognizance, an empty lucidity, empty cognizance. We need to know why it is worthwhile devoting ourselves to something such as that. We are not used to that. We are used to applying effort, dedication and so forth, that we are producing something and here we are not really producing anything. In fact, producing something would be totally ruled out because that's part of the practice.

The following verses will give us much more conviction about the nature of the view and the nature of our perceptions and the nature of the ultimate state of reality, the nature of our minds. That will make us more convinced why it is worthwhile practicing this because then we'll have a clear view that can be sustained by logic and that is very important. Otherwise, if it cannot be sustained by philosophy and logic, then that view is something that is not invulnerable. It can be destroyed by some other kind of view, which can be sustained by logic.

When we talk about the view and what we will see then philosophy is something that helps us to have a clear image, which is a valid cognition of what that nature of mind is. But it can never give us exactly what it is because that is only something that can happen through direct realization, which is beyond thinking. It is unthinkable. It is unspeakable. It also cannot be described. That is the nature of the prajnaparamita. It is the nature of our minds. Philosophies are needed because that gives us a support, through our conviction through our intellectual human mind, that we are doing the right thing. As long we don't replace that mental image provided by philosophy for the actual experience, the direct realization of introduction to the nature of mind.

The next verse is [Sloka 9]:

*All phenomena are the illusory display of mind.  
Mind is devoid of 'mind'—empty of any entity.  
Empty and yet unceasing, it manifests as anything whatsoever.  
Realizing this completely, may we cut its basis and its root.*

In the mahayana, the whole point, the whole emphasis, is demonstrating that phenomena are empty. That was the main point, which was the second stage in turning wheel of dharma. That came after the first stage in which the teachings did not really deal with existence or non-existence of phenomena, but focused on the non-existence of the "I", the self, which provided a huge door to achieving peace and the liberation from samsara, but did not really provide a door or gate to omniscience, which is buddhahood. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> turning of the wheel of dharma, it's mostly about perceptions. Perceptions were left apart in the whole system of the theravada. The whole thing is mostly about the "I". But in the second turning,

Buddha includes all phenomena because it was left aside in the 1<sup>st</sup> wheel of the dharma.

The main point is prajnaparamita and pointing that things don't have independent, inherent existence. They lack intrinsic identity, and because of that lacking any identity, any kind of inherent existence, they are void. They are empty of any self and of phenomena. That contrasts with our way of perceiving everything, because we perceive everything as real and concrete. In the third wheel of dharma, Buddha said that mind is not mind. The nature of mind is luminosity. Then there is much emphasis on the mind that is experiencing and perceiving the "I" and all the phenomena and everything and how it is connected with phenomena. And since mahamudra belongs to that system and it emphasizes that aspect of luminosity and emptiness, then all these different verses deal with that. They include phenomena and also include the relationship between phenomena and mind.

Here it says,

*All phenomena are the illusory display of mind.*

In some sutras and some other texts we read that everything is mind. That is a way in which teachings are presented. One may think everything is totally idealist [?], that everything is just mind. According to the highest teachings of madyamaka, mahamudra and dzogchen, there is a certain difference. We cannot really say that everything is mind. There is a difference between *nangwa* [Tib. *snang ba*], which would be the perception that we have in our mind, and *nangyul* [Tib. *snang yul*] appearing object, which would be the objects that are being perceived. How these objects that are being perceived? Longchenpa says that it's not that those who believe that everything is mind. They are mistaken. We can't really say that. We can say that everything is contrived by the mind, everything is a product of the mind, made by the mind. One of the main tantras of dzokchen is this *kunje gyalpo*<sup>1</sup> [18:06], which means, "All-Creating Monarch". That all-created monarch refers to mind. It is our mind essence that creates everything. It is our mind that contrives everything, but that and phenomena are not exactly mind. They are produced by the mind.

We have seen that phenomena, on a kind of superficial kind of reasoning, we can see that they cannot have intrinsic identity. They can't be real and can only exist by dependent origination or interdependence and based on that the only way that they can exist is like a dream, or an illusion, or hallucination, or an image in a mirror, and so forth. They have that illusory nature because they are not permanent, not singular and are not autonomous. We saw that. If we take for example a flower, a rose, and that rose is reflected in the mirror so that image in the mirror is equivalent

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<sup>1</sup> Kulayaraja Tantra, All-creating King Tantra. The main tantra of the mind category of dzokchen.  
[https://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/The\\_Dzogchen\\_Tantras](https://rywiki.tsadra.org/index.php/The_Dzogchen_Tantras)  
[https://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Kulayaraja\\_Tantra](https://www.rigpawiki.org/index.php?title=Kulayaraja_Tantra)

to the illusory kind of rose. That image in the mirror is not the rose but it also isn't something different from the rose. It's not that it's reflecting a tree or elephant. It's reflecting a rose. Another reason why there is a rose there and it's not at that point an elephant is because there is one thing that is called one's own perception, one's own karmic perception, and then there is also a collective or common kind of karmic perception of other beings, particularly human beings. Because of the coincidence with the collective karmic perception of other beings, at that point then, that flower, which is the object of our perception, appears as a flower and not as an elephant. So here there is one thing, which is that it is one's own projection because we share the same karmic perception of other beings, and particularly human beings. I don't know what a bee sees when they see a flower or what a dog sees, or a worm sees, because each one has their own karmic perception. The whole point is that the image that appears is the same as we are saying.

We have come to a conclusion by analyzing that things are not singular, permanent and autonomous, that they are like an image. But then what happens in the dualistic mind is that we do not think that is an image. We take it as something real because the mind is already solidified or reified, in the form of the "I" and also then there is the other, which is the other object. All other objects appear dualistically only because of our habits. Because of our habitual tendencies then they manifest in our karmic perception and contribute to the common perception of forming that flower and that flower is a rose and it appears as a rose as a common perception with other beings. In fact, it only appears but is not really true. Therefore, there is a connection between the mind that is perceiving that rose and the rose itself in the sense that it is mind-created. Somehow, we are perceiving an image of the rose, which is within our own perception. Within our own perception then all the different kleshas are active. Then we might react like we like the rose or reject the rose, and so forth. That is the  *nangwa* . That is the perception.  *Nangyul*  would be the object, which is the flower. You see how these two are connected?

The only way there is an image appearing is in our minds. When we make a distinction between something being mind or being something contrived by the mind, or produced by the mind, like the analogy of the sun and sunlight. Sunlight is produced by the sun, but the sunlight is not the sun. It is produced by the sun. We cannot say these two things are exactly the same. But at the same time there would not be sunlight if there were not a sun. Therefore sunlight is not the sun, but it is not other than the sun. This can be applied to the whole of phenomena and we are keeping within that vision in which things are not mind. They are produced by the mind, but ultimately they are not different from the mind. It is maybe a subtle difference but it applies here:

*All phenomena are the illusory display of mind.*

How is that display of mind? If it is the display of mind, then it is illusory, the illusory display of mind.  *Rangnang*  [Tib.  *rang snang* ] is a very important term here.  *Rangnang* , which is display, means our own perception. It is our own projection. The

whole phenomena is our own projection. We'll see it in the next verse. It is our own perception. And there is the *shennang* (Tib. *gzhan snang*), which is the perception of others. Here it is saying that everything is one's own projection.

This also can be seen in a deeper way with something common to hear in the mahamudra teachings, which is dharmakaya and coemergence. The first line is: \_\_\_\_\_ [Tib. 25:02]. Coemergent mind, innate mind, mind essence, is the dharmakaya. So dharmakaya and mind essence are equalized. It's not two different things. That means to say mind essence. Still there hasn't been any display from that mind essence. That's dharmakaya. What happens when there is a display of phenomena. \_\_\_\_\_ [Tib.25:34]. That means to say that coemergent phenomena, when you see that within phenomena that you are perceiving, actually it is a manifestation of dharmakaya. That is what dharmakaya's light is. It's the radiance of dharmakaya or the light of dharmakaya. Dharmakaya can be perceived in absolutely everything. The whole of phenomena is embraced by what is called *tigle* \_\_\_\_\_ [Tib. 25:05], the single sphere of dharmakaya. That is the main view of mahamudra.

In mahayana, the prajnaparamita, the essence of all phenomena is emptiness. But in the mahamudra system, the essence of all phenomena is dharmakaya, which is totally connected to our minds. It is our mind essence. Why is it coemergent phenomena? It is because dharmakaya is always present within phenomena. It only appears to us as being real, as being mountains, trees and so forth. It is because our habits have kind of distorted the manifestation of dharmakaya within our minds and therefore they become like ice, but they never cease to be water of dharmakaya.

A third line was added afterwards. I think the first two lines were expressed by Gampopa, but the third by a disciple of Gampopa. And then he said that thoughts, coemergent thoughts, are like the waves of dharmakaya. It has a little more poetry. Then it means there is a flow, a moving aspect of the dharmakaya, which is thoughts. Of course that can also be included in the second one, which is \_\_\_\_\_ [Tib. 27:34], like the waves of dharmakaya. Here it is kind of about the same thing. The only reason things appear to us as separate and also as true objects is because of our habits. These habits are all stored in the alaya. They condition the alaya vijñana to function in a dualistic way and from there all the display of the different aspects of consciousness like the afflictive consciousness where the "I" and the other are formalized, and also the 6<sup>th</sup> consciousness, which is intellect that classifies everything that is perceived by the five sensory consciousnesses, this whole group of the 8 consciousnesses is dominated by the force of habits, which is a result of our karmic actions which were done within the structure of duality, meaning conceptually. That's what we are doing all the time, mentally, verbally, and physically. As long as we have not transcended the view of "I", which is dualistic, self and other, and are functioning from the nature of mind in which duality does not really exist. Of course, when we say duality doesn't exist, it doesn't mean that you can't really function because everything has become like a soup in which there is no duality between subject and object. All it says is that this radicalized reification that we give

to the “I” and to all the objects, and all phenomena, and all thoughts, and all emotions, everything, because they seem to our eyes to be real, that duality of subject and object is totally separate from the way that we are perceiving it now. When we are in the nature of mind and we operate and function from the nature of mind, of course there will be some duality. But, it will be like a mere duality, otherwise you wouldn’t be able to do your shopping or take a shower or do anything. The only thing that changes is that a virus of duality and reification has been taken away from our perception so our perception, everything, becomes mere. There is a mere “I”, a mere Gerardo who will buy a mere kilo of mere potatoes, and will be paid for with mere money. Everything is mere. As long as we are in that empty lucidity, then everything is just a mere conceptual designation. It exists and functions, and it does exist and function as we saw, because they are empty. Otherwise they would never exist. Nothing could possibly exist at our conventional level unless each single phenomenon lacked this intrinsic identity, or inherent existence, or the many ways [to call] this independent existence. The whole phenomena are a magical display of the mind or illusory display of mind. [31:00]

What about mind? There are schools of thought that become a little bit funny, discussions of the schools of thought.

*Mind is devoid of ‘mind’—empty of any entity.*

That is the madyamaka kind of view. In yogacara view, they don’t say exactly the same thing. They say everything is a projection of the mind but the mind is *rangrik*. It has some sort of existence. That school of thought is extremely profound. When you study the Madyamavata by Chandrakirti, then he holds the madyamaka view, particularly the prasangika view. Then in two pages he destroys all the philosophical views that exist in the theravada and also the non-buddhist views. He deals with all the different views that exist in the different approaches, but when it comes to mind only school, then most of the book is debate between the mind only school and madyamaka, because it’s extremely profound. Dzokchen and mahamudra are based on the madyamaka view, and particularly the prasangika view. That is why it says, mind is no mind. Mind is devoid of mind. It is empty of any entity.

Up until now we have seen that everything is a magical manifestation of our mind. Somehow we understood that, but then we might believe that the mind has existence. Everything is like illusion, but the mind has existence. That would comfort us a lot, right? Otherwise it’s like everything is illusion. If you take the Heart Sutra, everything is demolished and everything is empty. Everything is illusory. Even omniscience is illusory. Even the Buddha is illusory. We wish that, okay, now everything is illusion. Now, [we think], “I know that I’m deluded and I take everything that is illusory as something real, but I hope that when I find the truth, that is actually real.” No. Even that is also an illusion. Buddha was enlightened and came and said that you are all illusory, but I am real. Not at all. Everything has the same common nature. Everything is emptiness in nature, even Buddha, even the nature of mind, even the ground and buddha nature.

Of course, there is a big difference compared to Buddha, although this never ceases to be an illusion, because of our confusion and delusion of ignorance, we take it to be real. It is illusory, all the time, and we are all the time confused about it and we take it as real. That is caused by duality and reification, whereas, Buddha is never confused. For Buddha, everything continues to always be an illusion, so no confusion there. But there is another aspect, which is our common perception right now, which is deluded, also it is not a valid cognition, meaning there is no truth in it. It is some kind of fiction or falsity. Whereas at the buddha level, everything is an illusion, but also it is true. That is also a valid cognition. So that is also a slight difference between one experience and another experience.

Mind is not mind.

*Mind is devoid of mind.*

What does that mean? When we look for the mind, no mind means that there is no concrete kind of entity that we can point to after searching, trying to touch it with our hands, trying to intellectually reduce it and try to go deeper and deeper, subtler and subtler, until we find finally, I found this. This is mind and out of this, this reproduces or whatever and from there everything happens.

But mind has an atom or particle of existence, as it is considered in the theravada system, or sravaka, system. Consciousness, each instant of consciousness has an independent existence, they say. But here, not even that. You cannot find because it doesn't have colour. It doesn't have shape. It is not big. It is not small. There is nothing that you can really find when you are looking for mind.

That is what is meant by *mind is devoid of mind*. It doesn't have anything concrete. It is empty of any entity. Then you say that if it's no mind, then it doesn't exist. Because when we talk and we say that something does not exist then we say that it is empty. It doesn't exist at all. They say like horns on a rabbit or something like that, but that's another case. They say that it is,

*Empty and yet unceasing and it manifests as anything whatsoever.*

That's the magic about it. That's what's transcendent about it. It cannot be said to be existent, but then we can also not say that it doesn't exist. It is continually happening. In which way does it happen? It happens like an illusion. It doesn't have an existence as such, but also it manifests everything. It manifests our feelings, our emotions, our sensations, our ideas, and our opinions. We cannot rule it out. We cannot say that mind does not exist at all. Then, it would collide with our experience. Buddha would never go against something that collides with this type of approach. Therefore the mind is not mind because it doesn't have anything concrete about it. We cannot say that it exists on an ultimate level. But, within our conceptual mind we fall into it's nothing. But that is not the case.



In our own experience we cannot say we don't have a mind. We are participating now in this session. If we didn't have a mind then this session couldn't possibly happen. The computer couldn't happen. Zoom couldn't happen. My words couldn't happen. Your hearing wouldn't happen. Therefore we cannot say that mind is nothing. It is constantly appearing. Because it is empty, then everything can appear from that. Being empty doesn't mean it is nothingness, because from nothingness nothing can appear. If it were only nothing there wouldn't be anything that we would be experiencing—no thoughts, no feelings, also no perceptions, no objects, nothing in phenomena and so forth. It is not blocked by void and yet at the same time, when we talk about the clarity, which is where everything appears, within lucidity, where we have lucidity and emptiness, this union of empty lucidity, phenomena, thoughts and everything. Everything that manifests belongs to the category of lucidity. Emptiness, what provides this immense kind of aspect it provides is that nothing really exists and because of that everything can happen. Where does it happen? It happens in the clarity, in the luminosity aspect of mind, which is empty also. And that is unceasing and also it doesn't block. The reason why it doesn't block is because it is not nothingness. It is just emptiness. It just lacks, mind itself also lacks true existence.

The essence of mind is empty. That is dharmakaya. It's lucid nature is sambhogakaya. And this is an indivisible unity, which is the incessant or unobstructed or unimpeded energy of compassion, or compassionate energy, which is the third quality that opens up the door to all our buddha qualities. Everything arises from this third quality: samsara and nirvana. Everything arises from our buddha nature, from dharmakaya, dharmakaya's light. That's buddha nature. Dharmakaya's light is phenomena. Dharmakaya's waves are thoughts and emotions and so forth.

*Empty and yet unceasing, it manifests as anything whatsoever.  
Realizing this completely, may we cut its basis at its root.*

We are still at the stage of learning and it is important to assimilate all these different aspects. This is receiving the teachings and reflecting. Of course, the best scenario would be that we actualize that and we realize it because we have recognized the nature of mind as being empty, lucid, unobstructed compassionate energy. Therefore, in that way, we cut the root and basis of delusion that prevent us from seeing that all phenomena are the illusory display of the mind, instead of seeing it through the lens of delusion that everything has its own existence and they are called things that are real, and that the mind also has some kind of existence. That is also part of delusion. So we cut what is called the dualistic mind root and basis. What makes that kind of cognizance of the dualistic mind is delusion. Delusion is the root and the basis of that dualistic mind. If we eliminate delusion we eliminate the mistake. That's all we do. Taking out the mistake, which is delusion and confusion, and then we see the truth. Within the vision of the truth, all phenomena are mind and mind is empty and so forth.

[Sloka 10:]

*We have mistaken our nonexistent personal experience to be the objects,  
And by the power of ignorance, mistaken self-cognizance to be a 'self'.  
This dualistic fixation has made us wander in the sphere of samsaric  
existence.  
May we cut ignorance and confusion at the very root.*

This is more or less the same. In Tibetan teachings, they come again and again to amplify the understanding. They are all our own projections, but because of delusion, which is a mistake, instead of seeing everything as an expression of rigpa, of our own mind, in the ultimate sense, then we are seeing it as independent entities that have little to do with us, except when they come in contact, momentary contact, interaction with things. Apart from that, everything has its own rules and everything moves on their own and has nothing to do with us. That is the way we perceive because we are so set in dualistic perception. But actually, whatever we perceive never had any kind of existence but we see it as having existence because we don't realize that they are just our own projections. In an ultimate way, they are the manifestation of dharmakaya, the radiance or light of dharmakaya.

But in our perception now, we are ruled by our own perception. Everything we see is our own perception. We cannot see much beyond that. The only problem is that we think all these different things have their own life, their reason to be, and they appear to us as real. It's not so difficult to see that inanimate things are one's mind's projection. We need to think about it, of course, because they don't appear to us like that.

What happens when it comes to a sentient being, a being that thinks, has their own problems, goes to therapy, are born, grow up, have pain, happiness? Do we create beings also? Actually, we don't create beings and we also don't create mountains, trees and so forth, but we do create our own experience, our own conception of that. If I take a person, for example John, do I create John? We said before that mind contrives everything so maybe we could say that I created John. I'm sure that John wouldn't agree with me because John has his own life and maybe doesn't even know about me, like so many people in the world that don't know about me. So, how can I say that I create them? The teachings don't say that I create John himself. But I do create my perception of John, my own perception of John, of table, of mountain, of car, and so forth. That is all my own creation. Then I go back. There will be tables and mountains and John, also, because there is a shared perception among human beings, so there is a John for other people also, as well as there is for me. But all I can say is that I create my own perception of John. That is valid, but I don't create John.

Our perception is what changes when we walk on the path. At the beginning, now, our karmic perception is impure. It is called impure perception because it is totally governed and formed, and modeled by karma. Each being has their own perception. Each of the six kinds of being has their own perception. Within the animal realm also

there is some karmic perception different from one to the other. A dog's perception will not be the same as a fish's perception. Even within the realm of dogs, maybe a Rottweiler won't have the same perception as a Chihuahua and so forth. Everybody has their own karmic perception. They are all considered to be impure because they are karmic and they are not based on the knowledge of emptiness.

When we talk about purity, there is an impure thing when one generates bad karma. We say it is impure karma. But that's not the point here. From the point of view of wisdom, what is called pure or impure is whether it accords with reality or not. So pure is when emptiness is present in our perception, that perception becomes pure. Impure is no matter how much pure we have as a perception, because we are so pure that we act always with compassion and the paramitas and everything, so we are really such a pure being. That has nothing to do with it. Of course, it is much better. We are coming much closer to realizing emptiness. But, pure means empty. When we say dharmakaya is *kadak*, the primordial purity, it's not because it's purity because it never killed anything and became impure. It is pure because that is the nature of reality. In essence it is empty, so therefore it is pure. And emptiness is present in that cognizance of the dharmakaya, lucid emptiness. Then when we reach the first bhumi, it becomes pure perception. In any case, view, meditation and conduct, each yana has view, meditation and conduct. Each of the four tantras has view, meditation and conduct. Mahamudra has its own view, meditation and conduct, which is what we are seeing here.

When we talk about my own perception, then I can talk about my own perception and that is what will change. Our own perception, our own experience, is what registers whatever we do on the path. The world might change or not. We have no part about that except maybe if we have sublime qualities people will become attracted to us, like we are attracted to lamas and higher beings that we have met. Apart from that, it's not that our whole purpose is changing the world. The world has its own karmic rules and everything, interdependences. That's another thing but we have total capacity of changing our perception and changing our perception and notion and concept of body, and concept of speech and concept of mind. That's why dharma is also good for body, speech and mind, because it changes our concept of body. Eventually, it will become vajra body. See what changed? It began, I'm perceiving my human body with lungs and everything. This is Gerardo body. Then with practice, eventually, I will experience what I used to call body, as a vajra body, vajra speech, and vajra mind. So, there is a big influence in our perception according to the practice that we do. [52:02]

Once I read in the Prajnaparamita of 8,000 Slokas, which is a dialogue between Subhuti and Buddha. Subhuti was an extremely intelligent disciple of Buddha. He's actually from the theravada but also is a bodhisattva because he is in all the prajnaparamita sutras. Buddha asked Subhuti a very interesting question. He asked, "Why is a bodhisattva sattva?" Sattva means courageous. What is the courage of a bodhisattva? What does it consist of? Why do you call a person who is a bodhisattva courageous? What would I think? Maybe most of us think because also then the

teachings of mind training and the 37 practices of a bodhisattva, the 7-line mind training, then the bodhisattva is courageous because he's ready to give up his body, his head, his arms, his eyes, whatever beings need, because he has that courage. He's not thinking about himself, only thinking about others. He has enormous courage to do these incredible compassionate acts of sacrifice. But Subhuti doesn't answer that. He says, "A bodhisattva is courageous because he sets out, not only this life, but all his lives, to liberate all beings knowing all the time that there is not a single being to be liberated. We are all fictions. All sentient beings, they never have a true existence. It's all like a movie where everything is happening, but nothing is really happening at the same time.

Of course, for us, it really is happening and when we have a toothache then we suffer, and when we lose someone really dear, we really suffer, because everything is so real to us. But that is only a product of confusion of ignorance. It does not represent the reality of things. The reality of things is that nothing really exists, which is quite outrageous and so contrary to our common perception. Beings don't exist. Karma doesn't exist. Nothing really has that kind of existence. It's all a product of this lens that we have of the karmic perception that makes us experience everything in terms of reality and also as real. What happens when I become enlightened because if nothing exists then when I become enlightened, what happens with all beings? Because I'm saying that I have a perception of all beings that belongs to me and that perception is what will change according to my level of realization.

My level of realization can be for example the third yoga of mahamudra of one taste in which materiality completely dissolves because mind and phenomena become inseparable. Therefore you can go through walls and you can do all kinds of things because everything has been realized at that point, not only as being illusory, like in the second yoga of mahamudra of simplicity, but a step forward. Already there is tantra there. The first two yogas of mahamudra are like madyamaka, but from a mahamudra point of view, which is of course important. But the third one is really when the mahamudra vajrayana teachings start to come and vajrayana mahamudra realization starts to happen, this essence mahamudra. That is the 3<sup>rd</sup> yoga. Still, it's all our perception. What used to be like a solid wall now becomes like cognitive energy. That's all. Everything is made of mind energy, wisdom energy. When we become enlightened or when we become buddha, what happens with all the beings that we saw? What happens with all the mountains and the oceans, trees and lakes? Everything dissolves in mahamudra and in trekchö, both, because mahamudra and trekchö are said to be the same. There is a difference in the access. Mahamudra takes the dualistic mind as path and trekchö, from the very beginning, takes wisdom as the path. But once we realize rigpa or thamel gyi shepa, it is exactly the same. Many teachers say that. Longchenpa says that.

So, what happens? *lo se cho se* [Tib. *blo zad chos zad*]. [57:49] *Lo* means conceptual, concepts. Concepts are completely exhausted at that time, but *cho se*, meaning even phenomena completely dissolves. These phenomena that we are seeing are only sustained by our deluded perception. Therefore, this whole phenomena disappears

and what is left is what has always been the projector, so to speak, which is dharmakaya and rupakaya. The whole experience is a display. The whole experience is a display of the three kayas, which means a display of primordial wisdom.

Within that is also discussion of whether we see beings or not and within that, according to many teachers, like Karma Lingpa and Tsongkhapa, and many others, they say that yes, they will see beings that are tormented by delusion and so forth, but it will all be like images in a mirror. No matter what images happen in a mirror, horrible images or beautiful images, the mirror is totally unaffected. Here, it is all an expression of compassion and that's why they emanate and perform enlightened activity.

It becomes a bit tricky when you start to say that if everything is a projection of my mind, then I created John, because we've been saying that I created the mountain. It is not the mind, but it's a creation of mind, so I also created... No, that's not the case. I create my perception of John. What happens at enlightenment is that our contribution of our karmic perception to the general karmic perception is taken away. We cease to contribute with all other karmic perceptions of sentient beings because now we are from the truth, which is the 3 kayas.

First is regarding the objects. Because of mistaken beliefs and because of delusion, objects are not real. We saw that they are not permanent, not singular, not autonomous. They are not real. They are just like a mirage and hallucination. But also, they are the mind's projection. The projector of that is our mind, our cognizance. Instead of realizing self-knowing awareness, which is the nature of mind, there is a mistake there, which is caused by delusion. Because of ignorance, then because of confusion, we are confused. Instead of taking our essence as being empty lucidity, we took it as a self.

Empty lucidity is self-knowing awareness, which is here. It says that we have

*mistaken self-knowing awareness to be a self.*<sup>2</sup>

We are constantly mistaking that. Each instant of our consciousness has the opportunity to see that self-knowing awareness or to see itself as a self and we always fail the first one and we go back again and again to the second one. Why? Because of habit. Because of the alaya. As long as we have alaya then we are prone to fall into the duality, even bodhisattvas. Bodhisattvas have not exhausted the alaya. That's why there are several bhumis, because at the time of formal meditation, all bodhisattvas, whatever experience they are having at that time of emptiness, the object, so to speak, is emptiness. There are certain differences in the strength, or clarity or lucidity of that, but actually there is no big difference because all formal

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<sup>2</sup> *rangrik* is translated in this line as 'self-knowing awareness' by Gerardo. 'Self-cognizance' is used In Erik Pema Kunzang's translation, Song of Karmapa, the translation that we are following in this seminar.

meditations are the same. But there are differences in post-meditation experiences. In the post-meditation experiences they have a lot of affinity and also familiarity with emptiness. Because of the alaya, then sometimes they fall into duality and then they go back to nature of mind, but then they fall into duality. The only reason they fall into duality, of course in a much subtler way than we do, is because they have not exhausted the alaya and the alaya will keep on bugging them, like sending consciousness into a dualistic perception.

We already said because of *trulpa* [Tib. *’khrul pa* 1:02:43], which means delusion, we have taken our own projections as separate entities and given them real status. It is the same with our own mind essence. We have mistaken it, instead of seeing that it is actually empty in essence. No, it is not empty. It is a kind of frozen clarity in which we are all set [1:03:10] right now, dualistic clarity that reifies I and reifies other. That is the way we are always. The whole world is a result of this frozen kind of clarity. It is frozen because it lacks the awareness of its own empty essence.

*This dualistic fixation has made us wander in the sphere of samsaric existence.*

This is a very important line. It is duality that makes us [wander in the sphere of samsaric existence]. That’s why I repeat again, duality. Once we have reified the object and reified the subject, then they are dual. In our cognizance they are two entities that are independent from each other, which is not the case. This duality, we all have it. Even animals have it, worms, ants. When an ant sees a grain of sugar and approaches it, it sees it as something outside. The ant is not philosophizing or anything. It’s just a natural instinctive way of reacting completely governed by its own habits, but not much different than us, I’m sorry to say. We are much more sophisticated, more educated, more advanced in so many things, and have much more detailed discernment about things and knowables, but actually duality is exactly the same in us, as it is in ants and in the world. What affects us and makes us a samsaric being is duality.

What comes first, duality or reification? It is difficult to say. The teachings say duality came first. In the explanation of dzokchen, when the youthful vase broke and all the movements of this primal wisdom manifesting as lights happened, and then Samantabhadra was the only one who immediately saw it as their own [1:05:20] experience, their own projection, and all of us saw it as a separate thing, duality. Because of duality there is already reification. Then “I” exists and if “I” exist, then other also exists. This is all just delusion, but dualistic fixation is the one that matters the most here.

In the highest levels of samsara, those who are resting in absorption, the devas of the formless realm, they are almost like mahamudra realization, almost. But, it’s not like that. Infinite consciousness [1:06:03] and infinite space, neither consciousness and so forth... come pretty close to this emptiness and mind essence, but no, they still

have a duality of a notion of a meditator that is resting on that absorption. What keeps them being a samsaric being is duality.

*May we cut ignorance and confusion at the very root.*

Again, what is the cause of this delusion? It is that we are not aware of our own essence.

[Sloka 11:]

*It is not existence since even the victorious ones do not see it.  
It is not nonexistent since it is the basis of samsara and nirvana.  
This is not a contradiction, but the Middle Way of unity.  
May we realize the nature of mind, free from extremes.*

This is about the same. It's this way of the teaching, when the more you repeat it, the more established it will be. Again, we cannot say that then mind is existent. When we try to find the essence of mind, we don't find anything. We might think that we don't find anything because we are deluded. Of course, we are deluded, but we don't find anything is because it is not existent. Not even the buddhas, who know the three times and space and everything because they are omniscient, not even they have seen it. By nature it is non-existent. It is not that it is non-existent that because of our delusion we cannot find it. Even the buddhas have not seen it. It doesn't have shape, or colour. It doesn't have a concrete thing. There is nothing that can confirm and corroborate that ultimately there is some kind of "mindness" in mind. There is no such thing, so we cannot say that it is existent.

But our dualistic mind cannot conceive that immediately if we cannot see that it is existent then of course it is non-existent. They are mutually exclusive. If it is existent, then it is not non-existent, and either way. Then here it says, no. We cannot say that it is non-existent because it is the basis, the ground, of samsara and nirvana. As we saw, dharmakaya light or dharmakaya's radiance is all of phenomena. So, there is phenomena coming. We cannot say that dharmakaya doesn't exist. We cannot affirm that it is non-existent. Something is happening. Again, this is repetition but something is really happening, within us, feelings, thoughts, emotions, opinions, and also whatever we perceive with the 5 senses. The whole world of samsara and the whole experience of the qualities of enlightenment, they all come from the same basis. One basis. Two paths. One basis is always the dharmakaya. From there, if it is recognized, it is enlightenment and if it is not recognized and mistaken to be the *sem*, that is samsara.

Everything comes from the same source. Last time I mentioned *kunshi*, all-ground. All-ground consciousness, *kunshi namshe* would be like all-ground or alaya vijñana. That is the basis of samsara. Then all-ground *kunshi yeshe* would be all-ground wisdom. That is dharmakaya wisdom. Wisdom and dharmakaya are not two

different things. Rigpa, wisdom, and dharmakaya, we are talking about the same things, which is the basis, the ground.

We cannot say it is non-existent because of course everything appears and there are qualities of Buddha and there are also the faults of samsara and sufferings and beings and whatever happens there is a manifestation. That means to say that the only way that we can bring these two things so that they are not contradictory is the middle way. Of course we can only corroborate that through meditation. We cannot corroborate it through reflection or through meditation, although we can come to a kind of knowledge based on inference, but that doesn't mean that we have really corroborated it. The only way that we can corroborate that is through meditation because meditation changes our cognizance and helps its own power of cognizance, of lucidity of the mind, to drop all the shackles of duality and reification. It can only be done by itself. Rigpa has the power to do that. TGS has the power to do that, but we have to be careful to provide an environment for that power and that capacity to manifest and be effective. That is our job. How is that going to be done? When we talk about meditation. Still we are talking about mostly the nature of the mind.

*This is not a contradiction.*

It is a contradiction to our conceptual mind, but who cares? We know that our conceptual mind is faulty. It's only sustained by delusion and habits that are fed and completely reinforced again and again by our deluded perception. Therefore, we cannot really put a lot of confidence and trust in our conceptual mind, which will not accept that mind essence is neither existent nor non-existent. It cannot be said either or other. It is free from any kind of extreme and that is the beauty of the middle way of unity. When you realize the middle way, when we realize madyamaka, we see that these two are not contradictory because it is not something existent and at same time everything arises from it, so we cannot say it is non-existent.

This points out the nature of mind having no limitations. It cannot be the extreme of existence, which means the extreme of materialism, eternalism, permanence. We have already discarded that. And also the extreme of non-existence, which is a nihilistic kind of view. It is said that the sage does not fall into the extreme of existence and also does not fall into the extreme non-existence, but walks on the middle way. But should he dwell middle then he has also lost his path. The middle way isn't a new view, a solid view that we have to dwell in. It's just the view where all the different propositions about the nature of reality are completely refuted. Buddha said, "Because I never asserted anything, because of that I am totally flawless." The madyamaka system never asserts anything. If you are going to assert something, then already you are missing the point. That would be dwelling in the middle way. But the middle way means it is neither existent, nor non-existent, but doesn't affirm anything. Neither this, nor that. It completely refutes any kind of philosophical principle. It does not affirm anything or assert anything. That's why it's flawless. When the Dalai Lama does a teaching, his favourite kind of prayer says, speaking to Gautama, that because you have come to the world to destroy all views,



because of that, I have prostrated to you. I think maybe Nagarjuna made that. That is this. When we talk about view, view, view, view of mahamudra, view of dzokchen. And then we have point of view. Then we have a new point of view. Again, we are warned again and again that the highest view of mahamudra is the non-view and the highest view of dzokchen is the non-view. View would be like again reifying some kind of point of reference and we have to go beyond any kind of point of reference.

It becomes quite transcendent. That is the beauty of transcendence. Transcendence in many other types of spiritual paths, seeing God or going to paradise, you transcend this world of suffering and so forth, and sin and virtue and the whole thing, but in Buddhism transcendence is so to the point. My cognizance right now is fixating on reality, is fixating on duality. Is it really grasping at anything or not? In the first case, then we are not transcending. When we don't grasp at anything, or fixate on anything, when we have transcended with, our minds are not locked within duality, that is transcendence. That is buddha. That is buddha nature. It's as simple as that and as complicated to realize as that, but it really boils down to that.

*May we realize the nature of mind, free from extremes.*

We saw that.

[Sloka 12 at 1:17:52:]

*Nothing can illustrate it by the statement, "this is it."*

*No one can deny it by saying, "this is not it."*

*This nature transcending concepts is unconditioned.*

*May we realize this view of true meaning.*

Again we are going to approach the mind trying to illustrate it. We are going to use the intellect and if we use the intellect we are trying to express a description of mind essence which will never be exactly the same as mind essence. We will use analogies, but analogies are always going to be faulty because we are using conceptual mind and conceptual mind doesn't really know what essence of mind is, although it is always present within it.

It's still functioning at the level of the ice and never perceiving the water in that analogy. Analogies can give us an approximation of what that is. But we have to see that there is absolutely no analogy that can be so exact as saying, "It is this". Also, there is nothing that we can say to prove that it is not this. Mahamudra—we cannot say it is not this. We cannot say it is not the essence of mind. It is this or it is not this. They are all formulations that come from our conceptual mind. We use all kinds of names: mind essence, tgs, buddha nature, rigpa, dharmadhatu, dharmata, prajnaparamita, buddha nature, sugatagarbha, tathagatagarbha, so many different words. We can give any kind of name to it because in its essence, it is nameless. It doesn't have any name. Nothing can illustrate it with a certain name because names are all productions of our concepts.

Even philosophy is based on concepts. That's a liability of philosophy. It can give us a fantastic definition and image but it can never really bring us to that. The problem with philosophy is that it really enhances our intellect. One who is really studied, it happens with quite a few scholars, they become so fascinated by words and conclusions that through analyzing and through debates and logic that then they don't really approach the nature of mind from other things that don't have much to do with intellect, for instance devotion, compassion. They always take to developing the intellectual mind, which is a view and a path. I'm not negating it. I'm saying that it has some kind of parallel [1:21:37], that maybe you get stuck, fascinated by conclusions which are only analytical conclusions based on thoughts and concepts, and concepts are dualistic.

Therefore we cannot say that it is this. We cannot say it is not that.

*This nature transcending concepts is unconditioned.*

Again, we are talking about the nature of mind. You cannot really freeze it by saying it is this and you cannot really deny it by saying it is not that. We are talking about what can we use in terms of concept to define it properly and completely. No, we cannot. It is not conditioned by anything. It is not conditioned by concept. It really transcends concept. Rahul, I think Buddha's son, made a very famous praise to the Prajnaparamita. "It is unthinkable, unspeakable and beyond description, the Prajnaparamita. It is unborn, unceasing. It's like the essence of space, the heart of space." Prajnaparamita, is it known within the sphere of concept? No. It is only known within the sphere of precisely this self-knowing awareness, self-knowing cognizance. It is the only cognizance that can know itself and know everything. That is our own rigpa, our own tgs. Only within the sphere of that knowing is that prajnaparamita can be realized, not with a dualistic mind. Finally it says, "I bow to the mother of all the buddhas." Why the mother of all the buddhas? A mother gives birth to something. What is it that gives birth to somebody who is a sentient being and then is born as a buddha, figuratively speaking? The realization of prajnaparamita, of emptiness. That's why he uses that last line.

*May we realize this view of true meaning.*

Definitive meaning. Not interpreted, is what is meant.

[Sloka 13 at 1:24:36]

*Without realizing this, we circle through the ocean of samsara.*

*When realizing it, buddhahood is not somewhere else.*

*It is completely devoid of "it is this" and "it is not this."*

*May we see this vital point of the all-ground, the nature of things.*

The all-ground here refers to all-ground wisdom, not the all-ground consciousness, which is a vital point, a crucial point. You cannot say anything about the nature of the all-ground. Why do we circle in samsara? Because we are stuck with that conceptual mind that already puts everything in boxes. This is samsara and this is nirvana and all the different kinds of perceptions, concepts and whatever we do that we are seeing then all these can be put into separate boxes. That's how conceptual mind is. It is this and it is not that. Then we are stuck encircled in different realms of samsara because of this, because we reify everything. We reify everything because we are completely set into this dualistic kind of cognizance.

But then it says, "*When realizing it*", meaning when we realize that it is beyond saying that it is this or that and yet it is really existing as something, but which is not existing and beyond non-existence. When we realize that, that is buddhahood. That is mind essence. We are not going to find buddhahood anywhere else. Buddhahood is within us all the time, right now. What separates us from that is fixation. When we talk about fixation, then we are talking about something that is a cognizance that is fixated even in the subtlest way. It's a cognizance that is not aware of emptiness.

If there is awareness of emptiness, that cannot be fixation. These two are totally incompatible. If there is fixation, that is dualistic mind and if there is no fixation, that is emptiness. There are many types of fixation: dualistic fixation, fixation on permanence, reifying fixation, fixation on the defining characteristics of things. That is, for instance, one of the last ones to be purified. Dualistic fixation from the first bhumi onward is already quite transcended but one of the last ones that is said to be from the 10<sup>th</sup> bhumi bodhisattva, the highest bhumi bodhisattva, is these characteristics that we give to phenomena, like fire is hot. The characteristic of heat is already defining fire. These bodhisattvas still have some kind of defining characteristics, which seem to be kind of concrete and reliable, and saying this is samsara and this is nirvana. So, they are different. This is the buddhas, all the enlightened buddhas, but there are also sentient beings. From the point of view of wisdom, there is no difference between buddhas and sentient beings and there is no difference between samsara and nirvana because everything comes from the same ground, the ground of wisdom, the all-ground, which is the ground of *kunshi* [Tib. *kun gzhi* 1:29:10], which is the nature of things.

Q & A [1:30:16]:

Shauna Jade Larson: Would that ground that is not perceiving samsara and nirvana as being separate, and that's a difficult thing to get your head around. Is the seed of that, *evam*? In the view of mahamudra, where does *evam* sit?

GA: Probably so, but I am not really sure of that right now. I will to check and maybe I can help next time.

Alfio Ponasco: Empty lucidity as a state also has immense, all-pervasive compassion, but still existence and non-existence. Is this all-pervasive compassion related to non-

duality? Is this all-pervasive compassion like universal love? Is dharmakaya like this kind of energy, cosmic love, non-personal love?

GA: There is a semantic problem. It has to do with translation. Translators have different ways of approaching the third word, [*tukjé*]. We have empty essence, dharmakaya, lucid nature, sambhogakaya. Everybody agrees on that, but the third one, we use the word *tukje*. It is a hard word to define. It is used as compassion usually, like in an honorific way, like when we talk about Chenrezik, who is the embodiment of transcendent compassion, he is called Thujé Chenpo, Great Compassion. It has the character of compassion, but in this case it is more like an energy.

Some translators translate it as response, some as capacity. They don't even use the word compassion. I keep the word compassionate energy because compassion is always present within that realization. When we say *rigtong zunjuk nyingje nyinpo chen* [Tib. *rig stong zung 'jug snying rje snying po can*]. So we are always talking about *rig tong*, rigpa and emptiness, empty rigpa, empty lucidity, suffused by compassion<sup>3</sup>. It's all cognitive stuff, lucidity's cognizance and rigpa's cognizance. Where is compassion there? The essence of Buddha's teaching is compassion and the essence of buddha nature is also compassion. This phrase means empty rigpa suffused with compassion. That is very valid. Compassionate cannot be separated. It's part of clarity and part of lucidity, as much as bliss. Anything that manifests, all the qualities, renunciation, devotion, compassion, empathy, loving kindness, bliss, everything happens within lucidity. Even though maybe they seem to be contradictory. How can you have bliss and at the same time be compassionate? These are contradictions, but you can't pinpoint how it works in Buddha's mind. But, at least then we have that.

What this points at as the 3<sup>rd</sup> kind of quality, it's like an energy, like the union of lucidity and emptiness. Union means that emptiness is not nothing but it manifests as lucidity. Lucidity is not frozen because it is aware of its own emptiness. It is *zunjuk*, which means they are totally indivisible. What is the result of that indivisibility? There are no more blocks to our cognizance, no more blocks to our mind essence to show up. That is the third quality. It is not blocked because if it were only nothing, empty, from nothing, nothing comes. It's not blocked by reified mind, a frozen kind of clarity. We are blocked there because we don't see emptiness. Our cognizance is blocked right now. If I want to see what is happening in the corner of the street I have to walk and go there because there are so many blockages. Cognizance is blocked. It is frozen in these boxes that conceptual mind [creates].

That doesn't happen when we are in rigpa. Rigpa knows itself. It knows everything and because it has no limitations, like space. Space has no limitations and empty essence is like space. It has no limitations. Then everything manifests and buddha qualities can manifest. Samsara can manifest. All the things can manifest because it is the same ground and whether it is samsara or nirvana depends on how it is being experienced. It is like an energy.

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<sup>3</sup> "suffused by compassion" was added by Gerardo after the talk.

I'm not even sure if it is an appropriate translation, but I like to keep the taste of compassion. I go to those who translated first and they said, "empty essence, natural lucidity" and the third one is their indivisibility, which is *zungjuk*, not *thujé*. But they did not say *zungjuk* is unobstructed and unimpeded. They said *thujé*. Why the main point is that they are completely indivisible and united and there is a perfect word for that *zungjuk* or *yerme* [Tib. *dbyer me*], inseparable. If they use *thujé*, which means compassion in other contexts, then I like to put some taste of compassion there. So compassionate energy and it has never been corrected when I translate orally for lamas, so I think it can be accepted.

I don't know about that being universal love. I don't really know what universal love is in regards to compassion. Buddha nature is kind of universal. All the qualities of enlightenment are exactly the same in Buddha as they are in you and me. It's not that Buddha is a much, much higher buddha than us, in our essence. From that point of view, if you want to call it universal compassion maybe that's okay but it's not because it's like a big lake of universality, because all the qualities of compassion are exactly the same at the ultimate level.

Barbara Stewart: A person that has gone beyond or no longer sees things as dual has stepped away from contributing to the karmic habits of everyone else, the collective karma of others.

GA: If that person is a vidyadhara, meaning they never leave the continuity of rigpa, then they are not contributing to the karmic perception of all other beings. But that doesn't happen because they go back and forth, as long as rigpa is stable in a certain level, but also it is lost and therefore the mind comes back to duality. What I meant was that when you become completely enlightened, then you have completely taken away your contribution to the general karmic perception, at the level of a buddha.

I have read that when you become enlightened that all sentient being become enlightened, which is kind of shocking. How can that be? That has to do with your own perception. In your mind there are no longer sentient beings, like Subhuti said. In that context, your own perception became wisdom, primordial wisdom, dharmakaya, sambhogakaya, nirmanakaya. Within that dimension, you don't see any beings because they never existed somehow. But at the same time, because of the functioning of wisdom and there is also transcendent wisdom, so at the same time omniscience also adds in a very weird way that I cannot explain. I think that only a Buddha can know. Then they also can perceive beings who are suffering and they emanate according to circumstance and continue with their bodhisattva work.

In that way it makes a little bit of sense that when you become enlightened, all beings become enlightened. But they don't become enlightened. They become enlightened in your dimension of experience. Then, they are no longer sentient beings. You see everybody as buddhas. Like Patrul Rinpoche, he would walk and sometimes he said he would want to prostrate before a dog because he would see buddhahood in a dog. Of course, he wouldn't prostrate because everyone would have thought that he was nuts.

Barbara: Would the dog be seeing something different?

GA: Of course.

BS: What I mean is, would the dog notice that the being is no longer contributing to...

GA: No, I don't think so. He's there. That is a very subtle point. This thing about not contributing that is a very high level of realization. In any case, when there is a lama or human being, like a great teacher, who can be an amazing teacher, who could have no doubts about Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche being a buddha, or Karmapa, Dalai Lama. All these people are amazing beings but they still participate, talk with words, and eat with us. When we talk about buddhahood it is very tricky because we are trying to express in words something that is completely beyond any kind of conception that we can have. Our minds are too limited.

This comes to who creates us? We created ourselves. In a theistic religion, it is very easy. God created us. God created the world and the whole system is based on that type of belief. But when there is no God, like in Buddhism, I didn't create John. Who created John in the example that I gave? John created John. Gerardo created Gerardo. Barbara, you created yourself, through your own habits. Through deluded habits, you created this karmic experience of your body as Barbara, your speech as Barbara. You were born and given the name Barbara and all your opinions and everything based on the 5 skandhas, everything is your karmic self and it's all your own creation. Then, of course, I will have my perception of Barbara and Jane will have a perception of Barbara and Peter will have a perception of Barbara. Everyone will have a perception of you that belongs to each other person or being. A dog will also perceive you in a way that belongs to the karmic perception of that. If we go to who created us, it is ourselves who create us. With a notion of a self, we create a whole construction.

JoAnn Schindler: Much of this talk today relates to the stanza in the supplication in the Kagyu lineage supplication, that says, *"The essence of mind is dharmakaya, as is taught. Nothing whatever, but everything arises from it."* Then there is a line that says, *"To this meditator who arises in unceasing play."* It seems to me that it points to an instruction to us. Can you speak to what that line is saying?

GA: I think this line goes along with a person who has realized tgs. So then, oneself also in a manifestation of dharmakaya's light or dharmakaya's expression and that person is aware of that, because it is like rigpa and rigpa's expression, mind and mind's expression. But that mind is not dualistic mind. It's a way of saying like in deity practice and you visualize and identify with the deity, there is an important point which is sustaining the pride of the deity, or the divine pride, meaning you have to feel and believe and think that you are exactly a buddha, Tara, Manjusri, whatever. Here it is the same thing. I am a supreme practitioner because I also arise as a ceaseless display of rigpa. I'm not very familiar with the prayer, but in this context I think that if a person says that, this meditator who arises in unceasing display means that oneself and also mountains, trees and so forth are the unceasing display of dharmakaya. As long as you are aware that your mind is dharmakaya mind, which is empty lucidity indivisible, then you are included in that. How are you

going to perceive yourself? Stubbornly perceiving yourself as Joanne? Therefore it is a way of saying that I understand this. My mind is dharmakaya so therefore, on the basis of that dharmakaya mind of which I am aware, then I am an unceasing display of that dharmakaya.

Vicki: I know translators from Nalanda Translation and they are still debating the translation of those lines that JoAnn read to you.

GA: It's a tricky line.

*NB: Yellow highlights are missing Tibetan that we are hoping to clarify.*