Speaker: Yes Sir, yes.

VROT chants (don't know which one)
(Inaudible) Do we have the tape?

So now I would like to talk about the various experiences I had with His Holiness, the 16th Gyalwa Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpa Dorge, who taught me in his way the (inaudible) Mahamudra which I have understood in this way: effort and effortlessness are the same, view, practice and action are the same. And how he taught me was by example, rather than by formal instruction. He was very kind to me and always acknowledged my existence as the Dorje Gyalsap of Trunpa Rinpoche. That happened early on in 1977 and we were sitting around together, His Holiness The Karmapa, His Eminence The Jamgon Rinpoche, the Supreme Guru, The Vajracarya and myself and at that time in 1977 sitting in a room which was in all shade with the sun coming through the windows, after a press interview, we were sitting toghether and he looked at me in the presence of the others and he said, " Do you understand that the Kagyu Lineage depends upon you?" I was shocked and overwhelmed, but I said, "Yes". He said, "You should always remember that, that in itself is the teaching." But there were many experiences that I had with him which are worthy

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of note, and hopefully in the future will elucidate and discribe, in terms of practice the real Mahamudra. How Shall I begin? I have many stories, but the ones that are most vivid in my mind I cannot, I cannot right now tell them in order, but I will tell them as they occur im my mind, which I suppose is the way of Mahamudra. time His Holiness was visiting, His Holiness The Karmapa was visiting the Boston Dharmadhatu, and I, as the representative of Trungpa Rinpoche was in attendance. And we gathered in the room, all the rooms are kind of, the main reception room of the Dharmadhatu, and from the windows we could see the more or less new structure  $_{\Lambda}$  the John Handcock Building, designed by Ian Pettick (?) which is a quite magnificent building. And at that time His Holiness said to us in the room where myself and well, Jamgon Rinpoche was there, my secretary Don Milani and other people, he said, "How many stories do you think there are in that building? How many stories?" We all made different guesses including His Holiness. He guesses 80, somebody, Jamgon Rinpoche guesses 70 or something, and I guess 60 and (inaudible) and I said to Mr. Milani, "Go find out if anybody in the Dharmadhatu knows." Mr. Milani came back and he said, "According to

somebody who works there, there are 60 stories which I had guessed and His Holiness said. "How do they know? What floor do they work on?" (people laugh, someone says, "60th") If they work below, from his mind, playing the joke, if they work below the top one, how do they know if there is anything above? He was joking with us in that way and then he started to tell a story, a story about a doctor who was a scientist and a scientist of, at this point he was studying mental states, and he was studying how meditation students are enlightened or not enlightened according to a graph that he would attach to their bodies, just to figure what their mental state was. His Holiness was telling me this story because this gentleman, doctor so and so came to Rhumtek and asked His Holiness, was talking to His Holiness about meditative states and how they could be measured. And His Holiness said, "Well," He said to this gentleman, "basically speaking, it is impossible to measure the meditative state." And the gentleman said that he had been to Dharmsala and visited his Holiness the Dalai Lama who allowed him to measure the meditative

state of his main students by hooking up this machine, whatever it was. (person speaks - biofeedback stuff) Some kind of bio-feedback stuff, yeah, to their mental state, and he allowed them to measure that. His Holiness told me Aspecifically that the gentleman told him that the Dalai Lama had allowed him to do that. And His Holiness said to the gentleman, "I don't see where it's possible by any machine to measure a meditative state. (inaudible) but the Dalai Lama allowed him to do that. And he said, "I said to this gentleman, meditative state cannot be measured by a If you try, it won't result in anything. Whatever your results are, they won't really show." He said, "Come back here next year. Next year, after the three month, three year, three year, three month, three week retreat, the Naropa Retreat. You will see yogis, who in the midst of the winter, simply clad in a cotton cloth can plunge themselves in the cold water and steam will come off their body. Then you'll see if there's any proof or not. With your machine, he said, that can't measure anything." (VROT laughs) He told me about this doctor and he actually went on with the story for quite a long time. He was about to do an Abhisheka in the Boston Dharmadhatu. I think it was the

Karma Pakshi Abhisheka, and even though it was supposed to happen, he went to great lengths to tell this story. And after he had finished telling the story and inviting the scientist back again, this doctor, Dr. (inaudible) not MD but scientist, he said come back when the retreat's over, then we'll see what the actual measure of practice, by people who can jump in the lake. So people started to file out, it was over, he finished the story, and as he was going he turned to his translator and said something in Tibetan, and then he moved down as he did rapidly, and the translator turned to me and he said, "His Holiness wants me to tell you that you can never manipulate the Dharma with your mind. That's one story of Mahamudra which you should take to heart and realize what he said. There is another story, also in Boston at a different time, 1980. At that time, Trungpa Rinpoche, my guru, had fallen from the stairs and had a concussion. At the time I was in Austria. I called, by phone, or I heard, and I talked to him, Rinpoche, by phone. I said, "How are you?" He said, "I'm alright." I hung up the phone, and that was that. During this time in Boston in 1980 we were talking, His Holiness and I, and he said to me, "You should always know where

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all of the Tulkus are." He looked at me and he said, "Where is Trangu Rinpoche right now?" I said. Your Holiness I don't know." He said, "Where is Trangu Rinpoche right now?" I said, "Your Holiness I don't know." "Where is Situ Rinpoche right now?" And he went down the list, and I didn't know where anybody was, another Mahamudra teaching. Then he said, "You should make it your business to know where the major Tulkus are?" He said, "Where were you when Trungpa Rinpoche fell down?" I said, "I was in Austria," and thinking that I should say something more I said, "You Holiness I was very distressed and upset when I heard it." He said, "Oh yes? you do? Did you fly back?" I said, "No." He said, "If you were distressed why didn't you fly back immediately, if you were worried?" I said, "I was really worried about the Vajracarya." He said, "If you were so worried, why didn't you get on a plane and fly back immediately?" Another Mahamudra teaching, especially one of devotion. If you think you're so devoted, why didn't you get on a plane and fly back immediately if your guru was hurt. You might not have seen him again. He taught that to me. Then other times, let me think now, there's so many. Oh the last time I

saw him was the most important one. (inaudible) He was dieing of cancer, in the hospital outside of Chicago, what's it called? (person says, "Zion") Zion, Illinois. How interesting. He probably conquors all the, by him dieing there probably conquors the Jehovah complex. He was dieing, and I went to see him. The first day I went in, he could hardly speak. I brought with me Don Milani, my secretary, and Steve Roth who has a special connection to him through all the years. And I brought Mr. Roth especially so he could see the dieing Karmapa, so it would fix in his mind the visual truth. First night(?) we went there he was not able to talk. He looked at us, we did our prostrations and xxxx we went out. next day we came back, and he was sitting up. And my guru had told me, when you see the Karmapa tell him this, "please stay with us for ever and ever and never leave us." So I did my prostrations and I came close to his bed, and at that time he had lost quite a bit of weight and he did not look like the old Karmapa as we know, but he was thin and gaunt, and, but his eyes were brilliant as always, never changing. But i did my prostrations and I came close to him, and I laid my head on his chest.

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hospitals, but I didn't do it, because I wasn't afraid of that particular disease. I thought if I caught that one I might acheive enlightenment. I didn't actually think that cause I didn't really care. Put my head on his chest and I said, "Your Holiness, please don't leave us. Don't ever leave us, stay with us." And I burst into tears, crying, crying with my head on his chest. Не couldn't move, he couldn't move his arms, or his body and I put my head on his chest and cried and then I lifted my head and his eyes met mine in a specific gaze, and he looked at me and he said, "Nothing happens." I said to him, "I know." And he put his hand on my head, and that's the last time I saw him. That is another Mahamudra teaching. (Which) transcends birth and death. From that moment on - I always see the Karmapa. The eyes have never left me. Let me tell some more stories if I can. One time we were in San Francisco, you were there, (person says, "1976"), no, you might not have been (person says, there, "I was there, inaudible) We're sitting around in this mansion that we had rented for him, sitting there, and he was talking about this and He had a curious way Minakingxconversationx of making conversation which eventually wound up

They wanted me to put on a mask, but I, (inaudible)

in teaching. And we're just talking about, at that time the fact that he, and he alone had gotten a bulfinch out of England. His favorite bird is a finch, because he says they are the most non-agressive birds, and also very beautiful. But the English law says that no bulfinch can get out of England. So he told me the story that (inaudible) He started the story by saying that he, "what kind of car is the best car in the world?" (inaudible) We said various other things and he said, "well it seems that a Rolls Royce is the best car." You see he had met this person, Lord so and so or whatever, who had four or five Rolls Royces, old ones which he kept up. And it seemed to His Holiness, he said, "that those were the best cars in the world." And he remembered that this person had kept up his Rolls Royces. this person also was a breeder of bulfinches. (People laugh) (inaudible) And said, "well," he said to me, "I'd like to give you this bulfinch, but you know you can't take it out of England. His Holiness said, "well I accepted it, and I wanted to take it out." And when he left England, at customs, he put the bulfinch in his robe. And the customs agent searched him and they found the bulfinch, and he said immediately they called the police, the customs, the intelligence people,

all came around and they said they were gonna put him in jail. And he looked at me and he said, " I said to them, in my whole life I've never done anything wrong, if you want to put me in jail, go ahead." (people laugh) And then he says, "they let me take the bulfinch out." After that, he called for his attendant and brought me a rupa of Padmasambha and he said to me, "Your service to the dharma, I want to give you this." When I was on retreat, in 1980, I was doing guru yoga practice one day, finishing my ngyondro, and I was in a small house in the middle of California, Pasa Robles as the place is called, or Pasa "Robbles" as they say in California, and in the small house that I was in the telephone was in the kitchen which was very near my shrine, shrine had no door, it just had a curtain, and of course you could hear the phone. Well, generally speaking I didn't answer the phone. The phone rang and rang one day and I was doing guru yoga and I was extremely aggrevated and upset and I said to myself, "What son-of-a-bitch is calling me - alright I'll answer the phone. I answered the phone, on the other end is Randy Sunday saying, "Vajra Regent", I said , "huh ho" since I know him for a long time, nichhuh when he said Vajra Regent, I thought this must be

important. He said, "I'm here in New York City with His Holiness Karmapa and he would like to speak to you." Now I should preface this story by saying at that time since I was on retreat, I knew that I couldn't greet His Holiness in New York City, so I sent him a traditional poem, praising his buddha activity. He went to the hospital at that time in New York City to have tests for his malady, which was finally stomach cancer. And when he got to the hospital, they presented him with this poem, and according to what they had told me, he read it and said, "Where is Osel Tendzin right now?" They said, "He's on retreat." He said, "Does he have a phone?" They said, "Yes." He said, "call him, right now." So he called, through Randy Sunday, and I was irritated, answer the phone, and Randy Sunday said, "Vajra Regent?" I said, "Yes" He said, "His Holiness would like to speak to you." I said, "what?" He said, "His Holiness would like to speak to you." I said, "Okay." And on the phone comes His Holiness Karmapa. The 16th Gyalwa Karmapa is calling me on the phone, on retreat. And he said, "Osel Tendzin, how are you?" I said, "I'm fine Your Holiness; how are you?" He said, "Good, very good," and he gave the phone back to Mitchell.

He gave the phone to Mitchell Levy, who said, I said, "What is going on?" He said, "We're here in the hospital, His Holiness is having I said, "Well how's it going?" He said, "It looks pretty good" and what not (inaudible) and we talked for a while, and he said, "Oh wait a minute, His Holiness wants to say something I said, "Okay." His Holiness came else to you. back on. He said, "Osel Tendzin, goo (?) bye." I said good-bye Your Holiness and I hung up the phone and I went back to my practice. suddenly there was such immediate energy and light. And I thought to myself, "Of all the blessings, the glorious Karmapa has called you on the telephone in the 20th cnetury while you are doing the practice of guru yoga. I thought to myself, "In previous days they had to actually experience it in their mind, you got it on the telephone." That's quite an interesting story, and also very dood teaching for Mahamudra, in a sense that of regardless of the time, and regardless of the vechicle, the guru's message is direct, straightforward. All he said is, "How are you" and "Good-bye." And that was enough to carry my practice at a rapid rate and also at a brilliant tone for the next three weeks. These are some of

the stories I have, there are others. In Boulder, in 1976, after the first visit of His Holiness Karmapa, I was not known as the Regent at that time, in '74, in '76 I was known, and Rinpoche, Trungpa Rinpoche, never asked His Holiness to confirm me as Regent. He allowed it to happen. His Holiness looked at me one day, we're in Dorje Dzong, Jamgon Rinpoche, His Holiness, myself, and Trungpa Rinpoche, and he looked at me and he said, "The last time I was here there was dust on the mirror; this time it seems much more clear." Several days later he wrote the inscription on my proclamation as the Regent, saying that he as the Karmapa endorsed it, and wished everybody to acknowledge that. are more stories. Ho, there are lots of them. That's enough for now.

Steve Roth: We were on another bird expedition with about ten attendants and we went back to Cinderella City, I think we'd been there about two times at this point. It's a very plastic looking, huge shopping mall down in the southern

part of Denver, and we were going to various stores.

We went to the bird stores of course first, and then we went to a couple others, and we ended up in a huge telephone place where they had every type of immaginable form telephone for sale. You know, all different kinds from Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck to these fancy Swedish things and His Holiness was walking aroung and the lamas were playing with the different phones and trying them out and in the midst of this, His Holiness suddenly blurts out "Osel Tendzin, I want to phone him." (laughter) So what was I gonna do?

VROT: What, phones or what?

Steve Roth: Yes, you know, 250 phones there. So he wanted to talk to you on the phone.

VROT: He called me in the office. I'm in the office at Dorje Dzong, and the (inaudible) says, "It's His Holiness Karmapa on the phone.

Steve Roth: "Sel Tendzin."

VROT: Osel Tendzin and he (inaudible) and he starts to crack up laughing. Laughing, laughing, laughing, laughing, that's all he does. He says "Osel Tendzin ah ha" he's cracking up. Jamgon Rinpoche says,

comes on the phone, "Osel Tendzin, ho ho-o-o, he laughs. Somebody else comes on and I said, "What's going on?"
So (inaudible) says, "Both of them, His Holiness and Jamgon Rinpoche are in Cinderella City, they're trying out all these phones and His Holiness wanted to call you. I said, "Great", you know. Great, you get a call from His Holiness the Karmapa, from Cinderella City. That's very funny, of course he was always very funny. He was good. He was so good, taught me so much. (glitch in tape) Erhardt. EST was sponsoring the Black Crown Ceremony in Mason, what is it?

Steve Roth: Masonic.

VROT: Masonic Auditorium in San Francisco. And there must have been three thousand people there, and before we all gathered together in a room and Erhardt went on and Trungpa Rinpoche went on with Erhardt and I myself was left alone with the Karmapa by some reason. We're sitting in a room waiting for the Karmapa to go to the Black Crown Ceremony, and he and I, he grabbed my hand and we walked down the hallway of this Masonic Lodge or whatever the hell it is, auditorium. And he's walking down the hallway talking to me in Tibetan. And I didn't feel any problem listening to him, although I didn't understand what he was saying and he also he

knew I didn't understand Tibetan. We wnet passed certain bookshelves and he'd look at them and he'd laugh, and he'd look at me and I'd laugh. walked back and forth, we walked back and forth about three times before it was time for him to go out and do it, you know. But the experience of being with him was beyond language. Which was very interesting. I didn't feel any anxiety about the fact that I didn't know Tibetan. Neither shall I say did he feel any anxiety about speaking to me in Tibetan, even though he knew I didn't understand. And when he looked at the books, he was particularly hilarious. (inaudible) books, and I don't even remember what they are now, but they were sort of philosophy books or something like that, Masonic Temple whatever. And he looked at them, couldn't read English, and cracked up laughing. He looks at me and says something in Tibetan, and I cracked up laughing. I don't know why that happened but it did. It was sort of magic always in his presence. When he could, he could walk into a room and change it entirely. One time there was a meeting of a, in Karma Dzong, this was at Marpa House, was an audience of various students who asked him questions of whatnot or other. At that time I remember him saying this. Somebody asked him about himself, which was very interesting. And he

said, "You know, to some people, to some people Buddha is like a dog's tooth." And I said to myself, "What?" He said, "Myself," he said, " I am like a dog's tooth. If you see any benefit in a dog's tooth, then fine." I'm not quoting that exactly right. How does it go? It goes like this. He said, oh no, he said, "Buddha is like a dog's tooth. If you see any benefit in a dog's tooth, that's good. I,m like a dog's tooth. If you see any benefit in that, it's good for you." All the time. (?) He was doing a group audience for the Tantra students, the most advanced Vajrayana students at the time, and they're asking him about kye rim and dzog rim. Kye rim is the developing stage, dzog rim is the completion stage. In other words upattikrama and sampannakrama. They're asking the difference between the two. He didn't say very much. But what he did say was this. He said, "The Dharma is like an eyelash in your eye. It's that close. It's as close as an eyelash caught in your eye." From that I understood the Mahamudra much more clearly. Oh my goodness, the most famous story, I didn't tell it. Thank you. This is the most famous story. This also occured in Boston, somehow a lot of stories happen in Boston. This is early on. This is '76. Karl Springer was with me and can attest to this story if he wants to. We were sitting together

with His Holiness and Jamgon Rinpoche, strangely enough again. At that time he gave me a brocade tie given to him by the King of Bhutan?

Steve Roth: I think so, yeah. (inaudible)

VROT: By the King of Bhutan. It had the eight auspicious symbols. No, the one he gave Rinpoche is a gold tie with is garish, completely garish by Western standards. gold, with silk brocade symbols on it. He gave Rinpoche one with the eight auspicious symbols and myself with a brocade design on the tie. And he gave it to me and he said, I said "Thank you Your Holiness." He said, "Put it on right now." So I took off my tie and put on the tie. Of course it was a little bit short, since the Bhutanese probably are shorter than Westerners. he's talking about, he said, "You know," he said, "I have one problem in my life. I am a liar." He said, "I am compulsive liar." (inaudible) sat back in my seat. (inaudible) Your Holiness (inaudible) He said, "I lie all the time." He said, "For instance, people ask me where is this tulku, where is that tulku?" He said, "I make it up, I lie." "For instance, Trungpa Rinpoche, 'well. I said, there's a red dog and there's a door with a symbol on it, and I make it up." Then he said, "Even though I lie, if I were wrong, people would lose faith."

He said, "sometimes, when a beautiful bird flies in the sky, shit falls on a stone." From that I understood the Mahamudra teaching. Then he said, through his translator, that he had recognized more tulkus than any Karmapa before him. (glitch in tape) one-pointedness. A beautiful bird is simplicity, while a beautiful bird flies in the sky, is simplicity. Shit falls is a onetaste, on a stone, is non-meditation. This is the way I understood it. Where are the Kagyu Gurus right now? Where is Kalu Rinpoche, where is Trangu Rinpoche? You were concerned about your Guru? Why didn't you fly back? If you want to measure meditation, don't try to manipulate meditation with your mind. Don't try and manipulate the dharma with your mind. stories? How do you know if you don't, (inaudible) on the top. (inaudible)

Student: I think it's like going, like there's gap, and what we're talking about earlier of no gap, that you flip from one thing to the next. When one situation just kind of falls into the next, and you just, and it all has the same emphasis from your own point of view which, I don't even know if that's Mahamudra or not.

VROT: That's called one-pointedness.

Student: But there's, so where do you go beyond that now?

VROT: Well, the next one is simplicity, which is where

all of your sense perceptions, and all of your perceptions altogether are resolved in a simple way.

Student: Well, that's, so that's where everything is actually coming in, it seems, but that (inaudible) should actually flip.

VROT: The flip is one-taste.

Student: But when you land with a flip....

VROT: There's no meditation and there's no production, and there's no accomplishment, there's no meditation.

Student: To me, it almost, that's what allows you to actually keep flipping it.

VROT: You don't have to. Once you do the, once you (inaudible) never have to do it again.

Student: I question the linear aspect of it.

VROT: It's a beautiful bird. (inaudible) When a beautiful bird flies in the sky - shit falls on a stone.

It's consecutive. stages of yoga are consecutive as well.

Student: I mean it seems like a difference, I mean in other words, you can't...

VROT: Well it's always that.

Sutdent: But for me it's like I can't flip into another situation without that situation also just presenting itself at the same time.

VROT: Well you know, that's kind of like a, that's sort of like a hunting dog thinking about the next meal.

Student: It doesn't happen that way though. It's, you know, all of a sudden, you, it's there. But it seems like that the, there's some reason why it's there, and maybe it's the perception actually coming out on the spot.

VROT: Oh, I see. Well you have to refine your meditation practice, I think that's the point. Meditation practice on is not, is not, well, it's done various levels, gross, medium and fine. For the most part, in this point in time, most people are (meeting?) meditation practice on the gross level.

Steve Roth: I was just feeling it would be fantastic if you could do a caligraphy on that.

VROT: On the bird (flying through?) if we have the paper and the ink I'd do it. Don't make me move.

Student: I love the whole imagery of when the bird flies in the sky...

VROT: <u>WHEN</u>. When is the first part. That's called one-pointedness. A beautiful bird flies in the sky is called simplicity. Shit falls is one-taste. On a stone, non-meditation. This is the way I understand it.

Student: So, so you're looking at the gross level as the one-pointedness (of?) the situations, the ..

VROT: When is what occurs to you. What occurs to you is just one-pointed is your mind, what occurs to you. A beautiful bird flies in the sky is simplicity itself. That is whatever occurs in your mind. When something occurs in your mind, right. Shit falls, means that it

Student: One-taste.

reveals itself as real.

VROT: One-taste.

VROT and Student together: And when it falls on a stone, non-meditation.

Student: (inaudible)

VROT: See, he taught me this, yes, and I could go on each one of the stories I have told you and break it down exactly that way.

Student: You should write that down. It's very good.

VROT: I'm writing it. This is the beginning of it.

This is the beginning of it.

Student: I still have a question about the, seeing the simplicity of Mahamudra.

VROT: You never see it. You don't see it. You don't see simplicity. Simplicity <u>is</u>, is itself. You never see it.

Student: You don't see one-pointedness either

VROT: No, you don't.

Student: It just happens.

VROT: Right, but you don't see simplicity. You see, it's kind of like if you allow things to happen, they happen in that succession, always.

Student: Is it that the one-pointedness and the simplicity ....

VROT: Do we have a sumi, not sumi, rice paper? Student: Yes Sir.

VROT: That's what I think we should do. So I think I have, I know exactly what I have in mind. Have more drinks, have more drinks.

Student: Sir may I follow this..

VROT: Oh, please, please.

Student: Is that when you have the one-pointedness is that..

VROT: Don't be anxious Mr. (inaudible).

Student: Could be simplicity, that does it like expand over the one-pointedness. Is the one-pointedness like..

VROT: No, no, they're all the same.

Student: Well, from your own meditation practice then whether they happen at different times

VROT: Only because they do. Now this is important for you to realize. Because when you think of things in consectutive way, in a consecutive way, you only are partially understanding the truth.

Student: Well, I'm not thing of it necessarily in terms of being consecutive, it's more like, you see the one-pointedness, so there's something that's actually happening with your mind in situations that are, as things come into your mind...

VROT: Well I would say that one-pointedness, one-pointedness is like when. It's almost like you are in a moment totally involved in time. You're totally involved in time in a moment, when, a beautiful bird flies in the sky, which is beyond time, which is simplicity. Shit falls, is shit falls is your experience as a meditator.

Student: So, you go from the when, which is time,

VROT: When.

Student: .. no time,

VROT: Right.

Student: no reference point.

VROT: Which is one-taste.

Student: One-taste, cause there's no reference point.

VROT: Because there's no reference point, falls on a stone, right, falls on a stone and there's nothing more to do.

Student: (inaudible)

VROT: There's nothing more to do.

Student: There's no meditation.

VROT: It's called non-meditation, not no meditation.

END OF SIDE ONE OF TAPE

VROT: (inaudible) that's according to your experience.

So, trust, renunciation, that sounds right?

Student: (inaudible) letting go. Same thing. (inaudible)
You know

VROT: Not quite, you have to seal it. it's like

bookends.

Student: But if you can continue..

VROT: (inaudible)

Student: I'm sure you will sir, but I mean, near the end of your talk, you, you took off, and that's why people were sitting there going...

VROT: At the beginning of my (inaudible)

Student: Yeah.

VROT: See, one thing always leads to the next thing,

\*\*EXNEMBLES\*\* ground, path, fruition (inaudible) incredibly
mixed, indelibly mixed. You can't separate one from the
other. If you have body, you have speech, you have
mind, you can't separate any of that. You say, well
there's only mind. That's what some people, in philosophy
they say, there's only mind. Some people say there is
only intellect, which is speech. Some people say there
is only body. It is not the case. So there's all three
at once, every moment there is all three.