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Naropa Institute Course: Naropa, the Mahasiddha

Talk 1 of 3

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VAJRA REGENT OSEL TENDZIN:

Good evening. Thank you very much, Dean Lief. It's always an interesting experience to be introduced. One never knows what background you actually have. So I see a lot of familiar faces. It's interesting that Dean Lief brought up the Maitri. It used to be called the Maitri Project in 1972 when I was the director of such project, and we did our first little seminar in San Francisco in the Jack Tower Hotel, and we had Stanislaus Graf and people like that, and [inaudible] who is now dead, and other people there. It was interesting. We had our first place in Elizabethtown, New York. Some people here tonight were there. Mrs. Craig is here, I see. One of the original staff of the first Maitri setup. She is now co-director of the Vidya School, part of the Nalanda Foundation. Anybody else from that old [inaudible words]? Mrs. Lief herself. I suppose that someone like yourself, Dean Lief, becomes institutionalized. Just like Nancy Craig.

So we are going to talk about Naropa himself, the mahasiddha. His life example as a student and also as a teacher. The reason why we picked this particular topic is that you are all here, obviously, at Naropa Institute, and there is some, to use his name, means that there must be some guiding influence of his life example in order to use his name. Naropa, as you probably know, is one of the founders or forefathers of the Kagyü lineage of Tibet, and that lineage is described as the practicing lineage. You might call it the shit-kickers [laughter] of Buddhism. Not the imperial fellows who have very nice ideas and nice robes and the rest, but people who actually practice Buddhism, the Kagyü.

They sometimes get a bad reputation for being sloppy, just like Naropa Institute gets a bad reputation for being sloppy. It's not officially run as a good business should be, as we know. That comes from our lineage [laughter]. It does! So you should understand that. You know, those of you who think that the administration is inept [laughter] and made so many mistakes, you should understand that there is a reason for that. The first reason is that they are practitioners. Because they are practitioners, they are not so much attached to the worldly things, and that is the efficiency of the confused mind. A confused mind loves to be efficient in its confusion. It's always good to be efficient, therefore you can always rely on your own ignorance to make things go off. In Naropa Institute, it doesn't work that way. There are a lot of

holes, a lot of gaps, and lots of mistakes, and that's what makes it a very brilliant and wonderful place to be at.

If you study the Kagyü lineage, you will find the same thing happening. The teachers of the Kagyü lineage transmitted the pristine wisdom from guru to disciple to the present day without having to make a rigid system. Well, how is that possible? In our world we think of education in a one or two-dimensional fashion. At best, two-dimensional. But in terms of our forefathers, especially in the Kagyü lineage, we always think of three to begin with, and four when we really do it. What does that mean? [Laughs, laughter] There's a fourth dimension? Yes; there certainly is. It's the dimension of mind, and mind itself has no particular origin, so there is where we get, how we call ourselves the followers of Naropa.

Naropa himself was born into the tradition which was very solid and based on thousands of years of practice. He was born a Brahmin in the Indian tradition. Now I don't know how many of you have studied the Indian tradition from the Vedic times and following the Vedic times, but there are four sections of life according to the Indian tradition, and those four sections of life eventually developed into four different types of people and what they did. But the four sections of life according to the ancient Indian tradition, was described in this fashion. The first one was called the Brahmacharya, that is to say, that from the time that you were born until you are fifteen or something like that, you are a celibate student, and then after that is what's called [inaudible]. You become a householder, you become married, and you take up your family's business and you bring up your children and live in your house, and you have land and whatnot, and you live that way. The third one is called [inaudible], and that is a forest dweller. When your children are grown, you leave your home, you go to the forest, and you practice [inaudible], a Sanskrit word, austerities or discipline. And the last one is called, is when finally you give up everything completely.

So that is the world Naropa was born into. But at that time, the situation had degenerated to the point where there were called "castes," or sections of society. It had divided itself into people who did certain things, and those people were called, first of all, the Brahmins. Those people were the priests, their province was spiritual activity, and they were born as samyasa, renunciates, which is not exactly going according to tradition, but at that point, that's what happened. And the second being the [inaudible] or the warrior caste, and the business, and everybody who did everything else. And then below that, people who weren't considered human. This was a division of humanity that developed because of, the original idea was fine. But then somehow, because of the confusion of time and the confusion of mind, it developed itself into where society was graded by your birth.

Naropa himself was born as a Brahman – no, he was born as a [inaudible], I think. Anybody remember? I think he was born into warrior caste. Yes, he was. He was born into warrior caste, and his family, his mother and father, were local chieftains, royalty in the sense of a local family who owned land, and his people were part of their province, part of their governing system. And he himself, Naropa that is, at the age of eight years old, had definite experience of impermanence and transitoriness of human life and decided, if you can believe it, that there wasn't anything worthwhile about this human life, nothing that could be offered by

the sense pleasures and the sense appetites, and decided to study the dharma when he was eight.

When he was eleven years old, he traveled to Kashmir with the blessings of his parents, also the – you might say they were completely upset and distraught about the fact that he was interested in religious life. But they sent him anyway to Kashmir, where he studied the buddhadharma and learned the principles of learning at the time, which were astrology and language and blah, blah, blah. There were six different ones. I don't remember. Probably somebody here should. Does anybody here remember what the six principles of learning were at that time? Judith, where are you? [referring to Judith Zimmer Brown] What were they? Grammar, logic, medicine, the arts, epistemology, there were five, there weren't six. Ah, I thought there were six.

Well, anyway, he learned that from the time he was eleven until thirteen years old, so you could say he was a gifted student. We have to be attentive to this particular person, Naropa. Of course, he is considerably advanced in his birth, which is a Buddhist concept, or Buddhist notion. Those of you who are not Buddhist might think it's a little fishy, but according to the tradition, Naropa was a tenth-stage bodhisattva who took birth in order to finally complete his training and become a Buddha. So to be that clever at nine or eleven years old is not unusual from that point of view. But in any case, the first part of Naropa's life was dedicated to learning in the classical sense: how to speak, how to walk, how to talk, how to learn the arts, learn what was the object of learning at that time. And he put himself wholeheartedly into that, and mastered it.

By the time he was a little bit older, I don't know if it was fifteen or sixteen, when his parents were frightened that he would become solely interested in the dharma and forsake the worldly life, thinking that he's the last of their line which had descended in a long line from generations. They worried that he would not father a son, and therefore their line would discontinue, the name and the line. They tried to keep him away from the dharma, but it seems like his mind was totally absorbed in it, so they had very little choice. I suppose we have very similar experience ourselves being here at Naropa Institute. I'm sure there are more prestigious and notable institutes that we could go to, to learn what we want to learn, psychology or the arts, or whatnot. And we'd get far better credentials than being here at Naropa Institute. But because of our passion to learn, we are here at Naropa Institute.

And that is the same, in a way, as Naropa himself. If his passion for learning was so great that he wasn't considering whether it would profit him to learn these things, to go to Kashmir and wherever else he went by the time he was sixteen, to learn all the different dharmic arts, dharmic learning. But his parents thought when he was sixteen, that's enough. You're going too far. You better get married. And so they fixed him up, as was the custom. And one wonders if that wasn't such a good custom now these days. But in any case [laughter] he married a good girl of the Brahmin caste or whatever. I think she was actually Brahmin caste, yes. He was married for eight years, but still his mind was turned toward dharma. After eight years, by mutual consent they split, left each other. His wife was called Niguma, is now and still part of the Kagyü lineage. In fact, Kalu Rinpoche, whom many of you have met, holds part of her teaching. So she wasn't just simply trying to do the housewife bit for Naropa. She also had

her own thing that she was doing. And fortunately, they met. Naropa's passion for learning was intense. He was so completely learned that after he left his wife and took teachings from teachers all over India, he eventually landed at Nalanda University, and through debate won his debate and became Abbott of Nalanda University.

In terms of our own understanding of what that means and what we're doing here, we should understand this, that Naropa's passion is our very stuff, what Naropa Institute is made of. The passion to learn, to experience, and to completely master the very classical essence of knowledge is what we're all about. So in that sense we have been trying for these seven or eight years to – it might be nine at this point – nine, it's nine, twelve, nine [laughter] it's nine! – that we've been trying to impress and to present to students that the first step is always the most classical step, the most precise step, and that is in order to first master the art of being a student, one must have the passion to learn the classical form. It is the most basic principle of learning. If we look in the Western world, it's always the same, Eastern world, the Chinese, excellent example of how to learn. The Chinese government is based on academies, and having gone through certain courses of learning one could qualify for government posts, which was important in the classical Chinese tradition. But the basic point is that to begin with one must learn the classical steps. If one learns the classical steps, one knows the language, whether it's a body language, mental language or speech. Those languages are learnable, and once they are learnable, then it is possible to pursue a career, then it is possible to be educated, let's say. In terms of Naropa, a boy of nine years old, and eleven years old, was proficient and learned in grammar and epistemology, all these things by the time he was thirteen. That kind of passion to learn should be the way we approach our life. Someone say, well that's completely fanatic, you know, you'll just be looking at parking meters twenty minutes, forty minutes, just look and see how it turns around, you know, and [laughter] things like that. You know, you'll be so passionate about how things work that you become fixated.

Well, not quite, because there's another aspect, and that is to have passion for wisdom, and not just passion by itself, not just passion to learn anything. But passion has to be guided by a sense of wisdom. That is to say that we could learn many different things, but we should have some understanding that what we can learn will result in wisdom, which will result in transforming our own lives and the lives of the people around us. Naropa himself, at a very early age, saw this as wisdom: that to have a human body, to be born as a human being, is indeed miraculous and trustworthy. That is to say, we should make use of it. Second, that being born as a human being is a transitory experience nonetheless, and even though we have this fantastic experience to learn, it very easily can be cut short. Third, that by following the dharma, wisdom accrues by itself. So Naropa himself thought this way. We ourselves should take that as an example. Passion for wisdom, having a keen mind, being interested in everything that goes on around us, and to master the basic elements of learning should be our first and primary step. And that way we can follow Naropa's life example as a student, at least in the first phase. So that's sort of the basic setup, and that's how we made Naropa Institute, with that example. If you have any questions, please, feel free.

QUESTION: Good evening. Would you explain what you meant when you said that if you follow the dharma wisdom accrues by itself?

VAJRA REGENT: Well, you see the thing is, Naropa being born into a family which had all the comforts of home, shall we say, in terms of those times, and being, having available to him all that was necessary in terms of living, you might say, a superior life, found that those things were not actually enough, even at an early age he found that those things were not actually enough to produce something meaningful or even interesting.

The dharma is of two types: ordinary dharma is just simply experience of elemental phenomena, that is to say, hot and cold and good and bad and hot and cold and things like that, growth, birth, sickness and things like that, wind, fire, air. Those are elemental dharma. Those are actual things that we experience. The dharma that Naropa was following was the dharma brought about by passion and inquisitiveness. That is to say, so there is wind and fire and earth and water. So there are these things. These things are happening. And so there's hot and cold and the rest of it, and I feel cold and I feel warm. What does that have to do with being alive at all? So a kind of question arose in his mind at a very early age, which I suppose arose in all of our minds. But because of the keenness of his mind and the passion, understanding the passion to learn, he followed the higher dharma, that is to say, understanding the nature of reality, or how things appear as they are and how they are in reality.

So that's what he followed, and that's why the dharma, by following that, by following that dharma, things appeared in their own nature. Take, for example, studying something, whatever it is. How do we actually learn what that something is that we are studying? Say, well, I'm studying art. What does that mean? It means that you apply that keen and passionate mind to the artistic vision of your particular time, culture. It might involve paint. It might involve photographs, photography. It might involve music, or whatever we call art, but what you do is you apply your mind to that and you learn the basic components of that particular study.

In terms of Naropa, his study was how we be, how we are. So he applied his mind to that, and he learned a lot, so much so that he distinguished himself among the scholars. Oh goodness, I forgot this whole point! He's a scholar. [Laughter] Forgive me. He was called a "mahapandita," the great pandit, the great scholar, Naropa. He was so proficient in his studies that he could quote any verse of sutras and tantras at will. When he came to his debate in Nalanda, the competition was, shall we say, this great scholar, the mahapandita, the great scholar. At the same time he's a practitioner, and his mind is always inquisitive. Anyway, so that's following the dharma, is what he followed. It's the same process what we do. When we study something, the process is the same. You have your inquisitiveness, you have your passion, you have your discipline, you have your result. Mahapandita. You know those hats, you've seen Karmapa, those of you who have seen His Holiness Karmapa, pandita hats. That comes from ancient India. When they had debates, they put on those hats. They have a point like that. And they would debate each other over points of grammar and all the rest of that. [Inaudible]

Q: It seems like you would have to be somewhat fanatical to get to a position like that.

VR: I think so. I think so. Somewhat. But when you think about it, which one of us isn't? You know, we are fanatical sometimes about things which don't seem to mean all that much [laughter].

Q: Parking meters –

VR: Parking meters, right, yes. That's what I meant, yes, exactly. I mean, we're fanatical about how we do this or that, but Naropa himself was fanatical about knowledge itself. That's the thing. He was fanatical about knowledge, to learn first of all how to do things properly was his first intelligent goal. When you think about it, there aren't many people who do that, you know, to learn how to do things properly, not only see the ancient Indian method of learning had to do with a whole being. That's what we're trying to teach at Naropa Institute as well. It wasn't just simply being perfect in one science, but to be perfect in all sciences it means that, meant that you could be a complete being in your body, in your speech, in your thought, in your relationships, in your occupation, whatever. You were educated. We'd like to do that, that's our idea. Some people say that's the ancient liberal arts idea. You bet it is. It is! And we're the cobwebs in the computer [laughter]. Just like Naropa was to his parents. His parents thought, "You don't really want to do that! Study religion? I mean, you could be a king! You could do all these things, and have power." He said, "No, I think I'd prefer to study this because it seems to make more sense."

QUESTION: [Inaudible words] – parents didn't want him to study religion?

VR: Well, because they thought that he's the last son that they would have. They were old at the time. And they only had one son, his name was Naropa. And they thought if he studied religion then he wouldn't have any other sons, and their family name, like Rich, for example [laughter] wouldn't go on any further. And people usually are very prideful about their names. They would like it to go on, in other words, after I'm dead, I would like Vajra Rich [referring to his eldest son] to be the next Rich, you know, and that kind of thing. Naropa's parents were like that, and they thought if he studies religion he won't have any children. He won't keep our family name going. You know what happens then. If there is no family name, they lose their property. If they lose their property, their memory will cease to exist in history. So they were afraid of that.

Q: So they were a little greedy.

VR: A little greedy, that's true. [Laughter] They were a little greedy. They weren't a lot greedy, because they did let him do it, after all. They were afraid that he would do it, and they tried to stop him, but once he said to them, "Listen, Mom and Dad, this is what I want to do," [laughter] they said, "Well, we can't stop that." We didn't plan that, by the way. [Laughter]

VR: Gentleman back there.

QUESTION: I'm confused about the passion for wisdom. If one has that passion for wisdom, how does one know what one has passion for? Usually there is an object, and you say, I want that, but in the wisdom case it's so obscure, in a way. How, in what way do you know what you want, or how do you know what to go after?

VR: Well, let's say if you would like to learn how to do a particular dance, there are certain steps that you must know in order to make that dance at least workable. The wisdom part is, once you know the steps, when you dance – ahhh! It's beautiful. It looks like a really good dance, right? You can really dance! But to begin with, unless you know the steps, to think about it, and say, well I'd like to really dance like whatever, Baryshnikov or Travolta [laughter]. In order to dance like that you have to know the steps, so the passion for wisdom begins with a vision. You see an example. Basically, you see an example. You see things in a way which is perfectly real and brilliant, and then you think to yourself, "I would like to do that. I would like to learn how to do that." And then you begin to understand that in order to do that you have to go through the basic one, two, three, one, two, three, one, two, three.

Q: So when you have the vision, things are never the same after that.

VR: Never. [Laughter] As soon as you begin to wake up as Naropa did, even though he had to be married for eight years and go through the stages. That's why I talked about the stages of life according to the Hindu system. He had to go through that because of the culture, still his mind was intent on wisdom. Once you see, once you have a glimpse of that, you never change. You might get older and a little bit cranky, but occasionally, when the very simple, cheerful message comes from the phenomenal world, you remember. Our point is that we shouldn't get so old that our body can't keep up with our mind. You understand?

Q: I missed the last part.

VR: Well, the reason why we're doing this thing at Naropa Institute is so that you don't get so old that your body can't keep up with your mind. If you remember twenty years later that you actually had a thought of real wisdom and brilliance, you can't do the steps any more. We're trying to say, well, let's do it earlier on, okay? So you get the steps down, not so that you can become so sure of yourself that no matter when, you'll be able to dance that dance. You might still, but you'd be really tired out afterwards. This point is that in the very beginning of our study we should know that mastering the very basics of learning is something which never leaves you, and that comes from having a glimpse of wisdom, having passion, let's say, for wisdom.

Q: Thank you

QUESTION: You talk about the need of mastering the classical steps, having a passion for that form, and Naropa is the mahapandita, the master scholar. You also say he's a practitioner.

Could you maybe say a little more about the connection between mastering that classical form and the rather vague state of practice that we all have been working on or are confused by?

VR: Well, the vague state of practice comes second. The form comes first. You see, the second part of Naropa's life, when he was actually a practitioner in the real sense, was only due to the fact that he had mastered the formal training of how to be a decent human being. He could not have done the second part without the first. In our world, because things are a bit loose, shall we say, we usually think the opposite way around. We think that first we're practitioner, and then we master the formal steps. But it doesn't really work that way. Let's say the first thing that we have is when we wake up, we realize, as Naropa did, there's only one way to go, and that is toward the light, toward the wisdom, and that's the way I will go. The second thing is to figure

out how to go and to actually walk. You have to have the right shoes. The wrong shoes and a few hundred miles, the shoes will wear out, and your feet will be exposed to the earth and things like that. The practitioner part comes later. People, you know, we think that we're practitioners, some of us anyway, think that we're practitioners before we actually know how to hum the tune. We are musicians before we can actually say, you know, "Bum, bum, bumbledum, bum, bum," that kind of thing. You have to actually know how to make a few notes and sounds before you can compose a piece, right?

Q: But on the other hand, you did say that these times were rather loose.

VR: These times are.

Q: These times.

VR: Yes.

Q: And we might not even know what tune we want to hum, to begin with. And –

VR: Right.

Q: – what it suggests is that maybe at that stage, maybe a more rudimentary version of practice might be helpful –

VR: Well, I suppose what you are talking about is what the steps are –

Q: – in our case –

VR: In our case, yes. Well, the steps are always twofold. They involve your intellect and your intuition, as we say at Naropa Institute. Intellect means that the subjects that you study, you should study from a very pure point of view, to know them in a simple fashion, according to the way they were taught. Your inquisitive mind, on the other hand, is to take what you have studied and put it in the hopper, so to speak, and let it bounce around, and see what kind of real insight comes from that. So those two things are very basic. In our time, our probable or seeming obstacle is that people don't have very much respect for classical being, for classical being not very much respect, not very much, more than respect, awe. It's a better word, awe. Like "Ahh!" When you see something beautiful, you say "Ahh!" It just comes out from about here, and goes up and says "ahhh" very gentle and soft. It just goes out, "ahhh," because it's so complete and beautiful. Then you want to emulate that. Then you realize you have to, you know, left, right, one, two, three, one, two, three. Even these days, when everything is "you deserve a break today" and "we'll do it your way." [Laughter] All of that stuff – anything you want, you've got it. All you've got to do is pay for it. Sometimes you don't even have to pay for it, you just have to show up [laughter]. In these days, when everything seems to be so, shall we say, haphazard, Naropa himself is still transmitting his message. First, do things properly. Learn how to speak, how to walk, how to think properly, how to analyze or discriminate, how to present, and further, how to contemplate. Do that, and then let's see if we have something else to do. Let's see if our vision of wisdom matches up with our, the intensity of our skill. Does that sound too hard-nosed? It's real simple, you know. It's the kind of thing that makes Naropa Institute still here, after nine years, because we still adhere to that very basic principle.

QUESTION: It seemed like Naropa didn't have to deal too much with patience, being such a gifted person.



VR: His parents and everybody were on him all the time. They were on him all the time. They said, "You can't do that."

Q: So he had to be patient with them.

VR: Yes, of course. And also his position in society. They expect him to be the next ruler of that particular district. He doesn't want to do that. And they're all saying, "You have to do that." He had to be patient.

Q: How about patience with himself?

VR: Yes. That's in terms of his studies. We'll talk about that tomorrow night.

Q: Okay.

VR: Yes, patience with himself comes next. First, you have to do the outer version of things, then the inner.

QUESTION: How did Naropa get interested in Bud –

VR: Dharma?

Q: Dharma.

VR: Well, partly because of the time that he lived in. In India at that time, dharma, or spiritual practice, or religion, was everything. Everybody did that. It was part of one's life to do that. But there was also a second thing that happened to him, is because he saw certain things and he, being well born, let's say, he didn't have any problems with money and, you know, all the rest of it that we have problems with today. He didn't have those problems. But because of that, he saw things in a real contrast. If somebody was suffering because they didn't have any money and any food, and he had money and food, he saw that, and he said, "What's going on here? I'm rich. I have all these things. That person doesn't have anything. What's going on in this world? Why should that happen?" And he saw that, and he began to think about it. And that was where he lived. In some ways, we're doing the same thing. You know, you can eat, right? Some people can't. But we don't see that all that much. So he became interested in dharma because he saw the contrast. There were certain things that seemed to be good, and certain things that seemed to be bad. How could those two things, good and bad, exist at the same time? How could it be good at one point and bad at the other? Why should it be that way? So he started to think, why should it be that way?

Q: How long did it take him to know, well, I mean –

VR: To know altogether?

Q: Yes.

VR: Well, according to the story, let's see, nine, sixteen. From nine to sixteen, seven years. Assume that he was twenty-something at Nalanda. Twelve years with Tilopa. It took him a really long time [laughter] as far as a human life goes, twenty-five, thirty years. But he worked hard all the time. You know why? He was always interested in what he was doing. He wasn't bored. [Laughs] These days, we're pretty bored because we have a lot of things to entertain us, but he didn't have that many. Maybe he had an easier time than we do. But I doubt it.

[Laughter] Well, that's why he became interested in dharma.

Gentleman in the back with the red shirt. Do we have a microphone back there? Well, it's all right, but we're trying to record it, yes, it's a formality, sort of like one of those formalities.

QUESTION: [inaudible] about teaching – oh no, you talked about learning, and, you know, when you're small, you learn from a lot of people, and there are teachers, and what about if those teachers are bad, or, I mean, sometimes you cannot choose those things.

VR: That's true. But even at the same time, if they are bad, there is a certain kind of intelligence that we all have, that sort of vibrates in ourselves, and if the teachers are bad, and we experience the bad results of their teachings, we feel it in our body, in our mind and in our environment. We feel it, and we have a certain kind of repulsion that goes on to those things that are bad, let's say, that are not real teaching, but they are actually contrary to enlightenment, contrary to being good human beings. We feel it. Sometimes we're not strong enough, or we're not in the right environment where we can actually conquer that kind of obstacle, and that happens with most of the world. But in this case, we're trying to make a little seed that grows into a forest. And eventually what we have is the environment where, if any **[TAPE 1: END SIDE A, BEGIN SIDE B; some words missing]** will grow over it. There's no way to say that we can establish a perfect world where incomplete or negative teaching will not occur. But in some ways we should trust our intelligence to know that when that negative or unintelligent teaching occurs, it ignites further passion in our minds to learn. So in that way we don't become disillusioned by human beings who say they are teachers and are teaching us to be stupid. That kind of thing. We shouldn't be angry with them. Sometimes I suppose we should thank them because we learn much more. So anything else? Again. All right.

QUESTION: How old was Naropa when he died?

VR: Eighty years old. Around eighty years old. I think it was between eighty and eighty-three.

Q: Did he have any children?

VR: No. He didn't.

So having said that, there is one more thing that I should say, according to the steps, and according to what we're going to do this weekend. I see that the number of you here tonight is rather hopeful. The number of you here tomorrow morning to practice meditation might be less hopeful. Some people think that meditation is something they already know about, so therefore they don't have to do it again. [Laughter] Some people think that meditation is something that they don't really want to know about, therefore they should only do it when they have to. Some people think that meditation is something that they really want to know about, therefore they should do it all the time. Of the three, none are the superb attitude. The best attitude is simply to do it, as it is prescribed. This does not produce great numbers of people doing sitting practice, this kind of instruction. But it is the most intelligent way to present it. Don't approach meditation practice from any of those angles. In fact, don't approach meditation practice from any angle whatsoever. Just sit and be as you are. You might as well be here as anywhere else. I suppose you might think that tomorrow you probably have something very important to do in your life, and I'm sure you do.. It's going to be as important as it ever was. [Laughter; laughs] It's funny! But when it comes to the moment of death, you should be clearly awake and aware. When consciousness fades into the four elements, and finally fades into the bardo state, you

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should have abiding awareness, which is not separate from your mind. The only way to do that is to practice meditation, to learn the steps. You have the opportunity tomorrow. We have the schedule set for you. You don't have to do anything incredibly difficult. All you have to do is sit here. Those of you who know, those of you who are uncertain, and those of you who don't know, the three categories blend into one in a simple moment. Naropa's mind is available. His inheritance is our practice. Learn the steps, and don't be too shy, and don't be too excited, and don't be too complacent. Those are Naropa's words, or his experience. We should try it. I know. When you become an expert, it's hard to do something simple. When you are a front runner, it's hard to do something that a subordinate would do. When you are a beginner, it's hard to imagine that you could do something that an accomplished person could do. You think about it. The simplest mind is the one which has passion for knowledge and a keen mind for learning the actual steps to achieve that knowledge. We call it meditation practice. It's given to us by Naropa. We are thankful to him. He didn't try to deceive anybody, and when you think about his life, he's a wonderful example of how to be a good student.

So thank you very much for your attentiveness. Dog chewing on a bone has a memory of meat. Still the juices of our intrinsic intelligence create the saliva of enlightened mind. [Laughter] That's a little poem from me to you. [Laughter] Practice tomorrow. Let's see what happens. Thank you.