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VAJRA REGENT ÖSEL TENDZIN: In continuing our discussion, there is an important point that we should remember in terms of practicing meditation, and that is that we're not so much concerned with sudden glimpse as a conclusion. In other words, we're not interested in fast-food version of things. That attitude itself is a product of speed and what we call neurosis or insanity.

The suffering and misery of our world and all worlds is simply caused by, to begin with lack of mindfulness to the function of consciousness and also lack of clarity in understanding things as they are, in seeing things as they are. So in order to provide some sane help for sentient beings like ourselves, the transmission of the buddhadharma, the Buddha's teaching has been explained in terms of yanas or vehicles. And when you look at the mass of teaching that has been accumulated in two thousand five hundred years, we begin to think that even one lifetime, even ten lifetimes, it would be impossible to digest all that material. But not so. It is possible to understand the entire journey if one simply begins at the beginning and creates a sense of discipline in oneself so that we don't skip, speed past the elementary and first teachings which are so important for understanding the path. And this concept of path is the sense of ongoing practice. So that the separation between the teachings and oneself starts to be seen in a different context altogether. Not from the point of view of poverty, not from the point of view of grasping, but from the point of view of an ongoing path quality, ongoing journey.

So what we have been trying to accomplish in this particular seminar, ITS, from starting from New York and ending tonight was to take a look at the actual beginnings of a practitioner's journey and how we should relate to that beginning practice. Again and again obstacles arise on the path and one of the primary obstacles is that forgetting or getting caught up in the speed of trying to achieve the next stage, the next state, of meditation practice.

The three yana principle which is taught by our lineage involves what's called hinayana, as we have heard, which is working with the four noble truths, working with a sense of development of renunciation of samsara, renunciation of confused way of thinking and developing allegiance to sanity, what's called nirvana, sanity.

But from the three yana point of view, developing too much allegiance to nirvana creates a sense of egocentric absorption which in itself is another pitfall, another obstacle. So it is necessary to continue on the journey and that continuation is allowing one's discipline to spread further, allowing one's discipline to extend one's discipline and also one's realization, to exte-, to extend

beyond personal achievement. In doing so there is another threatening quality which obviously comes up, that if I go further than what I already have achieved, isn't there the possibility that that will dissipate and might fall into again some theistic notion of other? There is that possibility, but again we have the teachings which explain the remedies for such an obstacle which is the bodhisattva path, remedy for self concern about achieving enlightenment is the bodhisattva path. In doing so one's realization actually grows because as we see from the beginning what we're always working with is that feeling of egolessness.

So what we have done basically is simply try to present the beginning of the journey and go into some detail about specifics of practice and motivation for practice and a little bit into the experience of practice itself. And that's as far as we've gone in six talks. And I think it would be overly ambitious to try to go too much further. As it is we could go over this material, the same aspects of the journey and produce many more talks because obviously as we have studied, most have studied, eight states of consciousness is the beginning of form, of ego. From then we have the development of the five skandhas. We also could study the twelve nidanas, the three marks of existence and get further into the study of abidharma completely, abidharma being the philosophy of meditation practice, which we should do in time.

But now we should make some first conclusions about our journey. And that is to begin with we have innate experience, innate intelligence which we have used the term "sudden glimpse" to describe so as to try to connect with everybody, some common ground. And then further we explored that ground and the necessity for the ground at all to begin some relationship, some practice. So establishing a ground is a stepping stone where to go from. And then to clarify that ground we described in terms of the meditative state of mind what that sudden glimpse actually is. In other words we talked about the complete realization of sudden glimpse. And then we discussed that because we have some description doesn't necessarily mean that we can stop at that point. In fact, hearing that description automatically produces a sense of inquiry, inquisitiveness. And that inquisitiveness is made use of through the practice of meditation. And then we discussed how the practice of meditation works on what we call consciousness, the mind seeing sudden glimpse, the mind seeing itself and how that functions. And then we went on further to discuss the energy aspect of practice, or the workable aspect, that is to say, realizing that the material for practice is no where else than in our ordinary experience, ordinary everyday life. And that what is generally seen as negative experience can be, if viewed properly, further motivation. And that motivation is not based on belief but is simply on the quality of inquisitive mind which has no particular praise or blame, has no particular reward involved. It looks for the sake of itself finding out.

One develops conviction and confidence as we go along and see that our experience actually corresponds to what has been taught. So beginning practitioners, beginning on the path, we have a three fold function which occurs: that is, first hearing the teachings, and second contemplating them, thinking about them, and third meditating on them. So that is what we have been doing.

According to the path as it has been explained to us, a very necessary step in making that conviction solid and ongoing is some sense of personal commitment, some proclamation of that personal commitment. And that proclamation is called taking refuge in the Buddha, the dharma and the sangha. It is the frank statement that one is actually on a path and a particular path. It is the proclamation that we no longer have to be led by frivolousness and entertainment and belief in a fantasy.

So taking refuge in the Buddha, dharma, and sangha is becoming a full fledged practitioner.

This particular ceremony of taking refuge does not mean that after one has taken refuge then one really begins to practice. What it does mean is that one's practice, one's intention, one's motivation should be proclaimed in the world of consciousness, proclaimed in the world of consciousness so as to add another monkey wrench into ego's mechanism. Another powerful force to overcome obstacles. Taking refuge in the Buddha involves relationship with the teacher. Taking refuge in the dharma and the sangha, well dharma we've been talking about, the practice and the understanding of the practice. The sangha is the community or the group of practitioners like ourselves. This three fold refuge in itself produces greater confidence and greater doubt at the same time which we have talked about as being very similar.

I think at this point it is best to spend a little time on taking refuge in the Buddha, as teacher. In the tantric texts, the third yana, it says that—something to the effect that—even the teachings of a thousand Buddhas would not arise unless there was a guru. Now I use that particular example to refer to the Buddha in this case, the one who first turned the wheel of dharma. And simply stated unless there is a human being to teach, then no dharma appears in this world.

And so taking refuge in the Buddha, the teacher, is developing the beginning of a real gratitude for hearing such teachings, and that gratitude is not simply related to from the point of salvation, "I'm so grateful because I was saved from my neurosis," but it's a gratitude that someone actually had the courage to take a look themselves, and further courage to explain what they saw, what they experienced.

The teacher, the complete, completely enlightened one, the fully enlightened one, the Buddha, the one who is awake is related to in many different ways, and I suppose many of you have read histories of the Buddha, life of the Buddha, and how he dealt with the people of his time, all different kinds of people, all the various professional people, all the low down, downcast poor people, all the business people, all the religious people, all the scholars, all the artists, whatever. And everybody who begins this path relates to the teacher in a particular way. And the beginning is simply that one, that person from whom you first heard the dharma. So the teacher in the beginning is, doesn't take as important a role as the dharma or the practice, basically because we are so confused about our life that hearing some sort of good news is a—and being able to practice it—is quite exciting and delightful. And the teacher himself somewhat takes a back seat in that beginning process, and rightly so. Otherwise, we would have some sort of a worship of a teacher as a deity.

Along the way as we practice further and further and grow in deeper respect for the profundity of the teaching and its efficacy, we begin to view the teacher himself, in human form, herself, in a different way as well. Some little resentment usually crops up because we begin to realize as we get saner that the teacher was sane to begin with and saw us in such wretched condition that we feel slightly embarrassed to relate to the teacher as more than good fellow and one with good knowledge and good intentions. Because once we begin to see in ourselves that this practice is so penetrating that no mask is going to last very long, if you're in the company of those who actually have practiced, you begin to realize that they can see your little game, little deception, which is irritating and embarrassing.

So what necessarily has to happen is some kind of development of softness toward oneself. The

discipline itself at some point has to become softer. in the beginning, and let's not say how long the beginning is because we're all in that particular space all the time, the beginning of the moment we could say, it's very necessary to be hard, very hard, almost like a knife, so that we can penetrate, catch the deception as it begins. But the tendency later on is to continue to carve so much so that we create ourselves into something monumental.

So some beginning of softening in the practice takes place later on and that's basically due to the teacher. And due to our remembering, or shall we say our unavoidable confrontation that the teacher had some real kindness to us to actually give us some teaching at all, that the teacher himself did not hold onto his particular, her particular realization and not pass it on. So that sort of reflects on our own practice and we begin to see that it's necessary not to hold on so tight. And at that stage, which is the entrance into the mahayana, we begin to relate to the teacher as something more unusual than we thought. And someone quite inspiring, sometimes without any logic, sometimes without any rhyme or reason, but always very real. And also we begin to see that that kindness which was paid to us is done to others in the same way by the teacher. That is why we refer to Buddha as example as well—that he taught in India at that time every caste, every person whether they were of the lowest caste or the highest, whoever wanted to hear teachings could hear. So that kind of kindness also has a sense of awe that somebody could have such compassion. And then we begin to feel diminutive and small again because we start looking at our extension, how we extend our realization of sanity and see some sort of miserly quality there. And this is a process one goes through.

It is not, again, either good or bad. It is just simply a process. And we apply again the same technique of mindfulness and awareness to that extended version of—or that extended path quality, journey quality. And friendship to ourselves, kindness to ourselves is also manifest as kindness as the teacher himself, embodiment of kindness, compassion. And that's called, the technical term, kalyanamitra, spiritual friend, a mahayana teacher.

And just briefly to mention the third stage in the vajrayana is that even that awe inspiring kindness which goes a long way, the relationship with the mahayana teacher goes a long way, it goes all through the levels and stages of developing what is called prajna or discriminating awareness toward the development of wisdom, so that one actually begins to feel like Buddha himself; one actually begins to act like Buddha himself.

But that sense of having found, having discovered something so inspiring and so great, buddha nature, also has its own little hangover, and that is holding on to compassion as a way of maintaining one's realization.

So throughout the whole path there is necessary, necessity always to remember that state of unborn and that one's realization through practice must also be of the same nature as unconditioned mind. So any kind of holding on to realization, self liberation is again ego clinging.

And the last relationship to the Buddha or to the teacher is called guru. And that is the person who forgets about convention in relating to you entirely and uses any means, any device in the world of experience, in the phenomenal world to point out that last sense of clinging.

Now this is a very quick summation of relationship and progress along the path. Again let me emphasize that path is what we should be working on. Path with no particular end in mind but simply path from point of view of walking, feeling our feet touch the ground, raising our legs,

lifting, stepping, walking, going along, with a sense of clarity, mindfulness, awareness. So that in brief is our sudden glimpse.

If you have any questions, we could have a discussion.

QUESTION: Are you Buddha?

Vajra Regent Ösel Tenzin: Same as you. As much as you are.

Q: I don't really understand that?

VR: What does a Buddha mean?

Q: I don't really understand that.

VR: Awake. Do you understand awake?

Q: I think so.

VR: Aha. See, that's why we have to go back to the practice. You think so. Develop some conviction in the state of awake and then we can talk about who's Buddha, who isn't Buddha.

Q: I'm wondering if the particular way the teacher relates to you is a reflection of your own state of mind and in what way? Well I have a feeling that it is, and I'm wondering in what way, and if you could talk about that?

VR: Well, that's exactly what I've been saying. That's why we relate to the teacher in those three particular aspects: wise person, spiritual friend, guru. They reflect the state of one's own practice, that is, if the teacher is completely enlightened, samyaksambuddha, to embody those three characteristics.

Q: I'm wondering in a more specific way about like if the teacher moves toward you or if the teacher moves away from you, is that a reflection of your own poverty or arrogance?

VR: I would say generally speaking that holds for all of our experience. The teacher just happens to be more vivid because he's the one or she's the one who gives the teaching. Therefore our focus goes to that. But if you look at it, our experience is always that way. Reflective. We feel bad, world is bad: world isn't good when we feel bad, and vice versa.

Q: Thank you.

VR: Lady in the back. [laughs]

Q: You mentioned in the beginning that an obstacle was being very speedy about trying to achieve something, trying to achieve some kind of next stage. And it seems that that speed could be coming from either wanting to get away from, from pain and, you know, escaping. Or it could come out of a sense of longing and yearning to expand further in practice. And it seems that when you want to expand that much and have, or want to expand you have that driving something, a strong feeling of resistance seems to arise at the same time, which is the speed it seems.

VR: No, I don't quite see it that way. I think that the resistance isn't the speed, the resistance is the sanity. The speed is the driving force but the main point of the question I think is that the reason why the path is taught in this way is so that driving force is not impeded by neurotic clinging. So that you can go straight forward on the path without interruption, without obstacle. So therefore this teaching of complete mindfulness of a function of the moment, is always necessary

as a foundation. Without that it just becomes another jumble, another speed trip going back on itself continually. So we get nowhere on the path basically. People say, “I haven’t experienced anything,” you know, “I don’t feel any better, nothing’s happening.” Well, it’s basically because the perfection of mindfulness is shoddy, has been dealt with in a shoddy way. So trying to skip over the first stepping stone to get to the next one could break your leg. So we teach continuous sitting practice. At the same time the rest of the path begins to evolve by itself. And one does have the experiences as they’ve been spoken of and written about in the texts.

Q: Thanks.

VR: Is there a microphone in the front?

Q: You mentioned hearing, contemplating, meditating. Is, does that mean that what we’re hearing is a technique as well as what happens when we apply the technique, and that the meditation is the technique itself?

VR: Sitting practice is the technique.

Q: Yeah.

VR: Yeah.

Q: The, why does the contemplation come between those two? Did you mention in that order—

VR: Well, it just generally happens that way, you know. Generally happens that way. You hear somebody say, “Nature of our world is pain,” and you, immediately you think about it. So it’s just a matter of making use of what naturally occurs. This is what one and in this case as a discipline, one should do that. Hear the teaching, just like studying it—contemplating is just studying what you heard, and then applying it through practice.

Q: Then if you stop at, at the contemplating and don’t go on to the rest of it, you just spin?

VR: Well basically what you do is you forget it and go on to the next hamburger.

Q: Oh.

VR: Yeah.

Q: Thank you.

VR: Behind.

Q: Last night at the reception you said to me that you thought the situation was rather funny but that the joke was on us. And I was wondering if you could elaborate on that.

VR: Probably not. I’m sure I could, but I don’t think I will. It had nothing to do with the person, personalities, it’s just a general state of what we call our world. It’s very humorous but the joke’s on us.

Q: That for me presents some kind of difficulties in terms of what Rinpoche sometimes said that one must believe in the cosmic magic at the same time society of cosmic joke, so there seems to me some kind of conflict between—

VR: The two?

Q: Yeah.

VR: Cosmic joke is cosmic magic. You know, they go hand in hand. Once you see the joke, then the world becomes magical. Sleight of hand. Or slit.

Q: My question is, you, you've been talking about speed and wanting to get on to the next step of the path and that isn't how I experience it personally, and I was wondering if you could possibly say something? I feel rather attached to hinayana and no desire, probably a fear to even think about mahayana and I also have another question in regard to a teacher and ...

VR: Shall we take the first one?

Q: Yeah, the first one.

VR: I believe I mentioned that there is a point where one does try to hold on to being saved.

Q: What do you mean by that?

VR: Feeling sane when you once felt crazy is a great relief. So there's a tendency to want to freeze that. That freezing that is speed, it's the beginning of the speeding process again. The same speed that created development of ego consciousness, again applies when you feel sane.

Q: The clinging?

VR: Hum.

Q: And in regard to a teacher, are they, are they everywhere? Or is it you or is it Rinpoche or is it the person next door, I mean...

VR: Person who teaches is on, well various levels. There's called nirmanakaya. That's a person in a human body. And I think that is about as far as I should go. [laughs] Then there are other things. Basically its too early for us to talk about earth, air, water, and fire as a teacher, as experience as teacher, as, you know, situation as teacher, things like that, because that's very sophisticated in terms of how disciplined one is. But to begin with it's somebody who has a body, who talks, teaches.

Q: I wondered if you could comment on the difference between using someone as an example and mimicking?

VR: Well the difference there is as we talked about earlier using someone as an example involves practice. In other words, if the Buddha is your example, then we should try and do what the Buddha did. The problem with mimicking is that we start to mimic the end of the journey, not the beginning. So we should start mimicking how the Buddha first sat down and said, "No matter what, I'm going to find out what this is." So we can mimic that, no problem.

Q: And the rest takes care of itself?

VR: Well, we'll see.

Q: Does meditation practice deal with ego's solidified version of consciousness or is consciousness itself ego?

VR: Egg drop soup. Which came first, the chicken or the egg? I think from hinayana point of view, we deal with consciousness as ego.

Q: Well, does that mean that it changes later from a mahayana point of view, that that would change somewhat?

VR: Well, I suppose that when you realize that there's no such thing as ego, there would be some difference in one's experience.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

Q: You said that one's practice should be proclaimed in the world of consciousness. Could you say something more about that?

VR: That's refuge vow. You see.

Q: That is.

VR: That's what I was talking about refuge vow. Proclamation of one's practice in the conscious world. In other words, basically by taking the refuge vow out loud, not just to oneself in one's head which one does anyway afterwards all the time I think, that in the presence of human beings with the same elements of consciousness, in the presence of the teacher and lineage, one proclaims that I am henceforth going to work on this practice continually and dedicate myself to doing that. So by making that proclamation you again generate the same awakened quality in oneself. In other words, you just can't think about it. You actually have to do it.

Q: Will you talk more about the word function? Then meditation is...

VR: Function means how things work.

Q: Okay.

Q: Could you elaborate a little bit on the difference between gap and glimpse in terms of practice?

VR: Um. Gap is that which we experience through practice. In other words, it is brought about by sitting meditation. Glimpse is different only in the sense that it happens by itself.

Q: But it's the same in terms of consciousness?

VR: I think in terms of consciousness, it's the same. Yeah.

Q: Okay.

VR: Here's the microphone.

Q: Is, could you say something about the relationship between sudden glimpse and the experience of a teacher?

VR: Of the teacher?

Q: Yeah.

VR: Yeah, well I think everybody has some common experience about meeting the teacher in that usually everything is jumbled into one soup, sort of undistinguishable. And meeting the teacher, who at that point as I said, is simply the spokesman of the teaching, sudden glimpse could occur because in the mess, suddenly you heard something honest, straightforward. So it creates its own, you know, space. 'Cause it's true, creates its own space.

Q: So in the continuing relationship with the teacher then you are constantly basically having further—

VR: If you practice.

Q: Yeah.

VR: Yeah. Otherwise, it's you know, people trying to recreate things you know. Then then you start relating to teacher as some kind of deity.

VR: Baker.

Q: Could you say something about sudden glimpse and the discomfort or paranoia that one might feel in the presence of the teacher?

VR: Well, I think that the, in the presence of the teacher—are you talking about over a period of time or first meeting the teacher?

Q: Well, I mean the ongoing ill at ease quality.

VR: Well, that's the beginning of, you know, discriminating awareness. That, that you feel irritated by brilliance of the teacher and at the same time you also feel energized by that, would like to do something about that. So from ego's point of view that's always seen as a very awful situation and something to be avoided at all costs. From the practitioner's point of view it's kind of, um, meekly approaching the subject shall we say. It's kind of just touching always that hot spot. In other words a practitioner wouldn't get completely confused because of feeling uncomfortable in the presence of the teacher. Would have some reference to the teaching as well because of his practice.

VR: In the back.

Q: This afternoon in the tape you mentioned that we can be awake in any state of mind and that from my experience when there's some kind of heavy emotion even when I somehow see that happening it—

VR: Somehow see what happening?

Q: See the process, the thoughts as it's coming up—

VR: Yeah.

Q: Beginning.

VR: Yeah. Somehow when you see that happening?

Q: It's still hard to distinguish for me between just kind of the normal ego kind of state of mind and the awake state of mind. I can't, you know, I can't ...

VR: Well, what, what would you say?

Q: If I'm seeing that happening?

VR: No, what would you say about that? What is your ...

Q: Well, it's ...

VR: ... notion about that?

Q: Well for myself it feels very even if I, even if I don't feel caught up in it, it still feels very solid and ...

VR: What is, which is the "it" that feels solid?

Q: The thoughts, the kind of—

VR: Even if you see thoughts arising?

Q: Yeah.

VR: And lingering?

Q: Yeah.

VR: They seem solid, the thoughts?

Q: Yeah.

VR: And after they're gone, what do they seem?

Q: They seem nonexistent. Or something.

VR: So basically what we're saying is keep practicing and the reason why a thought becomes solid is because we freeze and don't continue.

Q: What do you mean by continue?

VR: Well, you know next thought comes up after that, right?

Q: Uh huh.

VR: And what generally happens is we don't let the next thought just come up after that but since that one previously was so entertaining, we try and do it again in a different way and do it again in a different way. So then we say thoughts are solid.

Q: Umm, would that be where some sense of softness or humor would be important also?

VR: Would be very important.

Q: In that you might be too hard on yourself, kind of?

VR: Would be very important, yeah. At first it's necessary to try to perfect one's discipline. But you can begin to feel when that perfection has become too solid. So at that point one should try and let go further, see the larger picture. In other words, that particular thought, even though it has a reference, you know, to the next one, and that you might say is ego, still let it be. Still, let it be. Breathe out.

Gentleman on the pole.

Q: I, I haven't been doing this too long, either studying or sitting so my question may clear itself later but right now I'm very concerned about this. You know I'm really confused on whether the awake state of mind is a state of mind that experiences things as they are or experiences things as they are for one's consciousness. And as a corollary to that, if no state of mind is a guarantee that you experience things as they are, is the awake state of mind accepting that fact rather than fighting it with the arrival of ego need for power?

VR: Start from the first one again.

Q: Okay.

VR: The first aspect.

Q: Say it again.

VR: The first aspect of your question. Repeat it please.

Q: Oh. Yes. Is the awake state of mind an experience of things as they are, or is it an experience of things as they are for one's consciousness?

VR: Things as they are from one's consciousness?

Q: Okay, from one's consciousness?

VR: What did you say?

Q: I said "for" but "from" I think would do the same.

VR: Things as they are for one's consciousness—oh I see for or from in that case. Is the awake state of mind ...

Q: Right.

VR: ... the experience of things as they are from one of your consciousness or?

Q: Yeah, right or the experience of things as they actually are.

VR: Well, one would say that the awake state of mind is the experience of things as they actually are.

Q: And so one in no way has this consciousness that comes from—see the is I—

VR: One doesn't.

Q: One doesn't. And the reason I ran into that problem is from sudden glimpse you then have relative mind building consciousness.

VR: Uh huh.

Q: And to me it seemed like sudden glimpse was something that, you know after that there would be thoughts and you're saying there, there are no—that a state of awakened mind is constancy—

VR: I said that sudden glimpse is not a completely awakened mind. I said it's a sudden glimpse. Did you ever hear my tapes?

Q: Yes.

VR: Here we're talking about sudden glimpse—

Q: Right.

VR: as ground—

Q: Right.

VR: to begin practice. Which means that simply in our life, in our experience we have such flashes of awakened state of mind.

Q: I see and so there is never, the production of consciousness after that.

VR: Oh, now wait a minute please. Sudden glimpse is not fully awakened complete enlightenment. It is the ground to even think of such a thing. From a sudden glimpse comes the production of consciousness. From one's point of view that's what's called ego. One's point of view, consciousness. So if you, if you're trying to say, can consciousness be conscious of consciousness, yes and that's

what's called awake. But consciousness cannot be conscious of awakened state of mind. That's what's called production of ego.

Q: Does the awakened state of mind still go through the point of "I get off here at 59th Street," you know, and then after that point start thinking about, you know—

VR: Awakened state of mind is 59th Street, is the train, is the body, the thought process, the emotions, and senses—

Q: Well, then, then after that can the awakened state of mind go into reverie for instance?

VR: After that?

Q: After you get off, you've done the appropriate action, you've gotten off at 59th Street—

VR: Appropriate to what?

Q: Well, I you wanted to get off, I guess.

VR: That is you want to get off. And why do you want to get off?

Q: Whatever you know, maybe you have to give a talk that day, I don't know...that's a pretty...

VR: Yeah, and why do you have to give a talk that day?

Q: I'm lost. I don't know what you...

VR: Right. The point, the point is that we can't put the cart before the horse, you see. Once you start thinking that way, then the relative situation gets endless.

Q: Exactly. That's exactly what I came up with.

VR: Right. It's endless.

Q: Right. So how's that—

VR: Well, you're trying to use the awakened state of mind from a relative point of view. It just isn't possible.

Q: Oh so it's constant living in the now whatever comes up and it's the kind of thing that, [laughter] no, no it's the kind of thing that..

VR: If the now comes up.

Q: And there's there, okay can you just, is there a state of for instance reverie in the awakened state of mind where the person you know then starts daydreaming because there's he's not at that point having to get off or at that point having to avoid a bus or at that point...

VR: What do you mean by reverie?

Q: Sure, of course.

VR: What do you mean by reverie?

Q: Well, a person start of mind produces consciousness which is his own you know...

VR: A person starts to produce...?

Q: An awakened state of mind produces consciousness which his which is his own production...

VR: An awakened state of mind produces consciousness?

Q: Of relative, of relative mind.

VR: [Laughs]

Q: No, I mean it's his own production of relative mind. He has his own—

VR: Whose?

Q: An awakened state of mind. I mean you know awakened, the awakened state, an individual—

VR: You can't do it. For get it. [Laughter]

Q: It's not, I'm confused as far as the question. I know the question.

VR: Oh, I'm certainly sure you're not. But what I'm saying is you can't do it that way. You can't get there from there.

Q: Well, why is that a way that's actually harmful—is wrong to even think about? Because it's—

VR: A waste of time.

Q: A waste of time, it doesn't—

VR: Um. It goes round and round, round and round.

Q: And so therefore, automatically it's just a thing that's off the, off the path because it doesn't ... I see, yeah. Thank you.

VR: It's what is commonly referred to as examining the hairs of a tortoise. Or a crow's teeth.

Q: Yeah. I think I see.

VR: Well...

Q: I mean, do you see what I'm saying as far as...

VR: Just practice.

Q: ...consciousness—

VR: Practice.

Q: Yeah.

VR: As far as the whole thing goes. At some point you just have to do it.

Q: Yeah. Okay. Thank you.

VR: And hopefully at a point very soon. [laughter]

VR: Well, unless there's one burning one, I think it's time to stop. Is it burning? All right. The hot one over there.

Q: I would like to know (thank you) what is actually opening up to the teacher.

VR: To the teacher?

Q: Yeah.

VR: Well, I think it's basically what I was saying before. The feeling of embarrassment at having

been seen in a confused state prevents one from making a relationship with the teacher.

Q: Um hmm?

VR: Also at the same time that someone's trying to hold onto individual sanity saying, "Well, this I've got you know, I've got what they said and that's okay you know. I don't need any more interview or anything like that, you know. What am I going to say? You know I understand, it's just basically live your life, see things as they are."

Q: Well, what about if you get to the point where there's a lot of doubt and then begin to doubt the doubt so then there's just being stuck. You know what I mean?

VR: Yeah, well, that's where, see that's the, that's the point where you bring that gift to the teacher.

Q: Take that...

VR: Take that mess and say "Is it beautiful?" [laughter] Or you could say, "I really have an ugly thing to show you, I mean it's just [laughter] awful eh? I hope you don't mind."

Q: Yeah, thank you.

VR: I mean this is development of some humor because that's—in that way we could actually live in the world of sane people. You know, which means that we wouldn't suddenly see that somebody's neurosis "get away" because we could see the humor in it that we also presented, you know.

Q: Um.

VR: We wouldn't say "Look at that crummy tie. This person gave me this tie. Isn't it absolutely awful?"

So. Fire's still burning in any case. Well, as I say, we've just begun and even though a lot of faces are familiar and I've known a lot of you for quite a while, a lot of faces are completely new. I would suggest that you study carefully these teachings that we've been going over and apply your practice to your study, to the study, and develop good discipline, and have some trust in your own intelligence. That would be basically my wish for you in terms of the path. And it's been delightful, being in New York and being here, mix and match. Very nice.

So, let's see, is there anything I've forgotten? Help support Karmê-Chöling if you can with money and with practice, with whatever energy you can lend to this place because if it were not here we would have to do it outside and it's cold. [Laughter] It's raining. It's much more difficult to sit without shrine hall. And well, I suppose that's it. And I'll see you again next time. If there is such a thing. [laughs] Thank you.