

Original Transcript: This transcript may not be reproduced for any purpose, in whole or in part, without the express written permission of the author.

Copyright 1988 Vajra Regent Osel Tendzin

Vajra Regent Osel Tendzin

The Mahamudra Lineage

Talk One of Two [A preliminary public talk to this seminar entitled “Direct Path to Enlightenment” was given on April 16, 1988 in Los Angeles.]

April 23, 1988

Los Angeles, California

Transcribed by: Donna Holm

Checked by Dana Fulmer and Donna Holm

VAJRA REGENT ÖSEL TENDZIN: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome. We have undertaken to discuss and practice in the style of the Kagyü lineage of Tibet, which is the lineage of mahamudra, and it would be good, I think, to discuss, at least to begin with, the notion of mahamudra and the notion of lineage, so that what we do when we practice comes together with what we understand as the continuity of teaching.

The mahamudra lineage refers to an expression of enlightened mind presented in this particular world by the realized beings, such as the 84 siddhas of India, who lived around the eighth century and before, who actually realized the complete enlightenment, awakened state of mind, by practicing various yogas and meditation practices, and who have manifested as what is called a “siddha.” *Siddha* means “accomplished person.” Completely accomplished. Often translated in the west as “magician.” These siddhas realized the ultimate awakened state, which is termed *mahamudra*. *Mudra* meaning “sign,” or “seal,” and *maha* meaning “great.” So in this case, they realized the “great seal,” which means they attained complete enlightenment. And therefore everything was sealed completely.

These particular siddhas did not live in an ordinary way. That is to say, in terms of conventional religious life, they did not fit the picture. But, because this particular teaching is so all-encompassing and direct, it was possible for these siddhas to manifest in various ways in order to present, or manifest, the awakened state to the society. Some of them were sweepers, some worked in

brothels, some king, warrior, business person. And in fact, that is the unique quality of this particular lineage. That, over time, the people who realize this particular mahamudra manifest according to the different needs of the societies that they live in.

Among these 84 siddhas was the great mahasiddha, Tilopa. And from him, this particular line, which I am representing, so to speak, evolved. Tilopa was born in a high caste as a Brahman in India. And at a very young age was attracted to the dharma. By the time he was in his teens, he had mastered all the sutras, and later on, all the tantras. But in order to actually complete his realization, he studied with four great gurus. But ultimately, he manifested as a completely awakened one. In other words, he attained buddhahood. And he said, "My guru is none other than Vajradhara himself." Vajradhara in this case means primordial mind. And as a manifestation of that, he lived by the side of a river and ate fish entrails. Not conventional person. He transmitted this particular teaching to the mahapandita Naropa, who was a great scholar.

This scholar was, at one time, the head of Nalanda University, the greatest center of buddhist learning at the time. And Naropa was completely perfected in all the sciences, such as, at the time, grammar, epistemology, and medicine, et cetera, and knew all the dharmas thoroughly, but somehow he felt that he had not seen the whole thing. And motivated by that he had a vision of Tilopa as an old hag with 37 ugly features, which corresponded to 37 defilements, and also to 37 aspects of enlightenment. And he was quick enough to pick up on the fact that this vision meant something other than just a production of his mind. So he gave up his position, and he went to seek the guru, who was Tilopa. And after a lot of hardship — the basic hardship was his own projection — he found his teacher, Tilopa, and for twelve years served him. And attained complete enlightenment.

He, in turn, passed the teaching on directly to Lord Marpa, the first Tibetan, who spent sixteen years in India, with five great teachers, but Naropa in particular, who taught him the complete tantra. And Marpa himself was a householder. Had lots of land, had a wife, had seven children. He was gruff and short-tempered. When he was young, he was so short-tempered that his family said, "Either he learns the dharma or he's going to come to no good." [Laughter.] So they sent him off to study the dharma. And Marpa was considered by lots of people in the world to be just a mercenary type, just gathering gold all the time. But he gathered gold to give to his guru, because he wanted to give the best possible offering he could. And Marpa was an

incredibly brilliant scholar and a translator, in fact, one of the founders of what is called the New Translation School in Tibet. But more than that, he was an adept in meditation. And it is said that Marpa perfected this mahamudra in seven days. [Laughter.] And Marpa brought the teachings to Tibet — this particular line, lineage. And he had four great disciples, but one was the superior one. And he was called Milarepa.

And Milarepa had no talent whatsoever. [Laughter.] He — the most distinguishing thing about him was that he learned black magic in order to fulfill his mother's wishes of having revenge upon the aunt and uncle who usurped their property. But one thing about Milarepa was he had one-pointed dedication and devotion, which is not equaled in the world. And he served his guru, Marpa, for many years. And for many years Marpa would not give him the teachings, knowing that his karma was pretty bad from making all those bad things happen to his relatives. And the famous story of Mila is that Marpa asked him to build a house for his son. And when Mila had built it almost completely, he said, "Tear it down, it's not right." And then he did it again, and again, and again. And finally he did it a fourth time, which is called "The House of Nine Towers", sorry, "The Tower with Nine Stories," that Mila built personally, by himself. And finally, when Mila thought that he had no choice but to commit suicide because his guru was not giving him the teaching, Marpa relented and said, "All right, I'll give you the teaching." But, in order to clear away his past misdeeds, he had to do it that way.

But in any case, Milarepa meditated for twelve years in the mountains, and many of you know the story. And he, himself, is considered to be the ultimate ascetic. Had no liking for the world whatsoever. But he produced a great many disciples. Among them, the best and foremost was the Lord Gampopa, who actually put together and organized what we now have as Kagyu lineage, which has been unbroken from Gampopa to this time through, primarily, the Karmapas, of which there have been sixteen, the last one entering parinirvana in 1980... '81. And part of that lineage is the Trungpa line, of which the last Trungpa was the eleventh, and he passed those teachings on to me.

The mahamudra lineage has to do with what is called vajrayana. And vajrayana is the last turning of the wheel of the buddhadharma in this particular age. It is the, what is called, the expedient path. The path that brings, if followed completely with one-pointed mind and devotion, enlightenment in one lifetime. According to this lineage and these teachings, there are three turnings. What is called hinayana, mahayana, and vajrayana.

That is, a being, sentient being, like ourselves, when we wake up to our basic intelligence, we enter the path in a hinayana way. That is to say, we have to bring everything in very closely and center ourselves, so to speak. Center our consciousness and what we are doing. At the same time, we have to not cause any harm to others. So to simplify, and to not cause harm, is the basic way we enter. Beyond that, in the mahayana way, once we have steadied our mind and understand the basic problem of existence, so to speak, then we begin to expand and create the relationship between that understanding that we have and the world outside. So called other. And that particular expansion is based on recognizing some fundamental spark that we have, which in essence is warmth or heat, but in expression is called compassion. And this compassion is the quality of a buddha.

So in the mahayana phase of the path one actually conceives of oneself as a buddha, in a particular way. Not conceives of oneself by imagining that we are, but an actual experience occurs where one feels complete sense of openness and generosity toward all beings. So that's the first flash one gets of actually possessing enlightened mind. And in the mahayana phase of practice, one works very hard at dissolving or letting go of aggression. In the first phase, one pulls in everything, and by doing that one does not harm. In the second phase one opens up, and by doing that, not only does the individual practitioner not harm, but one develops compassion by letting go of any kind of aggression that is built up.

And finally, the vajrayana phase is that, having felt the kind of compassion toward all sentient beings that actually brings up the buddha mind in oneself, one practices the “path of means” which is called *upaya*. The path of means is to take everything that exists, whether it's considered good or bad, and use it as part of one's practice. So that is why the siddhas could be one thing or another thing without corrupting their motivation and their point of view.

So this vajrayana teaching takes a little bit of leap, in a certain way. However, in this particular age, the vajrayana teaching seems to be the most direct way of awakening those primordial instincts, so to speak. Because our world is so corrupt, that in order to have the proper practice one has to actually work with corruption. Now, according to some schools of Buddhism, the vajrayana is corrupt. It is not true buddhism. Because if you read in some tantras, it says, “indulge in your senses,” et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, and many other things. But that language is the language of mahamudra, and it is sealed

by enlightened mind. And in order to understand it one has to have direct experience. But to people who do not follow this path, it becomes scary. However, any good teacher, and especially those of this particular lineage, would never put a student in a compromised position to begin with. That would be disaster. In fact, all three yantras are contained in the vajrayana: renunciation, not causing harm; generating compassion, working for others; utilizing all phenomena as expression of enlightenment — are all one path, one practice.

So students like ourselves, when we hear the vajrayana teachings and we enter into this path, we enter primarily on a hinayana level, but we hear the teachings from a vajrayana point of view. Which I think is best because at that point we can hear the whole thing right at the beginning, so you know what you're getting into. And also, you know what you are getting out of.

So this mahamudra we should talk about. What is that great symbol, great seal? What is that? Basically, what it means is that all of phenomena that is experienced by the mind is sealed, or is the symbol of itself. That means there is no duality whatsoever between what you experience and who you are. There is no duality whatsoever between mind and its projections. There is no duality whatsoever between phenomena and appreciation. So in all of reality there is no particular break. It is totally sealed and complete, altogether. That's the mahamudra. There are no second thoughts.

This is at once, to the mind of a student, this is a terrifying prospect, and at the same time it opens the mind completely. Terrifying in the sense that hearing these words one begins to feel the quality of the mind itself. In other words, mind seeing mind. And if there is a residue of fear or struggle or egotism, there begins to be some shaking in the mind. And from that shaking, there is a quality of paranoia, such as, “Who dat who said who dat?” [Laughter.] That particular paranoia. However, that particular paranoia is this very mind, which we call nowness. Or things as they are. So to hear the mahamudra is actually to experience a glimpse of it, right on the spot.

Now, due to lingering we accumulate habits. Or the mind accumulates its own habit, you could say. “We” is just a euphemism at this point. And those habits are nothing in particular, however, they become forms, so to speak, bodies. They become places, things. They become attitudes and environments. They become philosophies, religions. They become nations and races. They become history. They become good and bad. They become war and peace.

They become everything. So in reality, everything is generated from this mind. In terms of mahamudra, this mind has never been corrupted. And all the forms that appear in the mind are simply the display of brilliant energy. However, lingering in a foggy way creates images and forms that don't exactly seem real. And, at the same time, do. In other words, there's some kind of split that occurs in one's consciousness due to fogginess or laziness. Where the forms that we see appear to be real, and at the same time, appear to be a mirage.

So, it is very hard for the foggy mind to appreciate its own form. So all of the phenomena that we are impressed with is simply the result of a lack of clarity. And when there is a lack of clarity, one thing is usually mistaken to be another. And when that occurs, there is friend and enemy, there is good and bad, and all the rest of it. And when that occurs, we, because of our own projection, begin to take sides, say, "Well, I must be with them, because I'm not with them." Not realizing that both of them are the projection of one's own mind. So, taking sides, we create endless confusion. And endless repetition. And what eventually becomes the neurotic struggle to survive. And this culminates in taking birth in a body, such as what we have. Or it could be other bodies. According to the Buddhist teaching, there are six realms of particular types of manifestation; human being one of them. And once we actually take the form of a solid body, then our minds are so confused, that we can, are so far from seeing things clearly, that all we can do is habituate ourselves to whatever body we have. Such as, if you're a human, you will like comfort, so you will constantly strive to create a more comfortable environment. If you are an animal, you will constantly crave food, et cetera, et cetera. But in any case, the view is, is that once you have entered one of these particular states, it is almost impossible to see the clear, naked crystal-like quality of one's mind, or of mind itself.

However, due to compassion, the Buddha and his followers said some very nice things to us, and maybe it's like having cold water poured on your head. You wake up. And, at some point, due to coincidence, which is auspicious, you hear the teachings. And in doing so, in hearing the teachings you begin to practice the discipline of waking up. And, frankly speaking, all that I'm talking about is that. There isn't any other thing that we're doing, other than waking up. There isn't any enlightenment that exists outside, that by practicing in this way, you will "get it." That doesn't happen. It is simply a matter of waking up.

But, again, due to compassion, the Buddha and his disciples have presented to us a path which can be *done*, can be *practiced*. And that is the great

proclamation of mahamudra, that it actually can happen. You can do it. In fact, Lord Marpa's biography is called "Seeing Accomplishes All."

So just one glimpse [snaps fingers] and you're on it. If you have one glimpse, you are on it forever. Again, somewhat claustrophobic. To the frightened, disillusioned mind, the prospect of being on it forever is threatening, because there's a feeling that we should have a place to go to when things are a little bit tight. Stress. When we get stressed out we should have some therapy we can do. Some alternative. My dear friends, that is so silly. So, well, what about all the good that can happen if you're in trouble and you're feeling crazy, and somebody could present you with an alternative, you can actually get out of your craziness. Oh, yeah? Can you? Well, let's see. Can you actually get out of the real craziness? Real craziness is wanting some alternative to what is. That's real craziness. [Laughter.] And in this world that we live in, my goodness, replete with alternatives. And the worst of all are the psychological alternatives, at least at this time. The spiritual alternatives are very tired. Although one believes that in southern California that may never end. [Laughter.] However, the psychological alternatives are much more insidious, offering actual results.

This particular lineage, when we talk about the situation that we have, it talks about "rock meets bone." That you actually see your own face. To do that, one has to have a genuine teacher. Cannot be done through books, cannot be done through association, such as having a friend who does it, practices meditation, whatever, it cannot be done through thinking that you are doing it, it cannot be done through thinking at all. Therefore, it is necessary to have a genuine teacher, who has done it. And you can tell that teacher by the qualities. They should be a person who is gentle, kind, a person who thoroughly knows the teachings, and a person who can actually transmit those teachings in such a way that their students attain those qualities themselves. In this particular lineage, we do not just talk, but actually we produce those people. However, one has to have the right view, to begin with. Otherwise things could get distorted.

In order to have that right view, one should assume a meditation posture. And, in assuming that posture, one should settle one's body in the earth or on the earth, so that one feels a connection with all the elements. In other words, the elements of the body, the elements of the earth and the sky, and elements all around are settled together, simultaneously. That has to do with body. The second thing is one should settle one's speech. That is to say, one should regard thoughts as transparent. And thirdly, one should settle one's mind. That is, one

should look straight into things as they are. In those three ways, one practices the view of mahamudra. It is quite simple; at the same time, it is very profound.

For beginning meditators, it is very hard just to settle the body. To settle the body is difficult because of discursive thoughts. In fact, the body that we are trying to settle is what is known as a psychosomatic body. It's a thought body, it's not actual body, elemental body. The first body we are working on is a thought body. So we have to settle that thought body. And the way we do that is to use breathing, or the breath, as a vehicle for settling. When we work with the breath, we work with it because it happens by itself and it's not something we have to think up. That's very important, especially in this mahamudra practice, which is not based on any contrivance whatsoever. So, to begin with, we work with the breath, and especially the outbreath. Because the outbreath is a kind of opening into space. In other words, it's leaving any kind of centralized notion of "me" or "I" — leaving it and letting that notion dissolve in space. And when that happens, then there is a sense of 360-degree awareness because there's no checking back, everything is one shot, such as what's called the mahamudra.

So in working that way, every time you breath out there's a possibility of experiencing everything there is to experience, in one shot. And experience, I'm not talking about the current usage, in other words, which is basically mental experience. I'm not talking about that; I'm talking about awareness. So in one shot everything is seen, clearly. And there is no thing, particularly, that one sees, but everything is seen clearly. So that particular practice, when repeated over time, begins to settle the discursiveness of the mind, so that the body is felt as an actual body.

When the body is settled, the thoughts are next. And, again, working with the breath as the background, and the connection with space in that realm of openness, thoughts arise, dwell, and fade, one after another, constantly. In fact, if one looks at it seems there are no end to thoughts. If one practices, one sees that thoughts come one upon the other, tumbling down just like water over rocks. However, if one examines very closely without any bias — that is, having settled one's body, if one examines very closely without any bias — the origination of those thoughts, they do not come from anywhere. If one examines very closely without any bias the dwelling of those thoughts, they do not dwell anywhere. If one examines very closely without any bias the cessation of those thoughts, they do not go anywhere. So, one begins to see that

thoughts themselves are transparent. That is the beginning of realizing non-aggression. At that point one does not have to be hard on oneself.

Later on, when one practices more completely, one begins to see that thoughts may subside, but occasionally the mind is gripped by very strong emotion, such as passion or hatred, or envy, jealousy, whatever, and that emotion creates a story in the mind. A story is nothing but a series of thoughts. But in this case that story seems to have a history. If one examines that history very closely, one realizes that it arise — arose from thought. From that thought came a picture, from that picture came a story, from that story came a very strong emotional feeling. Well, again, if one just resolves the breath, the mind and the breath, and lets the breath go out and dissolve in space, then right at the end of that outbreath [snaps fingers] is the end of that particular thought. And the emotions that create such a picture are in themselves transparent. But later on when one practices, even those emotions, seeing those emotions as transparent, might become another trap, that is to say, another reason to feel self-snug or secure. And at that point one actually has to work with the mind. That is to say, one has to dive straight into whatever arises, without any hesitation. And, again, body, breath, thoughts — directly dive into the mind, into whatever occurs. And that particular practice is done stage by stage, but not deliberately. It occurs if you just let go and relax and just be.

In mahamudra we talk about non-meditation. That is to say, the practitioner and the practice merge together so that there is no more effort. However, in the beginning it is necessary to actually see, at least as much as one can, that there is actually a path to this whole thing. And that path, all the way through, is completely empty of any concept whatsoever. It appears to move from one place to another simply because, in terms of clarifying the mind, as we begin to clarify the mind, various, sort of, almost like film —, not meaning celluloid, but filminess — develops on the surface of the mind, and perhaps creates shapes like hinayana, mahayana, vajrayana. But in reality, those are just words. In reality, that unobstructed and unoriginated mind is always right now. And that is just simply joke.

So this mahamudra is like an eagle. Or like a snake. Or like a pig. [Laughter; laughs.] Or like a vulture. It is good practice in order to wake up to what is already here. So that is the beginning of our discussion. If you would like to ask some questions, please feel free to do so.

How many people were sitting today? Oh, not bad. So you understand what I said? [Laughter.] Simple. Do we have a microphone that we're going to pass around? This gentleman, there.

Question: Let me get right to the point. It seems to me you were talking about duality between –

Vajra Regent: Have we met before?

Q: We met at a reception last week, at this woman's house [inaudible].

VR: Oh, that's right, yes.

Q: It's nice to see you.

VR: Yes, you too.

Q: You were talking about the notion of duality. I've read about it, I've heard about it, and I've yet to have been able to really seize it, experience that there is no duality between mind and what it appreciates.

VR: You haven't been able to do that yet? [Laughter.] I see.

Q: Am I being a little ambitious here, or what?

VR: I have no idea. Yes?

Q: Is there some, I mean, is it, meditation, how does one get to there?

VR: Well, there are various ways of actually experiencing duality as not dual. But according to this lineage, the practice of formless meditation is the best. That is to say, meditation without object, because it undercuts any kind of ambition. And in that way, you don't have to struggle. But one should be warned: it is very intense. It is not for weekend [laughter]. I mean, that is to say, if you actually are, mean what you say, you know. Otherwise it could be weekend, could be, you know, five seconds, same thing. But if you are interested in actually going the whole way, then you have to put your body, speech and mind into it, and you have to give up any hope of reward

altogether. That's why I told the story of these gurus at the beginning because that's what they did.

Q: Thank you very much.

VR: You're welcome. This gentleman. [Laughs.]

Question: Hi.

Vajra Regent: [Laughs.] Hello.

Q: You said that thoughts come from nowhere.

VR: That's what I said.

Q: Yeah. I don't understand that.

VR: That's right.

Q: Thank you. [Laughs; laughter.]

VR: What would you like me to do?

Q: Well, I was sitting for the first time today.

VR: Hmm. Where did they come from?

Q: A lot of them were churning thoughts from –

VR: No, I didn't say what were they like; I said where did they come from?

Q: Okay. From unresolved issues.

VR: Like where? Not — I mean, where did they come from?

Q: You mean like from right here or there or –

VR: Anywhere. Where did they come from?

Q: Well, I'll have to get back to you on that, I don't know. [Laughs; laughter.]

VR: All right, so you have something else, then?

Q: No.

VR: Yeah. Practice some more. Find out for yourself. Do they actually come from somewhere? Find the place where they start, where your thought actually originates. Find that place. Then tell me. See, when I say thoughts come from nowhere, it's not to give you a clue, particularly [laughter]. It's not Jeopardy or any of that stuff or whatever. [Laughter.] It's actually pointing to itself. [SIDE TWO OF TAPE] Pablito.

Question: You were talking at one point about seeing your own face.

Vajra Regent: Yes.

Q: Or one seeing one's own face –

VR: Yes.

Q: — with the teacher. And I wondered what is that? [Laughs.]

VR: [Laughs.] Well, can you imagine seeing your own face without a mirror?

Q: No.

VR: Right.

Q: I'm pretty, I mean you would be sort of the, like the...

VR: Impossible.

Q: ...the whole psychological face, or whatever.

VR: Impossible.

Q: Well, if you see that, I imagine that what you're saying is that we aren't aware of ourself –

VR: Yeah; something like that.

Q: — and seeing it is supposed to be a big shock.

VR: I don't know what it's supposed to be.

Q: [Laughs.] Well, something happens, I mean, what, that's what I was wondering, what is the —

VR: What happens?

Q: Yeah. What is the relationship of seeing your own face with the mirror?

VR: With the mirror?

Q: You could shave.

VR: With the mirror is the shock; that's the shock [laughter].

Q: Yeah. [Laughter.] That's what I thought; there was a shock. [Laughter.]

VR: Every time. [Laughs; laughter.] The teacher acts that way.

Q: And the relationship would be, there would be sort of like a self-correcting vision I imagine?

VR: I don't think so. Just shock.

Q: Well, what's the point then, I mean [laughs]?

VR: Wake you up. Wake up! What's the point? There is no point [laughs]. We are born, we get old and sick and die. What's the point in all that? [Laughter.] We say, well, I can leave something to the world. Yes, but the world changes all the time. And in time your statue in front of the building you made will be gone.

Q: I'll have to sit more and think about that [laughs.]

VR: Yeah, I'll bet.

Q: I mean it seems like there's something there, there's something, I mean you're, there's some kind of relationship there that is not toward building a statue.

VR: Yes.

Q: I mean, you're not here to build a statue.

VR: No.

Q: So there's some –

VR: But I might. [Laughter.]

Q: I'm not worried whether you do or not. [Laughs; laughter.]

VR: Good.

Question: I wanted to ask the question on emotions, such as anger, frustration and passion. Is the idea that if you practice and practice, in your thoughts are seen as transparent that eventually if you get angry about something it will just go away?

Vajra Regent: Well, yes, it will just go away, but in a particular way. That's what we're talking about. When we experience anger, it, your body shakes, you know, blood, you know, you get hot and you know, you can't talk, you know. And after a while, after, it takes a while to, for your body to settle again, and all this stuff happens, you know. But in reality that experience is just nothing but exaggeration of a misconception, you know, or a conception, basically. Not misconception; misconception that's redundant [laughter]. But just exaggeration of, you know, just latching on to a particular feeling. And that feeling could be first generated by a thought, but a thought in combination with the body creates an emotion, and that emotion starts to get bigger and bigger and bigger — sshhh, ssshhh, ssshhh — waves come out, like that. Well, that is based on aggression toward oneself. Aggression means to jangle up everything, make everything really painful, for no reason. It's purely the mind fascinated with itself.

Q: Would you say that the enlightened ones don't experience anger or frustration –

VR: I would say that I think they use it to teach their students, because my teacher sometimes he could create a situation where it was almost like you couldn't breathe in the room. And you knew he was not pleased. [Laughter.] And then, fifteen minutes later, he flips and says some kind of joke. And then at that moment you say, [snaps fingers] “Oh!” I'm taking this very seriously. However — [laughter] at the time, one becomes very terrified. Because one is terrified of one's own thoughts, one's own emotions. We all are. I mean, this terrible thing, isn't it? We are terrified of ourselves. My goodness! Who is there to turn to? [Laughter.] I see. The white-bearded one. [Laughter.]

Q: Thank you.

VR: You're welcome.

Question: This question is left over from our discussion of last week about reincarnation. Could you explain what it is or what it isn't that's reincarnated?

Vajra Regent: Mental propensities.

Q: That come from no place?

VR: That come from no place but appear to be solid because of repetition.

Q: Hmm.

VR: If one is attracted to constantly eating rough food, one starts to look like that, you know, and act like that, and everything else. All that stuff is mental projection, and that's based on panic, which is, manifests as some sort of being: you, me, a snake, an eagle or a pig or a vulture. [Laughter.]

Q: Okay. Thank you.

Question: I'm not quite clear what mind is, actually, because you talked about feelings, thoughts, and so on, which are all thoughts which originate

somewhere in space or nowhere in space. And this mindful compassionate looking towards oneself or others, isn't that another thought, then?

Vajra Regent: Could be.

Q: So there is no way of knowing?

VR: No. None whatsoever. If there were a way of knowing, then we could do it in the weekend and pay the money. [Laughter.] But there isn't any. [Snaps fan.] Knowing, in this case what we call — there are two aspects of knowing, according to this particular path. One is what's called the relative truth, and that is called prajna in Sanskrit, or discriminating awareness. That's one aspect of it. And the other is called jnana, which is called wisdom. Both are the same, based on no origination and no birth and no death — no substance whatsoever. So that knowing is not a thing. So basically you can't know as a so-and-so. Mr. So-And-So knows this. You say, well in the relative world, you can know how to bake a cake, you know, et cetera, et cetera. But even that knowing is not possessed by anybody. When you say, “Who knows how to bake this cake?” “Well, I do.” “How did you learn how to bake this cake?” “Well, I watched my mother do it, and while my mother baked the cake, I..” “Well, how much flour do you put in?” “Well, you put this much in. Then you start to stir it, and you put ...” And then suddenly you begin to realize that the process of doing that has to do with the sharpness of one's mind. And the knowing of the cake altogether — what should it taste like? — that's wisdom. So if you're looking for this mind, it doesn't exist.

Question: Sir, if mind itself does not exist, what is the looking at the looking at?

Vajra Regent: Well, the best way of putting it is like the moon reflecting on a lake.

Q: So it's just what is.

VR: Yeah, I suppose. What do you mean by that? [Laughter.]

Q: Moons reflect in lakes.

VR: No, no. The moon reflecting on a lake, on the surface of a lake. If you say, “What's the mind looking at? What's this looking at what?” Well, it's like the moon reflected on the surface of clear water.

Q: So my experience is such that when there's some space, then there's recognition of that space, then there seems to be sort of an echo of looking at that space. And then the –

VR: [Laughs.] Hah! Really? [Laughter.] That reminds me of the old Zen koan: “The old pond jumped in the frog.” [Laughter.]

Q: Excuse me, sir? The Loppon?

VR: Jumped in the frog. Plop. [Laughter.]

Q: What is.

VR: [Laughs.] Well, it could be completely different than you think. [Laughs.] I'm not trying to be tricky; it's just that you can't really conceptualize at all. Well, people say, “Well, in that case, we are paralyzed! We can't, you know, put the clothes in the washing machine!” I bet you can. [Laughter.]

Q: Yeah, I was wondering. You spoke about dealing with any situation which arises, and taking that as the basis for your action or your practice. And I was thinking that your thoughts are part of your experience of what arises, and so if someone, say, reacts in way which is based upon their thoughts, you respond to that, the whole thing, their thoughts included, along with your thoughts. The point is that, apparently, you can choose to, or not to have thoughts. And so is it all just a matter of choices that you're talking about, and that all these levels of reality they're all the same? I mean, I get lost at that point. [Laughs.]

VR: Well, you're making it too complicated. It was, it started off pretty good [laughter], then it started to get bigger. Well, to begin with, that's pretty good, what you said about well, if all of the phenomena you use as your path, then the thoughts are as well. The point is not to get rid of thoughts or have them cease or to generate them when you want to. That's not the point. There is no point. But it is good, to begin with, to have a very definite path. That is to say, to connect with a lineage that talks about no point. And to follow the instructions without getting too complicated. Because in order to see your mind clearly, in order for the mind to be clear, so to speak, it is necessary to

just get rid of the excess frill, excess baggage, so to speak. And that means one's own interpretation, which is the basic excess baggage that we have. Phenomena is neutral. Phenomena is not for or against anything; it's just purely a display. It's light or it's dark; it's gray, blue, whatever. But if you try to, sort of manipulate it, well, you can do that. But I don't think anybody wants to do that; it's just a matter of ignorance.

Q: Then one question?

VR: Sure.

Q: One of the big things for me that is difficult about practicing is I feel that I have to give up a lot.

VR: Such as what?

Q: Such as ideas of how else I would live. Primarily ideas.

VR: Only for an hour at a time.

Q: [Laughs.] Okay. [Laughs; laughter.] Well, my point at that was it seems as thought when you level it down to, there is no big difference between –

VR: Don't jump the gun, come on. Don't jump the gun.

Q: Sorry.

VR: Don't jump the gun. Sit for a while. Sit for a while. I mean, really do it. It's not so much that we have to rush to our death. I mean, everybody's doing that. Speeding to death. Why? It's not like in meditation practice that what we're talking about is giving up your fondest dreams and whatever it is that you feel creative about. No. Just let it settle itself. Whoosh. Just for a while. And then for a longer while. See what I'm saying?

Q: Yeah, I see what you're saying. My question sort of, I don't think I completed it, was, at a level, there doesn't seem to be much difference, and I was wondering if you could tell me what –

VR: Between what and what?

Q: Unenlightened and enlightened, then.

VR: Oh, really? Which level?

Q: In the level that everything can be the basis of enlightened action, then everything in and of itself is enlightened action, even if you don't know it. So it seems the only difference is you know it or something.

VR: No, if you don't know it, then it's not enlightened. Enlightened means there's lights on and it's not dark any more. [Laughter.] Doesn't work.

Q: Okay.

VR: Good try. Sit. [Laughter.] Just sit. Gentleman here.

Question: Is there any way to talk about what it is that draws us to do the practice or to take us towards enlightenment?

Vajra Regent: Well, I think that there is, you know. We don't have to spend a lot of time on it, but I think it is the innate quality of the mind to recognize itself. A sort of very basic, in fact, it is reality. That is the basic reality: that you see, and as you see, what you see is illuminated because it is its own projection. The minute you see something, you know what it is. It doesn't take any time to cognize it. And that's the basic thing about all of the mental world that we live in. The question is what brought us to remember that is the great compassion of those people, such as the Buddha and his disciples, who see people like ourselves falling asleep, dreaming, sort of wallowing in fantasies. They ring a bell, they send a windstorm of dharma in a certain way to your doorstep. They create plague and famine, all of these things, by their mental projections, so that maybe we could wake up to it. That's just, you know, I'm just sort of waxing because I'm in Los Angeles. [Laughter.] But I think the truth of the matter is that it's one's innate wakefulness that brings one to, to itself, brings oneself to itself, if we could say it that way. But even all of that is just a bunch of garbage words. If you want to look at it on a strictly relative level, you were born so-and-so in this particular lifetime, and through whatever confluence of conditions and causes, you arrived here. All of that, what was, that came about in the past, is finished. Right now, finished, has no existence whatsoever. This very moment, also does not exist as something you can hold on to. The future is just purely imagination. So what is the reality? It's just basically what is, which

is the mind itself. That's called the mahamudra. It's very claustrophobic and very delightful.

Q: I had a second question, if I may.

VR: Mmm hmmm.

Q: You talked about the lineage saying that, or offering that you could achieve enlightenment in one lifetime, and –

VR: It's not just an empty promise; it's what they say.

Q: —and then last week, if I remember correctly, you mentioned the idea of something like grace, that something has some outside sort of ...

VR: Well, it's not outside. You mean adhisthana?

Q: I'm not sure what that means. But it's –

VR: What, what did you, what did I say? Grace? Did I say that?

Q: I think that word came up or maybe, someone may have asked about grace.

VR: Yeah; blessing. Oh, someone asked about it, yeah. Amazing grace.
[Laughter.]

Q: Well, I guess what I'm asking, is there something ...

VR: Outside?

Q: I guess outside your own mind that actually allows you to be enlightened –

VR: No. No, no, no. [Laughter.]

Q: It's not your, just pursuit?

VR: Couldn't be.

Q: So the practice, if one really does it devotedly, and I forgot the other word you mentioned — with that intent?

VR: Intensely.

Q: Intensely.

VR: Yes. But you shouldn't take it to mean that I am saying that this is the ultimate self-help method. Unless one has devotion to one's teacher and to one's lineage, nothing ever happens. Because devotion is the real heart. It's the only thing we've got. Nobody's all that smart. Like Tilopa, he was very smart. Smart guy. According to the story, when he wanted the supreme teaching of enlightenment, which is represented by a red lady — you might have seen some thangkas of her; she has three eyes and fangs — he went to see her directly, not through a guru or intermediary. He said, “I want the teachings from you.” She said, “Who are you anyway?” He said, “I am Cakrasamvara, your partner.” Well, in our lineage we have that attitude. [Laughs.] She said, “In that case, by all means, come in.” [Laughter.] You know how it is.

Question: Sir, when you talked in the beginning about primordial instincts?

Vajra Regent: Yes.

Q: Is that pretty much what —

VR: Instincts. Yes, yes. Bodhicitta.

Q: Pardon me?

VR: *Bodhicitta* is Sanskrit for the word I have translated as primordial instinct.

Q: Is that pretty much what's propelled all of us to come listen to you and to practice?

VR: I think so.

Q: Is that the same as innate wakefulness somehow?

VR: Mmm hmmm. So many words to say one thing.

Q: Yeah. So it's like we're pretty lucky, actually, that something —

VR: It all depends on what you do with it. You could be lucky for a short time. In other words, if you practice for a weekend, your mind could sort of resolve itself a little bit, you know, and then you go back to your world and suddenly everything jumps back on again and you start gnashing and gnawing of teeth and all the rest of it. It depends on what you do with it.

Q: It's not something you can lose altogether though, is it, do you think?
[Laughs.]

VR: Let me ask the holy father. [Laughter.]

Q: Thank you.

Question: I have two questions. One is I would like you to speak a little bit more, please, about why you feel psychological stuff is a hindrance. [VR laughs.] And the –

Vajra Regent: The other.

Q: The other one is, some of us have had difficult experiences with teachers, here in the United States. And I find personally that it's not easy to find one that is helpful.

VR: That's not looking for something back from you? Is that what you're talking about?

Q: Not me, necessarily, but –

VR: Oh, if you're not talking about yourself, who're you talking about?

Q: My community.

VR: You mean Los Angeles?

Q: No. San Francisco.

VR: Ah hah! No wonder! No good teachers would ever go there. [Laughter.]

Q: So now we're here.

VR: That's a good thing! [Laughter.]

Q: And –

VR: Psychologizing is the compartmentalizing of the mind. It's kind of like the crystallization of the mind into compartments, and then studying those compartments as if they were real. Such as the origin of your neurosis and its components. That in itself is delusory and offensive to any person. However, I speak from a particular point of view. That is to say, someone who has never paid for it, ever. When I was very young, when I was eight years old, I had a feeling of myself that was undeniable. It was a feeling of, that no matter what happened, I would not commit suicide. Some kind of genuineness of being. And since then, what I've been doing is this.

Q: Okay. So, what you're saying then is from your own experience and not necessarily a feeling that you have about whether it would help or not help other people along the path.

VR: Well, what I would say is this. That what I like to do best is to take the skeleton out of the closet and jangle it. [Baby cries; VR laughs.] And when it comes to psychology, in this world today, well, it's a little bit unnerving. Because there's so much invested in it. I mean, money and time, everything. My goodness! The question that comes to my mind is that if there's a real intermediary between you and your own sanity, then is there real sanity at all? Does the sanity belong to the intermediary, to you, or what happens in between?

Q: Okay. So let me attach it to the other question. If your way, then, is to take the skeleton out of the closet and jangle it, I assume that you would have, or a student would have to have a, some kind of, you'd have to be with your teacher in some way. In other words, what I'm saying is, trying to attach my two questions. If you're a teacher of a hundred or a thousand people, how are you able to do that for your students?

VR: Magic. Magician thing. In other words, between the teacher and the student, there is a bond which is unbroken. Once a student connects with a teacher, the magic of it is, it doesn't need even a telephone. As soon as you think of your teacher, your mind is there, on the spot. [Snaps fingers.] That

kind of connection takes real openness, real heart. It's not ordinary thing. The reason I'm saying about all this psychologizing, I'm just warning everybody not to buy everything. I mean, my goodness, we may have problems, but at a certain point those problems start to become monumentalized. Mr. Freud wrote big books about his problems. [Laughter.] Which became a whole generation of everybody's problems. They said, "That's right. My mother did that, did, dd, dd, dd,..." And you said, "Well, that's true; that happened to me, too." The mind's quality is to reflect itself. And you read it, and you say, "Yeah, that's me." It makes no difference when you die.

Q: So to develop that kind of openness with a teacher, you would, you, for yourself it was some kind of immediate connection, as I understand.

VR: Well, you know, in terms of a teacher, what I said was there are certain qualities. If you are looking, I mean if you're actually looking for a teacher, that's a little bit suspect anyway. Because it's kind of, a little bit like shopping for the right thing. If I get the right one, then I can devote myself, you know. It happens to you. Because of the confluence of certain conditions and times of your own particular life. And suddenly, boom! You look at him, you say, "I think I'll go that way," you know. And if it's a genuine teacher they know how to guide you step by step, to say to you at some point, "It's your show. Go ahead." You know.

Q: Thank you.

Question: Sir, my question is further about psychology. I've worked in psychiatry before, as a nurse. And I want to ask, don't you think that there is some value when people get very confused about their world –

Vajra Regent: Yes.

Q: Thank you. [Laughter.]

VR: But when they start putting electric things on the head, and — it's still done everywhere, everywhere, you know. It's total bullshit, and it's fucked from the beginning.

Question: Sir, I have a question about thoughts that arise that have no connection to one's own experience in terms of, "He said this, she said that, I want to do this, I want to do that." Thoughts that are basically unattached to one's own recognized everyday experience.

Vajra Regent: In other words, they have nothing to do with anything you can remember?

Q: Yeah. They're totally unconnected to who I think I am.

VR: Yes. There are various classes of those particular thoughts. Some of them are generated due to, you think you don't remember them, but in your basic alayavijnana they exist, and they come up through that. And also there are others who are just born from the, sort of like, adhithana of the gurus. In other words, they put their thought toward you, which can be done. And therefore, you think it, which wakes you up from a dream, or something like that. And others like that. Anyway, what's the point?

Q: Well, I'm just curious as how to, you know, —

VR: Don't regard them as anything but thoughts.

Q: In the same kind of way, then, as other thoughts.

VR: Exactly in the same kind of way.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

VR: You'll never get stuck on it that way.

Q: [Laughs.] Thank you.

VR: Get stuck on that, you can start your own religion. I come back and see the Sadowsky Group. [Laughter.]

Question: If mind might be thought looking at thought, would you say then that —

Vajra Regent: Mind is not thought looking at thought. Forget that. [Laughter.]

Q: Well what I was wondering is whether the mind, a mind, a thought is unique to a thinker, or the thinker unique to a thought?

VR: Seems to be the same.

Q: Well, I guess it depends somewhat on the origin of thoughts, whether it's something out there –

VR: Seems to be the same. The thinker is the same as the origin of thoughts. Find out where the thinker originated from. Take a look. And next time, tell me. You're going to sit tomorrow?

Q: Mmm hmm.

VR: Sit. But don't look as if you're looking for something. If it occurs to you fine. If it doesn't, fine. But if you find out, let me know tomorrow. Take a look.

Question: Hi again. [Laughter.] Is the teacher the mirror of the student?

Vajra Regent: [Laughs.] Who wants to know? [Laughter.]

Q: The reason I asked that [laughter] is that I feel somewhat uncomfortable with the veneration that is placed on the teachers.

VR: Well, you know, the thing is, is we grew up in a, sort of like a haphazard time, where real devotion and understanding of lineage is not part of our sort of current mental consciousness. That's the only reason you feel uncomfortable with it. It is perfectly natural to fall in love. There's nothing wrong with it.

Question: I just wanted to ask you, what is your feeling about the martial arts, and do you see someone attaining enlightenment –

Vajra Regent: Through that?

Q: Yes, through martial arts training alone?

VR: No. No, no. Attaining a certain level of accomplishment in terms of the mind, but not enlightenment. Enlightenment is something different.

Q: Do you, have you personally experienced?

VR: Little bit. Not to the degree of people who actually practiced heavy duty, you know, as a discipline. But through my associations and whatnot. But the reason I say that is because that's what actually occurs.

Q: Personally, I feel that it takes you to a certain point, and we really don't have texts, you know, material, literature to follow –

VR: I don't think there is any test.

Q: I mean texts.

VR: Oh, texts.

Q: Written material. In the sense that, you know, a lot of the training is through physical discipline –

VR: Must be; yeah.

Q: — and there is some sharing of, of thought –

VR: When you get closer into your mind, then there has to be sound, kind of a symbol. That's really important, and only the great gurus can actually transmit that to you. So in terms of martial arts you can train your mind in such a way that you can actually move the elements around and all kinds of things. But at a certain point, in order to cut through any kind of existence whatsoever of an ego, you need to actually be shown the seed syllable and visualization and actually put your mind [snaps fingers]. But you need a good teacher to do that.

Q: Do you then suggest, like, personally, I've made a commitment to do this for life. I enjoy it for one, but I do see that I was introduced to this lineage through my old roommate, and I see a lot of value. It's something that I feel that you, you either face it now, or you don't, and you die, right. It's always there.

VR: Precisely.

Q: And, but we only have, well, we only have –

VR: Short time. Short time. Life is short.

Q: And so, do you feel that –

VR: Yeah; well, listen. The point is that you have to do, when you wake up to it, you have to do the most essential thing. And the most essential thing is to resolve your mind to its depth. That's the most essential thing. And you start on the outside and work inside, inside, inside. Until finally you let go of even the technique at all. But then, that's when you need a teacher. You need someone to point out the actual symbol of mind itself. That's important.

Q: Thank you.

Question: I was just wondering, where actually do you put your effort into when you practice. It seems like –

Vajra Regent: Getting there.

Q: Getting there. [Laughter.] Okay. It seems like –

VR: That's to begin with. Just to get there. [Laughter.]

Q: It seems like when I try and practice, I almost try to hard and I end up fighting myself instead of really practicing. And I just –

VR: Well, it seems to me that real effort is almost like, anytime you begin to feel that you are trying to make practice happen with your mind, let go of it. How do you let go of it? Go back to the basic, simple technique: out, breath, dissolve.

Q: So, when I find myself, say, doing shamatha, and I'm quite discursive and I don't come back to my breath that often, I try and, I try to come back to my —

VR: You are in a hopeless situation, my friend. [Laughter.] You can't patch it together in your mind.

Q: I can't — excuse me? I didn't —

VR: You can't patch it together in your mind. About how to come back to where you already are. It's impossible.

Q: So, I have to relax more and then it'll happen on its own, is that what you're ...

VR: Something like that. And the effort is somewhat being on the edge of that. All the time. Effort that we experience to practice, in practice is to relax, totally. That's the effort we experience in practice. But if you try to relax totally as a mental fabrication, all you get is a confusion between the in breath and the out breath and your body and the space and the thoughts and all of that. The real relaxation and effortless meditation is simply giving in to what is, and that is very profound. It's called shamatha, dwelling in peace, and it's ultimate nonaggression. And fundamentally, it arises as a thought. "I am meditating," is the first thing when you're meditating that you realize that you're doing it. When you realize you are doing it, it arises as a thought, "I am meditating," and then you say, "I lost it." Then you try and get it back. And you try various ways of getting it back. And then you let go if trying. And then, by itself, you experience unobstructed awake mind. And then you say, "That's it." And then you get pissed off at yourself for even saying that. [Laughter.] And it goes on. And it goes on. But in the midst of that is the thread of mahamudra, which we call mahamudra meditation. That in itself is it.

Q: So is there really no place for effort, or at least the kind of effort I'm talking about? It seems like you're saying that you have to relax and let the, let whatever you're cranking up run out of steam on its own, is that right?

VR: I'm saying if you don't actually make an effort to practice this, it will never happen.

Q: So the effort is in just sitting down, and then —

VR: Yeah, yeah.

Q: — you kind of let it go.

VR: Well, whatever the effort is in, if you don't make that effort to make your mind as Buddha, it will never happen. If you think that, according to the

mahayana teachings everyone possesses Buddhanature, therefore in time everyone will become a Buddha, you can actually wait it out [laughter] it won't happen. But if you think that effort is trying to construct your mind as a Buddha through mental construction, it won't happen.

Q: So where should I put my effort, then?

VR: Nowhere.

Q: Nowhere. Okay.

VR: Put your effort nowhere.

Q: Put it nowhere.

VR: And practice that way. Tomorrow. Tonight, when you go to sleep. Any time. But especially when you sit.

Q: Thank you.

Question: [Inaudible] lineage, actually, and the emphasis is a lot on tantra. And I'm very drawn to, this, the breathing that you do in terms of examining your own mind, and I find the tantra very busy, very busy. And I'd like to know your comments about how you can study your mind or achieve mahamudra through tantra.

Vajra Regent: Well, there are two ways to achieve the mahamudra. One is through the path of what is called tantra, and the other is through the path of meditation. The tantra is to utilize the mental occurrences in a symbolic way, that is, to visualize and repeat mantras and to see one's body as a particular deity, or aspect of enlightened mind. The path of meditation is to allow your mind to resolve itself through just being in a nonstructured way. Both of those things work. It all depends on your teacher.

Q: Well, the teacher that I study with, I study with a Gelugpa. And a lot of times they say watching your breath, you're not necessarily earning merit, because there's no meritorious object, per se. So it's a little bit discouraged. I mean, it's saying, fine, do a couple of minutes, you know, before you do your sadhanas, but. Do you know what I'm saying?

VR: Yeah; I understand what you're saying, I understand what they're saying. But they're wrong. [Laughter.]

Q: Well, I'm sitting here. Actually, my husband is, you know, practices with Dharmadhatu and I find myself very drawn but then I'm a little bit torn because, you know, I do have a devotion to one method for a number of years.

VR: To have devotion to a method is a mediocre point of view. To have devotion to a teacher, that's the best.

Q: A teaching?

VR: Teacher. [Tape Two begins at this point.] In terms of accumulating merit, the best merit whatsoever is merit without a reference point. And that in itself is a formless one. And if they don't know that, well, they don't know that. There's accumulation of merit with a reference point, accumulation of merit without a reference point, and there's accumulation of wisdom. There are three types of accumulation. Ask your teacher about that.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

VR: Don't tell him I said it though. [Laughter.] Say it just came up in your mind. [Laughter.]

Question: Sir, you've been speaking this evening about devotion quite a bit.

Vajra Regent: No; little bit.

Q: And my question is regarding the situation of having found a teacher and making a connection with the teacher, having a limited exposure to that teacher and feeling strongly to have met a genuine teacher, and having only gone so far on the path that he's sort of laid out for us, and then having him pass away, and it being in a situation where in this form he's no longer available to us, or to me. And it seems as you say, even thinking of the teacher or referring to a picture of the teacher that one can rekindle devotion. But I have yet in my experience felt anything akin to being with him or being close to him or being around him.

VR: Practice more. You meet the teacher's mind through practice. The teacher, when, the teacher lives in a body, that is purely a manifestation for your benefit so that he can express the practice to you. So you get some idea of what it is that you're doing with yourself. [Laughs.] Well, consider yourself lucky.

Q: I do.

VR: Well, then, practice it. Practice the lucky practice. [Laughter.] Lucky, lucky. [Laughter.]

Question: You have mentioned a number of times about specific points.

Vajra Regent: Which ones?

Q: On the path, at which, well, I haven't got there myself, I don't know, but at which the teacher can direct you or reflect you or having some very specific teaching –

VR: What is it you'd like to say?

Q: Well, in some way I feel I've lost my teacher.

VR: It's like losing your mind. Good. Find out where you lost it. Go back. Start from the beginning. Find out where your teacher originated from, and where you lost him. Don't waste time. [Snaps fan.]

Question: You mentioned that the teachers are here in the human form to present us with those type of teachings. But aren't we in return in human form to accept those teachings and thus to become teachers to teach other people those teachings?

Vajra Regent: Yes.

Q: Yeah. Thus! [Laughter.]

VR: As is said! [Laughter.]

Q: Is this the ultimate way to –

VR: Yes!

Q: Well, no, wait. Let me finish. [Laughter.] Is this the way, is this like the ultimate way to change this corrupt world into a non-corrupt world?

VR: No, that's impossible.

Q: Oh, that's impossible. It's a shame.

VR: No, it's not; it's just what is.

Q: Just what is.

VR: This corrupt world is always what it is, and it is that way because it is endlessly corrupt.

Q: Why is it endlessly corrupt?

VR: Find out. You know, there's a story which is very central to this whole thing, about a teacher, and he had two students. And he said to both of them, "Go out and taste everything in this world and find out whether this world has anything to offer or not." They both went out and did that, and one got into it really heavily and created a whole illusion. The other one immediately saw that there was not much happening. And eventually, they met up again. You know the story?

Q: [Inaudible] think I've heard it, but go ahead.

VR: [Laughs; laughter.] Hum a few bars, right? [Laughter.]

Q: I'm sure other people haven't –

VR: Oh. [Laughter.] I'm sure that some of them haven't. Well, they met up and this one student said, "Well, I opened this brothel, I opened this gambling place, I did this, I did that, I did the whole thing in the world." And the other one said, "I decided that none of it was worth it, so I just practiced." And the teacher said, "You're right; you're wrong." The one who had done the whole thing killed his teacher, on the spot. And he's called the Rudra, which is the ultimate egohood, to kill your teacher. He misinterpreted the instructions.

Q: Thank you.

VR: Check it out.

Q: Yeah, I will.

VR: We'll see.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, good to talk to you. This today seminar — seminar? Whatever. Is meant to open a gateway to the particular teaching of mahamudra and also meant to simplify things quite a bit. Hopefully, we've made some beginning. So, tomorrow, sit. Sit without any particular ambition. Try that. There's no reason to think that tomorrow you will attain enlightenment, but perhaps you will. [Laughter.] {Tape ends.}