

Speaker: The Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin

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Talk 1 of 3

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VAJRA REGENT ÖSEL TENDZIN: Who do we have from New York City? Would you raise your hand? Up. And on this side?

Well, everyone has heard the tape of our first talk in New York City and I would like to welcome everybody to the continuation of that particular session of teaching, “Sudden Glimpse: The Appearance of Awakened Mind in Everyday Life.” And our continuation is called, “The Step Beyond Hesitation”—same glimpse.

And at this point we have some experience of what we called sudden glimpse which is experience without reference point, without a watcher, without a commentator. Experience, sudden and glimpse-like, because it appears without warning and without planning. It takes us off-guard and leaves us with the memory which is at once exciting and also painful, irritating.

Now it is well and good for all of us to come together and experience sudden glimpse. In other words, have some flash of what we call unconditioned mind, unconditioned experience, same thing, but we did say that we were going to take another step beyond hesitation which means in this case that such a glimpse or such a flash of unconditioned mind is not enough to fully uncover that awakened state so that everyday life becomes completely free and open without hesitation, without doubt, full of confidence and energy, at the same time inquisitive, sharp and precise. So it seems obvious at this point that we can't simply be satisfied with some sort of glimpse. If that were the case, we could do it in many different ways. We could call just about anything a sudden glimpse of awakened mind. If suddenly we're all here in this room and the PA system blasted out a tremendous boom, we could say we all had a sudden glimpse of awakened mind. Tremendous. Big deal.

Our next problem which comes up is how to go further than simply the initial experience of the truth of the teaching. The initial experience of the truth of the teaching is quite shocking, delightful. We're relieved somewhat when we have such a flash, completely relieved to find out that we don't exist. It's a great relief. But it only lasts for a very short time. And then what happens? That is the subject of our continuation here at Karmê Chöling. And why we chose it, why we chose to do it here is because that continuation involves discipline in order to stabilize that sudden glimpse into a continuous state of meditation. If I recall, in our first talk in New York City, we experienced that ground as an experience without a perceiver or perceived, an experience which left a residue which was a question, and that question itself was not entirely formed, an embryonic question of what

was that? And the only conclusions we could draw from that sudden glimpse is that we had no answer at all to why we exist, if there was any purpose to life, if there was any reason to being here together at all. At the same time we did acknowledge some kind of potential which even began to percolate in that unformed question. Now our further study involves applying the technique of meditation to the residue or the memory of sudden glimpse, of that flash of awakened state of mind. The memory of awakened state of mind is also the reference point with which we have to work, to walk, to continue. In other words, it is the path that we must follow.

How is it that we remember such a thing as a glimpse, sudden glimpse? How is it that we have any inkling at all that such a thing occurred? That is our step beyond hesitation – to look at, to look straight away at, the next moment. Let's call it the next moment just for language sake, for communicating with each other, let's say the next moment after sudden glimpse, the one we avoid, also the one which produces the entire array of philosophical, religious, spiritual, mental, whatever you want to say. Whatever kind of production that follows that sudden glimpse is the moment which we are about to examine together in our next four days. And it is on the level of really stupid people. We have to take that attitude because, simply because, we have avoided and have no idea what that next moment contains. We have no idea what that next moment contains. And I use the word contains because it is a reference to the experience of no container, sudden glimpse, it didn't contain anything at all, but then suddenly we remembered. How did we do that?

Somebody remembered a sudden glimpse. Now this may be very mundane and elementary to some people here but to me this particular teaching is a jewel which, if found, continues to radiate immense clarity, so much so that it can wake up the entire world of darkness. Applying a meditation technique to the moment following sudden glimpse, I'm not talking particularly like there's a sequential event here. In other words, don't get too hung up on a time sequence. What we're actually talking about is that there is some memory of unconditioned mind, and that memory of unconditioned mind is what we have to go on. We can't go on unconditioned mind particularly because there's nothing to go on. But we can go on memory, the experience of flashback of some kind. And that memory, that flashback is what's called the development of ego, the existence of the watcher of sudden glimpse.

Now we can say that that watcher of sudden glimpse occurs because of consciousness. Somehow consciousness of that awakened state of mind took place. And our study together is to find out what this consciousness is. We're not talking about the result at this point, the result of finding out what happens when you find out, but we're trying to go back back back-track very carefully.

Consciousness in the Buddhist tradition has nothing to do with anything exalted or debased for that matter. We are not talking about something to be revered or heightened or explored or something to be disposed of. What we are saying is that that faculty which registers unconditioned mind is called consciousness and that consciousness is the beginning of what we call ego. Now we could make one thing perfectly clear, as has been said, that we're not talking about good or bad at this point. Okay? Nothing's good or bad, but the faculty which recognizes unconditioned mind is called consciousness, and the meditator who applies his or her technique possesses consciousness. And that consciousness has been said to have eight types.

Eight types of consciousness is what the meditator possesses in order to look at that state of unconditioned mind. Are you following me? The reference point to unconditioned mind is consciousness, and that consciousness has eight different aspects. Consciousness is born because a

sudden glimpse of awakened state of mind is not what we think of in terms of abstract and flat and void of any kind of sensation. Experience of sudden glimpse also has energy, and that energy of sudden glimpse is so vivid, so true, so real, more real than concept, that it creates an effect of echo, a blinding effect. The energy which comes off of experience of sudden glimpse creates us as ego entities. So the first aspect of consciousness is a sense of being awe-struck by the energy of awakened mind. I'm not positing or asking you to think of who is awe-struck particularly. Forget that. Some sense of the brilliance of the experience produces a kind of freeze-frame. Stop. Look. Question. Next question: Is it real? Is it here, or is it there? Outside or inside? These questions following immediately after such energy, such brilliance of sudden glimpse are not particularly verbal. But the first appearance of consciousness or reference point is like the echo of the sound itself.

That first aspect of consciousness is called alaya or storehouse. Storehouse in the sense of, not that it's storing anything particularly but it's storing itself. Storehouse doesn't have anything in it, but it has walls and a roof. In other words, first reference point to sudden glimpse. From that point of view of having suddenly experienced an echo, there is question beginning to take shape. Where did it come from? Who did it? Did I do it? Did it happen at all? Did it have color? Did it have shape? These questions are movement, the beginning of movement of consciousness, beginning of development. And that development is not particularly specific in terms of perception of object and subject but merely the potential at this point, the potential to have what we call a world and a perceiver of the world. Why so? Why should such a thing develop out of just simply four walls and a roof? Because every time there is a gap—in other words, every time we have some state of mind which cannot be associated—we have repetition of an echo, repetition of a sense of perceiver or watcher or experiencer every time. Okay? Contact? Very simple. Every time there's no reference point, reference point begins to exist because of the energy of no reference point, because it is so brilliant, so energetic. What we call development of ego, in this case development of consciousness, same saying the same thing, is that throwing back that same energy onto the no answer produces a question again. So that's the first simple ground, secondary ground let's say, of unconditioned mind.

That circular movement has nowhere to go but in the midst of having nowhere to go produces another secondary whirlpool of energy which begins to be potential thought process, memory of memory. In other words, a memory of unconditioned space becomes a memory of something. There must have been something there. Something was there feeling something, something there. What was it? Something there? Now we're talking about this you know [snaps fingers] about something quite quick. We're not talking about climbing up the face of mountain step by step. We're talking about something that happens in a fraction of a second but since we are working on the moment after, we're applying a meditation technique to the moment after, we intend to look at it very clearly, take a step beyond our hesitation to look at that utter confusion of how things got this way. So in the next level of consciousness, there's the potential which begins to raise question in terms of a primordial concept: who, what, where, when, how, texture, everything, still not verbalized in terms of words at all. And that movement becomes solidified in the sense of what's called cognitive mind.

First one, first aspect of consciousness, is simply ignorance of itself, in other words, trying to capture, trying to freeze a moment of unconditioned energy. Second aspect is trying to mold that

freezes into a form. At that point the second aspect is potential of form. Third aspect is the notion of how it can be done, which is called cognitive mind, which is the ability to reflect on itself. Now along the way what we should remember is that the basic question is of whether there is such a thing as inside or outside or real or unreal, you know, basic question which came out of the experience of ... So when we come to cognitive mind we have a kind of crystal-like approach, reflective approach, which can project, that which projects and recognizes the projection. And beyond that we have the last five types of consciousness which are call the senses. The last being to develop is sight. So in a moment after a flash of sudden glimpse, after awaked flash, we have the development of consciousness, the development of a reference point, from basic panic to actual sense perception.

What we are about to do in the next few days is the awful task of looking at that, and looking at that development, can be seen in one of two ways. It is either from the point of view of trying to erase a bad job or from the point of view of this is what simply happens. And I think the latter is what we, as Buddhists, would recommend.

As I said, this production of consciousness from the point of view of unconditioned mind is neither good nor bad. It becomes ego when there is a problem involved. So in your meditation practice which we're here for, we're not particularly trying to approach this subject from the point of view of unraveling a problem.

What we are doing is allowing mind to look at mind. Eight types of consciousness is how you look at how you are. That is to say, there's no other method, no other material, that exists except those particular forms, manifestations that we have just talked about: first being what we could call unconscious mind or ignorance, the second being we could call subconscious mind or ignorance becoming potential for perception, the third we could call mind as a mechanical structure of perception and five senses as the organs of relating to what is called an outside world. Actually that cognitive mind is also considered an organ of perception. And to top it all off, we can say that this particular outside world from the beginning is not certain at all, but the production of consciousness makes it seem so, that there is such a thing as an outside world. Whether there is or not we should find out. Any questions?

DISCUSSION

QUESTION: Did you say that, that sight is the last sense perception to develop?

OSEL TENDZIN: According to the scriptures that's what happens.

Q: Do they say why that is?

OT: No. Yes, they do actually. I'm sorry, it's according to the intensity of sense perception, sight being the most intense.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

OT: I'm sorry. I almost forgot. Tsultrim?

Q: Well, I was trying to figure out why the energy of the non-reference point would create reference point.

OT: Mmm.

Q: Is the reason because, not because of any one part, energy part of the non-reference point, but is the reason because the total non-reference point, the totality of that acts like a mirror to some extent and mirror's reference point because of it totality?

OT: Well, let us just suffice to say as experientially, rather than too much intellectually, because we'll get into more intellectually, is that because of the suddenness of nonreference point, reference point gives birth. That's why we call it sudden glimpse. Because we're trying to actually look into how we think we exist. And to begin with we say that consciousness arises because we don't exist and that experience of nonexistence no matter who it is that's experiencing it (which is not the question because it's actually too late to ask that question when you ask it) is that the brilliance and the totality of it is so striking that it creates its own reference point. Got it? Creates its own reference point which we call me, ego. In Buddhist point of view we talk about transparency of phenomena and of also noumena, of subject and object, that. But in this case what we're going to do here, what we're trying to do here is look at the object because the subject we have found doesn't have any basis. So what we are actually working with is already objectified in the form of consciousness. How did that consciousness occur? That consciousness is simply the energy, the brilliance, the spin of awakened state of mind. The problem we have with it is what's called panic or bewilderment. Somehow, ladies and gentlemen, I have no idea how, the question arose somewhere as to why we are even here. Now we went through that in New York City. I hope you heard the tape. What I'm trying to say at this point is now we're going to look at that, the mode of questioning itself. Am I making myself clear?

Q: Well, you're saying that there's a certain movement towards questioning ...

OT: Mmm. No. No.

Q: which is a ...

OT: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Right, right.

Q: Bad or good particularly. But then the whole thing goes sour at a later point.

OT: Mmm.

Q: But I'm not sure exactly what causes the questioning to go sour.

OT: Just the intensity of energy, just the intensity of energy. Nothing more than that. But you see, we can't do it like McDonald's. That's a problem. If we could do it like McDonald's we would love to. What makes it go sour to begin with, Buddhist teaching says that since you can't answer that question, clever as we are, let's go back and check out how we asked it, how we asked that question. Does everybody understand what I'm saying?

Q: No.

OT: Who said no? Give that microphone to Mary. [laughter] All right? Basic ground, did you hear the tape?

Q: I was just wondering if you ...

OT: You remember that stuff, right?

Q: Mmm.

OT: Mmm.

Q: Some ...

OT: Mmm. Right. Suddenly like that in a flash you're there. You're the one who said "No." Right?

Q: Right.

OT: So what I'm saying is the Buddhist practice is so miserly and stingy and so exacting that it wants to find out how that 'no' happened. Do you understand? Do you remember?

Q: Yeah.

OT: Do you remember? Do you remember you said "No." That's exactly what I'm talking about.

Q: You mean where that question comes from? Or ...

OT: No. How.

Q: How?

OT: We know where it comes from. From not knowing.

Q: How?

OT: Yeah. How.

Q: Cause it wants to hear itself. I don't know.

OT: No, no, no. It's too late. No, no. We can't do that. That's a really ... Well, painful as it may seem we have to start really at the beginning. How even starts with a hhhhhooowww. You know? Even as you form the word your mind takes form, your being, sense of being takes form. As you form the question, your sense of being takes form. You become somebody who asked the question. Now what we're saying is that there is a shape, shape to that and what we are going to explore through meditation practice is how we make the shape.

Q: There, there's already somebody there who's making the shape.

OT: Not necessarily. At the end there is somebody, the person who asked the question. But we're saying that consciousness has eight aspects and by the time the whole sensual experience is complete, there's a somebody. But along the way, it's like an embryonic approach, how did I say "No, I don't understand."

Q: I just don't understand what you mean by how.

OT: I'm [inaudible]

Q: I mean, I just don't understand what you mean by how, I just don't quite understand that.

OT: Yeah. Well, it's kind of like so what? How how how. [laughter] But from point of view of sudden glimpse ... Um, I wish you were all in New York. We had a grand old time glimpsing away. But let's glimpse again. From the point of view of just right now. Me talking to you and all of you listening, who's who and where are we? Just like that. And as you remember, just like that, something happened.

Q: Could we say that memory is also sudden, a sudden glimpse?

OT: We could say that ego is a sudden glimpse of nonego. That's what we could say. But pain

and frustration is because we don't know how that occurred. So what we're trying to do is find out exactly. I mean, you know it's so devastating, awfully painful to think about that we really mean exactly how it occurred. Which I don't mean to say that those eight types of consciousness we talked about have to be experienced one two three four five six seven eight. No, what I mean is what we must possess at this point is an attitude which is directed toward the path of finding out such details of the occurrence, because we could say that the reference point of the sudden glimpse in reality we could say, is no different than the sudden glimpse itself. But then, if that is the case, why do you have a question? Why are you asking yourself where it came from? Here or there? I'm not talking about tonight with me and you. I'm talking about when you just look at a dog walking down the street or somebody walking into the room or eating your food, you have that question always: Is it here or is it there? Is it real or is it unreal? Is there any purpose to me being here? Am I here? The whole thing. You know. Which becomes very complicated. So the point is that examine the faculty which perceives the question.

Let's get it straight again, okay? The question comes out of a sudden glimpse of no ground, unconditioned mind, okay? The question comes out of looking around and finding out you honestly, really don't know. Okay? The question comes out of that. Now what we're talking about as the step beyond hesitation is the same kind of courage to look at that questioning process or that looking process, the thing that looks at itself, cause that's ego, that's ego when it becomes strangulating.

Q: Well, looking back is a stuck, there's a stuck quality to that because it's looking back and it's looking back and it's ... I mean it's an endless process.

OT: Yeah, well the process here is that if you can see the transparency of the projection then you can see the transparency of the looker.

Q: Well then, then what?

OT: No you see, you're saying "then what" because you would like to skip the process of looking back, looking back. You know. Skip the process, say "then what," but no dice. Not if we're going to do this properly together. It doesn't work that way. Ego exists because projection exists. We have projected a world which is a spin off of the energy of awakened state of mind. I'm not concerned with the chicken or the egg. We are not concerned as a whole with the chicken or the egg. We are concerned with how it happened that from square one, from the first double take. Okay? Well, you have to squirm a little bit. That's the whole point.

The gentleman in the back.

Q: Does this whole process, starting with the glimpse and ending with consciousness refer to what happens that causes us to exist in the first place?

OT: Mmm.

Q: Does it also refer to what happens in each moment? As each moment of consciousness arises?

OT: Mmm. That's saying the same thing by the way. Those two questions are the same question. If I exist that means something arose as existence.

Q: So the eight stages of consciousness, levels - what?

OT: Types.

Q: Types, that has, that's very similar to the, to the skandhas.

OT: Very similar, only we would say that this particular eight stages exists in the first skandha to begin with, what we call form of ego, in other words, how we begin to perceive that we exist. Oh, it's such a slow process, it's like laying mosaic.

Q: So we get a glimpse that we're not here in the first place.

OT: We do.

Q: And that causes us to need to make something be here.

OT: That's right.

Q: And that's the moment after the sudden glimpse.

OT: That's what we say.

Q: Sounds like I got it. At least [laughter] ...

OT: What?

Q: Uh, mistake.

OT: Sounds like you got here.

Q: Right.

OT: Which is combination, combination platter.

Q: Right.

OT: It's sudden glimpse and also echo.

Q: Impatience, that's a combination of ego and intellect?

OT: Impatience?

Q: Yeah, yearning, yearning to understand.

OT: Ha. You could say that that begins before intellect even arose, yearning.

Q: Well, what we're trying to do is find the root ...

OT: Are we? What we're trying to do is find out what's out there.

Q: Out there is a constant change, constant flux, always in motion.

OT: Earlier than that. Just like this. Man with glasses. Could be a Martian. It's kind of elemental you know, elemental. Gold. [laughter] That. Gold that. That me.

Q: Out there.

OT: Is it out there? Is that experience out there or is it in here?

Q: That's out there and that's a form.

OT: Are you sure?

Q: Out there.

OT: Are you sure?

Q: Uh, as my eyes perceive it.

OT: Ha. Exactly. That's exactly, ladies and gentlemen what I'm trying to say. That the whole development of consciousness ends up with, "how my eyes perceive it." But before that happened, all the others happened. Yeah, I'm serious. I'm so serious it's sickening. Monsieur? Oh. Lelelelelele, the microphone, here it comes. Here we are. Okay.

Q: Uh, okay we got from glimpse to perception. Is perception a concept? That is, the idea ...

OT: Forget about it. Let's just get that far. Okay? Let's see how that goes. Okay?

Q: Okay.

OT: I understand your point, but do you understand mine?

Q: Uh, I don't know, I have a ...

OT: Question about it.

Q: Yeah, right.

OT: That's what I mean. Let's get to sense perception as such: how it works that you hear, smell, taste, touch, see. You can do that. You can follow that. Because of meditation practice there's the possibility. Which doesn't mean that you have to, when you're sitting, say, "oh, that's taste, that's smell," you know, "I heard a bird," you know, "I feel my ass on the cushion."

Q: That was my question.

OT: "I smell somebody"—that, this, that, there, and the other. [laughter] That's not what I mean by, you know, "you remember." Did you hear the tape?

Q: Yeah.

OT: Talk about gap?

Q: Yeah.

OT: Right. Just an instant there's no answer and no question. Then suddenly there's a question. Okay? Follow that process with your inquisitive mind which you have, follow that process to actually become sensual.

Q: Okay.

OT: Yeah. Don't do it with a kind of a, you know, rah rah spirit. Just let it happen. If you do the technique, it'll happen by itself.

Q: So if you stay awake through the reflex of production ...

OT: Mmm. Right. It doesn't produce the whole business. "If you stay awake through the reflex,"—you got it.

Q: It's just continuous unconditioned mind?

OT: Mmm Hmm. If you allow the energy to go its own course, then whatever thought arises, it's nature is nowness.

Gentleman in the front.

Q: Um, you said that in paying attention to the, to that next moment, that, that was, that that's the moment we want to avoid?

OT: Mmm Hmm.

Q: Is, is our wanting to avoid that out of the, that's where we find panic? Or ...

OT: Well, that's, it's, it's not exactly conceptual in that way, you see, that's, that's what I'm trying to say in terms of our practice here in the next four days. That you really can't approach it that way. It's not a matter of we avoid the next moment because we know that panic is coming up. No. We avoid the next moment because the next moment, already when it's over, has produced what's called the form of your identity, and it's already too late, feeling too hassled to try and go back over that. I mean it seems too subtle, too intricate, to go back over that, that little scratchy thing. Who needs it. Let's just get to the sudden glimpse.

Q: Are you just talking about laziness?

OT: No. Well, in a way, yes. But not exactly as we're accustomed to saying laziness. We're more used to saying ignorance.

Q: I, I just don't understand how.

OT: How it happened? [laughs] A science fiction movie. Suddenly I'm here talking to you in a microphone and you're talking back, and the people are listening, and MGM is filming. It's gold and red in here, and there's a blue ceiling, and the Buddha's hovering over us, and snow on the ground, and how did that happen? Do you see what I mean? That's what we call practice. How did that happen? That moment. After we had the sudden glimpse?

Q: I guess what I'm still unclear about is, is how come we want to avoid that.

OT: Well, it just seems to go on and on.

Q: We just do.

OT: It just seems to go on and on. We want to avoid it because we become more we the more it goes on and on. So the more, more, more we become we the more we want to avoid. It goes you know it's kind of relative reference, what we call relative reference. The more we think about a sudden glimpse the more we become we. Now at some point we have to really come to terms with this whole thing, 'cause it's smashing particularly smashing. Who's who? Is that sudden glimpse, is that unconditioned mind me, or I me, or is this me? Right? Right. So what we say is let's go back just for a moment and see how it occurred. Not talking about good or bad or resolving that question even of which is which. Just let's see how it occurred. From the moment we've felt that sense of a brilliant awake 'til this moment when we felt that sense of who dat who said who dat?. Where are we? You know. Even from totally sophisticated where are we, you know, like, where are we, really (British accent)[laughter] It really doesn't matter does it? Well, something like that, you know, we have the whole thing combined in a big soup but what we're trying to say is that there's a sense of consciousness, of sudden glimpse. There is a sense of consciousness of unconditioned mind, and that consciousness is what we are dealing with in meditation practice. That's it.

Q: Thank you.

OT: You're welcome. Down the line.

Q: Is unconditioned mind and the awakened state of mind the same?

OT: Mmm.

Q: I'm very confused tonight.

OT: Wait 'til tomorrow. More to come.

Q: It seems that that consciousness is the antithesis of the awakened state of mind.

OT: That is exactly what it seems. You got something really something good there.

Q: But, but you're saying that if we look at consciousness really closely so that we see the reflex action ...

OT: Mmm hmm.

Q: ... that is unconditioned mind.

OT: That's right.

Q: That's real paradox or is that ...

OT: That's two doctors. [laughter]

Q: I don't catch your joke. [laughter]

OT: Some people have a lot of nerve. Paradox is a silly word. Forget it. Now, let's start again. Okay?

Q: Okay.

OT: What I am saying is is that unconditioned mind has no reference point but somehow we remember that we experienced it. Now that remembering of experiencing it is the development of self-consciousness or ego. And to begin with we should study, if we're really interested in this whole thing and not bull-shitting, what it means to be conscious of awakened state of mind. In other words, what it means to be conscious of a memory.

Q: Some, somehow that blows me away. As soon as you say that.

OT: Well, I certainly hope so, as long as you know how to practice. Have you got meditation instruction? Yeah. Well, don't worry too much about what I say.

Q: Then the next question is about practice, then.

OT: Mmm hmm.

Q: There seems to be a lot of resistance to looking that closely.

OT: Isn't that the case? [laugh] How strange. Isn't it a strange world that we live in? I think so myself actually. Very often I think, "Why is it so strange that we're not interested in a pimple." You know. Or that we are. And not in a pimple on somebody else's back particularly, maybe on our own leg or something, but isn't it strange how we become interested in some things and in other things not.

Q: How does that happen?

OT: How does that happen. Bravo. That's what I'm talking about. That's exactly what I'm talking

about. You know. It's very hard to teach Buddhism because we're talking about the actual making of the thread. We're not even talking about the thread, when it's made, going through the eye of a needle which can get us to heaven particularly. We're talking about actually making the thread. Is there a thread between one moment and the next? That's what we're at, as Buddhists anyway. And because somebody was so kind to us, namely some Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, he said, "Yes, there is possible event. There is a possible way of looking into that making of the thread." Other than that the whole thing is complete chaos. Sudden glimpse becomes insanity. Yeah.

Q: I think I lost you.

OT: I didn't lose me. Sudden glimpse becomes insanity unless we have some teaching, some discipline to relate to, of how to look at the fact that we're looking at something we can't answer at all, and we have no reference point for - like being here tonight right now in this room which is made of sticks and stones and they're going to break our bones, and we're going to die. How about that? But it's gold here right now. See what I mean? How do you find out about that? We start all over again, square one. I suppose tapes don't help all that much do they? Well, I had a good plan in mind, but still, here we are again back to square one. Your question is a very good one. Don't drop it.

Q: It drops so fast.

OT: Don't drop the dropping of it then. Do you see what I mean?

Q: Yeah.

OT: It drops. Drop with it. It drops again. Drop with it. You can only do that through meditation practice. There's no other way. Otherwise it drops and you're up on top, and you're saying, "Hello Mom. Hello, Dad. Hello, Napoleon." Yeah, and all the rest, "Hello Buddha. Hello, Jesus Christ. Hello, Carter. Hello, shrine room. Hello, car payment."

Q: That's right.

O: Isn't that right? Yeah. Somehow that sudden glimpse has become separate from who we are.

Q: I seem to still have a question about ego as form.

OT: Form. Yes.

Q: Yeah.

OT: Form is the consciousness of unconditioned mind. That's as far as I'm willing to go tonight. Get it? Write it down. Form is the consciousness of unconditioned mind. Anything else? You can't be serious.

Q: [voice in back of room] Yeah.

OT: He is serious.

Q: Okay, in a way I'm wondering if, if, I mean if we're doing something different from what we usually do in that usually we say, "what's happening here? What's going on? What does it all mean?" and it seems that's what we're ...

OT: Great. That's fantastic question, absolutely fantastic.

Q: Thank you.

OT: Absolutely great. I was waiting for that juicy time that I could answer this question, and I've forgotten what to say. [laughter] Now wait a minute. I think I remember what to say. I think I remember. If what we're usually doing is looking at what we're doing while we're doing it, what are we doing differently? Is that right?

Q: Yeah.

OT: Yeah.

Q: Yeah, can we do it better than that, than the way, than the routine you just went through?

OT: There's one thing different, and this is, is how we usually do it, is with a sense of vindictiveness and a sense of being so down on ourselves. That's the difference basically. That we've been degrading ourselves continually, square one, and your question, which is fantastic, amazed that you asked that, that cause I was thinking of that it's basically, "Why do it at all?" And it's simply because of that, because of what we usually do is the sledge hammer approach. And say, "Why am I asking why am I here? Why am I asking why am I here? Why am I asking why am I here?" [hitting self on head. Laughter]

Q: Yeah.

OT: And this time, we can drop the hammer.

Q: All right.

OT: Does it make sense?

Q: Yeah. I rather like the idea.

OT: Good. I like the idea myself.

Madams et messieurs? Anybody else?

Q: Are you saying that if we stay awake through the process of trying to figure out this answer in the next four days that it trying to figure out why, why we're asking the question that the result of studying this would be that the knowledge that there's no answer.

OT: Heavens no!

Q: It isn't?

OT: Heavens no!

Q: Well, I don't know if, if I said anything like what I had in mind but in the first place ...

OT: I think you did.

Q: I don't think ...

OT: I think you did. I think you did.

Q: You think I did.

OT: I think you did. Yeah. But heavens no. Something more than that. Something more than that.

Q: Well ...

OT: If that were the case it would lead us back to the same thing again you see.

Q: Well, it ...

OT: It would lead us back to the same thing again. When we walk out the door, get in the car, we say, "What did I do there? Why did I go there?" Something more should happen than that.

Q: Well, what would hap ... what would be happening would be ... I think my original question was that whether there, whether the, the, the next moment after the sudden gap could be another sudden gap?

OT: Could be.

Q: Is.

OT: Is.

Q: Well ...

OT: Somebody's conscious of that ...

Q: Is that, is that, is that awareness. Is that being aware, awake? Is that being awake?

OT: If that's being awake, you bet your boots it is.

Q: Okay, I think ...

OT: But, um, but but but but somebody's conscious of that. Let us then explore what consciousness is so that if it is true that the next moment after the moment is the same "awake," then the consciousness is also the same awake. A present, we have our doubts. Isn't that the case? We have our doubts. Well, I think we do.

Q: Well, if you, if when you have the doubt the next moment then it's not a sudden glimpse.

OT: No. Then it's what's called a consciousness.

Q: That's right.

OT: [very fast, singsong] Oy neigh, neigh, neigh, neigh do, ba-ba-ba-ba-ba. [snaps fingers three times] Yeah.

Q: Okay, there are times then I feel like there's this speeding mental activity that's going on and then there's some kind of malfunction and some sense of focusing back on the environment and then some kind of memory of being blind, deaf and dumb almost. Is that consciousness of the gap or is that consciousness of the ignorance before the gap or the development of consciousness?

OT: Would you say that again?

Q: Okay, mind is speeding along. And there's some kind of malfunction.

OT: Yeah.

Q: And then there's some kind of sense of coming back to the present and it's almost like focusing in, like you said the last perception might be of sight, and so there's a moment of realizing you're in the room, seeing the wall, whatever, and then there's reflecting back, the contrast of that seeing the wall and feeling yourself there, is some sense of that you were blind almost, and that you weren't aware that you were there.

OT: Yeah. Yeah, I got you now. Okay.

Q: But it's kind of hard to distinguish the moment of gap or the moment of just speeding along ...

OT: Oh. Cha, cha, cha. We're not talking about the moment of gap here. We're talking about ...

Q: At the moment after.

OT: The rest of it.

Q: Yeah.

OT: How it works that we perceive. Yeah. Good show. That's very good. Very good description. Yeah, experience should be able to be described. If you really are meditating you can describe your experience. Even as you say dadadadababababa you can actually say how it is that you perceive. Thank you, sir.

Q: Is there a difference between a question and an answer from the point of view of sudden glimpse?

OT: I think the only difference between question and answer is the, from the point of view of discipline not from the point of view of sudden glimpse. From the point of view of sudden glimpse a question didn't arise. Answer arose from the point of view of echo. In other words, doubt that there was such a thing at all. So the only remedy we have whatsoever is to apply some sense of practice to the doubt itself. In other words, figure out how come we're conscious of looking for an answer. If we're conscious of looking for an answer then we have a relationship between answer and sudden glimpse. In other words, question, answer, same thing; we're talking about the same thing. Question and answer are the same thing. They are different from sudden glimpse. Sudden glimpse of awakened state of mind, unconditioned mind, has no question, no answer. Consciousness has a question which leads to looking for an answer. In this case, practice of meditation is the answer which leads to dissolving the question. Want to try again?

Q: Yeah, if I can.

OT: Sure.

Q: Earlier on, in the exchange that you had when you said how do we whatever and someone said, "no," that no didn't seem to me to be a question but an actual answer. You took it as a question.

OT: I think it is a question.

Q: Could you say a little more.

OT: Yeah. I think it's kind of like the tail end of the energy of sudden glimpse which is exactly what she was doing. Mary, if you don't mind, she had a sudden glimpse of awakened state of mind, and it turned into "no!" could have turned into fleck [laughter], or bik, or roast. You see, you laugh but that's how life is. That's the way our life turns out to be. So experience of a sudden, absolutely sudden, flash of something real, absolutely real, you said "no!" Now we, in our padded sophistication, start to consider yes and no as validity of experience, but it's already too late to make corned beef hash into filet mignon. That "no" is basically too late, and I'm not going to make a big deal about trying to say it's the same thing, brothers and sisters, cause it's not.

Q: Thank you.

OT: I hope you get what I'm saying, ladies and gentlemen. There is difference. It's fine, it's sweet,

and it rubs. It's textural, it's ego and nonego. There is a difference. And there is also a way.

Q: I'm trying to get a feel for the experience of staying awake through the process of consciousness raising. Of ...

OT: Right. Right.

Q: Of consciousness?

OT: Consciousness of raising, rising is better than raising.

Q: Okay.

OT: Rising, in other words, coming to be born. Yeah.

Q: I can't get a feel for it.

OT: How long have you been sitting?

Q: I haven't sat very long.

OT: Yeah. It does take some looking into. But what is your basic feel, let's say?

Q: Beg your pardon.

OT: What is your basic take on it?

Q: Well, I can sort of ... I could see becoming conscious of the consciousness but that's just taking it one step ...

OT: Further.

Q: Further ...

OT: Right. But what is your basic take on it, the whole question entirely, what we've been talking about?

Q: My basic take on it?

OT: Yeah, basic feeling.

Q: I'm kind of wanting to explore some of the ramifications of it.

OT: Yeah.

Q: I think that's my basic take on it.

OT: Yeah.

Q: You wanted me to be aware of that!? [laughter] I'm aware of that.

OT: How much? And how often? And how thoroughly?

Q: I, well, hum, I'm aware when I start to question things.

OT: Right. Are you aware how the question arose, that you start to question things? I'm serious about that.

Q: Yeah, yeah.

OT: Yeah. That's, you got it right on the head, you know. That's what we're talking about in a

nutshell at least between you and I.

Q: Mmmhmm.

OT: If somebody else understands that's their good fortune.

Q: Mmmhmm.

OT: It's that exact spot which is called the beginning of consciousness. Look at it. We recommend, practice of mediation is the best way, best way. Doesn't have any loop holes, no way to get out. God bless America. Come on. L'America. [inaudible]

Q: Are we stuck? Should we consider ourselves stuck if we realize, if we have feeling that the question is arising from nowhere?

OT: Well, some people are too smart for their own good. Okay, ask me another question.

Q: Well, I mean, I don't want to just make one up.

OT: [laughs] Oh, that's too sweet. That's too good. That's too good.

Q: That was it, my first question ...

OT: You certainly do. You certainly do. You certainly do.

Q: Is that what we're taking about?

OT: That's what we are talking about. We do want to make one up. What I'm saying is how'd that impulse occur to make one up.

Q: And what is that impulse? Was it, how ...

OT: Sure, yeah. Yeah, exactly. How what same thing, same question. See you said, "I don't want to make one up." I say you do. Okay. All right.

Q: So the question of "how" is the "how" is that point, or ...

OT: Mmm? Yeah, the question of how?

Q: How is that point where consciousness can either be the fruition of sudden glimpse of the birth of ego.

OT: Say it again.

Q: The question of "how" is that point where consciousness can either be fruition of sudden glimpse or birth of ego.

OT: Fruition is completely oblivious you know, I mean, it's completely out of place, doesn't make any sense. Say something else.

Q: By fruition I mean as far as you can go with the whole practice which is meditation in action.

OT: Absolutely not. It's just scratching the surface of stupid people trying to put a spoon in their mouth instead of in their forehead. You know how long it takes to crawl between here and there and the house and here and how many times you said "no, we're going to go right into the shrine room." How many times did you say that, Irv? Four. Let's not kid ourselves, not fruition here. Now ask me again.

Q: Well, basically, I'm trying to ... I'm wondering whether there's anything beyond. The whole process seems to be that of being reprocessed to go back into the world.

OT: Nah. Zilch. All right. That's it. Nobody has anymore good questions. Irv, good show. See you later.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, again we are confronted with each other on this embattled ground. Look at it. There's space between us. There's swords drawn, armor clanging. There's war clods in the south and some little hint of thunder, flash of lightening here and there. I take up the challenge. You're here again, some of you again and again. Some of you just parachuted from New York City and other places to take up the good fight, the wholesome fight.

Let me say this, that a mind turned toward dharma is a mind that realizes the occasion to stop, basically stop entertaining oneself with things of no consequence whatsoever. In other words, our usual game. But we have a little bit of a gambit here, sort of gap. We can consider it just simply gap. That we're suspended in unreality completely. I'll give you that much if you like. Sitting in a shrine room of the guilt and the brocades and the complete fantasy of who we are and what we're doing. I'll give you that much entirely. I won't hold back at all that you're prince and princess of the realm of fantasy [laughter]. And at the same time I will give you my promise that personally, until we fight to the death, I don't give up. So if you don't understand by the time I finish talking to you and you finish talking to me, then I lose and you lose. Too bad. On the other hand, we generally think that losing is very bad. But how can anyone lose in such an elegant hall as this, hmm? Is there a victor and a loser in such an elegant hall as this? What there is is simply a play of the mind between us, some little joust, some little exercise in the sharpening that faculty of mindfulness.

You have a schedule tomorrow to sit, and you're going to hear that second talk I gave in New York City first, and then I'll talk again in the evening. So by that time, we have such sharpened swords that we can actually do some significant battle. I look forward to it. Well, thank you all very much for coming to this ITS, intensive training session. And we'll take our little hesitatingly step beyond hesitation. All right. See you tomorrow. Please sit. Don't worry. Nothing's going to happen. [laughter]