

# FPMT BASIC PROGRAM ONLINE

## Awarenesses and Knowers

# Transcript

of

Ven. George Churinoff's  
Oral Commentary

to

*Explanation of the Presentation of Objects and Object-Possessors  
as well as Awarenesses and Knowers*

by

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## Session 1

### Introduction

As my teacher Geshe Sopa often says when he gives teachings: “During this course we are going to chew some tough bones”. Usually we want material that is quite easy, like pabulum, something easy to chew and swallow – like when we were kids and didn’t have teeth or when one is old... This study may require a little bit of mental effort, but I think there can be great benefit from it.

One of the reasons for engaging in a study like this is to develop your wisdom. It is not just to accumulate a lot of facts, or be worried about whether you have memorised things - although memorisation is useful too. But basically this kind of study helps to develop your wisdom and develop a vocabulary that we will be using as we study about other subjects like selflessness and emptiness (if we study other texts). We will talk a little bit more about that in a minute.

### Meditation

Let’s begin, as we try to do all the time, with a good motivation. Maybe over the weeks, as we progress, we’ll do some prayers also, some requesting prayers to Manjushri or something like that. But right now let’s try to quiet our minds. One of the best ways to do that is through meditation.

Sit comfortably. Relax your body. Relax your mind

Even from the very beginning, it is good to try to have some kind of union of the very special motivation that you are doing this for our ultimate attainment of enlightenment and out of a wisdom that understands that really there are no problems to worry about, there is nothing that you have to attend to. You know – and that might be attractive in your mind: all of those things that we designate with so much value and importance are ultimately empty. Whatever understanding you have, right from the start, just try to recall that, and then begin by placing your attention on the breathing.

With each breath, breath out your tension, your worries, breathing in inspiration and watching very carefully - knowing that you are breathing in and knowing when you are breathing out. And watching the endpoints, particularly where your mind may begin to try to play and engage other thoughts, when the breath is not moving so rapidly.

And follow one breath down to your heart. Let your attention stay there, away from the cerebral region. Just let your mind watch itself. Either you can think one corner of the mind watching the contents of the rest of the mind or one instant of mind being aware of what has just occurred in the previous instant of the mind.

Here the exercise is not to watch all the varied thoughts that pass through your mind, the various emotions that might arise, or to be aware simply of the feelings. But amongst that variety of phenomena, to see some commonality; that they are all arising in the nature of the mind which is clear and knowing - like a vast space that allows their presence - and to focus on it as your object, thereby taking your attention away from your thoughts and the thought processes - allowing them to subside, to disappear.

The nature of the mind, as we will learn, is said to be clear and knowing.

See if you can imagine bringing your attention to your heart, withdrawing your attention from the senses like a tortoise withdrawing its limbs inwards.

The mind itself has no colour, shape or dimension. So any blackness that you may see is perhaps induced by your eye consciousness, if your eyes are shut. That's not the nature of the mental consciousness. Try to get a feeling for the fact *that* that is there depending on the mind's spaciousness, its clarity. Try to develop a mental image of that through your experience; the continuity of clarity and knowing that we call the nature of the mind.

See if you can let go of your attachment to, your attention to, the form of your body that seems to be looming there irrefutably. That too is arising in your mind as an object, a mental picture, through the sense consciousness perhaps. Let go of that. Try to refocus on the spaciousness of the mind, within which that sense of the body was previously embedded and in which it was arising.

There's space. Like there is space for all thoughts.

Even the sense of an observer and a sense of dualistically observing, relishing the meditation. That too is just a thought.

The vast crystal clear spaciousness of the mind, once our mind is quieted. Like the appearance of the sky at dawn after the rainy season, when the dust has been cleansed from the sky, before the vibration of the sun fills the sky; as though you could see forever. Clear light!

And thinking of all other living being who have been intimately related with us numberless times in the past, in the vast womb of time. We don't recognize them *now* as close acquaintances, as mothers, but that doesn't mean that they were not. They've been depthlessly kind to us, just as our present mothers have been depthlessly kind to us over numberless lifetimes.

Knowing a little about the nature of cyclic existence, we can develop some sense of renunciation, not be too overcome by its attractions, not to be depressed by the inevitable rising of karmic suffering. All of it changing. On the basis of that we can develop some sense of empathy for others, and a sense of compassion, based on our feeling indebted to them. Just as we wish to be free of suffering, so do all living beings. Just as we want to be happy, want everything to go right, so does everyone.

The best that we can do now is perhaps not even just to lead ourselves, but to learn to lead others out of this suffering. So for their welfare, try to make a special motivation here at the beginning of the course; I am going to engage in this activity as the great lamas, masters, meditators, yogis, yoginis of the past have done. This kind of study to sharpen our minds, to understand better the laboratory of our mind, the playground, the field of our consciousness. To develop our wisdom so that we can eliminate from our mind all the harmful elements, develop the good qualities, especially wisdom and compassion, to become buddhas - enlightened, so that those living beings who depend upon us can be quickly lead out of their suffering.

So not just as a scholastic exercise, or to get some accreditation, but for the welfare of others I am going to listen to and participate in the course, tonight and throughout. Through all of my lifetimes, to study for the purpose of getting closer to buddhahood for the welfare of all beings.

Now relax. Bring your attention back to the present.

## Teaching

Ok. So how is everyone? How was your meditation?.

Student: How would you say in Tibetan - "cloud-follower".

I never heard of the word "cloud-follower". But you've heard of dakas and dakinis. Do you know what a daka is? Do you know what a dakini is?

Student: A dakini is someone who enjoys, s, emptiness...

Maybe; maybe realizing, maybe not - might be... Dakini means, as the Tibetans and the great meditators of the past translated the term from Sanskrit, *khadro*. *Kha* means sky or space and *dro* means to go or travel. So on one level, it could be those beings that traverse through the space of non-conceptual wisdom, in a sense maybe directly realizing or as we are doing now, letting go of the ego, diving into the mind, letting go and trying to that clear light nature. Be a real daka, be a real dakinis; don't be a "cloud-follower".

You may see on thangkas sometimes pictures of dakas and dakinis in a corner, flying through the sky. Did you ever see that? Sort of that flavour, I think. Perhaps as we do more of this meditation you will have some questions or observations about it.

We are going to be studying this particular text that you have before you. This text was chosen by our teachers - in fact this is a text that was studied by almost everyone in the Gelukpa tradition when they were kind of growing up so to speak. This is one of the first subjects that is studied in the monasteries and nunneries, by those preparing to be able to study the great texts. I think some of the subject matter might seem more complicated, some of the material might be more simple.

This is called, as you see from the title, *Explanation of the Presentation of Objects and Subjects* - subjects are called object-possessors because a subject is something that possesses an object. So we could just cross that out and say subjects and objects; objects and those things that possess objects.

So, *An Explanation of the Presentation of Objects and Subjects as well as Awarenesses and Knowers*. Awareness is this Tibetan word 'lo' and the word knowledge here, or knowing, is *rigpa*.

In fact you may know that in the Nyingma tradition - is it the Nyingma tradition? - you have the *Rigpa Foundation*. This is the same word, but in some cases *rigpa* means primordial awareness, like in the Nyingma tradition. But here it is to be taken in its more general sense, as knowing. Knowledge almost sounds like a noun, doesn't it, rather than a verb. Maybe they should both be verbs, awareness and knowing; I am not sure.

So this particular subject matter, this kind of text, if you asked the students what they were studying, they would say they are studying *lorig*. *Lo* means awareness, *rig* means knowing. So this is the short title, *lorig*.

It is part of a larger text with a kind of interesting name, the text called *The Magical Key to the Path of Reasoning* - a magical key opening up the path of reasoning, to be able to understand logic. This is a kind of magical key to understand this, then you can open up and understand texts on logic. *Lorig* is from that

text: *The Magical Key to the Path of Reasoning, Presentation of Collected Topics Revealing the Meaning of the Treatises on Prime Cognition*.

This particular kind of subject matter is called the presentation of collected topics, or *dura*. It means a compendium of topics that come up in the literature. It is a way to familiarise yourself with the vocabulary, for later when you engage in the study of this material. That's the text that the students often begin with – *dura*, when they are twelve or thirteen. Everyone here is a little bit older than that. You don't have to feel intimidated, although sometimes a lot of the material may seem very complicated, it is definitely doable and one of the ways of being able to not be intimidated by it, is to have some perseverance, some courage, some determination and to familiarise yourself with it.

That is also the meaning of mediation, isn't it? To *familiarise*. I have taught this kind of subject several times and people at the beginning say "oh my gosh, there is so many things to remember" and after maybe two weeks of classes, they are already feeling quite comfortable with the material. Already they have a basis and later when you hear other teachings involving this kind of terminology, you'll be able to understand it much more deeply.

This larger text *Dura* or *Collected Topics* has various parts. What are the topics collected from? They are from the texts or treatises on *prime cognition*, very famous teachings in Buddhism. Treatises or great texts, expositions, on what is called *pramana*.

Have you heard that term - *pramana*. *Pramana* is a word that is going to come up on several occasions. The Tibetans would say *tshad ma*. Sometimes it means prime cognition. Sometimes it just means validity, valid - valid cognition rather than prime cognition. In this context we will be talking about the subject matter from a certain philosophical point of view, so here it is called prime cognition, but generally the meaning isn't limited to that.

The texts on *pramana* are mainly about how we know and how we can verify what we know as true. How do you know that this is really pink, or whether you are really existing, and so forth, or whether what you think is right is really true. How do you know this? How can you verify this?

Do you know what that subject matter is called in philosophy? What is it?

Student: Logic

Well in a sense it is logic, but that's just one part of this investigation.

Epistemology! I don't think you'll find reference to such a word in ancient treatises; from my own investigation, I believe that the word came about in the late 1870s as a construction from other languages in order to explain this kind of study. That is essentially what you could call this. So the treatises on *prime cognition*, maybe you could say are treatises on epistemology. It is not just prime cognition here, it is *pramana*, the study of what is valid, how we know what are the different kinds of consciousnesses and so forth and how we can verify that things are true.

So this is the magical key to the path of reasoning, revealing the meaning of the treatises on epistemology or prime cognition or *pramana*, a presentation of collected topics from those texts. All these topics are found in the *pramana* literature, what we are going to be talking about and the text that is studied.

There are three parts - the small, the medium and the large; so this called the *greater* path of reasoning. In the first part, the small one, they study the definition of colour etc. Have you ever studied that? One of the questions that would be asked is: "is a white horse white". What do you think, is a white horse white? In that context they would learn "no, a white horse is not white because white is a colour". A white horse is a horse, even though it has a white colour. So they begin to learn the definitions and what constitutes a proper line of debate, using very simple subjects like that.

Some of us might be fascinated by that but others of us might find it incredibly boring to use those examples like a white horse is not white and so forth. But that is what they begin to study and they study definitions and the enumeration of the categories of phenomena.

All phenomena basically could be lumped into two sections; those that are impermanent - changing moment by moment - and those that are permanent.

Are there any permanent phenomena?

Student: Consciousness?

Consciousness is permanent? Why is consciousness permanent?

Student: It just came out of my mouth – it is something that continues...

Right. So we have to be careful here. When we are talking about permanent, what is meant by permanent is different from what we mean by eternal. What is eternal? That would be kind of forever. Right! Permanent doesn't mean something is necessarily eternal. This will blow your mind: there are some things which are temporarily permanent. Temporal permanence means that for some period of time they exist and they do not change for that period of time. So anything that is permanent is not necessarily eternal. Can you think of anything like that?

Student: Inaudible

Yes; you know about emptiness, and we'll talk about it later. In the Mahayana especially, we say emptiness is permanent. Right! So what about the emptiness of this pen? Does the emptiness of this pen exist forever? It came into existence in dependence upon the pen - when this pen was first made and could be categorised as a pen, things were put together and you said "a pen". The emptiness of the pen existed at that time. It didn't exist before that.

Emptiness is not some vague philosophical sort of space. It is something that has a relationship to conventional phenomena; it is their ultimate nature of being devoid of findable true existence. Right? The manufacturer might like to say it will last forever but it will definitely not... When this goes out of existence its emptiness will go out of existence. So that would be an example of something which is permanent but not eternal. So the two terms are not identical.

Can you think of something which is eternal but impermanent?

Actually your proposition at first, consciousness, would fit that category, wouldn't it? Because consciousness itself, we are going to be learning, is something which is impermanent - changing moment by moment. From the Buddhist perspective it had no beginning and has no end. Even when we become

buddhas, our stream of consciousness will continue. So if we just talk about consciousness itself, that is something which is eternal but impermanent.

So maybe if you check, you can find examples of the different possibilities; how many alternatives would there be here? There would be four alternatives.

We just talked about *impermanent and eternal* (consciousness). (1)

*Impermanent and not eternal*, that is easy; for example, the pen itself, the conventional pen.(2)

Student: or a person, Mark.

Yes. Mark is a person. So the Mark that we impute on this particular body and mind is *impermanent*, changing moment by moment and is *not eternal*. Mark will go out of existence when his body disappears. Right? His mind stream will continue. So something about Mark does continue...

Which one did we leave out? *Eternal and permanent (not impermanent)*. What would that be?

We already did *not eternal and permanent*; that was emptiness, for example the emptiness of the pen.(3)

So what would be *eternal and permanent*? (4)

Student: Space?

Maybe... it depends on which the space you are talking about... but usually, space is permanent... But space is also imputed on some kind of vacuity. So since there is nothing going to be around forever, and space is usually imputed upon some world system, you know, like the sky or something like that. Space starts to exist when there is a world system coming into existence. So space might not be eternal. It would be permanent whilst it's existing.

How about emptiness of your mind - buddha-nature? That's *eternal* because your mind is eternal and it's *permanent* because it's not changing moment by moment (4).

Anyway, you can play around with that.

So these are some of the things that are gone over in the *collected topics* first of all - the different enumeration of phenomena. Those things that are permanent, those things that are impermanent and we will be talking a little bit more about that in a moment.

This particular text was written by a very great Tibetan saint called Jampa Gyatso Purbuchok. Purbuchok wrote some of the beginning textbooks that are used at several of the main monasteries. Many of them are used for their collected topics. Purbuchok's collected topics and also this text. And then after this their own textbooks, written by someone from their own monastic tradition.

So this is what was studied at Sera Je where Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche studied when they were young. Almost all of my main teachers studied at Sera Je and this is the text that they studied – Purbuchok.

So, *Explanation of the Presentation of Subjects and Objects*. Usually we say it in *that* order. Often times when hit combinations like this, sometimes the Tibetan is such that they say *yul chen*. It sounds more



euphonic - it sounds nicer to the ear in that way. We would say subject and objects rather than objects and subjects in our language. You could say that, right. You could say *Explanation of a Presentation of Subjects and Objects as well as Awareness and Knowers from this, the Greater Path of Reasoning*.

So this is another phrase: *Path of Reasoning*.

Tibetans, and Buddhists in general, Mahayana Buddhists – actually, as I understand it, they did not refer to themselves generally as Buddhists. Did you know that? What did they refer to themselves as? Usually they referred to themselves as inner beings – *nang wa* - which some people take to be (I was joking about this before) almost in an Italian sense - the inner circle and everyone else are outsiders, but the esoteric meaning of course isn't that. Inner being means a person who looks for the solutions to problems within, within one's own mind, rather than seeking these solutions outside, thinking: 'it is their fault', 'that's the problem, out there'. I've mentioned in some other context, when I first went to the Kopan Monastery in the early or mid seventies, there were little pieces of paper on the walls that some of the Western students had written, because Lama was always saying phrases like this: 'First check inside, then check outside'. You know, if we have a problem, usually we think: 'oh, this is wrong'. Why do you perceive it's wrong? Check inside, is it really wrong? Is it inherently wrong? Check your own mind!

Lama was always saying 'check up dear'. But don't use that with your loved ones, as a kind of retaliation. Don't use the Dharma to clean other people's acts, as they say - you should use it to clean up your own mind. So don't go home and start using that as your pet phrase, 'check up'. I could imagine what could happen.

So another phrase like that is 'inner being', it is another way of talking about Buddhism from a Mahayana point of view, inner beings is referring to practitioners. And another such phrase is 'the path of reasoning'. That is what it is talking about here: 'from the greater path of reasoning'. Path of reasoning doesn't necessarily mean Buddhist but it kind of implies here that Buddhism doesn't depend only on faith alone. We need faith. It is a virtuous mental factor. We need to have faith, but the Buddha himself said "you should check-up what I say in the same way as you check gold".

You know that, right? You know that famous phrase? The Buddha said you shouldn't accept what I say out of faith alone. You should check what I say, as you would check gold. I've never bought gold. But apparently one would check it various ways; rub it, and see from the colour of what came of it if it was pure gold, and you would cut it see if there were any impurities inside, or like a thin layer of gold over a lump of lead. You would burn it. You would put in fire, maybe in a sense like its spectrum, they didn't have spectrometers but you can see something when you burn it. You know if you put copper in fire, it has its own particular kind of glow. Different things like this. So you would check gold in various ways.

I think a better example today is the way we would check a car. First you get your brother-in-law to look at it, right? He'd go around and kick the tyres. Take up the top, check it, turn it over, take it for a test drive. You'd check it first before you buy it. So in the same way, the Buddha said you should check what he said.

He wasn't meaning when he said this, that you didn't have to believe what he said and you could just pick and choose. This is an interpretation I have found is very popular in America now. Have you noticed that? That people like to say; "well this I like but this I'm not so fond of. I am not going to take that part, because Buddha said you didn't have to accept what he said". That's not what he meant. He said don't accept what he said out of faith alone. If you have doubt about something or everything, you should really analyse it, to understand what is really true, so you can see its consistency. So you develop real faith, faith that is based on conviction, rather than just blind faith which is easily dissuaded.



So, sometimes *path of reasoning* is a kind of an epithet of Buddhism in general. Does that make any sense to you? *Inner being* refers to Buddhists and *path of reasoning* sometimes is applied to Buddhism in general.

In this regard I want to mention something else. The Buddha taught that when engaging in any kind of Dharma study, practice of Dharma, Buddhism, you should base your engagement on four reliances. Have you heard of the four reliances? If I mention what they are, they will ring a bell with some of you...

First of all you shouldn't rely on the teacher but on the teaching. That is to say, not on the charisma of the teacher, whether someone is beautiful or charismatic. Like the fellow who is on TV late at night - Tony Robbins; a big smile and "ah this must be right", all these people following him. So you shouldn't rely on the person of the teacher, you shouldn't rely on the charisma, you should rely on the teaching, what is being said. So listen to what is actually being said.

Going a step further: don't rely on the mere words, the sweet sound of the words, the euphony of the words. What would we say in the West? Captivating, interesting things – "oh-yea wow, this sounds good". Sometimes we get excited because teachers tell us things that we like to hear, which doesn't mean that it is necessarily good for us. Don't rely on the mere words but rely on the meaning. So this is what we are going to do here, understand the meanings of things. Relying on the meaning rather than the mere words. There is a certain of wisdom that develops from hearing words but there is a deeper wisdom that develops when you engage in analysing the meaning of those words - we call it wisdom arisen from contemplation. Have you heard that before?

We talk about different kinds of wisdom. Wisdom that arises first of all when we hear or listen. Maybe that is kind off related to the first reliance. Rely on the teaching and not the person. Then, rely on the meaning, not the mere words. So that's talking about the second kind of wisdom that's called the wisdom arisen from contemplation, when, after hearing something correctly and it making sense superficially, you begin to analyse it in various ways.

Also, this is why debate is such a great tool in understanding the teachings, because you are forced to confront something that you thought looked this way, to look at it from the other's point of view, you see that there are other options. Do you see what I am saying? If you are talking with someone who understands it from a different perspective and you were going to say "no, you're wrong", because you don't understand it that way, but by debating with them, discussing with them, you are confronted with that. You have to come to grips with a deeper understanding.

So the first reliance - don't rely on the person, rely on the teachings. The second - don't rely on the mere words, the euphony, the nice sound or the attractiveness but rely on the meaning.

Then thirdly - don't rely on the interpretable meaning, but rely on the definitive meaning of what was being said. This has a lot of explanation later on in our study, when we talk about the difference between the definitive and the interpretative sutras, what was to be taken as definitive from what the Buddha said. Sometimes for example the Buddha said, "there is self". Did you know that? That the Buddha in some cases actually said to some people "there is a self", although, in other cases when he explained in depth, he said "there is no self". So one has to be able to understand from the context what is meant literally and what is only meant on one level; what is to be interpreted, what is meant definitively. So that's a deeper level of understanding. So don't rely on the superficial sense, don't rely on the literal sense of the words, but delve into what is the definitive meaning.

Finally, the fourth reliance: don't rely on simply a conceptual consciousness, but eventually develop a non-conceptual, direct perception of reality, in deep meditation. things directly. That is what eventually will be able to eliminate from our mind all the stains, when we realize emptiness directly and not just by means of our intellect.

Those are called the four reliances and I think it's worthwhile knowing them at this time because oftentimes there are a lot of teachers that are very charismatic and even centres are happy with them because they make lots of money for the centre. I am not sure if that is always the best rationale.

How are you feeling? OK? Let's go a little bit further; can you manage?

You might think if he goes at this rate, we will never finish the course because he hasn't even done the title yet. But actually there is a lot in it. You might think the title is just for the title page, but actually that page is very important because it can tell you what the whole subject is about. It has a lot of meaning to it.

And so Purbuchok – do you know who Purbuchok was? This author lived several centuries ago, Purbuchok Jampa Gyatso. I think he was understood by many people to be an incarnation of the Buddha Maitreya and very blessed. His more recent reincarnation was the abbot who gave some of my teachers their ordination. One of my teachers is Geshe Jampa Gyatso, and the 'Jampa' here came from this Purbuchok. His incarnations are I think existing still until today.

This particular translation that we have of this famous text, this very traditional text, was done by a very excellent scholar, Elizabeth Napper. We call her Betsie Napper, but Elizabeth is her proper name; she has a PhD from the University of Virginia, and the Buddhist scholar Jeffrey Hopkins was married to her for some time – they subsequently took on their own Dharma trails and she is presently in India, helping the nun's project. Is that right, do you know? In Dharamsala? A very excellent person and a very kind benefactor also and when she was translating, earlier, doing a lot of translations, she did this text amongst others on Awarenesses and Knowledge. It is a very excellent translation and with her permission - as you see - it has been reproduced for the FPMT program. So if Betsie ever sees these tapes, thank you Betsie... Elizabeth!

Now, just to get some perspective, the way these texts were often written is as sort of a triad of sections and we are not going to do all of them. There was first of all a presentation of other people's viewpoints, what other people think the definitions are. Sometimes these are completely corny, complete misconceptions, or some of them are drawn from debate. These are the assertions in the first section, assertions of other scholars and texts that the author of the text in question, in this case Purbuchok, would be finding issue with. He is saying "some people say this, but look, there is logical inconsistency because of this and that and this and that". These are the debates that go on in the first section.

Secondly, after having presented other's positions and having rejected them, rejected their propositions, then you present your own position which we call *rang lug*. *Rang* means self, and *lug* means tradition or system - so it is 'our system'. That means one's own system of how to define things, how the divisions are, how you understand the inner consistency of all the teachings. That is the section we mainly are going to be studying, because we don't have the leisure to debate on all of these subjects.

And then the third part is, after you have presented your position, other people can say, "Well, you made fun of my position. Now look at your position. It's full of holes too". So this is other people trying to find fault with *rang lug* or our own position, and defending it and saying; "No no, because of this you're wrong. This is still right". Then someone else says this is wrong for this reason and you say "no because of this, this and this, this is still right. You're wrong".

If you look that the first part of this text, if you start reading some of these debates, you'll think "How can I possibly understand this, this makes no sense at all." So we are going to skip over the first presentation and we are going to go to the *rang lug* on page 9 (of the 2003 edition; page 8 in the 2008 edition). Do you see on page 9 - it says "Our own system". The third line down, *rang lug*.

The first couple of pages have been talking just about objects, this is the first thing that is being talked about. Then we go into subjects or object-possessioners.

With regard to that, to explain, first of all, we talk about objects and subjects. Object is a synonym of existent. All existent phenomena are objects, they are objects of consciousness, of some consciousness. Even if they are so subtle and obscure that they are not the object of ordinary being's consciousness, they are the object of consciousness of the omniscient mind.

So in a sense all phenomena are objects, in a very real sense. There are various synonyms here that we could mention. When we divide everything, one way of enumerating is like this: starting with the selfless. Because everything, whether exists or doesn't exist, is selfless or empty. OK. You can divide that up into two parts: existents and non-existents. What is a non-existent?

Student: A flying pig

A flying pig! I thought flying pigs existed???.... OK, that's pretty good. Can you think of another non-existent, anyone? There are many famous ones.

Student: Sky-flower

Yes, we talk about the famous sky-flower. What is the origin of that idea, what does one mean by a sky-flower? Do some people think that there is this marigold floating in the sky or something? What is a sky-flower?

When the Mahayana began to proliferate, I think it was Vasubandhu -the brother of Asanga - the Hinayana practitioners actually criticized the Mahayana. When his brother Asanga tried to introduce it to him, he said "oh, the Mahayana is like a sky-flower, just like a figment of your imagination - a non-existent thing, the Buddha never taught that". So this is a phrase that has been used since then.

I think the origin has something to do with rainbows; to some people, in some sorts of situation, maybe between the clouds, a certain part of a rainbow that is there with very bright colours, maybe someone might think there is a flower growing in the sky. That's something called sky-flowers. Anyway, that is an example of a non-existent.

One of the other classic ones is ... what do you think?

Student: The son of a barren woman.

Yes. You might say, well, she could have adopted him, or she could have had him before she became barren – but we are not talking about that, it's referring to a woman who is barren and does not have an actual son that she gave birth to. So that's a non-existent - a classic example.

Another classic example that we find in the literature, is the horns of a rabbit. Have you heard of that before?

Student: We've all seen rabbit horns

One of my teachers, Geshe Jampa Tegchok, had a very wry sense of humour. He'd say, when he was teaching us "Ah I'm not sure of *Dura* even". It was in Manjushri institute. Helmut was a very serious German monk sitting in front and when we were saying prayers at the beginning of teachings and being very pious, Geshe took out a little postcard somebody had sent him of a rabbit with a big set of horns on the top of it's head, and he put it in front of Helmut and Helmut just had to laugh - he was trying to keep serious because it was prayer time. Geshe was teasing him.

So what's the origin of that? Are there rabbits with horns? I mean they're might have been somewhere along the evolutionary trail but that's not the point. What's being referred to here is the mistaken idea that when you get up in the morning and you look on the field on a foggy morning and you see a little rabbit stick it's head up and you see it's little ears, and you think "ah those are horns" - so mistaking the ears for horns. One might conceive of a horned rabbit, but a horned rabbit doesn't exist.

Those are examples of non-existents that we can mistakenly imagine, right? Or let's say, the water in a mirage, is that a non-existent? There is no water in the mirage; it is empty of water. Or the gold at the end of the rainbow?

The most important non-existent that we should be concerned with is our sense of self-identity, that we perceive and think is so real. That is a non-existent and we have to understand that it is non-existent, because our ignorance now believes in that, it grasps to that, it perceives it and believes in it, grasps to that and assents to that.

Everything is selfless and that is divided up into those that do exist and those that are non-existent. Mainly we are talking about existents. Object is a synonym of existent. Anything that is existent is an object, because it is the object of a consciousness. That is why it is called an object. It's an object in the sense of there being a consciousness that apprehends it, and therefore it possesses that object to some extent. That is why it is called *yul chen*, object-possessor, on the cover; it has an object as it's object of engagement or apprehension. Remember, we said *Presentation of Objects and Object-possessors*. So subjects are called object-possessors.

So everything that exists is called an object. Do you know the different synonyms of *existent*? The Sanskrit is *sat* - you may have heard of that. One famous one is dharma. What does dharma mean? In Tibetan we say *cho*. Dharma means phenomenon in this context, and that is a synonym of existent and object. If something is a dharma, it exists, it is the object of a consciousness. OK, that is another synonym, so we have *existent*, *dharma*, and *object*.

The Tibetan word for object is *yul*. Also *she ja*. Do you know what she ja means? She ja means object of knowledge, that which can be known. That is another synonym.

So all of those are synonyms of existent and in this text one that comes up in the very beginning, that will come in the next sentence I think, is *established base*; the basis for establishing phenomena. Something which exists is also called an *established base*.

So I am just going to give this first definition and the divisions and then we will take a little stretch break.

So concerning the first: "from among the two, objects and subjects" or "objects and object-possessors", the definition of an object is "that which is known by an awareness".

So objects here are defined in terms of being objects, not for any other reason. The real meaning of object in this sense, when we say objects and subjects, is that they are objects of awareness. That they are known by, cognized by, understood by a consciousness or awareness. That's why they are called objects.

The consciousness that is knowing them is the subject or the object-possessor which has that object.

And when objects are divided, here it says there are three. Here we will be a bit more elaborate. There are appearing objects, determined objects and objects of engagement. Now we can make that list a little bit more elaborate, because it's going to be elaborated anyway in the very near future. So we could say there are six kind of objects that we will be talking about. Three of them are here.

We could start with any of them. Let's start with *appearing objects*. A synonym of *appearing object* is the *beheld object* or in Tibetan we say *snang yul*. You could write under appearing object equals (=), it is the same as *beheld object* – *snang yul* - completely synonymous. If something is an appearing object, it is a beheld object.

*Determined objects* refers to objects that are known by conception. That is the actual thing that the mind is getting at when we conceive of something.

*Objects of engagement* can be for perception or conception. They are the object that you actually are engaging in.

For *determined object*, you could also say *conceived object*. That is not a different Tibetan word – it is just a different way of translating *determined object* - *zhen yul*.

So we've got engaged object or object of engagement '*jug yul*, determined object or conceived object (it's just a different translation of the same word, *zhen yul*) and appearing object, *snang yul* - those three. And appearing object is the same as a fourth category called *beheld object*.

Then there are two other objects, one of which has a complicated name. We say in Tibetan, *dzin stangs yul* - *the object of the mode of apprehension*. I think that is how it is actually translated here also.

And then finally, something that is now radically different that these - a sixth one; *referent object* or *observed object*. The *object of observation* - the *dmigs yul*. If you have studied some Tibetan, *dmigs ba* means to observe or to refer to. Say for instance, if you are trying to understand the colour of the flower. The *referent object* or *dmigs yul* would be the flower and the *engaged object* would be its colour. What you are referring to is the flower and you are engaging or entering into some quality of it.

So let's take a little break and if you feel like you've had too much you can escape out the door, if the pressure has got too much... Oh, somebody had a question before, I'm sorry, you had a question?

Student: Is there a synonym for *referent object*?

There is not a synonym, but there are different ways you could translate it. You could translate it as *observed object*. But that's not talking about a synonym, that's just another way of the translating the same term - *the observed object*. Any other questions?

Student: I am trying to understand the colour of the flower. Then the referent object is the flower and what object is the colour?

The colour would be the *engaged object*, and the *object of the mode of apprehension*.

So lets take a short break.....

I mentioned that there we two kinds of space in the scriptures. The word for space is *nam kha* in Tibetan and in Sanskrit it is *akasha*. One of the eight famous bodhisattvas was called Akashagarbha. Garbha means womb or essence; Akashagarbha means essence of space.

What we mean generally with space is the absence of any kind of obstructive contact, and that is something which is intellectually understood, it is not something you see. You might say, "Well excuse me. I see there is nothing between me and Chris. I am seeing space". But that's not space - what you are seeing, that is not the subtle kind of space. That is what is called *bar ma nam mkha*; bar ma means intermediate. So that's something that is visible.

When we say, "I see space, outer space - it's black", or I see the sky", that's not what is meant by the absence of obstructing contact. What you are seeing, what you can perceive with your sense consciousness, in this case your eye consciousness, and also with your hand if it's dark, you know if there's some space here. What you are feeling or what you are seeing is *barma nam mkha* - the intermediate space - and that is an impermanent phenomenon that you can impute through your intellect. You can know that that space is devoid of any obstructing contact through various kinds of means. By transparency, but that is not always a perfect thing, isn't it? It could be a perfectly clear piece of crystal between this and I. Where do you see that sometimes? It comes in the movies or you may have walked into a glass door sometime. Then you check with your tactile sense if there's any contact. So that's impermanent space, the intermediate space. But actual space is the lack of obstructing contact, the absence of obstructing contact. That definition is very useful, because when we talk about emptiness, it's a quality similar to emptiness: space is a mere negation. It only negates obstructing contact, it doesn't affirm something else in it's in place, like transparency or beauty or openness. These are mere negations; the one negating any kind of contact and the other, emptiness, *shunyata*, negating inherent existence.

Sometimes people say - I've even seen great lamas, especially in the Nyingma or Kargyu traditions say "oh that's not a good translation for *shunyata*, emptiness; there is something implied by *shunyata*."

*Shunya* means empty, *shunyata* means the state of being empty or emptiness. The *ata* as the ending is what you do to make it a noun.

Is empty a noun or an adjective? When you make an adjective into a noun what do you called that?

Student: Nominalize it



When you nominalize it, making it from an adjective into a name, into a noun. There is a great meaning, because from the Buddhist scriptures, from Nagarjuna's explanations about emptiness and so forth, emptiness itself, when talking about ultimate truth, is the absence of true existence. The mere negation; in your own realization, negating a certain kind of existence, say of your own self identity. Nothing else is implied, so the resulting appearance to your mind is like space. When you meditate that way it is what's called *space-like* meditation on emptiness *because* it is like space, It's merely the absence of any kind of appearance of true existence. Have you heard that expression before; *space-like* meditation? In meditative equipoise that is what we do. There are two kinds of mediation on emptiness; one is space-like meditation on emptiness and what is the other one called? *Illusion like* mediation on emptiness.

In Lama Chopa, when we get to the verses on the perfection of wisdom in the overview of the lam-rim, it's talking about these two kinds of meditation on emptiness. And we often say that when you are in meditative equipoise on emptiness, nothing else is appearing to your mind - only emptiness, like space. A little bit like the experience we were trying to emulate at the beginning, but maybe that was a positive phenomena. Here we were talking about just the negative phenomenon. We'll talk about what this means later: the absence of true existence.

Do you know who the eight bodhisattvas are? Manjushri, Avalokiteshvara, and Vajrapani were three famous ones. Maitreya, Samantabhadra - you heard of all of those, right? Then the three brothers - not that they were brothers, but I think because of the names; Akashagarbha, Ksitigarbha – who we have a statue of on the hill at Land of Medicine Buddha. These names are very nice, right - my son Ksitigarbha, my son Vajrapani and so on. And the last one is Sarvanivaranavishkambhini.

You know I always thought when I was growing up that being named George was bad, but what if you were named Sarvanivaranavishkambhini? That would have been more of a drag; I can't imagine why his mother would have named him that . Sarvanivaranavishkambhini means “one who has completely purified all of the obscurations”. *Avarana* means *obscurations*. *Sarva* means *all*. Like *sarvadharmas*, right, *all dharmas*. Those were the eight great bodhisattvas that were close disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha. Anyway, that is just an aside.

So the first definition that we have, if you can, you should try to memorise it. The definition of an object is "that which is known by awareness". Here we talk about an *appearing* object and we said that a synonym of that is *beheld* or *apprehended object* - later on in the text it's called *apprehended* object. Then there is *determined* object, which you could also translate as *conceived* object (it means not just to conceive, it means to kind of weigh or intellectually determine, that's why they translate it as *determined* object), and that's an object known by conception.

And then the *object of engagement*, which is synonymous with what? With the *object of the mode of apprehension*.

So how many do we have there? We have *appearing* and *apprehended* – those are two. Then *determined* or *conceived* - that's the third . Then *object of engagement* – four, and *object of the mode of apprehension* - five - and then one other that is not immediately synonymous with those, it is called the *referent* object or *observed* object ( *dmigs yul*).

You know the word *mig pa*, from the mantra of Lama Thong Khapa. Do you know that mantra? Some of you will have heard of it. Mig me tse way....*me* means not, from non-observable or non-referential; *tse way* means mercy or compassion. So this is an epithet of Chenrezig, the buddha of compassion. Non-referential compassion doesn't mean kind of spaced out. It means he doesn't observe or refer to any truly existent



phenomenon. That means it is a kind of compassion which is conjoined with the wisdom realizing emptiness.

There are different levels of compassion. Our 'idiot' compassion, if I can be as bold as to say that, which is not really idiot compassion because it's still compassion, but it simply observes sentient beings as suffering and might conceive of them as being permanent and their suffering being permanent, and might conceive of them as having a self and so forth, as truly existent. That is the first kind of compassion. There's another kind of compassion that observes sentient beings having first understood impermanence, and that sentient beings are impermanent and their suffering is impermanent. That's called *compassion observing phenomena*. Knowing more than just mere suffering. Do you follow what I am saying? It's a deeper kind of compassion. Even in the world, if someone has that kind of knowledge, 'this will pass', they don't get so caught up and their compassion can be more authentic, helping people better. Right now when we try to be compassionate we expect things to change right away, not realizing that it depends on karma; we think that this suffering is real, and really unbearable, and permanent. We get caught up and we get burned-out. Healers often get experiences like that. The third kind of compassion is one that is conjoined with a wisdom that doesn't refer to a truly existent phenomena or doesn't observe, *mig me*, it doesn't observe truly existent phenomena. It doesn't mean by accident, or that it doesn't observe due to looking the wrong way. It looks at the person and the suffering but knows them to be devoid of a truly existent person. So that's call *mig me tse way* - sometimes it is translated as *non-referential* or *non-objectifying*. It means a compassion that doesn't believe there is a truly existent object there.

So these are the six kind of objects we are going to be talking about. We are just going a little bit further today and then we will review and go a bit further next time, and start on subjects.

So as an exercise, you might want to read this section again, in the light of everything we've said and what we will say before the class is over. And read the next section on subjects - object possessors, in chapter 2. Basically it doesn't go much further on this page. You might read some of the other debates after page 9 but mainly the presentation of *rang lug*, our system, that is mainly on page 9 here. And then the next part is the refutation of other people's objections about our own system.

If you read page 12 of chapter 2 for next time, about object possessors or in other words, subjects. Then we get into what the main topic of the course is about; consciousness, what consciousness is, how we know and so forth. But in order to know consciousness, you have to know the objects of consciousness, what kind of object different consciousnesses have, in order to understand those consciousnesses better.

So let's go into a little more detail here. I'm reading just after that, it says *the appearing object of a particular awareness and apprehended object of that awareness are synonymous*. So I had called it *beheld object*. Here it is called the *apprehended object*; it's the same word in Tibetan. *Appearing* object is actually synonymous with *apprehended object*.

I am reading further "Whatever is an established base is necessarily an appearing object". So what does that mean? Do you remember what I said? Do you remember what an *established base* is? An *established base* is one of the synonyms of phenomenon, of *existent*. Everything that exists is an *established base* or you could say an established basis for perception. So that's just another way of referring to something that exists - an object. Whatever is an *established base* is necessarily an *appearing object*. Why is that? Because it has to appear to some conceptual consciousness and it has to appear to some direct perception - a perceptual consciousness. We will talk in a lot more detail about the difference between perception and conception, but do you know a little bit the difference? Do you know what the difference between perception and conception is?

Student: Perception would be perceivers; the eyes, the ears, touch. Conception would be that which follows - dissecting it and determining what it is, putting words and concepts over that.

That would be right, but what is doing that dissection? For instance, if I see a cup of nice tea or a nice tofu meal and I think "oh that looks delicious", is that conception being done by my eye consciousness that is seeing it? Where is this being done?

Student: By mind.

Isn't eye consciousness mind?

Student: I don't know

So we will learn about that.

In common usage the word *mind* is used exclusively for what you are thinking, for the mental consciousness. In that way we could use it just to refer to that; we could say both are consciousness, but when we talk of mind, it kind of implies mental consciousness, in which case you are right.

So it's only the mental consciousness that has conception. Our eyes, our ear consciousness, our nose consciousness, our taste consciousness and our tactile consciousness; these all are perceivers, like a camera. It doesn't do any thinking, it just is a conduit. It knows the objects but it doesn't think about them, it doesn't conceive about them. All of that is done by our mental consciousness, which does know objects, can know objects, in a different way, via some other mode of knowing that we call conception. We will talk about it more later.

But can the mental consciousness perceive also? Can it know things directly or is it limited to conception? Usually for us now, our mental consciousness is more or less limited to conception. We will talk more about this later, but for now, in the continuum of ordinary beings like ourselves there are some instances of mental perception, like one thought instant at the end of a train of eye consciousness, where maybe the mental consciousness perceives the object directly in some sense. But that goes past us, because it lasts such a short instant; it's what we call inattentive because we don't pay attention to it, it is too short. There might also be something like mental direct perception in some lucid dreams but that is debatable.

Generally the first time that we might have direct perception with our mental consciousness is when having developed single pointed concentration, and we might an object with what is called yogic direct perception, one of the kinds of direct perception we will learn about. Yogic direct perception is a mental direct perception which can be developed by realizing subtle impermanence or selflessness of person. First it has to be known via a mental image, then we think about it, we analyse it, we get a mental image of what selflessness means, and eventually we can have a direct perception – although this is a little bit tricky in these tenets: we can know selflessness with direct perception but not directly...

Because what we are studying now is based on the tenets of the Sautrantika school. Have you heard of the Sautrantika school - the higher of the two Hinayana schools? The Vaibhasika - with eighteen subsets - is the lowest of the Hinayana schools. Have you heard of the Vaibhasika? Like for instance those that are today called the Theravada are one of the eighteen sub-schools of the Vaibhasika philosophical school. A slightly more sophisticated viewpoint were the Buddhists that were called Sautrantikas - the followers of sutra. This presentation is mainly from the Sautrantika point of view. You might say, well, why are studying this then? Excuse me, but not only are we Mahayanists, we are Prasangika Madyamikas, right? Well, the reason

is, this is the tradition of how to understand; in order to understand the subtle presentation of emptiness we have to understand the things which seem imminently reasonable to us here and now, then later we can see a finer reasoning in which this is refuted. So we don't put down the Sautrantika system. According to the Sautrantika system, we are going to learn that if something is an object of direct perception it has to be impermanent - only impermanent phenomena, things, functioning things, these are the only things that can be perceived by direct perception for Sautrantika. Impermanent phenomena is what we perceive with the senses. Our senses only know impermanent things, they don't know the permanents - *shunyata* or space. That's something that's known by mental consciousness via conception. So, the appearing object of a direct perception has to be an impermanent object. A synonym of impermanent phenomenon is *appearing object of direct perception*. Anything that appears and is the main or principle object appearing to a direct perception that is knowing it, is necessarily an impermanent phenomena.

So this applies also to mental direct perception; if we were to have a yogic direct perception of selflessness, we'd have a direct perception, we'd have realized it without any veil, but what we are actually knowing directly with that consciousness has to be an impermanent phenomena – so it can't be selflessness which is permanent. Selfless, like emptiness, is permanent. So according to these tenets, how is the selflessness of persons perceived by direct perception? It is by perceiving the aggregates, it's by perceiving the body and mind.

For example, if I'm realizing the emptiness of Mark, I'm perceiving Mark's impermanent aggregates with direct perception and indirectly knowing thereby that he's devoid of a permanent partless independent self, due to directly perceiving the impermanent parts - the collection of the aggregates.

Does that make some sense? We talk about it later but just as a prelude to that.....

So *whatever is an established base* (that means whatever exists) *is necessarily an appearing object*. Why? Because whatever is a thing (*thing* here means *functioning thing*, a very famous word in Sanskrit, *bhava* - have you heard of *bhava*? Svabhava ..... in Tibetan we say *ngos po*) - in this context it doesn't mean thing in general, it means impermanent thing, something which changes moment by moment. *Thing* is the same as impermanent phenomena. If something is an impermanent phenomena, it is a *thing* - a *functioning thing*.

So it started out by saying whatever is an establish base, whatever exists is necessarily an appearing object. Why? Because if it's impermanent, if it is a *thing*, it's necessarily the appearing object of a direct perceiver. Remember we were just saying that. The appearing object of a direct perceiver has to be an impermanent phenomena, which means a *thing*.

(So it is tossing in many words here, maybe to exercise the mind. At the beginning you might say it's trying to confuse you, if you were thinking more generously, you might think it is trying to exercise your mind.)

*This is because whatever is a thing is necessarily the appearing object of a direct perceiver and whatever is permanent is necessarily the appearing object of a conceptual consciousness.*

So this is the last thing I will say today, about the appearing object of a conceptual consciousness.

How does conception differ from perception, let's say the eye consciousness? An eye perceiver knows something by its object appearing directly to that eye consciousness, right? The appearing object of this eye consciousness is the same as the engaged object - the object that I am getting at, the flower - it is

appearing, it's the main thing appearing to the eye consciousness, an impermanent phenomenon is what is being engaged, what is being apprehended.

But for a conception, if I think about the flower, although in a philosophical sense you could say the flower is appearing to conception, that is not the principle object that is appearing. When you think of your mom, is your mom's face or person directly appearing to your consciousness? Is that the principle thing that you know your mom from? When I'm thinking of my mom, in fact my mother has passed away, so I couldn't be perceiving her right now. But I have a mental image in my mind and it seems that I can 'know' my mom that way. Or I can know the London Bridge or something else. The appearing object to that conception is what we could call a *mental image*. The technical term that is used in the literature is *meaning generality* and this has a lot of meaning actually - the term *meaning generality* (*don spyi*)

So what is appearing to conception, let's call it a mental image; we are knowing something, like for example a flower, and when we think about the flower, even when our eyes are open and we're seeing the flower, if we are thinking about it, it is via a mental image of it. This mental image is something that we have developed through experience, either correct or wrong. That mental image is said to be a permanent phenomena.

You might say "but wait a second. I can see my mom's arms flailing as she was screaming at me, or moving when she was tucking me in in bed. What do you mean it's permanent? It's moving". This something we have to investigate. In general a mental image is said to be permanent, it's not changing moment by moment - the mental image we have of cup, of mother and so forth. And so the appearing object of conception is a permanent phenomenon. Any permanent phenomenon is necessarily the appearing object of a conception realizing it.

In the same way, in the case of the appearing object of a perception: any impermanent phenomenon has to be the appearing object of a perception. Anything that is impermanent, even it is very subtle, is perceived – even if it is perceived only by the Buddha's consciousness.

So let's leave it there and let's see if you have any questions or comments and what I suggest is that next time, finish reading page 9 and begin on page 12 - chapter 2.

And if there is time we'll go into some of these debates before the presentation of our own system, where the other tradition is presented. And then we'll also go into some of the refutations, or attempts of refutation - when we refute the presentations of others.

Student: Is the mental image always based on an impermanent object?

No, we could have a mental image of something permanent also; but a mental image itself is permanent. It could be a mental image of something that is impermanent like our mom or chocolate cake or our consciousness or the weather

Student: Maybe this is jumping ahead but could you explain how a permanent object is a mental image?

One other thing first and then I'll address that. We could also be thinking about permanent things like space. We can have a mental image of space, which is in one sense actually space itself - if it is a correct mental image. If we do not know what space is, and just have an imagination of it, we could say that's a generic image that is not really space itself. But if we have really determined what space is, I think that mental image, because if it is a permanent phenomenon, it has to be the appearing object of some

conception. It itself has to appear as the mental image of some conception, because the mental image itself is permanent. So space itself at one point would be the actual appearing object of that conception. So you could conceive of permanent and impermanent things. In fact we can conceive of anything. By conception we can know and think about anything.

Now in terms of why it is permanent, this is one of the great investigations in Indian Buddhist logic. How do we know things by conception – here is a lot of investigation on this. We know things via some kind of generality about them, because they are not appearing by the force of that object appearing directly to our consciousness. They're appearing to our consciousness - in a sense - indirectly.

I'll just mention a little bit - what do they say in the movies? Like a teaser. I saw that for some movies, "the teaser trailer", the trailer that kind of gotcha: "Oh I want to see that one":

How do we have the mental image of a cow? First of all everything other than cow, we could say is a non-cow. This is a non-cow (points at flower). This is a non-cow, this is a non-cow, this is a non-cow (pointing at different other things). Isn't it correct, that there is no cow here? So everything here is a non-cow. If you have a set of things, like say a flower, and A is non-flower. A is everything in the universe other than this flower. Everything else is selected except this little spot in the middle (pointing at the flower). Then you say the opposite of that, the opposite of non-flower is back to here (pointing at flower). So this flower is the opposite of A. And similar with non-cow, as it is said in logic - we can investigate this, you can read and investigate various texts - the opposite of non-cow is how we intellectually determine the mental image of a cow. We develop that mental image somehow by that process, and then a generality, which will be a permanent phenomenon. In general.

Let's just leave it there - just as a teaser - and maybe as you read a little bit and as the course progresses, we will get a little bit better feeling for it.

One very useful book that puts some of this in perspective is this book, also translated by Elizabeth Napper together with one great Tibetan lama - one of my teachers - Lati Rinpoche, one of the great contemporary masters. (Ven. George displays the book *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*). This is an exposition of his when he was at the University of Virginia many years ago, visiting as a scholar. Elizabeth Napper worked with him and I think it was in the same period as when she did Purbuchok's translation. He uses another *lorig* text which doesn't have so much elaboration, but he does refer to Purbuchok sometimes in here. He says Purbuchok says ... and then this other author says...etc. This is a very excellent text.

There is another text called *The Mind and it's Function* which was taught by Geshe Rabten and I think translated by Stephen Batchelor. This is very excellent also.

And there is another text that we might be able to find, that was translated and printed at the Library of Tibetan Works and Archive, many years ago, a very short *lorig* text. It's just called *The Seven Ways of Knowing*, and the author was Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, another great Tibetan yogi lama. Very short, succinct ; you may be able to find that in your bookshop.

Just one last thing, if you're inclined towards the elaborate and you like to have as much weighty material as possible, you can take a look at Jeffrey Hopkins' book *Meditation on Emptiness*, which has a lot of other things in it but also has a lot about the things we will be talking about in it.

So let's finish up with a very short brief meditation and dedication.

Relaxing the mind, relaxing the body.

Bring your attention to your mental consciousness and if there is any sense of dread or awe, try to that all of this is not difficult. If boys and girls, 13-14 years, by the force of familiarising over a couple of weeks begin to understand this, then certainly I can understand this.

Think that due to the force of our motivation at the beginning, and having kept concentration, and trying to listen with attentiveness and an open mind, and contributing, we have created roots of merit, which puts karma on our mind stream, this evening.

Let's dedicate that merit, which is a mental action. Aspiring - the mental factor aspiration - thinking, may these roots of merit ripen, not simply in some samsaric relief that we call samsaric happiness, alone. Definitely it can only ripen that way as happiness in samsara at first, but let me dedicate in such a way, that until I achieve enlightenment, may it constantly nourish me, like a perennial tree- coming up again and again.

Due to these merits, may I quickly attain the state of enlightenment, compassion, complete freedom from all doubts and confusion, happiness, bliss, everlasting compassion and wisdom for the welfare of all sentient beings.

So I hope how many of you are here next week. We'll see how many courageous people there are.

Thank you very much. I think if you have a chance to continue, you won't regret it. Some of my teachers have said, you can spend years doing a Vajrasattva retreat but in one term of studying tenets or some subject like this, you can create more merit. Without knowing what to meditate about, without understanding the vital points - like we were talking about in the *Wheel of Sharp Weapons*: how to understand emptiness, how to develop bodhicitta - you are going to be flailing around and never get there.

So I really encourage you, if you have the time, please to join us again. Thank you.

## Session 2

### Meditation

Find a comfortable position for yourself.

Relax your mind. Place your attention on your breathing.

By focusing on your respiration, try to let go of any following of your thoughts. They can all be attended to later.

Then bring your attention inward toward your heart area – your heart chakra. Give up watching the breathing and be just aware of your consciousness, the events within it.

Even the distractions, the mental images, all the thoughts that are going through your mind, even though they are present, we can learn to let go of following them and focusing on them, and instead focus on the nature of the mind, which we recognize by their very presence. Those thoughts could not be present unless the mind had an unobstructive nature. They wouldn't be known unless the mind had the function of knowing, of cognizing.

The mind has no particular colour or shape, so if you are observing something in your meditation - some colour or shape - that's not nature of the mind, it's just appearing within the spaciousness of your mind.

Even the appearance of your body to your mental consciousness, it is just an appearance to your mental consciousness. You can let go of that by focusing your attention instead; on the state of consciousness that must be its support, the clear nature within which that appearance is arising.

Even the sense perceptions appearing to your consciousness, it's just that - an appearance. Refocus on the matrix of the mind, the womb of the mind within which that's growing, appearing.

Within the quiet of the mind, reflect upon our situation. We have a human rebirth with leisure to practice the Dharma; all of the endowments that are necessary to make Dharma realizations, probably lacking none, or if so, we have a facsimile of it.

This life is incredibly meaningful, because all of the things that we ordinarily strive after; worldly achievements, relationships, pleasure of the senses, success in the world, are fleeting, insubstantial. We can't be satisfied by them. We have had every relationship imaginable in past lives, every pleasure, every success but still we are looking for more within cyclic existence. The life that we have now has the capacity to take us beyond that kind of mundane striving for the worldly concerns - worldly dharmas. But it too is fleeting, momentary, and we are approaching our inevitable end of this life, in every instant, as though falling through time.

Recalling that all of the pleasures of cyclic existence are no more than relief - exchanging one suffering for another; hot for cold, contact for lack of contact.



Recognizing that all living beings still within cyclic existence are limited in the same way. Many of those are directly dependent upon us for their liberation. For many of them, their enlightenment will be indirectly quickened by our achievement of enlightenment.

All of them caught up in mundane concerns, their own egos, striving after pleasure but never really finding it, destroying the causes of samsaric pleasure out of anger, wrong views.

All our former mothers who have been incredibly, depthlessly kind to us in numberless lifetimes - not knowing the nature of the mind, are caught in this vicious ocean of cyclic existence.

Think: for once I am going to do something for them; I am going this evening to listen to teachings, participate, contribute, keep alert, even if it take mental discipline, mental effort. For their welfare, by understanding the mind, I can eliminate all the faults of my mind and develop all the good qualities. Therefore I am going to participate tonight, in order to achieve enlightenment, not for my own sake alone but for the welfare of all beings. To become less of a burden for them, contributing to their welfare.

Relax. Bring your attention to the present.

## Teaching

Now there's another text I mentioned before, besides the text by Jetsun Chokyi Gyaltsen that everyone has been given - an excellent book, *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, that goes over the same subject.

Also, *The Mind and Its Functions*, is a very good introduction, not too complicated, but very profound nonetheless.

There is another text that dear Jon Landaw just sent over. He had it because he was one of the team members who helped translate it originally. It's called *A Compendium of Ways of Knowing*. It was published by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. The Tibetan title is 'a mirror which clarifies what is to be taken up and what is to be rejected; the author is Akya Yongdzin Gawai Lodro. (It's interesting; our subject matter is called *lorig* and we mentioned that the Tibetan *lo* means *awareness* and *rig* means *knowing* or *cognizing*, but although here *rig* is pronounced the same, it is spelt differently, *rigs*. One doesn't say *rigs* in Tibetan, one still says *rig*, but when spelt that way, it means type or ways. So Akya Yongdzin, instead of calling it awarenesses and knowing, he took it to mean ways of knowing. So it's a little poetic play, because one of the main subjects is the various ways in which we know things.)

So this gives you an arsenal of supplementary reading to do and to sort of fill in the gaps.  
Are there any questions from last time?

Student: What is the difference between *appearing object*, *determined object* and *object of engagement*?

Remember, we talked about five different kinds of objects. The text mentions them at various points; maybe at this point it just talks about a few of them, and some of them are synonymous.

So let's take the example of a sense awareness, *an eye consciousness perceiving a flower*. The flower itself is the *appearing object* of sense perception, the thing which is the main thing appearing. The flower is also

the *engaged object* because it is that which the mind is actually entering into and knowing. They are not always the same, the engaged object and the appearing object, but in the case of a direct perception knowing something correctly, the engaged object and the appearing object are the same.

Now the *beheld object* or *apprehended object* is the same as the *appearing object* and the *object of the mode of apprehension* is also synonymous with the *engaged object*. So all four of those objects are the same in the case of a sense perception apprehending a flower.

The *referent object* might be different; for instance if I were perceiving the colour of a flower, the flower would be the referent object and the colour of the object would be appearing object and the engaged object and the other two.

In the case of *conception*, it is a little bit different. When we have a conceptual consciousness, the way that we are knowing things is via this mode of there appearing to us a mental image that we developed. In the case of *thinking about the flower*, the *engaged object* is the flower itself, but the appearing object is not the flower. Although you might say that if you close your eyes, the flower is appearing to you, but it is not appearing to your eye consciousness (in some sort of subtle way it is said to be appearing to the mental consciousness - the conceptual consciousness - but the flower is not the appearing object.) The appearing object is what we call a *meaning generality* of the flower. Did we talk about this the last time? We may have said *mental image*. Mental image might not be the best term, it might give rise to some erroneous understanding. To be more exact, we call it *meaning generality* or *object generality* of the flower.

It is our understanding of flower that has been developed through either conversation or by directly observing flowers; due to that we have a kind of image in our mind, some kind of understanding of the generality of flower. And we are engaging the actual flower, in the case of *conception*, via that mental image. So the *appearing object*, the *beheld object* in that case is this a *meaning generality*.

You can say mental image - it's not completely wrong. But it's not a mental image as though there is an actual image there that we are looking at and that are the flowers. You're not actually focusing on the mental image, although that is the principle object that is appearing to you. The mental image is the principle object that is appearing to you, when you have conceptual mind; so if I am thinking about the flower, the flower is not the appearing object but the mental image. Or the meaning generality, what is called *don chi*, that is the *appearing object* and the *beheld or apprehended object*. The *engaged object* is the flower and there's another term here - the *determined object* - that we talk about only in terms of *conception*, there's no determined object when you have sense perception. Here determined object, you could translate it also as *conceived object* - the object that you're determining or conceiving of through this vehicle of the mental image. So in that case the determined object is the flower itself.

For instance, we conceive of our own personal identity, our own ego identity - the self that Buddhism says doesn't really exist. Say we have a conception of that. What is the appearing object to that conception? Does that self actually appear? Yes, there might be some situations when the body is appearing to your mental consciousness, and you have a mental image of that and you are thinking that might be the self - but that is not the most subtle one.

Usually the sense of self is some kind of appearance to the mind through which you seem to be conceiving of a self, it seems to be an appearance to your mind that's not necessarily out there - I am just using that as an example with respect to the eyes (Ven. George points outwards); the mind is thinking about the self via a mental image of it; a meaning generality of the self, that is produced as a result of thinking, in this

lifetime, and numberless lifetimes of familiarity with it. The *appearing object* is the meaning generality of a self, or the mental image of a self.

If I believe in that self then the *determined object* is said to be that non-existent self. Did we talk about this the last time? The determined object is said to be the *conceived object*. For instance, if you conceive of the horns of a rabbit, there might be in your mind a mental image of horns of a rabbit. What you are conceiving of - the determined object - is the horns of a rabbit, but such things don't exist. Nor does a personal self-identity exist. Am I losing you?

Student: So how would you refute that?

Well first of all let's address a doubt, because objects have to exist. Among the various synonyms for existent things, one is *object*. So if something is an object it has to exist, in general. But there are some exceptions; if something is the object of a conception, like for example the conceived of an erroneous conception, then that object doesn't have to exist. I can conceive of my personal self-identity or I can conceive of a million dollars in my bank account - but that doesn't exist. That can be called the conceived object of that particular conception, conceiving of it, but in general it is not a real object. But it can be called a conceived object.

Student: Is the referent object the mere cognition of the flower?

No! When we talk about the flower, the referent object is the flower itself. It's not talking about the subject, it's talking about the object. All of these are objects (pointing to various items on the table).

Student: Is it a *flower* before I have labelled it, or does just anything appear to me?

Are you talking about conception or perception here? Are you going back to perception or are you just staying where we are when we are talking about conception?

Student: Perception

Going back to perception; the *referent object* is just the flower; that is what is being referred to, or observed. You could call it the *observed object*.

Student: The difference between that and the appearing object, which you defined a little bit ago, is the generality of the flower.

Don't mix it up! That's when we're talking about conception. They're two different spheres that we are talking about. In one sphere when we talk about the senses, the object that appears to your senses is the object itself, the object that you are engaging in, in general. The object that is appearing is the object that you are engaging in, in sense direct perception. But in conception, in a mental thinking process, if I am conceiving of Don and thinking "Don is coming to class", "Don is a good Student:", I have a conception of Don. There is a mental image of Don, (which actually is technically called the meaning generality of Don), through which I am knowing Don. I am conceiving of Don, so Don is the *conceived object* and the *engaged object*.

The reason I brought the self in is that it adds a little more clarity as to how the referent object could be different. If I'm conceiving of Don as being truly existent, or my *true* friend, a bit like there's a soul out there, my soul-mate Don, my buddy Don, or Don who owes me five dollars, and I'd really like to get at him,

it's as though the mind is projecting some kind of identity out there. The *referent object* is the actual conventionally existent Don, not the truly existent Don. What I'm referring to is the conventionally existent Don, which is merely imputed to his body and mind - that kind of phenomenon that conventionally exists. But I am conceiving of that referent object as truly existent via a mental image of it or meaning generality, through which I am misconceiving of the referent object as being truly existent.

Now I've thrown a lot of terms out there. Are you beginning to start making a little bit of sense of that?

Most of the time, when we are perceiving things, we also have conception going along with that. In everyday life we are looking at Don we're thinking of Don as my good buddy at the same time as perceiving him. These might be taking place simultaneously or maybe it's alternating, the visual perception and the conception. If we close our eyes or we're daydreaming or our mind is distracted, even though we're observing something here we can be thinking about something completely different; there can be mental images, we can be thinking about things via their images in our mind and those actual things - our mother's face, our friend, where we grew up - are not actually appearing to us as in direct perception, but we are still said to be knowing them in some way.

This particular tradition of Buddhism we study here says that correct conception doesn't have the same power as direct perception. For instance, we can perceive selflessness with our mental consciousness, directly, with what's called yogic perception; it is as though with your eyes, as clearly as seeing an apple in the hand, that kind of perception - direct knowing - and that can clear away the delusions so that they will never come back again. We'll talk about that a bit later today.

With this we take away different layers of the delusions every time we meditate and have a direct realization of emptiness. It's not something one completes next week, it's something that takes perhaps many lifetimes of preparation, if one is on the bodhisattva path. But still conception of selflessness gets us to that point. Without having first *conceived* of selflessness, we can't eventually have a mental direct perception of it. So although conception doesn't have the same power as seeing it directly, I am knowing Maureen via a mental image of her. I'm not focusing on the mental image but I am knowing Maureen as though I am seeing Maureen out there via the mental image.

So in the case of say of conceiving of Maureen as truly existent, the conventional Maureen that does exist is the referent object, the observed object. The conceived object and the engaged object is a truly existent Maureen, which actually does not exist but I am thinking it does - I am conceiving that such a thing does exist. So can I say that the conceived object doesn't really exist? I think I can say that; there is a conceived object but such a conceived object does not exist.

How about the appearing object? Does the appearing object exist, when I am thinking about Maureen as being truly existent? What is the appearing object?

Student: It's the mental image.

Yeah - that doesn't exist?

Student: It exists in your mind.

Yeah - so that exists. It is not exactly as the real thing but it does exist. Whereas the object which I am thinking to exists there - truly existent Maureen or truly existent Stephen - does not exist at all; that is just something I am thinking up. But the mental image exists.

Student: Is the conceived object the same as the determined object?

Yeah - it's another way of translating the very one and the same term.

Student: Does the appearing object exist, but not truly? Would not the appearing object be the same as the meaning generality, existing but not truly?

Well, we don't even have to get into that. Of course, ultimately nothing exists truly; but the appearance of a truly existent Ven. Angie still exists. Say somebody puts up a caricature of George Bush; maybe what is being referred to doesn't exist, maybe he's got a pitch-fork and a baby is on the pitch-fork or something like that, or he is guzzling oil or something like that – so the referred to object doesn't exist but certainly you can't say that the image doesn't exist. The picture does exist but what is being referred to by it does not exist.

Student: So you're talking all on the conventional level here actually.

Yeah - the only reason I bring up selflessness or emptiness is to show that there is a difference in the referent object. The referent object is what we are actually referring to, or observing, and in some cases it's different from the engaged object. In the case of perception, it is the same; the referent object or the observed object is indeed the same as the appearing object, which is indeed the same as the engaged object. And there is no conceived object in perception - right? The determined or conceived object, that's something that only takes place in conception.

So in conception there's one object that we don't talk about in perception; *the conceived object*. The sense consciousnesses - the eye, the ear, the nose, taste and tactile sensation - don't think. (Actually one non-Buddhist school, the Vaisheshikas if I'm not mistaken, believe that there can be conception within the sense consciousness.... when you hear something beautiful, it is as if though the ear consciousness is deciding 'that's nice', and maybe it almost seems to be like that to us sometimes: we see a nice person walk by and we think "mmm", and it's almost as though your eye is deciding that that is nice.) All thinking is done by your mental consciousness.

The point of talking about objects here is to begin to prepare us for talking about the mind, because the definitions and discrimination amongst the various states of minds will refer to these different kinds of objects.

A *mistaken consciousness* for instance is one which is wrong or mistaken with respect to its *appearing object*. That is what a mistaken consciousness is; something that is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. So for instance, it is said that all conceptions, even those that know correctly, are mistaken. We can have a conception that realizes emptiness, but it's still said to be a *mistaken consciousness*, because it is mistaken with respect to its *appearing object*.

The *appearing object* is what is actually known. Let's say if we were talking about emptiness, the *appearing object* is a mental image of emptiness via which we are knowing actual emptiness, factually, correctly. But we are mistaken because although the predominate thing that is appearing to us is the mental image of emptiness, we're thinking that that is emptiness and that's a mistake. We mistake the mental image for the object itself. So all conceptions, even if they are realizations, even if they are prime cognitions, are said to be mistaken in that way.

So that's the reason for going into detail about all these different objects, as further on when we go through the different types of consciousness, we'll be referring to them. Don't worry, even if right now it seems that there are so many, later when we go through the definitions you'll get familiar with them again and you can go back to it at that time. Some people will study it now and try to get it down; others like myself who are more lazy think "ah.... I just want to move on ....". My teacher Lama Yeshe, when he wanted to learn how to drive, as soon as he turned the key he just wanted to start driving and didn't want to have any instruction, he just wanted to do it; and I noticed when I taught Lama Yeshe's reincarnation, Lama Osel, that whenever we got some new computer or computer game or a toy or something, he never wanted to read the instruction booklet, he just wanted to use it immediately. So maybe you just want to do *lorig* and you don't want to worry about all of this stuff but sooner or later you will have to go back and study these objects again. So we went over a lot of this last time and maybe as the class progresses, there is something that comes up and we will go back to this again.

On page 9, the 2nd paragraph from the bottom, it says *Whatever is an established base is necessarily the object of the mode of apprehension of both a conceptual and a non-conceptual consciousness*. "Whatever is an established base" is another way of saying whatever exists, because established base is a synonym of existent. Anything that exists is an established base. So, whatever is existent is necessarily the object of the *mode of apprehension* or in other words the *engaged object* known by both a conceptual and non-conceptual consciousness.

How can that be? An atom in the middle of the Gobi Desert, what consciousness knows that directly? Well, the omniscient mind; there are numberless buddhas whose omniscient mind knows all phenomena. So whatever exists can be known both by direct perception and by inference.

Everything that exists according to these Tenets however is not necessarily the *appearing object* of direct perception. Now we get down to the nitty-gritty here.

Do you remember what we said before; if something was the appearing object of direct perception, it had to be what? It had to be impermanent. In fact it was synonymous with impermanent phenomenon; anything which is impermanent is necessarily the appearing object of direct perception. Anything which is permanent is necessarily the appearing object of conception. And the appearing object of conception is also itself permanent.

Let's say selflessness; is it permanent or impermanent? Emptiness, or selflessness.

Student: Is it impermanent because it arises with an object and goes away when the object goes away?

What do you think? Does that mean that's it is impermanent?

While it's there it's always selfless - it's not changing: sometimes selfless, sometimes non-selfless – that's right. So how would you rephrase Alicia's answer? She said; "isn't it impermanent because the selflessness of this person comes into existence when the person comes into existence and goes out of existence when the person dies". How would you explain to her that that is still impermanent? Do you remember the distinction between permanent and eternal? Because it sounds to her like it is impermanent because it comes into existence and goes out of existence.

While the selflessness, the emptiness is existent it is always permanent, right? So remember, we talked about something that was called permanent but not eternal, like the emptiness of this cup, which comes into existence when the cup is made and goes out of existence when the cup is broken or destroyed. So



there's a difference between eternal and permanent. Just because something is not eternal, doesn't mean that it is not permanent. Something can last just a certain amount of time and still be permanent.

Impermanent means momentary; it means that something which is impermanent disintegrates in every moment and what appears the next instant is something which is the continuity of that previous instant - like with the cup. The cup is impermanent, not only in the way that we might think in Western science, that the atoms are vibrating and the molecules are vibrating or something like that, but its very existence to our consciousness is due to our karma and every instant the appearance of that, although it seems the same as the previous instant, is actually different. The object that we are referring to is different and our perception, our karmic appearance of it is different.

So impermanent phenomena are said to be momentary, like our consciousness; every instant it arises, the next instant of consciousness arises as a result of the previous instance of consciousness – and is different. This is changing slightly in every instant (pointing to the cup). We're different in every instant although the change is so minute that we don't notice it. If you look in the mirror tomorrow when you are brushing your teeth and you saw your face as it would be when you are eighty years old, you would be shocked. You would think "oh, I suddenly changed". When a tooth falls out you think "oh....."; but actually, it has been falling out all along but we only notice it when something gross changes, we don't notice the momentary impermanence. We only notice at most gross impermanence, if we notice even that. That is why we meditate on death, in order to try to come to understand subtle impermanence; without understanding gross impermanence there is no way we can understand subtle impermanence.

Student: So is the cup impermanent but its emptiness permanent? Is that right?

I think that's right.

Student: What about the concept of cup?

What do you mean by the concept of cup?

Student: I'm thinking about cup in general

The concept itself is a mental state, right, when I am conceiving of cup. So that concept has to be impermanent, it is a mental state, a knowing, and that's changing moment by moment. But if I am conceiving of cup, there is a mental image that I am knowing cup by, and that mental image is permanent, or so it is said.

Student: And where's that stored, or does it have a storage place?

That's in the second drawer in the left laughs.

It arises in our mind, perhaps it's kind of related to memory. We'll talk more about it later. Maybe *meaning generality* or *object generality* is a better term to use; the generality of an object - we say *don chi* in Tibetan. That comes about through some kind of experience - either direct experience of something or indirect experience, like someone describing to you what Robert Redford looks like and when we actually see him, maybe he looks completely different than you thought. You had a different mental image that was based only on language; on having something described to you. Other mental images can be experiential, actually based on having seen something or experienced it in some way, your mental image of



that is perhaps more vibrant or reliable. Do you follow what I mean? Like having seen the Eiffel Tower, rather than just having it had described to you.

Student: Why is that meaning generality of a cup or the Eiffel Tower or whatever permanent? It seems lto be forever changing.

This whole subject of why the meaning generality is said to be permanent is very complicated. It's said that this is the way the Gelukpa tradition understands Dharmakirti and Dignaga regarding how we conceive things. For instance when you see a dog - your mother has taught you this is a dog, and when you saw another dog, as you may notice with your kids, then you said "dog". Kids see one fire-engine, and then they see a different one and they say "fire-engine". We can see things as similar and we give names; our whole language depends upon conceiving of things in this way and the names that we give; cup, mug. Actually this mug is different from this mug, but we still call it a mug. We conceive of and use the language of generalities in our life but we haven't really investigated it very well as to what those generalities refer to. To one of the greatest Buddhist logicians, Dignaga, generalities are necessarily permanent phenomena, and they don't have any correspondence to something real. They themselves are just something imaginary by which we find a correspondence between things. A generality always has particulars or instances, of which it is the generality; like the generality mug has many particulars or instances. We'll talk about the different word for particulars and instances later when we talk about language - Buddhist language. It's very important because from the higher schools' point of view all phenomena are merely imputed by concepts or names and so the study of that is very crucial to understanding reality.

So how do we generate a generality - a concept of generality (because it is a conceptual construct)? Can you show me the general cup, which is not a particular cup? These are two different things; the generality and the particulars. A generality has to be different from its particulars, but if it is a particular, it has to be that generality. Like if it's a particular dog, it has to be a *dog* - dog is the generality. Even if it is Wolf - if that happens to be your dog's name.

Student: Zuni

Zuni? I thought it was Wolf?

Student: He is a wolf

Oh, he is a wolf, not a dog, ok. Then let's say *wolf* is the generality, and then Zuni is a particular or instance of wolf – but where can you find wolf though, the generality *wolf*. Isn't that just a concept that we develop? How do we develop it? It's said that the means by which we develop it is an indirect one, in which we see a wolf and by that we know everything that's not a wolf. This is not a wolf (holding flower). Once we've seen a wolf, we know this is not a wolf (the flower), right. We know this is not a wolf (the cup). Theoretically we know a dog is not a wolf but obviously that doesn't necessarily work because I thought that Zuni was a dog - he is actually a wolf.

So we then know all things that are *non-wolf*. Then the *opposite of non-wolf* is the way we get at the generality *wolf*. One way of saying it is: wolf is the opposite of non-wolf, or the reverse of non-wolf. We talk about this in Tibetan Buddhism when we study a previous course (of Collected Topics) in the monasteries, there is this topic called *dogpa*, translated as *reverse* or *isolate* (the opposite of not being it).

**Tea break**

A Student: asked during the break what the meaning is of this word that occurs a lot of in the debates (that sometimes we're skipping over), *pervasion*.

This is a logical term - the Tibetan word is *kyab pa*. In debate it's one of the few possible answers. Debate is quite formalised: someone proposes an argument - they propose a consequence or a syllogism to you - and there are only a certain number of answers you can give. One of the answers is *there is no pervasion*. Like for instance, I might say, "Zuni is a wolf because he's a male". Is that true? Well Zuni is a male and Zuni is a wolf but there is no pervasion that if you are a male, you are a wolf, right? Chris is a male but he is not a wolf; I'm male and I'm not a wolf.

It is like a 'set' theory; if something is pervaded by something, it means that every instance of that can be found in the greater set. Do you know what I mean by a set? Where two sets overlap, there is something in common.

In logic (this is something that we will cover more as we are going along), we have a logical statement or a syllogism, like for instance "the subject, sound, is impermanent". The statement "is impermanent" is the *predicate*. There is a *subject*, a *predicate*, a *sign* and usually an *example*. Here the *subject* is "sound", the *predicate* is "is impermanent", and the *sign* is "because it is a product". An *example* is "like a pot" - a pot is also impermanent because it is a product. An example has to be something by which you can understand the relationship between the sign and the predicate more easily than you do with the subject. In this case, it is more difficult to understand that sound is impermanent than it is to understand that a pot is impermanent.

So let's take another example of a syllogism (a logical argument): take as the *subject* "on a smoky pass", as the *predicate* "fire exists", and as the *sign* "because smoke exists". Note that I didn't say "smoke existing on a pass", I said "on a smoky pass", to be sure that verbally it is legitimate. "On a smoky pass, fire exists, because smoke exists". Example: "like in a smoky kitchen".

Student: But wouldn't that only be realized through inference usually?

Yes, it's only by inference; it can give rise to an inference in your mind, an inferential cognition that knows a fact. We often use inferences in our own life to prove to ourselves that something is true. But to do so we need a correct inference. A correct inference needs to have what they call *the three modes*; there has to be what is called the *property of the subject* - of the subject of the syllogism - here: "on a smoky pass"; there has to be the *sign*, here: "smoke exists" ... Is that true?

Student: Yes

That's true - OK. Or sound is impermanent because it is a product. Then the property of the subject is that sound is a product. Does it have the property of the subject? Is it true? Yes, it does have the property of the subject because sound is indeed a product.

Then in addition to that, you have to have two pervasions; the *forward pervasion* and the *reverse pervasion*. The forward pervasion in the syllogism is that if it's the sign it is necessarily the predicate or in other words, the sign pervades the predicate.

In this case it would be; "smoke exists where fire exists" - where there is smoke there has to be fire. In fact that is what we often say: if there is smoke there has to be a fire. Wasn't that what your dad told you as a kid when you came in and there was chocolate all over your face and the brownies were gone...?

Why can't we say "where there's fire, there's smoke"? Because it doesn't work that way, there's not a pervasion, since you can have fires without smoke; but when there is smoke, *actual* smoke, - not something similar to smoke, like the dust from the horse's hooves of Tonto and the lone ranger passing by - it has to come from fire.

Then there has to be the reverse pervasion. The reverse pervasion is the opposite of the predicate pervading the opposite of the sign. That is to say, where no fire exists, no smoke exists - that is reverse pervasion.

Actually in general, if a syllogism, a logical argument, has the forward pervasion it will also have the reverse pervasion, so in theory you don't have to prove both. But it is said that you need all three modes.

So that's where *pervasion* or *there is no pervasion* comes from; if someone said something to you like: "Zuni is a wolf because he is a male" your answer would be *kyab pa ma yod* "there is no pervasion". That would be one of the possible answers that you could use in debate.

Another thing you could say is *tag ma drub*. Tag means sign, remember, from among these three elements, the *subject*, the *predicate* and the *sign*. Tag ma drub means *the sign is not established*. That means that the *property of the subject* is not established.

If "Zuni is a wolf because he is a male" didn't work for you, you said *no pervasion*, then I say "No, Zuni is a wolf because she is a girl". And you say "excuse me, *the sign is not established*, Zuni is not a girl.

Like this there are different answers you use in different cases. This is just giving a very simple example, using Zuni, who thereby has become very famous tonight.

Students: Other than emptiness, what is not a product?

There are numberless examples. What is not a product would be a permanent phenomenon, and there are numberless permanent phenomena. Generalities are permanent, space is permanent, cessation is permanent – like when we talk about true cessations. In the Abhidharmakosha a famous verse in the first chapter says: "space and the two cessations are permanent". It doesn't talk about selflessness or emptiness but one is led to the conclusion that selflessness in the Hinayana as well is a permanent phenomenon. But they mention space, which is the absence of obstructing contact, remember, we talked about this last time.

The two cessations here refers to analytical cessations. True cessation is like when on the path of seeing and onward, when arhats and arya beings have ceased the afflictions so that they will never come back in their mind streams again. Those 'ceasings' are called true cessations. They are ceased from the root, so that they will never come back again.

Non-analytical cessations are not exactly the same, they are - you might say - temporary sensations. Analytical cessations are real cessations. Non-analytical cessations are like - I don't think this is a good example but maybe something like this: when there is attachment in the mind, anger is ceased. It doesn't mean that anger is ceased forever from the root but because you have some state temporarily there, it can't manifest at that moment.

So there are lots of things that are permanent. In fact there have to be more permanent things than there are impermanent things. Because every impermanent thing has its emptiness and that emptiness has its emptiness; like that you already have two permanents for each impermanent - and that has its emptiness and so on. So you have to have numberless permanent things for every impermanent thing. Maybe you could find some flaw with that - I don't know.

Student: So cessation isn't produced

A cessation is not produced because if something is produced it is a product and therefore it comes about because of causes and conditions.

In the four noble truths, there's the truth of suffering, the truth of the origin of suffering, the truth of cessation and the truth of the path. The truth of cessation means true cessations - analytical cessations. Those are permanent phenomena. It refers to once something has been ceased from the mind, it doesn't oscillate - you know half there, half not. It's gone, it's ceased, but that cessation itself is a permanent phenomenon and it doesn't have a cause, but it does arise because of conditions, such as true paths. So you could say that true paths are causes of true cessations but only in a general way, not in a specific way. They are not real causes of true cessations because true cessations are permanent and anything that is permanent doesn't have a cause. Things that are permanent still are dependent arisings though.

Has that thrown you in for a loop, because sometimes we think that dependent arisings are necessarily impermanent? Dependent arisings are not necessarily impermanent, right?

There are different meanings of dependent arising. Dependent arising in a more extensive sense doesn't mean just arising in dependence on causes and conditions. That kind of dependent arising is a product, but in more subtle sense, all phenomena are dependent arisings. Even permanent phenomena are dependent arisings because they arise in dependence upon a consciousness, a basis of designation and a name or concept designated to that.

Student: A cessation is a dependent arising?

A cessation is a dependent arising, because its only existence is one which is nominal. The only conventional existence is one that is nominal, imputed by a consciousness, thinking about something - thinking about a basis and imputing a name to that. So even emptiness is a dependent arising. When you talk about Nagarjuna's final intention, it's always that emptiness and dependent arising are co-dependent, are affirming one another you could say, they are interdependent, they do not contradict but actually affirm one another, like we chant in the Lama Chopa puja that we do every month. To understand that, that there is no contradiction between emptiness and dependent arising is one of the hallmarks of the correct understanding emptiness - it is said there. Anyway - that's getting us a little bit off the field. We'll talk more about syllogisms as time goes on and when we talk about these debates.

So just let's go a little bit further in the text (p. 12). *Self, I, person and being are synonymous*. The Tibetan word for self is dag; the Tibetan word for I is nga, like in *nga dro gyi yin* - I am going. *Person* is gang sag. *Person* doesn't mean just a human being, even a cow or a cockroach is a person, a being, just as a bardo-being is a person.

All of these are synonymous. The Sanskrit for *self* is *atman*. You've probably heard of that; sometimes it's translated as self or soul.

So an illustration is a being who possesses a basis of one the three realms. A basis here means a body or a body and mind of any of the three realms. What are the three realms? What are they? America.....?

Student: Desire realm, form realm, and formless realm

Desire realm, form realm, formless realm - ok. Will talk more about that later.

So now we get to the main nitty-gritty here.

*The definition of awareness is a knower.* A knower, or cognition, rig as in *lorig*. So the definition of an awareness, any kind of awareness (*blo*) we have, is something which is a knower - it knows.

*The definition of a consciousness (shes pa) is "that which is clear and knowing".* Does anyone know this definition in Tibetan? *Sel shing rigpa*. *Selwa* means clear or clarity (like my gurus reincarnation's name - Lama Osel. *O* means light and *sel* means clear - clear light).

*Shing* means "and" and *rigpa* means knowing. So the definition of consciousness is that which is clear and knowing. That distinguishes consciousness perfectly - that which is clear and knowing. It doesn't mean clear like a clear day or something like that; it has a very particular meaning, like when we're looking at the nature of the mind.

The *clarity* of the mind has several different levels of subtlety.

On one level it means its *un-obstructive nature*, it does not prevent thoughts from coming into it, its nature is completely non-obstructive; nor is it obstructed by thoughts in it. So if you say "I can't change my mind, I've got anger in my mind", that anger or that thought doesn't obstruct your mind, the fact that a conscious thought, or anger, is present. That itself is not obstructing; consciousness itself is not obstructive to anything, as opposed to material matter.

Let's go on an aside for a second to one of the subjects that would have been studied if we had studied *Collected Topics* (the *Dura* texts). There are three categories of impermanent phenomena; 1. that which is *material* or *matter* or *form* - form is impermanent, and all of its manifestations, colours, shapes, wind, sun atoms; 2. that which is *consciousness* - completely different, there is no overlap between consciousness and form, our consciousness is not our brain which is comprised of atoms and molecules.

What's the third kind of impermanent phenomena? Can you think of something else that's impermanent which is neither form nor consciousness?

Compositional factors. Actually, in this case it would be a particular subset of that, called *non-associated compositional factors*.

Student: Not associated with the mind?

Not associated with the mind, because some compositional factors are consciousness itself. Like in the five aggregates, the fourth aggregate is called compositional factors, and that includes all the mental factors, which are consciousness. But there's this kind of compositional factor that is not associated with the mind. Can you think of something that is impermanent like that?

Student: Is time one?

There you go! Time is an example. Time is something which is impermanent but is not consciousness and is not material. Also a *person* is impermanent in that way. Like Mark, he is an impermanent phenomenon, so he has to be one of three: he has to be matter, consciousness or a non-associated compositional factor. Is Mark consciousness? Well, Mark is imputed onto a combination of body and mind. So Mark - the impermanent phenomenon that conventionally exists - is not mind itself exactly. He is not matter although he is comprised of matter - one of his aggregates is the form aggregate. But there is a third category which is neither form nor consciousness which is called non-associated compositional factor (and so that must be what Mark is!)

So there are three kinds of impermanent phenomena, and from among them we have here consciousness which is that which is clear and knowing.

The *clarity* can also refer to its *non-material nature*. Consciousness itself does not have a continuum that can be created out of matter, like you'd take a bunch of plutonium atoms or something like that and you put them together and somehow consciousness comes out. Or you make the brain in the laboratory and then consciousness is there because the material somehow causes consciousness.

It's not to say that matter cannot support consciousness. It does have a relationship with consciousness. Our brain does help to support the pathway through which consciousness can travel. Kind of like the L.A. freeways and if there is an earthquake and the L.A. freeway falls down, it's like having a lobotomy, something like an accident; when the brain has been crushed it's not as though the mind has been directly destroyed, but the pathways through which the mind travels are altered in some way. It's the same thing when you take aspirin or drugs and there appears to be some kind of mental change occurring. It doesn't change the mind directly, it changes the pathway for the vehicle, the *prajna* or air upon which the mind moves.

So *clear* in this definition can mean many different things. It can mean non-obstructive, it can mean non-material. You can find more possibilities in Lati Rinpoche's book : it can mean the ability of the mind to take on the aspect of whatever appears to it, the reflective quality, like the clarity of a mirror.

When we do Mahamudra meditation we try to meditate on the nature of the mind, we just try to recognize that nature - the clear nature of the mind, the non-obstructiveness, the non-material, reflective nature.

The second part of the definition is its function: *knowing*. The function of consciousness is *to know*. So it's different from the clarity of these glasses, or the clarity of crystal, though it does have some similarity to those. But the function of consciousness is unlike that of a crystal or glasses, even though these have a certain clarity and they might take on the aspect of something that you place them in contact with - you know, like you can see a colour through the clarity of a crystal. The crystal and lenses of my glasses don't know the object. Consciousness has the function of knowing, of cognizing – it is that which is clear and knowing.

*Awareness, knower, and consciousness are synonymous*. There are three synonyms, two of which come up with the first definition, of awareness. Awareness is the Tibetan word *lo* and the definition of awareness is a *knower* - that's *rigpa*. The second definition is of consciousness, *shes pa*. So these three, *lo*, *rigpa* and *shes pa*; *awareness, knower and consciousness*, are synonymous. That means that they refer to one and the same thing. They are different words, they are conceptually different, but they are referring to the same thing and synonymous.



*Second, when awarenesses are divided, there are two: prime cognizers and non-prime awarenesses.*

There are different ways of dividing awareness. I sometimes mention that it is like having a pie, you can divide the pie in many different ways, right? You can divide it down the middle into slices, or you can cut it up "boy-style" with a spoon, or you can cut it squared and for some people kids get little tiny pieces and mom and dad get the big pieces or the opposite, the kids get the big pieces – just because they cut it that way – and everybody gets a piece... Likewise, you can divide minds up in many different ways. When it says *when awarenesses are divided, there are two*, that is just one particular way of dividing them, while in fact this is one of the topics of the text - all the different ways in which you can divide minds. In one way of dividing minds, there are two kinds; *prime cognizers* and *non-prime cognizers* or you could say non-prime awareness - they are synonymous.

*Prime* in prime cognizer is this word that we talked about the other day; *pramana*. Do any of you remember that word? *Pramana* is an Indian-Sanskrit word that can mean *valid*, but here it is taken as prime, like primary - first. Prime can also mean best can't it? Like prime rib or something like that. Prima!

*Valid cognizer* is another way of translating *pramana*, according to the higher schools. They wouldn't translate *pramana* as prime; they'd take the *pra* as meaning *main*. *Pra-mana* - something which knows its main object. Here, according to these (lower) tenets, *pra* means *new* like *primary*, *first*; something which is fresh and knows something newly. While the basic meaning of a *valid* cognizer is something which has realized its object, or, in other words, which is incontrovertible.

What does that mean, incontrovertible?

Student: Direct perception?

Direct perception – that's not what incontrovertible means. Controvertible would mean what? Something you could overturn, that you could show to be incorrect. It is incontrovertible that all phenomena are selfless. It is incontrovertible, that red is red – yes. It is incontrovertible that nothing is certain except for death and taxes (or something like that...)

A consciousness that is incontrovertible means one that has eliminated all the wrong superimpositions about something and has gotten at something correctly - it has realized it correctly.

That can be a conceptual mind too, it doesn't only have to be a perception. But you could certainly say that a perception can be a valid cognizer. If your eyes are not faulty, you can actually have an incontrovertible perception of this flower.

You could also certainly have a conceptual incontrovertible prime cognizer, through a particular kind of conception that we call inferential cognition. When we were talking about logic before, stating a logical argument that you think about, you meditate on, like sound is impermanent because it is a product, and then you can actually that and have a valid cognition, and a prime cognizer that sound is impermanent. Based on the logical argument, having established to yourself that sound is a product, and that if something is product, it is necessarily impermanent... and so forth.

Student: Could intuition be a part of this mechanism as well?

Maybe we will have to investigate what intuition is. We use the word a lot in the West, and it is as though we know what it is, but what is intuition?



Student: It is a type of knowing

OK, let's say it is a kind of knowing, it is an awareness that we are labelling intuition. What are its qualities? Is intuition always correct? We think it's always correct, as in 'in the end my intuition was right' - but sometimes it's wrong, isn't it? So it's more kind of like a guess, isn't it. Without some logical reasons presented to us, we having a feeling that we may have some idea of what is going to happen or what's happening now in a distant place and there may be some validity to that, certain kinds of understanding can arise due to karma, or because of certain kinds of clairvoyance. So there may be some causes for intuition but perhaps a lot of what people call intuition is just what we will learn later to be belief. It can be correct belief, but it's just a belief. "Hmm...; I have an intuition that it is going to rain today". It might also be based on some evidence. So it's hard to say what intuitions is. It's a word that we use a lot in the West though.

Student: I don't know if intuition is really a guess. I think people use it as a guess, but I think that if we have real intuition, it is correct and it isn't a false knowing. Intuition I think turns correctly.

What if it's wrong?

Student: Well, then it isn't intuition

Well that's the point I was saying before. If it is not right then you will say "oh, it wasn't an intuition". But if it is right, how do you know that it was intuition and it wasn't a guess or belief that turned out to be right. Like: I think the Whitesocks are going to win the first game of the season....

Student: That's not an intuition

I have an intuition - I'm sorry, that's an intuition

Student: No! Not necessarily.

It's something that we can investigate. Because it's not something that has an exact Tibetan equivalent, we will just have to investigate as we go along. What you are bringing up are good points, so we just have to try figure out how that maps to the terminology we are talking about here. It is some state of consciousness, we have some kind of awareness that we call intuition in some cases, but is it the really a prime cognizer? Does it get at its object and know it? it? We have to check.

So let me just mention a little more; on the next page - page 13 - the second line down: *whatever is a knower which gets at its object of analysis is necessarily an incontrovertible knower does exist, because the definition of something's being an incontrovertible consciousness is 'a knower which gets at its object of analysis'.* This is part of an argument; the definition of something being *incontrovertible*, a consciousness being incontrovertible. The argument states that the definition of something being an incontrovertible consciousness is "a knower which gets at its object of analysis". *Gets at* means it finally, having analysed something, the goal of the analysis is achieved and it is figured out correctly. An incontrovertible consciousness is one which has eliminated superimpositions about something, like all the wrong ideas about it. A synonym of something which is incontrovertible is something which has *ascertained* its object. Have you every heard of that term before - to ascertain, to make certain? To ascertain something means a mental operation in which you have realized something and you have become incontrovertible with respect to that. To ascertain something is different from just to think about it.

Student: Eventually, can you an object in a conventional sense?

Well, ultimately there is no realization, so it has to be conventional; for instance, to have realized the value of a perfect human rebirth of leisure and endowments.

What would be a sign of that realization? What would it mean to it? Would it mean that you've read the book and said "Yeah. I've got it, I that"?

What does it mean, to , first of all? It means that one has not just understood the words verbally but one analyzed and eliminated all misconceptions and actually had some kind of experience of that, the truth of that and eliminated misconceptions. One has an incontrovertible consciousness; one has gotten at that object and eliminated all misconceptions. A person who realizes the value the perfect human rebirth would be somebody who would not waste time. They - knowing the value of the rebirth - given the opportunity to have a million dollars, a billion dollars by working for many years for some job, would say; "No excuse me. This perfect human rebirth is worth far more than a billion dollars or a trillion dollars".

To impermanence doesn't simply mean to think; "I'm impermanent, I am going to die". It is something which has used a line of reasoning: "I, George am going to die because....." and then applying various reasons, like the lord of death comes to everyone and there is no way to escape him, is one logical reason you could use, or, at the time of death there is no extra time and time we have left to live is constantly decreasing. Those are logical reason you could use to prove that you are going to die.

When you use a logical reasoning like that, you can it, you can eliminate misconceptions about it and all of the superimpositions that we have, that prevent us from really seeing that clearly.

The same thing with emptiness: you can that all phenomena are empty or you can that the self is selfless; that the conventionally existent self , the conventionally existent person, is empty of a truly existent person.

There are different stages in developing a realization. First of all you might have a wrong view. Later you might have a doubt. Maybe first off all you think the self does exist and that can change into a doubt that maybe the self doesn't exist, maybe it does, I'm not sure. Then that can develop into a belief that the self is selfless, I am selfless, there is no self. But that is just a presumption - a correct belief - maybe like an intuition in some cases. It's only when you reach the point of inference - an inferential cognizer - that you can actually that you are selfless or that things are really impermanent. That's when you can have the first valid cognizer, a valid or prime cognition that is incontrovertible

So next time we are going to talk about that and if you go up to page 14, you will see that a little more than half way down the page it says; "in our own system, the definition of a prime cognizer is ....". That's rang lug - our own system. From here the next three or four, maybe five pages, is all our own tradition. So if you could read that and get familiar with that for the next time, it will help. You can also read the applicable sections of some of the other books, the *"Compendium of Ways of Knowing, Mind and its Function"* and *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* alongside our Purbuchok text.

## Dedication

Let's take a moment to try to dedicate the merits, to put a cap on our experience tonight...

See if you can again try to find what little calm that we found at the beginning..

Even in the chaos of all the thoughts, letting go, seeing through them, rather than focusing on the objective thoughts, focusing instead on the subjective mind; the clear and knowing entity of our mental consciousness....

I think directly, what you can be perceiving as the clarity of the mind, perhaps indirectly you're knowing is it, the cognizing, because while the consciousness itself is knowing that phenomenon you are actually perceiving the clarity of the mind, its non-obstructiveness, its ability to give rise to whatever presents itself, the mind arising in an aspect of that....

This clear light, like the sky at dawn after the summer rains have washed out the dirt, like the monsoon clears the air; totally lucid before the sun has given any colour to the sky, as though you could see forever....

Think, this evening I have created some roots of virtue, by motivating at the beginning and performing the activity of listening in the class with that continuity of motivation, listening to the teachings, thinking about the mind as an object to be investigated for the benefit of others. These roots of virtue will definitely ripen as something pleasurable - relief within cyclic existence. They can't cause suffering but I am going to try and dedicate them in such a way that they will enhance my spiritual development and lead eventually to my enlightenment.

Dedication is the act of aspiring, trying to make a link for these wishes, praying that these particular merits ripen in that way. Due to these merits may I quickly become a buddha, a guru-buddha - because that's the meaning of buddha; all buddhas are teachers, all gurus are manifestations of the buddha potential within us.

Thank you.

## Session 3

### Meditation

So let's begin, as usual, with a meditation.

First of all, as you are beginning to relax, watch your respiration, which is easily found. Remind yourself to let go of other thoughts (otherwise you might just be sitting there without any particular orientation), trying to calm our minds to prepare for class, to overcome our defects, to develop good qualities for the welfare of others....

Withdraw your attention to your heart area, your heart chakra. See if you can remind yourself not to pay attention to any of the five sense consciousnesses. Actually you can pay attention for a second, to remind yourself: it's not the eye consciousness that you want to pay attention to, not the ear consciousness, the nose, taste or tactile consciousness, just the mental consciousness itself - the sixth consciousness.

Remember its defining characteristics; consciousness is that which is *clear and knowing*. See if you can get some experiential taste of that now....

Not focusing on the objective thoughts (the objects of mind) but on the possessor of those thoughts, the object possessor, the subject mind itself....

Letting go of thoughts, automatically they begin to subside, in terms of the intensity of their appearance and also the frequency of occurrence....

Whatever does appear, you can recognize as cloud-like within the spaciousness of your mind. Let go of any attention to it and instead focus on the subjective mind that is experiencing that thought, image, or conversation.....

We might try a succession of moments of just relaxing, letting go of anything that occurs to the mind, recognizing it as an objective thought and again trying to perceive the clarity, the spaciousness of the mind and its clear light nature within which those thoughts are arising....

Try to just focus on consciousness alone. If the object seems to be appearing, again let go of that and be like a veritable daka or dakini, in the space of your mind....

Recognizing this as an attribute of the nature of your mind, what his Holiness the Dalai Lama has referred to as the conventional buddha-nature, the conventional clear light nature of the mind. Within this mind I can let go off all the stains, all of the negative habit energy. I can be content. I can develop this blissful consciousness in anticipation of whatever occurs, even hardship....

All living beings that are still enmeshed in cyclic existence are still, to some degree, under the influence of their afflictions within their mind. The seeds of the afflictions cause these afflictions to arise when certain conditions occur. Anger and pride and other delusions arise, with different justifications, according to a person's status for example, and the outer conditions....

Basically it is all just a play of the mind. All of these appearances that arise to our mind are due to karma, they are not inherently existing phenomena but they appear to us that way....

Just as we would like to be free of all conflicts, arguments, suffering, abuse and criticism, so would all other living beings. And the only way to really get to the root and to be able to do that for them and ourselves, is to control our minds....

Ultimately, for the sake of all these beings who have been intimately related with me over numberless lives, who I don't recognize now, perhaps seeing them only as alluring temptations or irritating enemies, for their sake and in order to lead them to understand the mind, to conquer their delusions, which is something I must do myself - for that reason I am going to listen to the teachings tonight, in order to get closer to that understanding, to the ultimate achievement of enlightenment, so that I can benefit all sentient beings and not cause them any harm and actually lead them out of suffering and into happiness.

So I am going to participate in the class tonight with that aim in mind; the long term aim of discovering the nature of my mind, however long it might take, so that I can achieve buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings....

Relax.

## Teaching

Last time Bonnie left a note asking if I would try to explain how all this could be connected the basic meditations. I mentioned at the very beginning of the class that all of this material is meant to be an introduction to the terminology and the study of the mind. So right at the beginning, there may not be immediately obvious things that we can meditate on, but there are some that we've begun to understand.

One of the main things we've talked about is that the mind is a subject and just to begin to recognize in your own experience (as we did in this meditation just now) the defining characteristic of consciousness; that which is *clear and knowing*.

There is nothing other than mind that fits that definition. A crystal might have a certain kind of clarity but it is not the clarity that we are referring to in the definition of mind. The clarity of the mind that we are trying to experience on one level refers to its non-obstructiveness, and the fact that it is not obstructed itself if there are thoughts there. Like you might think "oh I have anger in my mind and I can't get rid of it. It's stuck". It seems just like a big state.

Actually the nature of the mind is clear light and it's different from the sky in this way; if there are clouds in the sky, although a meditator could perceive and understand that the sky still has the nature of clarity behind those clouds but that doesn't make the clouds go away - the clouds are still there. But if you watch the cloud-like thoughts in your mind, if you give energy to them, they perpetuate, but if you let go of them and you just perceive the subjective state of the mind, those objective thoughts, thought patterns, the discursive energy that continues on, that constant conversation with its judgements subsides. All the various states of mind that we will be talking about can be understood and recognized within consciousness in that way.

We talked a little bit last time about the meaning of *realization*. We have different words used for this in various texts, we are not in the golden age of Buddhism in America yet, where there is a standard vocabulary that everyone is agreed upon; I find the word realization a good meaning, what it conjures up to my mind is the correct meaning.

A consciousness which is realizing something is one which is *incontrovertible*. Do you remember this word? Which page was it on, do you remember? It is on page 13, the second to the fourth line down. *An incontrovertible consciousness is a knower which gets at its object of analysis*. So this word incontrovertible you might say, is like non-deceived - a consciousness which is not deceived about its object.

Although our sense consciousnesses are not usually deceived about their objects, they sometimes are. Something which is not deceived about the object and also is able to induce a remembering consciousness of it later, that kind of consciousness is a *realizing* consciousness - something which has realized its object.

A lot of what we experience with our senses, we do most of those things. We hear a sound and if we are able to eliminate any wrong view about it, and it wasn't ambiguous, and we are able to induce later a memory of having heard that, that is the defining characteristic of having realized that sound. If we have realized it, that consciousness is incontrovertible or not deceived about that sound. Not deceived is another way of translating the word incontrovertible. Is that not a word that you would use more in everyday language, like on the bus? Would you say to the bus driver "Oh this ticket is incontrovertible. Please give me my fare"? Maybe you could say "not deceptive" or in this case "non-deceived". Incontrovertible is a nice technical term but maybe it doesn't taste like much in your mind.

So in our own meditation, maybe you can recognize how sense consciousnesses have many instances of realizing their objects, of being incontrovertible with respect to their objects.

For instance, if I hear a sound and I think that it is a human voice but I do not know if it is a man or woman, or I might think it's Dorje but it turns out to be someone else, then although I've realized *something*, it isn't a realizing consciousness with respect to it being Dorje's voice. In general, if I see a rose and I know that it is a rose, and I know afterwards that it wasn't a carnation, that it was a red rose, not a yellow one, and then if someone tries to tell me that it was a yellow flower I can say "no, I saw a red rose", that would be an example of a realizing eye consciousness.

Many of our sense consciousnesses are realizing consciousnesses, they are incontrovertible. But what about the mental consciousness, what do you think of what we know with our mental consciousness, if you think of what we've said so far and perhaps try to observe in your mind? Do we know a lot of things by direct perception with our mental consciousness, or do we know most things via mental images, through the agency of conception? It's the latter, right?

So these are things that you can try to investigate. Perhaps a good teacher would provide all to these to you but there is a very famous physicist that I don't know if you've heard of - Richard Feynman? I think Feynman won a Nobel Prize once - didn't he? He was a buddy of Murray Gell-Mann. He is one of the great physicists of the later half of the 20th Century, he worked on the Manhattan project and died some years ago; he was quite a brilliant guy, he wrote a book that was used at Caltech as their freshman physics text. There was one quotation at the beginning that I was trying to remember before class, I don't have the text so I can't find it exactly but it was something like "teaching is almost useless except in those rare cases where it is almost superfluous". I was teaching in a boy's school in Connecticut which you could call very prestigious or you could call it a snotty boys school - anyway, we were in the master's room, the headmaster was a very eminent gentleman and they were all drinking brandy, and I mentioned this. I

remember the eyes of the other teachers going something like "Ah... you cannot say this! Teachers are absolutely important".

The Tibetan tradition says that when you study only a quarter of your understanding comes from the teacher, another quarter comes from your own study, and fifty percent would come from discussion and debate with others. That's something that we are not yet appreciative of and we don't necessarily find the time to discuss with others.

Student: Would a fraction come from experience?

Well, that comes about in your analysis, your reading and study and so forth, all of that is experience, isn't it. There is experience arisen from hearing – like from what the teacher said - or reading, and from study and contemplation, and from meditation. All of those are experiences; but it is said that in Tibet many of the great teachers realized emptiness in the debating courtyard, while they were debating with others.

So in terms of how this applies, just watch your own mind in meditation; just ask yourself: how much of what I intellectually believe do I actually ? For example, I believe I am right, usually, others are wrong, I'm lovable, and that there's a real solid reality out there. Maybe intellectually I might say that I have heard that things are empty but I still really believe in these things, much of the content of our mind are not realizations. There are some things that we , like I saw a rose or I tasted tea or something like that but many of the things that we think we know are not really realizations, they are not incontrovertible knowers. We don't get at the actual object and we don't remove superimpositions with respect to it.

There is a purpose for studying this kind of subject, even though at first it may not always appear to be applicable to everyday life. Also, that is not necessarily the main criterion for study, because the great and courageous beings of the past had another goal in mind: "I want to realize emptiness , I want to develop bodhicitta in my own experience, and get rid of my faults". In order to get to that goal, one has to understand what the great beings of the past have done, what the Buddha himself taught, and for that you need a certain vocabulary, a certain background. So some of what we are studying falls under that category. That's one of the reasons I like this subject very much; much of it is very tasty.

When you meditate on the mind, it is that which is clear and knowing that you are trying to perceive. This meditation could be called *Mahamudra* meditation. Have you heard of that, the Great Seal? In the Tibetan schools, especially the Kargyu and Gelugpa, there is a tradition called the *Mahamudra* - the Great Seal; it is connected with tantra.

The initial meditation at our level is to first focus on the conventional nature of the mind and (just as we have being doing) learning to take that as your object of focus, the object of concentration. Learning that without having a clear image of it, you can't concentrate on it. If you want to concentrate on anything, you have to find the object first of all, the mental object. Say for instance if you are visualising a buddha in front, you have to first of all "find the object". That's a terminology that we use when we are talking about concentration – "find the object".

In the case of watching the breathing it is easy to find the object, the breathing, right? In terms of localising it, finding it, since it's constantly there and it's fairly gross, it is easy to find. But the mind, because it is by its very nature very subtle and not something that appears manifestly to you at first, that object requires that you first build up a mental image of it, and then through your own experience of it in mediation, over time, you are then trying to make in accord with reality. That's what we call making it factually concordant, a terminology we will come across again later.



Then you can focus on that with single pointed concentration and in so doing, because one part of mind is watching another part of the mind, over time you can recognize one instant of mind being cognizant of what just transpired in the previous instant of the spaciousness of the mind. In that way, as you just focus on the nature of the mind, you can let go of thoughts much more rapidly. of transient, discursive thoughts.

In this way it may be a little bit connected with what we have been talking about. It is not totally unrelated to practice, but sometimes you have to think about it a bit to see how it applies to yourself.

So on page 14, a little more that half way down the page, it says "in our own system". The term in Tibetan is *rang lug*. *Rang* means *self* or *own* and *lug* means *system* or *tradition*. In our own tradition the definition of a *prime cognizer* or this word *pramana* that we talked about earlier.... Remember, there were three kinds of *pramana*, three kinds of validity. What were they? Did we not talk about them yet? We talked about three kinds of subject right? Consciousnesses, persons and articulate sounds.

Now there are two kinds of *pramana* - *valid persons* and *valid cognizers*. Here the definition of a valid or prime cognizer is a *new incontrovertible knower*.

So the reason that in this text it's translating the Sanskrit word *pramana* as *prime cognizer* is because it is in a sense **new**. It says a "**new** incontrovertible knower". This is as opposed to the higher philosophical schools that say that a *prime cognizer* or a *valid cognizer* is something which realizes its object. Here it does more than that, it is *fresh* or *new*. So according to this philosophical school, by the force of such a consciousness, it can induce a train of other thought instances, just like the engine of a train can pull all the other cars behind it, but it's just the engine that has the motor and is applying the power, the rest are pulled along by it. Right? Likewise, it is said that the first instant of a realization pulls along the subsequent cognition which may also be realizing; if you an object for one instant that can induce subsequent moments of realization called subsequent cognitions, and in many of the lower philosophical schools it is said that only the first instant has this very special quality that the Buddha referred to as being *pramana* or *valid*.

Student: Meaning that all other subsequent ones are not valid?

Well - if you've studied some of the higher philosophical schools, like the highest of the Madhyamaka schools, the Prasangika, you may have heard that terminology before. Like when we talk about the understanding of emptiness, we say that the most subtle correct view of emptiness we would like to be able to develop, the view that is capable of eradicating our ignorance, is the view that is explained from the Prasangika point of view. Now, according to Prasangika the subsequent instances of such a realization are also valid, they are also *pramana*; those subsequent cognitions are valid, just as you intuitively say "why wouldn't they be valid"? The lower schools however take the *pra* in *pramana* to be sort of similar to *pri* as in *primary* in English.

The prefix in Sanskrit could mean not just *main* (as the Prasangikas take it, e.g. a *main* knower or *valid* cognition), it can also be taken to mean a *new* knower. That's why in the definition they say "a *new* incontrovertible knower", because the subsequent instances of a realization are also incontrovertible, they are also a realizing consciousnesses, not deceived with respect to the object.

The upper school, the highest school, would say that that's not the definition of a prime cognizer; its definition would just be *an incontrovertible knower*. In fact I think there's a debate here isn't there, on

page 12, the section at the bottom. It says: *With regard to the first of these that is, prime cognizers, someone might say that the definition of a 'prime cognizer' is 'an incontrovertible knower'.*

Indeed that would be the definition that a Prasangika would state. To this is the lower school saying: *It absurdly follows that the subject, a subsequent cognizer, is a prime cognizer because of being an incontrovertible knower...* Usually in debate when we say "it follows", it means there's a consequence, in this case the consequence that the subject – a subsequent cognizer – would be a prime cognizer (*pramana*) because of being an incontrovertible knower.

And you would agree with that, right? That was the point you were raising, saying, "What's wrong with that?" In fact, the Prasangikas would say that that's right, but the lower school is then saying "oh well, then a subsequent cognizer would be a prime cognizer".

Then: if someone says "the reason is not established" - in Tibetan *tag ma drub*, the reason, or the sign is not established... remember, in a syllogism, you have a *subject* and a *predicate* and a *sign*. Like "on a smoky pass" (*the subject*), "fire exists" (*the predicate*), "because smoke exists" (*the sign*). And one of the factors that has to be present is the property of the subject, that means the subject has to be the sign; in this case, "on a smoky pass, smoke exists" - is that true? Yes that's true. So this syllogism has the property of the subject.

If someone says the sign or the reason is not established, what would that mean in the syllogism from the text? If I say to someone "it follows that the subject - a subsequent cognizer - is a prime cognizer because of being an incontrovertible knower", what would it mean to say the sign is not established? It would mean that one says that a subsequent cognizer is **not** an incontrovertible knower. That's the meaning here if one says that the sign or reason is not established.

So if someone said that the reason is not established, we would say "it follows that a subsequent cognizer **is** an incontrovertible knower" - we prove that the sign is established: "It follows that the subject - a subsequent cognizer - **is** an incontrovertible knower because of being a knower which gets at its object of analysis".

*If someone says that the reason is not established, 'It follows that the subject a subsequent cognizer is an incontrovertible knower because of being a knower which gets at its object of analysis'.*

So what is it trying to say? There are two things. In a debate here the Prasangika says "the definition of a prime cognizer is an incontrovertible knower." Is that wrong according to the tenets of our text? It's wrong - right? According to these tenets it has to be a **new** incontrovertible knower - it has to be fresh. So to that Prasangika we say "it absurdly follows that a subsequent cognizer is a prime cognizer because of being an incontrovertible knower", because in our tenets (the Sautrantika tenets that this text is taught from), a subsequent cognizer is only drawn along by that first instant. It is not a prime cognizer. It's incontrovertible, it knows its object, but it is not called a *pramana* according to these tenets. To be a *pramana* it has to have the quality of being fresh.

Student: What's the difference then between *pramana* and prime cognizer?

You could translate *pramana* either way. You could translate it as prime or as valid; if translated as prime, the flavour is more the way the Sautrantikas take it, it means it has to be *fresh*. And prime can mean *main* also. If you translate it as *valid* cognizer, that's more the meaning the Prasangika take it to have. So here the debate revolves this kind of understanding.

We say to the Prasangika "Oh you silly guy or you silly girl, it absurdly follows that a subsequent cognizer is a prime cognizer because of being an incontrovertible knower" That's what we've said to them and if they then say back to us "the sign is not established", that would be one of the things that could be said to then try to defeat our assertion, then we would say it follows that the subject - a subsequent cognizer - is an incontrovertible knower, because it realizes its object, because of being a knower which gets at its object of analysis.

Another thing that you can say in debate is that there is no pervasion. There's only a couple of things you can say; one is *the sign is not established*, another is *there is no pervasion*.

What would be the pervasion be in this syllogism? The consequence was 'the subject - a subsequent cognizer - is a prime cognizer because of being an incontrovertible knower'. The pervasion then is that whatever is an *incontrovertible knower* has to be a *prime cognizer*.

In fact this might be the correct answer according to a Prasangika, to that for them erroneous response by the Sautrantika who says "that's silly; it absurdly follows that a subsequent cognizer is a prime cognizer because of being an incontrovertible knower". The Prasangika would actually, accept that; they would say 'I accept'; 'it follows the subject – a subsequent cognizer - is a prime cognizer because of being an incontrovertible knower'.

The word *dod* can mean desire or it means "I accept" – "I accept that", "I assert that". For the Prasangika that would be the correct answer. A non-Prasangika might say that the sign is not established, or that there is no pervasion. That would mean that there's no pervasion that if something is an incontrovertible knower, it is a prime cognizer. That would be the position of the Sautrantika in general I think

Just bear with me one more second to complete this; I know some of you are going to be thinking "what was he actually talking about"?

*(p. 12-13) If someone says that there is no pervasion, 'It follows that the pervasion that whatever is a knower which gets at its object of analysis is necessarily an incontrovertible knower does exist, because the definition of something's being an incontrovertible consciousness is a knower which gets at its object of analysis..*

If someone says there is no pervasion to the stated pervasion, that whatever is a knower which gets at its object of analysis is necessarily an incontrovertible knower, we answer: it does exist and there is a pervasion, because that is the definition of something being an incontrovertible consciousness, because the definition of something being an incontrovertible consciousness is a knower which gets at its object of analysis.

Anyway, we are going to skip over many of these debates but, occasionally we will go into some of them so that you get familiar with this terminology.

Back to page 14: *In our own system, the definition of a prime cognizer is: a new incontrovertible knower.* "in our system (the Sautrantika system), the definition of something being *pramana* - a primer cognizer - is a *new incontrovertible knower*. So not only does it get at its object without any mistake but it's also fresh and new - the first instant of a train of consciousness.

*There is a necessity for expressing the three--new., .incontrovertible., and .knower.—as parts of the definition of prime cognizer, because .new. eliminates that subsequent cognizers are prime cognizers,*

*.incontrovertible. eliminates that correctly assuming consciousnesses are prime cognizers, and .knower. eliminates that physical sense powers are prime cognizers.*

There is a necessity here it says, for expressing the three terms in that definition; **new, incontrovertible** and **knower**. So there are different reasons for including the different parts of the definition; usually these are in order to exclude other possibilities; sometimes it is to eliminate misconceptions but generally they cut something off. So here there is a necessity for expressing these three things - **new, incontrovertible** and **knower** - as parts of the definition of a prime cognizer.

The word **new** eliminates that subsequent cognizers are prime cognizers. So generally we would not say this, later, when you study the highest philosophical school, in accordance with what your intuition was indicating – remember, Intuition is not always right is it, we had a discussion about this the other day, when someone was saying that intuition is wisdom...or can be accurate, and then the question is whether that means it is wisdom, or incontrovertible...

Student: You see, I don't like studying the lower school because I've studied the higher school and I don't like going back to this school because it makes me start questioning and I thought it was this way and now it is pointing another way .... so this confuses me.

Sometimes confusion is good; because we may think we've understood something but sometimes in debate we find we've not quite understood it. Say I say "mug" has this little handle sticking out. I understand mug this way but then Diane says "No! Mug has a circular edge to it". She's looking at it in a different way and if I say "Don't confuse me, excuse me, I just want it this way", we don't really get the whole picture.

Sometimes in our own analysis, in analytical meditation it would be ideal if we had the flexibility of mind, the courage and creativity to investigate different topics from many different angles. Sometimes this comes about from hearing new teaching from a teacher, giving a new perspective and encouraging us to look at something from another perspective. Sometimes, mostly, it comes through debate and study and it's not necessarily bad that we are temporarily confused because what we thought before of as very firm in our mind becomes clear to be only something shaky, as if we have been sort of putting rocks one on top of the other but it's not very firm yet.

Student: That's why I don't like to study other tenets, because it's not very firm yet.

Right; but knowing that it is not very firm, we can not really build on it. So knowing that it is not really a firm foundation to build higher realizations, we can go back and say "OK. Let me go back and shake this up a little bit and try to make it really firm, so I understand why the Prasangika is right".

The only way you can do that is by starting to understand the fundamental teachings, the way the different schools understood the Buddha's intention. For instance, one of the great schools of Buddhism existing today is the Theravada, right? We would say that that is one of the Hinayana schools of tenets, because from their point of view, the main teachings that the Buddha gave were about the four noble truths, the twelve links of dependent origination, interdependent origination, that there is no self of persons, and by following the three higher trainings, in wisdom, ethics and concentration, they develop vipassana - using ethics as a basis to develop concentration and using concentration as a basis to develop wisdom, vipassana; so that's the main thing to be developed there.

Let's have tea and try to let these thoughts ruminate in your mind

## Tea break

When one tries to understand what's happening while looking at the mind, one might get the impression of something like auto-cognition, self-cognition or what is called a self-knower. The higher schools say there is no such faculty. So how can consciousness know itself? When we are trying to watch what is going on in the mind, we reserve a certain amount of mental energy just to be watching what is happening in the rest of the mind. So you might say that in the same instant, a part of the mind is watching the mind; but actually what it is doing is it is watching the previous instant of mind.

Let's say an eye consciousness arises based on this foil covered piece of chocolate. When that consciousness arises, it is because of the previous instant of this piece of chocolate. Because of the law of cause and effect, I can't see it simultaneously with its present state, I am always seeing what existed the previous instant, because the eye consciousness has to arise based on it as a cause. The effect (the eye consciousness) always has to arise in the next instant, the subsequent instant. So it can't actually be perceiving the chocolate which is coinciding with it. We could say that the eye consciousness at twelve noon is cognizant of the chocolate at 11.59 + some fractions of seconds.

So you could think of one part of the mind watching the mind but actually it's watching a previous instance of mind; later, when the mind becomes very calm, when getting closer to single pointed concentration, you can invest all the energy of the mind in being continually cognizant of the continuity of *clear and knowing* – just focused on that. Right now it's hard for us to get even just a glimpse of that, rather than to see that the continuity. So it's a bit like one part of the mind is watching the mind, or watching a previous instance of mind.

Student: So are we actually practising that so we can get back to that place of direct perception?

We can develop a mental cognizer, a direct perception, of the mind. Right now we don't have that; the instants of mental direct perception that we have are what is called inattentive; we don't pay attention to them and they are very short-lived. We'll talk about mental direct perception in more detail later, for now, just briefly, we could develop the mind to the point of the arya beings; when they realize emptiness, they have what is called in this context, a *yogic direct perception*. This is a kind of mental direct perception. It's called *yogic* because it comes about not just from any ordinary mind but from a *yoga* - a union of shamatha (calm abiding, tranquil abiding) and vipassana. When you have a completely calm mind, shamatha, and the ability to analyse within it without causing any ripples in that mind, that's what we call vipassana – higher insight, penetrative insight.

On the basis of a combination of those two, one can have a mental direct perception, called a *yogic direct perception*, for example of subtle impermanence, or of the gross or subtle selflessness of persons - according to the tenets of our text. According to the upper tenets, you can actually have that kind of direct perception of emptiness, but there are a lot of details to get clear about before we understand that.

Just for the sake of bringing up some terminology that we will get later, just so you get a bit familiar with it, because some of you I know like to read ahead, we could say that there are **seven** ways in which we could divide up the different states of knowing. The way the text is laid out this is not so clear at first. In fact in the text *A Compendium of Ways of Knowing*, the rig of *lorig* is taken to mean **ways** rather than cognition, it's spelt differently in his title. So, these seven ways of knowing give us an idea of the progression in developing a direct realization. Let's talk a little about this here.

If we were to talk about how emptiness, at first we might have a *distorted cognition*, *wrong view*, or just *wrong cognition*. We might think “Come on, what are you talking about? Things *really* exist. What are you taking about - emptiness? How can you say that they exist but that they don’t exist from their own side? There! I’ve put my hand out and it’s existing from its own side”.

Later when we start to understand for example say with respect to the ego, that the ego seems to exist from its own side, but it might not, we might subsequently, after having a *wrong consciousness*, develop what is called a *doubting consciousness*.

Doubt basically is **two pointed**; it is **indecisive wavering**: it might be this way, it might be that way. There are three kinds of doubt; there is doubt that is leaning in the wrong direction, doubt which is equally balanced and doubt which is leaning in the right direction.

At first we think “No no, I’m sorry. Everything is permanent”. Then we hear about the teachings or we experience something and then we think “Maybe they are permanent, maybe they’re not. They probably are permanent” - still leaning in the wrong direction. Then maybe after some time we might be in dilemma and think “Maybe they are permanent like I thought before but maybe they’re not. I don’t know” – so then you are left with equally balanced doubt. If we think about it further, led in a proper way, we could be brought to a doubt leaning in the right direction. Even though we are not convinced we are thinking “Probably not permanent. Probably impermanent. Things are probably impermanent”. So that’s the second of the seven ways of knowing.

From that point, if we were to develop confidence and we turn into believing it, we might develop what one of the texts is translating as *presumption*, but you could also translate it as *correct belief*. That is not just a doubt leaning in the right direction but now a presumption or belief that it is true. “Yes, it seems apparent that things are impermanent. I *know* they’re impermanent”. We say we know but it’s actually only on the basis of a belief at this point. We don’t have conclusive evidence, we haven’t actually verified it for ourselves, its not yet **incontrovertible**, we haven’t developed an incontrovertible knower, a realization yet. *Correct belief*, *presumption*, was there another way it was translated, some of you who have been reading one of the other books?

Student: Is that the same as *assuming consciousness*?

Yes – assumption; correctly assuming consciousness, presumption and correct belief are different ways of translating that same kind of mind; and it probably applies to much of the correct things we believe, such as that the Buddha attained enlightenment and that there is such a thing as karma. Have you really realized karma?

Some of what we think we know is just wrong but some of what we believe and happens to be correct is no more than that: a correct belief, a correctly assuming consciousness. But it is progress and we need it. It’s not wrong, and in progressing from a wrong consciousness to a direct realization we need to go through this stage, the third of the seven ways of knowing.

The next step would be an *inferential cognition*. It is not just a logical statement, it is a consciousness that arises due to a logically correct statement that one is using for oneself. It might be formally put as a logical statement or it might be something that doesn’t even make you think of logic. You might say “well I never studied logic, but I realized emptiness by chopping wood or by carrying my guru’s kaka out” – it happens. There could be different ways, but still, if look deeply into what’s happening with someone who has had a



realization, there was some logic that their guru stated or their own mind or that they absorbed from teaching and they were actually cognizant of, and that provided some insight to eliminate misconceptions about something – to get at it. During meditation courses people have come up to me and said something like “yesterday after I meditated, I realized emptiness”. I can’t say they didn’t, but generally speaking it is probably a presumption on their part. It’s probably not an inference, which would be the first step in actually realizing emptiness.

All of this is dealing with *conception* in the mind – right? It is conceptual understanding. First you’ve misconceived something and you’ve got a wrong mental image of it, like everything is permanent, it is not changing and this is the way it is. Lets say: “America will always be the greatest country and that’s for sure...”. (1) Then later you start to see the stock market is going down and “maybe... but no, we are still the best and we are always going to be the best” - doubt leaning in the wrong direction. (2) Then maybe later you are not so sure. Then later you think that maybe we are changing, maybe America won’t always be the strongest country in the world. Maybe we are the same as some others. You don’t know. Maybe we’re going to change. Then you might actually have a belief in that, not necessarily based on logic but your mental image now is becoming more and more correct. It is factually correct but not based on any proper reason. When you get to what is no longer a doubt, when it has become a presumption or believe or assumption, however you want to translate it, then the mental image is becoming more and more factually correct, but not based on a proper reason. That’s why it’s called “correctly assuming consciousness” or “correct belief”. (3)

The fourth step is developing the mental image on the basis of correct reasoning, eliminating superimpositions and misconceptions about it. (4) Then on the basis of such an inferential cognition we can have a subsequent cognition of it. (5) After the first instant of that realization, of that inference, if we meditate again and again on that and we think about it again and again based on the initial understanding, that’s what we call a subsequent cognition.

Over time, the mental image we have of let’s say emptiness or selflessness or impermanence becomes more and more transparent. Right now we’re knowing things via a mental image, remember, we talked about the way we know things conceptually, how our mental consciousness knows things via a mental image of them. Our mental consciousness doesn’t contact the phenomenon directly; but over time that mental image can become more and more transparent and our mind can have a direct perception of that. (6). Which one is that? Number six – right? So which one is left out here?

Student: *An awareness that is not ascertaining.*

Yes, that’s what we could call *inattentive perception*. Literally it says “a consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained”. For instance, usually our ear or eye consciousness can be of various kinds. It can be what could be called a *direct perceiver*. *Direct perceivers* know their object, they are not deceived with respect to their object. Direct perceivers can be prime cognizers, i.e. they can realize their object newly, or they can be subsequent cognizers, or they can be cognitions to which objects appear but they are not ascertained. There are three ways you can have a proper eye consciousness that is a direct perceiver. Either it is a prime cognizer that realizes the object freshly, or it is a subsequent cognition, realized the object subsequently on the basis of the initial perception, or things appear to your eye consciousness but because your mental consciousness is paying attention to something else (maybe one of the other senses), you don’t pay attention sufficiently to the eye consciousness to ascertain it; even though the eye consciousness is knowing something, the mental consciousness does not pay sufficient attention to induce a remembering consciousness of it later.



It's the classic thing at a hit and run accident; someone tries to remember the licence plate and they say "I saw it but I don't remember it". If under hypnosis they can remember it, would that still have been an inattentive perception? No – if it can be remembered, if it can induce a memory consciousness, it wasn't totally inattentive.

If you are watching a baseball game and are entirely engrossed in it, and you are called because lunch is ready, the chances are that the ear consciousness actually hears the sound of the call, it is a direct perceiver but it's like going in one ear and out the other – right? The sound went in but the mental consciousness paying attention to the baseball game, completely entranced in that, you're oblivious to this other sense. You could call that *inattentive perception* but literally it means *a consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained*. So that is a direct perceiver because there has been no error made by the ear consciousness, it's just a direct perceiver that the mental consciousness didn't pay enough attention to.

You can also have a sense consciousness, for example an eye consciousness, which is *like* a direct perceiver but is mistaken with respect to its appearing object, like when you press your eye and you see two chairs where there is one, or after drinking you see double. That would be an example of a sense consciousness which is not a direct perceiver. So not all eye consciousnesses are direct perceivers. There are only three kinds of direct perceivers; a prime cognition, a subsequent cognition and a consciousness to which something appears but was not ascertained. They are the only kinds of direct perceiver you can have.

Apart from those, you can have a facsimile of a direct perceiver, something that is similar to it. In Tibetan we say *thar nang* – appearing like. Do you know what a *facsimile* is? It's something that looks like something else. In fact that is what *fax* means; when you fax something, it looks like the original. So there are certain facsimiles of direct perceivers.

Some facsimiles are conceptual but here we talk about a facsimile that is non-conceptual. When you are at a very high altitude in the mountains, due to the lack of oxygen or some other factors, the snow mountains which are actually white in colour can appear as blue; the appearance of a blue snow mountain to eye consciousness, that would be a *facsimile of a direct perception* because a white snow mountain is appearing to your eye consciousness as blue. Or your little brother sticks his finger in your eye and you see two moons. Such an eye consciousness, a sense consciousness which is not a direct perceiver, would be mistaken. It is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. Remember when I talked about the various kinds of objects? It's mistaken about what appears and it might also be a *controvertible* (i.e. not *incontrovertible*) knower. So this is just to connect some things; we'll come across this again very soon.

It was necessary in this definition to mention *new* because that eliminates subsequent cognizers from prime cognizers. So according to the Sautrantika tenets it only to the first instance is a prime cognizer, like the engine of a train that pulls the cars.

It's necessary to say *incontrovertible* in the definition, or in other words *not deceived*, because that eliminates *correctly assuming consciousnesses* from being prime cognizers.

The word *knower* is in the definition. We say *new*, and *incontrovertible*, and we also have to say *knower* because that eliminates that physical sense powers are prime cognizers.

There are four philosophical schools; the Vaibhasika, the Sautrantika (the successively slightly more sophisticated among the Hinayana schools), then the Mahayana schools, with the special characteristic of presenting the bodhicitta path and emptiness. The first of the Mahayana is called the Mind-only school or

Cittamatra, also called Yogachara; then the highest of the philosophical schools is in general Madhyamaka – the Middle Way school, which has two parts, the Svatantrika-Madhyamaka and one called the Prasangika-Madhyamaka.

So the lowest of these philosophical schools is the Vaibhasika school. A very famous text in India that Asanga's brother Vasubandhu wrote is called *Abhidharmakosha* which is written overtly from the perspective of the Vaibhasika School. Actually many of the things in it are said tongue in cheek. He wrote the text from the viewpoint of the Sautrantika, criticising the Vaibhasika School. So there's all sort of innuendos in there and every once in a while he will say "they say that....", the implication being that the author himself doesn't believe that. But anyway the Vaibhasika school believes that even the *sense powers* themselves, the faculties, know their objects. So this something we should investigate.

From the perspective of Buddhism, there are three things necessary for consciousness to arise - three conditions. Let's say for an eye consciousness to arise there has to be a *faculty* or *sense power*; the eye sense power is necessary for an eye consciousness to arise.

If you don't have an eye sense power, no matter how clever you are you can't see things, although there are exceptions; a buddha can see even with his finger tips. But ordinary beings need an *eye sense power*. The second condition needed to be present is a *previous moment of eye consciousness (the immediate condition)*. And for an image, the aspect of some outer object to arise, a *referent condition* or *object condition* needs to be present. When those three conditions are present, a *faculty*, a *previous instant of consciousness* and a *referent object*, it is possible for an eye consciousness to arise. If any one of them is missing, we won't have an eye consciousness of something. If the object is missing we can't have an eye consciousness of it, although we can conceive of it. If the consciousness is missing, even if the faculty and the object are there, we won't perceive it. What would be an example of that?

How about asleep, or dead, or in a coma? You could put a rose before the eye and the eye is open and it may be reflected on the retina, and in the sense power, which is actually in this case a subtle matter in the back of the eye - the eye faculty is not the eyeball, it is a subtle matter which is found within the fleshy eye – in the gross part of the eye – what we would call in the West the "rods and cones" that are in the back of the retina. The eye consciousness actually pervades that and acts an interface for the reflection of the object to appear on that.

Student: What happens when you are colour-blind? Does that have to do with the rods and cones?

It might be. From a Buddhist perspective that wouldn't be a direct perception, that would be a facsimile of a direct perception because it wouldn't be appearing the way that it actually is. It still would be a consciousness, it doesn't mean that a facsimile is completely wrong but it doesn't reflect all of the information.

So there are three conditions that are necessary for a sense consciousness to arise: the faculty is what is called the *empowering condition*, it is that which empowers and is necessary for the consciousness to occur.

Like for the ear sense power, the ear faculty, in the ear there's some little conch-like shape and there are some fibres within that that actually sense pressure, perhaps that's the interface that's meant in the case of the *ear faculty*. If that is lacking even if a consciousness is present, but if the ear were damaged and that faculty was not present, one wouldn't be able to hear sounds. Then there has to be an outer sound, the *object condition* and there has to be an immediately preceding moment of consciousness that acts as what

is called the *immediately preceding condition*. If there wasn't an instant of consciousness there before, an instant of consciousness to act as the basis of a first instance of ear consciousness, the ear consciousness couldn't arise either. In a simplistic way you could just say that if the ear consciousness is there because the person is either asleep or dead or in a coma, it's lacking the immediately preceding consciousness.

The nose faculty, where is that? Maybe within the nose there are certain areas that are sensitive to different odours. It is certainly so for the tongue, you can experiment; if you put a piece of sugar in one place you don't taste it and you put it in another place and you taste it. There are different receptors. The faculties are referring to that.

It's said that the body faculty pervades all of the cells of the body except for the finger nails and the hairs. The roots of the hairs still have a sense of touch but you can cut the hair and you don't feel anything. Maybe when you were a kid you were afraid because it was pulled a little bit. I think also if I'm not mistaken the brain itself may lack a sense of touch although I haven't seen this in the Buddhist scriptures. When I think of people being operated on, the brain does lack a tactile sense, there are no nerve endings in the brain. So maybe because they didn't do experiments like that on live people's brain at that time, I don't know, maybe it is mentioned somewhere in the Buddhist scriptures but I've never seen it. Usually they say the body sense power or sense faculty pervades the body except for the nails and the hair. Maybe what it means is the external parts of the body.

So there are three conditions that are necessary and according to the Vaibhasikas even the physical sense powers know their objects. Say for instance, a chocolate image impinges upon the eye faculty, and if the Vaibhasika would say that is a *prime cognizer (pramana)* of that object then here in this definition it says it has to be a *new incontrovertible knower*, so you can say "ah ah; a faculty is not a **knower**". The *immediately preceding condition* is the *knower* that gives rise to next instant that actually knows the chocolate.

Does that make some sense? Are we lost?

Student: There are some stories of people who have a perception of their guru as a buddha. They actually see them, they're not spacing out, they see them visually. They see something different than what we would normally see but their eye faculties are intact – the faculty isn't off. Where does this cross over?

It's not so simple to explain, if indeed I understand it myself. Different yogis and yogini meditators have had perceptions of a buddha in their meditation; often generally this is how they perceive it. Sometimes due to that kind of experience in the mental consciousness and having a correct mental perception - a training of the mind, having realized emptiness and so forth - even when the eyes are open, the mental consciousness seemingly can conceive of and perceive the appearance of a buddha outside. It might be a conception or it might be a mental yogic perception to a yogi or a yogini. A great meditator, even when their eyes are open, their mental consciousness may be perceiving something directly, like the appearance of a buddha sitting on their head or something like that. Or one might perceive one's guru in the aspect of a buddha. But there are a lot of different things involved.

One of the things that we try to do in the practice of guru devotion is to perceive our teacher or guru as a buddha. You might say: "Well excuse me, but you're not a buddha". The point however of that kind of practice is many fold, as often explained by Lama Zopa Rinpoche when talking about guru-devotion, I don't know if you heard some of these teachings? Like: if the buddhas appear in the world to us now, as they must, because they arose out of great compassion, their whole purpose was to be able to lead sentient being, so if they arise in the world today, then because of our impure karma we would not perceive them,

we can't have a direct perception with our eye consciousness of them appearing as buddha. We don't have the karma to have that kind of perception even if they were to appear as a nirmanakaya. Therefore the buddhas sometimes appear as impure forms, so that we can perceive them, not because of any lack on their own part but because in their pure form we are not able to perceive them. One of the practices is to try to supersede that impure appearance to our eyes and our ears and other senses with a constant recollection that this is the vehicle for the Buddha's teachings coming to us. Many analogies and reasons are offered to explain why the guru can be seen as a buddha; being like the lens that focuses the sun.

It doesn't mean that any individual teacher is necessarily a buddha, but there is only advantage in understanding and viewing him or her in that way because even if someone is not a buddha, if they are a qualified teacher, if they have the qualities of let's say a Mahayana guru - they have compassion and their mind is subdued by ethical behaviour and more subdued by concentration, and let's say super-subdued by wisdom - the three higher trainings, they have realizations of emptiness, they have great skill in teaching, they have more knowledge than the disciple, they have enthusiasm to teach and so forth, if they have a good number of these qualities and they are qualified Mahayana gurus, then if we practice in understanding their teachings as the vehicle of the Buddha - even if a buddha were here the teaching would not be different - then we create the karma to receive the blessings of the Buddha in our mind. Even if the Buddha is present but we don't have any faith that it is a buddha, we don't receive any blessings in our mind, it doesn't transform our mind at all. So that kind of practice of guru-devotion has many different levels. At our level it might be just trying to overcome our constant adherence to the impure appearance of the guru and to have a mental understanding, co-existent at that time, when we are listening to them, that this is actually the Buddha's advice coming out to us.

So there are many different things that that can take place. It can be that some of those higher meditators actually have a direct perception. I don't know but in general I think for most of us it would be more on the level of superimposing a mental understanding. But if there is a direct perception, it is going to be more in the mental realm I think. It can be like in the case of Asanga, who meditated for many years, and thought that the dog he encountered after coming out of the cave was just an old dog, and when he then purified his karma sufficiently by trying to take up the maggots from her sore, and he opened his eyes, he saw that it was actually Maitreya Buddha. That's not quite ordinary. Someone in San Francisco going to see the Dalai Lama and seeing him actually with their eyes as Chenrezig, that would be surprising. It would have to be someone with incredibly pure karma.

Let's go a little bit further, otherwise we could talk about all sorts of interesting things continually.

One way of dividing all knowers is into *prime cognizers* and *non-prime cognizers*. First of all *prime cognizers*, there are two kinds and only two - two ways that we can ***freshly, incontrovertibly know*** something.

One is called a *direct prime cognizer* i.e. a *direct perception* which is a *prime cognizer*. The usual way is with our senses, but it can also be a direct prime cognizer with our mental consciousness, like when realizing emptiness directly.

The other way is an *inferential prime cognizer*, an inferential realization. So then we something incontrovertibly with our mental consciousness.

Direct prime cognizer can be sense or mental cognizers but inferential prime cognizers can only be mental. You can't have an inferential cognizer with your eye consciousness or your ear consciousness or your senses.

*When prime cognizers are divided, there are two: direct and inferential prime cognizers. The individual definitions, illustrations, and so forth will be explained later.*

In order to define what a direct prime cognizer is, we have to first understand what the definition of a direct perceiver is. We haven't had the definition yet. So what's the definition of a direct perceiver? We've looked at some illustrations, like a *sense direct perceiver*, remember, we said they were three kinds; *prime*, *subsequent* and *inattentive*. But what is a *direct perceiver*? *The definition of an awareness which is a direct perceiver is: a knower which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken.*

Actually I think Lati Rinpoche says in his book that *free from conceptuality* is almost redundant.

*Non-mistaken* doesn't mean that it's absolutely correct, it means it's not mistaken with regard to its appearing object. When we use the word *non-mistaken*, it's always referring to the appearing object. A conceptual consciousness is always a mistaken consciousness. You might think "I know something conceptually, that I know correctly, so what are you talking about?" A conceptual consciousness is always mistaken because it is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. What is its appearing object? Do you remember? What is the appearing object of conceptual consciousness?

Student: *A meaning generality.*

Yes, a meaning generality or mental image. A conceptual consciousness is said to be mistaken with respect to its appearing object because the mental image appears to be the object itself. Even though you are not actually focusing on the appearing object, you are knowing the object via the appearing object - the mental image, the meaning generality, and it is said that one mistakes that to be the actual object. So all conceptual consciousnesses are said to be mistaken because they are always mistaken with respect to their appearing object, a mental image.

Student: Doesn't it change things if you know that? If you know that it is just an image, doesn't that effect that?

It's still appearing to be the object.

So a knower which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken, that is a direct perceiver.

Let's continue along then, we can talk about what is eliminated by this definition next time. We just have a few more minutes left right?

*When awarenesses which are direct perceivers are divided, there are four: sense, mental, self-knowing, and yogic direct perceivers.*

Now this is very useful, this is very important to know. There are *sense direct perceivers*, *mental direct perceivers*, *self-knowing direct perceivers* and *yogic direct perceivers*.

*Sense direct perceiver* and *mental direct perceivers* are the ones that we have talked about mainly. I've also mentioned a little bit about *yogic direct perceivers*, which are kind of a variety of mental direct perceiver but we didn't talk much about *self-knowing direct perceivers*.

*Self-knowing direct perceivers* according to these tenets do exist. According to the Vaibhasika (the lowest school) and according to the Prasangika (the highest school) there is not such thing as a *self-knowing direct perceiver*, there is no such a thing as a *self-knower*.

In general we can divide consciousnesses into those that know other things and those that know themselves - *self-knowers* and *other-knowers*. Does that terminology make some sense? Usually what we think of as a consciousness is an *other-knower*. Like my eye consciousness knows shape and colour, which is other than its own entity, it knows something other than itself. But it is said that in order to try to explain memory, how we can remember that we saw something, it is hypothesised and perhaps there's some scriptural references that are taken to try to prove there's something called *self-awareness* - in Tibetan we call it rang rig. You can *auto-cognize* or *self-cognize* or *self-know*; that is a faculty of consciousness itself which is aware only of the fact that there is knowing going on.

Let's say an eye consciousness perceives this chocolate - the consciousness that is knowing the chocolate is an *other-knower*, that's the sense direct perceiver.

Student: You're not perceiving the chocolate

I'm glad you are being precise, this is very good, I'm not seeing the chocolate. I'm just seeing shape and colour with the eye. That's right, I can't see chocolate. Ok? Because the object of eye consciousness is shape and colour. So my sense direct perceiver that's perceiving the pink shape of the wrapper of the chocolate is an example of an *other-knower*. Within that consciousness itself, within that eye consciousness there is a faculty, an ability simply to know that the eye consciousness is functioning. It doesn't know the pink colour and the shape, it simply knows that the consciousness is functioning.

So you might think when we do our Mahamudra meditation and are looking at the clarity of the mind that the way that we are knowing at the clarity of the mind is through something like *auto-cognition*. So you have to investigate that.

Let's go through these quickly and we'll go over them again next time. There are these four kinds of direct perceivers and the reason that we are dividing the direct perceivers here is because there were two kinds of prime cognizers; direct prime cognizers and inferential prime cognizers. In order to understand the definition of a direct prime cognizer we have to first understand what a direct perceiver is.

Direct perceivers are of four kinds; sense, mental, self-knowing and yogic. Usually there are two parts presented, the definition and the divisions.

*First, the definition of a sense direct perceiver is:*

*1) that which is produced in dependence on its own uncommon empowering condition, a physical sense power, and 2) is a knower that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken.*

A sense direct perceiver – this indicates the consciousness itself, e.g. an ear consciousness, or a nose, taste, or eye consciousness... The *empowering conditions* means the faculty. It says *uncommon* because it is exclusive to itself; the eye consciousness doesn't arise on the basis of the ear sense power etc. It is *not conceptual*, it doesn't include the mental consciousness, and it is *not mistaken* with regard to its appearing object.

For instance, there can be an eye consciousness which is mistaken with respect to its appearing object; something white could appear as yellow if you had jaundice - supposedly. So that would be a mistaken



consciousness because it is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. So that would not be a sense direct perceiver.

When sense perceivers are divided, you can divide them as these three that we mentioned before; *prime cognizers*, *subsequent cognizers* or *inattentive cognitions* or literally *an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained*. Or we can divide them up into five: *When sense direct perceivers are divided in another way, there are five: sense direct perceivers apprehending forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects*.

We can say that there are sense direct perceivers that apprehend visible forms. When it says form here, you should note that it means visible form because of the word *rupa* in Sanskrit. Do you know the word *rupa*? Sometimes people say ‘what a wonderful *rupa*’, meaning what a wonderful form. *Rupa* or in Tibetan *zug* means form. The exact same word also means visible form; in English there aren’t two different words for this. A tactile object is form but is not visible form. Sense direct perceivers apprehending visible form means it’s an eye consciousness, sound means that it refers to an ear consciousness, odours obviously means nose consciousness, and then there’s taste and tangible objects. A sense direct perceiver perceiving something tangible is a tactile or touch consciousness.

So let’s stop here and let’s just do a very brief dedication and then we’ll continue next time. If you can continue on reading, hopefully some good questions will come up.

## Dedication

See if you can develop, as you relax your mind, a remembering consciousness of what transpired in the meditation at the beginning of the teaching.

Using that as a basis, then to have a feeling of the actual perception of the continuity of your mental consciousness. There may be many thoughts going through or your mind at first, or the mind wandering to your senses. A sense of wavering - but then recalling that all those objects are transient, almost sensing them as transparent, try to sense the clear light nature of the mind that is always present, that allows for those various objective states to exist.

Let go of the body, and of the sense of ego. Think, whatever merit I have created this evening, may it ripen in my courage, my wisdom, my compassion to overcome my own faults, to develop good qualities, to have the aim of working for the welfare of all sentient beings.

Due to these merits may I quickly achieve the state of omniscience, where I have eliminated the obstructions to liberation, ego grasping, the obstructions to omniscience; the various gross kinds of obstacles like the self-cherishing thought and the subtle ones that prevent me from seeing the two levels of truth simultaneously, and all phenomena of the past, present and future.

Due to these merits may I quickly become a compassionate guru-buddha for the welfare of all sentient beings.

Thank you very much.



## Session 4

### Meditation

So let's begin with a little bit of motivational meditation. It's nice for me also.

Let your body relax. I can hear some people still relaxing – OK

Let your mind relax and from the very beginning, as our purpose in doing this is to try to set a special motivation, even from the beginning think that I am doing this to overcome my adherence to the vision of this lifetime, only thinking about this lifetime; I'm doing this to practice the spiritual path for the welfare of others, to attain enlightenment.

Start with something very easy to find, the breathing, as we often do, but just watch it as though you are doing it for the first time.

Successively letting go of all of the thoughts, your attention to the senses and just watching that one thing, paying attention to one thing; the movement of the air, the respiration.

With a factor of discriminating wisdom that is recognizing when you are breathing out and when you are breathing in, the end points.

And when the mind is somewhat relaxed bring your attention further inside, withdrawing your attention away from the senses to the heart area and just watch your mind, the nature of the mind if you can. We have begun to do that, and because of familiarity we will more quickly recognize the continuity of clarity and clear light.

All thoughts that come to your mind, all emotional states, they are just transitory. From their very presence we infer the clarity of the mind, its clear light nature, the fact that the mind does not obstruct the arising of new thoughts nor does it embed thoughts within it so that they can't escape or change.

Try to go deeper and see if you can sense the continual flow of subliminal thoughts, as fish swimming below the surface, and even let go of those.

If your mind is somewhat calm, refocus on the sense of the body. Notice its seeming presence and again let go of that, recognizing it as just an appearance to your mental consciousness.

And the sense of an "I", an observer, not the body but somehow seemingly connected with mind, a controller, an experiencer, a taster; that too is just an appearance to our mental consciousness. Let go of that.

Just dive into the spaciousness of your mind. Let there be just mind.

Then thinking how fortunate we are in this lifetime to have found a life that has the leisure from un-free states and the opportunities, having met the Dharma and so forth, to actually practice Dharma authentically – how lucky we are. We can create the causes for happiness for numberless lifetimes of our own continuum and begin on the path, if we haven't yet, to full enlightenment where we can be resource

for all living beings. Stopping to identify some much with our own body and mind and identifying with the welfare of all living beings.

But this life has a duration that has come about because of causes and conditions, which are difficult to create and even though it is very valuable, it has a finite duration, a very brief one, we are heading toward the termination of it with every instant. This life that seems so comfortable, and with plenty of spare time, will end quickly and it is uncertain, if you look at our behaviour in this life – even in our most ardent moments of practice – that we actually practice in such a way as to create the causes for another human rebirth in the next life. And there are causes we have created that are not yet purified that can throw us into the lower realms.

The Buddha taught that among wisdom *fear* is one of the causes that propels one on the path, to take direction, to seek refuge in the teachings of the Buddha, with faith in him, as an individual who achieved enlightenment, and his followers the arya beings, the Sangha who put into to practice and verified that the teachings are true.

By taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and taking their main advice, to observe the abstention from negative karma and to try to create virtuous karma, that at least can give us some sense of security for the next lifetime, even if it is uncertain what we will do there – whether we will use that virtuous karma up, or create more virtue or non-virtue.

No matter where we are born in cyclic existence, whether we are rich and famous, beautiful, having lots of friends and things that we would seek in this lifetime, security and love, pleasures of the senses, even if we had those, they wouldn't bring us real happiness. They are understood by the arya beings as being fraught with uncertainty, being impermanent, transitory and even their experience is not real happiness. It's what the Buddha called *changeable suffering*. Relinquishing one's suffering by experiencing something but the very experience itself is only a relief not real happiness.

So the individual of intermediate scope takes that understanding as a basis to observe the higher training of ethics, that's based on sense of renunciation, wanting to escape from cyclic existence, seeing it as like chaff and uninteresting and on the basis of that developing concentration, because ethics dispels the distracted mind and also aids to develop mindfulness, the prime elements that are necessary for concentration. It builds up a store of merit, and then concentration is used for the higher training of wisdom with the aim to escape from cyclic existence. It begins to investigate the sense of the "I". It sees how all of our afflictions arise based on that certainty that the "I" exists - this ignorant mind of ego grasping; recognizing first through inference then later through direct perception its non-existence, its emptiness.

Some individuals strive for nirvana but even there we are fortunate to have somehow, somewhere in the past and in this lifetime met holy beings and have been fortunate to leave an imprint in our mind to have a greater aspiration, seeing that leaving all other living beings behind, even we were to attain nirvana, would be somehow selfish.

There's a greater goal that can be attained; the Buddha taught the state of full enlightenment – buddhahood. By overcoming not just our self-grasping but our egoistic cherishing of ourselves and ignoring of others. Seeing our own plight as exactly the same as others; others who might be angry with us, perturbed with us, and others who are maybe angry at our country or see human beings as sources of food or whatever; all of these beings are exactly the same as us, in wanting to be happy, wanting to be free of suffering, and in being controlled by karma and afflictions. They've all been kind to us both in this life and

in the past over numberless lifetimes, even when they have been enemies, they have been kind; they've given us the chance to experience the fruits of our negative karma in the human realm, in very minor ways; they are kind because they give us the opportunity to practice patience, to practice generosity, to practice love and compassion and bring about our own happiness.

So to better understand this path that we are aspiring to thread, to achieve enlightenment for the welfare of others, to develop the factors of skilful means of bodhicitta and the wisdom of emptiness, I am going to participate in the class tonight, listening carefully and contributing; for that purpose, of achieving enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings; this being one of the subsidiary steps- collecting merit. Merit is very powerful with that intention.

So think I am going to listen to the teachings and participate in order to achieve the omniscient state, in order to benefit all sentient beings.

And then relax and bring your attention back.

## Teaching

If we think we want to bring benefit to all sentient beings - can we benefit the Buddha? We make a motivation at the beginning that we want to bring benefit to all sentient beings. We motivate before we do any action with something similar to bodhicitta motivation - "I'm going to do this action in order to achieve enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings". So can we bring welfare to the Buddha? Is the Buddha a sentient being?

Well, someone who is already a buddha experiences everything as blissful, so it is not as though we can add some new bliss. You know like I was kind of feeling down a bit and somebody brought me a little pastry. As a sentient being there was some bliss or some relief that I didn't have before. But if you bring something to the Buddha, it's not as though the Buddha has some pleasure that he didn't have before.

Usually it's said in the scriptures that the word *sattva* is translated as sentient being. Sometimes *sattva* means courageous being like *bodhisattva* or *Vajrasattva*, and sometimes *sattva* just means something that has mind - what the Tibetans translate as *sem chen*; *sem* is this word that we learned before meaning *mind* and *chen* means *having*. As such, sentient being is limited to non-buddhas. So if someone is a sentient being they are not a buddha.

Student: Does it have to do with realms? I was reading that today and I wasn't clear; form, formless and desire realm. Does the Buddha exist in the formless realm?

Buddha doesn't exist in any of those realms. Those realms are kind of the habitat of our mind-streams which experience those different realms because of our afflicted karma. The buddhas have transcended all of these.

Student: What does it mean, the form realm? Because it said something about the form realm having something to do with having reached the forth state of meditation. The formless realm was beyond that. What does that mean?

When you develop single-pointed concentration, say for instance in the Theravada tradition, where an individual who is practicing the middle scope of the lam-rim - practising (as was mentioned in the motivation before) the higher training of ethics and on the basis of that practising the higher training of concentration and then on the basis of that practising the higher training of wisdom, those are called the three higher trainings, that's the methodology that an individual who is following the middling scope uses to achieve nirvana. The bodhisattvas practices the six perfections (which can be expanded into ten perfections) that can bring about the all of the factors necessary for the accumulation of merit and wisdom that are needed to achieve enlightenment. So when you are working on concentration, there are different kinds of meditative states that you can develop. When you develop what is called *shamatha* or what we call in Tibetan *shine* - single pointed concentration. If you achieve tranquil abiding, calm abiding, your mind-stream is in a sense separated from the delusions of the desire realm. In a sense they are suppressed because of your concentrative state. Now the first concentration of the form realm (which is like a preparation to that achievement of tranquil abiding), you develop *worldly vipassana* and not the kind vipassana where you analyse emptiness – these are the two kinds of vipassana. Then we also talk about the union of tranquil abiding and penetrative insight. *Worldly vipassana* looks at the level where one's state of mind is and sees it as faulty compared to the higher state, and through concentration and analysis is able to suppress the attachment to and the delusions of the lower level, this is called separation from attachment, and achieves a state of mind in which one hasn't ceased those delusions, like on the arya path where you have true cessation, but you have a suppression of them due to concentration.

So the first level of concentration that one encounters is called the first concentration or the Brahma realm, then the second concentration, then the third concentration and the forth concentration. These are four realms of subtly where the mind has more and more special abilities. In fact by doing this one creates the karma to be born after this lifetime without this gross body, in another kind body called a *form realm body* and the mind has also that same kind of quality that was achieved in a meditative state, in the concentration, of the previous life.

Do you remember about the four kinds of arya beings? *Non-returners* or *once-returners* won't return to the desire realm before they achieve their nirvana. Some of them achieve it in the form realms. And beyond that there is a state where one can meditate even more profoundly - this is all what is called *mundane vipassana*. One can meditate on the faults of the form realm and achieve what the Buddha called the formless realm. If you were doing that as a human, your body is still here but you create the karma to be born in a future life without a gross form aggregate at all, just the consciousness. According to tantra there would still be some subtle form - but that's called the formless realm. Those two states (the form and formless realms) can be attained mentally in concentration while a human, maybe some gods as well can do perhaps, I don't know.

Then by so doing you create the karma to actually be born in those realms afterwards. But that isn't necessarily a great place to be, without having bodhicitta, without having higher wisdom. Just to be born in those states is like being intoxicated for eons and all one's good karma is used up. Like when we talk about the eight unfree states, one of them is to be born as a long life god, which is in one of those kinds of realms.

So anyway, I just wanted to throw some sand in the gears - about sentient beings.

Student: I've heard that the buddhas create no more karma because they are not sentient beings anymore. Others said to me that is not true, of course they create karma, even in their dreams. So it confused me.

I don't know if buddhas dream. I'm not sure what you heard. I've talked with some lamas about this and there's some debate about what kind of karma a buddha creates. If the buddhas create karma, they create uncontaminated karma. But you have to check, there is some debate about this.

Anyway let's get back to the material in class.

Student: In Lati Rinpoche's book it says that a *meaning generality* is permanent. I don't understand why it doesn't disintegrate...

According to Dharmakirti (the famous logician) and I guess Dignaga and it's the Gelukpa position too, a *meaning generality*, a *mental image*, is not something that you see but something via which you know things intellectually and conceptually. The way in which one develops that mental image makes it (by its very nature) a generality, and generalities have no real tangible existence. You can point to instances of a horse but you can't point to the generality of horse. Where is the generality 'horse' that you have in your mind? You can say that you see them every day but those are instances.

But you don't have to accept this. The great Buddhist scholar Jeffrey Hopkins said that he had heard some geshe argue in the debate courtyard that the mental image that you see is actually changing and the other scholars heads would crack in amazement because they were so stuck on accepting that it is permanent.

From the tenets that we are studying here the exam answer is that if it is a *meaning generality* it is permanent because generalities are you might say metaphysical entities. That's the meaning of generality. A generality is something that pervades its many instances, and particularities are instances that are subsumed by some generality.

These sweet peas are flowers, right? Someone might say that 'flower' is a generality, and in response I can show this single flower, and say: so this here is the generality flower? No, this a particular flower isn't it. This is not the generality of flower. So it in that sense we say that the mental image of flower, the meaning generality of flower has come about through a process of eliminating what is not flower. It is the opposite of a non-flower; and due to that process it's said that a mental image is therefore by its nature permanent.

It might be if you have a mental image of a cow walking, or your mother cooking eggs or tofu (if you're a vegan), then you might say well, that mental image is moving, how can one say that it is permanent. But still, maybe your mental image of your mother is one thing, and your mental image of cooking is one thing, and may be there is in fact a mental image which doesn't disintegrate moment by moment.

Was the original thing that you asked how come it comes into existence and then sometime is not there, how could it be permanent then? We dealt with that before, remember? There are some things that are permanent but that are not eternal, that are temporary, that come existence and while they are in existence they are permanent.

Like the emptiness of this cup; it is permanent, it doesn't change moment by moment, but it did have a beginning, that was when the cup was made. The emptiness of the cup is not some metaphysical thing that exists independent of the cup, as though it is always there. It's the ultimate nature of the cup, its being devoid of existing the way it appears to an afflicted consciousness - that's what the cup's emptiness is. So that reality of it only comes into existence when the cup comes into existence and while the cup exists that emptiness exists, and it is permanent. It doesn't change moment by moment - that's the meaning of permanent. But then when the cup is broken, it falls on the floor and disintegrates, its emptiness is no longer a phenomenon we can talk about as existing at that time. You could talk about the emptiness of the

cup of the past but if the cup doesn't exist any more you can't talk about the emptiness of the cup now. So that emptiness goes out of existence, but it was still permanent during that time of the cup's existence..

Student: Is the existence of the cup is also permanent then?

You have to check, because if you just talk about existence then it is a generality again. You might say, well that sounds funny, that is existing but it's impermanent.

It's a little more complicated even according to the different tenets. I'm not an artist but I'm told that if you draw a picture the most important thing is to get a general outline first of all. An artist would draw the outline and then they would put in the details. So don't worry, even though these details might seem all-compelling and sometimes the mind can get bogged down: "I've got to figure that out or else all of this doesn't make sense" - they are important but they are the details. It's kind of like the freckle on the face or something. Investigate them as much as you can, go back and look at the broader picture and later, as you understand more later, then you can begin to read and study more. Even though I have studied this many times, I'm still reading and studying this to see what the great logicians of the past have said and see according to other tenets what their viewpoint is - because it doesn't mean that's the ultimate position of the highest philosophical school, this is taught according to the Sautrantika school.

OK let's go a little bit further in the material of the text. Where did we get last time? Did we get up to page 15? First of all there was the definition of a *prime cognizer* or *pramana* - the Tibetans say *tse ma* - a prime cognizer is a *new incontrovertible knower*.

On the basis of that we began to discuss what the definitions are of a *direct valid or prime cognizer* and an *inferential prime cognizer*, the two divisions of prime cognizer. There are only two ways that we can know things incontrovertibly: either with direct perception or with inferential cognition. That's why we start with the definition of an awareness which is a direct perceiver, in order to prepare us for the definition of a direct valid, or prime, perceiver.

So an awareness which is a direct perceiver is a *knower that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken*. Do you remember that from last time? What do you think? (page 14, end)

Actually this definition is a partly redundant, there are some words in here that are not needed. Do you know what they are? A direct perceiver has to be a *knower* first of all which is *free from conceptuality* and *non-mistaken*. Do we need both of those latter terms?

You don't need the words *free from conceptuality*. It is added to eliminate some misconceptions of the Vaishesikas that there is conception in sense perception. If you just say a knower that is not mistaken, how does that exclude conceptual thought?

Student: Conceptual mind mistakes the mental object for the real thing.

Yes. The way it is being used here in all these tenets is that conceptual thoughts are mistaken about their appearing object.

Now there also are sense consciousnesses that are mistaken. Like you can see two moons or you can see a snow mountain as blue or something like that. They would also not be direct perceivers because they are mistaken consciousnesses; they are mistaken with respect to their appearing object. What appears to them is not actually what exists. But also all conceptual minds are mistaken with respect to their appearing

object, because their appearing object is a mental image, a meaning generality and they know the object by means of, or via a mental image. So they mistake the mental image for the object. Therefore they are said to be mistaken. So if you just said a knower which is non-mistaken, that would definitely exclude all conceptual minds and it would exclude the sense perceptions that are not direct perceptions because they are mistaken with respect to their appearing objects.

For instance in these tenets they say if you were to see a firebrand - a firebrand is like a torch swirled around - it seems to your eye consciousness to be a circle of fire but there is not an actual circle of fire there; that would be a mistaken sense perception, and not a direct perception. A direct perception has to be factually concordant.

An awareness which is a direct perceiver is defined as a knower which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken. So that makes it very clear. There are four divisions of direct perceiver. This is very important. We mentioned this last time. Do you remember what they were? Without looking it up? Right, Sense, mental, self-knowing, and yogic direct perceivers.

So direct perceivers are consciousnesses that are not mistaken about their appearing object. They know things directly and they are unmistaken about their objects. So they are very reliable.

There are sense direct perceivers (for the five senses) and there are mental direct perceivers. It is possible for the mental consciousness to know objects directly, but in the continuum of ordinary beings like ourselves, these instances of mental direct perception are rare.

There is some debate about whether dreams are mental direct perceivers. Lama Tsongkhapa indicated in some texts that some lucid dreams, when you seem to see something totally clear with the mental consciousness, might be considered direct perceivers, but in general in these tenets, the mental direct perceiver in our continua are limited to one instant at the end of a train of sense direct perceivers, the mental direct perception takes place for an instant before one has a conception about that and acts as its basis for that. One instant in our mind-stream can't be perceived - it's too short a time. So it's inattentive or as we said it's a consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained.

Student: Could you give an example?

Say for instance, I see Chris' Cadillac with my eye consciousness. What colour is your Cadillac?

Chris: Gold

Gold, I thought it was yellow - a golden Cadillac, I see it with my eye consciousness and there are trains of sense consciousness that take place. There's a directly perceiving eye consciousness when I see that Cadillac that goes on for a certain number of instants and at the end of that the mental consciousness has one instant of mental direct perception of that, really brief, just a millisecond or something. How that happens, I don't know exactly. It's not as if the mental consciousness knows your Cadillac directly but rather it is via the agency of the eye consciousness.

Student: Does it happen at every seeing?

Every hearing, every smelling.... At the end of the train of every sense consciousness, I believe so, according to Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition.



I think two of the texts here, Lati Rinpoche's and *Compendium of Ways of Knowing*, mention that in India there were three traditions in which the Buddhist philosophers believed that there was a moment of sense perception, then a moment of mental direct perception and then again a moment of sense perception, alternating. But it is said that there are various reasons why that's thrown out. So there are other ideas about that....

Student: The idea that I have is that the eye sees the object and it hands it off with a mind that recognizes the object and then the mind floods the information with the internal .....

...judgements – yes. In a sense there is no contradiction with that. We are just talking about the particular point at which point mental direct perception - if there is mental direct perception at all, because one might say that there doesn't have to be - can be aware of what has happened and conceive about it, because it is like the observer of the sense consciousnesses. But here it is said that there is moment in the continua of ordinary beings like ourselves of a mental direct perception of objects of sight, sound, taste and touch at the end of the train of sense perception, but it goes unattended, we're inattentive of that. So that's what's being meant here in this context by mental direct perception.

It can also mean clairvoyance, which is mentioned as an example of mental direction perception Although because it's not a sense direct perception and it's not a yogic direct perception..... this is because yogic direct perception only has three objects, three things that only arya beings recognize; a yogic direct perception exists only in the continuum of an arya being, realizing either subtle impermanence, or gross or subtle selflessness of persons, according to these tenets - Sautrantikas don't talk about the emptiness of all phenomena, they only talk about selflessness. So if clairvoyance is not a yogic direct perception and it's not apperception, self knowing perception, it has to be a mental direct perceiver. But we were only talking about the ones in the continua of ordinary being like ourselves, and in general we don't have examples of mental direct perceivers. Although we think we really know things, almost everything we know with our minds is by way of conception, which is kind of interesting. .

There are sense direct perceivers, mental direct perceivers, self knowing (apperceptive) direct perceivers and yogic direct perceivers.

I'll just mention the definition of the first (page 15):

*First, the definition of a sense direct perceiver is:*

*1) that which is produced in dependence on its own uncommon empowering condition, a physical sense power, and 2) is a knower that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken..*

Notice that it has two parts - "a knower that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken" and "that which is produced in dependence upon its own uncommon empowering condition, a physical sense power".

Its "uncommon empowering condition" for the eye sense doesn't mean the eyeball. The empowering condition is that subtle matter like the rods and cones at the back of retina that allow an interface between the consciousness coming in and for it to be able to come in contact with the aspect of what we are seeing.

*The definition of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form is:*

*1) that which is generated in dependence on its own uncommon empowering condition, the eye sense power, and its observed object condition, a form, and 2) is a knower that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken.*

That is the definition of an eye sense direct perceiver apprehending a visual form.

So let's take a little break and renew your sugar content or caffeine content or water content and we'll start again in a minute

## Tea break

Ok, all reinvigorated?

So the first thing to understand is what sense direct perceivers are because those are the main things that we have in our own experience. We are not yet arya beings, we don't have yogic direct perceivers, and most of us don't have mental direct perceivers, and apperceptive or self-knowing direct perceivers are something which the highest tenets don't even except - they are just posited in the lower schools.

In fact it's said that there are three kinds of phenomena that we can know: those that are **manifest phenomena** i.e. things that we can know for the first time directly, without depending on logic; they appear to the senses. There is another category of phenomena called **hidden phenomena**, that which is hidden or covered. An example of that is subtle impermanence. Even though subtle impermanence is appearing to us, we don't apprehend it with our sense consciousnesses. Even with our mental consciousness, thinking of it right now, at most we might have an intellectual understanding of it. We don't have direct perception of it and at first we don't even have an inference of it. But we can eventually hidden phenomena such as subtle impermanence, and selflessness of persons, and emptiness. Those are called hidden phenomena. They can't be known immediately by appearing to our consciousness directly. They have to be first inferred with an inferential cognizer. Intellectually we have to understand them first of all and develop a mental image of them. Once that mental image has become correct or true or factually concordant and not just some kind of fantasized idea, then by meditating on that and developing single pointed concentration, the hidden phenomenon such as subtle impermanence or selfless of persons or even emptiness, can be apprehended via the agency of direct perception. The third kind of phenomenon is called **very hidden phenomena**. Phenomena like that are things like the result of a karmic action. It's not just something we can infer, it's not only hidden, like that virtuous actions bring about happiness - you can begin to see that. But you can't through ordinary logic that the first instance if I giving this penny, will in 417 lifetimes in the future, in the universe called so and so, in the North, result in me having some many dollars because of this action - there's no way to infer that. That kind of subtle phenomenon, such as the deeply hidden connection between actions and their effects, is an example of a *very hidden phenomena*.

The hidden qualities of the buddhas that only a buddha's mind can know is another example of a deeply hidden phenomenon.

These three kinds of phenomena: *manifest phenomena*, *hidden phenomena* and *deeply hidden phenomena* are known via different kinds of consciousnesses. We'll be talking about it again later in the next lesson about inference.

We can know *manifest phenomena* with direct perception. Actually you can use inference in some cases, like you can infer that there has to be fire but fire is something you can see and you don't have to rely on inference to know that there is a fire on the path; you can go up there and look. You can infer it but when we say manifest phenomena it means that it can be perceived for the first time without reliance on inference.

But for *hidden phenomena* we have to rely on inference first of all; an inferential cognizer - a mental image that is based on true correct reasoning. Then we can know that validly and eventually know it directly (like emptiness) through that agency.

For *deeply hidden phenomena* we have to rely on a particular kind of logic and a reliable person, a valid person. The word *pramana* means valid cognizer. One of the divisions of *pramana* is valid persons, and the Buddha is a valid person because the Buddha explained karma to many people. For example, some women came and gave the Buddha a small piece of bread; they were a very poor family and the Buddha said "oh, in the future you will become a solitary r, in so and so many eons from now, and attain arhatship". Her husband came out and said "ah, give me a break - for this little loaf of bread, your making up this story trying to get more offerings or something".

So only a buddha can know that kind of connection between individual events and their consequences. There are other things that are *deeply hidden phenomena* that only the omniscient mind can know and the way that we can get to know them is via the agency of the Buddha explaining them.

Now you might say "well how do you know that the Buddha is right. Maybe he is just making it up. How do you know?" Well in order for that kind of logic to work, to prove that when that woman gave that bread she would achieve the state of solitary r, you have to prove the Buddha is a valid person and there are ways of doing that - that the Buddha has realized all that is to be realized and has eliminated all the faults of the mind. That is part of the subject matter in the 2nd Chapter (I think) of the *Pramanavarttika* (the same word *pramana*) - the *Commentary on Valid Cognition* or *Commentary on Pramana* (that which is valid). It talks about cognition but also the second chapter talks about valid persons, why the Buddha is a valid person. A very, very famous explanation.

So direct perceivers are the things that know the manifest phenomena of our universe. There are two ways of dividing sense direct perceivers. Is the mental consciousness a sense? We do talk about the sixth sense, and you could call it a sense but here, when we talk about sense direct perceivers and mental direct perceivers, we mean the five senses. So don't think that there is some mistake and mental is not included there by error. Just linguistically it is supposed to mean the faculties that depend on the physical sense powers.

Here it says "that which is produced in dependence upon its own uncommon empowering condition, a physical sense power". It's *uncommon* because it is exclusive to that particular sense. An eye sense faculty does not act as a vehicle to hear, in ordinary beings. Even if the ear consciousness would happen to divert itself to your eyeball, it can't hear through there. It needs its own uncommon or exclusive empowering condition, the ear sense power

So when you divide sense direct perceivers one way there are three: there are *prime cognizers* (or *pramanas*); there are *subsequent cognizers* and there are *sense direct perceivers to which an object appears but is not apprehended*. This is what we could call inattentive perception. Like when you were a kid and you were playing and your mom called you for dinner and you were so engaged in playing that you do not hear it. You see kids sometimes completely engrossed and even when you say that dinner is ready - tap, tap tap..... Their ear consciousness, because their mental consciousness is mainly paying attention to one of the senses - let's say the eye consciousness, it's oblivious of what else is appearing to another sense consciousness. Is that inattentive perception a wrong consciousness?

Student: No

You're right, it is not a wrong consciousness. It actually is a direct perceiver. Notice that it is one of the divisions of direct perceiver. Direct perceivers that know their object, that are not mistaken about their object are of these three kinds: they can be *prime cognizers*; *subsequent cognitions* or *consciousnesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained*. With regard to the latter, you can't recall that you perceived something because the mental consciousness was not paying sufficient attention, but the ear consciousness was still functioning as clear and knowing and knew or perceived that object, but you can't recall it later.

So then it gives examples. The example of a prime cognizer which is a sense direct perceiver is the first moment of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form. Here form doesn't necessarily have to mean visual form, because all of the sense perceivers perceive form in its general meaning of form. Even sounds, tastes, odours and tactile objects are form. The first moment of such a sense direct perceiver is called a *valid or prime cognizer*.

An example of a subsequent cognizer is the second moment (or the third moment or the seventeenth moment) of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form. Let's say if I apprehend a blue colour with my eye consciousness, the first instant of that is called *prime* in these tenets because it was fresh, it was new. Remember the definition on the previous page of a prime cognizers - a **new** incontrovertible knower. So *new* eliminates subsequent cognition. It's like the first instant of that train of eye consciousness acting like the engine that pulls along (according to these tenets) the subsequent moments. So somehow the subsequent moments from this point of view lack some vibrancy of newness or freshness. They don't have the same impact as that first instant.

The Prasangikas say it doesn't matter, but these tenets made fun of the Prasangikas before, do you remember, they said "someone says that subsequent cognizers are also prime cognizers! How foolish! How could they say that - it can't be, because they don't know something newly". The Prasangikas would say that they don't *have* to know something newly. They just have to know/ their object, to be valid cognizers.

Next, an example of a sense direct perceiver that is an *inattentive perception* - another way of saying: an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained. *Ascertainment* has to do with realizing; for something to be ascertained you have to be able to recall it, to generate a remembering consciousness of actually perceiving that. So the third example, of inattentive perception that is a sense direct perceiver, is a *sense direct perceiver apprehending a form in the continuum of a person whose mind is especially attracted to a pleasant sound*.

Here the example is of visible form. You're listening to your iPod or you are listening to Beethoven or something, and you are so entranced with paying attention to the beauty or the rhythm that you are completely oblivious of what is occurring to you eye consciousness. It is not as though your eye consciousness is not functioning; your eye consciousness is functioning, but your mental consciousness is not paying sufficient attention to induce ascertainment that you see its object.

That was one way of dividing sense direct perceivers: into *prime cognizers*; *subsequent cognizers* and *inattentive perceivers that are sense direct perceivers*.

You can divide sense direct perceivers another way. What is the other way?

Divided in another way, there are five sense direct perceivers: apprehending visible forms; sounds; odours; tastes and tangible objects; in other words, the five sense objects.

*When sense direct perceivers are divided in another way, there are five: sense direct perceivers apprehending forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and tangible objects. The definition of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form is: 1) that which is generated in dependence on its own uncommon empowering condition, the eye sense power, and its observed object condition, a form, and 2) is a knower that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken. (page 15)*

The definition of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a visible form is “a knower that is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken” - that makes it a sense direct perceiver and “that is which is generated in dependence upon its own uncommon empowering conditions (its own faculty) - the eye sense power” This text adds the phrase and “its observed object condition - a visible form”. It doesn't say visible here in the translation but that is kind of the meaning.

Student: I'm still just held up a little by that inattentive one.... If you don't ascertain it, how are you a knower?

How is the person a knower?

Student: A direct perceiver is a knower. I mean is it perceiving if you don't ascertain for example the cup

There is a kind of knowing in which an object appears to a clear awareness. The aspect is there, the consciousness is not defective and if paid attention to by the mental consciousness....

Student: I would say *it would be perceived* not *it wasn't perceived*.

No, the act of perception is *to be aware*. Do you remember these three words: *lo*; *rigpa* and *shes-pa*. Before we said: *lo* means awareness; *rig* means to know or to cognize and *shes-pa* means to be conscious of something. So the sense consciousnesses can *know* something - but maybe we have to augment the way we think of that word; this is a very good example of how the way we are accustomed to use words, the way that we think of them, may prevent us from understanding something. It is almost like you have to be (like Christ said) a baby again. What did he say? He didn't say that?

Student: Be like a little child

You have to be like a little child again, you have to be reborn. You have to start off again and get rid of all the intellectual preconceptions of what words mean and see what they actually mean here. *Knowing* in this context is a perfect example, because just as you say, and I'm sure it comes to many people's minds, "you didn't know it", you didn't pay attention to it.

However, the sense consciousness *is knowing it*, but the mental consciousness is not paying sufficient attention, if any attention, to it. It might make momentary glimpses of it but it doesn't pay sufficient attention to be able to induce memory of it.

Like the example in the Wheel of Life; the monkey looking out of the various windows of a house. Have you seen that example when it talks about name and form? There is a monkey in a house and there are various windows, like the five senses are doorways to the outer world. The monkey is like the mental consciousness. It's looking out of one, and all his attention is paid to that one. It's oblivious about what's happening outside the others, even though the windows or openings are clear. Let's say there's also an opening of the door, so sound also is still coming in, but the monkey does not pay attention to that.

So that is our monkey mind! Anyway let's investigate that more, think about what that means.

*Extend this format to the other sense direct perceivers.*

You can extend this to the other sense direct perceivers; this is a very common thing, you can apply the same definition to the others. So what is the definition of a sense direct perceiver apprehending odour? How would you augment this definition for apprehending form to smell? That's simple, right? That which is generated in dependence on its uncommon condition the .....

Student: Olfactory power.

Right, the nose sense power, and its observed object condition an odour (or fragrance), and 2) it is a knower that is free from conception and is non-mistaken.

Lati Rinpoche mentions in his commentary that this definition would hold without saying "its observed object condition, a form". All you need to say is "its own uncommon empowering condition", the eye sense power, the nose sense power, the ear sense power. But the reason it says this is because there are three conditions necessary for a consciousness to arise. Do you remember what those are? The *empowering condition*, the *immediately preceding condition* and the *object condition* or the *observed object condition*.

So let's take the example of taste consciousness, so that we don't use the eye all the time. Is it possible for a taste consciousness to arise in a corpse, a person completely dead, not doubt about it, one week already, (even the yogis are gone), and you come and you put a piece of chocolate on the tongue. Does a taste consciousness arise?

Student: No

Why not? There's a sense power there and you've got the object.

The person is dead, so there's no *immediately preceding consciousness* to act as the basis for a next instant of consciousness - a taste consciousness.

Also when you are asleep - did you do that with your brother or sister, when you were a little kid or maybe when you were in college - you'd tickle someone or you'd open their eyes or put something on their tongue? And they might actually have a dream because of that, because the consciousness is oscillating out, but in deep sleep the consciousness is not there and there is not the immediately preceding condition. So you need to have an immediately preceding condition of consciousness to give rise to a next instance of consciousness.

The other two conditions are also necessary. You can't have an eye consciousness without a visual form. The same thing with the ear of course; you can't have an ear consciousness without a sound - its own uncommon object condition.

I remember one of my class mates in MIT; this guy could sleep so deeply; he stayed up for hours and hours but when he slept it was impossible to wake him up. He was one of those guys manning the computers when they shot the first astronauts to the moon, he was like a genius. It was a freshman's job to wake him up and it was really a chore; even if you shook him, it was like his mental consciousness must have been so absorbed in the deep sleep that it took a long time. He was in the shower for an hour or so and then many cups of coffee.



Student: So how about when you say mantras in dying people's ears?

When a person is dying there's no special benefit in saying the mantras in the ears after the ear sense consciousness is absorbed; it should be done before that, reading the *Bardo Thodol* or something like that.

So without the sense power, the empowering condition, you can't have the consciousness. So the definition mentions its own uncommon, or exclusive, empowering condition, the eye sense power (or the ear faculty or the nose faculty or the tongue faculty or the body faculty). That's one condition, and its object condition is a form

Student: What is the difference between the uncommon empowering condition and the sense power? When you are talking about the three things that are needed, you are talking about the eye sense power; the object and the previous moment of consciousness. I don't get where the uncommon empowering condition comes in.

The uncommon (or exclusive) empowering condition of the eye consciousness is the eye sense power. That's its own exclusive one. It can't function as the faculty of the ear consciousness. Even if the ear consciousness goes there, the ear can't see. It has to have its own uncommon empowering condition. Also, when we talk about mental consciousness, that has its own uncommon empowering condition as well. Which is what? The sense organ of the eye consciousness is some subtle matter in the back of the eye. Not the eyeball but something like the rods and cones. In the ear there is some subtle material that actually is the interface with the consciousness and maybe registers the pressure or something, there is a certain area where there are certain materials that acts as an interface to that empowering condition. On the tongue there are certain areas; like that, you can map them on the body. So what about the mind, what is the empowering condition? Does the mind have a physical sense power? The brain?

No! It can know without the brain; Western science would say that without the brain you can't know, but that's not the case from the Buddhist perspective at all. The exclusive or uncommon empowering condition of the mental consciousness is a previous moment of consciousness.

You might say "well, wait a second, George, you said a previous instant of consciousness was the immediately preceding condition". Remember that? They can be two different consciousnesses; for instance, to think about something, the immediately preceding condition might be a mental consciousness, and the empowering condition would be a preceding instant of mental consciousness; but also, you might be thinking about something while the immediately preceding condition would be an eye consciousness seeing a form. So they could be different, a mental and a sense consciousness, or they could be the same, both being mental consciousness.

The word *faculty* or *indriya* is used twice here. Empowering condition, and sense *power* or sense faculty. Its own uncommon *indriya*, and the eye *indriya*.

Of the three conditions that give rise to consciousness, one is called the *empowering* condition, one is called the *immediately preceding* condition and one is called the *observed object* condition. Without all three of them the tripod of consciousness can't stand.

Student: I get those three but I'm getting confused. Where is the eye sense power?



If you put in an "=" sign, its own uncommon empowering condition = the eye sense power. Maybe there should be a semi-colon after that, so that you kind of see that means that, or you could put in parenthesis the "eye sense power". Does that make sense?

Student: I thought you were explaining it as four things.

No, it's three things, that's it

So, with respect to mental direct perceivers there are two parts: definitions and divisions, as usual.

*With respect to the second, mental direct perceivers, there are two parts: definition and divisions. First, the definition of a mental direct perceiver is: 1) that which is generated in dependence on a mental sense power which is its own uncommon empowering condition and 2) is a consciousness that is an other knower which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken. (page 16)*

A mental direct perceiver is (I'll read the second part first) "a consciousness that is an other-knower free from conceptuality and non-mistaken and that which is generated on dependence on a mental sense power, which is its own uncommon empowering condition". What's the difference here? One difference is that it is talking about a mental sense power and it's not talking about a physical sense power, so it doesn't depend on the brain. But here this "other knower" which is kind of curious. What is an other-knower? Anyone?

Student: Another prime cognizer.

It's not saying "*another*", it's saying an *other-knower*.

A way of dividing consciousness is into other-knowers and self-knowers, and the next type that we are going to be talking about is a self-knowing direct perceiver the third type of direct perceivers; see page 14 We mentioned before that consciousness has two abilities: *clear* and *knowing*. Clear, like the space of your mind, so that in your consciousness you can have the appearance of a flower, a flower appearing in the space of your mind; and the consciousness that is knowing that object is knowing something different than consciousness, and is therefore called an other-knower. It is knowing something other than itself, it is not knowing consciousness, it knows an object other than consciousness.

This might remind you of when we do our Mahamudra meditation at the beginning, and I ask you in one instance of consciousness to try and recognize what was happening in the previous moment of consciousness - but here the idea is a little bit different. When we talk about self-knowing, it is a quality ascribed by the Sautrantikas and the Cittamatrins and some of the other schools, but not the Vaibhasikas, the lowest philosophical school, and not the Prasangika. They, the Sautrantikas and the Cittamatrins, say there is a quality of consciousness that is aware of its own knowingness. It is a self-knower; it is knowing consciousness but not knowing the object.

So if an object is present, one part of the consciousness has the ability to know that object that is other than itself, let's say the flower - and that's the other-knowingness of it. Then also one part of the consciousness has the ability to know that it is knowing, but it doesn't know the object, like blue, or flower, it just knows that it is knowing. That's called a self-knower. Self-knowing, or apperception, or as one professor in Wisconsin, John Dunne calls it, "reflexive awareness". (You can really get carried away if you want to use all sorts of nice philosophical terms; I don't know if *reflexive awareness* makes it any clearer to me.)

So when it's talking about a mental direct perceiver it says "a consciousness that is an other-knower". So according to this definition a self-knowing direct perceiver is not a mental direct perceiver, right? Because a self knowing direct perceiver is something that is knowing itself. It's not knowing other than itself. It's knowing its own entity. It is a knower that is knowing its own ability to know. Does that make any sense?

Student: A lot more than the others

Lati Rinpoche mentions that to a certain extent you can argue that self-knowers and yogic direct-perceivers are both mental direct perceivers. If you say that there are two kinds of direct perceivers: those that depend on physical sense faculties and those that depend on a non-physical (mental) sense faculty, then the yogic-direct perceiver and the self-knower don't depend on a physical sense faculty.

Each of the consciousnesses have their own kind of self-knower. The eye consciousness that is knowing form, that aspect of the eye consciousness is called an other-knower. It's knowing something other than itself. Within the entity of that eye consciousness, according to the Sautrantikas, Cittamatrins etc., there is an ability to know that it is knowing.

The definition of a self-knower is (half way down page 16) "that which has the aspect of an apprehender". Actually it doesn't say *have*, it literally means "aspect apprehender" or "the aspect of which is apprehending". It is just knowing/apprehending, rather than knowing the apprehended.

An other-knower has the aspect of an apprehended object. An aspect is that which appears to a consciousness. What appears to an other-knower? An apprehended object, the kind of thing that you are knowing about. A self-knower's aspect is apprehension itself. It says it has the aspect of an apprehender, it knows that the consciousness is knowing, or apprehending.

*Second, when mental direct perceivers are divided, there are three: prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers, and awarenesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained which are mental direct perceivers.* (top of page 16). When we talk about mental direct perceivers, there are the same three kinds as there were for sense direct perceivers: there are *prime cognizers; subsequent cognizers and inattentive perceivers (or awarenesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained).*

I will have some debate with the great Purbuchok here. The first two examples I agree with; a mental direct perceiver that is a prime cognizer is the first moment of clairvoyance which knows another's mind. No problem. The second: a subsequent cognizer which is a mental direct perceiver is the second moment of clairvoyance, and the third, and so forth, moment which knows another's mind.

But for the third (inattentive mental direct perceiver) he gives as an example a mental direct perceiver apprehending a sound in the continuum of person whose mind is especially attracted a beautiful form.

What do you think? Remember when we talked about mental direct perceptions? Because to me this is a little bit perplexing. Which would be the inattentive perception of the senses in this case?

Student: Or the ear consciousness.

You're exactly right. That would be inattentive because it's apprehending the sound but the person is especially attracted to a beautiful form. While a mental direct perceiver in any case, if it is apprehending a sound is going to be inattentive. That's my point. Because it only lasts for one shortest instant.

So that's my debate with the great Purbuchok. Excuse me for that. It is said you can debate with your teachers but you always have to be very respectful. I think that some of the unfortunate circumstances that happened to some lamas when they got carried away and they were debating with their gurus or the Buddha and even though the gurus ask us to debate and so forth, they got disrespectful. So that's why I'm saying "Purbuchok, please excuse me". When you debate with Lama Zopa, he loves that but for your own karma you should be careful and not become disrespectful.

So then I'll just mention these other two. Self-knowing direct perceives. Definition, "a self-knower is that which has (here it says) the aspect of an apprehender". It's kind of hard to render it into English. It doesn't mean it's apprehending an aspect; it means its aspect is apprehension. It's knowing apprehension rather than knowing some other object than itself - so the definition of a self-knowing direct perceiver is that which has the aspect of an apprehender, is free from conceptuality and is non-mistaken.

So you can divide this up into three kinds: prime cognizers; subsequent cognizers and awarenesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained. The first two are easy. But the third one maybe throws you a bit. Did you understand this, did you read this already?

So let's look at examples of the third, the self-knower. It doesn't have to be in a mental continuum; although Lati Rinpoche said that even the self-knower of an eye or ear consciousness is somehow technically a kind of mental consciousness, because although the outer consciousness, the other knowing aspect of the eye consciousness, depends on the sense power, the self-knower doesn't depend on that uncommon (or exclusive) empowering condition. Does that make sense?

Let's take an eye consciousness; the eye consciousness which is an other-knower depends upon the eye faculty, the physical eye faculty, to know other things. But the self-knowing part of the eye consciousness doesn't depend for its functioning on the sense power; it's just knowing knowing. You got it?

Student: I don't believe it though. It has to depend upon it a little bit or it couldn't see? or think?

It's not thinking. It's knowing.

Student: Even in knowing though, it first has to see it to know it and then the other can start to operate.

I'm not sure; you can think about that. I just want to introduce the last one before we finish. Examples of a self knowing direct perceiver to which an object appears but is not ascertained. So let's see if you can get your mind around these: a self-knowing direct perceiver in the continuum of a Samkya. What is a Samkya? It's a philosophical school in India. Sometimes it is translated it as "enumerators" because they have a system with a certain number of this and that; it still is a very famous philosophical school, and I think some remnant of it still exists in Vedic philosophy.

So the example is a self-direct perceiver in the continuum of a Samkya that experiences bliss as being consciousness. So the Samkya's do not believe that bliss is consciousness. What is bliss? Bliss is a kind of feeling, a pleasant feeling. There are three kinds of feelings, which are the pleasant, unpleasant and neutral sensations - right? So bliss or pleasure itself is feeling, which is consciousness.

If you feel sad and somebody rubs you and you feel a blissful tactile sensation, that is an experience of your tactile consciousness. Or you eat stracciatella ice-cream and your tongue consciousness experiences pleasure, that consciousness experiencing that pleasure *is* consciousness. Bliss is consciousness.

So Samkyas don't believe it is consciousness; but since it is, it must be that for them the self-knower in their continuum that's experiencing that is not being paid attention to. It is being inattentive because they don't recognize that. Think about that.

Another example: a self-knowing direct perceiver in the continuum of a Vaisheshikas that doesn't experience bliss as being consciousness. This not the Buddhist Vaibhasika, this is the Vaisheshika, they could be called the Hindu Vedic school. They don't accept bliss as being consciousness, perhaps for a different reason, it don't remember.

And then the third example, a self-knower in the continuum of a nihilist. This doesn't refer to Jean Paul Sartre, it is talking about a particular Vedic school called the Charvakas. The Tibetan call them "those that toss liberation away a long way", it's like they are completely out of it. So "a self-knower in the continuum of a nihilist which experiences an inferential cognizer as being a prime cognizer". What's the point here, do you know?

A nihilist or materialist thinks that the things that we eat and touch are the only things that exist. "Don't talk to me about atoms, the other side of the moon, liberation, the Buddha -, come-on. You eat, you drink, and that's it". So in their continuum a self-knower which is experiencing an inferential cognition, a cognition knowing something through logic, for that self-knower this is experienced as a prime cognizer, and to them that is inattentive because they don't accept inferential cognition as being a valid way of knowing. They think that you can't know things through inference, that you can only know anything through the senses, like what you eat and taste etc. ... So think about those.

*With respect to the fourth, yogic direct perceivers, there are two: definition and divisions. First, the definition of a yogic direct perceiver is: 1) that which is generated in dependence on its own uncommon empowering condition, a meditative stabilization which is a union of calm abiding and special insight, and 2) is an other-knowing exalted knower in the continuum of a Superior which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken. When yogic direct perceivers are divided there are two: prime and subsequent cognizers which are yogic direct perceivers. (page 17)*

The definition of a yogic direct-perceiver is (starting with the second part) "an other-knowing exalted wisdom, in the continuum of a superior (an arya being) which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken; and it is generated in dependence upon its own uncommon empowering condition". The words "exalted-knower" here imply that it's conducive to liberation.

What's its uncommon empowering condition? Not a sense power, not just any immediately preceding moment of consciousness, but a particular kind of consciousness - a meditative stabilisation.

The Sanskrit word for that is *samadhi*, not shamatha. We have shamatha or concentration now in our consciousness, but as long as it is with effort only it's not fully qualified shamatha, and you can't call it single pointed concentration, as in the union of *calm abiding* and *special insight*. So here it is a kind of samadhi which is not even just *calm-abiding*; a kind of samadhi which is a union of *shamatha (calm abiding)* and *vipassana (special insight)*. The Tibetans call vipassana lhag thong and in Pali it is called *vipasyana*.

So in other words, this is a particular kind of direct perceiver; in essence it is a mental direct perceiver but it is only found in the continuum of arya beings and its object has to be one of the three: either subtle impermanence or gross or subtle selflessness of persons - here in these tenets they don't talk about the emptiness of phenomena.

This only has two divisions: prime and subsequent cognizers. There is no inattentive yogic direct-perception. A yogic direct-perception that is knowing subtle impermanence or selflessness of persons is never inattentive. It's knowing everything directly; and the text gives the reasons for that, talking about the Buddha's mind, which knows all things directly.

## Dedication

So just for the sake completeness and so that you don't get too exhausted and you can get home, let's do a very quick dedication that's still deep and profound.

Think whatever merits I have created tonight, due to the special motivation, and the seeds of virtue that are still in my consciousness and have not yet ripened - I can dedicate them all.

The act of dedication is wishing very strongly, aspiring that they ripen in the most distant and profound goal that is beneficial, that is the enlightenment of ourselves for the welfare of all sentient beings. That we can overcome all our faults, develop all our good qualities, become a source of inspiration, love and compassion to all living beings and to lead individuals that have special karmic connection with us to their own enlightenment.

To ripen numberless beings .... in total bliss, total contentment, no depression, no worries.

Due to these merits may I quickly become a guru-buddha for the sake of all sentient beings.

So again here it depends on your concentration; not just to say the words, but to try to have a continuity of that, so when one dedicates one tries to hold that with single-pointed concentration - that aspiration.

Okay - thank you very much.

## Session 5

### Meditation

So how's everyone?

Let's begin with our traditional meditation. Later maybe I think we'll begin to do some prayers. Every lecture you go to with Tibetan Lamas, there are always many prayers to recite. Obviously it's important to recite the prayers but it is good to try to have an understanding of what those prayers are meant to do - to calm the mind and set a good motivation. So that's why we are taking time to meditate at the beginning; I hope that you don't feel offended that we are not doing prayers

OK. Try to relax your mind, relax your body....

Bring your attention first to what is easily findable, the breathing and see if you can withdraw your attention both away from the senses and from all the preoccupied thoughts....

Then slowly withdraw your attention even further inward to your mental consciousness as though it were centred at your heart chakra (although it pervades other places); away from the cerebral region, where it is more conceptualising, more prone to be overcome with discursive thoughts....

Remind yourself that it is not the eye consciousness, nor the ear consciousness, nor your nose, taste or the tactile consciousness that pervades the body.....

Not having merely a state of no thoughts but actively perceiving the nature of the mind as being light, unobstructed, within which the various thoughts can arise....As a vast space within which all of the cloud-like thoughts pass....

Then with the body as though transparent and not grasping on to the tactile sensations of its presence, begin to let go of the sense of the "I" as a separate observer. Try to abide for some time in the pure state of consciousness - just mind knowing its own nature....

Whatever arises doesn't become an obstacle to that apprehension, but reaffirms it. If there are any objects or thoughts to be distracted to, or subjective responses, they are all possible because of that clarity of the mind; they are all known and experienced due to the faculty of knowing....

Knowing that we have no solution to our own suffering and our own condition in cyclic existence by ourselves, and even if we learn something of the path and have a certain direction, we are still helpless, blown by the winds of karma and under the influence of the various wild animal-like forces of our mind....

Think I'm going to take refuge, to the Buddha, the enlightened one, the Dharma that he taught, and all the buddhas that come in all three times of the past, present and future, who all teach variations of the liberating Dharma, and the supreme bodhisattva Sangha - since we are listening to the Mahayana teachings -, those arya bodhisattvas whose realization of emptiness is conjoined with a realization of conventional bodhicitta. I am going to take refuge in the Tripe Gem until I am enlightened....



Not simply developing a sense of Mahayana motivation/refuge but the thought of bodhicitta, as much as we have practiced it in the past. Think, due to the merits that I am going to create now through listening to the teachings, may this become a cause for me achieving enlightenment, buddhahood, from which state I can benefit all living beings....

And like we dedicate at the end of the teachings within the three spheres, also any action that we motivate with and any action that we do, like the bodhisattvas who try to practice within the perfection of wisdom, seeing that the agent, in this case ourselves, the action of listening to the teachings, and the teachings themselves are all empty of inherent existence.

Whatever we understand of that, we remain aware of as we progress along: there is an action of listening but it can't be found anywhere, there is a conventional self but it can't be found more than by pointing conventionally to our body and mind and saying 'that person is listening'; we can't find an inherently listening person within those aggregates.

Even the Dharma itself, the teaching, in this case Lorig, although seemingly concrete and embodying some findable knowledge, findable matter, findable subject, we can't find it anywhere either, it is just a name that we impute....

Now bring your attention back to the present.

## Teaching

Are there any questions?

Student: Yes, just a general question. Are the books we are using Sautrantika, like *The Mind and Its Functions* ...?

We are talking mainly from the point of view of the *Sautrantika* tenets. Sometimes you might get that mixed up with one of the higher schools called *Svatantrika*. *Sautrantika* is the higher of the two Hinayana schools. I think the etymology is related with their understanding of the Abhidharma. We talked about this before - right? They say that the Abhidharma can be found in the sutras, so they are called Sautrantika - as in sutra.

Although there are some things that are in common with the Vaibhasikas and a lot of it is in common with all of the Mahayana schools too, we will see some things that are different. Like for instance when talking about prime cognizers. I wasn't able to get a white board for this session; I was asked to try to put somewhere visually explained the different translations of the same word, to get it more clear. *Pramana* is a Sanskrit word - right? Do you know what it is in Tibetan? *Tsad ma*. Some translate it as *valid cognizer*, some translate it as *prime cognizer*. How is it being translated here in this text? *Prime cognizer* - right!

There are different ways that you can interpret 'prime'. *Valid* is a more general way; I'm not sure what *prime* means to the people who use it as the translation. The main qualification of a *pramana* from the highest tenets' point of view, from the Prasangika point of view, is that it is a *valid* cognition, that it realizes its object. It doesn't have anything to do for them with *newly* or *freshly*, as is the viewpoint the Sautrantika and some of the other schools take here.

Does anyone else have a question?

Student: I have looked over some notes and I had a note about perception.

This is great. You've got cards and everything.

Student: This is because I can't read my writing if I don't redo my notes. I have it written down that a *referent object* is as the same as the *perceived object*.

In some cases it is. You could also translate *referent object* as *observed object*; in Tibetan we say *mig yul*. The *referent object* here is the flower (pointing at a flower) and the *perceived object is the flower*. But one of the examples I gave if I was observing Mark, then the *conventionally existent* Mark would be the *observed* or *referent* object of my investigation. But I may be perceiving that *conventionally existing* person as *truly existent*, or as a *self-supporting, substantially existent person*, in a slightly grosser sense. So then *referent object* would be what I am referring to, what I am observing, but the conceived object would be a *truly existent* Mark, and the object that's being perceived would be a *truly existent* Mark.

Do such a thing exist? No. So we observe one thing but we conceive of it in a different way. If you have a flower as a *referent object* you may be centring in on one of its attributes, like its shape or colour, with your visual consciousness. The *perceived* or *apprehended* object maybe the blue colour. So the *apprehended object* doesn't always have to be the *referent object* but it can be. If you are just apprehending the flower, if the *referent object* is the flower and you are apprehending the flower, then they would be same.

The interesting thing is when we talk about conception, when you refer to something, you are observing something, but you are conceiving it in a way that might be contradictory to that. You might be conceiving it as *truly existent*.

Student: Like with Mark - I have this idea of skin and hair and eyes and form, tall, and things like that. So I see these .... and he's a form to me.

Sometimes we may conceive of person as a form but it is said that (especially according to the higher tenets) the person is the *being imputed on the five aggregates*. What you're actually observing is the *conventionally existent* Mark but you might not even recognize that, you may not even have an idea what *conventionally existent* Mark is.

You know, what I mean is that a baby, or a cow, or an ordinary person, like somebody in the train – they do not think in terms of *conventionally existent* and *truly existent* persons. So you don't see a differentiation but that is indeed what you are referring to - the conventionally existent person - because that is the only thing that does exist, conventionally, in terms of the person. Indeed, you might be just observing the form, and if you are thinking of the form as being a person, you impute person onto the form aggregate.

For instance in our meditation, when we think about our own self identity, sometimes we have a sense of "I" that seems to be identical to the form aggregate, it's as though "I" were the form aggregate, or one might say it is imputed on the form aggregate - but that's not the actual *conventionally existent* "I". The *conventionally existent* "I" is what is suitable to be imputed on all five aggregates, on that whole complex. And that may be what you're observing, or that's what you are actually referring to, but you may be *conceiving* of it in a certain way such as it being the form or skin or the hair or whatever.

So the *referent object* is the object that's being perceived. Sometimes it's not actually being perceived and we are interfering with that actual perception by conceiving of the *referent object* as something else; either as *truly existent* or as the form aggregate ...

Student: So it's very hard for us to make that distinction.

Yes; it might a good object of investigation in the coming week - to see how much our projections (what you are actually observing) is clouded over and is obscured from an actual perception by the mind/intellect projecting upon it and thinking of it as something else. Like *friend* or *enemy*; sometimes conventionally speaking there might be something that we can label friend or enemy, but our mind conceives of them as *truly existent* so. But then also, many times we are not even correct conventionally. It would be worth investigating this the coming week, to see if you can get a little deeper into that.

Student: Back on page 16 and 17, there are two terms that I'm not familiar with: Samkya and Vaishesika....?

We talked about this the last time, when we were talking about the self-knowing direct perceivers. One of the divisions would be self-knowers which are inattentive, something appears to them but it is not ascertained. Then the Sautrantikas give these examples. Like for instance one particular Indian school, the Samkya, who enumerate the various phenomena into a number of categories, 25 or something like that, and one of their tenets is that bliss or pleasure is not a consciousness, that it is something else. From a Buddhist perspective it actually is consciousness; a feeling of happiness or bliss is consciousness.

Of the five aggregates one is called consciousness; does that mean that feeling is not a consciousness? No, the consciousness aggregate is primary consciousness, and three of the others, feeling, discrimination and compositional factors, are all also consciousness, but they are not primary minds, they are mental factors.

So for a Samkya who is holding that bliss is not a consciousness, the implication is that they have a self-knower in their continuum that is realizing that bliss is a consciousness, because every consciousness (that is to say, other than a self-knower itself) has, according to Sautrantika, a self-knower which is knowing its entity.

Do you follow what I said there? Every other-knowing consciousness (i.e. every consciousness that is knowing something other than itself) has a self-knower as part of its entity, which is just aware not of the object that it is knowing but just of its state. So for that blissful consciousness there must be a self-knower that's knowing that. So the Samkya doesn't pay attention to that because they are adamant that happiness is not consciousness, and then it must be inattentive in their consciousness. Does that make any sense?

OK. So it's a similar thing with the Vaishesikas as well. Vaishesika is another of the Vedic schools. They don't accept inferential cognizers as being prime cognizers so it must be that their self-knowing consciousness is not paying attention to that, doesn't know that, doesn't ascertain that.

Student: On page 20, the fifth paragraph and what it says - ....

An inferential cognizer through renown (we will talk about this today) "is a inferential cognizer that realizes that it is suitable to express the rabbit possessor by the term moon, from the sign of it existing among objects of thought". Without explanation that does sound a bit obscure. Right?

Anything could be called anything, it's only by convention that we name things. There are many names (especially in poetry) for the moon in Sanskrit and one of them could be translated into English as "possessing the rabbit", because at certain latitudes when the moon rises it looks like there is a rabbit in it. So when it says the *rabbit possessor*, it is just referring to one of the poetic names of the moon.

So it says here an illustration of an inferential cognizer through renown is an inferential cognizer which realizes that it is suitable to express the *rabbit possessor* by the term moon due to the sign; an inferential cognizer is a logical statement, and it is suitable to do that. What's the sign? The sign is because it exists among objects of thought. So why is that a suitable sign?

Student: Is the IT referring to the *rabbit possessor*?

An inferential cognizers that realizes that it is suitable to express the *rabbit possessor* by the term moon, from the sign that IT exists. It means the moon/rabbit possessor exists among objects of thought - that it is an object that we can give both names to. You can call it anything. You can call it anything you want because it exists among objects of thought. Anything that exists among objects of thought (in other words anything that exists) can be called anything. There are no names that inherently adhere to things. That's the reasoning that one would use for that inferential cognizer.

Student: I think I'm getting confused because we (also) have that term "object-possessor".

Oh, ok. Rabbit-possessor. We had *yul chen* before: possessing an object -right. So you could say, that which *has* a rabbit rather than a *possessor*. The thing that *has* a rabbit, the place where there's a rabbit.

Student: When you were talking about consciousness, every consciousness has a self-knower except the self-knower itself?

Yes.

Student: Is the self-knower able to recognize itself as a self-knower or is it so absorbed in that state of self-knowing that it is totally aware, beyond labelling something as observed.

Most of what we think of as consciousness is called *chen rig* - other-knowing, knowing something which is other than itself. So let's say an eye consciousness knows shape and colour. The other-knower eye consciousness doesn't know itself and it doesn't know that it is knowing. It just knows shape and colour. According to these tenets, that consciousness also has another element to it, as part of it's nature it has the ability to look inward and to know that it is knowing; they say that otherwise you wouldn't be able to recall that you actually saw the blue or whatever.

If there was such a thing as a self-knower knowing that self-knower, then you would have an infinite regress, there would have to be a self-knower knowing that self-knower again, and so on. So here it's just said that every other-knowing consciousness has a self-knower and the self-knower itself verifies the knowing. I don't know if that is any clearer.

Prasangika does not accept that there is such a thing as a self-knower. Remember Shantideva's example: "just as a sword cannot cut itself, consciousness cannot know itself". So although you can turn the blade of a sword, or you can bend the blade, but the blade can't cut itself, no matter how you try to move it around. "I am going to cut the blade with itself" - it doesn't work. Shantideva also says "a lamp cannot illuminate itself". A lamp illuminates something else but it doesn't illuminate itself.

One of the reasons that these tenets say there has to be a self-knower is for memory to take place, for there to be a remembering consciousness of experiencing something. The upper tenets would say that merely the other-knower, knowing that other object, is capable of inducing certainty later that you experienced it. So they say you don't need a self-knower, but according the Sautrantika and the Cittamatra and even some of the Madhyamaka schools there is such a thing as a self-knower. It's quite renowned in Buddhism. We are just getting familiar with this type of terminology.

Let's go on a little bit further. I think we got to page 17, to *yogic direct perceivers*. That's just about where we had gotten right?

Remember there are four kinds of direct perceivers. Sense, mental, and self-knowing direct perceivers. Sense direct perceivers are the ones we are most consciousness of. Mental direct perceivers, we don't have many examples in our continuum, but it includes things like clairvoyance and so forth.

According to some (like in Lati Rinpoche's book) you can say that yogic and self-knowing direct perceivers have to be categorised as mental direct perceivers, because they don't have an exclusive or uncommon faculty other than the mind itself. Sense direct perceivers have a sense faculty; mental direct perceivers have just the mental sense power which is a previous instant of consciousness which can give rise to it.

Yogic direct perceivers are "that which is generated in dependence on its own *uncommon* empowering condition" - that means its exclusive faculty, that which only it has - "is a *meditative stabilisation*" - so that is a consciousness, and meditative stabilisation is *samadhi* in Sanskrit and in Tibetan *shine* - "which is a union of *shamatha* and *vipassana*" - a union of calm abiding and special insight.

The example sometimes given in the sutras of shamatha is when the turbid mind which is constantly agitated, in which the mud of our delusions has been stirred all around, has been calmed and there is no longer agitation. The poetic example is a little pond in the mountains that the king's horses have just run through; that pool of water, once they have run through it, and brought up the mud, when that's allowed to calm down is like when you don't have a lot of thoughts running through your mind and the mind can calm down - the mud can begin to settle and you are left with a lucid pool of water in the beautiful mountains. So that's likened to *shamatha*- calming the mind from the usual discursive thoughts that cause the emotional afflictions to arise and cause your mind to be polluted.

*Shamatha* is a mind which is singly pointed, it is not analysing. It's just imagining a buddha's form or watching the nature of the mind or meditating on love (not by *thinking* 'how wonderful it would be if all were happy', but having thought that way, holding the taste of that). *Shamatha* is just single-pointed meditation where there is no discursive thought. The mud has settled.

Then later you have to be able to develop the skill to analyse within that calm pool of our mind. It's like placing a fish into that pond - starting to analyse, to think. What's going to happen first of all when you put a fish into a clear pond? By its swimming around it's going to bring up some mud again, and ripples on the surface. Similarly, if one has developed shamatha and one tries to use that to analyse, one starts with losing the stability. You have to develop this greater faculty which is called vipassana, penetrative insight. That's like the ability of that fish of an analysis to very skilfully swim, not causing any turbulence like discursive thoughts or emotions that disturb the mind. So when you have those two together - that calm mind, and within that you are analysing, that's called the *union of shamatha and vipassana*. You've heard that before - the union of tranquil or calm abiding and penetrative insight.

So that is the necessary empowering condition for a yogic direct perception: “that which is generated in dependence upon its own uncommon empowering conditions, namely the meditative stabilisation (samadhi) which is a union of shamatha and vipassana”.

Can you have that before you are an arya being? Supposedly only aryas have yogic direct perception.

Can you have a union of penetrative insight and calm abiding before you reach the state of an arya? I think even non-Buddhists can have a union of penetrative insight and calm abiding, especially in case of the worldly vipassana that's analysing the grossness of the world we are in and relative subtlety of the form realm, the analysis that helps one to separate from attachment to that grosser realm. In this way one can actually achieve the so called jhanas - have you heard of the jhanas? Sometimes translated as trances. Dhyana in Sanskrit. So one can have such a union of calm abiding and special insight even as a non-Buddhist, or even before one enters the Buddhist path. But here it's "an other-knowing exalted knower" - it's not a self-knower, that's why it says "other-knowing", and exalted knower is "yeshe" ; this yeshe or exalted knower is something that is not just an ordinary consciousness but is conducive to our spiritual development.

So it is an other-knowing exalted knower, in the continuum of an arya being (someone who is a superior) which is free from conceptuality (it has to be a direct perception) and non-mistaken. When yogic direct perceivers are divided there are two: prime and subsequent cognizers.

Remember before, for all the other direct perceivers we had three divisions. What was the third one? Inattentive or a “consciousness to which an object appeared but which was not ascertained”. Here it says there are no “awarenesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained” for yogic direct perceivers because whatever is a yogic direct perceiver necessarily ascertains its object of comprehension.

That means it's never inattentive. According to these tenets a yogic direct perceiver knows it's object, it's not going to be spaced out, it's there.

The text then gives a reason for that. It says that this is because of Dharmakirti's *Commentary on Dignaga's Compendium of Prime Cognition (Pramanavarttika)*. Dharmakirti was the disciple of Dignaga who was I think the disciple of Vasubandhu.

Remember Asanga and Vasubandhu were brothers and Vasubandhu had this one disciple called Sthiramati. Vasubandhu was reciting the Abhidharma in his cave (I think he was reciting the Abhidharmakosha that he composed himself) and there was a pigeon up on the rock eating seeds and just by the force of hearing this (it must of paid some attention, it can't have been completely inattentive) in it's next life it was reborn as a little boy in the next valley, and when he was very young he wanted to find his guru. Because of the force of having heard the Abhidharma he became even greater than Vasubandhu. So even if you are just sitting here you will undoubtedly be much better than I in Lorig in the next life.

Vasubandhu had several disciples who excelled him in various subjects and one of them was Dignaga, who excelled him in logic. Dignaga was a great logician and his disciple - I'm not sure he actually studied with Dignaga or was a little bit after him - was called Dharmakirti. Dignaga and Dharmakirti are the two famous Buddhist logicians whose texts we study up to this day.

So here it says that Dharmakirti's *Commentary on the Compendium of Prime Cognition*, which was composed by Dignaga, says *From just seeing, the great intelligent ones – bodhisattvas - ascertain all*



aspects". This is a quotation that is used, and it is talking about the "great intelligent ones", the bodhisattvas, and "just from seeing" is referring to this kind of perceiver, a yogic direct perception.

So then it says that although subsequent cognizers that are yogic direct perceivers exist, the second moment and so forth of an omniscient exalted wisdom can not be a subsequent cognizer because every instant of omniscient consciousness engages its objects by its own power, even the second and third instant. So that is something specific for the omniscient mind.

Let's take a break and relax for a bit...

So we are in the middle of page 17:

Although subsequent cognizers that are yogic direct perceivers exist, the second moment and so forth (that is to say the third, fourth...tenth...moment) of an omniscient exalted wisdom, which one could say is a yogic direct perceiver, is not a subsequent cognizer because whatever is an omniscient exalted wisdom is necessarily a prime cognizer.

That means it's not like a train of thought or a perception in the continuum of ordinary beings, where only the first instance has a certain vibrancy, like we gave the example of the engine of a train that is capable of pulling the subsequent moments along. Every moment of the omniscient mind is like an engine and is capable of knowing its object by its own power. That's how these tenets are seeing it: the omniscient mind is different, it knows everything by direct perception, in fact there is no conceptual mind. Did you know that? A buddha has no concepts, doesn't have any thoughts. Does that sound contradictory to you? No mental images. Would there be any problem with that? What do you think? They experience everything directly - is that right?

Student: Concept and visual images, are they the same?

Conception is the process which uses visual and mental images. A conceptual mind knows and conceives of objects via a mental image, which doesn't have to be visual, it can be verbal. We can call it a mental image or a meaning generality.

Purbuchok qualifies this. Purbuchok is a great Gelukpa and uses the quotation of one of Lama Tsongkhapa's two main disciples – Gyaltsab Je. Do you know the two disciples? There's Lama Tsongkhapa and there's two disciples, one on either side, just like Shakyamuni is depicted with his two disciples. It is said that many of the great beings that appear will always have two disciples. The two special disciples of Lama Tsongkhapa were called Gyaltsab Dharma Rinchen (or Gyaltsab Je) and Khedrub Je. Gyaltsab Je looks older and has more compassionate expression and is supposed to be an emanation of Avalokiteshvara. When we do the mantra of Lama Tsongkhapa - (*mig-me tse-wai ter-chen Chen-re-zig*) there are three deities that are mentioned: Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri and Vajrapani. Lama Tsongkhapa was the emanation of Manjushri, Gyaltsab Je of Avalokiteshvara and Khedrub of Vajrapani. Khedrub Je is the one with the big eyes in the thangkas or statues. He was more famous for tTantric teachings. He's the one that had the great visions of Lama Tsongkhapa. He felt so sad when Lama Tsongkhapa passed away that he cried and prayed that he would come, and he actually had visions of Lama Tsongkhapa as a great mahasiddha.

Here Purbuchok, who is a Gelukpa, is quoting Gyaltsab Je to prove this point. Lama Tsongkhapa and his two disciples are considered authoritative in the Gelukpa tradition. One may find small contradictions between

Gyaltsab Je and Khedrub Je's teachings, but in general they both take Lama Tsongkhapa's explanation as perfect.

So: the omniscient mind never has a subsequent cognizer and is always a direct perceiver because Gyaltsab Je's text says so. The title of Gyaltsab Je's text is *Unmistaken Illumination of the Path to Liberation*; and he says in that text "no matter how much a turn inside and think about it I do not feel that an omniscient exalted wisdom is not pervaded by being a new r".

The Tibetans love to have double negatives. So what is he saying? It is **not** pervaded by being a new r. so in other words an omniscient wisdom is necessarily a new r? Is that right? No, because there is another negative in the beginning: "I do **not** feel". Sometimes they drive you crazy, these double, or even triple negatives. "I do **not** feel that an omniscient exalted wisdom is **not** pervaded by being a new r". If it **were** pervaded by being a new r that would mean it is necessarily a new r.

Here it says "**not** pervaded" but he also says "I **don't** feel" that "it is **not** pervaded". That means "I **do** feel that it is pervaded" i.e. "I **do** feel that it is a new r".

Also Khedrub Je's *Clearing Away the Darkness of Mind with respect to Treatise of Prime Cognition* is a nice little text, some parts of which we study sometimes. In that text he says "if something became a subsequent cognizer merely through its object being apprehended by a former prime cognizer, it would follow that the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient exalted wisdom would be subsequent cognizers. There exists many such flaws, as will be indicated below".

Maybe he's criticizing a particular definition of subsequent cognizer as being that which is what was realized before showing that it doesn't follow for a buddha. For a buddha one moment of consciousness realizes something, and the next instance of consciousness realizes something that was just realized, but it is not a subsequent cognizer, it is still a prime cognizer. Now we move on.

The reason for giving these four definitions, of sense direct perceivers, self-knowing direct perceivers, yogic direct perceivers and mental direct perceivers, is to come to the actual definitions of prime cognizers. Remember, there were two kinds of prime cognizers. On page 14 it said: when prime cognizers are divided there are two: direct and inferential prime cognizer: *When prime cognizers are divided, there are two: direct and inferential prime cognizers. The individual definitions, illustrations, and so forth will be explained later.* And then direct cognizers were explained first. Now that is finished and we look further at these two divisions of prime cognizers.

page 17-18: *The definition of a direct prime cognizer is a new incontrovertible knower that is free of conceptuality. When direct prime cognizers are divided, there are four: self-knowing, sense, mental, and yogic direct prime cognizers.*

A **direct prime cognizer** (which is a direct perception) is "a new incontrovertible knower that is free of conceptuality". *Incontrovertible* means it realizes its object and *free of conceptuality* prevents this direct prime cognizer from being any kind of conceptual mind, like an inference for example.

When direct prime cognizers are divided there are four - just as we had four direct perceivers, but the order here is stated differently: self-knowing, sense, mental and yogic direct prime cognizers.

That's all pretty clear, since we are just elaborating now, adding to the definition of direct perceivers the qualification of being ... what? What is the special thing about a prime cognizers, it has to be what?

**New** and **incontrovertible** - right? *Incontrovertible* or, in other words, not deceived. It is. So here the definition of a *self-knowing direct prime cognizer* is a "new incontrovertible knower free of conceptuality which is directed only inward and is just an apprehender". Does that have enough? What's added here and what's different from the definition of a self-knowing direct perceiver?

Page 16: A self-knowing direct perceiver is *that which has the aspect of an apprehender, is free of conceptuality and is non-mistaken*. We have to add to "incontrovertible" and what else?

The main thing added for a direct *prime cognizer* here is **new** and **incontrovertible**. So it says a new incontrovertible knower; that is free from conceptuality (that's in both of them); which is directed only inward and just an apprehender. So it's phrased differently. The other one says "that which has the aspect of an apprehender" and this one says "which is directed only inward and is just an apprehender".

What's missing out of this new definition on page 18, of a self-knowing direct prime cognizer? What does the definition on page 16 have which this one doesn't have?

p. 16: *The definition of a self-knowing direct perceiver is: that which has the aspect of an apprehender, is free from conceptuality, and is non-mistaken.*

p. 18: ... *the definition of the first, a self-knowing direct prime cognizer is: a new incontrovertible knower, free from conceptuality, which is directed only inward and is just an apprehender.*

Student: "Non-mistaken"

Yes, "non-mistaken" is missing. So is that wrong? Did the author wrongly leave it out?

Student: No, because a new incontrovertible knower *is* non-mistaken

Yes. So let's check that.

Remember, we were saying earlier that if one of two things in a definition are redundant they didn't both have to be there. But here, for a direct perceiver you couldn't just say "free from conceptuality", because a mistaken sense consciousness is also free from conceptuality. For example a sense consciousness that sees a blue snow mountain, or two moons, or has some other kind of error – being a sense consciousness, it is free from conceptuality, but it is mistaken.

Now maybe you could say it is non-mistaken, maybe that would cover both, but we need not look into that because here it says free from conceptuality. so we need to see whether that covers both. It doesn't say non-mistaken. (Did I get myself in trouble by saying that? Do you see what I am saying?)

Some of you had an insight here. There earlier one said "free from conceptuality and non-mistaken". This one says "that is free of conceptuality" and doesn't say non-mistaken but it does say "new incontrovertible". If something is incontrovertible will it also be non-mistaken?

Student: Yes

Then how about an inferential cognizer, a correct inference? Is it incontrovertible, if it's realizing subtle impermanence via a mental image? Yes, it's realizing its object. But it is mistaken because it is mistaken with respect to its appearing object.

So here if you say something is *free from conceptuality and incontrovertible*, and that will exclude mistaken sense perception. So that in that case you don't have to say non-mistaken.

What else is different here? A self-knowing direct prime cognizer is a "new incontrovertible knower that is free from conceptuality and which is directed only inward and is just an apprehender".

Before it said "which has the aspect of an apprehender". Here it says two things: "directed only inwards" and "just an apprehender". I think an apprehender that is directed only inwards means a self-knower because an other-knower is directed outwards.

Something that is directed inwards means towards itself - just apprehending itself as opposed to apprehending what is outside itself.

I think you could also say here "which has the aspect of an apprehender" instead of those two phrases. You could say "a self-knowing direct prime cognizer is a new and incontrovertible knower free from conceptuality, which has the aspect of an apprehender". You need to check.

Then: the definition of a sense direct prime cognizers is a "new incontrovertible knower free of conceptuality, which arises in dependence upon a physical sense power that is its uncommon empowering condition". So again what is missing is "mistaken". But that is ok because if it says "free from conceptuality and incontrovertible", so it will have to be non-mistaken.

Non-conceptual, free from conceptuality; so it's not a conceptual mind - that includes all the different kinds of sense and mental perceivers, some of which are mistaken and some of which are non-mistaken. But if it is incontrovertible, that means it's realizing its object and that means the object that it is apprehending actually exists and it is knowing it, so then it can't be a mistaken consciousness, and you don't need to have the word non-mistaken.

When sense direct prime cognizers are divided there are five; apprehending forms and so forth. So what are the five sense direct prime cognizers? An eye direct prime cognizer, an ear direct prime cognizer, nose direct prime cognizer and so forth. This is just talking about the senses.

Then, a mental direct prime cognizer is a "new incontrovertible knower that is free from conceptuality and arises in dependence on a mental sense power that is its uncommon empowering condition".

When mental direct cognizers are divided there are six: apprehending form and so forth. How come that there are six here, while there were only five for the sense direct prime cognizers?

If we look at the examples of mental direct perceivers, they are clairvoyances, dream consciousnesses, but also there is one instant of a mental direct perceiver in the continuum of ordinary beings at the end of a train of sense direct perception. So then, how many objects does it have? The ones that follow eye consciousness have visual forms, the ones that follow ear consciousness have sounds, and then smells, tastes and tactile objects and then the mental direct perceivers that are knowing a previous instant of mental consciousness would be the sixth one. So I think that is what is being referred to here when it says that there are *six* kinds of mental direct prime cognizers, apprehending forms and so forth.

That's kind of interesting though. Could they be *prime* cognizers, in the continuum of ordinary beings? What was the thing about those mental direct perceivers? Do you see my point? If they are inattentive, how can they be prime cognizers? Prime cognizers have to their object - right?

How many divisions were there of mental direct perceivers in the continuum of ordinary beings?

Student: Three

Yes. Prime; subsequent and inattentive. And most of ours are inattentive. The ones that are prime and subsequent would be clairvoyances. So if talking about apprehending forms and so forth, those would for the most part be inattentive, wouldn't they? The ones that come at the end of trains of sense perceptions. So that maybe is something to think about.

Then: the definition of the yogic prime cognizer is "an other-knowing exalted knower in the continuum of a superior, which in dependence upon a meditative stabilisation that is a union of calm abiding and special insight, its uncommon empowering condition, newly and directly realizes either subtle impermanence or the coarse or subtle selflessness of persons".

The other one, the definition of a yogic direct perceiver, said it is an other-knowing exalted knower in the continuum of a superior which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken, and is generated in dependence on its own uncommon empowering condition, a meditative stabilisations which is the union of calm-abiding and special insight". (p. 17)

So the definition of the yogic prime cognizer has the second part but it doesn't say "which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken". So is this definition wrong?

Before we said that it didn't have say non-mistaken if it said incontrovertible and free of conceptuality. Right? So in this case, if you say it *directly* s, what does that imply?

Student: That it's incontrovertible

Yes, to means to be incontrovertible. *Newly* is there and that was necessary for it to be a prime cognizer. It's **new** and **incontrovertible** with respect to either subtle impermanence or the coarse or subtle selflessness of persons but what about **free from conceptuality** and **non-mistaken**. Is it clear yet why it's free from conceptuality?

Student: It's because it's directly realizing that it's free from conceptuality

*Directly* realizing – yes, *directly* is what makes it free from conceptuality.

But still it's a little bit funny, because if you look later on in Lati Rinpoche's book, there's a difference between *directly realizing* and *realizing via a direct perception*. Actually this probably means via a direct perception.

Also, you might circle "directly s" here with a question mark, because according to these tenets, the coarse or subtle selfless of persons is not the appearing object. See if you can follow this. When you realize selflessness of persons, what's appearing to that consciousness? If you have a direct realization of that, what appears to the consciousness?

According to these tenets, can it be a permanent phenomenon that appears? No - according to Sautrantika the appearing object of direct perception has to be impermanent. So that direct perception realizing selflessness, according to them must realize the impermanent aggregates, and then *indirectly* knows that they are free of a permanent partless independent person (if you are talking about the gross selflessness of persons) or it indirectly realizes that they are free of a self-supporting substantial existent person (if you are talking about subtle selflessness). It doesn't *directly* realize that.

Lati Rinpoche explains this terminology by saying: you could say that yogic direct perception is *realizing with a direct perception* but it is *not realizing directly* but *indirectly*. So that's how you can make a subtle difference here, by saying "realizing *with a direct perception* either subtle impermanence or the coarse of subtle selflessness of persons".

Student: The union of special insight and calm-abiding as its uncommon empowering condition, doesn't that make it a direct perception?

No. Because let's say on the path of preparation, you remember, from the five paths: path of accumulation, path of preparation etc., do you remember the demarcation for the beginning of the path of preparation? When does a bodhisattva or a hearer or solitary enter into the path of preparation? When they have the union of tranquil abiding and penetrative insight, meditating on selflessness (or emptiness in the case of a bodhisattva, in the higher tenets) via a mental image.

So that's an inferential cognizer, on the basis of the union of tranquil abiding and penetrative insight. So it doesn't have to be a direct perceiver. That kind of stabilised mind can still have a mental image. But in a yogic direct perception, what was previously an inferential cognizer, knowing its object by means of a mental image, becomes a yogic *direct* perceiver when it's realizing it via a direct perception. The mental image disappears.

In other words this union of calm abiding and penetrative insight is not sufficient to say it is a direct perception because there are many instances that are conceptual but are that union of calm abiding and penetrative insight.

"With direct perception" eliminates conceptuality and because it's realized incontrovertible and non-mistaken everything is there.

Student: So it's necessarily directly realizing?

It probably doesn't say directly in the Tibetan, it probably says *by means of a direct perception* because it doesn't realize the subtle selflessness of persons or coarse selflessness of persons directly, it realizes them indirectly. Unless according to Purbuchok's texts *directly* means *via a direct perception*, and he uses a different word to indicate that it is not actually appearing directly. It's an implicit realization, an indirect realization in that case.

Prasangika doesn't say that. Prasangika says that direct perception can have permanent phenomena as their object. Only the Sautrantikas says that all a direct perceiver can know are impermanent phenomena.

So what about the one that realizes subtle impermanence? That is something which itself is impermanent, so it can be known both directly and via direct perception. But the other two (the coarse and subtle



selflessness of persons), according to Sautrantika if it can know them with direct perception, that direct perception is realizing something that is impermanent, you see that directly with your mind, and then you know indirectly/implicitly that what you are understanding is void of being permanent, partless and independent, or void of being self-supporting substantially existent.

When yogic-direct perceivers are divided there are three: prime cognizer directly realizing subtle impermanence; the coarse selflessness of persons and the subtle selflessness of persons.

According to Sautrantika, what is the subtle or gross selflessness of persons is? Is it the person being empty of true existence?

Sautrantika differs here from the Mahayana. The Prasangika (the highest school) say that the subtle selflessness of persons is that the person is empty of being truly existent. They also say that there's a *gross self of persons* that even if eliminated doesn't bring you to the arya state, but is useful in subduing some of the delusions. It is the realization that the person is empty of being self-supporting substantially existent. (Substantially existent in the sense of able to support itself, not in the sense of true existence.)

For the Sautrantikas, the realization of the emptiness of the self-supporting substantially existent self is the *subtle selflessness of persons*. They have something even grosser than that that they call the gross selflessness of persons, which is that the person is empty of being permanent, partless and independent.

These are the attributes of the *atma* in the Vedic schools. The *atma* - the Self - is something which is permanent and eternal, and is partless and doesn't have any kind of components and it is independent of other things. The higher tenets would call this an intellectually formed ignorance; something that has come about because of the tenets and not something that we innately and naturally grasp at; it is something one has to learn, it has come about because of exposure to a philosophical school.

So from the Prasangika point of view, the apprehension of a permanent, partless and independent person is intellectually formed, there's no innate form of that. Animals do not have it: "I am partless, I am permanent, I am independent". But for Sautrantika this is what they posit as the coarse or gross selflessness of persons; the realization that the person is devoid of being permanent, partless, and independent. Does that make sense?

The subtle selflessness of person here is that the person is devoid of being substantially existent in the sense of being self-supporting. What does that mean? Actually you have to inquire quite a bit to get at its meaning, it's not something that is usually explained right at the beginning. I think one thing it means is that according to the lower tenets there are two kinds of phenomena: those that are substantially existent and those that are imputedly or designatedly existent.

Now you may think: what's he getting at, everything is imputedly existent. But you have to forget that, and be like a baby with a new mind. According all the Hinayana schools and even some of the higher schools, some phenomena substantially exist, that is to say that by merely seeing them, you see that thing. Other things are imputedly existent, for instance a forest is something that is imputedly existent because a forest is comprised of trees.

Another classic example of something that is imputedly existent is an army. You see the individual soldiers and you say the army is passing, even if it is only part of the army. Army is something that is imputed onto a collection of soldiers.

A rosary is something that is imputed onto the collection of the beads and the string and so forth that are arranged in certain way. You can't find a rosary in any of the parts. This is what the lower tenets would say and they would say that one of the misperceptions that we have about the self, is seeing the self as substantially existent, whereas the self is only imputedly existent. It is like a forest or a rosary or an army, just imputed onto the collection of the five aggregates and there is no substantially existent self the way the mind perceives it.

Well, you might say, that sounds like emptiness to me. That's not as subtle as emptiness at all, it is still very gross, but it certainly gets us in that direction.

So for these tenets (Sautrantika) the lack of a self-supporting, substantially existent person is the realization of the subtle selflessness of persons. That and the gross selflessness of persons, the fact that the person is empty of being a permanent, partless and independent being, those two, and subtle impermanence, are the three kinds of objects that yogic-direct perceivers take as their objects.

So they them via direct perception but they don't all three of them directly; two of them they indirectly, or implicitly. What appears to them is actually an impermanent phenomenon - the aggregates that are devoid of such selves.

OK. That finishes that section. Let's go a little further now to the *facsimile of direct perception*. The word facsimile in Tibetan means like and appearing - so appearing like, something which appears to be direct perception but is not it. Well .... facsimiles are sometimes better than the real thing, but here the implication is something which appears to be a direct perceiver but is not.

All these different divisions are to sharpen our minds and to understand them from all different directions.

So the definition of a facsimile of a direct perceiver is "a knower which mistaken with respect to its appearing object". What kind of things does that include? Conceptions, are they mistaken with respect to their appearing objects? Conceptions are. Because a conceptual mind takes the mental image as its appearing object and although it doesn't focus on that, it's actually knowing its object via that mental image and it is said to be mistaken because of that. IN various ways, and one way is because the image is mixed with what you are trying to and you mistake this image to be the actual object.

A knower which is mistaken with regard to its appearing object, is that necessarily a conceptual consciousness?

It could be also a non-conceptual mind that is mistaken with respect to its appearing object e.g. a faulty eye consciousness, a faulty ear consciousness; they can be mistaken with respect to their appearing object because what seemingly appears is not what is actually appearing to it. Like when one moon appears to your eye but because somebody poked you in the eye and you see two moons.

So facsimiles of direct perceivers and mistaken consciousness are synonyms. Mistaken consciousness is something that is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. Can a mistaken consciousness anything?

Inferential cognition is a conceptual mind, mistaken with respect to its appearing object, but it realizes its object even though it has a mental image of what's it's knowing, like for example subtle impermanence or selflessness. If it is a valid cognition it realizes its object.

Remember, there are two kinds of valid cognitions or prime cognizers: inferential cognition and direct perceivers. So you can know things incontrovertibly with logic, with inference. Something can be mistaken but incontrovertible.

That was the point I was trying to make before. Sometimes it didn't have both words in the definition of a direct perceiver because it said free of conceptuality and incontrovertible. You'll have to get this in the next couple of days. Ok? Get your minds around this.

*When facsimiles of direct perceiver are divided there are seven.* I am just going over these and then you will think about these in the next couple of days and you will have them so clear next time that I can just fly through them. Six of them are conceptual, and one of them is non-conceptual and can almost seem like direct perception.

An example of a non-conceptual facsimile of a direct perception would be like seeing someone making a figure of eight in space with sparklers. That would be a seemingly direct perception but it is not an actual direct perception. So that would be a wrong sense consciousness.

Student: Doesn't this get tricky, because I don't see the atoms or molecules of your body moving around and you appear to me to be some kind of solid thing. Is that mistaken or are we saying (in this school) that this conventional reality is true?

Good question. We will check.

One that I've always found a little bit controversial comes a little bit further in the text, at the bottom of the page – where it is talking about what non-conceptual facsimiles of direct perceivers can be. The second one, where it says "the cause of error existing in the abode is for example sitting in a boat for a sense consciousness which see trees as moving". If you have ever sat in a boat it might seem like other things are moving but actually you're moving. Is that really true? Actually from the point of view of physics it's completely relative and you can't say that one of them is at rest but the implication is that there is some kind of state of rest, like the earth is some kind of platform but you could argue about that also that there is no one place that is absolutely at rest and everything else is moving. You can only say that things are moving with respect to one another.

From a certain point of view it seems as though there is a circle of fire but just like in a movie there is a succession of individual things, so it is like an illusion, there is not an actual perception of a circle of fire. But you can have a direct perception of a vase. Is that any less valid because the atoms are moving?

Student: Don't you need to ask for whom? Is it to us, we humans, who see this things in a certain way as normal and then it is a vase. But an ant right next to the vase doesn't see it as a vase at all.

So it depends on karma. According to what we know, none of the six realms perceives subtle impermanence, it is something only a buddha can perceive with a sense perception – subtle impermanence. Even aryas only can perceive it with yogic direct perception. So it sort of goes along with just the conventional state that we experience, that we don't perceive this, that succession of vases that are appearing moment by moment, even regardless of the motion of the atoms, just the karmic appearance of that as something similar moment by moment.

Student: So the gang that sees the snow mountain as white beats up the smaller gang who see the blue snow mountain because there are more of them?

You mean what do we consider to be conventional, what constitutes conventional truth?

Someone might say if it is just by convention, like the majority of people might say that something is green and then someone who is colour blind gets outvoted.

So if there are two different groups of people and one group says it's green and the other says it's grey, then we can come to some kind of scientific conclusion that the people who say it is grey have some defect in their sense base that prevents them from seeing what the other people are seeing. It's not just done by consensus. Like the Republicans say this has been a good war and we Californians that this is Belloni and because there are more Republicans therefore it is a good war. It's not done like that. But actually, most things are completely subjective.

For next time why don't you go over these seven and try to read the next couple of sections through, about the sources of error, and then we're going to get into inferential prime cognizers.

Up until now we have been talking about the prime cognizers that are direct perceivers or facsimiles of that, and in that way we have indirectly started to talk about inference. So the next time we will be talking about inference which is an actual valid way of knowing things. We can actually realize emptiness with inference. We can subtle impermanence. We can all of the various important spiritual concepts via inference.

Student: It would still be conceptual though?

Inference would be necessarily conceptual.

Student: But the realization, would that be non-conceptual?

The realization would still be conceptual. You've got to *get* this one. There are some things that you are still no getting. So if something is a realization, if it is incontrovertible, it doesn't have to be a direct perception.

According to the Buddhism there are two ways that we can know things incontrovertibly. You can know it with direct perception which is what most people would think is the only way, or you can know it with inference. Some of the Vedic schools, the nihilists or Charvakas, wouldn't accept that inference is a valid way of knowing and that you could actually know something by inference. But according to Buddhism you can actually know the object perfectly and that is how you get a mental image of emptiness. At our stage right now what we are trying to build up is a mental image of selflessness or emptiness. Even though it is not a direct perception of emptiness, we have to approach the direct perception that way, over time and by familiarising with that. Emptiness itself is a hidden phenomenon. It can't be known directly, or by direct perception, from the beginning.

Do you remember the difference between manifest, hidden and deeply hidden phenomena? Manifest phenomena can be known with direct perception from the very beginning. Hidden phenomena cannot be known by direct perception from the beginning but have to be known by inference, and then, once known by inference and familiarised with, can be known directly, such as subtle impermanence, emptiness and so forth. Deeply hidden phenomena, other than with a buddha's perception can not be known with direct perception and can only be known by inference. For instance, the action of the lady who was giving bread to the Buddha. That she would actually be born as a pratyeka buddha as a result of that particular karmic action. Also the qualities of a buddha are deeply hidden phenomena – it is like the wiring behind the wall that you can't perceive directly.

Student: Did you say a buddha only knows that by inference?

No. **We** can only know that by inference. We can know certain things about karma. We can know that giving will give rise to resources and we can know that morality can give rise to high status and being born in the upper realms. We can actually through inference by the power of the fact, which we will be talking about later, that giving will bring resources but that's not deeply hidden, that's a hidden phenomena. But the particular action of giving, we can't infer from that what the particular consequences will be, like "Ah, I know that in 47000 eons the result of this will be this." There is no way to infer that. Only by depending on the omniscient mind of a valid person can we infer that, by the third kind of inference, inference of belief.

You can go through and familiarise yourself with that in pages 21 and 22. I think we are getting down to some very interesting stuff, and you will have to come to terms with quite a lot.

Let's try to dedicate this merit

## Dedication

Try to calm the mind by focusing inward, to the mental consciousness....

Even if there is a continuity of images to your mind and to your senses, seeing through them and not giving them any mental energy, so that they can subside quickly....

Focusing just on that clarity that we have begun to get a mental image of.... Which is also a subtle hidden phenomenon - not deeply hidden but something that we can only have a mental image of at first and then have a direct perception of later....

Recognizing that due to the motivation at the beginning and due to the continuity of motivation over these weeks of study, studying the Mahayana teachings that are not just trivial information but actually conducive to our path to enlightenment, we have created merit tonight and dedicate it in such a way that it will not be used up on one or some small number of occasions in the future, but that it will have a longevity until we attain enlightenment....

Due to this merit may I achieve all the realizations of the path: good heart; compassion, wisdom, and quickly transform my mind and overcoming faults and develop my good qualities, may I become a guru-buddha who is in a position to lead perfectly all sentient beings to enlightenment....

Try to seal that always with an apprehension of the *three spheres*. The merits being dedicated, the object being dedicated to (in this case our enlightenment) and the act of dedication - those three spheres are all empty of existing truly, independently.... But they still function.... There is no self....

Thank you very much.

## Session 6

### Meditation

Let's begin by doing a little meditation. We are going to try and set a special motivation. At the very beginning we do some meditation and calm our mind. It's a little bit like playing musical chairs; remember, musical chairs, in kindergarten? When the music played you got up from your seat and walk around and quickly take a seat when the music stopped? So right now you are going to let the ordinary worldly mind not have a place in the seat of your consciousness, the seat of your attention. By just letting it be quiet for some time... and then we will try to replace that with positive mind.

So relax your body and relax your mind. Remind yourself right from the very beginning that ultimately everything is empty of existing the way it appears.....

The sense of self, the sense of truly existent others - they don't exist really in the way they appear to the mind. All beings are labouring under that misconception - all of our kind mothers. So I'm going to watch my mind now and try to set a good motivation for their benefit....

Begin by being aware of your respiration....

Try to bring your attention inward away from your senses, just being aware of the breathing....

Then when the mind is a little bit centred, bring your attention just to your mental consciousness, perhaps at your heart chakra, near the middle of your chest – that's a very good place to start. Keeping your attention there - away from the cerebral region.....

Watching the contents of your mind - both the subjective states and the objective thoughts – and try to see them as transparent; not cultivating them, not paying attention to them - let them disappear.....

Try to perceive behind them the constant nature of the mind, like clear light....

Any objective thought, any subjective response can be used as a stepping stone to recognizing *that* spaciousness, *that* clear light nature, by letting them go, as though bouncing off of it. Taking a step away from it and using that occurrence to recall that its very presence implies the spaciousness of the mind - its non-obstructibility. If the mind were solid, obstructing, if it were not clear, the different thoughts could not arise within it.....

Your key word here is *letting go*: *letting go* of the thoughts and whatever arises, and re-focusing on just the basic nature of the mind within which the thoughts are arising....

Practice with the body - let go of the sense of the body. Try to focus on the consciousness to which it is appearing....

The sense of self may appear to the mind as a meditator, as cultivating or experiencing that state. That too is just an appearance to the mind - a dualistic appearance. Let go of that and let there just be the experience of consciousness knowing the nature of the previous instant of mind....



Ask yourself: whatever understanding I have of the mind, this clarity, is it something that's based on belief or is it an assumption, something perhaps stronger than just doubt? Is it an actual experience, an actual realization of that mind?.....

Right now we are knowing the nature of the mind via a mental image that we're developing of it....

For that understanding to be a realization, it would have to be based on either direct perception or on inference....

Within this quiet mind, try to recognize that the extent of space is filled with living beings, sentient beings....Around us on the earth here are the animals, insects and even spirits that we don't perceive; hell beings and gods, filling infinite universes. All of them want to be free of suffering and have the stable highest happiness if they could find it.....

But not accepting the law of causation, of karma, they often, out of desire for happiness create non-virtue - the causes of suffering - actually destroying the causes of happiness. Wanting to be free of suffering, they steal their happiness away, by engaging in activities that create negative karma, that are the causes of suffering.....

All our mothers have such meagre joy within cyclic existence. For their welfare I am going to participate tonight to learn more about the mind, to control my mind as my gurus - the great beings - have done before and to get closer to enlightenment....

So for that purpose I am going to participate, as an action of training my mind, developing my good qualities, my knowledge in some ways, my experience. Being patient with the things that I don't understand at first, developing the store of knowledge to be able to further investigate the scriptures, to understand emptiness, to develop the real experience of bodhicitta in this lifetime.....

For the aim of helping, aiding sentient beings, for their welfare, I'm going to participate tonight in order to quickly attain enlightenment....

Relax and bring your attention back.....

## Teaching

Does anyone have questions from the last lecture or from that from which you have been reading?

Chris: Could you give a couple of *tsad ma* examples?

Examples of valid cognition?

What are the crucial criteria for something to be a valid cognition? Is it enough to a object? Is that a valid cognition, according to these tenets? What do you think? Don? If you an object, is that a valid cognition - to actually have a realization?

Don: No

Why not?

Don: It has to be non-conceptual

Wow! To realize something it has to be non-conceptual?

Don: It has to be non-mistaken, non-controvertible

Is that right? Bonnie - get him on the right track. Let's get Don on the straight and narrow here.

Bonnie: A direct perception is non-conceptual and you can an object that way.

Yes but he said that you had to things non-conceptually. Is that right? Because we said that a valid cognition at least had to its object. Don is claiming that in order to an object, you have to it with direct-perception.

Student: No. There's the inferential realization.

Exactly. You can also things with conception. You can realize emptiness conceptually via a mental image. That can be a realization. And you can things with direct perception. So if you only could things with direct perception there would be no valid way of knowing emptiness until you had a direct realization of it. There would be no prelude to that that was a realization. Do you remember?

The Buddhist position is that there are two ways in which we can realize objects - not just know them in a general way, and not just believe them or have doubt about them or presume them. There are two ways in which we can remove superimpositions and actually realize something; one is through direct perception and one is through inferential cognition (which were a going to be talking about today).

Chris' question was what an example of a valid cognition was. He used the Tibetan word - he's learning Tibetan - and said *tsad ma*. Maybe you thought he was talking about something else. In Sanskrit what's the word? *Pramana* – and in the way we are using it right now it means a valid cognition.

There's another criterion for something to be *pramana* besides realizing its object, or, as Don and Beth were saying, besides being *incontrovertible* with respect to their object. What else does the consciousness have to be, what other quality, according to the Sautrantika tenets, does it need to have to be *tsad ma*?

Student: Non-mistaken?

It doesn't have to be non-mistaken because inferential cognition is mistaken - isn't it? In the sense mistaken is being used, meaning mistaken with respect to its appearing object, all conceptions are mistaken with respect to their appearing object.

The other quality we said a *tsad ma* needs to have according to the Sautrantikas is that it has to be *fresh* or *new*. A *new incontrovertible knower* was the general definition of a valid cognizer – a *tsad ma*.

If you ask what are examples, I could say there are two:

1. There are *direct valid cognizers* such as our eye consciousness. The first instance of seeing these flowers is able to pull along the subsequent moments of that visual train/visual consciousness. That first instance according to these tenets would be a *valid direct perceiver*

2. The first instant when you realize for example impermanence with an *inferential cognizer*; that first instant would also be a *valid cognizer* because if you realize it with inference, and thereby it becomes incontrovertible, then that would be a valid cognizer. As for the subsequent moments, we have to investigate whether they would be called inference; maybe they are not actually inference.

Student: When were talking about the experience we have when “on comes the light”, that's my normal way of thinking of realizing something. Like ‘all this time I got it, but I didn't quite get it right ....’

And then suddenly – “aha.... Yes, that maybe something related to realizing - when you've suddenly understood something correctly. But that will still be conceptual most of the time. Would that necessarily be an inferential cognizer? No, actually to have an inferential cognizer, which is the only way that you can really realize something with the mind, it has to be due to a perfect reason that makes you eliminate wrong ideas about something. That kind of “aha” experience, that kind of experience where suddenly something dawns on you that may be eliminating certain misconceptions about something and getting at it correctly, I don't think that would necessarily be a valid cognizer. I think from there you refine it over time. It's not as if one minute you don't know it at all, and then the next minute you know it. That would not be the sign of having developed a valid cognizer.

Dorje: Did I hear you incorrectly a moment ago? Did you say that the only way you can realize something is by inference?

No. Don said that the only way you can realize something is with direct perception. I said that basically there are two, and only two, ways that you can realize something: via direct perception or via inference. Or their continuity - the subsequent cognition of either of them. There are two kinds of objects: manifest objects and hidden objects. Some of them are deeply hidden. Manifest objects we can realize with direct perception and hidden object we can realize with inference. Do you remember this?

What is a hidden object?

Student: Emptiness

Emptiness is a hidden object because it doesn't appear to our consciousness directly, it doesn't appear to direct perception until after we've realized it via inference, that is, conceptually.

Student: How do you define realize because if you realize emptiness through inference that's different than direct perception of emptiness which seems *more* realizing.

To ascertain something means to become incontrovertible with respect to it. There are several aspects: one means to remove misconceptions about it, and also to be able induce certainty afterwards - what we call an ascertaining consciousness, it ascertains that you did that. It has to be strong.

For instance a consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained, an inattentive perception, can't be a valid consciousness. You could be sitting there and something happened right in front of you, but if you were completely thinking about something else, or you were totally distracted by something else, whether it was another sense consciousness or your mental consciousness, and you weren't paying

attention to it, you will not remember it, although it appeared to your eye consciousness and your eye consciousness did see it, but your mental consciousness was not paying sufficient attention. That's the main way that we remember and that we can induce some certainty that we saw something. So that would not be a valid cognition even though it is a direct perception.

Is a consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained a direct perception? Chris?

Chris: I don't know

Do you remember the divisions of direct perception? Dan do you remember?

Students: Sense, mental, yogic and self knowing

Those are the direct perceivers. How about sense direct perceivers? What are the divisions of sense direct perceivers? I don't mean the five {ear, nose, tongue etc.} but if we divide it in three ways.

*Valid or prime direct perceivers, subsequent direct perceivers, and direct perceivers to which an object appears but is not ascertained.* So an *inattentive perception* is a direct perception. It actually perceives the object but it is not a valid cognition because it can't even recall that you saw the object. It's unlike seeing something erroneously - like having your little brother stick his thumb in your eye or having some sickness or waking in the morning and being groggy-eyed and not seeing things clearly as you are walking around. That wouldn't be a direct perception because you're influenced by some error in the sense consciousness (or in the basis).

Is it getting any clearer? Are you beginning to remember? No?

Student: It's starting to get clearer..

And then it gets foggy again....

Student: There's too much in there to give an answer.

Well there 's been a lot we have studied. The gist of it is that there are two things here: what constitutes a realization and what constitutes a valid cognition? Chris's original question was what constitutes a valid cognition and he asked if I could give some examples and I said that basically there are only two kinds of valid cognizers: direct perceivers that are valid cognizers and inferential cognizers. They realize their object, and the instances of them that are fresh are valid, or prime cognizers, because they have some kind potency to pull subsequent cognizers along like the engine of a train is able to pull the cars after it.

Then what constitutes a realization? That's another question. It has to be a consciousness which has eliminated misconceptions about something - either through direct perception or through inference - and it has gotten at the object of that and it can induce a remembering consciousness that you've perceived that. So inattentive perception is not a valid cognition because it doesn't fulfil that kind of criteria.

So to realize is different than to believe, even if you believe correctly. We were joking a couple of weeks ago as to whether intuition is a realization or not. Some people were saying that their intuition was a direct realization when it's right but when their intuition was wrong it was not a direct perception. Well, maybe it was just a kind of a guess, or a feeling. It might sometimes have some element of validity but unless it actually eliminates superimpositions and you have an absolute about that, it's not an actual realization.

Even if we think we're certain, it may not be a realization because we can have a correct belief about something in which we feel we're absolutely certain about it but we haven't actually realized it.

That will get a little bit clearer as we go along.

Student: In this book they are using subsequent apperception. What is an apperception?

Apperception is what we call *self-knower*. The translator of Geshe Rabten's book, Stephen Batchelor I think, translated self-knower as apperception. Sometimes you see it translated as reflexive awareness. In Tibetan it is *rang-rig*, which literally means knowing itself. I haven't looked the word *apperception* up in the dictionary

Chris: Can I get back for just a second? If the flower and its colour and shape appearing to your eye induces a conceptualisation of flower, and the colour and shape appearing to your eye is the power that pulls the rest of the train, then was that the correct and valid perception?

We can even leave off the conception. If later you are able to recall that you saw the flower, and the eye consciousness is not deceived about it, we would say that that was a direct perception of flower.

What are these? – pointing at flowers.

Student: Sweet peas.

That would be a direct perceiver of a sweet pea and direct perceivers can be prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers or perceivers to which an object appears but is not ascertained. In general direct perceivers (unless you are not paying attention to them) will realize their objects. The first instant of that would be the eye valid cognition (or prime cognition) that realizes its object, .

Subsequently, what goes on your mind is judging it and so forth; the conceptualization about it is a train of thought that's diverting from this. I think of it as what's happening in the eye consciousness being like a camera that perceives something; then the mental consciousness is knowing it - but unless the mental consciousness pays attention to it, you don't recall that you saw it and therefore that doesn't constitute a realization of it, you can't say you had a valid cognition of a flower if you don't recall seeing it afterwards.

So let's go a bit further. Where did we get to last time? On page 19 - we talked about facsimiles of direct perceiver (at the bottom of page 18). So let's start with the definition again.

What is a facsimile in general? A fax is a copy, something that looks like the original.

Student: A representation

A representation. In Tibetan the word is actually *thar nang* - that which appears like.... So a facsimile of a direct perceiver is something that appears to be a direct perceiver but in reality is not.

The definition of a facsimile of a direct perceiver "is a knower which is mistaken with regard to its appearing object".

Now why is that not a direct perceiver? What's the quality of a direct perceiver?

Student: Incontrovertible.

No - a direct perceiver doesn't have to be incontrovertible.

Student: It's not mistaken

*It's not mistaken* with respect to its appearing object. Here it says it's mistaken with regard to its appearing object. What's appearing to it - there is some kind of mistake with regard to that.

All conceptual consciousnesses are mistaken with respect to their appearing objects, remember? There are several reasons why a conceptual consciousness is said to be mistaken with respect to the mental image that is its appearing object. If I'm thinking about a vase, in one way you could say that the vase is actually appearing to my mind even though it is not here. It can be a vase from when I was a kid - if I think of that, you might say that it is appearing to my consciousness - but the vase is not called the appearing object of a conception. What's the appearing object of a conception - the main thing that's appearing to it? The meaning generality or mental image. That's how we are knowing that object - we're knowing the object via a mental image, and we're mistaken with respect to that. So all conceptual consciousnesses are mistaken with respect to their appearing object because in one sense the appearance of a mental image and the appearance of the object are mixed and we don't differentiate one from the other.

In a sense that's how the higher tenets say that all of our sense perceptions are mistaken as well. When I perceive Marcie, there are two appearances to my consciousnesses, even to my sense consciousness: the appearance of the *conventionally existent* Marcie and the appearance of the a *truly existent* Marcie as though existing from its own side. Those two are inseparably mixed, I can't differentiate between the two. Everything appears to be *truly existent* and when we do validly know them we do have an understanding of their conventional existence, we know that Marcie is the lady that is named on the basis of this particular set of aggregates - that sounds a bit impersonal, doesn't it - these five heaps or aggregates....

The Sautrantika explanation of why we are mistaken with respect to the mental image is because the images are mistaken for one another, you can't separate the two - the appearance of the mental image and the appearance of the mental object. It seems like the appearance of the mental image is the appearance of the object, but it is not.

The Prasangikas would say that we can leave aside a conceptual knower being mistaken with regard to its appearing object - all objects appear to sense consciousnesses, to our ordinary consciousnesses, as *truly existent*. But in fact the conventional object, like the *conventionally existent* Maureen, does appear to my sense consciousness, as does the appearance of the *truly existent* Maureen. Those two appearances are mixed such that I can not separate one from the other, even in the case of conception. Only when I understand emptiness can I eliminate the appearance of a *truly existent* object.

So there is some similarity here when we talk about how a facsimile of a direct perceiver is a knower mistaken with regard to its appearing object. According to this definition all conceptions are in a way facsimiles of direct perceivers - to many of them something appears very clearly, but actually, it is mixed with a mental image.

There are some non-conceptual facsimiles of direct perceivers. Those would be for example, on the fourth of July seeing a sparkler being twirled around in the figure of an eight ; it looks like there is an eight in



space but that sense consciousness is mistaken with respect to its appearing object, there is not an actual 8 there, it's just because the movement is so fast that our eye merges the succession of images together.

So here it says that there are seven kinds or divisions of facsimiles of direct perceivers. Actually six of them are conceptual minds because all conceptual minds are going to be mistaken with respect to their appearing object because they are mistaken with respect to the mental image. One of them is non-conceptual, which is was the kind of thing that we were just taking about a second ago - which has some kind of mistake either in the sense or in the object itself or something like that.

There are mistaken conceptions, conventional conceptions, inferential conceptions, conceptions arisen from inference, memory conceptions and wishing conceptions. This comes from the classic literature and you might wonder what you have to know this for. You need to know it in order to be able to follow the great pundits - they have all studied this, so it can make our mind a little more clear about their presentations.

So what is a mistaken conception? That would be just like a wrong idea; thinking that sound is permanent. That's a mistaken conception. Actually it's mistaken consciousness anyway – right? It's mistaken with respect to it's appearing object, but in addition to that, it's controvertible, it's wrong. It's also just a mistaken conception – “excuse me, sound is not permanent”. Or is sound permanent?

Student: No

No – sound is not permanent. It's changing, otherwise when I said something it would continually exist but sound as we know is waves that move through space and so forth and is not permanent. So a conception that thought that sound is permanent is given here as an example of mistaken conception.

The second one, conventional conception: an inferential cognizer which realizes sound to be impermanent. So this actually is what we call a correct inference. It doesn't explain why it's called a conventional conception; in some texts, in Geshe Rabten's or one of the other books, it implies that it is called that way because it is knowing conventional phenomena.

Student: Could we say with that example of the figure eight made by the fire brand, that it is a conventional conception that is mistaken? In that case aren't you inferring that what is actually motion is one singular piece of fire that is twirling around?

Would that be an inferential cognition?

Student: That's what I was asking...

It couldn't be an inferential cognition because an inferential cognition is something that realizes its object; if it is wrong it is not an inferential cognition – it might be a conception that is somehow faulty. An inferential cognition is something that has all the elements of realizing the subject, the relationship between the subject and predicate and the sign, e.g. on a smoky pass a fire exists because smoke exists. Then it realizes that fire exists on a smoky pass. Or it realizes that the person is empty based on a correct sign. Here, mistakenly thinking that there is an eight made out of fire out there, would not be an inferential cognizer because it doesn't realize its object, it's wrong.

The third example of a conceptual facsimile of a direct perception is a thought which is a mind apprehending a sign. This comes in more detail as we go along. A mind apprehending a sign is a consciousness which is the cause of developing an inference. It is one of the establishing cognitions in order to have an inference - like to realize that sound is impermanent because it is the product of causes and conditions. One of establishing cognitions, a mind apprehending a sign would be: in the continuum of a person who is about to realize that sound is impermanent, the understanding that sound is a product and that all products are impermanent. Both of those would be minds apprehending a sign.

Those are not actually inferences but are causes of an inferential cognition.

Student: How is that a facsimile?

Because it is a conceptual mind and all conceptual minds are mistaken with respect to their appearing object – the mental image.

For instance the one before this (the inferential cognizer), you could ask how that is mistaken? It realizes that sound is impermanent, so how is that mistaken? The definition here is something that is mistaken with regard to its appearing object, so even the conception that realizes that sound is impermanent is mistaken because it's realizing that inference via a mental image - because it's a conceptual mind. It is not a direct perception of impermanence. Some kind of mental image has been built up which is factually correct, in accordance with the fact, factually concordant, and that mental image has eliminated all misconceptions about it. And if one were to meditate on that and the mental image were to slowly dissolve and become transparent over time because of familiarity, one would eventually actually realize the object directly.

But here you are realizing the object via a mental image and the object impermanence that you are knowing by its mental image, that process is one that is mistaken because you are mistaken with respect to the appearing object. The appearing object – a mental image of impermanence – appears to be impermanence itself.

Student: So that's the mistake.

It is the mistake that exists in all conceptions. All conceptions are mistaken with respect to their appearing objects. The first one here was called a mistaken conception. They're using the word mistaken here twice which is making it double: not only is it mistaken with respect to its object but it is also thinking that sound is permanent - or that I've got a million dollars; that's definitively a mistaken conception, I can tell you.

Being a conception it's mistaken because it is perceiving its object via a mental image which it takes to be the object itself, but here it is called a mistaken conception or just a wrong consciousness because the actual object that it's getting at is wrong and doesn't actually exist. There's actually a whole section coming up soon on minds apprehending a sign.

The fourth example of a conceptual facsimile of a direct perception is *a thought which arises after an inferential cognizer*. So we've got the thought apprehending the sign, the inference itself and then the thought that comes after it. That's also a facsimile of a direct perception because it is still a conceptual mind. It could be a remembering consciousness or a subsequent cognition of that inferential cognizer.

Fifth: *a thought which today remembers an object of the past*. This is a little bit different than the previous one. Here it could be anything remembering something e.g. my baseball mitt or my graduation or

something in the past. That is also a conceptual mind. Remembering consciousness might appear to be very clear in some cases but they are said to be facsimiles of direct perception because they are mistaken with respect to their appearing objects.

Then the sixth is *a thought which for today wishes for an object of the future*. So future oriented thought. What else do we call it? Day dreaming it might be. That also is conceptual and so it's mistaken with respect to its appearing object.

There are many others but these are the main ones.

Then there are four *non-conceptual facsimiles of direct perceivers* and all of them are based on causes of error.

- The cause of error exists in the *basis*. Let's say in the sense base – the faculty.
- The cause of error exists in the *abode*. For instance when you are in a train or boat and it looks like other things are moving next to you but you are actually moving. The dock is suddenly moving away because the boat is going very slowly.
- The mistake exists in *object* – that was like the firebrand.
- A mistake in the *immediately preceding condition*. Like when you are incredibly angry and that causes blood to go to the sense base and that can cause some kind of colour to appear in what you see.

So let's take a little break. You deserve it!

## Tea break

Carrie asked about the three empty spheres. We say the *three spheres of emptiness*. There's different ways of talking about this. When we talk about dedication, the way to understand it is that the merits being dedicated are empty of being truly or inherently existent, the object being dedicated to (let's say our own attainment of enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings) is empty of true existence and the act of dedication which is linking the merits and wishing that these merits ripen in this way, that action is also empty of inherent existence.

Whatever that we do and whatever actions the bodhisattvas do – practising the perfection of generosity and of ethical behaviour, patience, enthusiastic endeavour, concentration and wisdom – all have to be conjoined with the perfection of wisdom so that one understands them as empty. In the act of giving one thinks the agent, the action of giving and the recipient are all empty of true existence.

So doing that is one way of conjoining the practice of charity with the perfection of wisdom. All of the actions that we do will have three things like that: an agent; and action and a recipient. Sometimes you divide up in different ways.

Student: A meaning generality is generally characterised, is that why it is mistaken? Because the appearing object is not impermanent?

Well, you can have a conception about space, and space is a permanent phenomenon. In these tenets it is called a *generally characterised phenomenon*. It means that it is in a sense a kind of generality. For these tenets, *generally characterised phenomena*, as opposed to *specifically characterised phenomena*, are permanent. *Generally characterised phenomenon* is one of the synonyms of permanent phenomenon.

*Specifically characterised phenomena* are for example a wristwatch, or the self, or a mind, these are all impermanent phenomena.

But as mentioned, you can have a conception of space. Space is permanent, like a mental image, so the cause for mistake you thought of is not there... You were saying maybe it's mistaken because the object you are thinking about (e.g. your mother's face) is impermanent but the mental image is permanent. But it is because actually they are two different things: your mother's face and the mental image – they are not the same, and that's the reason conception is mistaken. And in the case of space, it is permanent and the mental image of it is permanent, but still a conception of space is a mistaken consciousness.

So if you check about the conception of permanent phenomena, let's say a conception of emptiness or of selflessness, or a conception of cessation, the mental image is permanent and the object that is being known is permanent, but the mental image is not the object being known. It is a mental image that you are developing of that.

If you have a conception of space it doesn't mean that you are actually conceptually realizing space; the conception might be a correct belief or something like that. If it is based on inference, the mental image is factually concordant, concordant with the object that you are knowing, and there is no mistake in that, like the mental image of space is permanent and the space itself that it is a mental image of is also permanent.

*Student: From among the two, non-conceptual facsimiles of a direct perception which are mental consciousnesses and those which are sense consciousnesses, an illustration of the first (a mental one) was discussed above. What was that?*

What's the example of that?

Student: Wouldn't that be the second one? An inferential cognizer?

That's not non-conceptual. Those were examples of conceptual facsimiles ...

There are several things like this in the texts; Lama Tsongkhapa says sometimes "I explained this earlier ....", and then you look through the text and you can't find it. So you have to look; somewhere earlier in the text, when we were talking about mental direct perceivers.....

Student: I remember that after you have a direct sense perception you have a split second of a mental direct perception .....

OK. Now that mental direct perception – would that be a mistaken with respect to its appearing object? No. It's an inattentive perception and inattentive perceptions are not mistaken with respect to their appearing object. But for instance some dream consciousnesses, as Lama Tsongkhapa said, are direct perceivers, and dream consciousnesses are mistaken with respect to their appearing object. Anyway you have to check. Put a circle around that and see if you can find what it is referring to.

With regard to the second: non-conceptual facsimiles of direct perceivers which are sense consciousnesses, there are four in which the cause of error exists in the *basis*. So what are the examples of that?

The cause of error existing in the basis is for example an eye impaired by an obscuring disease. But also a sense consciousness which sees one moon as two - the cause of error exists in the basis; it doesn't have to be a disease. Also there are diseases where it looks like you are seeing falling hairs; that also would be an example of the source of error existing in the basis, which means the sense facility, because we're talking about sense direct perceivers.

How about colour blindness? Would that be an example? There would be an error existing in the basis – causing you to have a mistaken consciousness. You'd think the red light is green and you go through and crash or get a ticket, and you'd say "excuse me", and the policeman when looking at your licence sees that you are colour blind. That would be the cause of error existing in the basis.

The second one is the cause of error in the *abode* or the place. For example, sitting in a boat and an eye consciousness sees the trees as moving, while in fact the boat is moving. Or like in a train, when you're not quite sure, because sometimes it starts very slowly. So sitting in the train and looking out and seeing another train it looks like we're moving forward, but then looking out of the other window you we're not moving. Thinking we were moving because the other train was moving.

Just the opposite can happen as well, you can be moving and it looks like other things are moving with respect to you. You could have a debate about this because Einstein always talked about this with respect to the theory of relativity, that there's no absolute inertial state that is at rest and everything else is moving with respect to it. Everything is relative and so even when you see other things moving, you are moving with respect to one another, while the sense consciousness in error is seeing that the other thing is moving in an absolute way. Like I thought that our train was moving or when you are actually moving slowly and you think other things are moving away for you. That would be error in the *abode* in that case.

That's not hard to understand.

Then there's the error in the *object* - for example a quickly whirling firebrand. A sense consciousness which sees a firebrand as a circle, that is produced in dependence upon an error in the abode; there's no circle of fire there.

And the fourth is when the cause of error is existing in the *immediately preceding condition*. For example a mind that is driven by hatred, and because of that a sense consciousness sees the earth as red, produced in dependence upon that. Do you believe that? The implication being that when you are very angry it affects the flow of blood. When the blood pressure gets high and blood can come in the eye and it can effect the eye consciousness, so that makes what's outside appear to be red.

page 20: *Non-conceptual wrong consciousness, non-conceptual facsimile of a direct perceiver, and consciousness which has a clear appearance of a non-existent are synonymous.*

*Non-conceptual wrong consciousness*: here wrong is not just mistaken or controvertible but means distorted. *Non-conceptual distorted consciousness* or *conceptual facsimile of a direct perceiver* and a *consciousness which has a clear appearance of a non-existent* are synonymous. The *clear appearance of a non-existent* is for example the clear appearance of a circle of fire, or of the trees moving when actually they are not moving - the roots haven't sprouted feet and they are not walking along .....

Now we get to the definition of an *inferential prime cognizer*.

What's the sequence here? We were talking about prime cognizers or valid cognizers at the beginning and then we had the definitions of direct perceivers first, and then we had the definitions of direct prime cognizers. Now we are given the definition of an *inferential prime cognizer*. That's the second kind of prime cognizer. Another way that we are translating prime cognizer is *valid cognizer* – right? *Pramana*, or *tsad ma* in Tibetan.

The definition of an inferential prime cognizer is *a new incontrovertible determinative knower that is directly produced in dependence on a correct sign which is its basis*. So it has to be *new*.

Is this the first time we came across the phrase *determinative knower*? What's a *determinative knower*? Does anyone know?

A *determinative knower* is another synonym of conceptual mind. It's determining or weighing its object and is not knowing it directly. You could say an incontrovertible conceptual mind but here it's using determinative knower because that is actually a more powerful way of saying it I think.

*Which is directly produced in dependence upon a correct sign which is its basis...* Correct sign means a correct reasoning. Here the sign doesn't mean like when we talk about the syllogism where there's the subject, the predicate and the sign. Here the word sign can mean that whole syllogism, an entire correct reason.

Does that make any sense to you?

This is actually the definition of a inferential prime cognizer. Did we have the definition of an inferential cognition before, without talking about prime? We've alluded to it but this is the first time it's coming up, isn't it?

So determinative means it is a conceptual mind, a conceptual consciousness. It's determining it, you could say. This text doesn't have a glossary which is sometimes useful to look terms up in; I think the translator, Elizabeth Napper, did include a glossary in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*; it's the same author, she also translated Lati Rinpoche's text here and she used the same terminology for the most part. A determinative knower, we find in the glossary in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* is *zhen-rig*. *Zhen rig* you could say in a sense is imagining, it's not actually directly realizing something, it is knowing it via imagination you might say.

Let's go a little bit further because we are almost out of time. Oh no, we've got some time left – half and hour.

Basically we are talking about inference for the first time – inferential cognition – and the word **new** makes it a prime cognizer; an inferential cognizer has to be incontrovertible by definition.

When inferential prime cognizers are divided, there are three:

1. Inferential cognizers *by the power of the fact*.
2. Inferential cognizers *through renown*.
3. Inferential cognizers *through belief*. We could say through confidence – belief sounds too weak here.

All of them have to depend upon a correct reasoning but they use correct reasoning in different ways.

An illustration of the first (an inferential prime cognizer *by the power of the fact*) is an inferential cognizer that realizes that sound is impermanent through the sign of it being a product. In other words sound is



impermanent because it is a product. Or on a smoky pass fires exists because smoke exists. Or all phenomena are empty of true existence because they are dependent arising.

These are the usual statements, and all of them can give rise to inferential cognitions, but the statements themselves are not called inferential cognizers. A cognizer or cognition is an actual state of mind, and these statements are what that mind is realizing incontrovertibly. So the statement is not the inferential cognizer.

Student: Wherever I see the word sign, can I substitute the word *reason* for it?

Not always, but in this case you might be able to. Here it means the sign in the syllogism. A full syllogism itself can also be called a sign - sometimes the whole reasoning is called the sign. So in 'sound (the subject) is impermanent (the predicate) because it is a product', *is a product* is the *sign* or the *logical mark* in that syllogism.

There are only two kinds of prime cognizers - direct prime cognizers and inferential prime cognizers, but now we will look at three kinds of inferential prime cognizers – by the power of the fact, through renown and by belief. Those all are inferential prime cognizers; they all are in a sense related with the first one in that they all depend upon a correct reasoning, but there are slight differences between them.

An illustration of an inferential prime cognizer through renown is an inferential cognizer which realizes that it is suitable to express the rabbit possessor by the term moon through the sign of it existing among objects of thought. It sounds like we did this before.

Student: Rabbit possessor was used as an example earlier.

Ok. What is the rabbit possessor?

Student: The moon

Yes, it is a poetic name for the moon. There are many names for the sun and the moon in Sanskrit, just like in Italian there are many names for love – right?

Student: In French.

In French, ok , maybe in French. And like the Indians living in the rain-forest have many names for different shades of green, the Eskimos have many names for shades of white, to them they look quite different. To us it's just white or green, but to them, living in the forest or snow, the shades look different.

So similarly, there were many names for the moon. Here such a name is given as a synonym of moon and it's saying that an inferential cognizers that realizes that it is suitable (that means it is ok) to call the rabbit possessor – that thing up there that looks like it has a rabbit in it – the moon, is an example of the second.

Do you know the word for moon in Sanskrit? It is *chandra* like in Chandrakirti. *Chandrakirti* means famous moon, renowned moon. So it's suitable to call the rabbit possessor by the term *chandra* by the sign of it existing among objects of thought. In other words, anything which is an object of thought can be called *anything*. There are no names that inherently exist in objects.

Then the third kind of inference is through *belief*. An illustration of that is an inferential cognizer that realizes that the *scriptural citation* (here it says *scripture* which sounds like a book) *From giving resources*, or we can say *Due to giving one obtains resources, due to ethics one receives happy migrations*, realizes that that scriptural citation is incontrovertible, is unambiguous and absolutely correct with respect to the meaning indicated, due to the sign of it being a scripture free from the three contradictions. So one has to check what those three contradictions are; I'm not sure if it comes right here or if it comes in another place in the text, but you can certainly find it in Lati Rinpoche's book.

The Buddha taught that due to giving you will obtain resources - we joke that rich people think that due to *not* giving you amass fortune, but Christ and the Buddha said that you receive by giving, it creates the karmic cause for that. This is about karma, it is a famous citation that Nagarjuna uses in his text – “Due to giving, resources, due to ethics, happiness” (meaning a happy migration or higher rebirth).

Of a particular act of charity you can't logically know by the power of the fact or by the power of renown that it will bring about an exact particular result in the future. You don't know that if you give money to Land of Medicine Buddha, it causes that in the future you will be born in this specific world, with such and such an amount of resources etc. That connection is deeply hidden.

So an inferential cognizer through the power of belief means a belief in a valid person who predicted that. And then you have to check first of all that that person is a valid person (like the Buddha), and you have to check the scripture itself because different things were said for different reasons.

Not like what we call *ulterior motive* as in ‘Dorje brought me this present for an ulterior motive’ - he wanted me to lend him some money or he wished to borrow my car and therefore brought me a cake or so; that is not what is meant here. The Buddha may have had ‘ulterior motives’ when saying that there is self, because for some people telling them that there is no self would completely confuse them. So in some scriptures he said there is a self; similarly, in some of the scriptures which were the basis for the Hinayana teachings he said that when the person dies then the person just arose somewhere else, not mentioning the intermediate state, and he may have had an ‘ulterior motive’ for doing that, because in other scriptures he did talk about the bardo – the intermediate state between death and another rebirth – and so forth.

So the third kind of inferential cognition is one that knows deeply hidden phenomena, but not by the power of the fact. You can know hidden phenomena by the power of the fact. Hidden phenomena such as emptiness or subtle impermanence; you can those with inferential cognizers on the basis of the fact, by the power of the fact, like you that sound is impermanent because it's a product, or all phenomena are empty of true existence because they are dependent arising - things like that. But there is no way that you can logically prove deeply hidden phenomena. Due to Chris giving LMB his mother's printer, that in a future life in that specific world system at that specific time, he is going to have numberless free flyers arrive at his door or everything he wants printed will suddenly appear – we can't logically by the power of the fact deduce that.

How *can* we deduce that? How *can* we infer that? We deduce it from a buddha, a perfect being, predicting something; and then we would have to ascertain that he is a pramana – a valid person. (Pramana doesn't only mean valid cognition, it can also mean valid person). And that his scriptural prediction was free of the three contradictions, or is purified in three ways - that means it doesn't contradict the power of the fact etc. Anyway, we'll go through that a little bit later.

The text continues: *An inferential cognizer through renown is necessarily an inferential cognizer by the power of the fact.* The second one is actually part of the first; it's a variation of it. The sign is 'that object exists among objects of thought', remember, the second one: because of the sign that rabbit possessor exists among objects of thought; so that is a fact, and this is an inference through the power of the fact.

The text continues: *Also whatever is a direct perceiver is not necessarily a direct prime cognizer.* Why not?

Student: It is not fresh.

It's not fresh; for example, the text says: *the second moment of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form is not a prime cognizer.* And isn't another one of the divisions of direct perceivers a consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained? That also would not be a prime cognizer. Neither of those other divisions are. Remember, there were three divisions of direct perceivers: prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers and consciousnesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained. Neither of those second two are prime cognizers.

Here it says that it follows that a subsequent cognizer – the second moment of a sense direct perceiver – is not a prime cognizer. Why? That follows because the second moment of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form and the second moment of an inferential cognizer which realizes that sound is impermanent, both of them are subsequent cognizers. So from among the divisions, we said that if something is a subsequent cognizer, it is not a prime cognizer.

As we said before, based on this they made fun of the Prasangikas, saying "oh, some people think that the second moment realizing something is still a prime cognizer; how absurd, because clearly that's a subsequent cognizer". According to the Sautrantikas if something is a prime cognizer it is not a subsequent cognition – it's only that first instance that realizes something freshly that is a prime cognizer.

*This is because Dharmotarra's text called "The Correct" says "The two; the first moment of a direct perceiver and the first moment of inferential cognizer, are prime cognizers, but subsequent moments in the continuums of those because of being non-different in establishment and abiding, have forsaken being prime cognizers."* This is Sautrantika tenets and they are using a Sautrantika pandit to verify this. Their understanding, as we said before, was that the first instant of a train of consciousness – whether it be conceptual or perceptual (such as a sense direct perceiver) – that pulls the train along like the engine is a prime cognizer. It's fresh and it's knowing its object by its own power, but the moments subsequent to that in that same train of thought or perception, their vibrancy and their arising is due to that first instance kind of pulling them along. That sort of is the meaning. You can check into this a little more yourself.

*Furthermore, when inferential cognizers are terminologically divided there are two: inference for oneself and inference for another.*

What does that mean – terminologically divided? Do you have any idea? Did no one read ahead?

Terminological divisions – the implication here, the way that they are using it means that it sounds like it is a division but it's not a real division. We could for example say that when direct perceivers are divided terminologically, there are also the facsimiles of direct perceivers. Are those direct perceivers? No! How about the non-conceptual facsimiles of a direct perception? Is that a direct perceiver? No! They are mistaken consciousnesses – right? That's kind of the meaning of a terminological division – it sounds like it is one of them but isn't.. Some of them may not be actual divisions.

So: Furthermore when inferential **[NB: *prime* here in the text is incorrect, it should say inferential]** cognizers are terminologically divided there are two: inference for ones self and inference for another. The first is the only real kind of inferential prime cognizer. *The first ( inference for ones self) and inferential cognizer are synonymous. The second (inference for another ) and correct proof statement are synonymous.* A correct proof statement is not an inferential cognizer. What is a correct proof statement? Chris did you study this before?

Chris: No but would that be like a logical proof that you are giving to someone else?

Yes; it's called inference for another but it's not an actual inferential cognizer, it's called that because it can, if properly done, induce in the other person's consciousness a inference.

For instance, lets look at the process of trying to lead someone to an inference who is holding a wrong understanding, like ' there is no such thing as past and future lives, I've never seen them and my twentieth century gurus – the scientists in the laboratories – can't perceive them and therefore they don't exist'. So if someone has an idea like that, you first have to propose to them an absurd consequence of their position that can cause their mind to be unsure of what they were holding so strongly onto. If you simply were to show them a correct sign that explained why past and future lives do exist (and even for us such a sign may not be very convincing at first), if you were just to provide that to them, they wouldn't even attend or pay attention to it, or understand it clearly, because they are still holding the wrong idea.

So in the sequence of events – according to the Sautrantika and Cittamatra and others' presentation of logic – you first propose an absurd consequence to them. That's why a lot of the debates are phrased in terms of consequence: "It follows , according to you, that ....." For example, "According to you Don, there is only one kind of valid cognizer, a direct valid cognizer; so it follows that inferential cognizers are not valid cognizers".

Then the second step is to propose proof statements to them to establish in their minds the cognition of the sign – the mind apprehending a sign.

I'll read you a little bit – on page 83 of *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* – "*There is also a terminological twofold division of cognizers into inference for oneself and for another. That for one self refers to inference as has been set forth above in the threefold division by way of entity – inference by the power of the fact, by renown and by belief – these 3 correct inferences. That for another refers to a proof statement which is posited before a statement of a reason. First a consequence is stated, then a proof statement and then a reason ( - correct reasoning). This division is terminological because whatever is an inference must be a consciousness , and inference for another, being a proof statement, is sound, - it is just an utterance - matter - and not consciousness. Thus, whatever is an actual inference is necessarily an inference for oneself*".

So a proof statement can cause an inference in the person that you are providing it to, when they think about it, and then it becomes an inference for themselves – an actual inferential cognizer. Does that make sense?

Then: "*The use of inference for another is as follows: in order to overcome the wrong view of , for instance, a Samkya – this is a particular practitioner of the Vedic tradition - who asserts that sound is permanent, one would first state a consequence: It follows that the subject, sound, is not a product because of being permanent*".

Is that true?

Student: No

It's not true. It's an absurd consequence. They believe that sound is permanent. So you throw this consequence to them and they have to think about this. *It follows that the subject, sound, is not a product because of being permanent.* Actually they accept that sound is a product but they also accept that it is permanent and so when you throw this at them as a logical consequence of that, then that confounds them and you're preparing them for the eventual presentation of a proof statement where you establish what is correct.... To establish the pervasion for instance one would state that the subject, product, is impermanent because of being momentary; or you would say, to establish the property of the subject, that the subject, sound, is a product because of being a created thing. So those are called proof statements that are establishing in the person's mind various conditions to the correct position.

How do you feel? Is this manageable? It's not so bad. Slowly, slowly!

Let's dedicate, quickly, but profoundly, the merit that we've created

## Dedication

What merit did we create? The merit of listening to the teachings with a good intention, thinking that this would bring about the causes of our being able to overcome our afflictions by understanding emptiness, reading the scriptures and so forth. This was the intention with which we listened to the teachings – so that we could overcome our faults and not be of harm to others, to benefits others, to quickly attain enlightenment for their welfare.

So we've created some virtue in listening to the teachings tonight. Due to this virtue may I quickly attain the state of a guru-buddha. Not just may it ripen in the future in some pleasure but may I become an enlightened being for the welfare of all sentient beings.....

There are many different kinds of dedications – we can dedicate the merit like this: due to these merits may the bodhicitta that has not yet arisen in my own and others' mind continua arise. May that already arisen not decline but may it grow evermore.....

Once you've made the conventional dedication and you have a strong feeling of that, then try to seal that within the apprehension of the emptiness of the three spheres - the merit being dedicated, the goal being dedicated to and the action of dedication are all empty of inherent existence.....What does that mean, empty of inherent existence? It means that they can't be found like they appear to be, i.e. existing from their own side. Where are the merits? Where is the action of dedication? Even if you had a future buddha in front of you now, where is that enlightenment that we're imagining?

It's just a name that we impute to that state. It can't be found anywhere within the basis but is validly designated to that. Just as oneself is validly designated to one's collection of aggregates but you can find it within those aggregates. You can't find anybody within their aggregates, their basis of designation. You can't find enlightenment within the basis of designation of enlightenment.....

Ok, thank you very much.

## Session 7

### Meditation

(The beginning of the meditation was not recorded ).

Just notice the thoughts like in clouds in the sky, in the space of your mind. Try to see through them. Don't be distracted by focusing on them but immediately use them as a cue, as a hint, as a reason to investigate the consciousness that is knowing them, is perceiving them.....

Rather than focusing on the objective thoughts, let go of that and refocus on the subjective mind – its nature non-obstructive, capable of reflecting anything that arises within it, not obstructed nor defiled by any thoughts that come.....

See if you can let the continuity of discursive thoughts settle for now, temporarily. Even let go of the sense of the presence of your body, the residual apprehension of its presence, apprehended by your mental consciousness.....

Focus instead on the consciousness that's the matrix within which that apprehension is arising ....

Let go again and again.....

Even let go of the sense of ego - the observer. Although that might be appearing in your mind, recognize that it also is like all other conceptual thoughts and mental images which you can temporarily ignore, focusing instead - with concentration - on the clear light nature of mind.....

Recalling that within this clear state of mind, we have an unparalleled opportunity right now, this human rebirth, especially one of leisure and endowment that is very hard to find, quickly decaying and with every instant we're heading towards the end of this opportunity, that we often use for cultivating the eight worldly concerns, the eight worldly dharmas.....

Not taking advantage of its real essence which to be able to practice the holy dharma, to develop understanding of renunciation, an understanding of compassion and the development of bodhicitta and the causes of it.....

We can use this life every day to meditate more and more on emptiness, creating karmic instincts so that in future lives we'll meet the teachings and can easily proceed with them.....

All living beings have been our mothers numberless times and have been infinitely kind, depthlessly kind, but we don't recognize them in that way because of the different appearance that they have, the different guise that they are taking. We might instead recognize them as irritations or objects of our manipulation or desire. All of them are exactly the same, like us, in wanting to be happy and wanting to be free of suffering.....

With a thought to repay their kindness - because it is due to their kindness that we actually can achieve the perfection of morality, the perfection of generosity and patience - we do so in dependence upon sentient beings, we achieve enlightenment in dependence upon them..... so with the thought of dedicating our



energy to the goal of bringing about the alleviation of their suffering, their achievement of enlightenment, think, I am going to participate tonight in class and listen for the purpose of developing good qualities not yet developed and enhancing those that I already have and of diminishing and eliminating faults, so that I can be less of a burden to others and I can provide positive attributes and eventually actually lead them on suffering - be an actual friend and guide with no ulterior motives and no expectations.....

With such perfect power and bliss in my own mind, I am going to listen and participate tonight in order to achieve enlightenment, buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings.....

Relax and bring your attention back.....

## Teaching

How's everyone? I haven't seen you in a while. I've got a little surprise for you this evening. A quiz!

We're going to take the first 13 questions. 13 sounds unlucky but in Dharma 13 is considered auspicious. So it's inauspicious for worldly concerns but very good for Dharma concerns. 13 multiple choice questions, most of them are easy. We are going to do those right now - in the next five minutes you just circle your answer. After five minutes, what's left we can do later.

Students answer quiz questions on paper...Are you still capturing the video? OK – the people who are watching the video will also have to take the test.

(refer to the Midterm Quiz: *MC1\_AK\_MidTermQuiz\_HomeworkQue\_LMB.pdf*)

This is a self-mark exam. But it's not a democracy, it's not like we'll take your consensus for the right answer...

Q 1. The first question? What is the right answer? The tenets system of the Lorig text we are studying is?

Students: Sautrantika

Which one is that? The third or the fourth one? The third one – right? Anyone have a doubt about that? Do you have a doubt?

Student: I got it wrong.

You got it wrong – what did you say.

Student: Mahayana.

No, actually this system is one of the Hinayana tenets systems – right?

Q 2. Second one – the appearing object of conception is: permanent, impermanent or both?

Student 1: Permanent

Student 2: Impermanent

Permanent, impermanent .....

Student: 3 So far it's a tie

We'll have to take a vote

Student: 4 I say permanent too

Student: 3 It's two to one

What are you saying Maureen?

Maureen: I think permanent

Bonnie?

Bonnie: Permanent

I forget your name – Mark

Mark: I think permanent

Pat?

Pat: Permanent

I think the right answer is permanent. What is the appearing object of conception? It's a mental image, a meaning generality. According to Sautrantika, a meaning generality is always permanent. Right? That's what the appearing object of conception is – it is a permanent phenomena.

Q 3. The appearing object of perception is: permanent, impermanent or both.

Student: Both

It can be both?

Other students: Impermanent.

Impermanent. She said both – she is being very new-age, encompassing. Can the appearing object of perception (for Sautrantika) be permanent?

Student: I think it is impermanent.

It has to be impermanent – right? According to Sautrantika you cannot perceive permanent phenomena directly. According to Prasangika – the higher tenets – you can, because you can perceive emptiness directly, not only *with a direct perception*, but directly. So for them a permanent phenomenon can be the appearing object but here the appearing of perception is impermanent.

Q 4. Is an eye consciousness necessarily a direct perceiver? Maureen what do you think?

Student: I had said no but I'm willing to change...

What is your reason for saying no?

Student: I think I was hung up on the word "necessarily"

You're clever – right? Is an eye consciousness *necessarily* a direct perceiver? Chris, what do you think?

Chris: Again not *necessarily* because there are different ways to divide that up.

What's an example of an eye consciousness that is not a direct perceiver?

Chris: If you're inattentive

Inattentive is one of the divisions of direct perceiver. But an eye consciousness can be a wrong consciousness and a wrong consciousness is not a direct perceiver. Remember, there were three divisions of direct perceivers – this is going to come in one of the other questions. So if it is an eye consciousness, it doesn't *have to be* a direct perceiver or direct perception. You can have a wrong consciousness and that's not called a direct perception. Direct perceivers have to be either prime, subsequent or inattentive. Good! That's got you thinking.

Student: If it's a wrong perception like because there is a fault with your eye sense power, is that still a perception versus a conception? I guess I was thinking of it as conceptual versus perceptual.

Right. Usually what we would say then is non-conceptually wrong... While here it says direct perceiver.

Q 5. Is a self of persons an object in general. Carrie what do you think? Self of persons, is that an object in general.

Carrie: I really guessed and said no. I've no real reason...

You're not sure. Karl?

Karl: I think we would all have to "group-agree" with that, there is a Venerable George that we hold as an object perhaps.....

Here the self of persons we are talking about is the one that's being refuted - right? So it's not an object in general because in general, objects have to be existent phenomena. Like the horns of a rabbit are not considered an object.

Q 6. But the next question – is the self of persons an object in particular? You'd have to say yes. Why? Because according to the way that these tenets operate, if considering a wrong consciousness that thinks about horns of a rabbit, it is said that the horns of a rabbit are the conceived object. Even though the horns of a rabbit are not objects in general, they are said to be the conceived object of that particular conception. Does that make sense? Do you remember this?

Some of these things will help you to go back and go over some points. Sometimes it's helpful. So a self of persons here is referring to the self of persons that is being refuted.

Q 7. Are all conceptions mistaken? Bonnie

Bonnie: Yes

Maureen?

Maureen: Yes

OK – good. Did anyone say no?

Student: Well, you can have a conception of selflessness and I would think that that might be a true conception.

What does mistaken mean here? Maureen? Mistaken with respect to ....

Maureen: ...the appearing object ..

Mistaken with respect to the appearing object – right? All conceptions are necessarily mistaken because they are mistaken with respect to their appearing object, in that in different ways the appearing objects seems to be mixed with the actual object.

All are conceptions wrong?

Students: No

No. You can have many conceptions that are correct realizations – right? They are not all wrong.

Q 9. Is selflessness of persons realized by direct perception. Is it, Dan?

Dan: I put no.

The selflessness of persons is not directly realized by direct perception? Why? How come?

Dan: Because it's not an object.

Selflessness of persons **is** an object because it does exist – doesn't it? What do you think? Is this too complicated?

Student: No. I did put yes because realizing something by direct perception, it would have to be a knower, an awareness, that is new and incontrovertible, so that it would be non-mistaken.

But can you realize selflessness directly – according to the Sautrantika?

Student: That's where I would be confused. My intuition says yes but that I am wrong because this is Sautrantika.

Well... that's the one we are studying ...

Maureen, what do you think?

Maureen: Well... I said no because it seems to me that what we're trying to do is to find the path by realizing it through inference.

Well ... first we have to it by inference –right? But the question is, how do you do it by direct perception according to the Sautrantika...

Maureen: I don't know. That's what I couldn't figure out

Indirectly! Why? Is selflessness of persons permanent or impermanent? It's a permanent phenomenon – right? Can that appear directly to direct perception? No! According to Sautrantika, when you realize the selflessness of persons, what you are *perceiving directly* in your meditative equipoise *are the aggregates of the person* which are devoid of a permanent partless or of a self-supporting substantially existent person; *indirectly* you realize that those aggregates are empty. Because permanent phenomena cannot appear directly to direct perception according to Sautrantika. Do you remember – Don?

Don: Well, I get confused between Prasangika and Sautrantika; this is the discussion I think we had last week.....

You've got to get unconfused now.

Don: Yeah I'm trying. I'm *grokking* it? <sup>i</sup>

You're *grokking* it .... Carrie is here to help. Does anyone have a question about that?

Student: Can you say the last sentence again.

According to the Hinayana tenets, in general, you can't realize permanent phenomena directly, with direct perception

Student: Does a buddha?

A buddha knows it with direct perception – he knows all phenomena with direct perception. But here the permanent phenomena don't appear to direct perception. Remember, that is one of the hallmarks of these tenets, that the appearing object of direct perception has to be impermanent. Selflessness of persons is not impermanent so according to them you are actually realizing the aggregates which are impermanent and because of the force of that, based on that, you know that they are empty of a permanent partless independent self – the gross self, or of a self supporting substantially existent person, the subtle self according to Sautrantika.

According to the Prasangika you can realize emptiness with a direct perception, directly, because for them permanent phenomena can appear to direct perception.

Student: So then are there no Sautrantika aryas?

It depends upon what you mean by a Sautrantika arya. That's one of the things with tenets – they are posited in order to lead people gradually to higher realizations. An arya would have to have the right view. In order to become an arya being – an noble being who has realized emptiness directly – you would have

to have the correct view of emptiness. If your view of emptiness according to the Sautrantika view of selflessness or the Cittamatra view of emptiness or even the Svatantrika-Madhyamaka view of emptiness, from the point of view of the highest Buddhist tenets, you couldn't based on the force of that of realization, eliminate the afflictions from your mind – from the root. That would not be called the path of seeing. It would be a very high realization, and would be very close, and it may be that for individuals like that, the Buddha actually appears to them, if they don't actually have a teacher at that time, and then leads them a little further... who knows...

If you were to ask if there are any Sautrantika aryas – if someone was actually adhering to the Sautrantika tenets and that's all they mediated on, they wouldn't be able really achieve arya-ship according to the Mahayana. That's why according to Prasangika arhats can fall from the state of arhat-ship, because according to their view the total cessation of all afflictions can not be attained based on a realization of the Hinayana view of selflessness – and they can arise again – this applies even to arhats today. From the Prasangika point of view if you were subscribing to those tenets, you wouldn't actual be an arya.

Q 10. How many types of prime (valid) cognizers are there? One, two, three or four? Take a vote.

One? Anyone for two? Anyone for three? OK some voices and anyone for four? I think the answer should be – what do you think? Who has quite a strong opinion?

How could you count three valid cognizers? There are two: direct valid cognition and inferential valid cognitions. This relates to a famous quotation that we will talk about again today, but we've talked about this before – *"Because objects of knowledge are two: hidden and manifest"*. Of course there are deeply hidden objects also, but deeply hidden is as well understood by inference; and manifest phenomena are realized by direct perception. Therefore the number of prime cognizers is two. So what are they? Direct prime cognizers and inferential prime cognizers

Student: Subsequent cognizers – are they considered prime?

OK here's a good question. Dan's got a question. Who's going to eliminate the darkness of his mind? Carrie?

Carrie: In the Sautrantika it is not a prime cognizer.

Right – why not?

Carrie: Because of that train thing. ..

That's right. A prime cognizer has to be what? It has to be fresh, it has to be the first moment. So you're right. But in the higher tenets, subsequent cognitions not only realize their objects but they can also be called valid cognizers. According to Prasangika, but not according to the lower tenets here, it persists to be valid.

Student: A self-knower – could it be prime?

Can a self-knower by a prime cognition?

Class: Yes



Sure. The first instant of it but the subsequent moments would be subsequent cognition.

OK.

Q 11a. Is inattentive perception (consciousness to which an object appears but it is not ascertained) a direct perceiver. Yes or no?

Students: Yes

What do you think Theo?

Theo: Yes

Anyone who gets things wrong gets a special prize, because that means that you have been really thinking hard; you'll probably get more credit than somebody who got some of them right....

Inattentive perception is a direct perceiver. It's one of the divisions of direct perceiver. Remember? What are the divisions of sense direct perceivers? Prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers and inattentive perceivers, or consciousnesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained – right?

So it is a direct perceiver. It's not like a wrong consciousness. You could have a sense consciousness which is wrong and that is not a direct perceiver, but an inattentive perceiver is one in which the organ is actually perceiving something but you're thinking about something else or listening to something else and being inattentive to it.

Q 11b. So can that inattentive perception be a prime cognizer. Yes or no?

Student: No

Why not?

Student: Because a prime cognizer would have to be incontrovertible, in order to be realizing its object, but if it's inattentive it's not realizing.

It's not realizing its object and is not able to induce a remembering consciousness. It does not realize its object and therefore it cannot be a prime cognizer.

Q 12. Are facsimiles of direct perception necessarily conceptions? Yes or no? Carrie says yes. Don says no. What's your name (at the back)

Catherine: I didn't answer that.

OK. That's one of those obscure parts. We did talk about it a bit, but it's not easy to remember all this stuff. Theo?

Theo: I said yes.

The answer is no. There are seven divisions of facsimiles of direct perception, one of which was "non-conceptual". The non-conceptual ones are like, for example, a wrong, or distorted, sense consciousness – seeing a firebrand as a circle of light, or seeing two moons instead of one, something like that.

Ok – not bad. Anyone get between 10 and 13 right? Anyone get above 8? Ok good, excellent. Anyone get above five? Good. Anyone get above three. OK. Anyone get above one? Did anyone get them all wrong? Good ok.

That will give you an idea. We'll do one more quiz before the final test. There will be a final test for those of you who want to continue and get credit for this Basic Program subject and you'll get a BP certificate at the very end .. Did it seem fair – this quiz?

Student: I thought it was great ... – other students agree

OK

Student: Is an inferential cognizer a conception?

What do people think? Is an inferential cognizer conceptual?

Students: Yes

Student: So then how about question 7 - are all conceptions mistaken?; then an inferential cognizer is mistaken ....

Yeah

Student: It is?

It is mistaken. Why is it mistaken but not wrong?

Student: Because it's conceptual.

It's conceptual. There is a difference between the power of realizing something with conception and realizing it directly. The word *mistaken* in the way that we have been using it is that the consciousness is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. Even if a consciousness is mistaken with respect to its appearing object, it doesn't necessarily have to be incorrect or wrong, because its comprehended object (in terms of a conception) can be right and can be apprehending something correctly.

The last ten questions I'm going to give you as homework.

Student: Open book?

Let me think. Open book? No! You can take half an hour, between now and next week, maybe you can read over them once and then close it, and then you can do a little study, but do not actually answer them open book. And then we'll see how you did in that part also.

Great! Thanks for your courage!

Student: Could you say a little more about questions 5 and 6? I just don't think I understood the questions.

At the beginning when we were talking about objects, we said: for something to be an object, it has to be a phenomenon. There are different synonyms for object, or dharma (which means phenomenon). In other words, it has to be an object of knowledge and it has to exist, if it is an object in general. But there are some things which are objects of conception but which are not an object in general; they are the conceived object of that conception, but do not exist in general. Like the self of persons – a self of persons is not an object in general because it doesn't exist. Are horns of rabbits objects in particular? They are objects only in the sense that they are conceived objects of the conception that's conceiving them.

Student: That makes sense – I'd just forgotten.

So let's go on a little bit further here. We're doing well. We may finish this material very well.

My book is opened on page 21. Is that about where we are?

Student: yeah

Last time we talked about this a bit – here it says “*with respect to explaining minds apprehending a sign, there are two parts: definitions and divisions*”. We talked about something being a mind apprehending a sign – do you remember that?

Let me give you a little background. When you talk about inference, in order for an inferential cognition to function in your consciousness you have to have the whole inference in your mind. Let's say for instance – the subject sound (you don't have to say the words “the subject”) is impermanent - the predicate - because it is a product – the sign - i.e., sound is a product. Then they give you an example, like the vase, or something like that. An example has to be something that you can realize the thesis on. The thesis is the subject and predicate together. What's the thesis in that syllogism? Carrie?

Carrie: Sound is impermanent.

Yeah. So the thesis is comprised of the subject and the predicate. The sign is sometimes called the *reason* also. You have to have that syllogism in your mind and you have to be thinking of that. And you also have to have what's called the three modes, i.e. the property of the subject, the forward pervasion and the reverse pervasion. What is the property of the subject in that case?

Student: Impermanence?

The property of the subject means *the subject is the sign* – that there is congruence between subject and sign. In this case, sound is impermanent because it is a product, - is sound a product? Yeah. You have to realize that either by direct perception or by some other inference, but you have to have realized it for it to be the property of the subject.

You also have to realize the forward pervasion, which has to do with the fact that in a logical statement there has to be a kind of necessity that if the sign is there, the predicate will necessarily follow. The forward pervasion, in this case it would mean what? If something is....?

Student: A product

If something is a product, it is....?

Student: Impermanent.

If something is a product it is necessarily impermanent. So you have to realize that or you have to have realized the reverse pervasion. Actually one will follow from the other. Usually the forward pervasion is what is talked about, but you could also realize the reverse pervasion. What's the reverse pervasion in this case?

Student: If something is not impermanent then it's not a product

Right. You take the opposite of the predicate and the opposite of the sign and it goes in the opposite direction. So if something is not impermanent, it is necessarily not a product. If you realize the forward pervasion, you will know indirectly, and you don't have to ascertain to yourself, the reverse pervasion.

These are what are called establishing conditions – these kinds of understandings. They establish your mind to a condition in which it is ready to realize the inference, and is capable of making the inferential cognition actually function. Up until then it is just a bunch of words in your mind, an understanding which is maybe a belief, that is getting stronger and stronger...

Now the moment that those things are established such that the next moment it becomes an inferential cognizer, that particular kind of establishing cognition is called *a mind apprehending a sign*. Does that make sense?

What I call the establishing conditions are when you realize the three modes: the property of the subject, the forward pervasion and/or the reverse pervasion. At the moment when those are established in your mind, the next moment you are about to develop – on the force of those – the inferential cognizer, for example that sound is impermanent. Those minds at that point are called *a mind apprehending a sign*.

The definition of something being a mind apprehending a sign in the proof that sound is impermanent by the sign product – that is the syllogism we are talking about. What is such a mind? It is "*a knower in continuum of a full fledged other party for whom sound is being proven to be impermanent by the sign product*".

A "full fledged other party" means someone who has not yet realized that sound is impermanent by the sign product. Otherwise you can't be someone who is another party. If you have realized that sound is not permanent then you are not an "other party".

Other party means someone to whom perhaps the syllogism is being offered to, is being suggested to. A "full fledged other party" has to be somebody who has all the correct characteristics: they have not realized that sound is impermanent and they are wishing to know that.

So we are talking about the mind apprehending a sign in the proof that sound is permanent by the sign product. What kind of mind apprehending a sign is there in that? What is the definition?

It has to be a knower in the continuum of a full fledged other party for whom sound is being proven to be impermanent by the sign product, that it is a common locus of..... What does a common locus mean?

Do you know that that means? Have we talked about this before?

Student: I've heard in terms of like how many points between things....

OK – so in terms of logic and as it's being used here, a common locus means something which two different categories have in common. You can draw a diagram; like here's one set, and here's another set, and if they intersect at some point, partially overlap, the common locus would be the area where they overlap. Can you see that?

Here it means it has to fulfil both of these criteria – it has to be something which is both (1) incontrovertible with respect to sound is a product or and (2) that whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent.

What are these two things? Realizing the property of the subject – realizing that sound is a product; sound is a product is the property of the subject in *sound is impermanent because it is a product*; so the person must be realizing the property of the subject. And he or she realizes the forward pervasion that whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent; or you could also say the third one, the reverse pervasion: whatever is not impermanent is necessarily not a product. This means also getting at the two modes which are the pervasions.

So it has to be a common locus of that – it's incontrovertible, in other words it realizes those, (the property of the subject and the forward or reverse pervasion), and it is the cause of the inferential cognizer realizing that sound is impermanent by the sign product, which arises in dependence upon those two realizations acting as a causal condition.

Does that make sense?

So a mind apprehending a sign is something that becomes a cause of realizing an inference. It doesn't say here direct cause, so it doesn't have to be the exact previous instant, but somewhere in that mental continuum this has become the cause of realizing that inferential cognition. But I think that if it is like weeks before that you've realized one of those, I'm not sure if that is called the mind apprehending a sign – if you have just realized the property of the subject or the forward pervasion quite some time before – but in a full fledged other party who has that syllogism in mind and is about to realize it, those particular understandings are called minds apprehending a sign.

*When minds apprehending a sign are divided, there are two:*

*(1) minds apprehending a sign -- in the proof that sound is impermanent by the sign product -- which comprehend that sound is a product, and*

*(2) minds apprehending a sign in the proof of sound as impermanent by the sign product which comprehend that whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent.*

Actually there is a third one – what would it be?

Student: Not being a product and not being impermanent

Right. Whatever is not impermanent is not a product. When you take the reverse pervasion, you just negate and start from the opposite direction. The forward pervasion says *whatever is the sign is necessarily the predicate*; the reverse pervasion is that *if is not the predicate it's necessarily not the sign*.

Student: Say that again – if it is not the sign....

If it's not the predicate it's not the sign. Does that make sense?

Say for instance “on a smoky pass fire exists because smoke exists”. This would be a syllogism by the way in which we have an “exist predicate” - notice that I said “fire *exists*”, I didn’t say ‘*there is* fire because smoke exists’.

So does it have the property of the subject: on a smoky pass, smoke exists?

Yeah. Right. You have to realize that, and then you have to realize the forward pervasion, which would be what?

The existence of smoke pervades the existence of fire. If smoke exists, fire exists.

In other words, where there is smoke there’s fire. Don’t we say that? Do you object that sometimes there’s smoke while there’s no fire?

Student: Yes, like after a fire, where there is just stumps smoking for days and days.

Still! If they are still burning, there still has to be fire. Fire doesn’t need to be with flames - it has to be something that is producing smoke. But yes, you can debate about this; for instance the last instant of the fire, does the smoke exist after that? Yeah, it does exist after that. So there can be situations that you have to think about – like endpoints etc.

The definition of something being a mind apprehending a sign in the proof that sound is impermanent by the sign product which comprehends that sound is a product - now it’s giving the divisions.

The first, that particular thing ( a mind apprehending a sign) that realizes the property of the subject, meaning it realizes that the subject is the sign, in this case that sound is a product - has to be *a knower in the continuum of a full fledged other party for whom sound is being proved to be impermanent by the sign product, that is the common locus of 1. being incontrovertible with respect sound being a product.....* - incontrovertible means it realizes that sound is a product - *and also 2. being the cause of the inferential cognizer which realizes that sound is impermanent by the sign of product and arises in dependence upon its acting as a causal condition.*

What arise in dependence upon its acting as a causal condition? It’s long sentence – it is in the other definition too. Bonnie?

Bonnie: An inferential cognizer?

The inferential cognition (or cognizer) is going to arise in dependence upon this; meaning that this mind apprehending a sign is acting as its causal condition. So it has to be a cause and it is giving rise to that – in the next subsequent moments.

The second one is easy – it’s just similar:

*The definition of something’s being a mind apprehending a sign -- in the proof that sound is impermanent by the sign product -- which comprehends that whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent is: it is a knower -- in the continuum of a full-fledged other party for whom sound is being proved to be impermanent by the sign product -- that is a common locus of (1) being incontrovertible with respect to whatever is a product necessarily being impermanent and also (2) being the cause of an inferential cognizer*

*which realizes sound as impermanent by the sign product and arises in dependence upon its acting as a causal condition.*

the definition of something being a mind apprehending a sign in the proof that sound is impermanent by the sign product which comprehends that whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent. What's that realizing? It's the forward pervasion -right? It has to be a knower in the continuum of a full fledged other party for whom sound is being proved to be impermanent by being the sign.

If it wasn't being proved to a correct other party, a full fledged other person, then even if they had that mind – that sound is impermanent by the sign product –, it wouldn't be a mind apprehending a sign. They have to be thinking of that, this has to be proved to them.

It has to be a common locus of being incontrovertible with respect to *whatever is product necessarily is impermanent* and it has to be the cause of the inferential cognizer which realizes that sound is impermanent by the sign product, and that inferential cognizer has to arise in dependence that mind apprehending a sign as its cause and condition.

That's a lot of words.

*When the first, minds apprehending a sign - in the proof that sound is impermanent by the sign product - which comprehends that sound is a product, are divided there are three.*

So are three kinds, or ways that you can have a mind apprehending a sign: direct perceivers, inferential cognizers and subsequent cognizers that are minds apprehending a sign. In other words, that are establishing conditions, that are ready to give rise to that inferential cognition, the things that have to be present.

For example, if you are realizing that all phenomena are empty because they are dependent arisings, you'd have to have the property of the subject – you'd have to realize *all phenomena are dependent arising*, and if something is a dependent arising it is necessarily empty of true existence. You would have to have those cognitions, if you have those, you are ready to realize it, to get that inference.

## Tea break

Don?

Student: It's Mark but you can call me Al – ...

Al – like Simon and Garfunkel - laughs

Mark – like a logical sign, logical **mark**; I'm trying to remember, like logical sign, logical mark; I'll try to remember your name that way.

So Mark was asking why we are studying this and I was just re-iterating that this is something that helps to develop our wisdom of knowing the teachings. It's not something we know intuitively, what path to follow, what constitutes correct knowledge. So it's very essential and very useful.



So we are talking about minds apprehending a sign, they are something that cause us to . In this case, we are talking about two of the three modes; the property of the subject and the forward pervasion, they acts as a cause of that inferential cognizer.

So you could have minds apprehending a sign which are direct perceivers. What could be an example of that – an illustration of that? Look at the next paragraph: an illustration of a direct perceiver that is a mind apprehending a sign.

A mind apprehending a sign has to be a knower which is incontrovertible, that is realizing something, it realizes in the proof of sound being impermanent by the sign product, that sound is a product. So how could you comprehend that sound is a product with a direct perceiver? The illustration is a direct perceiver comprehending that sound is a product in the continuum of a fully fledged other party for whom it is being proved that sound is impermanent by the sign product.

What kind of direct perceiver could it be? If you had a direct understanding, a direct perception that sound is a product, it is going to be a sense perception right? How do you perceive that sound is a product? For instance, if you throw a rock, the sound arises as a product of causes and conditions. So you can have a direct perception of that with your eye consciousness or with you tactile consciousness.

How about realizing that sound is a product through inferential cognition? That's the second way that you could have a mind apprehending a sign - through an inference. That would be an inferential cognizer comprehending that sound was a product in the continuum of such a person. So you can have an inference that's helping to understand the other inference. The mind apprehending a sign is not yet itself an inference. Or is it? No, the mind apprehending a sign is just an incontrovertible knower that is knowing one of the establishing conditions for the syllogism. Maureen, am I losing you?

Maureen: I guess it's hard for me.....

Ok. I noticed you relaxing.

Maureen: Yeah, that's not good – laughs

You're ok. So a logical statement, what we call a syllogism, is *the subject, sound, is impermanent because it is a product* (here it's talking about subtle impermanence, it's not talking about gross impermanence - if we could realize subtle impermanence, that would be a very great realization; also that a person is impermanent and so forth, because it is a product of causes and conditions.) So order to develop an inferential cognition that realizes that, you need to have realized the various elements of that syllogism, otherwise it's just resounding the words: "yeah I know that sound is impermanent because it is a product". Some of you could say that but it doesn't mean that you've realized that. You have to realize the various elements of that: if something is sound it is necessarily a product; sounds are products of causes of conditions; and you have to realize the forward pervasion – if something is a product it is impermanent (necessarily).

If you have those things established in your mental continuum and they are presented to your mind at the same time, those realizations are dawning on you as you go through that syllogism: sound is a impermanent because it is a product. At that point those understandings can become what is called minds apprehending a sign – more than establishing conditions, they are actually causes of that inferential cognition.

But how do you those, how do you realize that sound is a product? One way is by direct perception and another way is by inference. A previous inferential cognition which might itself have had establishing conditions or minds apprehending a sign, that themselves were direct perceptions or even inferences back to back. There might have been many different inferences that brought about that kind of understanding.

An illustration of the third, *a subsequent cognizer which is a mind apprehending a sign in the proof of sound is impermanent by the sign product, which comprehends that sound is a product* is the second moment and so forth of an inferential cognizer, or the second moment of a direct perception realizing that sound is impermanent.

Also, with respect to the second - *minds apprehending a sign in the proof that sound is impermanent by sign product which comprehends that whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent* -.... So this is realizing the forward pervasion, that if something is a product it is necessarily impermanent. How can you that? You could realize that by direct perception. Why does it have to be d? Because it has to be a knower which is incontrovertible. Right? That means it has to realize that. You can realize it with direct perception, inferential cognition or subsequent cognizers.

On the next page, page 23, not quite half way down – “*when prime cognizers are divided in another way, there are two*”. How many ways were we dividing prime cognizers in before?

Student: Two

Student: Three... also subsequent ....

A subsequent cognizer is not a prime cognizer. What were the two that we divided them into?

Student: Direct and inferential.

Direct and inferential. Well then, you could also divide them into two in another way: those that induce ascertainment by themselves (self ascertaining) and those that are induced by another consciousness, either someone else’s consciousness, someone telling you, or your another consciousness in your own mind.

So this is very interesting because it gets to a question that Diana was asking before about what constitutes direct perception, or what constitutes a valid or prime cognizer, in a little more detail.

Let’s go to the rang lug (our own system’s presentation) on page 25 – “our own system ...”.  
*Our own system is as follows: Gen-dun-drup’s ‘Ornament for Knowledge, the General Meaning of Dharmakirti’s Commentary on (Dignaga’s) ‘Compendium on Prime Cognition’ ‘ posits thus:...*

Who was Gen-dun-drup? Does anybody know? He was the first Dalai Lama. The first Dalai Lama, when did he live?

Student: In the fifteen hundreds?

Fifteen hundreds maybe. Who was he?

Student: Was he Lama Tsongkhapa his teacher?

Student: That would be fourteen hundreds

When did Lama Tsongkhapa pass away?

Student: Fourteen seventeen?

Fourteen nineteen. Gen-dun-drup was one of the disciples of the Lama Tsongkhapa. He wasn't called the first Dalai Lama at that time. Do you know that?

Student: Of course he wasn't called the first Dalai Lama

Why not?

Student: Because there wasn't any other Dalai Lamas yet.

Ok then, was the second Dalai Lama called the second Dalai Lama?

Student: Probably not

Was the third Dalai Lama called the third Dalai Lama?

Student: I don't know when they started....

Gen-dun-drup, when he passed away was one of the principle disciples of Lama Tsongkhapa. When he passed away his reincarnation was found, I can't remember the name of the second Dalai Lama, and he also wasn't called Dalai Lama yet. When he passed away another re-incarnation was found who became a tutor to the Mongolian Khan. His name had the word Gyatso in it, I can't remember his whole name - Gyatso in Tibetan means "ocean". (Of the present Dalai Lama, one of his names is also Gyatso, Tenzin Gyatso; usually when asked "are you the Dalai Lama" he says "I'm a simple Buddhist monk, a simple bhikshu"). So the third reincarnation of that lineage, he went to Mongolia, and the Mongolians couldn't say the word gyatso. Even today they can't. I was in Mongolia for about five months a couple of years ago, and I noticed on the maps in a school that a big body of water was called a *dalai* - even though they know a lot of Tibetan words, in the Mongolian dialect they can't for some reason say the word gyatso. It turns out something like "chomps", it doesn't work. So I'm not sure of the exact story, but somebody was displeased or something, and instead of calling him "chomps" Lama, they called him the Dalai Lama. So originally it doesn't mean, as people think, "Ocean of Wisdom". Indirectly all of the Dalai Lama's names have some poetic meaning... but they are just names right?

So he was given the title then of Dalai Lama, and then posthumously the previous incarnation was called the second Dalai Lama and the previous incarnation to that was called the first Dalai Lama.

So Gen-dun-drup's "Ornament for Knowledge the General Meaning of Dharmakirti's Commentary on (Dignaga's) "Compendium on Valid cognition" posits thus: "The definition of a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself is .....

So this is quoting Gedun-drub (who was a disciple of Lama Tsongkhapa) as an authority about how the Gelukpas understand prime cognizers that induce certainty by themselves. This is also something that Dignaga and Dharmakirti talked about, I think.

So a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself has to be a prime cognizer first of all and it has to be able to induce ascertainment through its own power with respect to its own non-arising – the fact that it would not appear, would not exist if the nature of its object of comprehension did not abide with the object. Does that make sense? What do you think Maureen?

Maureen: It doesn't make sense

In other words a prime cognizer which is self-ascertaining means that it realizes its main object of comprehension, and therefore it indirectly knows that it could not arise if that wasn't there.

Say for instance if there were a red cloth in front of me here and I could see that is a cloth. I know that it is a red cloth, I am realizing that with my eye cognition and that would be self-ascertaining, that I would know that that cognition is able to induce ascertainment through its own power. This consciousness would not arise unless the object of comprehension (the red) did not abide with the object, if the red colour did not abide with the cloth – let's say.

Geshe Rabten mentions in his book a good example of an other-ascertainable (something which is not self-ascertainable). So the example that Geshe Rabten gives for that, I think it's a very modern example. Say for instance you are driving in a car and you hear "tap, tap, tap" – some knocking sound under the hood. You have a prime cognizer (an ear consciousness) of knocking sound, but that prime cognizer is not able to induce ascertainment that it would not arise if the knocking of the piston rods (or something else) was not there. Your mechanic has to show you, or have to go under the hood yourself and ascertain with some other prime cognizer that that knocking sound actually arose from that particular object of comprehension.

Let's say it is the piston rods. Can the piston rods make this sound? Chris? Chris is my resident car expert.

Chris: It could be like a rat....

It could be that there is that rat or it could be...

Catherine It could be low octane gas laughs

Low octane gas – there you go. Catherine, thank you. Or it could be the tappets. You're not sure, you just hear some sound. You do have a prime cognizer of the sound but it is not able to induce ascertainment. Ascertainment must be induced through the power of another prime cognizer with respect to the fact that it would not arise if the nature of its object of comprehension (the tappets or the mouse or whatever) did not abide with the object. Does that make some sense to you?

One of the classical examples is in the distance you see some red colour and you say is that Maureen's blanket or is that a fire. You can have a prime cognizer of a red colour but that would not be self-ascertainable prime cognizer – it is not able to induce ascertainment that it would not arise unless the red colour of fire or the red colour of the blanket was there. It doesn't know yet and either you have to walk up and see with your own perception, or someone has to tell you – some expert, a valid person, or binoculars, or some other kind of prime cognizers so you can realize what the actual object of comprehension is.

I've goaded Maureen into asking a question.

Maureen: I was at a concert one time and I was sitting next to a man who started telling me about the instruments and I could hear the music before he started talking to me, but he knew everything about these instruments – where they came from, they were medieval instruments..... I don't know much about music at all but after he told me then I could hear, he had words that helped me hear in a different way and I could say "oh what is that". I couldn't differentiate them before he started saying if you hear this kind of sound it is coming from that instrument.

And could you centre in on that?

Maureen: Yeah then I could. Is it something like that?

Maybe it could be something similar to that.

Let's see the examples here. The last line of this page says "if something is an inferential cognizer (according to Sautrantika) it must be a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself". Inferential cognizers have to be prime cognizers which induce ascertainment by themselves.

(end of p. 25) *although both of those i.e. prime cognizers which induce ascertainment by themselves and when it is induced by another exist among direct prime cognizers, whatever is an inferential cognizer must be a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself.*

Do all prime cognizers have to induce ascertainment by themselves?

Look at the definition above – the second one: prime cognizer where the ascertainment is induced by another. It is a prime cognizer; so not all prime cognizers have to have their ascertainment induced by themselves. If they have not, they can still be prime cognizers.

(p. 26, top) *Someone might say, .It is not correct to say that a sense direct perceiver that apprehends from far away a reddish color that is, in fact, the color of fire and with respect to which a conceptual consciousness wonders whether or not it is the color of fire is a prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another; this is because there is no time when a conceptual consciousness wonders whether or not something that is, in fact, the color of fire is the color of fire. That follows because a conceptual consciousness that wonders whether or not something is the color of fire does not exist. This is so because whatever is the color of fire is necessarily realized as the color of fire by a conceptual consciousness..*

For instance, seeing the red colour can be a prime cognizer with respect to red but not necessarily with respect to its ultimate object, the nature of that red colour, if there was or was not a fire there, that would have to be induced by another in certain cases, if it were far away. It could be that it is right in front of you in which case it can be self- ascertainable: " Yeah, that colour of fire would not be there if that fire were not there". It can be self-ascertainable; it's not that all fires/red colours have to be other ascertainable. That's just an example of something in the distance – right?

Student: You said that if somebody could tell you that it was fire because they had binoculars or something, then it's not .....

If you cannot ascertain it by yourself but ascertainment has to be induced by another prime cognizer. In this case that would have to be an inferential cognizer which relies on a person as a valid person, like your car mechanic or something. If you had Chris over to check your new Cadillac or something like that and you take him as a valid person. Or another direct perception – you get closer and you check on it.

Let's look at the examples . *"In our own system, when prime cognizers that induce ascertainment by themselves are divided, there are five"*

(1) "sense direct prime cognizers to which the ability to perform a function appears"

This will throw Diana for a loop. Does the ability to perform a function appear to sense cognition? Let's say fire – does fire have the ability to perform a function? What function does it have the ability to perform? To burn fuel or to heat or to cook. Does that appear to sense direct perception?

Student: No

Of the two kinds of knowers, conceptual and perceptual, conceptual minds are called consciousnesses that engage by elimination, sel jug (eliminative engager); that means they don't engage all of the qualities of something. They only engage some quality and that appears as the mental image. Direct perceptions are called drub jug (collective engager), that means a consciousness that engages its object by the establishment, or by a positive appearance of something: all of the impermanent qualities of something, when you have a direct perception of it, whether it be visual or audio or olfactory or whatever, are appearing in total, together, all of them appear. But it doesn't mean that you realize them. Therefore, with the appearance of an impermanent phenomenon, say a fire, which has the ability to perform a function, that ability does appear to the eye perception. But that doesn't mean that the eye perception perceives it, but it can be perceiving that which is familiar and which we have previously ascertained to have that function.

How do you perceive a function such as burning, or water as having the function moisturising or earth having the function of upholding or wind having the function of motility. How do you realize it? You have to realize it with your tactile sense. With touch. Only the sense of touch has the ability to do that but having felt that fire burns and that water moisturises and so forth, subsequently when you see that, your mental consciousness can know, only through seeing that, that it has the ability to perform a function.

It is appearing, the fact the fire has the ability to burn is appearing but your eye consciousness doesn't actually realize it by itself. Does that make some sense to you? Clayton, are you getting it?

Clayton: I was thinking about something else.

You were inattentive. You see how much reverence I hold. I've just realized "The Dark Side of the Moon" by Pink Floyd; I've heard somewhere that this was on the top ten list, it was the top played album for something like two years. I've never heard of it before ...

Student: Still is on the top ten played list...

Is that right

Student: Supposedly you can start the Wizard of Oz and that at the same time, and they sync up in some interesting way.

Wow! This is good to know and I think if we brought it along to make sure it was reloaded, probably we could do that too and find incredible synchronicity. Wow! OK.

So....we're talking about prime cognizers which induce ascertainment by themselves. There are prime cognizers which can induce ascertainment by itself to which the ability to perform a function appears. That is simply that by seeing fire it can induce ascertainment that the ability to perform the function of burning or consuming fuel would not be there unless that fire was appearing, because you are subsequently seeing the juxtaposition of the two... What you are seeing is fire and you've previously realized that fire has the capacity to burn (with tactile consciousness)

No, here it doesn't need any kind of inference.

Student: It's happened before so I know it's going to be that way now – as a concept.

Look for instance at the next one - a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself, such as a sense prime cognizer that has a familiar object, for instance, seeing the shape of your friend or you mom or your dad to eye consciousness. Does dad appear to eye consciousness? Diana?

Diana: Not the label dad

Does dad appear to eye consciousness – not the label dad?

Diana Well I think you said yes before but I'm still not getting it.

All the impermanent phenomena that abide together appear but they're not necessarily ascertainable by eye consciousness. What is actually perceived by eye consciousness?

Student: Shape and colour

Only shape and colour. There's a lot of debate about this and you have to check. It's not the case that there is dissension but there's a lot of investigation that you have to check.

Sometimes you can see that you've seen someone just because you've seen their hair : "Oh there's so and so..." Maybe Dorje is a better example. Or Carrie – "that has to be Carrie".

It's possible for a baby who is familiar with their mom or dad, with their eye consciousness simply seeing that familiar form to induce certainty in their mental consciousness that they are perceiving their mom or dad. It doesn't necessitate any other kind of thought process in-between.

So that's what it's saying here. It's not saying that the eye consciousness perceives the person, although we can argue about that. We are just talking about that it can induce that kind of ascertainment, without the need of any other kind of intermediate thing.

(p. 26, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph) *In our own system, when prime cognizers that induce ascertainment by themselves are divided, there are five: sense direct prime cognizers to which the ability to perform a function appears, sense direct prime cognizers that have a familiar object, self-knowing direct prime cognizers, yogic direct prime cognizers, and inferential prime cognizers.*

So there are also, :

self-knowing direct prime cognizers that induce ascertainment by themselves, yogic direct prime cognizers that induce ascertainment by themselves and inferential prime cognizers that induce ascertainment by themselves.



*Whatever is one of those five is necessarily a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself.*

And as that last sentence that I read to you said, whatever is an inferential cognizer must be a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself. You can't have an inferential cognizer that the ascertainment of which is induced by another.

Do you follow? How could have an inferential cognizer where someone else has to say: "Oh what you've realized is ....." Do you follow Cathy?

Cathy Yes

Say for instance there was such a thing as an inferential cognizer that realized that sound was impermanent, but to realize that you had to depend either on another prime cognizers subsequent to that, or someone else who was a valid person to tell you that you've realized what you've realized, that wouldn't be an inferential cognizer. It has to be something that realizes it by itself.

So my question to you is, this is sort of a homework question if you don't get it today:

Of prime cognizers inducing ascertainment by themselves, there are first two kinds of direct prime cognizers: direct prime cognizers to which the ability to perform a function appears and direct prime cognizers that have a familiar object. Then there's self-knowing direct prime cognizers, yogic direct prime cognizers and then inferential direct prime cognizers, which are not direct perception.

Question: How come there is not a mental direct prime cognizer which induces ascertainment by itself? Why is there no such division? This is one for the scholars. This is one for Clayton.

What are the divisions of direct perception – can you remember what they were? The four divisions of direct perceivers, what do we have? Sense direct perceivers, mental direct perceiver, yogic direct perceivers and self-knowing direct perceivers. Here there are only three of them represented. It doesn't talk about mental direct perceivers. That's my question for you – what might be the reason that they are not represented among the divisions here?

The mental direct perceivers that we talk about in this context are all inattentive; the only kind of mental direct perceivers that are not inattentive are clairvoyance (that's not talked about in the context here) and some dream consciousnesses (according to Lama Tsongkhapa). Otherwise they are called yogic direct perceivers, if they are mental direct perceptions that realize subtle objects conducive to the path.

So maybe mental direct perceivers (in this context) are not going to be prime cognizers because they only last one instant. So this is something for you to think about.

*Whatever is one of those five is necessarily a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself.  
Illustrations are as follows:*

The first is an illustration of a sense direct perceiver to which the ability to perform a function appears. For example a sense-direct perceiver that apprehends fire as able to perform the functions of cooking and burning. We talked about that already – right?

Student: In that example, is it the eye consciousness that is apprehending the fire's ability to perform a function or is it actually inducing that apprehension in the mental consciousness?

These are prime cognizers that induce ascertainment by *themselves*. That means that they themselves are able to induce an ascertaining consciousness, and the ascertaining consciousnesses here are necessarily mental consciousnesses – right? So you can induce ascertainment or certainty through merely having seen something.

Indeed the ability to perform a function does appear to the eye consciousness, the eye consciousness itself does not realize it though, like with subtle impermanence; subtle impermanence does appear to our eye consciousness also but the eye consciousness of an ordinary person cannot realize that subtle impermanence. It does appear but the only things that eye consciousness is able to apprehend, , are shape and colour. But it can induce ascertainment of other things. OK?

Maybe this is getting a little closer to answering your questions.

Student: It is

There's a qualm that often is raised here : "I thought that we were saying that the eye consciousness only sees shape and colour. How can you say that you see a person?" So maybe that eye consciousness is able to induce ascertainment that you saw a person, because that's a conceptual understanding, and maybe it can be induced without the need of any other intermediary conceptual thoughts. When it's a familiar object – let's say.

So the second one: a sense direct prime cognizer having a familiar object. For example, a sense direct perceiver in the continuum of a son apprehending his father's form.

A familiar object - it doesn't have to be something like that. It could be something that you've known before. You've already labelled it and you know the name of it. The first instant when you see these – (pointing at the sweet peas) - before I knew they were sweet-peas to me they were flowers. OK so this is an unfamiliar object – this will be coming later.

The third. An example of a self knowing direct prime cognizer is for example a self-knowing direct perceiver that experiences an eye consciousness.

Are all self-knowers direct cognitions?

Student: Yes

What else could they be? If they are non-conceptual they could only be wrong consciousnesses – right? I don't believe I've ever heard of a self-knower which is a wrong consciousness. So they are direct perceptions.

So here it says "prime-cognizers that induce ascertainment by themselves". So are all self-knowing prime-cognizers able to induce ascertainment by themselves? Are there some self-knowers that are not able to induce ascertainment by themselves? We have to think about that.

Are all self-knowers necessarily prime-cognizers? No, there could be second instants. Are they all necessarily realizing consciousnesses? They could be also inattentive – right?

Student: Self-knowing consciousness that's inattentive?

Yes. When we had the divisions of direct perception, most of the division other than yogic-perception had three divisions: prime-cognizers; subsequent-cognizers and inattentive perception. Remember the example of Charvakas and so-forth. Remember that? We can find the page very quickly.

Student: Page 16

Page 16 – “examples of the third – an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained which is a self-knowing direct perceiver”. On the bottom of page 16. So there are some inattentive perceptions that are “self-knowing direct perceivers in the continuum of a Samkya that experiences bliss as being consciousness”. So in other words the implication here is that self-knower was inattentive because it is a direct perceiver but the Samkya believes wholeheartedly that bliss is not a consciousness. So they are not paying attention to that direct perceiver – it’s inattentive. OK

Then the fourth – a yogic direct prime cognizer, which is a prime cognizer that induces ascertainment by itself, is for example, an omniscient consciousness that is an other-knowing mental consciousness.

Other-knowing as opposed to what? Self-knowing – right?

We talked about self-knowers and other-knowers. Self-knowers are the rang-rig – things that just know the entity of the consciousness that they are part of. Other-knower is the entity of that consciousness that knows something other than its being clear and knowing – it knows another object – (according to these tenets).

Then the fifth – an inferential cognizer. An example of a prime cognizer which induces ascertainment by itself that is an inferential prime cognizer is, for example, an inferential consciousness that realizes sound to be impermanent.

So what I was saying to you before, if you go back and check about this, think about this later – that sentence that it said at the bottom of page 25: “whatever is an inferential cognizer must be a prime cognizer which induces ascertainment by itself”. How could it be a prime cognizer in which the ascertainment is induced by another consciousness? rhetorical question. OK, so when prime cognizers that are induced by another consciousness, in other words, those that are not self-ascertainable, when they are divided terminologically, there are three. Remember what terminological divisions were? Mark?

Mark: No

Pat?

Pat: I don’t remember...

A division that is terminological is called a division but it doesn’t necessarily have to be a division. Facsimiles of direct perception could be called one of the terminological divisions of direct perception. It’s not really a direct perception. It’s just called that. Terminologically it’s a direct perception..

So here, the terminological divisions are three: initial direct perceivers, inattentive direct perceivers and direct perceivers having a cause of error. These are not actual prime cognizer where ascertainment is induced by another. Let’s check.

So what is an illustration of the first?

Who told me before? I forgot again – sweet peas. Did Marcie tell me that these were sweet-peas? When I was first looking at these, that would have been such an initial direct perceiver. For example a sense direct perceiver in the continuum of dumb person like George who has not previously experienced seeing a sweat pea, which apprehends the colour of a sweat pea; ....or an upala.

What's an upala? It sounds like some kind of middle-eastern delicacy –doesn't it?

Student: Is it a plant that one of the buddhas is holding

Yeah – upala is a blue lotus. It is actually a lotus family but certain blue lotuses are called upala and I know that when we make certain kinds of incense and medicine, we have to have the upala flower. Tara is holding an upala in her hand. Not all lotuses are upala flowers. Manjushri in his right hand is holding a stem, and I'm not sure if it is the stem of a regular lotus or an upala. I think it's just a regular lotus. And what's a pundarika? A pundarika is a white lotus. There's a sutra called the *Saddharmapundarika* : the *Lotus of the Pure Dharma Sutra*.

So in the continuum of a person who sees an upala; actually they could be perceiving a flower, knowing that it's a flower but not knowing that it is an upala. Or they are just seeing the blue colour from the distance, not even seeing that it is a flower but just seeing the blue colour, not knowing that it's the colour of an upala flower. Does that make sense to you? This could be an initial direct perception.

I think an another example might be the perception that something is a flower but not yet knowing that it is an upala flower because it hasn't been told to you, or my perception of these flowers, not knowing before Marcie whispered that they were sweet peas. You had told me before that they were sweet peas but I had forgotten but in a sense now this is kind of like another initial perception.

It's not able to induce certainty that the apprehension of this flower or this colour would arise - I don't know that yet. This is just the initial apprehension of that. So there might be many initial apprehensions until one knows what that is. Right? It doesn't mean only the first instant of it.

Does that make sense to you?

Student: Yes

So the second – an inattentive direct perceiver that has to have ascertainment induced by another is for example a sense direct perceiver in the continuum of a person whose mind is especially attracted to a beautiful form which apprehends a sound.

So what is not being attended to here – the beautiful form or the sound?

Student: The sound

The sound. What's being attended to?

Student: The form

So it's like someone saying "Wow – look at that. Did you see that guy or that girl?" Your mental consciousness is paying attention to the eye consciousness and what is being perceived by your ear consciousness at that time remains inattentive – it is a consciousness to which an object appears but it is not ascertained. That consciousness is not able to induce an ascertaining consciousness that you heard something – that has to be told to you. You heard George say "the practice day is going to be this day" or whatever. You heard that, but it did not register. Does that make sense?

Now, are those first two direct perceivers both prime cognizers, valid cognizers? If something is a division of prime cognizers with ascertainment induced by another they have to be prime cognizers – right? But the ascertainment is induced by another like the example of a fire from the distance.

The first one, is that a prime cognizer?

Student: Yes

It is a prime cognizer with respect to what? Either blue or flower, but not that it's an upala. Somebody would have to tell you that it was an upala. Or the example I told you before – "I saw some guy coming at the restaurant and when he sat down my friends had to tell me that that was Robert Redford. I had a prime cognizer of a person, a man with a young lady, but it wasn't able to induce ascertainment subsequently that I saw Robert Redford. That had to be induced by another. Ok?

How about the second one? Inattentive perception – is that a prime cognizer

Student: With respect to form

What is going to be induced by the other – the certainty that you heard or that you saw?

Student: The certainty that you heard.

Yes, that you heard has to be induced by an other, because you are not certain of it now – it is the inattentive perception. Is that a prime cognizer? It's not really a prime cognizer is it? Remember the divisions of direct perceivers: prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers and inattentive perception; these are all separate, and if it is an inattentive perception it's not a prime cognizer.

How about the third – a direct perceiver having a cause of error? For example a sense direct perceiver apprehending the colour of a mirage which directly generates a superimposition apprehending the mirage as water. What does that mean – which directly generates a superimposition? Where does it generate the superimposition? In your eye consciousness or where? In your mental consciousness. For instance if I see Bonnie's form, that's a familiar person that is able to induce certainty that I saw Bonnie – in the next instant. But if I see a wavering colour in the distance, that is capable in a person who is not learned in mirages of being able to induce a superimposition, which is a wrong consciousness, thinking that it is water. A superimposition in the sense the mental consciousness is superimposing something that is not really there.

Student: To me that seems to be the same function as perceiving fire and knowing that it burns. There is like a mental function step in there.

This can happen immediately because of familiarity with seeing that shimmering colour and finding it was water in the past, the person can mistakenly think that this is water but it is not actually water. So that is not a prime cognizer either. So those are terminological divisions.

Let's just stop here and if you have a chance do these ten other questions of the test. Take a half-hour. You can take one look at them but not taking notes and then you can go back and look at the sections. Then after you note your answers, then next time we'll see what your score was. And then you can go back being motivated to check that again.

And see if you can read the section on self and other ascertainable prime cognizers and generate some ascertainment!

## Dedication

OK let's try to dedicate the energy. This is just beginning of the second half of the course. So we are doing well and we should be joyous for creating more merit.

Think whatever merit I've created, may they become the cause of quickly realizing all of the good qualities and eliminating all of the faults in my continuum for the benefit of all sentient beings. Due to these merits may I quickly achieve the state of buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings.

May they not simply ripen in some pleasure which is actually in the nature of suffering within cyclic existence, which is experienced only once in the future as some relief, but whatever way they ripen may they become the cause of my continued practice and sharing with others, overcoming my obstacles slowly, developing my good qualities (wisdom, compassion, renunciation).

Try to first make that conventional dedication. Due to these merits may I quickly become a guru-buddha and lead all sentient beings to that very state.

And when you get a flavour of that dedication, try and seal it within the three spheres: the emptiness of the merits, the goal dedicated to, and the act of dedicating that tries to join the two. All three of them are empty of existing the way that they appear, as if somehow findable within their basis of imputation. They exist, they function conventionally, but they are empty of any kind of inherent or ultimate existence.

## Session 8

### Meditation

As it's an eclipse of the moon day, let's try to meditate and control our minds, control our lunacy, especially my lunacy. Relax your body and relax your mind. Please place your attention on the breathing....

Even though other thoughts might seem compelling, this is the familiarity that you develop in meditation: reminding yourself that you don't have to follow them. 'Now I'm trying to practice concentration and I'm just going to watch one object in order to tame this wild elephant of my mind.....'

And when the mind is somewhat subdued, withdraw your attention even further inside to your heart chakra. Focus on the contents of your mind, trying to recognize the nature of consciousness within which all that content is arising – the container you might say....

In letting go, again and again of all the thoughts, even the subjective states such as attachment or irritation, you are trying to seek a mental image of your consciousness as being clear and knowing....

Its clarity is its capacity to give rise to the appearance of whatever impinges upon it, its non-obstructing nature such that thoughts can pass through it without being hindered....

Even let go of the sense of the body. Refocus on the consciousness that was recognizing *that* - within which the appearance of the body arose. ...Even the sense of an observer - "I" or self.....

See if you can recognize this clear light nature as our potential, our conventional buddha potential. All of the negativities can be eliminated. All of the positive qualities can be generated within such a mind.....

All sentient beings who have been my mother numberless times and have been depthlessly kind and who I do not remember now having been my mother are (if still in samsara) cycling under the influence of ignorance, grasping to a self, grasping to a self of phenomena, giving rise to the various afflicted states of mind that generate karma that then come back upon them like a weapon....

Those that are in very high states, experiencing the results of their past contaminated virtuous karma, as well as those who are experiencing the results of their contaminated negative karma, changing, cycling, circling in cyclic existence, nothing definite about those states of good fortune or beauty or success....

Think especially today at a time when the moon is going to be eclipsed, the minds of sentient beings are often affected in a very negative way as though the power of the shadow tends to grow. There is more paranoia and fear and the negative mind can arise more easily. Think, for the sake of all sentient beings, especially today during this next class time, I am going to participate in the study of the mind – epistemology – honing my wisdom so that I can develop very quickly a good heart, so that I can develop the wisdom that realizes emptiness, can cut through my ego grasping, practice the bodhisattva, deeds that take great courage and perseverance, in the support of wisdom understanding the mind.

All the while for the sake of living beings and not just for my own sake, I am going to participate tonight in order to become enlightenment, awakened, for the welfare of all living beings....



Now bring your attention back to the present....

## Teaching

How are you feeling? OK?

Who's missing – it feels like someone's missing. I know that Chris and Marcie sent their apologies, they couldn't come tonight.

OK, so how about your homework, your examination? This is going to be self-marking. Maureen did you do the exam? You forgot? No you did. Ok.

OK – first question:

1. What is the definition of consciousness? I'll ask different people and compare it with yours. Dan what is the definition of consciousness?

Dan: That which is **clear** and **knowing**?

Does that sound right? Bonnie is that ok? Did you have something else?

Student: I just put **awareness clear knowing**

Awareness clear knowing. Maureen what did you put down?

Maureen: I had that which **knows** ...and is **clear**

Did you write it down or are you just remembering it?

Maureen: Yes I did – **that which knows!**

**That which knows** – is that a sufficient definition?

Student: No

No! Why not?

Student: Because consciousness always knows. You can't escape from consciousness – can't you?

So that's not consciousness? So you think that knowing would mean that it didn't have mistake?

Student: Yeah – if you know something, you know it's not mistaken.

No. "To know" is a synonym of for "to apprehend", to be "aware". It doesn't necessarily mean that it is correct – factually concordant.

What do you think? Would that be a sufficient definition of consciousness – just to say *knowing*, or to *know*, rather than saying *that which is clear and knowing*?

In order for something to be a definition there has to be what are called “the eight doors of pervasion”. Do you remember this – eight doors of pervasion? The eight doors of pervasion are between the definition and its definiendum. The definition is the things that are the defining characteristics like *that which is **clear** and **knowing***. The definiendum is that which is being defined.

There have to be eight doors of pervasion between definition and definiendum. 1. If it is the definiendum it has to be that definition. 2. If it is that definition it has to be that definiendum (going backwards).

3. If you have that definition you have to have that definiendum. Did I say that right? Both ways – 4. if you have that definiendum you have to have that definition. Then 5 and 6. if it is not that definition, it is not that definiendum and the other way around, and 7 and 8. if you do not have that definition you do not have that definiendum and the other way around. Do all those possibilities make sense to you?

So to say the definition of consciousness is *knowing*, could that a definition of consciousness? What do you think Sarah?

Sarah: I’m thinking about it.

Well those are synonyms – **consciousness** and **knowing** are synonyms. In general you can’t have synonyms as definition and its definiendum. Something is used that distinguishes consciousness more, like a defining characteristic – that which is *clear* and *knowing*.

2. Second question: *manifest, hidden* and *deeply hidden* phenomena are respectively realized initially by ordinary beings in dependence on which types of consciousnesses?

Sister Theo: what do you think?

Sister Theo: I put non-conceptual

So *manifest, hidden* and *deeply hidden* phenomena are all realized initially by non-conceptual consciousnesses? You just gave one answer, even though there are three kinds of phenomena mentioned here.

Sister: Yes but I thought they all contained non-conceptual consciousnesses.

Who can I ask? Don? What do you think? Manifest, hidden and deeply hidden phenomena, is Theo right? They’re all d?

Don: I had manifest as realized by a sense direct perceiver.

Manifest phenomena are realized by sense direct perceivers – initially. Yes

Don: Hidden as realized by inferential cognizers.

Hidden phenomena by are initially realized by inferential cognition.

Don: Deeply hidden by inferential cognition through belief

Other Student: Are not realized by ordinary human beings

Deeply hidden phenomena are not realized by ordinary beings? They can only be realized *directly* by buddhas. For ordinary beings, they can't be realized by direct perception *initially* nor by inference by the power of the fact, but there's another kind of inference – the inference in which you have already ascertained that a certain individual is a valid person, a valid authority, and that is still called inference. It still is a valid way of knowing, so we can know deeply hidden phenomena but we can't know them through an inference by the power of the fact – the usual kind of inference, like 'because of this, that', 'because there's smoke, there's fire', but you can know it by another kind of inference because it was spoken by a valid person and you have checked it and it is free of contradiction by means of the three kinds of analysis. Do you remember? You don't remember exactly. You have to go back.

So I think Don's got it on the head. So Sister Theo said that manifest, hidden and deeply hidden phenomena are respectively initially realized by ordinary beings in dependence upon which types of consciousness. She said "non-conceptual".

Manifest phenomena are realized by non-conceptual consciousness, by sense direct perceivers. Manifest phenomena means phenomena that appear to our consciousness directly and not via a mental image. I can have a mental image of this book too, of course, but the book itself is a manifest phenomenon because it manifests itself to my senses without the intermediary of a mental image. So that part's right manifest phenomena. So maybe you get one third right....

But hidden phenomena can't be realized non-conceptually initially by ordinary beings like ourselves. For example things like impermanence, emptiness or the subtle nature of our mind, those are hidden phenomena and have to be first ascertained via a mental image – maybe by a belief that we hone until we have an inferential cognition of that. With belief it is a mental image that is factually correct and single pointed in the sense of not doubting. And eventually we can realize that hidden phenomenon directly.

Deeply hidden phenomena can't be realized initially by direct perception, nor by the usual kind of inferential cognition that depends upon an ordinary sign, but they can be ascertained because the Buddha explained certain things, like the qualities of the Buddha that even 10<sup>th</sup> level bodhisattvas can't perceive or they can't infer by other kinds of signs. But you can develop an inferential cognition by the power of belief in a valid person. When you have that kind of inferential cognition, can that lead, when you are an ordinary person, into a direct perception of that? That deeply hidden phenomena? Diane?

Diane: It can for hidden phenomena ....

Right. So hidden phenomena you can realize directly. Like you can have a direct realization of emptiness. First you have an inferential understanding. You couldn't have that direct realization of emptiness immediately without having an inference first, because it is a hidden phenomena.

Deeply hidden phenomena, also you have to realize first by inference, but by one particular kind of inference which depends on what is called the power of belief, and an ordinary person could not have a direct realization of that because that is the providence of a buddha's omniscient mind – deeply hidden phenomena.

OK very good.

3. So this one if for Dorje: what are the four divisions of direct perceivers?

Dorje: Inaudible

Don't know! Oh oh! Did you take the exam?

Dorje: I wasn't here last week.

Oh you weren't here – ok

Dorje: Was it like yogic direct perceivers...?

What are the four divisions of direct perceivers?

Dorje: Is it inferential, yogic...

Inferential, yogic.... No

Dorje: You can't inferentially directly perceive...

You can't inferentially directly perceive – ok, good, you corrected yourself. That's good and you get extra credit by humbly showing some mistake and then correcting it.

Dorje: I'm sorry but I don't remember

Ok. That's close. Carrie

Carrie: Sense, mental, yogic and I drew a blank, I could not figure out the fourth one.

It's self-knowing. That's good in terms of order, it's sort of by levels of subtlety. There's some reason for saying them in that particular order - sense direct perceivers, mental direct perceivers, yogic direct perceivers and self-knowing direct-perceivers.

5. What is the uncommon empowering condition of mental consciousness? Bonnie – do you know this one?

Bonnie: Well I put "primary mind" but right now I am thinking that that's not right.

In general what's the uncommon empowering of say an eye consciousness? It's the eye faculty. For sense consciousnesses it is its sense faculty, and so by analogy the mental sense faculty might be an answer, but what is the mental faculty?

Students: Mind?

Mind? Any mind? The mind of last week? The mind of next week? Your mind could be the empowering condition of my mind? Or if it would have to be your mind, could it be last weeks mind?

It has to be a previous, an immediately preceding moment of consciousness. Could it be a previous moment of say for instance a sense consciousness that can act as a basis for the next moment of mental consciousness? Yes. Can it be a previous moment of mental consciousness?

Student: I thought it had to be a mental consciousness

It doesn't have to be a mental consciousness. It can be also a sense consciousness. Any consciousness, whether sense or mental, can be the uncommon empowering condition of mental consciousness. That's interesting.

So you were thinking it would be mental consciousness and I was just hearing that Karen was thinking "how could it be mental consciousness?"

Karen I was thinking of the mental perception that comes at the end of sense direct perception, but I knew that there were others.

But what do you think? What's your name?

Student: Mark

Mark. Oh that's right, logical Mark, yes. Logical Mark, what do you think: what's an example of a previous moment of mental consciousness that could act as the empowering condition of the next moment? OK, let's go to the next question first.

6. What are the conditions necessary for consciousness to arise? I'll ask Mark...

Mark: I didn't get an answer for that

You didn't get an answer for that. You drew a blank. What are the conditions necessary for consciousness to arise? Karen?

Karen I'm not sure if I got it right but I put the object to be realized, the uncommon empowering condition and the immediately preceding moment of consciousness.

That's not bad.

We say there are three conditions, like a tripod, ok. There has to be objective condition (in Tibetan *migs yul*) or the referent condition – you could say **object condition**. Without an object, consciousness cannot arise, the consciousness that is perceiving it. There has to be an **empowering condition** that gives some special power to that consciousness to cognize in that particular way, and there has to be an **immediately preceding condition** that is the continuity of consciousness before that consciousness arises.

In some cases, for mental consciousness, as asked in question 4, the uncommon empowering condition, which is one of these three conditions, for mental consciousness can be another consciousness - the ear consciousness or some other consciousness. It can also be the same consciousness, a previous moment of mental consciousness it that acts as the immediately preceding condition, that can also be the empowering condition for that consciousness to arise.

Student: I'm just stuck on it. Let's say we're talking about apprehending a form; the immediately preceding moment of consciousness could be *any* of the sense consciousnesses or does it have to be the eye consciousness?

The *immediately preceding condition* is the continuity of consciousness that allows consciousness to continue. So you have mental consciousness existing and the preceding moment of that acts as a condition for the next moment to arise. If there wasn't a continuity of consciousness then the next moment wouldn't be able to arise.

Student: But I thought that you said for number four...

That's talking about the *uncommon empowering conditions*.

Student: Oh. I'm sorry. I'm getting the two confused. OK

Alright

Student:1. So the answer to question six is "the preceding moment of that consciousness"?

Student:2 No that's the answer to number four. Isn't it?

Not necessarily mental consciousness. The uncommon empowering condition for mental consciousness is *the mental faculty* and if you ask "what is the mental faculty?", it can be a preceding moment of any consciousness: the sense consciousness or the mental consciousness, that can give rise to a mental consciousness.

5. How about number five? What do you think? What are the three divisions of sense direct perceivers?

Student: Prime, subsequent and awareness...

Prime sense direct perceivers, subsequent sense direct perceivers and *awareness*?

Student: Did I get two out of three?

OK. Maureen what do you think

Maureen: And inattentive.

Inattentive awareness, remember? Sense direct perceivers by their definition are non-conceptual and non-mistaken. So they are not wrong consciousnesses. The third division is a sense direct perceiver to which an object appears but that is not ascertained i.e. your mental consciousness is not paying sufficient attention to later ascertain that something was actually perceived. OK did that help?

Student: So it's *inattentive*.

*Inattentive* is a way that we could translate that or literally in Tibetan it is a *consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained*.

Then six we just did. Oh look at this. Extra credit – there's no number seven.

Student: I got that one right...

Did you get that one right? What's the answer?

Student: There's no number seven

You said you got it right. What's the answer?

Student: Well, that there's no number seven

No number seven ; I guess you get credit for that. Wow, that's interesting. How did I do that? I must have had a seven and I .... I don't know.

Student:1 In the last one you said "appears but not...."?

Student:2 "ascertained"

Yes. An awareness to which something appears but is not ascertained. What is doing the ascertaining? Is the sense consciousness doing the ascertaining?

Ascertaining consciousness usually refers to mental consciousness, so it's not as though the object appears to your sense consciousness but your sense consciousness doesn't ascertain it. That's not the meaning of it. Do you follow? The phraseology is such that it appears to your sense consciousness which does apprehend it, but the mental consciousness is not paying sufficient attention to that to induce a remembering consciousness later, it induces no certainty that you saw that. OK?

7. Number eight (or seven depending on how you number them): what are the possible apprehended objects of a *yogic direct perceivers*? Who have I not asked yet? Sarah?

Sarah: I've not caught up yet

OK so Carrie gets the next one.

Carrie: They are realizations in the continuum of a superior....

So what are the possible apprehended objects of *yogic direct perceivers*?

Carrie: Everything. I mean *yogic direct perceivers* aren't supposed to be able to miss anything so it would be impossible for them....???

Hm! What does the text say?

Student: Subtle impermanence, and gross and subtle selflessness of persons.

Right. I wonder if I've phrased that question so that Carrie can get away with it.... I said what are the possible apprehended objects... I'll have to do some research on that but the answer I was hoping for was that the particular objects that *yogic direct perceivers* realize are only objects that are conducive to liberation such as subtle impermanence and gross and subtle selflessness of person, the four noble truths.



Here in the text it just mentions impermanence and the gross and subtle selflessness of persons, but it can be other things like the four noble truths and their aspects, and so forth.

9. What is the referent object of the conception grasping to self of persons, according to Prasangika?

Sister Theo: The inherently existent person.

Is that right? Dan? What is the referent object of the conception grasping to a self of persons? Conception - is a sense direct perceiver or what? What is conception? It is something within the mind.... We can only have conception within the mental consciousness – right? So it's some kind of thought process which is grasping to a self of person. What does that mean – grasping at self of person? You can't hold onto a person with your mind – can you?

Student: Sure

You can?

Student: 2 Easy.

So you can hold me from falling with your mind ....?

Grasping here means not just *apprehending a self of persons* but it means grasping to it, sort of attaching to it and believing that. So that particular state of mind is what? Some scholars say that that's the root of samsara – the ignorance grasping to a self of persons – that conception. What is its referent object? What is it referring to? Sister Theo says it is referring to the inherently existent person. Is that right?

Diane: It's referring to the conventionally existent person.

Now, Diane says it's referent object is the conventionally existent person. Let me ask - inherently existent person and conventionally existent person, both have the word *existent* in them but do both of them exist?

Student: No

Only a conventionally existent person exists? Inherently existent person doesn't exist? Doesn't a conventionally existent person inherently exist?

Student: No! It does not exist.

No, a conventionally existent person does not inherently exist. Inherent existence is a mode of existence that our mind supposes. It means that there would be a kind of inherence that is coming from its own side – that Theo exists without me needing to impute the existence of Theo. There is something, Theo, there from her own side. You might ask: "What is he is talking about? Of course there is Theo from her own side" - but if you investigate all phenomena, you cannot find that which the mind is supposing there – some kind of inherent existence.

So referent object is a little bit different than the conceived object. What is the conceived object of the conception grasping to a self of persons? Mark, what were you going to say?

Mark: The conventionally existent I.

You're saying the conceived object is the conventionally existing I. And referent object is?

Mark: The inherently existing I

I think it's just the other way around. What we are conceiving of (incorrectly) is an inherently or truly existing person. Here in the question I said *according to Prasangika* so you wouldn't say the object of the conception grasping the self of the person is the self-supporting substantially existent person – that's for Sautrantika, and according to Prasangika that's a gross grasping at persons - . Well, I didn't say subtle or gross, so you could argue that that's also correct.

The referent object though is not the object that is actually being determined or conceived. The referent object is the object to which you are referring, and there is an ignorance in our continuum that refers — let's say — to the conventionally existent Mark and *conceives* of that conventionally existent person as inherently existent. So the referent object of a conception grasping to a self of persons (according to Prasangika) is the conventionally existent person.

Is that getting clearer? A little bit clearer? OK

9. Finally number nine or ten depending upon whether we give you extra credit for number seven which wasn't there – what is its conceived object? Did we just answer that? Dan?

Dan: The truly existent self

The truly existent self, or the inherently existing self – that would be the object that is being conceived. Karen you said something about the aggregates.

Karen I think I overlooked the word *conception* grasping so I said the referent object is the five aggregates to which the label self is imputed.

You also skipped grasping then. You just said what is the self of persons.

Karen The referent object of that....

You left out not just conception but also grasping – right? We usually don't talk about the referent object of a self of persons. What is the self of persons, the self, the person - it is *the being imputed upon the five aggregates*.

Ok – good. Who got them all right?

Who thinks they got more than three quarters right? Good.

Who got less than five percent right?

Good – so you all passed – those that took the test. Good, we're on a roll.

Which page are one – 27? Any questions? Have you been studying ahead? Over-committed? Tired out from seeing the premier of the "Matrix Redouble"

Student: The *appearing self*, is that the conceived object?

What exactly do you mean – *the appearing self*? Be a little more precise. Do you mean the appearance of a self that is appearing to conception?

Student: Yes

You're talking about a conceptual consciousness that has the appearance of a self. What is the appearing object of a conception? Maureen knows this? Of any conception? Say I have a conception of this pencil.

Maureen: Mental....??

If I use my clairvoyance – mental *image*, that's what's she's thinking.

Maureen: That's the word.

There you go. That's how we say it generally; the technical term is a *meaning generality*. So that's the appearing object of a conception. So by referring to conventional persons that do exist – like say I've labelled somebody Oma – and referring to that, which does exist conventionally, to my mind (in thinking about that) it seems as though that is appearing from its own side.

There are two kinds of self - of persons and of phenomena. The self of phenomena appearing to my sense consciousness would be for example these glasses or this pencil. These have what is called a self of phenomena. It is not just persons who have selves. The Buddha said there is something called an *atman* or self – not in the sense of a soul, not like this pencil has its own soul – but there's a certain kind of self-identity of the pencil that actually appears to sense consciousness. As soon as I impute pencil, it appears to sense consciousness that a pencil is existing from its own side. All phenomena appear to sense consciousness as though they were inherently existent – existing from their own side. This is according to the highest philosophical school – the Prasangika.

Are you with me?

Student: I was thinking that *appearing* was a synonym for *conceived*

Appearing is not at all necessarily a synonym of conceived. Conceiving is a conceptual/mental activity; thinking about something, and seeming to know that. We can conceive of things correctly. We can conceive of emptiness and have a correct conception – right? What is a correct conception? Say for instance if I believe that phenomena are empty of true existence, is that a correct conception?

You don't I have to realize it through inferential cognition for it to be correct?

Student: You can have a correctly assuming consciousness

You can have a correctly assuming consciousness or what we call correct belief.

That would still be mistaken however. Why would it be mistaken, even though it's correct? Because it is a conceptual consciousness that is mistaken with respect to its appearing object. It's correct. Also it doesn't necessarily have to realize its object; a correctly assuming consciousness, as Diana points out, is not necessarily realizing its object.

OK. On the bottom of page 26 then: “When prime cognizers when ascertainment is induced by another are divided terminologically there are three”

What are prime cognizers when ascertainment is induced by another. What does that mean?

Maureen. I think we were talking the last time about how someone can help you see, help you apprehend something that you don’t recognize.

A real prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by others has a certain characteristic. A prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another is: “a prime cognizer”. It has to be a prime cognizer – this is on page 25. So it’s not as though someone helps you to realize it completely. You have had to have realized something yourself but the ascertainment must be induced by another.

The ascertainment of what? *Its own non-arising if the nature the object of comprehension did not abide in the object* has to be induced through the power of another prime cognizer. It can be a valid person – like we were giving the example of the mechanic. Or it means for instance that you’d have to go up and see something, like a tree in the distance – “is that a pine tree or is that a redwood or is that a telephone pole?” You see something and there’s a certain prime cognizer, you’re cognizing tree, let’s say, but the ascertainment of whether a pine or a redwood was there has to be induced by another consciousness. You have to get up closer or someone has to explain to you that that particular shape is this kind of tree.

A prime cognizer where ascertainment is induced by another has to be a prime cognizer but it’s talking about whether you can actually get to the final nature of the phenomenon or whether you are only understanding the appearance of it.

OK Bonnie are you getting that?

Bonnie: No

No. Like for instance I can see a red fire in the distance and I can have a valid cognition of red colour but if I’m not sure that’s due to fire or to something else, that would be a valid cognizer where certainty is induced by another.

Sister Sarah asked what the antidote to pride is. Who knows? You could say that the antidote to anger is patience but how do you generate the antidote to pride? There are different kinds of humility. When one is working on single-pointed concentration, there are different objects that you can choose to meditate on if you have one particular affliction that is dominating you. For instance if you are dominated by lust, you meditate on the repulsiveness of the forms that you have desire for; like the human body, you recognize its various stages of decomposition and worms coming out and maggots and the bones and so forth. If you’re dominated by anger, you meditate on loving-kindness, taking that as your object for developing concentrating. You take a particular object that acts to train the mind as an antidote to your main affliction and also as your object of concentration. So if a person is dominated by pride they would meditate on many complicated things, such as the enumeration of all categories, the five aggregates, the twelve entrances or sources, the eighteen constituents and the interrelationships between them. It’s said that in so doing, since it is so complicated and vast, one’s pride inevitably diminishes.

My teacher Lama Yeshe used to say that the best antidote to pride was heart-warming love because if for instance you are with your mom who you love dearly and she is sick and she says “Computer? What’s a computer?” or she says “Sautrantika? What’s Sautrantika?” At that point there is no pride in your mind and

you say “Mom, excuse me. Sautrantika is a Indian system of Buddhist philosophy ....” Because of heart-warming love there’s no sense of superiority or pride arising. So I think in terms of practice that’s very useful. If we notice, in terms of relations with other people, pride arising, developing love for them and wanting to them to be happy can be a very powerful antidote to pride.

Maureen: are you being affected by the moon?

Maureen: No I have something for after class

OK. Hope it’s a croissant or something.

Maureen: I’ve lots of worms to bury - animal liberation. People can take worms home.

How nice. Not croissants, worms. So we won’t eat them.

Let’s continue. So prime cognizers when ascertainment is induced by another (perceiver). There are different illustrations here on page 27. We said that when prime cognizers when ascertainment is induced by another are divided terminologically, it’s into three.

We said terminologically because not all of these are real prime cognizers when ascertainment is induced by another, because to be that they would have to be a prime cognizer. We had: initial direct perceivers; inattentive direct perceivers and direct perceivers having a cause of error.

An initial direct perceiver is for example a sense direct perceiver in the continuum of one who has not previously seeing an upala which apprehends the colour of an upala. So that is an actual prime cognizer where ascertainment is induced by another, because it is apprehending the colour but it is not apprehending that it is the colour of an upala – that part has to be induced by another prime cognizer.

The second, an inattentive direct perceiver, is a sense direct perceiver in the continuum of a person whose mind is especially attracted to a beautiful form which apprehends a sound. Is that a prime cognizer or is it just a terminological division?

Student: It’s not a prime cognizer.

Why not?

Student: Because to be a prime cognizer it has to realize its object and this is inattentive.

Right. Remember, from among the definitions, inattentive perceivers don’t ascertain their objects and that’s one of the qualities that a prime cognizers has to have. It has to realize its object and has to induce ascertainment that you knew something. So this one is not a real division

Third example (a direct perceiver having a cause of error): a sense direct perceiver apprehending the colour of a mirage which directly generates a superimposition apprehending the mirage as water.

So what is the implication there?

Student: It’s a conceptual cognition.

Is it a prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another? Let's check. So you've ascertained what? The colour of a mirage; you haven't ascertained the mirage, you've apprehended the colour of a mirage and you've realized that and that generates within you mental consciousness, a superimposition – a mind that thinks that you are apprehending water. Is that an actual prime cognizer or is that also a terminological division? What do you think – Theo?

Theo: I don't think that can be a valid (prime) cognizer

Why not? This is talking about a sense direct perceiver apprehending the colour of a mirage. There are only three kinds of sense direct perceivers. What are they?

Prime, subsequent and inattentive. So it's a sense direct perceiver, it's not inattentive here. It is perceiving the colour of the mirage, but that is inducing within the mental consciousness a mistaken idea that that's water, but that's being done by the mental consciousness. So we are talking about just the eye consciousness being a prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another.

Student: So what was the question?

The question is and was: is this just a terminological division of a prime cognizer where ascertainment is induced by another or is this an actual case of a prime cognizer where ascertainment is induced by another?

Student: It would have to be induced by other

Ascertainment would have to be induced by another here but is this really a prime cognizer? Like for instance in the previous one - inattentive perception – it is not actually a prime cognizer. For instance are facsimiles of direct perceptions direct perceptions?

Students: No

No, they are not. They look like direct perceptions but they are not. Some members of terminological divisions may be actual divisions, but most of them are just called divisions. Like, we say bunny rabbits. What are the ones: cashmere or mohair rabbits and then Hugh Hefner's bunny rabbits, or Theo's car which she calls "Bunny Ma". If we had that list: Hugh Hefner's bunnies or Bunny Ma – the car-, they would be called bunny but they are not actual bunnies. That would be a kind of terminological division.

So is this a terminological division or is this a real one... What do you think Mark?

Mark: I believe it's terminological

I *believe* it's terminological. It sounds like this is getting into some kind of belief system. I *believe* and you had better not disagree with me or I'm going to get .... What do you think?

Student: I think it's terminological

So in other word the sense direct perceiver is not a prime cognizer in this case? It's perceiving the colour of a mirage....

Student: It is a prime cognizer. It perceives the colour correctly.

Yes it is a prime cognizer. It's not mistaken. Because the person is not familiar with this, it induces a wrong response in the mental consciousness but there is nothing wrong with the eye consciousness. It is a prime cognizer.

So there's another three ways of dividing them up terminologically.

*When prime cognizers when ascertainment is induced by another are terminologically divided in another way, there are three: prime cognizers when ascertainment of the appearance is induced by itself but of the truth by another, prime cognizers when ascertainment of the generality is induced by itself but of the particular by another, and prime cognizers when ascertainment of even the mere appearance is induced by another.*

Prime cognizers when ascertainment of the appearance is induced by itself but of the truth by another. What is the example of that: a sense direct perceiver apprehending in the distance a reddish colour which is in fact the colour of fire and with respect to which there is the doubt as to "whether that is the colour of fire or what?" So is that an actual division or a terminological division.

To be a real one it has to be a prime cognizer. Yes this is a prime cognizer. This is a classical example of where ascertainment is induced by another. It's ascertaining the colour, red, but the fact, or the ultimate mode of that colour, that it is the colour of fire, that has to be supplied by some other direct perceiver. You have to get up closer to see that it is actually fire.

The second; an example of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a tree having leaves and branches which is in fact an Ashoka tree and with respect to which there is a doubt wondering if that is an Ashoka tree or not. Is that a terminological division? Carrie what do you think?

Carrie: They are almost identical, one is a sense perception and one is a mental perception.

So this is also a prime cognizer, right? The ascertainment of the final nature of the object that's being known is not just a tree but in this case an Ashoka tree. That has to be induced by another consciousness.

The third one: a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue which induces a doubting consciousness that thinks "did I see blue or not?" It's not like you're crazy or something, it's talking about an inattentive perception again, right? So this third one is just a terminological division.

The text says: *There is a difference between those as to whether they are actual or imputed, for the first and second are actual prime cognizers when ascertainment is induced by another, whereas the latter is an imputed one.*

Is it talking about the first set of three or the second set of three?

The second set of three because in this first set the one that is not a natural one was the second one – right at the top of the page.

The text continues: *Also, from amongst those, the first a prime cognizer when the ascertainment of the appearance is induced by itself but the truth by another is both that which induces ascertainment by itself and also a prime cognizer which induces ascertainment by itself with respect to the reddish colour in the*



*distance which is in fact the colour of fire but with respect to which there is the doubt, wondering if that is the colour of fire or not.*

Could I say it's both? That is a prime cognizer with respect to the reddish colour, right? It induces ascertainment by itself with respect to the reddish, right? Can you see that?

*It is also both that when ascertainment is induced by another and a prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another with respect to such a reddish colour being the colour of fire. However, it's not a prime cognizer with respect to that reddish colour being the colour for fire.*

In one sense it's a prime cognizer – a prime cognizer where ascertainment is induced by another has to be a prime cognizer - but it isn't a prime cognizer of the final nature of the thing. It's a prime cognizer of just the appearance, just the appearance of the colour, the appearance of blue, or the appearance of tree. So here it says "in brief, whatever is a prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another is necessarily a prime cognizer". Right? It has to be a prime cognizer. "*However whatever is a prime cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another with respect to a particular phenomenon is necessarily not a prime cognizer with respect to that phenomenon*". It's pretty simply, isn't it?

Do you get it Theo?

Theo: Yes

Good.

*"This is because whatever is a prime cognizer with respect to a particular phenomenon is necessarily a prime cognizer which induces ascertainment by itself with respect to that phenomenon".*

You can circle that phrase. That's sort of the gist of it – if something is a prime cognizer with respect to something, it has to induce ascertainment by itself, according to these tenets. According to the Prasangika, maybe it doesn't have to be a prime cognizer.

*"When prime cognizers are terminologically divided in another way, there are three".*

Here it says: "**valid cognizers** that person's". I'm not sure that I would agree with that translation. I think a valid cognizer cannot be a person. This is talking about *pramana* or *tsad ma* which translates sometimes as valid cognizer. We usually just say "that which is valid". So the Buddha is *that which is valid*. There are examples of that which are valid which are persons, such as the teacher Buddha, in dependence upon whom one could generate inferential cognition by the power of belief - with respect to a valid person.

I don't know – *valid cognizer that is a person* – I would debate with that.

Second – "valid speech such as the wheel of the doctrine" (such as of the four noble truths). You know the Buddha is said to have turned the wheel of Dharma three times. Do you know what the three turnings of the wheel of Dharma are?

The first was the four noble truths. You can almost say sutra, tantra and Vajrayana. Like people who went a lot of times to India are talking about mudra, mantra and yantra (from the Hindu tradition), since that sounds so nice. Bonnie do you know what the three turnings of the wheel are?

The first turning was, as Dan said, the teachings that the Buddha gave on the four noble truths. There are different ways of understanding it; it doesn't mean only that particular teaching, it refers to all the teachings the Buddha gave in which he expressed phenomena as truly existent.

The second turning of the wheel are the teachings that the Buddha gave that became the *Prajnaparamitra Sutras*, in which he taught that all phenomena are empty of true existence. *Prajnaparamitra* means perfection of wisdom. So in the second turning of the wheel the Buddha was mainly teaching that all phenomena are not truly existent – these are Mahayana sutras. Maybe the first turning of the wheel looks like mainly the Theravada cannon – for the most part, although you can find instances in any one sutra (even in one teaching) of different turnings of the wheel. The second turning of the wheel mainly teaches that phenomena are empty of true existence.

The third turning of the wheel was what?

Student: Abhidharma?

Abhidharma? No. The third turning of the wheel of Dharma talking is about the three natures.

Student: The third makes fine distinctions between the first and second?

In fact the mind-only school is based on the teachings of the third turning of the wheel and the scholars who took those teaching as definitive said “the second turning of the wheel was also wrong; the first and second are not completely right, the third, that's it! That's the middle way”. But that's not how the highest philosophical schools see it. They say that the second turning of the wheel is the definitive teaching.

So here it says an example of valid speech is “the wheel of Dharma of the four noble truths” .....

Student: So what's the third turning of the wheel?

The third turning of the wheel are like the *The Sutra Unravelling the Thought* and *The Descent into Lanka Sutra* are called sutras of the third wheel, from which the mind-only school takes their basis, and the *Tathagatagarbha Sutras* arose – a source for instance of the statements that all sentient beings are already buddhas but they don't realize it. From a Prasangika point of view that would also have to be interpreted. But they are the basis for the mind only school for the most part.

So that's just an example of valid speech.

The third are valid cognizers which are consciousness, such as a direct perceivers or inferential cognizers. What about subsequent cognizers - isn't that also a valid cognizer? Dorje? It's the second moment of a sense direct perceiver.

Dorje: I would think so, but it's not a prime cognizer according to the Sautrantikas ...

Valid and prime we're using as synonyms here .

Dorje: According to the Prasangika it would be but not according to Sautrantika...

Ye, for these tenets Sautrantika, a subsequent cognizer realizes it's object but it's not a valid or prime cognizer because it's not fresh.

Here comes an interesting thing. *With respect to the enumeration being definite*, how many different kinds of prime cognizers are there? There are two kinds: direct and inferential prime cognizers. Why are there only two? Why aren't there three or four or seven? It is because it is said that there two kinds of phenomena.

Actually, before we talked about three kinds of phenomena— manifest, hidden and deeply hidden. Basically you can say two, manifest and hidden, because deeply hidden is a subset of hidden. So manifest phenomena can be realized by valid/prime direct perceivers and hidden have to be initially realized by inferential valid/prime consciousnesses.

You don't need more than two and you can't have fewer than two. Fewer would not be inclusive. How do we say it in English – you don't need more and you can't have less. You can just say that.

*"That more than these are unnecessary and fewer would not be inclusive is the meaning of the enumeration of prime cognizers being limited to two for prime cognizers are limited to those two"*

*If someone says the reason is not established, ...what does that mean? In debate they say "tags ma drub".*

Remember, in a syllogism there are three modes that have to be ascertained by someone to develop and inferential cognition. There has to be the property of the subject, and there have to be forward pervasion and the reverse pervasion. So if you don't have the property of the subject, that is, the subject is not with the sign, the answer if someone is debating with you is *tags ma drub*. That means the sign is not established, there is not the property of the subject. "Sign is not established" means the sign is not a property of the subject, is not established on the subject. Does that make sense? Sign means the reason. In a syllogism you have the subject, the predicate and the sign.

Student: When you say the sign is established - does that mean all three are established or is only the first one established?

Only the first is, the property of the subject is..

If someone says the reason is not established, what is that talking about? *That more of these are unnecessary and fewer would not be included is the meaning of the enumeration of prime cognizers being limited to two for prime cognizers are limited to those two* - it's referring to that reason. *If someone says the reason is not established, that follows that the enumeration of prime cognizers is limited to two because the enumeration of objects of comprehension is limited to the two, specifically and generally characterised phenomena.*

What are specifically and generally characterised phenomena? Actually this comes more in "*Dura*". Bonnie, do remember this from reading that text?

Specifically characterised phenomena are phenomena that are able to perform a function, that are impermanent and that are real, that are the objects that are manifest phenomena and are the appearing objects of direct perception.

Generally characterised phenomena are phenomena that are permanent, that are only imaginary. For instance the mental image is not able to perform a function in itself. Like the mental image of a chair, you can't actually sit in, although you might say it's able to perform some function because through it you can develop an apprehension of chair. But in general you cannot sit in that mental image of chair. The mental image of the money that you own, you can't use to buy your condominium.

So why don't you think about that and we will see next time if you have questions about those.

Then it goes into some things here about "substantial entity". I am going to skip that for the time being and come back to it next time. For next time, why don't you read these two pages: 28 and 29 and we're going to discuss this next time – we're going to jump to page 30 now, we're going to try and begin the next section tonight.

On page 30: *the definition of free from conceptuality*. Why is it talking about this? Because it's talking about the definition of *that which is a direct perceiver* and so forth. So we are going to be talking about that also.

*"free from being a determinative knower that apprehends a sound generality and a meaning generality as being suitable to be mixed"* This is going to come later. This is something just to get familiar with. When we talk about conception - a conceptual consciousness, it is one which apprehends sound generalities and meaning generalities as suitable to be mixed.

Are only direct perceivers free from conceptuality? Anything else besides direct perceiver that is free from conceptuality? Of course – non conceptual mistaken consciousnesses. Seeing two moons as one, or seeing a blue snow mountain or something like that. That's free from conceptuality but it is not a direct perceiver because a direct perceiver can't be mistaken with respect to its appearing object, it has to realize its object.

So we are going to be talking about this also next time. I'd like to start the next section so that we get a little momentum going. So we are going to be talking about these later, pages 28, 29, 30 and 31, we are going to go over next time.

Now on page 32 (third chapter): non-prime consciousness. What were the kinds of prime cognition?

Student: Direct....

There could be direct perceivers that are prime cognizers and ....?

Student: Inferential ....

Inferential cognizers that are prime cognizers. How about subsequent cognizers? No, they are not prime cognizers but they are realizing consciousnesses. Right?

Now we are going to be talking about the kinds of non-prime cognizers. In the middle of the page it says *"In our own system the definition of a non-prime consciousness is a knower that is not newly incontrovertible"*. Remember, a prime cognizer is a knower that is new and incontrovertible. Here it's not newly incontrovertible. It is not new and it is not incontrovertible – would that be correct to say? That would be too much to say, right? If I say a non-prime cognizers is a knower that is not new and not incontrovertible – that's saying too much. It just has to be one of those two NOTs.

There was some craze in America some years ago. Do you remember? The kids used to say “NOT” at the end of a sentence to negate what went before. I think it came from Wayne’s World, right?

So here it doesn’t have to be two of those. When non prime cognizers are divided, there are five.

*Subsequent cognizers*, is that right? OK, of course, subsequent cognizers are not prime because they are not new. They are incontrovertible though by definition – we’ll see later, we have the actual definition coming up.

*Correctly assuming consciousnesses* – why are they not incontrovertible? They haven’t eliminated superimpositions. It’s not as though they have doubt but they haven’t reached a firm valid reasoning or conclusion about something. They are just presuming.

The third - *awarenesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained* (inattentive perception). Why is that not valid or prime? Can it be new? It could be new, can’t it? But it’s not incontrovertible.

*Doubting consciousness*, how come that’s not prime? The first instant is fresh but it’s not incontrovertible.

*Wrong consciousness* is obviously not incontrovertible.

*With respect of the first, the definition of a subsequent cognizer is a knower which realizes what has already being realized.* Let’s say I have a wrong perception of Carrie, I think that Carrie is lawyer - maybe that’s right; are you a lawyer?

Carrie: No

No. So the second instance of that, would that be a subsequent cognizer? What does the definition say?

So I didn’t realize that Carrie is not a lawyer – so it’s actually a wrong consciousness, and that is not a subsequent cognition. Just the second moment of some consciousness is not the meaning of subsequent cognition. Subsequent cognizers are realizing consciousnesses.

What are the different kinds of subsequent cognitions that we had? A sense direct perceiver? The first instant of that would be a prime cognizer, the second instant and so forth would be subsequent cognitions. What else? Mental direct perceivers. The first instant would be a prime cognizer, the second and further instants would be subsequent cognitions. Yogic direct perceivers, do they have those same divisions?

For sense and mental direct perceivers there were three divisions – prime, subsequent and inattentive – ; yogic direct perceivers are never inattentive but they can be prime and subsequent, right? Like the first instant of a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness would be a prime cognizer and the continuity of that realization would be subsequent cognition.

What about mental-direct perceivers?

Also they can be prime and subsequent. What other subsequent cognitions can you have?

How about self-knowing direct perceivers? Also they can be prime and subsequent. What else can be subsequent cognition? Are they the only kind – direct perceivers?

Inferential cognitions can be subsequent cognitions. Is the second moment of an inferential cognition still and inferential cognition?

Student: If it subsequent it's not prime...

It's not prime but is it still an inferential cognizer?

Student: Yes

Are you sure? Is the second moment of an inference a subsequent cognizer?

Say the first moment it was a prime inference like on page 20. The definition of an inferential prime cognizer is a "*new incontrovertible determinative knower that is directly produced in dependence upon a correct sign which is its basis*".

Some of the schools take it that if something is an inferential cognizer, it directly arises in dependence upon a correct sign, so then the second moment is no longer an inferential cognizer, is it? The second moment is not directly produced in dependence on the sign which is its basis, even though it sounds like that would be a subsequent cognition...

What I'm saying is there can be other kinds of realizing consciousnesses that are subsequent cognitions.

Maureen: Now you've just lost me because we were talking about inferential and I don't know how we jumped to over there. What I was trying to follow was how inferential was *not subsequent*.... What does it become when it no longer is a prime inferential cognition, in the next moment?

What it would be called? A continuity of that inference is what it becomes, but it is not called an inferential cognizer any longer because of not arising directly in dependence on the sign.... Is it a remembering consciousness?

It's a subsequent cognition but it is not an inference any longer. It's realizing what was already realized but it is not a division of inferential cognizer. It is no longer called an inferential cognizer. It would have to become like a remembering consciousness.

Student: In the divisions of facsimiles of direct perceivers there *conceptions arisen after an inferential cognizer* (illustration nr 4) Does it become that?

Well, it might, yeah. What is the example?

Student: The illustration is "a thought which arises after an inferential cognizer"

Yes, but those are listed because they seem to some people to be direct perceivers, that's why they are called *facsimiles of direct perceivers*.

Check your other sources, according to these tenets (and some other schools), if something is an inferential cognizer it has to directly depend upon the sign, so the second instance after that.... The inferential cognizer is like the engine, the prime cognizer and the subsequent moments of that are subsequent cognitions and are conceptual subsequent cognition, but they are no longer called inferential cognizers because they are not realizing in dependence directly on a sign ....

Student: What are they called?

They are called subsequent cognition. There are different ways they can arise; if they arise in that train then maybe they would be conceptual subsequent cognition. Later if you remembered them they could be a remembering consciousness. Anyway, check that out.

*So a subsequent cognizer is a knower which realizes what has already been realized. When subsequent cognizers are divided there are three: direct perceiving subsequent cognizers, conceptual subsequent cognizer and subsequent cognizers that are neither of the two.*

So here it doesn't say subsequent cognizers that are inferences.

"Neither of the two" – that is a good one. What is a subsequent cognizer that is neither of the two? Well how about this? Who can I ask here? I forget, what's your name.

Student: Pat

Pat. The moment after a prime cognizer, is that a directly perceiving subsequent cognizer or conceptual subsequent cognizer?

Pat: Directly...

Oh No! - sorry, I was thinking to ask the second moment after an inference.

By saying just the generality of prime cognizer, it isn't differentiated, and it could be either of those, or, in other words, that subsequent cognizer is neither of the two.

In fact you can't posit an example of that which is neither of the two. An example has to be one of the two, but that general category is neither of the two. Because the moment after a prime cognizer is not necessarily a directly perceiving subsequent cognizer nor is it necessarily a conceptual subsequent cognizer. It's neither of those two categories - so that is the point. It's not like there's something else which is a third kind of category that we forget to mention. It's just the general category. Do you grok that Carrie?

Carrie: Barely

Barely grokked. OK. *"With respect to the first, direct subsequent cognizers, there are five"*

- (1) directly perceiving subsequent cognizers that are sense direct perceivers,
- (2) directly perceiving subsequent cognizers that are mental direct perceivers,
- (3) directly perceiving subsequent cognizers that are self-knowing direct perceivers,
- (4) directly perceiving subsequent cognizers that are yogic direct perceivers, and
- (5) directly perceiving subsequent cognizers that are none of those four.

This is a good exam question. When I ask how many kinds of directly perceiving subsequent cognizers there are, you'd like to say four but there is five. What's the fifth one – Dorje?

Dorje: I wasn't paying attention.



You're inattentive. It's like the camera, all of this is appearing but it is not being ascertained. You should be like the hard disk.

Dorje: The only difference is that when we screw up, he aims the camera at us.

That's true. OK. Since Dorje actually is the master of the camera he is permitted to get a little slack. Dan, can you get that – what's an example of a directly perceiving subsequent cognizer which is none of those four?

That's so simple – the second moment of a direct perceiver. Right? When you just say "direct perceiver", you're not saying sense direct perceiver, mental direct perceiver, self-knowing direct perceiver or yogic direct perceiver. You are just saying the general category, while it has to come in some context to know which on. The illustrations are simple.

*When the second, conceptual subsequent cognizers, – we are on page 33 - are divided, there are two: conceptual subsequent cognizers that are induced by direct perceivers and those that are induced by inferential cognizers.*

So do you remember, when I was talking about a conceptual subsequent cognizer you were asking what you would call that second one – the one that was induced by the inferential cognizer? Well it's just called that – "conceptual subsequent cognizers that are induced by inferential cognizers".

Some conceptual subsequent cognizers are induced by direct perceivers. How can that be?

An example – "a factually concordant ascertaining consciousness ascertaining blue that is induced by a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue"

This is an example of a conceptual subsequent cognizer and so it is a mental activity that is going on. You've seen something with your eye consciousness, say, you've had a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue and this induces a factually concordant, a correct mental understanding, an ascertaining consciousness that is realizing blue. So you can be thinking that you're seeing blue – "oh that eye glass case is blue!"

So the eye consciousness – the direct perceiver, the prime cognizer – ascertains that. Even the subsequent eye consciousness that is apprehending that can induce a subsequent cognizer. Remember, a subsequent cognizer has to realize what has been previously realized. What has done the previous realizing? In this case it's the sense direct perceiver realizing blue, and then the mental consciousness can be thinking "oh, that's blue". If it's factually correct then that can be a subsequent cognizer that is realizing that, subsequent to the direct perceiver.

*The second is, for example, the second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent.* So that answers your question.

*With respect to what has been said, someone might say, "It follows ... "*

Consequences are phrased like that – there is a consequence, *thal* in Tibetan, or 'it follows'.... *that the subject, the second moment of a correctly assuming consciousness, is a subsequent cognizer because of being a knower that realizes what has already been realized.* What do you think about that?

Student: I didn't think that a correctly assuming consciousness was realizing something.

Well this is what this person says. So what do you say to them? The text says to this: it follows (from what you just said) that the second moment of a correctly assuming consciousness would be a subsequent cognizer because of being a knower that realizes what is already realized.

Now there are different kinds of answers you can give in a debate. If the person doesn't give any reason at all you can say "why" (*chi chir*). Otherwise, you can either say "the sign is not established" – (*tags ma drub*) - that means *the property of the subject is not established*, or you can say *kyab pa ma jung* that means *there is no pervasion*. There is no forward pervasion and there's no reverse pervasion.

If they just say that sound is permanent, you can say "*chi chir*". That means "why" and you have to give some reason. So there are only certain kinds of responses that a proper debater would be using.

So we'll continue next time. We're getting ready now to look at the eclipse of the moon that is just happening, it started ten minutes ago.

## Dedication

So let's dedicate these merits, both with a conventional dedication that is aspiring that these karmic seeds that we've created ripen in the most lofty of far reaching goals – the enlightenment of ourselves and all sentient being and that they not ripen and exhaust themselves in anything less than....

May they bring about that total happiness of all sentient beings by our becoming buddhas.

And seal that dedication within the emptiness of the three spheres: the emptiness of the karmic seeds, the emptiness of the goal and of the dedication itself....

Also meditate on the emptiness of the self that arises in the emptiness of the dedication, because there is no "I" that is doing the dedicating, trying to link these karmic seeds with these lofty goals.....

But still they function: the "I" functions, the karma functions, the goals are attainable. They arise dependently, they don't inherently exist.....

Thank you very much.

## Session 9

### Meditation

Let's do a little mediation to begin....

Relax your body and mind and place your attention on your breathing.....

Try to bring your attention inward to your mental consciousness and watch the texture of it – its nature, temporarily superimposed by different thoughts; verbal, visual, emotionally toned like waves in the ocean.....

See if you can develop a mental image of this clarity of the mind that is factually concordant.....

Let go of the sense of body and let go of the sense of your ego.....

Letting go of your ordinary ignorance grasping to the ego, within this clarity of mind try to develop a special motivation for participating in the class tonight; whatever problem I have, whatever emotions are brewing in my mind, whatever worries or fears, all of them are transitory and a much greater goal of my life is to try to develop the ability to benefit other beings, to overcome my harmfulness to them, to develop bodhicitta and the wisdom that realizes emptiness, based on a sense of real understanding of the law of cause and effect, through understanding renunciation.....

This is the real goal of my life as a Buddhist, to try to bring the greatest benefit to sentient beings by becoming enlightened.....

And like the great masters of the past, threading in their footsteps and studying the same material that the Buddha proposed, and the great scholars that followed in his footsteps, the yogis, the pundits, in order to sharpen my wisdom to understand Buddha's intention of the scriptures, I am going to listen to the teachings tonight and participate to get closer to that goal....

I'm going to listen, participate, for the sole purpose of becoming a buddha, from which state I can perfectly benefit, cause no harm and be totally protected myself from all fears, worries and concerns.....

And then bringing your attention back to the present.....

### Teaching

Did we finish going over the exam last time? Everyone looks rather subdued tonight. Do you feel subdued? No? Do you feel subdued Don?

Don: Ah....

No? You're un-subdued. OK. We wouldn't want you too subdued.  
Any questions? Maureen?

Maureen: I can't my mind around how all this works with these different pieces of prime cognition, and when there is a new prime cognition starting. Say you have this direct sensory experience, and then these others moments of mind come right behind that; what happens when you're not looking at the water bowl anymore, but start to look at the photo of Rinpoche, for example, or my mind goes to somebody I knew in high-school? Or in meditation, my mind can go all over the place, and I can't keep track of what prompts a new thought.

Yes, because we don't have control over our mind now, we don't have single pointed concentration, so even if we try to focus on one thing, other thoughts will arise in our mind due to karmic imprints. Some of them we call memories, some of them are future oriented; different associations are made. We see something and our mind, because not being able to stay focussed on one object, is thinking about that in other ways and by that association other memories come up or plans or worries or fantasies and like that our mind wanders. When those thoughts come, again, if you see the nature of the mind as like a big space, these cloudlike thoughts arise in the mind that we were originally focusing on, different thoughts arise within the spaciousness of our mind and then we got attracted to those and lose the original object.

Maureen: It just seems like it pops in out of the blue.

It seems like it pops in out of the blue, yes. Sometimes in our lives, happiness pops in out of the blue – you meet someone – or suffering pops in out of the blue because of karma, right, because of outer conditions and our karma; certain conditions that are conducive to our karma occur and that karma being ready to ripen, then we experience something suddenly. Within our mind, the same kind of thing can happen. Different kinds of thoughts can arise because of the juxtaposition of for example feeling something with a particular state of mind, the airs going in a certain way through the channels of our body.

There are many different kinds of phenomena, and we are just beginners in investigation in this laboratory of our mind. Just like if you went to visit some place, there are all sorts of things you might find fascinating. Instead of just doing one task. We are like "Oh look at that, what's this? Oh, look, that...." Different thoughts arise in our mind and we get distracted by them. When we are concentrating the main objects of distraction are what is attractive to our mind, it's what we sometimes translate as excitement. It doesn't mean: "man I'm exited". It's just a way of translating a kind of scattering or distracted thought the content of which is an attractive object. But right now, we are not at that point; we are not at that level of calm of mind, and much of our distraction is also motivated by objects of discomfort: maybe worry, low self-esteem, depression and different things like that.

And then a different train of thoughts start and we don't have control over our mind. So that's why this kind of practice is very useful. Even just watching the breathing for a period of time, and whatever thoughts come up, letting them go. If the thought of Rinpoche comes up, or 'nice blue water bowl' comes up, or anything else, while you're meditating, to let that go, whatever it is that comes up.

Then (when you have trained in meditation in that way), I think there can come a different kind of awareness in every day life when you are observing things. Say you observe the altar and you see the blue bowls, you can concentrate on that if you think of them while making water offerings in puja; you won't be so distracted by other things because you've already trained the mind in mediation in focusing on one thing, and you have more ability to just remain on one object that you have chosen to remain on. Does that answer your question?

Maureen: So what your saying is, as we practice enough we actually might be able to see what associations are made, that move us from the blue bowel to.....

Whether we can see the associations or not may be due to karma. Why does someone suddenly have an insight into something? Because the right karma has ripened. Maybe they had an accumulation of merit and certain conditions are there. It's very difficult for us to see the associations but we may be able to notice our mind thinking in certain ways that before was subliminal, what some people might call sub-conscious.

Different thought patterns are like fishing swimming underneath the surface of the ice. So maybe as our mind gets clear we maybe able to notice that, what our mind is thinking, the conversations that are going on. We might be very surprised sometimes and maybe even a bit offended – “wow what's going on in there”. Or maybe we might be pleasantly surprised if we had some virtuous thoughts or thoughts of mercy or wishing others well, or courageous thoughts to give up our own temporary happiness for the welfare of others. So, I think that those kinds of experiences are the fruit of practices – just like people that do yoga everyday notice some special kind of experience engendered by that. The same thing with mediation; if you get familiar with the nature of the mind, you are going to develop the ability to concentrate more and as you have that ability you notice when distractions come and you can recognize them for what they are and not get involved. Or if you do begin to get involved with them you can notice how your mind is getting involved with them, and you can cut that off more easily. Rather than trying to push it away, which we find is kind of like depression, that is not the proper way to deal with distractions, but to bring your mind back to one object. In a sense it's like a decisions – “don't follow that thought. I can follow that kind of thought any time. Let me bring my attention back to this more virtuous or at least chosen object of concentration”.

You have a question?

Student: I think it's fairly elementary but I want to get it out of the way anyway – all of these phrases; yogic direct perceiver, prime cognition, inferential prime cognizers, are they different flavours of moments of mind and if not what are they?

What do you think? Are they all consciousness?

Student: I believe so.

Yes! They are all consciousness, but they are different qualities of consciousness. Like there definitely is a difference in the consciousness which is a sense direct perceiver and a conceptual mental consciousness. They have different...

Student: Styles, flavours - every shortest moment, every 64th moment of a finger snap.... Whatever they are...

We have different consciousnesses that are functioning simultaneously, eye and ear consciousness and so forth – five sense consciousness that are simultaneously functioning and a mental consciousness that is simultaneously functioning. The mental consciousness is the most decisive in that it pays attention to the other consciousnesses. If it doesn't pay attention to them, they are what are we called “inattentive”, like a TV camera that no one is watching – it's functioning and it is consciousness that is perceiving its object but there is no way to recall what they were knowing unless our mental consciousness actually pays attention to them. So we may pay partial attention, for an instant, to the eye consciousness and then to the ear consciousness, like when we are looking at someone and they are talking. We may be alternating between

the two and it may seem like we are equally paying attention to both. Like having a conversation at dinner and looking at our companion, talking, and eating our food, tasting it, smelling the aroma, feeling the texture of the food. All of the different consciousnesses might seemingly be simultaneous - but you would have to investigate it in your own experience, whether the mental consciousness is partially paying attention to all of them at the same time. It might seem to be paying attention to them simultaneously, but probably it's putting its attention on one and then moving to the other, it is in succession. So all of those different mental experiences are going on and they all have their own flavour – so to speak.

We're getting pretty close to finishing up some important subjects here.

The last time – did we get up to page 33? We were talking about subsequent cognizers. A subsequent cognizer is “a knower that realizes what has already been realized”.

So could we say that the second moment of a doubting consciousness is a subsequent cognizer – Carrie?

Carrie: I think we could.

The **second** moment of a doubting that's thinking *maybe sound is impermanent – it probably is* – leaning in the right direction – is that a subsequent cognizer? Carrie says yes. Unless he's changed his mind.

Diane, do you have an opinion or wisdom or realization?

Diane: I don't think it can be called that because subsequent cognizers need to be realizing something, so doubting consciousness isn't realizing its objects.

What would say Carrie? Would you defend yourself, or would you say “oops”?

Is the second moment of a correctly assuming consciousness a subsequent cognizer ?

No it isn't - for the same reason – right? Because a correct belief or assuming consciousness doesn't actually realize its object. It has an object which it believes is true and is by definition correct - if it were not correct it would be like Sister Oma's intuitions that don't turn out to be true. Remember, we were talking about that before – when intuitions are right we call them intuitions, and when they turn out not right we call them something else.

Sister Oma: I now see that I was equating intuition with clairvoyance...

For something to be a subsequent cognizer it has to be the second or later moments of a **realizing** consciousness. How many realizing consciousnesses are there? Does it have to be only the second moment after a prime cognition? Are only prime cognizers realizing consciousnesses? What else realizes its object? Do only prime cognizers realize their object?

A prime cognizer has to realize its object, but it has to be a fresh realization. Subsequent cognizers can arise in the train of a prime cognizer; or you can have a remembering consciousness of something that you realized in the past, a conceptual consciousness that realizes that, that can also be a subsequent cognition.

We said page 33 that when subsequent cognizers are divided ...

First we talked about directly perceiving subsequent cognizers and there were four kinds: subsequent direct perceivers, subsequent mental direct perceivers, subsequent self-knowing direct perceivers and subsequent yogic direct perceivers – the usual four divisions of direct perceivers.

Now the second division of subsequent cognizers is conceptual cognizers and when those are divided, there are two: conceptual subsequent cognizers that are induced by direct perceivers and conceptual subsequent cognizers that are induced by inferential cognizers . That's simple – right?

Student: About this directly perceiving subsequent cognizer – it says that there are five: the four you listed and then the last one was the point that you made last week but I didn't quite grok it.

Yes, there were five, not just four.

Student: The fifth was subsequent cognizers that are none of the four (end of page 32)

OK. What does that mean? Does it mean that there is some new direct perceiver that we never talked about before? What about a subsequent moment in the train of a sense direct perceiving prime cognizer ? That would be that first category – a sense directly perceiving subsequent cognizer . And the subsequent moments of a mental prime cognizer would be the subsequent cognizer of a mental direct perceiver. But how about the subsequent moments of a direct perceiver in general? Which of those four is that?

Student: We would need to specify it further ....

But there is such a thing. Isn't this a viable answer: **the subsequent moment of a direct perceiver**. Doesn't that fit the category? It does but it is not any of those four categories. So that is another category that one can construe, and often when making enumerations, there will be an enumeration of something that is *neither of the two or none of the four*, in this case.

Student: So could it be a subsequent moment of a remembering consciousness or correctly assuming?

Both of those are conceptual, so those would not be divisions. The first ones we were talking about were direct perceivers. You can actually point out any direct perceiver which is one of those four, and point it out **in general**, you can just say "**direct perceiver**". As you said, that would require more specification in order to give an actual example, but it still is a direct perceiver. Even if you don't say **sense** direct perceiver or **mental** direct perceiver or **yogic** direct perceiver, it still is part of the category of direct perceivers.

Take for example **prime cognizer** – if you said the second moment after a prime cognizer, in that train of consciousness - that would be a subsequent cognizer; but because it is not specified, it is not one of those four categories. There's nothing tricky here. Do you follow? Does that make sense?

Student: Does "terminologically" .....

A terminological division would mean something that's not really that and it's just called that. But is the second moment of a directly perceiving prime cognizer not a directly perceiving subsequent cognizer ?

Definitely–right? But whether it is a sense direct perceiver you did not say, you just said "direct perceiver". You didn't say whether it was sense or mental or whatever. So it's just the general category. So here that's given as a fifth division.



Student: But is there anything else that you could say that also fits in the fifth category.

There's nothing that's in fifth category that is not in one of those other four categories. Anything that is that fifth category, if you were to find an example of it, would have to be one of the other four because those are the only kinds of direct perceivers that there are, but if you don't categorise which of them you are talking about, well then...

Student: .... Then the only thing to be done is to call it a direct perceiver.

Yes, and here we're talking about the second moment of a direct perceiver.

Student: Which school are you talking about?

We're talking about the Sautrantika school.

Is that actually right? Is the second moment of a direct perceiver is going to be a subsequent cognizer ?

Let's check. Is an inattentive perception a direct perceiver? Remember, there were only three categories of direct perceivers: prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers and consciousnesses to which an object appeared but which was not ascertained (inattentive), that's not a realizing consciousness, it doesn't induce ascertainment afterwards. Although the eye consciousness perceived its object, it's not a realizing consciousness because it doesn't induce a mental awareness that realizes that you saw that.

So here my question is – the second moment of that (inattentive) direct perceiver, is that a subsequent cognizer? The second moment of inattentive perception – that's not a subsequent cognizers, is it? No, because it's not a realizing consciousness.

So maybe one has to watch the working here a little bit. The second moment after a prime direct perceiver would definitely be a subsequent cognizer but the second moment of a direct perceiver could mean the second moment after an inattentive perception.

So you have to be careful of that. For example, if I say to you "Karen, give me an example of a subsequent cognizer which is none of those four categories" and you said "the second moment of a direct perceiver". That is not necessarily a subsequent cognizers. This is what I'm proposing because a direct perceiver also includes inattentive perceivers and the second moment of an inattentive perceiver is not a subsequent cognizer because it doesn't realize its object.

Student: So then that doesn't fit in the fifth category...

That's what I'm saying. Maybe some other words have to be added here. Maybe it has to be the second moment of a **prime** direct perceiver.

Say the first example – the second moment of a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue. Can you have a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue which is an inattentive perception?

Student: No

Why not?

Student: Because then you wouldn't realize the blue

Does an inattentive perception apprehend its object? Does it have an appearing object?

Student: Yes

Then it has an apprehended object - for direct perceivers the appearing object and the apprehended object are the same. So it would seem it apprehends and it's just like the camera's working (you might say) but there is no one paying attention to it. So I'm just proposing that maybe these illustrations, you have to think about them to see if they are exactly right or not, and whether there is something earlier in the explanation that makes them incorrect ..

The second one, the second moment of clairvoyance knowing another's mind – probably, that's going to be a realizing consciousness. I don't think that can be inattentive.

Third: the second moment of a self-knowing direct perceiver experiencing the eye consciousness and so forth. I'm not sure...

Fourth: the second moment of an uninterrupted path of seeing. That's going to be a yogic direct perceiver and those are never inattentive, those always realize their objects. From my point of view there would be no question that that is a subsequent cognizer. But I have some doubt about some of the other ones, so if you can find an error in what my qualm is you can bring it up.

Let's go onto the 2<sup>nd</sup> category here: conceptual subsequent cognizers . There are those that are induced by direct perceivers and those that are induced by inferential cognizers . We talked about this the last time.

The first is a factually concordant ascertaining consciousness ascertaining blue that is induced by a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue.

An ascertaining consciousness is necessarily a mental consciousness. We don't call sense consciousness ascertaining consciousnesses. So here, the second time it says ascertaining, that implies realizing blue. So you have had a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue and subsequent to that you have a mental consciousness which is correct and is not misinterpreting that and is ascertaining blue, and that was induced by that sense perception.

The second example: "the second moment of a inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent". Is that still an inferential cognizer ? Bonnie?

Bonnie: Is it a subsequent cognizer .

Yeah, here it's an illustration of a subsequent cognizer, but is it an inferential cognizer ?

Bonnie: I don't know

What do you think Carrie? Is that an inferential cognizer ?

Carrie: I think the first one was an inferential cognizer.....

The inference arose directly in dependence on a sign, and the subsequent moments are no long inferential cognizers but they are called subsequent cognizers induced by an inferential cognizer . Only the first

moment of that consciousness that has depended upon the sign to realize the object is called an inferential cognizer. That's a prime cognizer (and prime cognizers are of just two kinds: direct and inferential.)

Are you following me?

Student: I'm following you. In Lati Rinpoche's book, if I've read it correctly, says that the subsequent (moment of an inference is also an inference...) In Purbuchok's, what I understand is that "inferential cognizer" definitely meant that it was going to be new but in the text that Lati Rinpoche is giving commentary on, he made it sound like you could have a subsequent inferential cognizer (page 76)

Student: 2 It doesn't seem possible

It doesn't seem possible? Even amongst the Gelukpas there are differences, for example in interpreting Sautrantika (the tenets we are investigating). There are be different monastic textbooks that are used at the different monasteries. Many of the monasteries use Purbuchok but some of them use texts by Panchen Sonam Dragpa, and there's Jetsun Choki Gyaltsen – these are different text book writers.

They have different text books that they use, so that when they debate, their own positions are slightly different. One but not all of these could say that only the first moment of an inferential cognizer, only that prime cognizer is an inference, and the next moment is a subsequent cognizer; the subsequent moments of it which are realizing consciousnesses are no longer called inferential cognizers because according to their interpretation a subsequent cognizer has to be induced directly by the reason and so only the first moment would do that.

Student: It is on page 76 – the third paragraph

OK, p 76 in *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism*, it says – "thus in this text" he's using a short text that's being used at Drepung Loselling these days, by Geshe Jampal Sampel – not an extremely famous lama, someone from around the turn of the century, I think, or maybe even later ...It says "Thus in this text there's a distinction between inferential cognizer and inferential prime cognizer. In other texts, for instance Purbuchok's *Awareness and Knowledge* (which we're studying here) this distinction is not made; the two are considered synonymous".

So that means that if something is an inferential cognizer, it is necessarily an inferential prime cognizer according to our text. So if you were debating at Loselling, and you were to say that because you are basing your knowledge on Purbuchok, you would be roundly debated against, and although you could certainly hold that position, you would have to defend it somehow.

It's not as though these different ideas are in contradiction to one another. They are actually different ways of interpreting. When you get down to the actual understanding, beyond the words, maybe then you would have the same kind of understanding; what we would call a subsequent cognition induced by an inferential cognizer is still a realizing consciousness, so we wouldn't understand its qualities any different than someone who studied at Drepung..... But we wouldn't categorise it as inferential cognizer any longer because according to our text, to be a real inferential cognizer it has to be directly developed from a sign.

Like for instance, lets debate: if you take the bodhisattva vows, according to Sera, are you a bodhisattva?

Student: No

Why not? Some people for example in the Nyingma school say that if you take bodhisattva vows you're a bodhisattva.

Well then, can that bodhisattva break their vows? You think yes... But then again, is someone really a bodhisattva by simply taking the vows?

Student: If you take it from the point of view that the seed is implanted there and therefore from that seed only a bodhisattva can grow, well then you can say that person is a bodhisattva

So when I plant a redwood seed, I can say there's a redwood tree, according to Oma?

Student: the potential is there.

But I'm not talking about the potential. All sentient beings are potential bodhisattvas; according to the highest philosophical school everyone has buddha-nature and everyone will eventually attain enlightened even if they first enter into the Hinayana path and attain arhatship, even if it takes them eons, even if they are the last sentient being they'll have the potential to be bodhisattvas. But yes, we do use that terminology—we say 'I planted trees in the back yard' but there are no trees there yet, right? There's not even sprouts, I've just tossed down the seed five minutes ago and it's not even germinated but we do use that terminology. But one has to investigate; that kind of terminology is investigated in the Prasangika teachings. But although indeed there are different texts, but if you were taking an exam on Purbuchok, you would have to follow his text. You could say, "according to Purbuchok only the first moment is an inferential cognizer, and there are no subsequent cognizers that are inferential cognizers, but in my option, based on other lama's thinking, it makes sense to say.....etc, etc.". You could say it like that but first of all you would have to give what the reigning view is.

Let's go on to the next one on page 34 (near the bottom of the page). "With regard to the second of the non-prime consciousnesses" ....How many non-prime consciousnesses are there? I think five, right? There are two kinds of prime cognizers – directly perceiving prime cognizers and inferential prime cognizer and then there are five non prime consciousnesses. So (the first was ) subsequent cognizer, which is not prime but it still realizes its object. The other four are going to be non-realizing consciousnesses – not only *non-prime* but *not realizing*.

The first of those (the second of the non-prime cognizers ) is a correctly assuming consciousness. We can translate this in different ways, "correction assuming" or "assumption". Maybe correctly assuming is better than assumption because you could have a wrong assumption. This is talking about a kind of mind which is correct. How about presumption? Can you have a wrong presumption? "I presumed that you were the one but I was wrong". Yes, you can a wrong presumption. Somehow maybe the word "correct" has to be in there. Or correct belief, you could call it. "I correctly believe ...".

So the definition is that is a "factually concordant determinative knower which is controvertible with regard to determining its object". Who can explain what that means? Bonnie can you beak that down? No? Mark?

Factually concordant means what? Chris?

Chris: I would say that it is in line with the facts.

It's in line with the facts. It's not wrong. Right? What does a "determinative knower" mean?

Student: Conceptual?

Student: It gets at its object

It gets at its object? So that means that eye consciousness is a determinative knower?

Here it's a synonym for conceptual, right? A *factually concordant conceptual consciousness* which is controvertible with regard to determining its object. What does "controvertible" mean?

Student: It doesn't have surety - if it were incontrovertible you would be totally sure

OK, so a correctly assuming consciousness doesn't have surety about its object because it is controvertible. Let's check. You might say "I have a correctly believing consciousness that sound is impermanent" - if you completely believe that, are you not sure about it?

Student: I totally believe somebody else's statement, or out of a book or whatever, but I haven't reasoned it out and if you started arguing with me I .....

I'm going to argue with you about that. Controvertible here doesn't mean you are not sure. You may be sure in your own mind - but that doesn't mean that you've realized it. Surety and actually realizing it are different. This kind of consciousness is sure. It's not a doubt thinking "is sound permanent or impermanent. I'm not quite sure". It is not like that. It's absolutely made up its mind single pointedly ...but .... it doesn't have a perfect or inconclusive reason.

Student: I thought that meant that you could be persuaded in another direction because you weren't sure.

It's not because you are not sure of it, but it is due to the basis, your surety is not based on a realization. It's kind of an option, we might say.

## Tea break

We're talking about correctly assuming consciousnesses, on page 34. This is the second of the non-prime consciousnesses. The first one was subsequent cognizers.

The definition is "a factually concordant determinative knower which is controvertible with regard to determining its object"

It's controvertible. That means that although it may be sure, it's controvertible and that means that it is fallible. Controvertible is not an everyday word, not something you use in the office every day...

It's not wrong about its object, but it is not infallible (to use a double negative). It's fallible. That is to say it has not realized its object. But it has eliminated superimpositions and gotten at its object perfectly. Does that make sense? Chris what do you think? That's pretty clear right?

When correctly assuming consciousnesses are divided, there are five, according to Purbuchok's text here. There are other ways of dividing them by other great lamas of the past, I think. Maybe one of the Sakya lamas, Sakya Pandita divided them in a different way, but basically we have the same number.

The first is a “correctly assuming consciousness which do not have a reason”. What does that mean – “which do not have a reason”? The example is on the next page – “an awareness that apprehends sound to be impermanent in dependence upon the mere words ‘sound is impermanent’”

Or “My lama said that if you take refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, you will be protected” .  
Or “The Virgin Mary will protect you if you pray to her” . If you just have belief in something on the basis of mere words, without any kind of sign, although it’s correct, that would be an example of this first division of correctly assuming consciousness which does not have a reason.

The second one – “a correctly assuming consciousness which has a contradictory reasons”. A contradictory reasons means it proves the opposite of what you think. Examples - “Sound is impermanent because it is not a product” or “it’s not produced” or a correctly assuming consciousness having a contradictory reason is, for example, if you “apprehend sound to be impermanent from the sign of it being empty of being able to perform a function” – that means not being able to perform of a function, being empty of that. “This is a suitable example because empty of being able to perform a function is contradictory with impermanence”.

The first kind of example, in a debating courtyard, someone said “it follows that sound is impermanent”. What answer would you give?

Student: No sign

No that is not one of the possible answers. If there’s no sign been given, so you can’t say “there’s not pervasion”, you would say “why” (chi chir), which essentially means you are asking for a reason, .

The sign of a very good debater would be that they would limit themselves to three or four possible answers rather than saying “well it’s little bit like this...” That’s not the sign of a good debater. Even if the others are getting exited, you would just be saying things like “why”, “the sign is not established”, “there’s no pervasion”. There’re a couple of other obscure things you might say, but those are the main things that you would say. Or you could accept and you could say “dod” – that means “right” or “I agree”. That might throw them for a loop also because they are trying to debate with you.

Carrie, what if he said that sound is impermanent because it is empty of being able to perform a function, what you would say?

Carrie: I’ve got to think about that.

You can’t say “why” because I’ve given you a reason so you would accept, right? It’s just not correct. So would you say the sign is not established or would you say there’s no pervasion?

Carrie: The sign is not established

That means that sound is **not** established of being empty of being able to perform a function.

Carrie: Right

Is there any pervasion in this case. Is there the pervasion that if something is empty of being able to perform a function that it is impermanent?

No, there's no pervasion either. So when the sign is not established and there's also no pervasion, I'm not sure but I think generally you would start by saying the sign is not established. But you could also say no pervasion.

The third division – “a correctly assuming consciousness for an indefinite reasoning”. This is a little but funny – “for an uncertain reason” or in other words, it lacks pervasion. Do you see that one “a correctly assuming consciousness for which the reason is not ascertained”. He says “not ascertained” but maybe that's not right because the word *nge wa* sometimes means the verb to *ascertain* but it also means *indefinite* – like in death is definite and the time of death is *indefinite*, *ma nge wa*. You wouldn't say the time of death is not ascertained and death is ascertained. Can you say that? You wouldn't say that, right? We'd say it's indefinite.

So here it's indefinite or uncertain. The reason is for example “an awareness which apprehends to be impermanent from the sign of being an object of comprehension. Sound is an object of comprehension, isn't it? Is sound an object of comprehension? Can sound be known? Yes it is an object of comprehension. All knowable objects are objects of comprehension.

So it has the property of the subject but is there a pervasion? If something is an object of comprehension is it necessarily impermanent? No; it could be permanent.

There are two kinds of objects of comprehension, things that you can know. You can comprehend objects that are permanent and objects that are impermanent. Does that make sense?

This example sound too theoretical, right. Who can give a more common sense syllogism which would be illustrating a correctly assuming consciousness based on an uncertain sign, where the reason is indefinite or uncertain, the sign is uncertain.

‘The man with the rosary around his neck is a Buddhist because he is wearing the rosary around his neck’. Is that a definite sign? A person with rosary around the neck does have a rosary around their neck, so it does have the property of the subject, but is it definite that someone who has a rosary around their neck is a Buddhist? No! It's not definite, right?

The fourth one – a “correctly assuming consciousness for which the reason is not established”. Here the answer would be not established, the reason is not established. The illustration of that is “an example: an awareness which apprehends sound to be impermanent from the sign of being an object of apprehension by eye consciousness”.

Here it says sound is impermanent because it is an object of eye consciousness. To have the property of the subject, sound would have to be an object of eye consciousness. Is that true? No. So you say the sign is not established (*tags ma drub*).

The fifth kind “a correctly assuming consciousness for which a reason exists but is not settled”. The reason is not settled. Example: an awareness which apprehends sound to be impermanent from the sign of being a product. Notice it says **apprehends** sound to be impermanent. Does that mean it realizes it? No. To apprehend doesn't mean to ; it just means it's the apprehended object or its object of engagement.

“An awareness which apprehends sound to be impermanent from the sign of being a product”. That is a correct sign; if you were debating and someone said “sound is impermanent because it is a product”, you would say ‘I accept’. The person has in their mind a correct reason, but it has not been settled, not all of



the elements have been d; they may not have the establishing cognition that knows that sound is a product and that all products are impermanent - that inferential cognizer has not been generated in their mind, so the moments just before an inferential cognizer, before you have a prime cognizer and you realize that sound is impermanent by the sign product, that would be a correctly assuming consciousness where the sign is unsettled. The next moment the sign becomes settled and set up in your mind and everything is established. Maybe first you realize that sound is a product and all products are impermanent. Do you thereby necessarily realize sound is impermanent by the sign product? Not necessarily, you still have to think about it : “Sound is a product and all products are impermanent **therefore** it makes sense that sound is impermanent because it is a product.”

So one has to develop a simultaneous understanding of those things in one’s mind. When that inferential cognition arises then that would be the realization. Up until then it would be a correctly assuming consciousness based on an unsettled sign.

Then follow some other definitions that are given in the great text from Rato, a famous monastery in Tibet that I visited, not so far from Lhasa; they had one of the famous *dura* texts – the texts on collected topics – called Rato Dura. Rato Khyongla Rinpoche in New York was one of the high lamas of Rato monastery. It was right near the Tara gumpa that Atisha built in Lhasa. Sera and Drepung (monasteries) are right in Lhasa and outside of Lhasa (on the way to Ganden – several hours by bus) you would pass this gumpa, I think it was called Dolma Lhakang (the temple of the Goddess Tara), and right behind that was Rato monastery.

One of the Rato lamas wrote a Dura text .The definition presented here on this page I think is very similar to what is in the Rato Dura. It says “someone might say the definition of a correctly assuming consciousness is a determinative knower which newly and one-pointedly ascertains its true object without depending on experience or a basis which is a correct sign”. If you are interested try looking at that debate and try to understand why that definition might not be perfectly held in debate. It doesn’t mean its wrong, it’s not that Rato was wrong; if you check in Lati Rinpoche’s book it talks a little bit about that. But we won’t go into those details right now.

Is that ok? Does that seem comfortable?

So on page 37 – the third of the five types of non-prime cognizers . So what did we talk about already? Of the non-prime cognitions, we talked about subsequent cognition – why is that non-prime? Doesn’t it realize its object?

Student: It’s not fresh

It’s not fresh. It’s not new.

And the second was correctly assuming consciousness and now the third one – an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained. So, inattentive perception. *The definition is “a knower that is common locus of 1. having a clear appearance of the specifically characterised phenomenon which is its object of operation.....* (You could change that to say object of engagement ; because earlier she has translated *jug yul* as object of operation, but later she uses object of engagement. I don’t think there are two different Tibetan words; she probably didn’t check everything and get everything consistent).

*Common locus* means it has to simultaneously fulfil the mentioned criteria, two in this case:

So 1. it has a clear appearance of a specifically characterised phenomena which is its object of engagement and 2. *being unable to be induce ascertainment with respect to the specifically characterised phenomena which is its object.*

Boy that sounds very complicated

Student: Does that mean it's not apprehending....

It cannot induce ascertainment. It's not ascertained. Let's say an ear consciousness that hears "lunch is ready", while the eye consciousness and the mental consciousness are watching the football game or watching ballet. Someone says something to you and you are not paying sufficient attention with your mental consciousness to that, to ascertain it. It's still apprehended. The ear consciousness still apprehends a sound but it is not retained because it can't induce ascertainment. It is said to be not ascertained because it cannot induce a remembering consciousness that knows with certainty that you heard that. That's called an ascertaining consciousness.

Student: Well I always wonder about that because you know how if somebody calls again you remember that you have been already called. You actually didn't ascertain it but you can remember when your mom called you a second time, you go "ah yeah, she called me five minutes ago but I wasn't paying attention to that call."

Well what would that be? Maybe you ascertained. Maybe your mom said "dinner's ready" and you were just watching the game and then she said "DINNER'S READY!" and you paid attention and you think "Oh I heard something a while ago but I didn't pay attention – I heard something". Remember when we talked about the consciousnesses that realized something, that were prime cognizers with respect to the appearance but not the specific final nature of something. Maybe you knew you heard a sound. So that wouldn't be a totally inattentive perception but it would be inattentive with respect to the meaning .

Sometimes at an accident the police ask if you saw the licence plate and you say "I don't remember" and then they put you under hypnosis and you can remember. Would that be an inattentive perception, if you can remember it later, under hypnosis?

Student: No

No, that wouldn't be an inattentive perception. It would mean something that was just barely ascertained and it wasn't glaring in your memory but there can be things that are not ascertained because you are paying so much attention to another thing.

So here there are some subtleties in this – why it says "the specifically characterised phenomena". Mark – what is a specifically characterised phenomenon?

Mark: I'm not quite sure.

That's a good answer, getting you out of that one quickly. Carrie?

Carrie: That's mom's shout that dinner is ready

A specifically characterised phenomenon is mom shouting that dinner is ready? OK, but what is the general meaning of specifically characterised phenomenon? What Carrie gave is an example, mom shouting that dinner is ready.

Carrie: Like you know “blue”. You saw blue.

How about space? Or *shunyata* – is that a specifically characterised phenomena? Specifically characterised phenomenon is a synonym of what? Of impermanent phenomenon. So it’s not a synonym of object because objects include permanent and impermanent phenomena. The synonym of permanent phenomenon is what? Do you remember Bonnie?

Bonnie: Generally characterised phenomenon.

Generally characterised phenomena. Yes.

So here its’ taking an impermanent phenomena as its engaged object. Why does it have to say that? Because there could be a doubt; this is talking about an inattentive perception and what if you had a wrong sense consciousness that saw two moons when there is only one moon. If you didn’t say *which is its object of engagement* and you just said “a knower which is the common basis of having a clear appearance of the specifically phenomena *which is its object*”, then for that wrong consciousness, does one moon to appear to your eye? And one moon is a specifically characterised phenomena, right? The single moon is an actual phenomenon and it is unable to induce ascertainment with respect to that specifically characterised phenomenon. So this definition would apply to that wrong consciousness.

Is the wrong consciousness that sees two moons able to induce certainty that you saw one moon? No, because it is a wrong consciousness and it thinks that you saw two moons, right? But what is the object of engagement?

If you talk about a determined or conceived object, that only applies to conceptual consciousnesses. We can talk about the engaged object and the appearing object. A synonym of the appearing object for direct perception is the apprehended object and the object of the mode of apprehension. Remember, we talked about that at the beginning of the course.

Sometimes we can talk about the referent object too, but here we are not going into that, and we are not concerned here with conceived or determined object because that only takes place for conception. If you are conceiving of a house, the conceived object is the house, the appearing object is the meaning generality of the house (the mental image), the engaged object is the house and so forth. Here we are not talking about conception, we are talking about perception, right? Let’s say an eye consciousness; to be an eye direct perceiver it has to either be a prime, a subsequent or an inattentive perception - but we do have a fourth category of eye consciousness that’s not a direct perceiver – erroneous, like seeing two moons because there is an error in your eye or an error in the basis and so forth. A wrong, non-conceptual consciousness.

So to that consciousness that sees two moons, what is the appearing object?

What is appearing to that consciousness is one moon but what the mind is engaging in is two moons so actually there is no real object of engagement, but just as we talked about at the beginning of the course, we could posit an object of engagement. If someone said “well what is the object of engagement” you

could say two moons; or if someone was perceiving the horns of a rabbit, there is no real engaged object because an engaged object has to be an object, and if it is an object it has to exist, it has to be either permanent or impermanent. The horns of a rabbit don't exist, but you can conceive of the horns of a rabbit, and so if you talk about a conception of the horns of a rabbit you could posit the horns of a rabbit as the engaged object.

There would be an appearing object to that conception. What would that appearing object be?

Student: Horns of a rabbit?

Horns of a rabbit? The meaning generality of a horns of a rabbit, because that does exist. There is an appearance to your consciousness that looks like the horns of a rabbit. Via that you are engaging in something that doesn't exist. You are determining or conceiving of something that doesn't exist, right?

Let's leave that for now – that's conception and we go back to perception, such as eye consciousness. We are not talking of a prime cognizer or subsequent cognizer, we are talking about an awareness to which the object appears but is not ascertained.

The reason why "which is its object **of engagement**" has to be put in the definition is if you just put in "which is its object" or "specifically characterised phenomenon" then that definition wouldn't work because you could be talking about a wrong eye consciousness that was perceiving two moons or perceiving a firebrand as a circle of light or seeing a blue snow mountain, or something like that.

In that case you could say that with regards to the specifically characterised phenomenon which is its appearing object, the one moon, or the white snow mountain, there is clear appearance of them, they do clearly appear but those consciousnesses are unable to induce ascertainment with respect to that specifically characterised phenomenon. It is not able to induce ascertainment that there was one moon because due to the error in the eye you thought you were ascertaining two moons, or you weren't able to induce 'white snow mountain' because you thought you saw a blue snow mountain - or a yellow conch because you had jaundice.

Making sense?

Student: A specifically characterised phenomena which is its object of engagement - so wouldn't that have to be an actual existing thing....

Yes, that's why this definition is correct.

You might say that it's too wordy and why can you give me a nice simple definition, why does it have to use all of these words. So it's because it's eliminating different kinds of other possibilities.

Let's say in the case of a wrong eye consciousness - I see two vases of flowers, and I see two Chris-es, two Marks, two Taras. So what is the object of engagement? The definition here says: it has a clear appearance of the specifically characterised phenomena which is its object of engagement. In the case of a wrong consciousness is there a specifically characterised phenomena which clearly appears as its object of engagement? Does it have a clear appearance of an object engagement. What's the object of engagement of an eye consciousness perceiving two moons? Although it doesn't really exist, the object of engagements would have to be posited as two moons, but that is not a specifically characterised phenomena. A specifically characterised phenomena has to exist

Student: It doesn't exist because there are no two moons...

There are no two moons. You are right. Maybe in some world systems there are two moons but not here.

Is this making some sense. Bonnie is shaping here head. Chris?

Chris: Can you go over specifically and generally characterised one more time?

Characterised phenomena? Generally characterised phenomena are related with generalities. From the Sautrantika point of view these are things that don't have real existence, they are mere projections of the mind. Although generalities are within objects of knowledge, they are permanent, they are not able to perform a function. There is a generality of watch, this specific watch is an instance of the generality of watch, but you can't point out generality of watch anywhere. Where is generality of watch? Remember, we talked before about the category that was "none of the four"? Can you point to that category anywhere? No, anything that you point out has to be one of the four, but there is theoretically that category also.

So generally characterised phenomenon is a synonym in Sautrantika for permanent phenomena.

Specifically characterised phenomenon or self-characterised phenomenon are phenomena that are instances, that you can actually perceive; they are able to perform a function.

Chris Are specifically characterized phenomena necessarily non-mental?

What do you mean by mental? Mental could mean consciousness. Consciousness is a specifically characterised phenomena because it is impermanent. But if you are talking about mental images, they are generally characterised phenomena, as are other kinds of phenomena, such as space. I don't mean the space that we see with our eyes but space which is a lack of obstructive contact. Shunyata, selflessness, and cessations are also permanent phenomena. The *Abhidharmakosha* says that space and the two cessations are permanent; those are the only two examples that it gives. You could debate that, when you study the *Abhidharmakosha* you can debate and maybe they would have to accept that selflessness is also impermanent. Remember, when we talked about the realization of selflessness according to Sautrantika, selflessness can be realized with a direct perceiver but not directly because selflessness is a generally characterised phenomena – it is permanent, so it can not be the appearing object of direct perception.

The appearing object of direct perception has to be an impermanent phenomenon. It has to be a specifically characterised phenomenon. The appearing object of conception is a generally characterised phenomenon, a permanent phenomenon. So if you had a direct perception of emptiness or selflessness, i.e. realizing it with direct perception, the appearing object (according to Sautrantika) could not be a generally characterised phenomena such as selfless. The Prasangika say that there is no problem, but according to Sautrantika the appearing object to that perception cannot be a permanent phenomenon such as selflessness, so you have to realize it indirectly; what you are perceiving is the aggregates which are empty of self or empty of a permanent partless self, that impermanent phenomenon is the appearing object, and via that you are indirectly knowing selflessness.

We talk about this before but it's good to bring all of this together.

Student: You mentioned the two cessations. What are they?

OK. According to the Abhidharmakosa there are, I think Jeffrey Hopkins translates it as analytical cessations and non-analytical cessations. According the upper tenets, a real cessation is what the Vaibhasika call analytical cessations, that is you eliminate something so it will not arise again, by eliminating its conditions and roots. You have eliminated those from the mind and so it will never arise again – that’s an analytical cessations. What non-analytical cessation is, you have to read.

Let’s just see here before we finish up, because we don’t have too much time and I think there is going to be a puja later.

So this is the long convoluted definition of an inattentive perceiver. *“However one should know the manner in which **not to posit** as the definition of something being an awareness to which the object appears without being ascertained”, namely, “that which is a common locus of 1. having the clear appearance of a specifically characterised phenomena which is its object.....”. What’s being left out there? Object of **engagement**. And “2. being unable to induce ascertainment with respect to the specifically characterised phenomena which is its object” . Because if you tried to posit that as the definition of an inattentive perceiver, there wouldn’t be the correct pervasions; you could posit something that was that definition, such as a wrong eye consciousness, but it wouldn’t be that definiendum. It wouldn’t be an inattentive perceiver.*

Remember the difference between a definition and a definiendum? The definition in this case is this long sentence. The definiendum is that which is being defined – in this case an awareness to which an object appears without being ascertained. The definition of this definiendum is “a knower that is a common locus of ...etc....” So the definiendum is that which being defined.

So then here it gives the reason – *“that is because a sense consciousness that sees snow mountains as blue, sees as blue the white colour of the snow mountains, which is its object of engagement and therefore it does not see clearly the specifically characterised phenomena which is its object of engagement or object of operation”.*

“Does not see clearly”? I’m not sure she’s got the grammar of that quite right. This kind of (wrong) consciousness doesn’t really have an object of engagement. It is only posited, right? Here it says “which is its object of engagement” and it sounds like here it is saying that the white snow mountain is the object of engagement. Is that how you would read this sentence here?

Student: What she is saying here is “blue”

But is that the object of engagement ? The blue snow mountain is what’s being engaged.

Student: I think that’s what she means. She says in the next sentence that the appearing object is the white mountain.

Of a snow mountain which appears clearly as blue whereas it does not exist as blue, there is the clear appearance of the specifically characterised phenomena which is its object. But the way she has written it there first: *“this is because a sense consciousness that sees snow mountains as blue, see as blue the white colour of the snow mountains which is its object of operation”.* What is the “which” of its object of engagement here? The way she’s written it looks like the white colour of the snow mountains but it is the blue that the mind is apprehending, that’s the object of engagement, that which the mind is engaging. Does that make sense?



Student: No

No?

Student: It sounds like she's referring to the blue

OK. In Lati Rinpoche's teaching that Elizabeth Napper also translated, on pg 100, 101 – I'll read it quickly. *"For direct perceivers one can posit three objects. They do not have a determined object but they do have an object of engagement as well as appearing and apprehended objects. This is true also for an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained. In the example of a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form - like say seeing flowers -, one can posit its form as its object of engagement. This consciousness does not have a determined object, for to posit such there must be a conceptual determining involved - there has to be a conception - . To determine means to think 'It is such and such' and that does not occur in direct perception. The form is also the appearing object, the apprehended object and the object of the mode of apprehension of such a direct perceiver - this is talking of a correct direct perceiver -. In the case of direct perceivers, whatever is main object of operation - that means the main object of engagement - is necessarily the appearing object; however, whatever is its object of engagement is not necessarily its appearing object. The main object of engagement, let's say in this case it's a blue flower, is its appearing object but whatever is its object of engagement is not necessarily its appearing object, because it can have several object of engagement. - for one can say that the opposite from non-form is its object of engagement but not that such appears to it."* The opposite from non-form is what is being engaged, that's what's being known, but that doesn't appear, because that's a permanent phenomenon. The main object of engagement is the form itself, not the opposite of non-form.

Then: *"Also, whatever is an appearing object of direct perceiver is not necessarily its object of engagement"*. How does that work? Bonnie are you getting that?

Why? *"because the impermanence of the form"* - when I am perceiving these flowers, the impermanence of the form does appear - *"its momentariness, the form's ability to perform a function, and so forth are all appearing objects of direct perceiver apprehending a form but not objects of engagement - they are not the objects of engagement of that eye consciousness."*

Student: It's like emptiness.

Well emptiness, according to Sautrantika, is a permanent phenomena and it doesn't appear to eye consciousness but impermanence does appear. All of the things that are one nature with the flower in terms of its conventional nature of being impermanent do appear but they are not all engaged by the eye consciousness. That can give you a little more to think about here.

*"In the case of non conceptual wrong consciousness such as a sense consciousness perceiving white snow mountains as blue, there are appearing and apprehended objects but no object of engagement or determined object. If one were asked to posit the object of engagement of such a mind, one would have to posit blue snow mountains - which do not exist, and thus one answers that the object of engagement does not exist. This distinction is important in terms of the definition of an awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained as will discussed later. One can not posit a determined object for a non-conceptual wrong consciousness because only thought consciousnesses have such..."*

Does that make some sense?



In the case of a wrong eye or ear consciousness, what is appearing is the actual phenomenon that is appearing to you. Here when we talk about an awareness to which an object appears without being ascertained, it is a common locus of having the clear appearance of the specifically characterised phenomena which is its object of engagement - so that means it is not a wrong consciousness – if it has a clear appearance of the object of engagement and the object of engagement clearly appears it is not a wrong consciousness. If the object of engagement would have to be blue snow mountains, it is not clearly appearing to that consciousness. The object of engagement doesn't really exist so how could it clearly appear?

Think about that a little bit.

Our text continues (2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph above the end of page 37) *“Still, since it's appearing object, the white colour of the snow mountain, appears clearly as blue whereas it does not exist as blue, there is the clear appearance of the specifically characterised phenomena which is its object. Also it is unable to induce ascertainment with respect to that because it engages the object perversely”*

So that's why not having the word “its object **of engagement**” in the definition would make the definition defective.

Let's jump to page 39. I want you to take a look at some things and think about them.

The definition of the next non-prime cognizer. So what have we had? We've had subsequent cognizer, correctly assuming consciousness, a consciousness to which an object appears but is not ascertained and now *doubting consciousness*. Then there is one more after this – wrong consciousness.

Doubting consciousness; the definition: *“a knower which has qualms two-pointedly by its own power”* according to Purbuchok. Two-pointed here means that it hasn't come to surety. It's not really sure about it. It's thinking like “yeah, there are future lives, I'm pretty sure”. That would be a doubt leading in the right direction. “I'm not completely sure. Maybe there are not but probably there are.”

You could have an equally balanced doubt, thinking “I don't know. Maybe he's a buddha maybe he's not” of the Dalai Lama. Completely unsure.

You could have a doubt leading in the wrong direction. “They say that all phenomena are selfless but I don't know. Maybe they are but I don't think so”.

A doubt means a doubting consciousness which is not certain, it's two pointed – like the example they give of a needle with two points.

Here, by its own power, according to this definition, means it is only talking about the mental factor doubt. Because when you have a doubting consciousness there are other factors in the mind that are also two pointed about the object, but not by their own power; rather, due to the presence of doubt.

As Lati Rinpoche and some other lamas say, they don't think it's necessary to have “own power” in the definition, although this limits the meaning of a doubting consciousness to the mental factor doubt. The mental factor doubt is two-pointed by its own power, by its own nature and not by the power of something else being present.

We'll talk more about that next time. If you have the chance, read the section on the last of the non-realizing consciousness – wrong consciousness – “a knower which engages its object erroneously” (on page 41). There are two kinds: conceptual and non-conceptual. Then in chapter 4 we will talk next time about other divisions of consciousness. We can divide them up into minds and mental factors.

## Dedication

Why don't we dedicate our energy here, our merits....

Bring your mind to a concentrated state so you actually do the first part of the dedication, conventional dedication. You have to have a strong aspiration that these merits actually ripen in a particular way and there are numberless kinds of dedication one can make – one can dedicate for the dharma to flourish, for sentient beings to find happiness, for calamity to be finished, and so forth, or for oneself to attain enlightenment.

Due to these merits may I quickly attain enlightenment, so that I can set each and every sentient being in that state. That's dedicating the merit for our own enlightenment and so that is a bodhicitta motivation.

Basically it's thinking for a very high goal – giving up one's own attachment to these merits. The higher the goal that one dedicates to, that prevents them being exhausted in some lesser goal, let's say “due to this merit may I become rich in the next life” or “due to these merits may I become famous” or “may I defeat everyone else in debate”. Maybe if you had a very strong wish that way the merits might have the tendency to ripen in that way, but then they would be exhausted, they would give their results once like a tree that blossoms just once.

So dedicate them to the highest goal of our eventual enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings.

Thinking of how wonderful that would be. They should ripen, they will ripen in that way. I dedicate them in that way and then seal that dedication within the emptiness of the three spheres, the conventional dedication that we did, that those merits that we are dedicating are not truly existent. They can't be found anywhere. Although they do exist conventionally and do function, they are not inherently existent.

The goal dedicated to – our eventual enlightenment for the welfare of sentient beings – does exist conventionally but does not exist inherently. It's just a conception – a conceptually imputed state that can exist in the future.

And the act of dedication which includes the actor, the agent (myself), trying to join up with the merits to a particular goal. That also cannot be found. It's not inherently existent – just imputed to these moments of mind.

So in this way, letting go of one's apprehension of these three spheres as inherently existent protects them perfectly from the danger of anger (that would be burning them up) or wrong view, abandoning Dharma and so forth, that can cause the roots of virtue, that are not so dedicated, to be destroyed.

Thank you very much

## Session 10

### Meditation

We'll do a little meditation to calm our minds and try to set a good motivation.

Relax your body.... I like to tell myself that, because my body doesn't always react.

Relax the mind..

Basically everything is ok. You have the buddha-nature and the perfect human rebirth. All the problems that might be objects of our worry or objects of attachment and desire, all are illusion-like, ultimately without any basis, merely imputed. There are no real enemies, no inherently existent friends and companions, and all sentient beings are exactly the same as us, in exactly the same plight; confused, caught in our egos and our pride and our own conceptual thoughts.

So try to set your attention first of all on the breathing, to let go of the conceptualizing mind.....

Withdraw your attention more finely away from your senses like a tortoise withdrawing its limbs into its shell. Withdraw your attention to the cave of your heart chakra, and instead of facing outwards to the sense doors, pay attention to the mental consciousness....

It has no colour or shape. It is not dominated by the eye consciousness or the body consciousness.....

It's un-obstructing like space and unstained by the thoughts that are temporarily there – the adventitious events of our mind. It is reflective and clear....

Also knowing, cognizing....

When the mind reacts to various thoughts, grasps onto them and doesn't let go, use the various means that we have begun to understand, recognizing that and quickly going back to the object of concentration – that clear light nature of the mind, within which that thought is arising....

Notice how our reactions to various objects of mind are coloured by our sense of ego and let go of that also.... Recognize the appearance of ego as just conceptual appearance to the mind.....

With this wisdom arising within that consciousness, try to recognize this nature of the mind as our potential conventional buddha-nature....

Recalling that we have a perfect human rebirth that is very difficult to find, within the entire universe, although we haven't recognized its rarity or great usefulness, because if we did we wouldn't be engaged in some many worldly activities....

Nor have we realized impermanence, the mighty instigator of Dharma activity that all the great beings of the past have measured their initiation into the path by....

Where real effort begins, real seriousness takes place and we begin to recognize the inevitability of death and the momentary change of all that we ordinarily encounter....

The perfect human rebirth is so valuable but every moment ebbing away, having no definite length, and within all of samsara, the desire realm, the form realm, the formless realm there's no real pleasure to be found ....

Certainly the lower realms are replete with discomfort and suffering. Even the upper realms have their own distinct unfortunate circumstances. Even the gods, at the time of death, feel incredible sadness about losing their high status; ...the asuras, the demigods, experience unbearable jealousy .....

But beyond the obvious suffering of suffering there's no real pleasure to be found within cyclic existence and only Dharma happiness, and uncontaminated happiness can bring us real satisfaction; by eliminating our afflicted states, not by coming in contact with objects of desire or eliminating the objects of irritation but by eliminating the afflictive states themselves through meditation, through dharma.....

All living beings, exactly the same as us, wanting to be happy, wanting to be free of suffering, have been our mothers numberless times in the past and have been depthlessly kind, even now, as friends, as strangers, even as enemies who are giving us a chance to practice in this perfect human rebirth, practice the Dharma. They are all equally important as a field of merit as the buddhas and bodhisattvas. And all of them suffering...

So with the thought of the two aims – my own and others' – to overcome my own suffering and to achieve everlasting happiness, to achieve the aim of others, to emanate solutions in bodily form, with speech for the welfare of sentient being, I am going to participate in the class tonight like the great practitioners of the past have studied. The great lineage lamas of the Lam-rim and all of our present gurus studied these same subjects, sharpening the mind and developing good heart, so I am going to participate tonight and pay attention with concentration, with a good heart and mind, wisdom and courage, in order to quickly achieve enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings.....

Bring your attention back and relax.....

## Teaching

How is everyone? Any questions? Sister – yes

Sister: I've taken it upon myself to go back over the printout that you gave us on chapter one and in the middle of the page there is phrase that says "but there is a grammatical play here" and it talks about the challenger and the defender.

Sounds like a war or something

Sister: My mind is thinking about what is debate in terms of how we take this information and really use it in the sense of explaining phenomena or using examples given in the text and I don't know if that's where anybody is but if you would explain the *subject*, *object*, *nominative* and how this dance of words plays into something.

Do you mean on page 4?

Sister: Page 4, chapter 1.

Which paragraph?

Sister: It's the fifth paragraph up from the bottom and it begins with "there is a grammatical play here". I wonder if that's jumping ahead or....

The *first* chapter - I not sure if that's jumping ahead; it could be that it's a little beyond what we cover, but I'm not sure.

When *Lorig* and *Dura* and subjects like that are studied, there are a lot of debates that revolve around certain grammatical constructions in Tibetan. It's not the same in English. There are a lot of things that play on words and so on. Sometimes these are Tibetan jokes. I remember how Geshe Tegchok loved to tell jokes and sometimes he'd sit there waiting and we wouldn't get it – Tibetan word-play jokes.

That's one of the reasons that we have skipped some of the debates and also because we have had not had a chance to study one of the perquisite foundations called *Collected Topics (Dura)*, which is not part of our BP curriculum. *Collected Topics* is something the monks and nuns would study for maybe six years, and *Lorig* might be in the fifth or sixth year as part of that, in which they would learn how to debate. They would learn a lot of this by heart ; they could make a big show in the debating courtyard. So what we've done up until now, for the most part, is skipped the debates.

I'll remind you of something I said at the beginning - the way these kinds of texts were laid out, there were three parts. First it presented the wrong ideas of the others schools (sometimes non-Buddhist and sometime other monasteries). Sometimes it presents the Prasangika view – "some say this and if they say that we say this, this and this" and completely destroy them. "Those Prasangikas don't know what they are talking about". Sometimes the debates are from other monasteries and sometimes they are from great scholars of the past that the monastic text book would be taking as examples to try to sharpen people's understanding of debate.

So there would be this kind of presentation on the subject matter, objects of doubt, and it would present wrong views and how one would debate against that.

Then once one had cleared away some of those wrong ideas of what was meant, then the section comes that is presenting our own view, and that is mainly what we have been doing – the study of our own tradition – *rang lugs*. Sounds like Cosa Nostra our something – our own thing, our own tradition.

Here there are some small little debates within there but not much - within our own section. It's mainly presenting how the monastic text presents the material. So in a sense this is how our education is in the West for the most part isn't it? For example when we study algebra or chemistry or some technical subject, there is not much talking about wrong ideas and eliminating them because you don't know very much yet.

Some of these other position debates, the geshe themselves go back to much later; when they have their geshe degree they will actually go back to these debates that they studied when they were twelve or fifteen years old and they then see the richness of it . The point being that it looks quite simple but there is a lot of complexity to it.

So the first part was present the wrong views and eliminating them. Then presenting our own tradition.

Then thirdly there could be critiques on the tradition that we're adhering to. Different people, different scholars, different traditions might find fault with our tradition and then the third section deals with that – dispelling objections about our own tradition.

If you have the leisure (and the 39 cents or whatever it costs to get a magic marker), you can go through the sections and you can mark where it says “our own system” and start there, marking the beginning and the end.

Right before that, in any one topic, there can a presentation of some wrong views that are not completely just off the wall, that help clarify our own system. Some of these ‘wrong’ views were held either by non-Buddhists or by other Buddhist traditions or other monasteries, or other great scholars of the past.

Then the presentation of our own system right after that, say for instance in this section on objects (starts on page 9) – *our own system* – the third line of the text from the top. In Tibetan we say *rang lugs*. That goes on and then on page 10 the third line down: “*concerning what has been said someone might say....*”

So this is kind of now dispelling wrong views about our own tradition – “someone might say” . These debates right after the presentation of the subject are maybe positions of some other scholars or from other monasteries or maybe some doubts that may of have arise. The text author might just raise certain points, just from his own wisdom, knowing that certain things might occur to the students, because this was something that was studied for hundreds and hundreds of years, an accumulation of knowledge.

So what we have not done is go into the debates at this point other than just very superficially, because we don't have the time and some of them have to do with grammar and to try to explain that we would have to almost learn the Tibetan grammar. It's not that all of them are grammatical but the ones that do play on grammar, I don't know if it's that worthwhile to spend time worrying about those. But if someone were to study it in depth those would be a very fruitful objects of research.

Basically, those two sections – before and after *our own system* – are presented usually as consequences. There are two kinds of logical arguments that we are presented with: syllogisms and consequences. I can't remember (if I ever knew) the Sanskrit word for *consequence* - “*prasanga*” I guess because we say “*yim pa thal*”, “it follows that...” or “there is the consequence that..”.

A consequence is not exactly a syllogism. It has arisen because of some view that your opponent is holding, like someone was saying something and I could throw back some consequence of what was said.

Maybe like telling your kids “you always drive on the correct side of the road, don't drive on the wrong side of the road” and then when you have to pass someone, the kids say “well, it follows that you made a mistake, because you drove on the wrong side of the road” and maybe then the mother or father or big brother would have to defend that.

So a consequence is like a syllogism but it always has the words “it follows..” or “there is the consequence that...”. The Prasangika school – the highest of the Madhyamaka schools – are called Consequentialists because they hold that you can actually induce an inferential cognizer in someone's consciousnesses merely by throwing them the consequences of their own view; someone who is a sharp opponent.

The purpose of debate of course is not just to show off one's intellect or even just to defend Buddhism or our own system, although in some cases that has been necessary; but the main purpose of debate is to

eliminate wrong views in your opponent's mind stream. So it should be done out of compassion and not out of ego and so forth.

Lets say for instance we are studying together and first we were just discussing, and we ask Sarah how many different kinds of phenomena there are. And then she says she doesn't know. Carrie, how many different kinds of impermanent phenomena are there?

Carrie: Seven

Seven. And then I would say 'posit'— present them, what are the seven divisions of impermanent phenomena....

Carrie: silence

Ah you were just making that up. I see. I thought you really thought there were seven - Ok, who has an idea? Bonnie?

Bonnie: One

One division of impermanent phenomena -.....

So the debate might start that way, I would go "ah, ok.." and then I would step back and I would go through some gestures like taking my mala and pulling it up my arm and stamping my feet on the ground.

Actually there's a certain meaning to all of those physical gestures and there's some ritual at the beginning also; reciting the mantra of Manjushri and so forth. When one claps the hands together, it is not just to distract the opponent, it is that one is closing the door to the lower realms and bringing all sentient beings into the upper realms; similarly, one pulls the rosary up ones arm to be making a point

"It follows from your assertion, that there is one division of impermanent phenomena, that consciousness, matter and non-associated compositional factors are one division", or something like that.

There are a many possible consequences to you could throw to someone. They would be put in a position then to try to answer that. They would be thinking about the consequences, the answer that you had presented to them. The answerer (the person who is sitting down and being debated against) doesn't have much leeway to say a lot; they can't sort of start a soliloquy or go off on a tangent - that's the sign of someone who is supposedly not a good debater, unless the person who is debating with you is a complete novice and is making so many mistakes and you are just trying to get it back on track. Usually if you are sitting down and answering the questions that are being debated against, there are only certain answers that you can give.

So that's kind of the context of these debates. For instance someone's system has some particular idea or doubt or something and then they might start "if someone says" - that's kind of the initial thing that indicates the start of describing a debate.

For instance I ask Bonnie some question and if Bonnie says there's one division of permanent phenomena; then "it follows that..." - and then there will be a bunch of consequences of that, that can be used to try to dispel that wrong view. Then at the end, in the debates after the presentation of our own system, "if



someone says..." is about our system, that there's a fault in our system because of the way that we defined something, and then we have to defend that, by showing that there is no inconsistency.

So that's kind of the basis of those debates and because it's not part of our daily study to debate like that, and because it would go on too long, we haven't gotten into a lot of detail. But as we go on and study other subjects maybe over time ... In the twelve classes that we have for this subject we have time mainly just to go over our own tradition. So later if you study this again you can go into these; with the understanding based on having studied our own tradition you can go back and study those debates. But those about grammar, I would say you can leave those until the very last, don't worry about those, they are not very important in general.

So the last time we got up to I think page 38 - doubting consciousness. it continues on page 39, where it says: *"our own system is that..."* - In the Tibetan text it will probably say *rang lugs* here – *"the definition of doubt is"*

And this is right after the section in which some other definitions of doubting consciousnesses have been proposed. On the bottom of page 38, where the section about doubt starts, where it says: *"With respect to the fourth of the five non-valid consciousnesses, doubting consciousness, someone might say that the definition of "doubting consciousness" is "that which has qualms with respect to its object"*

What is a qualm? Is that something that one cooks at thanksgiving?

Student: A doubt.

A doubt, right. It's kind of a formal way of saying a philosophical doubt. "I have qualms about whether I should accept this money from you" or something like that – I have doubt.

So the definition of a doubting consciousness is posited as: *"that which has qualms with respect to its object"*. Does that sound like a good definition? What do you think?

Student: I wouldn't have argued.

You would have said 'I accept', *dod*. So a debate might start like this: "Give me the definition of a doubting consciousness" and Don says "a doubting consciousness is that which has qualms with respect to its object". Then, "OK, so it follows absurdly that ...." The word "absurdly" doesn't come in the Tibetan. It means that we are showing an absurd consequence of that definition.

"So it absurdly follows that the subject **a person**....." Because the definition of a doubting consciousness, you said, Don, "is **that** which has qualms with respect its object"; it doesn't say "is **a consciousness which**...". And so a person who has qualms with respect to his object could be a doubting consciousness *"because of being that which has qualms about its object"*. *"The pervasion has been asserted"*. What does that mean?

Student: The forward pervasion?.

The forward pervasion. So what's the pervasion in that consequence? A consequence generally has a subject, a predicate and an object that is the sign, just like a syllogism except that it has the words "it follows that..". In this context what's the subject? It's easy, it says it right there.

Student: A person

A person who has qualms with respect to object. What's the predicate?

Student: Is a doubting consciousness

Is a person a doubting consciousness? A person can't be a doubting consciousness. A person is this kind of third category of impermanent phenomena called *non-associated compositional factors*. A person is imputed upon body and consciousness, so it is impermanent, and the person Don is impermanent, but Don is not consciousness and Don is not body, so a person comes in the third category of impermanent phenomena which is *neither consciousness nor matter: non-associated compositional factors*.

In that consequence of "the person who has qualms with respect to an object is a doubting consciousness..." , what is the reason or sign?

Student: Because of being that which has qualms about its object.

The pervasion has been asserted. What's the pervasion meaning the forward pervasion here? If it is something has qualms about its object, it is a doubting consciousness. That has been stated earlier because that was your definition, right.

Ok, so we say that to that person. Now what are they going say back? What are you going to say back, Don? I said "So it follows that you accept that the a person is a doubting consciousness". The opponent knows that the person is not a doubting consciousness. So what are the possible things they could say back to get out of it?

They could either say the sign or reason is not established, or there is no pervasion. (Here it says "reason" which is the same as when I say "sign"; she is translating the word "tags" as "reason". "Tags" usually means "sign" or "mark".)

So if the person says that the sign is not established, what would that mean in this case? The subject – *a person who has qualms with respect to his object* – is a doubting consciousness because of being that which has qualms about its object.

Maureen, are you with us?

Maureen: More or less.

You think so.

Maureen I'm here.

Student: She has a doubting consciousness

She just said that Maureen **has** a doubting consciousness, she **is** not the doubting consciousness.

*"It absurdly follows that the subject, a person who has qualms with respect to his object, is a doubting consciousness because of being that which has qualms about its object."*

The reason (or sign) is not established. That means the subject is not the sign, so that's saying that *the person who has doubts with respect to his object is not that which has qualms about its object*. That's what the person is essentially saying if they say "the sign is not established".

*If he says the reason is not established, "It follows that that subject, a person who has qualms about his object, is that which has qualms about its object because of being a person who has qualms about his object."*

It doesn't sound very profound but that's one of the possible answers that the debater might give. They made this absurd statement and now they are trying to get out of it.

Bonnie: He's going around in circles.

There you go. If he says that the reason is not established, what do we reply? On the bottom of page 38, the second one – that a person who has qualms about his object is a person who has qualms about his object.

So if he again says the reason is not established, they are debating back with you, you are saying: *"It follows that such a person is himself because such a person exists."* There are such people that have qualms about their object.

*If he says the reason is not established,.....* Then it goes on to a lot of different kinds of arguments and some of these would seem very absurd but they are the kinds of debates that might come up.

So let's talk about doubting consciousness, a bit further down page 39.

*Our own system is that the definition of a **doubting consciousness** is: a knower that has qualms two-pointedly by its own power.*

*Two pointedly and by its own power* are important and it says a *knower* and doesn't say *"that which has qualms about its object"*

The *two-pointedly* means that it hasn't come to any conclusion. For instance, a wrong view or a correct belief is not a doubt; I can't say that actually; so let's say a well held wrong view. For instance the strong belief that reincarnation doesn't exist or karma doesn't exist is not a doubt because if they are holding that very strongly, that's not being held two-pointedly and there's no qualm in the person's mind, "maybe karma exists or maybe it doesn't. It probably doesn't exist" – it's not like that.

A doubting consciousness has to be two-pointed. Even though it might be tending to one conclusion, it hasn't made certainty in its own mind about that.

If it would come to a conclusion it doesn't mean that it has to become a correct consciousness. It can be doubt leaning in the wrong direction. And it doesn't mean that it's becoming a wrong consciousness either, because it can be doubt leaning in the right direction.

Student: Does that make it a right consciousness?

If it's leaning in the right direction, it could be factually concordant to the extent that it's still two-pointed. With a correct belief, the person has gone beyond doubt and has come to a conclusion - it may be by a

wrong reason, it could be without any reason at all or it could be based on a correct reason but one that is not totally established in that person's mind; in whichever way, it's not yet a realization, it hasn't eliminated all superimpositions. It will have eliminated doubt to a certain extent if the person has correct belief, because a doubt is something that has qualms two-pointedly.

Student: Would you explain *two-pointedly*?

It is meaning that there are two things. It's thinking 'maybe it's this, maybe it's that - I'm not sure'. Of the three divisions of doubt, that's kind of like medium doubt.

"Maybe past lives exist, maybe they don't, they probably **don't**" – that would be a doubt leaning in the wrong direction. Although you think that they probably don't exist, there is still a doubt in your mind that maybe they exist.

"Maybe they exist, maybe they don't, they probably **do**. There probably are past and future lives" Even if we might think we've come to a belief, that's still a doubting consciousness.

What do you think? Most of us would admit, even people that are very zealous practitioners, that there is some doubt. That's not something to be afraid of. Nagarjuna said that doubts can be very useful. Sometimes we might think that because it is not a correct belief (which itself is not yet a realization) that doubt is something inferior that we have to eliminate. "You better believe..." or "You better swallow it" or whatever. I remember at one of the first courses at Kopan in 1974 or 1975 there were some people from San Francisco who were Buddhist or Zen Buddhist or new age or something. They had these expressions that they used to put up on the board when Lama Zopa Rinpoche would be teaching Lam-rim. They used to put up these caustic notes saying "swallow it", like we were being told just to accept these things or something like that.

Student: Like "act as if and you will!"

Maybe... So a doubting consciousness is something that is two-pointed, it's doubting, it has qualms. In general you can't use the word for what you are defining in the definition. That's why, although "qualm" - in Tibetan is a synonym of doubting consciousness, it is used, because you couldn't use doubt, you couldn't say "a doubt is a knower which has doubt." You have to use a synonym of it or something else. Like for example the definition of colour uses the word "hue", which is sort of a synonym of colour, in its definition.

*A knower that has qualms two-pointedly **by its own power***". The significance of *by its own power* here is, I think, that according to Purbuchok and a lot of the different traditions, there's a school of thought that thinks that of the seven ways of knowing, when we talk about doubting consciousness, it must refer to a mental factor.

Do you know the difference between a mental factor and a primary mind?

Student: A primary mind grasps the entity of the object and mental factors the other qualities of the object.

Yes. They mental factors engage in the various qualities of something and are secondary to the main primary mind. But they are the same entity; like the ocean and the waves.

There is a mental factor called doubt amongst the fifty one mental factors. Do you know where it's located, in which category? Among the afflictions, the klesha, in the six root delusions; there is what is called "afflicted doubt". This is not just doubt in general.

Say for instance you had a doubt that maybe phenomena are not empty of true existence but maybe they are; they might very well be empty. The Buddha himself said that having such a doubt (leaning in the right direction) can 'tear the roots of samsara asunder'. You start to meditate on selflessness and you actually find the object and think that maybe it exists or maybe it doesn't. Even though you don't yet have a correctly believing consciousness, let alone an inference or direct realization, just having that doubt is like a precursor and is a cause to be able to destroy our cyclic existence.

So that type of doubt is not an affliction. That doubt (leaning in the right direction) doesn't cause one's mind to create negative karma the way afflictive doubt (of the six root delusions) does.

You can also talk about a mental factor that is looking at two alternatives and leaning in one direction or the other or is equally balanced. By its own power means from its own side; when you have the mental factor doubt (whether afflictive from the six root afflictions or even a positive doubt), while that's present the whole main mind that accompanies it is affected. ... when that mental factor is present the main mind is also a doubting consciousness. The whole main mind is two-pointed also but not by its own power. It has become two-pointed by the presence of doubt – the mental factor..

Doubt doesn't take place in your eye does it? Does your eye have doubts? "Did I see Dorje or Richard Geere?" That doubt, does it take place in the eye consciousness? No! The eye is just a perceiver. A doubting consciousness is completely mental, completely conceptual, right?

For instance, is a primary mind virtuous or non-virtuous by its own power? Not by its own power. How does it become virtuous or non-virtuous - because we can say that a primary mind is virtuous or non-virtuous.

It becomes virtuous or non-virtuous because of the attendant mental factors that are present. Say for instance if anger or resentment or pride or jealousy is present in the mind, the whole mind, by association with that, takes on the quality of being non-virtuous. And say the primary mind of bodhicitta takes on a virtuous quality by its attendant mental factor, the wish to attain enlightenment for the welfare of sentient beings.

According to our tradition (at least in Purbuchok's text), doubting consciousness has to be a mental factor, it has qualms two pointedly by its own power. That means that it itself is having those qualms and not the primary mind or even the feeling that's present in that consciousness. When I have doubt about something e.g. "is this Coca Cola or is this water?" Is there a clear Coca Cola? No, it's Pepsi. "Is this water or Pepsi?" - I taste it, and I'm not sure. At that point there might be a feeling in my mental consciousness that is responding to the taste – pleasant or unpleasant. Even that feeling is two-pointed when I have doubt, but not by its own power; it's only two-pointed because of the presence of the two-pointed-ness of the mental factor doubt; that, by its own power, is the thing that is two-pointed.

Student: Is it referring to the mental factor and not the primary mind?

It's referring to a mental factor and not to a primary mind, and also not to the other mental factors that are present while the mental factor of doubt is present.

Student: So if you look at these two definitions, the difference is that they refer to a *knower* and it sees qualms two-pointedly *by its own power*.

Right and if you look through these debates there might be some that point out the lack of a word or particular phrase; each of them cuts out some misconception about it.

Student: So in general we are talking about – our definitions commonly say something like *knower which* has a wrong perception or whatever. Are we talking about mental factors when we refer to a *knower*?

In general this is the only one that's definitely a mental factor so far. When we talked about correct belief we weren't talking about the mental factor belief. We were talking about the mind in general that is believing, and that might have a factor of confidence or aspiration or something, but here this one is being singled out as having to be a mental factor.

Lati Rinpoche mentions from his point of view a doubting consciousness doesn't have to be a mental factor and that phrase wouldn't have to be in the definition, and that phrase would make it wrong. So that is a different point of view.

*A mind which possesses similarity with doubt and the feelings, etc., which are companions of that mind possessing similarity with doubt have qualms by the power of doubt, but do not have qualms two-pointedly by their own power.*

"A mind that possesses similarity with doubt" - that means a primary mind. "Possessing similarity" is a technical term that will come up later; minds and mental factors are sometimes defined as sharing five similarities with one another. They have the same *object*, the same *duration*, the same *entity* and things like that.

So this is what it means to possess similarity with doubt. The primary consciousness which is concomitant with doubt, and the feelings which are companions of that mind and are possessing similarities with doubt, have qualms by the power of doubt, but they do not have qualms two-pointedly by their own power. So that's kind of pointing out why in this tradition those would not be considered doubting consciousnesses – according to Purbuchok's definition.

Miss Oma?

Oma: Well I had a question about feeling that I'm trying to figure out. That's not an aggregate?

Feeling is one of the five aggregates and there are three kinds of feelings. Perhaps today we will get to the mental factors, which includes feeling. Did you ever meet Lama Yeshe? Oma, you'd know Lama Yeshe, right? Once we were in Kopan and they ordered some chocolate éclairs from the coffee house at the Annapurna hotel in Kathmandu. At that time, the late seventies, you usually didn't find chocolate éclairs in Kathmandu, let alone in Kopan. I remember that Lama took this chocolate, he was going to start the party, and didn't take a bite but put it straight into his mouth - illustrating something about the practice of tantra...

When doubting consciousnesses are divided there are three: doubt tending toward the factual; doubt tending toward the non-factual (doubt leaning in the wrong direction) and equal doubt.

(page 40) *The first is, for example, doubt which thinks that sound is probably impermanent.*

If you think “yeah, sound is impermanent”, but you are not absolutely certain, it’s still a doubt. Even though think “oh yes, I know sound’s impermanent, maybe”. If it’s like that, that is still a doubt, isn’t it?

You might think you have a *correct belief* of emptiness, or selflessness but if you check it you probably don’t even have a correct belief.

Student: Is it a doubt until it’s a realization?

It’s a doubt until it’s no longer two pointed. Say when you’ve reached confidence or certainty, you’ve reached a decision in your mind, then it might be a correct belief if the doubt was leaning in the right direction. But remember it might be still not completely be established; and there might be different kinds of misconception around, it but it could be still be called a correct belief.

Some correct beliefs are much more powerful than others, right? Some are completely based on wrong reasons or incomplete reasons or just a person’s exaggeration, thinking they know something. Other correct beliefs, that are based on logic and experience over a long period of time, in mediation and thinking and so forth, can be very close to bringing about inferential cognition.

So there’s a whole spectrum of belief, but there are only three doubts: that are leaning in the correct direction, doubts that are leaning in the wrong direction (“maybe sound is impermanent but it is probably permanent”) and the third doubt, equal doubt, which wavers, it wonders whether sound is permanent or impermanent.

Even if you are leaning in one direction and you say “it’s probably...”, even then it’s not certainty yet. Is “probably” the same as “certainty” in your mind? Probably, definitely ....What’s that turn of phrase that causes us to think?

Student: “Probably, definitely, maybe”

Probably, definitely, maybe.

Let’s start one of the debates today: “*Someone might say*”. So having presented our own tradition, now there is a debate coming up in regard to our own definition. The debates just before our own tradition were someone else presenting their definition of doubt and we try to eliminate them by showing the absurdity of them. Now someone is trying to show us that there is something wrong about our definition.

*Someone might say that wrong consciousness and doubting consciousness are contradictory.* Let’s see what they are thinking. What is wrong consciousness?

Student:1 It’s wrong

Student:2 It’s like the blue snow-mountain.

Is that a wrong consciousness? So it follows that a blue snow-mountain is a wrong consciousness?.

Student:2 The knower that perceives the blue snow-mountain, it that a wrong consciousness?

An eye consciousness that perceives a blue snow-mountain would be a wrong consciousness, yes. Another example could be a conceptual wrong consciousness, they are not just perceptual; like thinking that there



is a self of persons, grasping at a self of persons, grasping to the horns of a rabbit, grasping that someone is your enemy when they are not even conventionally your enemy and have actually been helping you. There can be many kinds of wrong consciousnesses

*"Someone might say that doubting consciousness and wrong consciousness are contradictory". Are they?*

Student: No, they are two different consciousnesses.

Well to be **contradictory**, it means that **there cannot be one thing which is both**. If it is one it is (necessarily) not the other.

Student: A doubting consciousness can be a wrong consciousness

For instance?

Student: Over here, where it said that when it's divided into the three parts and one is doubt tending toward the non-factual.

Yes, from our definitions here we see that that would be a wrong consciousness.

*To this we reply, "It absurdly follows that whatever is a doubting consciousness is necessarily not a wrong consciousness because these two are contradictory. The reason has been asserted." You have asserted the reason. You've stated the sign. What's the sign in that?*

Student: Doubt heading toward the non....

No. What's the sign in that statement?

Student:2 These two are contradictory.

These two are contradictory. This reason has been asserted by themselves. This they have to accept, they have to say at that point *"dod"* – 'I accept'

*If this consequence is accepted, "It absurdly follows that the subject, a doubting consciousness which thinks that sound is probably permanent, is not a wrong consciousness because of being a doubting consciousness. This is because it is doubt tending toward the non-factual."*

Because the person has already accepted that a doubting consciousness can't be a wrong consciousness, and so this can't be wrong.

*If the consequence that a doubting consciousness that thinks that sound is probably permanent is not a wrong consciousness is accepted, "It follows that the subject a doubting consciousness that thinks that sound is probably permanent is a wrong consciousness because of being a conceptual wrong consciousness. This is because it is a wrong thought."*

This is what Oma was saying before.

*"The pervasion that whatever is a wrong thought is necessarily a conceptual wrong consciousness exists because wrong thought and conceptual wrong consciousness are synonyms. This is because Kay-drup's*

Clearing Away Darkness of Mind With Respect to the Seven Treatises says, *‘Wrong thought and conceptual wrong consciousness are synonyms.’*”

Kay-drup is one of the two disciples of Lama Tsongkhapa. Do you know which one? There is one sitting on either side of Lama Tsongkhapa in pictures. Do you know Carrie? Have you seen this on the thangkas? One that has big eyes and one has greyer hair and looks a little kinder. Which one is Kay-drup Je? The kind looking, older one? Is that what you said?

Student: Yes

No, it’s the one with the big bulging eyes. He is supposed to be an emanation of Vajrapani. He wrote more about tantra and was very insightful. He’s the one that had the great five visions of Lama Tsongkhapa after he had passed away. Kay-drup wrote a text called *Clearing Away Darkness of Mind With Respect to the Seven Treatises*. Sometimes some Kay-drup Je’s and Gyaltsab Je’s and Lama Tsongkhapa’s assertions might seem contradictory but in general if you’re a Gelukpa, if you quote one of them, they can always be taken as a source. Even one of the Dalai Lama’s you can generally take as a source. But say I am debating with Dorje (who’s from Drepung while I’m from Sera), I can’t say that this true because Jetsun Chokyi Gyaltsen (our text book writer) says so. He is not going to accept that because Panchen Sonam Dragpa (Drepung’s text writer) doesn’t say that. When you are debating with someone, you can only use quotations from something that everybody accepts. So all Gelukpas that you are debating with are going to accept that Kay-drup Je’s text is authoritative.

So Kay-drup Je says: *“Wrong thought and conceptual wrong consciousness are synonyms.”* That’s easy

*Furthermore, “It follows that wrong consciousness and doubting consciousness are not contradictory because wrong thought and doubting consciousness are not contradictory.*

Is all doubt wrong consciousness?

Student: No

What about equally balanced doubt – is that wrong consciousness?

Student: No

Why not?

Student: 2 It’s only half wrong ...

Student: 3 It’s still undecided.

So if it’s not wrong consciousness then it’s factually concordant!

Student: No, it can be still undecided.

We’re going to have to think. Are consciousnesses necessarily either factually concordant or not factually concordant?

If it is not factually concordant, is it necessarily a wrong consciousness?

Student: It sounds like it

What is an example of something which is not factually concordant and is not a wrong consciousness?

Student: An assuming consciousness that is correct

By assuming consciousness you mean correct belief?

Student: Yes

Correct belief is something which has certainty and so it's not tending in one direction or another. Doubt comes in a sequence leading up to correct belief. Correct belief, correct assumption and presumption are all translations for that same thing. It's sort of like "yes, that's case." It's *correct* belief and that is not wrong belief. Correct belief has to be leading in the right direction. If you had a belief leaning in the wrong direction, that would be a wrong consciousness. That's further than a doubt and is like a wrong view.

Could it become a realization in the same way that correct belief could become a realization?

Student: Sure

That would mean that you could realize that a wrong view is true – but a wrong view is still only a view, and you couldn't realize it because it is not true. If you could realize it, it would be factually concordant.

So you start with having wrong view, then if you had a doubt about that, that could become a doubting consciousness maybe first leaning in the wrong direction then equally balanced and then leaning in the right direction.

When you have it leaning in the right direction, then when that became very strong, that could become a correct belief (where you reach certainty in that's the way it is) –even though you haven't perfect reasons. As I said, there's a whole spectrum of correction belief or assumption.

Then what could be more refined than that is to have an actual inferential cognition that realizes that. This is when we are talking about intellectual things – conceptual consciousness, when you actually determine something by correct reasoning and all the elements are present and then you realize that.

Student: You can't have a realization of ignorance?

You can realize that ignorance exists but you can't have an ignorant consciousness that realizes. Remember, we had doubt (equal doubt and then leaning in the right direction) and that becomes a correct belief; then that could become a realization ( an inferential cognizer).

Now let's go to the other way: doubt leaning in the wrong direction. What's stronger than that? Wrong view actually holding that, that's like correct belief but is actually wrong belief.

Student: So would the next one be a direct realization of ignorance?

That's what I was saying before; if so, you would have to have an inference, or you might have to have a correct direct perception - but that which is wrong is not factually concordant, so it can't be realized.

Student: But we believe it so much

Yes, that's the wrong view. That's the pit that we're in. In fact this kind of understanding, when you analyse like that, can give you a lot of inspiration to practice the path, because you see there's only so far that you can go wrong. But you can go infinitely right; the mind is infinitely perfectable. It is not infinitely degenerate-able and damageable. You cannot realize evil.

That's something to think about. Maybe there are three divisions: factually concordant, non-factually concordant and neither of the two. Maybe it would be an example of neither of the two what the Student: just said but is inaudible. That isn't just a terminological division. Ok, so maybe factual concordant and non-factual concordant isn't something that covers all consciousnesses. There's a doubting consciousness that's equally balanced, for example.

*"The assertion that all wrong thoughts possess an aspect that is definite as a one-pointed mode of apprehension is incorrect"* This is what Kay-drup Je's text says.

If someone were to say that all wrong conceptual consciousnesses are definite and they are really holding that it's wrong, it's incorrect because it would follow a conceptual consciousness thinking that sound is probably permanent would not be wrong thought. Why? Because if it were true that all wrong thoughts were one-pointed (like really holding something)... then doubt leaning towards the incorrect would not be wrong consciousness.

That's also maybe a cause for optimism. Maybe our wrong thoughts are not so one-pointed. Even if we think that we are so ignorant, maybe they're not completely that way. They maybe close but there is a doubt in our mind and just to entertain that doubt is very powerful.

Student: This is the only definition that they have that says it's two-pointed.

Yes. It doesn't say wrong consciousness is not two-pointed, and it doesn't say it has to be one-pointed. How about correct belief? What was the definition of correct belief?

Page 34 – correctly assuming consciousness is : *A factually concordant determinative knower that is controvertible with regard to determining its object.*

Does that say anything about being two-pointed? Can't it be two-pointed because it's controvertible? It has not made up its mind with regard to determining its object. I think some texts might put the words in a slightly different order. Here, in Lati Rinpoche's, page 92 it says that the definition of a correctly assuming consciousness is : *A knower that does not get at an object with respect to which superimpositions have been eliminated although it adheres one-pointed to the phenomena which is its principle object of engagement.*

There it actually states explicitly: *"adheres one-pointedly."*

If you want you can always check here, because Lati Rinpoche often compares the various texts, and you can see if he mentions the definition by Purbuchok and says if there is any inconsistency here.

Student: Is the point that the difference between a doubting consciousness and a wrong consciousness is that one is two-pointed and the other is one-pointed.

No-no, a wrong consciousness can be two-pointed because a doubting consciousness can be a wrong consciousness and a doubting consciousness is two-pointed; even if it's leaning in one direction it's still two-pointed and has settled on a single point. It's still vacillating and saying "probably this, but maybe this". So a doubting consciousness can be a wrong consciousness, right?

Is a wrong consciousness necessarily a doubting consciousness ?

Student: No

No, not necessarily. There are wrong consciousnesses that are one-pointed.

Student: A doubting consciousness can be a wrong consciousness but a wrong consciousness cannot be a doubting consciousness

Sure it can. A wrong consciousness that thinks 'probably', for example, if it thinks sound is **probably** permanent.

Student: Isn't that a doubting consciousness leaning toward the non-factual?

Yes, and it is also a wrong consciousness. That's what it's just said: *The assertion that all wrong thoughts possess an aspect that is definite as a one-pointed mode of apprehension is incorrect because it would follow that the conceptual consciousness thinking that sound is probably permanent would not be a wrong thought*", because it **is** a wrong thought, and it continues *"Therefore, wrong thought and doubt are not contradictory."*

Enough of that and let's go to the fifth of the non-prime consciousnesses.

What were the five earlier non-prime consciousnesses? Correctly assuming consciousness, consciousness to which object appears but is not ascertained or inattentive perception, doubt and now follows wrong consciousness.

Well, we would have to also say subsequent cognition; subsequent cognition is not prime, right? Why not?

Student: It's subsequent.

It's subsequent, and prime in this context means fresh or new.

So then after subsequent cognizer, correct belief, inattentive perception, doubt, and now wrong consciousness making five in all. How many of them are realising consciousnesses.

Student: Subsequent...

Yes, a subsequent cognizer actually is. Not only is it factually concordant but it realizes its object.

How many of them are factually concordant?

Student: Two - correctly assuming consciousness could be....

It has to be factually concordant because it is a correct belief.

Student: Right ; but having the correctness, the consciousness might not know the reasons why.

Right; but it is still factually concordant and what else?

Student: Doubt leaning towards the correct

Yes, part of doubt.

How many of them are wrong consciousness? Wrong consciousness itself is obviously wrong. Anything else?

Student: Doubt leaning towards the wrong direction...

Part of doubt – leaning in the wrong direction

Student: Inattentive

Inattentive is also wrong consciousness?

Student: 2 It perceives them

This is really good. This is what you should be debating about. Dorje should spend his lunch hour with Theo debating about these points. Chris should call up Marcie on his cell phone and say “Marcie it follows that you don’t know the definition of a doubting consciousness....” She might not appreciate that, right. I hope she has a chance to see this later and then she can say that she was part of the class.

Let’s go on here.

The fifth one is wrong consciousness and there are two parts to it: definitions and definitions. Again, this is positing a wrong view about wrong consciousness – someone else’s idea.

*With regard to the first, someone might say that the definition of “something’s being a wrong consciousness” is “a knower that is mistaken with regard to its determined object”.*

That’s ok, isn’t it? Mark what do you think?

Mark: So far it sounds ok.

That’s right isn’t. That’s a correct definition. If you were debating with someone who said that, what would you immediately think – are they right or are they wrong?

Student: I reckon it’s ok.

You’d agree. *Someone might say that the definition of something being a wrong consciousness is “a knower which is mistaken with regard to its determined object”.* What is the determined object? Do sense consciousnesses have determined objects?

Student: Determined objects are mental images

Determined objects are objects of conceptual consciousness, right? The mental image is not the determined object is it? Maureen? Say, for instance, I'm thinking about the sand mandala (actually it's made out of powdered stone and not sand) and I have a mental image of that; that is the referent object which we don't often talk about. What's the determined object of that conceptual consciousness? Say I have good mental image of it?

The determined object is that which am thinking about, that I am conceptually determining – the actual sand mandala.

What is the appearing object? It is the mental image of that.

The mental image of the sand mandala is not the determined object. The determined object is what I'm determining and coming to the conclusion about, what I am understanding. For a conceptual consciousness in general that is the engaged object – the object that I am actually getting at, that I am understanding.

It may not be the object that I am referring to. For instance I can be referring to the conventionally existing Maureen (the referent object) but I can be conceiving of Maureen as truly existent and that would be my determined object and my engaged object. The appearing object would be the meaning generality of a truly existent Maureen.

Which of those three objects - the referent object, the determined object and the appearing object actually exist?

The determined object is the truly existent Maureen. The referent object is the conventionally existent Maureen – that's what I am referring to; determined object means conceived object – I'm conceiving her as truly existent, and I do that via a meaning generality, the appearance of a truly existent Maureen to my conception. Which of those three objects actually exist?

Student:1 The determined object

Pat says the determined object. So a truly existent Maureen exists? It follows that he thinks Maureen is truly existent and a truly existent Maureen is an object of knowledge, and that it exists as it appears, truly.

No. From the point view of Mahayana Buddhism objects are not truly existent. They may appear that way to sense consciousness and our mental consciousness may actually grasp at them as being that way but they are in fact devoid of being truly existent. So the determined object doesn't really exist ; and if you were asked to posit what the determined object of the conception conceiving Maureen as truly existent is, you could say 'it's the truly existent Maureen, but such an object doesn't really exist'. You could still posit it as that what is seemingly being determined.

We were talking before about ignorance seemingly realising. You were saying "couldn't ignorance realize its object"? It looks like it's realising its object but it's not, right? It's not really an object.

How about the referent object – the conventionally existent Maureen?

That does exist. Maureen is a conventionally existent person, just a name labelled to the five aggregates.



How about the appearing object – does a truly existent Maureen appear, does it exist?

Student: No.

That doesn't exist? So it follows that there is no appearance of a truly existent Maureen in my consciousness because it doesn't exist.

What's the appearing object of that wrong conception? A mental image. It does exist, just like the appearance of a mirage exists.

So if someone gives as the definition of a wrong consciousness *"a knower that is mistaken with regard to its determined object"*, we would reply: *It follows that the subject, a sense consciousness that sees snow mountains as blue is that definition i.e., a knower that is mistaken with regard to its determined object because of being that definiendum i.e., a wrong consciousness."*

Remember *definiendum* is that which is being defined such as a wrong consciousness and *definition* is in this case as "knower which is mistaken with regard to its determined object".

Is this a wrong consciousness: an eye consciousness that sees snow mountains as blue?

Student: It's a wrong consciousness but it's due to...

Whatever it's due to, it's a wrong consciousness, right? It's a wrong consciousness and if the definition of a wrong consciousness were something that was mistaken with regards to its determined object, that consciousness would have to be mistaken with respect to its determined object. So the person says "yes, that's ok, it's a wrong consciousness" when you said that it follows that that sense consciousness that sees snow mountains as blue is that definition because of being that definiendum, so they would say *dod* (yes, I accept, I agree).

So if they accept, then: *"It absurdly follows that the subject a sense consciousness that sees a snow mountain as blue is a determinative knower because it was accepted that it is a knower that is mistaken with regard to its determined object. So only determinative knowers (conceptual consciousnesses) can be mistaken with respect to their **determined** objects."*

But: *One can not accept that (that it is a determinative knower) it is because it is a non-conceptual consciousness. This is because it is a sense consciousness.*

So after having posited a definition that is wrong from our point of view it goes on to say:

*Our own system is that the definition of a wrong consciousness is: a knower that engages its object erroneously - wrongly.*

*Second, when wrong consciousnesses are divided, there are two:(1) conceptual wrong consciousnesses and (2) non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses. Examples of the first are a thought apprehending sound as permanent and a thought apprehending the horns of a rabbit.*

What's another one? The thought apprehending my million dollars in the bank, or the thought apprehending Maureen as truly existent

*With regard to the second, non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses, there are two:....*

Is there such a thing as non-conceptual wrong consciousness? Pat?

Pat: No, because we can't realize something that is not true?

A non-conceptual wrong consciousness – what's wrong with that?

Pat: If it's non-conceptual then it's a direct realization, isn't that right?

Wow! It follows that if something is something non-conceptual, it is a direct realization. So it follows that inattentive perception is a direct realization because it is non-conceptual, and it follows that a wrong eye consciousness realizes because of being non-conceptual!

So... not all non-conceptual minds realize their objects. Some direct perceivers such as inattentive perceptions don't realize their object. They apprehend their objects but they don't realize it because they can't induce a remembering consciousness that they apprehended that object.

And then *some* non-conceptual consciousnesses are just wrong.

Student: Mistaken.

No, wrong!

This is a good class tonight. You guys are sharp. Something must be happening.

Student: Wrong direct perception is like...

Is there such a thing as a wrong direct perception? It follows that there exists a wrong direct perception because you have just posited it.

Student: Like when there is jaundice that affects the eye..

That's a wrong **direct** perception? No, it can't be a **direct** perception, because there are only three kinds of direct perception: prime cognition, subsequent cognition and inattentive perception. If it's not one of those it's not a direct perception.

What about seeing the two moons, is that a direct perception. No, that's not a direct perception. That's a wrong non-conceptual consciousness. It's not conceptual, but it's not a direct perception.

For direct perception the engaged object has to be the appearing object, and for a non-conceptual wrong consciousness, let's say a wrong sense consciousness, the engaged object doesn't exist at all. Like engaging two moons; but there is an appearing object – the appearance of two moons.

I might have misspoken the other day – I'm not sure – but I think I probably did. I might have said that the appearing object of that wrong consciousness perceiving two moons is a single moon. That's the referent object.

Let's continue here; *With regard to the second, non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses, there are two:*

*mental consciousnesses that are non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses and sense consciousnesses that are non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses. The first, a mental non-conceptual wrong consciousness is, for example, a dream consciousness that clearly sees as blue the blue of a dream.*

It sees blue in the dream and perceives it as blue.

Not all dream consciousnesses are direct perceptions but Lama Tsongkhapa seems to indicate that there are such and that's probably Purbuchok's thought here - that some dream consciousnesses which are very lucid are non-conceptual and they are not appearing via a mental image but it is kind of hard to understand what that means. In the case of those lucid dreams, we wouldn't call it a direct perception because direct perceptions are not wrong by definition.

What are the divisions of direct perceptions in general?

Student: Prime cognitions, subsequent cognitions and inattentive perceptions.

There were four divisions of direct perceptions in general. What were they? Sense direct perception, mental direct perceptions, yogic direct perceptions and self-knowing direct perceptions, and all of them except for yogic direct perceptions had three divisions. Yogic direct perception did not have inattentive perception because it was always attentive, but the rest of them when divided all had those three divisions.

*The first, a mental non-conceptual wrong consciousness is, for example, a dream consciousness that clearly sees as blue the blue of a dream. Why is that wrong? Because there is no real blue there. It's appearing clearly but it's not existent.*

Student: Why is it non-conceptual?

Not all are dreams are conceptual. There are some dreams (supposedly) in which there is a very clear appearance not via a mental image, that arises in the mental consciousness.

*This subject is a mental consciousness, a non-conceptual consciousness, and a wrong consciousness. Respectively, it is a mental consciousness because of being a dream consciousness - we don't dream with our sense consciousnesses, we only dream with our mental consciousnesses - , it is a non-conceptual consciousness because of being a consciousness that is free from being a determinative knower which apprehends a sound generality and a meaning generality as suitable to be mixed - this is the definition of a conceptual consciousness which we will get to today if we don't run out of time -; and it is a wrong consciousness because of being a consciousness that apprehends its object, a form which is a phenomenon-source, as blue, whereas it does not exist as blue.*

Student: Phenomenon source?

Remember, we were talking before that there were twelve entrances, or sources for the generation of consciousness – the six faculties and the six objects of the consciousnesses. There's the eye faculty and the visual form, the ear faculty and sound, the nose faculty and odour, taste faculty and taste, tactile faculty and touch and mental faculty and object of mind. Those are called "lotanas" (entrances) as opposed to "dhatus". You may have heard of dharmadhatu. Phenomenon source means phenomenon entrance.

Mental consciousness can have a perception of forms, sounds, smells and tastes and so forth, but its exclusive objects are called dharmas, or chö, or phenomena - which is just another way of translating dharma. So it's called "dharma lotana", phenomenon source, and that means the entrance to mental consciousness which is its exclusive object. That's easy.

Let's just quickly go over this section because we just have two more classes after this night and then we'll have a practice day when maybe we can clear up some other doubts.

So there are other divisions of consciousness (page 42).

Up until now we've divided consciousness up into **seven** types . What have we talked about?

Two that were *prime* – what were they? **Direct prime cognizers** and **inferential prime cognizers**; and to understand them we had to define some others, like direct perceivers.

Then there were five that were *not prime*:

**Subsequent cognizers**; and then of the remaining four, of which some were not only *not prime* but some were *wrong* and some were *factually concordant*: **correct belief, doubt, inattentive perception** and **wrong consciousness**.

I've counted seven -sometimes called **the seven ways of knowing**. That was a division of consciousness into seven. There are other ways of dividing consciousness, for instance you can divide it into **two** – **conceptual** and **non-conceptual** – or **three**:

*With respect to the threefold division of awarenesses and knowers there are three parts: explanation of conceptual consciousnesses that take a meaning generality as their apprehended object, - apprehended object and appearing object are generally the same - , of non-conceptual non-mistaken consciousnesses that take a specifically characterized phenomenon as their apprehended object - that would mean like sense direct perception and mental direct perceivers so forth - , and of non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses that take a clear appearance of a non-existent as their apprehended object. So its appearing object is a non-existent. It is the clear appearance of a non-existent. Its referent object exists – the white snow mountain.*

*With respect to the first, explanation of conceptual consciousnesses that take a meaning generality as their apprehended object there are two parts: definition and divisions.*

Now we get into the actual formal definition of conceptual consciousness which we didn't have before other than being alluded to a minute ago.

*First, the definition of **a conceptual consciousness** is: a determinative knower that apprehends a sound generality and a meaning generality as suitable to be mixed.*

This way of phrasing it has been refined over hundreds of years; not everyone would agree with this way of stating the definition but it has a particular meaning.

Do you know what a meaning generality is?

Student: A mental image

Kind of. It can mean mental image. What's a sound generality then? Isn't a sound generality also a mental image?

*The term "sound" of "sound and meaning", refers to a sound generality and the "meaning" refers to a meaning generality. That which apprehends those two as mixed apprehends a collection of those two.*

*There is a purpose for saying "suitable" to be mixed because it is necessary to include conceptual consciousnesses in the continuum of a person who has not trained in nomenclature – names.*

*This is because a conceptual consciousness in the continuum of such a person does not apprehend sound and meaning generalities as mixed, but merely as suitable to be mixed.*

It means they could be mixed, they could be joined.

Student: May I ask what nomenclature is there?

Nomenclature just means terminology, names and words. A cow or a little baby or dogs are not trained in nomenclature. Maybe your dogs and cats are trained somewhat in nomenclature but in general when a cow thinks about licking the salt block it doesn't think "I want the salt block". It has an experiential mental image, a meaning generality of salt block and thinks of it that way and wants to go over there and taste that, but it doesn't have a name to go with that.

Student: So a sound generality is like the labelling...

Well, there are different ways of talking about it. In Geshe Rabten's book, they are called *experiential mental image* and *nominal image* - on page 42 and so forth of *The Mind and its Functions* it says: "The most distinctive element within a conceptual cognition is its apprehension of the object by means of mixing it with a mental image". That's another meaning – the actual object, the appearance of the object and the mental image are mixed; it says "To any conception the object conceived appears indistinguishably mixed together with a subjectively projected image of the object".

That's not the meaning of "mixing" here (in our text).. On the next page (44): "Conceptions based on *experiential and nominal images*"; that's what we're calling , meaning generality and sound generality here. He's calling it experiential and nominal images: "A conception is defined as a conceiving cognition that apprehends its object through of media of experiential and nominal images that are fit to be mixed".

Do you see that as the same definition? Here Purbuchok it says: "a determinative knower that apprehends a sound generality and a meaning generality as suitable to be mixed."

*The Mind and its Functions* : "Generally speaking we define a mental image of an object as a mentally projected entity that, whilst not being the object, appears as though it were. Here, although we have to make a distinction between experiential images on the one hand and nominal images on the other, both of them nevertheless bear these defining characteristics." A sound generality is also a mental image. In general it's a generality that appears to the mind. "Thus experiential images - or meaning generalities - and nominal images - sound generalities- are both types of mental images; their difference lies in the manner in which the object in question has been or is being apprehended. If we have had or are having a direct cognition of an object, then it is possible for us to conceive of it via the medium of an experiential image - meaning generality -...."

Say for instance if Bill Clinton has been described to you but you haven't actually met him, or Dustin Hoffman, of whom people often say that he is much shorter than they thought, and then you have a nominal image due to a verbal description, you do not have an experiential mental image. It is just a nominal mental image, something that has come about because of nomenclature.

Why don't you prepare for next time by reading these sections in these texts, if you have them, and in our text, the sections on these divisions of consciousness and especially the definitions of conceptual consciousness, meaning generality, sound generality and we'll try to iron that out next time.

## Dedication

Let's finish up with a short dedication.

Thinking that all the doubts that have been slowly emerging in our mind, that weren't all there before, but some of which are beginning to get clarified - different kinds of misconception that we have had about the mind - just studying this material and thinking tonight have created some virtuous karma with good motivation, studying the teachings that Buddha himself taught about the field of the mind.

This kind of wisdom can be so beneficial because of the positive motivation I had; it definitely can ripen within cyclic existence as happiness, but let me try to make that incredibly more powerful so that it is not exhausted in that way, by dedicating it to the ultimate goal in the future, my own enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings.

May these merits ripen in that way. May they become the causes to bring about my achievement of buddhahood, becoming a guru-buddha so that I can lead all sentient beings to that same state.

A mind in which all doubts, wrong views and even correct beliefs have been superseded by direct realization; not even inferential understanding any longer but a direct realization of all phenomena. Knowing how to exactly to lead all sentient beings, their needs, their abilities, however long it takes, because some are illuminated immediately but knowing that some need a long period of time.

Dedicate the merits to that goal and seal it within the recognition of the emptiness of the three spheres – the merits and the goal dedicated to and the act of dedication are all empty of being truly existent – especially the self who is the dedicator.

## Session 11

### Meditation

OK. Let's begin with a motivation.

Relax your body and relax your mind....

There are two kinds of obstacles to your concentration: the outer ones – outer sounds and distractions - and the inner ones – the thoughts. Withdrawing your attention inward, focus on the breathing and let go of your attention to outer stimuli, and recalling the value of concentration, let go of your attention to inner ones

All of the problems and worries and desires and so forth that we might have in our mind, from the point of view of ultimate wisdom are empty....

Withdraw your attention to your heart. If you like you can follow your breath from your nostrils to the crown of your head, and then down to your heart. Leave your attention there – your heart chakra - withdrawing your attention away from the outer senses....

Be aware of that which you have begun to see in previous meditation sessions – the nature of that mind behind the varied appearances.....

The mind has no shape or colour, so if you're focusing on something that has a shape or colour, recognize that that is just an appearance within the clarity of the mind. Let go of that....

Try to recognize this clear light nature as our conventional buddha-potential and the wisdom that's understanding that is perhaps more suitable to be imputed as "I" than the sense of "I" that we usually grasp to....

See if you can actually instigate a sense of the ego, the sense of "I", in your mind, thinking of some situation in which you have been accused or in which the ego arises strongly – perhaps anger, attachment - where there is an undeniable sense of self, of "I".... Just watch that and let your mind act in its ordinary way with that. With one part of your mind, just a corner of your awareness, watch how the "I" seems to be appearing and the mind seems to be reacting to that. Is it rejecting that appearance of the "I" or is it actually grasping to it? ....

That "I" which has arisen due to some dynamic situation (anger, attachment or some afflicted state)... that I doesn't actually exist the way that our mind is grasping to it and on the basis of which we engage in other activities; all of our actions mainly are based on this ignorance which out of total unreality creates future suffering for us....

All living beings - even those that like us have a fortunate rebirth, leisure and endowments – still have a mind with some imperfection, either trapped in samsara or not yet having attained enlightenment. All of them have been our mother numberless times, and, like the mother of this life, they guided, cared for us,



educated us, protected us, gave enjoyments numberless time; they are, depthlessly kind, even though we don't recognize them as such... They all want to be happy and free of suffering just the same as we do....

With some recollection, some remembering consciousness of our study of renunciation, that there's no real pleasure to be found in cyclic existence, and with a sense of compassion for all these sentient beings, think, I'm going to participate tonight and continue to practice in this and other lives to eradicate the self-grasping in my mind, the self-cherishing attitude and to do so I am going to study more about the mind, to get more clear in my understanding of it – the laboratory of all my experience. So that I can be more prepared to study and learn about emptiness and other subjects as my wisdom increases, I am going to listen to the teachings to become enlightened for the sake of all living beings ....

Now bring your attention back and relax....

## Teaching

How's everyone? The weather is interesting. How is it outside? Is it hot outside?

Student: It's cold.

The other day someone came and said that outside of this enclave of redwoods it was sunny.

OK. So anyone have any pressing questions? Don has a question.

Don: The definition of conceptual consciousness – could you go over it, with the meaning and sound generality?

What if is said no? Yes, that's what we are going to continue with today. But in your general survey of what we've been going through, are there any doubts or questions? OK

So we've gotten up to chapter four on page 42 – other divisions of consciousness. So what divisions of consciousness have we been talking about up until now? It says other divisions of consciousness as though there is something that we've already been encountering.

Student: I have it broken down into seven different consciousnesses.

So what are those seven kinds of consciousness?

Student: Direct perceivers

Direct perceiver is one of them?

Student: The seven types of awareness?

Yes

Student: Direct perceiver, subsequent cognizer, inferential cognizer, doubting consciousness, wrong consciousness, consciousness not apprehending (ascertaining). What did I miss?  
I think you've got six.

Student: 2 Correctly assuming consciousness

Correctly assuming consciousness, presumption.

So I have a question for you. Theo said direct perception and inference. If you said that, if you say direct perception and inference, which of the other seven ways of knowing or states of mind might be one of those two?

Student: Subsequent cognition.

Subsequent cognition, could it be an inferential cognizer?

Student: Yes

What do you think? Dan? According to these tenets, if something is an inferential cognizer, it has to depend directly upon a sign which is its cause; so a subsequent cognizer can arise from an inferential cognizer, but an inferential cognizer has to be just the first instance, right?

So that wouldn't be an example; but you could have a direct perceiver which is a subsequent cognition because that's one of the divisions of a direct perceiver.

Which other of those seven ways of knowing would overlap one of those two?

Student: Inattentive

Inattentive consciousness, to which an object appears but not ascertained. That would be what? That could be an inferential cognizer?

Student: No, it would be one of the divisions of a direct perceiver.

It could be a direct perceiver. So how about the other ones – the way that Theo listed them? You said direct perceiver, inference, subsequent cognition, wrong consciousness, doubt, correct belief and inattentive perception. Leave off the first two and just talk about the other five – subsequent, wrong consciousness, doubt, correct belief and inattentive perception. Can any of those overlap? Can there be any mind which is more than one of those? For instance, can something be a subsequent cognition and a wrong consciousness?

Student: No

Can something be a subsequent cognition and a doubt?

Student: 1 Yes

Student: 2 No

Why not?

Student: 2 Because a subsequent cognizer is incontrovertible.

A subsequent cognizer realizes its object and doubt doesn't realize its object. It's at two points about something. It's not as strong as a correct belief.

How about subsequent cognizer and correct belief? Can there be something which is both?

Student: It's not incontrovertible.

No, it's not incontrovertible either because a correct belief, although it might be factually correct, hasn't realized its object, so it can't be a subsequent cognizer.

Can something be a subsequent cognizer and an inattentive perception? No, because that doesn't realize its object either, right?

OK so take wrong consciousness. Can any of the others (that are left) be a wrong consciousness? Can a doubt be a wrong consciousness?

Student: Yes

One division of doubt can be a wrong consciousness, right?

Correct belief, can that be a wrong consciousness?

Student: No

Why not?

Student: Because it is correct

As opposed to wrong? It's something to investigate, the exact meaning of correct, but let's leave that for the time being.

Can a wrong consciousness be inattentive?

Student: Yes.

Student: 2 A direct perceiver can be inattentive, right?

In fact, if something is inattentive, it is necessarily is a direct perceiver, isn't it?

Student: 2 Yes

You don't have any kind of conceptual inattentive perception. Although it seems like it could be; like a conceptual mind paying attention to one thought and another thought is there and it's not paying attention to that. But that's not called an inattentive perception, it's only a division of direct perception.

You have to check whether wrong consciousness could be inattentive. It would have to be a direct perceiver which is wrong. You can have some direct perceivers that are wrong or can you?

Student: No

Why not?

Student: Because it's incontrovertible

Do direct perceivers necessarily realize their objects?

No, because inattentive perception is a division of direct perceiver. Does a direct perception have to realize its object?

Student: It's a perception that's non-conceptual and non-mistaken

Is that all it is – an awareness that is non-mistaken and non-conceptual? What is the definition of a direct perceiver?

Student: Knowers which are free from conceptuality and are non-mistaken

Which page? Page 14, right? The definition of an awareness which is a direct perceiver is "*a knower which is free from conceptuality and non-mistaken*". It would be enough to say *non-mistaken*, as we said at the time. So that means non-mistaken with respect to its appearing object but if it not mistaken with regard to its appearing object, does it realize its object?

Not necessarily because inattentive perception is also a direct perceiver. So not all direct perceivers realize their object.

Student: Could you have sense direct perceiver that is a wrong perception?

Not just not realize its object but realize it wrongly?

If it's a direct perceiver it has got to be unmistaken with respect to its appearing object, so when we talked about a non-conceptual mistaken consciousness, we didn't say mistaken direct perception because by definition a direct perceiver is unmistaken. If it is mistaken with respect to its appearing object then it's no longer a direct perceiver and it's called a non-conceptual mistaken consciousness.

The reason I bring this up is that if you look at these seven divisions, usually the first two are not just called direct perceivers and inferential cognizers. They are called **prime** direct perceivers and **prime** inferential cognizers. The only overlap that I see in that case is that one part of doubt which can be a wrong consciousness. Which kind of doubt is that?

Student: Doubt leaning in the wrong direction.

It's thinking the wrong thing - doubt that is leading in the wrong direction, right. Remember, we had quotations that said doubt can be a wrong consciousness, you had to accept that part of doubt could be wrong consciousness. The doubt that is leaning in the wrong direction, even though it hasn't single-pointedly made up its mind about that is the way it is, it is still a wrong consciousness. You might say wrong belief or something like that.

For instance, a doubt leaning in the right direction is not yet a correct belief, right? It hasn't yet reached certainty about its object and there still is two-pointedness about it.

So in the presentation of the seven ways of knowing it doesn't say just direct perceiver and inference, it prime cognizers.

Could there be anything else of the seven that is a direct prime cognizer, rather than just a direct perceiver...If it were direct prime cognizer, could it be inattentive?

No, because if it is inattentive it doesn't realize its object. If you take the first two (direct prime cognizer and inferential prime cognizer) out, which of the others are realising consciousnesses?

Student: Subsequent cognizers.

So those three (direct prime cognizer, inferential prime cognizer and subsequent cognition) are realising consciousnesses. Where would you put just *prime cognizer*? Is there something missing out of the seven, if I call the first one just prime direct perceiver for example?

Student: What is the question?

The way that Theo had set it out: she said that the first one was *direct perceivers* and the second one was *inferences*, and I'm saying if it's that way then direct perceiver can be a subsequent cognition and it can be a inattentive perception, so you have an overlap among these seven ways of knowing.

So then I'm proposing that the first two should be *prime direct perceiver* and *prime inferential cognizer* i.e. the ones that are actually fresh. That would be a neater. If that were the case, is there a direct perceiver that is not included in that because it's not just called direct perceiver, it's called prime direct perceiver. Do you follow, Chris?

Chris: I think so.

So can you give an example?

Chris: Subsequent cognizer would not be prime but it could correct. Yes?

You're right but that's the third division. Any other direct perceiver that's not found in there? Because there were three divisions of direct perceivers: there were prime cognizers; subsequent cognitions and inattentive perception. Both the other two (subsequent and inattentive) are there. Say if we go in order: prime direct perceiver; inferential cognizer (in this case we don't have to say the word *prime*) and subsequent cognition. Then going in order from wrong consciousness to doubt to correct belief and then we throw inattentive perception in at the end. If you put it that way, if you say of the seven ways of knowing the first way of knowing is *prime direct perceiver*, then there's no overlap. The only kind of overlap that you have is between one part of doubt being possibly wrong consciousness. Otherwise everything is distinct.

Do all consciousnesses fit into one of those categories? If I were to say prime direct perceiver, inferential cognizer, subsequent cognition, wrong consciousness, doubt, correct belief, inattentive perception is there anything that doesn't fit into those? (\* this is addressed below, end of the next page: That's one way of dividing

consciousness in an elaborate way. You have to investigate but maybe every kind of state of mind has to be included in those. That why it's called the "seven ways of knowing". )

Usually when you talk about the seven ways of knowing, the first three are *realising* consciousness and the first two are *prime* (when put in this order). So in that way there is not much overlap between them.

Student: You are assuming that the overlap is with doubt... but it really isn't a wrong consciousness....

Why? What's the criterion of a wrong consciousness? Doubt leaning in the wrong direction, for you, is not a wrong consciousness? OK – so take a look on page 40 – a paragraph up from the last paragraph. The last paragraph is talking about the fifth (wrong consciousness), where it says "furthermore .... *furthermore it follows that wrong consciousness and doubting consciousness are not contradictory*".

According to you they would be contradictory, right? If two things are contradictory that means that if it's one thing it cannot be the other. What you are thinking makes a lot of sense and in fact that's why it is brought up, because that doubt, that qualm that you have does arise. It doesn't sound like doubt leaning in the wrong direction would be a wrong consciousness because we have the feeling that a wrong consciousness has really made up its mind. Like a correct belief, which is also beyond doubt but then in the right direction. When you reach certainty you get a correct belief, so what you would like to think of as a wrong consciousness is similarly the next step beyond doubt, where it's reached a conclusion in the other, wrong, direction.

Student: Yes

OK. You could argue that and you wouldn't lose any points in a debate or in an exam, if you explained your position. If you said "according to the tradition that we are reading, it posits of these seven ways of knowing, and it seems that there is a small overlap between doubt and wrong consciousness. In order for them to be separate, I'm positing them to be different – that a doubting consciousness leaning in the wrong direction is not a wrong consciousness.

But then you would have to deal with this quotation, where it says that they are not contradictory: *"this is because the doubt which thinks that sound is probably permanent is both a wrong thought and a doubting consciousness. In accordance with that Kay-drup's Clearing Away Darkness of Mind With Respect to the Seven Treatises says, "The assertion that all wrong thoughts possess an aspect that is definite as a one-pointed mode of apprehension is incorrect..."*

So he is speaking directly to you and directly to us who think that wrong consciousness has to be necessarily one-pointed, has made up its mind: *"because it would follow that the conceptual consciousness thinking that sound is probably permanent would not be a wrong thought," and continues "Therefore, wrong thought and doubt are not contradictory"*

So according to our tenets here, there is a small overlap.

Does that make some sense?

That's one way of dividing consciousness in an elaborate way. You have to investigate but maybe every kind of state of mind has to be included in those. That why it's called the "seven ways of knowing".

You can divide consciousness other ways, just like you would think of a pie. You could divide it up this way or you could cut it rectilinearly or you could cut it from the centre. You can cut a pie in different ways and you can cut up consciousness in different ways too.

A further way of dividing is for example into conceptual and non-conceptual, but first we encounter the threefold division of consciousness in terms of their objects or apprehension: *conceptual* consciousness; *non-conceptual non-mistaken* consciousness and *non-conceptual mistaken* consciousness – and it's always appended with what is their apprehended object: a conceptual consciousness which takes a mean generality as its apprehended object. Apprehended object is a synonym of what? Do you remember?

Student: Appearing object

Appearing object. So if something is taking something as its apprehended object that means it's its appearing object. What's the appearing object of a conceptual-consciousness? A meaning generality, in general - you might say that there are two different things – meaning generality and sound generality but generally, both meaning generality and sound generalities are meaning generalities. When you divide it up, there's a slight difference in what kind of meaning generality or mental image they are.

The second, a non-conceptual non-mistaken consciousness – what kind of apprehended object does that have? It takes a specifically characterised phenomena as its apprehended object. Remember specifically characterised phenomena as opposed to? Christopher

Chris: Generally characterised phenomena

Generally characterised phenomena is synonymous with?

Chris: Conception?

With *objects of thought*; but it's synonymous with permanent phenomenon, that which is unable to perform a function (according to Sautrantika).

Specifically characterised phenomenon is a synonym of impermanent phenomena, and so they are able to perform a function.

If anything is impermanent it is able to perform a function according to these tenets. If anything is permanent it is not able to perform a function (according to Sautrantika). According to the lowest philosophical school (Vaibhasika), permanent things *can* perform a function; they say space can perform the function of allowing things to move in it. Space is permanent, right? Non-compounded space.

The Sautrantikas say "come on, you're missing the point. Its presence, the fact that things can move in it, doesn't mean that it performs a function." According to Sautrantika and the higher schools, if something is permanent, it isn't able to perform a function.

Dorje: ...So emptiness does not perform the function of the development of wisdom....

So according to you, emptiness ,....

Student: Keep the camera running laughs



Yes, Dorje the camera operator let's get a look at you. Come on. All this time you wondered who was behind the camera. Actually in the very first class you saw Dorje's smiling face in the mirror when the camera used to be in the back before, you could see him there. So now you know who Dorje is, all of you who are watching this DVD, years later, in Mongolia or some place else. This is the great Dorje.

"So according to you ..." - this is how they would slightly sarcastically start the debate, to cause the ego of the other person to rise.

Dorje: It absurdly follows....

Well, I haven't thought of a good absurd consequence yet. According to you emptiness has the function of creating wisdom.. So wherever there is emptiness, wisdom should be generated. So out in the outer expanses of space where there is no one paying attention, (maybe the Buddha's mind is perceiving it but not other people), wherever emptiness exists it has the function of creating wisdom? No.

Remember, I told several times that Lama Yeshe used to say "There is nothing special about emptiness. Even kaka has emptiness". Emptiness is very common. It's not something special. What's special is the wisdom that realizes emptiness, right?

When we talk about permanent things, it's worth investigating, because it will come again when we talk about the four noble truths. What's the third noble truth?

Student: Cessation

The truth of cessation. The first truth –the truth of suffering – is that permanent or impermanent?

Student: Suffering or the truth of suffering?

The truth of suffering.

The truth of suffering is impermanent. True cessation, that which is perceived by the arya beings, is that permanent or impermanent?

Student: Permanent

It's permanent, right? Did you know that? But isn't it created? Suffering has its cause. But doesn't cessation also have its cause – the true path? If it has a cause then it is not permanent because when you talk about impermanent/permanent things, anything which is either a cause or a result has to be impermanent because it has resulted from or is the cause of something.

Dorje was thinking that in a sense emptiness is the cause of the realization, because it is the object of the wisdom that is being generated. Or a person might think that because cessation is the result of true paths, it is impermanent.

Is cessation the result of true paths?

When you investigate the four noble truths, you find that it is not the case, although it sounds like it should be and you say "of course, yes, cessation comes about because...." Maureen it seems obvious, right?

Maureen: I thought you were right.

Yes, it seems obviously right. You follow the true path and then the result is that you get true cessations.

The Abhidharmakosa says that there are three kinds of permanent phenomena: space and the two cessations. One of the cessations is true or analytical cessation. These are the only permanent phenomena that are mentioned in the Abhidharmakosa. So we know from the beginning that it is said to be permanent.

Why is it permanent? It is when a delusion has actually been ceased, not just temporarily suppressed through tranquil abiding. Remember, we talked before about how by developing vipassana, at the first jhana you are separated from attachment to the desire realm, maybe you heard that expression “separation from attachment”, it says that that specific attachment is abandoned, but in that case it doesn’t mean abandoned in the sense of not returning, it just means temporarily suppressed. When you have an actual abandonment, what you’ve abandoned has ceased, it is a true cessation; if you have abandoned something by seeing the antidote, emptiness, realising emptiness directly, that affliction is gone from your mind. It is not as though one moment it’s gone and the next moment it’s there again.

For something to be impermanent it has to be momentary, that means it’s there and it changes from moment to moment. Something which is a true cessation doesn’t change from moment to moment.

You might say “well, take the emptiness of this microphone. This is an emptiness and doesn’t that emptiness go out of existence when I break this transmitter. Therefore it’s impermanent, right?” What do you think, venerable?

Venerable: But you have permanents that are occasional.

As the Italians say, “ecola” (there you go)! Remember we talked before that, according to Buddhist understanding, if something is permanent it doesn’t mean that it is eternal. So for true cessations (or a specific emptiness), the fact that they are permanent doesn’t mean that they have to be eternal. It just means that once they are existing, they are not changing moment by moment. Once anger has been ceased, it’s not as though one minute it’s there and then it kind creeps up a little and then it goes down – it’s gone, its cessation does not change once it exists.

True paths are not *actually* the causes of true cessations. When you take a look in the Lam-rim Chen-mo and other texts, and especially Uttarantra, where we define the Buddha jewel, the Dharma jewel and the Sangha jewel – which is part of the first chapter of Uttarantra. Where do you find cessations? Is that part of the three jewels or something different? That’s the four noble truths, and the three jewels are different.

Student: Would it be in the Dharma jewel?

What is the actual Dharma jewel? The text? The realizations?

Student: Would it be the implementing of the truth, the living of the truth?

*The living of the truth.* Sounds like a good title for a movie – maybe not dynamic enough, it would have to be “The Living of the Lie”, that might be a better. *The Living of the Truth* might not sound interesting enough. Or “True Lies”, wasn’t it “True Lies”, that film title ?

If you talk about the Dharma jewel, it has two aspects: true paths and true cessations. Does the Buddha have either of those in his consciousness? Do true paths have to be antidotes to the delusions? If they do then the Buddha does haven't any, because the Buddha doesn't have any delusions any longer. Anyway, you can think about that.

Buddha has true cessations, right? So the Buddha does have the Dharma jewel. Maybe you have to think whether he has true paths. What do you think? Does the Buddha have true paths?

Student: I think he's transcended that.

Transcended that? Let me ask you a question. Is the Buddha a Buddhist? Venerable what do you think? What is the definition of a Buddhist?

Venerable: Someone who accepts the four seals and has heartfelt refuge in the three jewels.

Someone who seeks refuge based on one of the causes. You have to have the cause. You have to have fear of samsara or fear of not being able to help sentient beings. So does a Buddha have refuge?

Student: Buddha is refuge.

Buddha is refuge but is he a Buddhist? That is something you have to think about. There is debate about these kinds of things. Buddha is always the endpoint and is always like an exceptional case. Maybe you can say that the Buddha is the resultant refuge.

When we develop ultimate refuge, of course it is the resultant state, the effect state of buddhahood. So when you attain that state, there's no fear obviously. Maureen, I've stirred some thoughts in your mind?

Maureen: If the true path is not actually a cause of true cessation, then what is the cause of true cessation?

Well, let's look at it the other way. If true cessation is permanent, does it have a cause? What's the cause of emptiness? Is the cup the cause of the emptiness of this cup?

Student: I was thinking that it was uncaused.

It's uncaused. Do we say uncaused? We say it's a non-product. For instance, *something that is caused* is also a synonym of impermanent phenomena. It's *produced* from causes and conditions. We often hear the term *unproduced* when we talk about the qualities of emptiness.

Student: Is cessation like the analogy of the water with sediment that's stirred? The cessation then becomes the clear water, from which the sediment is cleared?

You mean that the cessation was always there? I'm not sure, because in that case, if you are just talking about the settling of the sediment, that would be like a temporary diminishing of the delusions. Like for instance developing single-pointed concentration or developing mundane vipassana, where you separate from attachment and the delusions become un-manifest, like mud sinking to the bottom, but you haven't cleared it away so that it will never rise again. OK, so that's something to think about.

Let's just begin this section again. We said there was a threefold division of consciousness after the seven-fold. There's probably some other one too but this one is famous.

The first one was conceptual consciousness and the definition was “*a determinative knower which apprehends a sound generality and a meaning generality as suitable to be mixed*”. And so Don had said at the beginning “come on, give us a break, explain what this is talking about.” So there are different ideas.

In general you could say that it is a *determinative knower* and that would be enough, but here it gives more qualifications of it. Sense consciousnesses, direct perceivers and so forth are not called determinative knowers. Determinative knower is just another synonym for conceptual consciousness. It knows by determining its object, intellectually – weighing it so to speak. So it’s a conceptual knower that apprehends a sound and a meaning generality as suitable to be mixed.

In one way a sound generality is just whatever appears to your mind when you think of a particular word or sound, or something is described to you. Geshe Rabten, in this book, *The Mind and its Functions*, do you remember what he is calling it?

Student: Is it *nominal*

A *nominal mental image*. A sound generality or a nominal mental image; he says that could be for instance your mental image of Venice by having it explained to you if you’ve never seen it, whereas an experiential mental image – a meaning generality - according to his explanation is that which actually arises from actually seeing, hearing, tasting, experiencing something.

That’s not too far off from the general point of view I think; except that a sound generality doesn’t have to be developed from a description, it can be just when someone says to you “cappuccino” and you don’t know what cappuccino is and that sound generates some mental image in your mind. In fact for you to say the word again, you have to rely on that sound generality to even say the word, to express the sound. So a sound generality can be anything from a mental image that resonates in your consciousness, when the sound is said, to the mental image due to a description. Even if you think you’ve got a mental image that is so clear from being described, that’s still, according to these explanations, a sound generality. It’s a mental image that’s being developed through mere sound and not through your experience. What’s called the meaning generality is based on when you have experienced the actual object itself.

“Those are suitable to be mixed”. That is to say that you can have just a sound generality without a meaning generality mixed with it or you can have a meaning generality without a sound generality – without knowing the name of something. Like a cow has a meaning generality of things around it doesn’t necessarily give names to it.

Conceptual consciousness has the capacity of mixing those two mental images. When you say “this is a cup”, then in your mind the mental image of the word “cup” is mixed with the mental image of the cup itself.

## Tea break

Student: Can I ask you about the causes of cessations? Is that state of cessation already existent and then it’s interrupted by a cause ..when the cause is removed it becomes clear ...

So you’re saying that cessation is already there but it’s interrupted by the delusions.

Student: You said that we could attain a buddha's mind by removing the defilements, right?

Is that true?

Student: I'd say it's true, yes. Maybe I am asking about a different cessation. ...Cessation is brought about by eliminating some affliction by its direct antidote such that that affliction will never come back again. That's actual true cessation. Could you say in that sense that true cessation exists in our mind now and we don't ? Could you say that we are buddhas now but we don't realize it?

Some people do. Some people in the Kargyu and in some other traditions take some of the Buddha's teaching, probably from the Uttaratantra, from the third turning of the wheel of Dharma, and say that we are already Buddha and all you have to do is realize it. There is some profound meaning to that, but from the Gelukpa point of view that's logically untenable. If we were already buddha it would be a mockery, we could say we had the omniscient mind and we didn't know it, we were all-knowing without knowing it.

What is meant is that we have buddha-potential is not that we are already buddha but we have the capacity to become buddha because the ultimate nature of the mind is empty of true existence. Because of that fact, the mind is not inherently limited to the deluded state it is in now, and it can change. If the mind were inherently existent, it couldn't change.

We were talking about this first division (on page 42), conceptual consciousness. It says *"The term "sound" of "sound and meaning", refers to a sound generality and the "meaning" refers to a meaning generality. That which apprehends those two as mixed apprehends a collection of those two"*

It doesn't have to mix the two. It can have just a meaning generality or it could have just a sound generality.

If I say a sound to you and you have no idea of what that sound means – like when Carrie referred to 'grokking' something - there is only a sound generality developed in your mind, until you actually apprehend what it means, isn't it. When we were talking about mental factors for example, in order to know what those words mean you have to actually apprehend their actual state, don't you, within your own consciousness – of what feeling or discrimination or wisdom is. Then you can have a conceptual consciousness which actually mixes the meaning generality and sound generality.

*"There is a purpose for saying "suitable" to be mixed because it is necessary to include conceptual consciousnesses in the continuum of a person who has not trained in nomenclature".* Nomenclature means language – like a baby; when a baby begins to talk, what's the first thing said? "Dada", "Mama" or something like that? I don't know, maybe "Wolf", if they had a dog called "Wolf". So that would be a case that once they were trained in enough nomenclature, have enough language, they can have a mental image of "Wolf" by mixing the meaning of the word and the sound of the name. Before they got the name, they just had the meaning generality.

*"When conceptual consciousnesses are divided, there are three: conceptual consciousnesses that apprehend only a sound generality, conceptual consciousnesses that apprehend only a meaning generality, and conceptual consciousnesses that apprehend both a sound and a meaning generality."*

*An illustration of the first a conceptual consciousness that apprehends only a sound generality is a conceptual consciousness in the continuum of a person who does not know that a bulbous flat-based thing*

*that is able to perform the function of holding water is a pot which, generated in dependence on merely on the sound “pot” apprehends pot.”*

Phew! This is just a sound generality. – “the mental image that is generated in dependence on merely the sound *pot*”. They have some apprehension of ‘pot’ just by the sound “pot” or the description of pot maybe, but they haven’t seen a pot.

The definition of a pot is a “bulbous flat-based thing that is able to perform the function of holding water”. There’s usually another part of the definition – “that which has a flat belly, a flat base and a hanging lip” Sometimes in the debating courtyard they say that that is the definition of a *geshe* - that’s a Tibetan joke.

That’s the famous definition of a vase or as he calls it here a pot, in Tibetan *bumba*. You’ve heard of the famous word *bumba*? If someone asks you for the definition of a *bumba*, you would have to give that i.e. “that which is bulbous, is flat-based, has a hanging lip and is able to perform the function of holding water.” Then, if that person doesn’t know that such a thing - *a bulbous flat-based thing that is able to perform the function of holding water* is a pot, they may realize a *bumpa* is a pot. For instance if I use the Tibetan word *khyi* and say “where’s the *khyi*” and you say “well the *keys* are in my pocket” and I reply “no, the *khyi*” - what is the meaning of the Tibetan word *khyi*? It’s *dog*. So you’ve seen dogs but I say *khyi*, and you would have this first kind of illustration, of a conceptual consciousness that apprehends just a sound generality. Although you do know what a dog is, you are not associating *khyi* with that mental image. They are not mixed. They are suitable to be mixed but they are not mixed at that point.

*“An illustration of the second a conceptual consciousness that apprehends only a meaning generality is a conceptual consciousness in the continuum of such a person who does not know that a bulbous flat-based thing able to perform the function of holding water is a pot which, generated in dependence on merely seeing a bulbous thing apprehends a bulbous thing.”*

They see the pot but they don’t know it’s called a pot. They might call it something else. They might call in “bulbous thing” but they are not mixing it with the name “pot”. Or they could be someone who is not trained in language.

*“An illustration of the third a conceptual consciousness that apprehends both a sound and a meaning generality is a conceptual consciousness – in the continuum of a person who knows pot – apprehending a pot.”*

You’re thinking of a pot by thinking that is a “pot.”

*“What are the sound and meaning generalities of pot?” That appearance which is an appearance as pot to the first conceptual consciousness in the above three illustrations is just a sound generality.”*

So when someone says *pot* or *khyi* and you don’t know what *pot* or *khyi* is, it generates just a sound generality.

*“That appearance which is the appearance of a bulbous thing to the second conceptual consciousness in the above illustrations is just a meaning generality.”*

Like the famous example of the cow thinking of its salt-block. What is it called, what they lick? “Salt lake”? It’s just called “saltlick”. I told that joke before: Salt-lick city ....

Another example is a child seeing their mom or dad without knowing any language yet. It just smiles and knows them because of the conceptual memory of them. While they see them, they know them by just that meaning generality – conceptually – right? They are watching and they have a mental conceptual consciousness at the same time.

*“When either a pot or a bulbous thing appears to the third conceptual consciousness in the above illustrations there is the appearance of both a sound and a meaning generality.”*

Then: *“When conceptual consciousness are divided in another way,”* - which way were they just divided? Into those that apprehended just a sound generality, just a meaning generality or both.

*“When conceptual consciousness are divided in another way, – by means of expression - there are two: conceptual consciousnesses that affix names, and conceptual consciousnesses that affix meanings.”*

OK.

*A conceptual consciousness that apprehends its object within thinking “This bulbous thing is a pot,” is both a conceptual consciousness that affixes a name and one that affixes a meaning. Respectively, it is the first because of being a determinative knower that apprehends its object within affixing the name “pot” to the object the bulbous thing; - that is, it is a conceptual consciousness that affixes a name. It is the second because of being a determinative knower that apprehends its object within affixing - or associating - attributes to a substratum.*

This “bulbous thing” is a pot.

*Whatever is a conceptual consciousness that affixes a meaning is not necessarily one that affixes a name, for a conceptual consciousness that apprehends its object within thinking, “This person has a stick,” is a conceptual consciousness that affixes only a meaning.*

This might throw for a loop. What do you think? It’s not saying that this is a person, this is “John”. It is thinking and it might be using some terminology and saying this person has a stick.

*It is a conceptual consciousness that apprehends its object within affixing an attribute - stick - to a substratum - person.*

Did some of you read the section here? It’s a little bit interesting because Lati Rinpoche gives a different explanation here: *“A thought consciousness affixing the meaning is one which apprehends its object within associating the meaning of a substratum and the meaning of attributes”* – page 131, about two thirds of the way down the page. *“An illustration is a conceptual consciousness that thinks ‘This person is one who has a stick’. The stick is the basis (substratum) and the person is the attribute”.*

It’s the opposite of what is said here by Purbuchok, right? Here it says that the attribute is the stick and the substratum is the person. *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* continues: *The stick is the basis and the person is the attribute, for if you said ‘Whose stick is this?’ the answer would be ‘That person’s’.*

So actually this may go to show that attribute and substratum are just labels. If you talk about a person with a stick, from the point of view of the stick, the stick is the basis and the person is its attribute. From the point of view of the person the person is the basis and the stick is an attribute. This person is the one that has the stick as opposed to some other person. If you’re talking about the stick, the stick has a person.



I'm going to go over that a little bit maybe when we get to the next lesson. I just want to finish today with a little bit about the mental factors. So we are going to go a little bit fast through here, so think about that and also you can read about the affixing meanings and names.

Usually we talk about a conceptual consciousness that affixes a name as the way you actually think when giving a name to something. If you are just having a general conceptual consciousness and you are connecting attributes you may not necessarily be naming something. E.g. "that person is beautiful" - if you're using those words you are giving a name and attributing 'beauty' to that person, but you could also just be associating a basis (a person) with attributes (beauty or ugly or talkativeness or neediness or whatever).

Do you follow?

Tentatively. That's good.

Ok. On page 44.

*Also, whatever is a conceptual consciousness is not necessarily either of those two, for a conceptual consciousness that apprehends merely the substratum "pot" is neither of those two.*

It's not a conceptual consciousness that affixes a meaning nor is it a conceptual consciousness that affixes attributes. Like if you thought "the pot is gold" or "wow, that pot is full" or "that pot is broken", then you would be affixing names and attributes, right? But here, you just apprehend pot and are just thinking of pot. What does it say? "*apprehends merely the substratum "pot"*", it is not affixing either of them. That's something to think about.

*"When conceptual consciousnesses are divided in another way there are two: factually concordant conceptual consciousnesses and factually discordant conceptual consciousnesses."*

This is simple, right?

*The definition of a factually concordant conceptual consciousness is a factually concordant determinative knower which apprehends a sound and meaning generality as suitable to be mixed.*

Is a doubting consciousness an example of a factually concordant conceptual consciousness?

Student: If it is a doubting consciousness leaning towards the correct conclusion.

Towards that which is factual, which is correct? So that's factually concordant? Remember when it said that wrong consciousness didn't have to be one-pointed - does a factually concordant consciousness have to be one-pointed? It doesn't say here but what do you think?

Student: I would assume it would have to be.

So then doubting leaning in the right direction wouldn't be factually concordant even though sound is probably impermanent, phenomena are probably empty of true existence.

So as of yet it doesn't establish it. Maybe if you check in Lati Rinpoche's book. It doesn't give that detail here.

*"If something is an established base, the conceptual consciousness apprehending it is necessarily a factually concordant conceptual consciousness."*

So if you have a conceptual consciousness apprehending something that exists, it is necessarily a factually concordant conceptual consciousness. So what about doubt? It could a direct perception or a subsequent cognizer or an inference, all of those could be it... Oh, no, I'm sorry, conceptual consciousness can't be a direct perception; it could be a remembering consciousness. A lot of things, not just correct belief. Inference also is factually concordant, isn't it?

Student: What's factually concordant?

It means according with the fact. It means kind of true, in accordance with reality. It's not just imagining the horns of a rabbit. A thought that is thinking of the horns of a rabbit is factually discordant and it doesn't accord with reality.

What about a consciousness thinking sound is impermanent which is a correct belief – would that be factually concordant? Probably we would all agree that that is factually concordant, right?

How about the thought that thinks it is probably impermanent? What do you think venerable? Does that sound factually concordant?

Venerable: I don't know whether factually concordant has to be dependent on a certain sign or analysis.

Well then, if it had to depend on a sign or analysis then a correct belief wouldn't be factually concordant. Remember what the definition of correct belief is....There are a lot of different kinds of correct belief, right? The definition of a correctly assuming consciousness was "a factually concordant determinative knower which is controvertible with respect to determining its object". So it is factually concordant.

What about, in the section on doubt? What does it say about this...?

So this is how you would determine what applies, you would go back and check. Is doubt before or after correct assumption?

Students: Before

Page 39: A doubting consciousness "is a knower that has qualms two-pointedly by its own power." Does it give a definition of that which leans in the wrong direction? It doesn't, does it? It just gives the divisions: doubt tending toward the factual, doubt tending toward the non-factual, and equal doubt

So that's something to think about – whether doubt leaning in the right direction is factually concordant.

Would you say a doubt leaning in the wrong direction is factually discordant?

Is conception leaning in the wrong direction a wrong consciousness or not?

It's a wrong consciousness, right? If it's a wrong consciousness, one would think that it's factually discordant. So maybe something leaning in the right direction is also factually concordant but I have doubt about that.

You know what factually concordant means? To accord with the fact, to be compatible/in harmony with reality. So certainly things that are single-pointed, like wrong consciousness or correct belief or inference, are pretty clear – they are either in accord with reality or they're not- but in case of doubting consciousness it is not so clear to me. That would be a good debate that you could have with someone. Try to use different reasons and go to other part of the text, using the section on those.

*"A factually discordant conceptual consciousness is a factually discordant determinative knower which apprehends a sound generality and a meaning generality as suitable to be mixed".*

You asked what an established base is. An established base is just a synonym of existent phenomenon. Remember, earlier we were talking about permanent and impermanent, and Chris was saying that specifically characterised phenomena was synonymous with impermanent, which is synonymous with what? Able to perform a function, product, cause, effect. If it's one of those things it has to be impermanent, right?

Synonyms of permanent phenomenon are generally characterised phenomenon, not able to perform a function, non-product, non-effect, non-cause.

There are many synonyms for that which is existent, like phenomenon (dharma). The word dharma can mean the holy Dharma but phenomenon in general is the same word – dharma. The Buddha perceives all dharmas – that means all phenomena. The Tibetan word is what?

Dorje: Choo-choo???

That's a train Dorje. Now that is an example of affixing a sound erroneously. What's called a choo-choo later is found to be a train. Dharma in Tibetan is *chö*

So there are different synonyms for phenomenon, one of which is established base. Existent is another. If something is an existent, it is a phenomenon, and it is an established base. Object of knowledge – that which is capable of being known - are other synonyms of phenomenon.

I think somebody could make a nice comic strip for this class, with cinnamon (synonym) rolls and "choo choos" ....

*"If something is an established base, the conceptual consciousness apprehending it is necessarily a factually concordant conceptual consciousness"*

*"If something is not an established base,"- If it doesn't exist - "the conceptual consciousness apprehending it is necessarily a factually discordant conceptual consciousness."*

How about the conceptual consciousness apprehending a self of persons? Is that factually concordant?

Student: No

If it is not factually concordant that means the object that it's apprehending exists or doesn't exist? If it's discordant, the object doesn't exist and it's not a phenomenon, it's not an established base and it's not an object of knowledge.

Can a self of persons be known? Self of persons does exist, doesn't it? A conventional self of persons? But when we say self of persons in this context, we are talking about the wrong self. It's not as though there's no Marcie. When we say "everything is selfless", "everything is empty", it is not as though Marcie doesn't exist. There is a conventional existent person called Marcie who is imputed onto the collection of the five aggregates (Marcie's parts) – the body and then the four mental aggregates. That self of persons does exist, when the Buddha said "anatta" (no-self), he wasn't saying that there was no self whatsoever. He was referring to the self that appears when we know Marcie or Chris or Maureen, when once we have given the name Maureen it looks like there's a Maureen appearing from her own side, even though the only Maureen that exists is the conventionally conceptually designated phenomenon that we impute.

Even though it seems so counter-intuitive, and it seems like Maureen is there existing from her own side. That apprehension is grasping to this wrong self, to a truly existing self.

If something is not factually discordant, it means that the object it is apprehending does not actually exist – like the horns of a rabbit or my million dollars. But maybe some day that will be factually concordant.

*"With regard to the second of the threefold division of awarenesses and knowers, non-conceptual non-mistaken consciousnesses that take a specifically characterized phenomenon as their apprehended object"*

What does that mean? Non-conceptual, non-mistaken consciousness – is that necessarily a direct perceiver?

Students: Yes.

Well those are descriptions of a direct perceiver, right? So that doesn't contradict. What kind of non-conceptual consciousnesses are there? There are direct perceivers and there are mistaken non-conceptual consciousnesses like an eye consciousness that see two moons or something. Here it's just talking about the correct ones and another way of saying that would be direct perceivers.

They take specifically characterised phenomena, impermanent things, as their apprehended objects.

*"There are two parts: definitions and divisions. The definition of something's being a non-conceptual non-mistaken consciousness is: a knower having clear appearance that is non-mistaken with regard to its appearing object."*

So a direct perceiver is (remember at the beginning) a non-conceptual non-mistaken knower. Here it says "a knower having clear appearance which is non-mistaken with regard to its appearing object".

Before in that definition of a direct perceiver it said it was sufficient just to say *not mistaken with respect to its appearing object* because a conceptual consciousness is necessarily mistaken with regard to its appearing object.

*"The two, non-conceptual non-mistaken consciousness and directly perceiving awareness are synonyms."*  
So this is a direct perceiver.

*When non-conceptual non-mistaken consciousnesses are divided, - that is when direct perceivers are divided - there are four: sense, mental, self-knowing and yogic direct perceivers. Since these were already explained before, one should know this.*

What are the four divisions of direct perceivers? Do you know Sarah (you weren't here at the time)? I've just enumerated them but see if.....

Oma: .....

Quiet Oma, be a good girl. I know you want to create the karma to have the answer when you are in third grade in another life but.....

Sarah: Yogic

Yogic, yes, but what is the most obvious one?

Sarah: Sense

Sense direct perceivers. What are the other divisions?

Sarah: Mental, yogic and self-knowing

So those are the four divisions that we talked about. If you had sense direct perceivers, how would you divide those? Besides saying five but just if you divided it into three? Prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers and an consciousnesses to which an object appears but is not ascertained.

It's good to remember at least those. Who knows that might be on the final exam.

Student: I'm sorry but I don't understand how you did that.

Slight of hand – laughs.

Student: No, you were talking about the four, then mentioned five and then you said what are the three.

After the four, from among them I took sense direct perceivers and then I said that it itself is divided. Of course you could divide it into the five senses but in another way any sense direct perceiver is of three types: prime cognizer; subsequent cognizer or an awareness to which a consciousness appears but is not apprehended.

But not all direct perceivers have those three divisions, do they? What's the exception? Chris knows the exception.

Chris: Not at this moment.

If I give you a hint. Do yogic direct perceivers have all those three divisions?

Chris: They always apprehend their objects. They are never not ascertaining.....

Right – inattentive. But in general the direct perceivers will have three divisions except in the case of yogic direct perceivers, since it is said they are not inattentive for some reason.

Then on the bottom of the page it says:

*“With regard to the third of the threefold division of awarenesses and knowers, non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses that take a clear appearance of a non-existent as their apprehended object”*

So the apprehended object, that is the appearing object, is the clear appearances of a non-existent. So seeing two moons, what is the appearing object? I’ve spoken about this before. It’s the clear appearance of a non-existent. The appearing object is the appearance of two moons but the referent object (the thing that it is referring to) is just a single moon. The appearing object that is being apprehended is a double moon.

Student: What’s the object of engagement?

In general for a direct perceiver the object of engagement is the same as the appearing object.

How about here? Is the object actually being engaged the same as the appearing object? The appearing object is only imputed in this case. There is an appearing object – the clear appearance of the double moon. What’s the object being engaged?

Students: Double-moon.

Does such a thing exist?

Student: No

So maybe in this case you could say that this is different than a direct perceiver, where the appearing object and the engaged object are the same. Here, according to the way that the text is written, the appearing object does exist, it is the clear appearance of a non-existent. That means that is clearly appearing but such a thing doesn’t exist, like for instance the circle due to the firebrand, where the engaged object doesn’t exist. It looks like you would say there is an appearing object but there is no object of engagement.

Student: So there’s no object of engagement.....?

You could posit the object of engagement. You could say it is the double-moon but a double-moon doesn’t exist. But the appearing object is not the double-moon but it is the clear appearance of a double-moon.

Student: So you are saying that all objects of engagement have to exist?

No, I’m saying that if something is an object in general, that is a synonym of existent. If something is an object in general it has to exist. If something is actually an object of engagement it has to exist but you can still posit as done here. What’s the determined object of conception conceiving the horns of a rabbit, is it the horns of a rabbit? Is that a conceived object? Then you would have to say so it follows it’s an object, therefore it has to exist. But you could posit it as that, being not a real conceived object. So the engaged object here could be posited as a double-moon but such doesn’t exist.

I think the referent object in this case would be the single-moon. The engaged object doesn't exist but is posited as a double-moon. The appearing object does exist as the clear appearance of the double moon.

It's still to be finally decided by your own debate.

*"The definition of something's being a non-conceptual mistaken consciousness is: a knower having clear appearance that is mistaken with regard to its appearing object."*

Couldn't that be a conceptual consciousness? It says "non-conceptual mistaken consciousness". That would be like seeing two moons or something like that.

*"A knower having clear appearance that is mistaken with regard to its appearing object."* So why could this not be a conceptual consciousness? That would be the definiendum, right? For a definition to hold there have to be the eight doors of pervasion between a definition and a definiendum. The definition of a pot is that which has a flat base, fat belly, hanging lip and is able to hold water; if it has those attributes it has to be a pot, and if it is a pot it has to have those attributes, and if you don't have a pot, you don't have those attributes, and so forth. Those are called the eight doors of pervasion.

*A knower having clear appearance that is mistaken with regard to its appearing object.* Isn't a conceptual consciousness mistaken with regard to its appearing object?

Student: But what about the meaning of clear appearance? A conceptual consciousness is apprehending a meaning generality.....

That's right, it doesn't have a clear appearance. It might seem that way in our conception but clear appearance is that which appears to a non-conceptual consciousness. Some dreaming consciousnesses have clear appearance. Some you might think to be clear but they are actually conceptual and you are actually apprehending something via a mental image. So clear appearance is kind of a synonym here for that which appears to a non-conceptual consciousness.

*When non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses are divided, there are two: sense consciousnesses that are non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses and mental consciousnesses that are non-conceptual mistaken consciousnesses.*

That's easy, right? *A sense consciousness which is a non-conceptual mistaken consciousness is: that which is a common locus of being a non-conceptual mistaken consciousness and being produced in dependence upon a physical sense power which is its uncommon empowering condition.*

A mental consciousness which is a non-conceptual mistaken consciousness is *"a common locus - that which is both - of being a non-conceptual mistaken consciousness and being produced in dependence upon a mental sense power which is uncommon empowering condition"*

So that would be like a dream consciousness or something.

So we've divided awareness into different ways: into seven; into three

*And furthermore, with regard to awarenesses, you can also divide them into two: self-knowers and other-knowers.*



What are other-knowers? Are these two divisions mutually exclusive? Dan, do you know what an other-knower is?

Dan: It's knowing something different than a self-knower

That's pretty good. So an other-knower is that which knows something other than its own entity, like a consciousness which is knowing some other object. Actually one part of consciousness could know another part of consciousness but that still is an other-knower. Self-knowers are just one entity of consciousness which knows that it is knowing. Remember when we were talking about self-knowing (*rang rig*).

*The first of these i.e., self-knower and consciousness which is directed only inward are synonyms.*

So this word *rang-rig* (self-knower) – one of the four divisions of direct perceiver – is “that which has the aspect of an apprehender”. In other words, the aspect that is being known is apprehension itself. It's knowing its own ability to know. Here it is says “a consciousness that is directly only inward” and so it isn't outside from itself, knowing others. It's not knowing other objects. Other-knowers are consciousnesses which are turned outwards. It's knowing something other than itself.

*Sense, mental and yogic direct perceivers as well as conceptual consciousnesses are illustrations of the second i.e., other-knowers.*

Can conceptual consciousnesses be self-knowers? Pat what do you think? Conceptual consciousness is one which knows its object by a mental image, and, remember, self-knowers are direct perceivers. A conceptual consciousness can have a self-knower which is knowing it but that self-knower itself is not a conceptual consciousness. It is a direct perceiver, and it is knowing that it is knowing.

So whatever is any of those (sense, mental, yogic or conceptual consciousness) must be an other-knower. So conceptual consciousness itself has to be an other-knower, and a self-knower is not a conceptual consciousness.

*With regard to self-knowers and other-knowers being contradictory”, - are they contradictory? Yes, if something is a self-knower it's not an other-knower and if something is an other-knower it is not a self-knower - “someone might say, ‘It follows that the subject, a self-knower in the continuum of a buddha superior, is not an other-knower because of being a self-knower.’*

OK – you can debate about that. I'm not going to do anything about that right now. Buddha is always a special case. So I'm just going to introduce this next section now (on page 46).

*Furthermore, with respect to awarenesses and knowers there are two: minds and mental factors.*

Minds and mental factors. We say *sems* and *sems jungwa*. *Jungwa* means arisen. *Sems lay jungwa* means arisen from the mind.

*Main - or primary - mind (gtso sems), mind (sems) – citta in Sanskrit - , sentience – or mentality, manas in Sanskrit - (yid) and consciousness (rnam shes) - vijñana in Sanskrit - are mutually inclusive and synonymous.*

*The definition of a main mind or primary consciousness is a main knower that is posited by way of apprehending the entity of its object.”*

So primary minds just know the entity of the object, just the entity of the perceptual field whereas mental factors enter into knowing particularities about the perceptual field. Like feeling is a mental factor within the main mind, it is not something different but is part of the mind. The way that the mind enters into one particular aspect of the apprehended field or sensation is called a mental factor - that is something that has arisen from the mind.

So of the five aggregates, the last aggregate is actually main or primary mind. Do you know that, venerable, about the aggregate of consciousness and the mental factors?

Venerable: It's consciousness.

It's consciousness but can't consciousness be both primary mind and mental factors?

Venerable: It's the main mind, isn't it?

Four of the others are also consciousness, aren't they? When you talk about dividing up the person into the five aggregates, you could say "aren't these others also consciousness, isn't feeling consciousness and discrimination and non-associated compositional factors – aren't those all consciousnesses". Well they are consciousness phenomena. They are knowing, they are knowers but they are not primary consciousness.

Do you know what the five aggregates are? Form, feeling, discrimination, compositional factors and consciousness. So that consciousness aggregate doesn't mean mental factors. It means only primary consciousness. It means the eye primary consciousness, ear, nose, taste, tactile and mental primary consciousnesses – just the entity of those consciousnesses.

All of the factors that can arise within those consciousnesses are called mental factors. They are either feeling or discrimination, and all the other mental factors are included within the fourth aggregate, non-associated compositional factors.

That doesn't fit well, Chris?

Chris: I was just thinking that that sounds like general and specific.

Here there is another difference between main minds and mental factors. Let's say for instance in the ocean; the entity of the waves is still water but they are different, they have particular aspects rather than being just the ocean itself. So the main mind in that sense is like the ocean. The main mind is sometimes likened to the CEO and the mental factors are like a retinue that comes along and they do the particular things.

*When minds are divided by way of entity there are six: from eye perceiver up to mental perceiver. So those are the five physical senses and mental consciousness, right? There are four possibilities between the two, sentience – or mentality - (yid) and mental consciousness (yid shes).*

Do you know in general what we mean when we say that there are four alternatives or possibilities between two things? The four possibilities are, if you have A and B: that which is A **and** B; that which is A **but not** B; that B **but not** A and that which is **neither** A **nor** B. Those are called the four alternatives between two things.

Let's check here. We'll just do the four possibilities between primary mind, or sentience, or mentality (which are synonymous) and mental consciousness. Let's go in the order that the text goes:

*This is because an eye consciousness is a possibility that is mentality but not a mental consciousness; - that's A **but not** B - the feeling accompanying a mental consciousness is a possibility that is a mental consciousness but is not mentality - feeling is a mental factor **but it is not** a primary mind, so the mental factor feeling in a mental consciousness is mental consciousness but it is not primary consciousness - ; a mental consciousness is a possibility that is both mentality and a mental consciousness - it is primary consciousness **and** it is mental consciousness - ; and the feeling accompanying an eye consciousness is a possibility that is neither mentality nor a mental consciousness - It is **neither** a primary consciousness **nor** it is a mental consciousness.*

That's easy isn't it? The trick is that they are playing on the Tibetan word *yid*. *Yid* by itself can mean this word mentality/ sentience and *yid shes* means mental consciousness. If something is *yid*, it doesn't have to be *yid shes*. It can be a primary consciousness and not a mental consciousness.

Student: Is mental consciousness synonymous with mental factor?

No. Mental consciousness is one consciousness among the six consciousnesses and it includes both primary consciousness and mental factors within it. Our mental consciousness can have feeling etc.

So I'll just give the definition of a mental factor: *a knower that apprehends any of the features of its object and accompanies whatever main mind has similarity with it.*

For the next time, if you could read this final section and then the last chapter, about expressive sounds. We have one more class left and then a practice day. Actually we'll have the practice day this Sunday. Right?

Student: Can you tell us what we can expect from the practice day?

No.  
Well, yes, of course. We are going to practice, we're going to meditate. If you bring your text with you, and while we're going to do some different kinds of mediation and try to recognize what consciousnesses for example we have about the Lam-rim that are still doubting consciousnesses and which are wrong consciousnesses and which are maybe correct beliefs; we can try to understand these things from an experiential point of view.

## Dedication

So let's just quickly dedicate.

I don't know if you can dedicate negative energy. You probably can but usually dedication means 'due to this virtue that I've created...'. It's the mental factor aspiration which is in your mental consciousness. In this case it's a conceptual consciousness, wishing that these merits ripen in a certain way. It's stronger than a wish, it's a determination. May they ripen in my achievement of enlightenment for the welfare of all living beings.... Once having done conventional dedication, try to seal in emptiness of the three spheres....

Thank you very much.

## Session 12

### Meditation

So this is our last regular class. The next week we have the examination and we have already done our practice day. So we are going to finish up the text today.

Let's begin with a little motivation....Relax your body and mind....

Remind yourself that all your worries, preoccupations, desires are based on grasping at true existence and are therefore baseless.... Ordinary desires, also desire for enlightenment, they are all imputed desires, even the virtuous ones....

That all living beings like ourselves want to be happy and free of suffering and for their sake we are going to concentrate and try to set a special motivation for our last session. On the basis of your familiarity with watching the breathing, try to set your mindfulness on that – the respiration....

Then bring your attention to your mental consciousness. One part of the mind does the watching of the rest, and observes its nature behind the individual events within it – the thoughts, the images, the emotionally charged moments.....

Let go again and again of any thoughts. If you pay attention to the senses, recognize that they too are just being paid attention to within the clarity of mind. Refocus on that.....

Recall that we have, for a short time yet, a life of leisure and endowment. Buddha actually mentioned in the sutras the difficulty in finding this, its rarity and the great use that it can be put to. Perhaps we're inattentive of that sometimes, it's right there in front of us but we're not paying attention to it.

All of the problems of this lifetime, in the great equaliser of time and of death, will be seen to be very trivial - all the worries and ordinary worldly goals. After this lifetime, due to our karma, we will have to take rebirth either in the upper realms or the lower realms....

As a motivation, recognizing that we have no certainty to be born in the upper realms and motivated by the fear of rebirth in the lower realms, initially taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha based on this, and as we progress along the path, that motivation to take refuge extends to recognizing the suffering of samsara in general, even of the upper realms, the changeable suffering, the all pervasive suffering, and we are enhancing that to Mahayana refuge, recognizing that we don't have the ability yet to really help others. We sometimes are dangerous for them, unskilful, needy. So out of that fear of not being able to help sentient beings, taking refuge in the Mahayana Dharma, the Buddha who taught it, the arya Sangha...

And then think I am going to participate this evening especially as an offering to all sentient beings.....With a fresh mind, listening, leaving imprints in my mind, even if I don't understand, trying to understand, to better develop my wisdom and my compassion, leading to bodhicitta, so that I can even in this lifetime have a sense of practising the bodhisattva deeds and proceed along the path to enlightenment for the sake of all living beings.....

Then bring your attention back.

## Teaching

Dan's just flown in from L.A. probably

Student: I forgot to pick him up

Oh – OK

Dan: My best friend

OK. That's the mental factor of forgetfulness. It looks like I've forgotten my glasses also.

So how's everyone? Any questions?

Student: I have a question about something you went over last week. It was the thing about breaking down between the primary consciousness and the mental consciousness, how you can have the four possibilities – it's either A and B, A and not B..... I understand the principle of either having A and B or just A but you're comparing primary consciousness and mental consciousness but mental consciousness is a part of primary consciousness...

Wait, wait! Is that right – that assumption? Mental consciousness is part of primary consciousness?

Student: Isn't the primary mind the five sense consciousnesses and mental consciousness?

The primary consciousness?

Student: Primary mind

Primary mind or primary consciousness, you can say either. So *sems*... Lets approach it this way: usually we say there are six consciousnesses, right, five sense consciousnesses and one the mental consciousness – so take any one of them, it has two aspects: the primary consciousness and the mental factors. Actually they are one entity – they are not really different things – like the water and the waves you might say. So mental consciousness does have an aspect which is primary consciousness. Just saying mental consciousness would not be specifying whether it is primary mind or mental factor.

Student: Would the sense consciousnesses (be the same)? If you are talking about eye consciousness does that mean you are definitely talking about primary mind?

No, eye consciousness can also be divided into primary mind and mental factors. So the eye consciousness has an aspect which is its primary mind and also it has mental factors within it, within its entity.

Here the word that was being used was mentality. This is the bit we are talking about, right, on page 46. *There are four possibilities....* This is called *mu*, in Tibetan we say *mu shi*. Shi is four. It almost sounds like some kind of, it is Thai food? Oh, Chinese. But they don't say **mushi**, they say **mooshi**; you could translate it as four alternatives or four possibilities. It's a very useful way of checking things.

The four possibilities between two things are: something is **both A and B**; **neither A nor B**; A but **not B** and B and **not A**. Those are the only possibilities that you can have.

So here it's kind of a play on Tibetan words again, because the word *yid* is a synonym of what is translated here as sentience. Sometimes I've seen it translated as mentality, but that almost sounds like mental consciousness. So it's talking about primary mind, in general, it's one of the synonyms for that. (I'm calling it primary mind but here in the text it says main mind.)

So there are four alternatives between primary mind and mental consciousness. Without looking at that page, Carrie, can you give the four possibilities? Are there four or are there fewer than that between primary mind and mental consciousness? Are you clear what the difference is? What is mental consciousness?

Carrie: It sounds to me while reading this, that you experience something and then there's the primary mind's experience of it and then there's something mental arising that happens simultaneously.

When you say something mental arising simultaneously, that's not necessarily what's happening. Any one consciousness has both its ability just to know the general perceptual field – that's called the primary or main mind – whether it be eye consciousness or mental consciousness, and within that consciousness there are the abilities to know particularities or experience particularities of perceptual fields, those are called events that arise from the mind. In Tibetan we say *sems jung*, here translated as mental factors. *Cittana* in Sanskrit. *Citta* is mind, – like in bodhicitta, it's *sems*. And that which arises (*jung*) within or from that mind; it is not like it is a different entity, it is part of that mind.

Just to see how many different kind of possibilities there are (between **primary mind** and **mental consciousness**):

1. If something is a primary mind can it also be a mental consciousness? Are there examples of something which are both a primary mind and a mental consciousness?

Student: Perceiving the cup.

Perceiving the cup?

Student: You see an object and....

This is talking about mental consciousness, not visual consciousness. Chris what do you think?

Chris: Just guessing but would it be like having a conceptual consciousness? Because you have the main mind which is the "arena" and then the concept in that .... I'm not sure.

That's good. Does a primary consciousness have to be conceptual or non-conceptual? It doesn't say. It can be. If a mind is conceptual then you would have to say that the primary consciousness is conceptual; if the mind is a direct perceiver the primary mind takes on the quality also. How about mental consciousness? We know that mental consciousness can be both conceptual or non-conceptual and so Chris' suggestion is that a primary mental consciousness, whether it is conceptual or non-conceptual, just the mental consciousness that is knowing the mere entity of its perceived object, in general, that for our case it is going to be conceptual; so there is a possibility of that.

Student: Wouldn't clairvoyance be a primary mental consciousness?

If you are talking about the aspect of clairvoyance that's just knowing the mere aspect of the perceptual field – yeah. But if you just say clairvoyance, that is not necessarily a primary consciousness. It is a mental consciousness, but it's not necessarily the primary part. You would have to specify: taking for example a clairvoyant consciousness, the primary consciousness experiencing its object, another person's mind or something like that.

So that was something which is both.

2. Is there something which is neither mental consciousness nor primary mind, is there that alternative, possibility? Dan?

Dan: A feeling accompanying an eye perceiver?

There lots of things that are neither primary mind nor mental consciousness. Many objects are. It is not like you have to think much. Like if I asked if there was something which was neither existent nor non-existent - there would be nothing that you could point out that was either non-existent or not non-existent. Right? (Without having to think much.)

Student: Like the horns of a rabbit?

No. Let's say the alternatives were between something that's existent and something that is non-existent.

Student: Are they mutually exclusive?

In general, but it depends on what you say. If you said existence and non-existence, then, does non-existence *exist*? Non-existence *does* exist. I don't know if they are mutually exclusive, you'd have to investigate that. but any *thing which is* existent or non-existent has to be mutually exclusive; but is there anything which is **neither** existent **nor** non-existent? Do you catch what I'm saying? – because I'm just trying to give an example, because I asked before, if Dan could posit anything that is neither primary consciousness nor mental consciousness, and there are lots of things that are neither of those. There is a huge spectrum of things you can choose. But sometimes you might choose two things of which the alternative of being neither of them would be nothing – you couldn't have that alternative. Like when asking the alternatives between existent and non-existent – then there would be nothing which is neither.

3. Is there anything which is a mental consciousness but not a primary consciousness?

Student: Some sort of mental factor

In the eye consciousness; an eye feeling?

Student: Yes

No; mental consciousness but not primary consciousness?

Within the mental consciousness a mental factor. Did you catch that?



Student:2 No

So that was the alternative of something which is a mental consciousness but not primary mind, not mentality, or not sentience. So it would have to be a mental factor because it's not sentience, it is not primary mind (in this context). And since it has to be mental consciousness it would have to be a mental factor within mental consciousness. So think about that.

And then what would the other alternative be?

4. A primary mind but not mental consciousness. Is there any example of that, or is there no primary mind that is not mental consciousness?

Student: A direct perceiver that experiences something but doesn't apprehend it?

Here we're talking about another way of looking at things, where we don't even have to talk about those ways of knowing. We are just talking about a different way of looking at mind – whether mind is a primary consciousness or a mental factor.

You could have something which was a primary mind but not a mental consciousness – what could that be? An eye primary consciousness.

OK, what does it say here? *This is because an eye perceiver is a possibility that is sentience but not a mental consciousness; the feeling accompanying a mental perceiver is a possibility that is a mental consciousness but is not sentience; a mental perceiver is a possibility that is both sentience and a mental consciousness - so it's talking about the primary mind and it is a mental consciousness - ; and the feeling accompanying an eye perceiver is an alternative that is neither sentience nor a mental consciousness - it's not a primary mind and it's not mental consciousness, that is pretty simple.*

OK - on the next page (page 47): *One should know similarly the way of positing four possibilities between the two, sentience – that means primary consciousness - and sense consciousness (dbang shes) .* OK let's try that. Don?

Don: I'm sorry, I'm still grokking some of the earlier stuff...

OK, but de-grok that for a moment, see how flexible you can be, and if you could just leave that and try this one.

**Sentience and sense consciousness;** are there four possibilities? Sometimes there's not four and sometimes there are four.

Don: Primary ..... we could have a mental factor for each one...

Wait, wait. Let's take sentience and sense consciousness.

1. What is something which both? Is there such a possibility? Something which is sentience but also sense consciousness?

Don: The primary eye consciousness its feeling ....???

The mental consciousness of the eye?

Student: Well that's what I was asking – the feeling of an eye perceiver ???

OK It's interesting. We are going to talk about **ever present** mental factors. Feeling is a mental factor, what we might call a sensation. Because a lot of times people think feeling is as in "I have a lot of feelings for you" or something like that, and that's not what is meant. Feeling means either a pleasurable, a suffering, or a neutral feeling and it can actually be present in the senses.

The main thing that we ordinary sentient beings spend our lives seeking are pleasant feelings: pleasure of the body, of being caressed, feeling warm, avoiding unpleasant feeling of the body, feeling sensual pleasure and so forth...

Pleasant tastes; wouldn't you call that a feeling within the taste consciousness? How about olfactory (smell) consciousness; can you differentiate between pleasant and unpleasant smells? Yeah – perfumes and nice things, as opposed to garbage or the dog leaves a little treat on the carpet or something like that. That's not as pleasant. How about ear consciousness? For ear consciousness and eye consciousness, you have to investigate whether we have pleasant or unpleasant feelings within those consciousnesses. It's said that we do, but it's not immediately clear what it means. You have to think about it a little. It doesn't mean, for instance, if you hear "the Dark Side of the Moon" - you know, that album by Pink Floyd – and you go "aaah"; I don't you how you would be going but anyway - would that be a pleasant ear consciousness?

Student: Yeah

You know that album? OK. So that would be pleasant but would that be in the mental consciousness? Of course you could have both alternating, but you would say that it's a pleasant ear consciousness? If it's pleasant consciousness then most sentient beings, most human beings anyway, who heard that should experience it as pleasurable to their ear consciousness. So I'm not sure that everyone not only would experience it mentally as pleasant but also with their ear consciousness as pleasant – you have to check.

It doesn't mean that unpleasant sounds would be like big things where you hurt your ear drums or something like that. There might be some unpleasant feeling in the ear consciousness but that's not the main thing, and that would probably be the tactile consciousness, but maybe like the discordant sound of rubbing a finger nail on the blackboard or something like that.

Also in the eye consciousness; what constitutes a pleasant feeling within the eye consciousness? Maybe you can check this week. Do you have any eye consciousnesses in which you could discriminate the mental factor feeling that was pleasant? It doesn't just mean looking at Richard Geer or some attractive person. I think you would have to do it in your own personal experience.

So sentience and sense consciousness, do they have four alternatives.

1. (continued). So for that which is sentience (primary consciousness) and sense consciousness; is there something which is both?

Yes, primary eye consciousness, primary ear consciousness and so forth.

How about primary mental consciousness? That's not both, because it's not a sense consciousness, right?

2. So is there something which is sentience but not sense consciousness?

Student: I think it's mental perceiver

A mental perceiver; you could say the primary consciousness of a mental perceiver.

3. How about something which is sense consciousness but not sentience?

Student: A direct perceiving eye consciousness?

A directly perceiving ...., no that would be sentience. If you are just talking about a direct eye perceiver you are talking about the primary consciousness. You would have to say *a mental factor within the eye consciousness* or something like that. That would be a sense consciousness but not sentience.

4. And something which is neither sentience nor sense consciousness?

Of course you have many things but let's say something within the realm of consciousness. Is there some consciousness which is neither sentience nor sense consciousness?

Student: A mental consciousness

Which?

Student: A feeling in the mental consciousness

A feeling would not be a primary consciousness and it would not be a sense consciousness, so a feeling within the retinue of a mental consciousness. Right.

Then, how about the four possibilities between exalted wisdom and mental consciousness; oh, that maybe too hard, we'll leave that for the time being.

(page 47) *The definition of a mental factor is: a knower which apprehends any of the features of its object and accompanies whatever main mind – primary mind – has similarity with it.*

So this brings up "has similarity with it". I don't know if it came up in the text yet, it may have come up in some of the debates before. One way of defining a mind and its mental factors in a sort of an oblique way is: a primary consciousness is that which bears five similarities with its attendant mental factors. That is supposedly a definition which is very good for debate, whereas for a meditator you would say that a primary consciousness is that which knows the mere entity of the perceptual field. That's the definition that's given in one of Maitreya's five texts, *Ute Namshe, The Analysis of the Middle and the Extremes*.

So here it's bring up this thing about similarities. We say that a primary consciousness and its mental factors have a relationship of main mind and attendant or retinue. Like the king or queen and her retinue. So the queen is like the principle (like the primary mind) and the retinue always accompanies her, wherever she goes, the retinue is always there. Can I use the word retinue? – attendants. Of course she may sneak out and have a secret meeting, go through a secret tunnel, go off sometime to try and get away from her attendants, but in general she can't separate from them.

So in general a primary mind and the mental factors are never separated. There's not an instance of primary consciousness when there are no mental factors. And they have five things that they share in common - five similarities or five samenesses.

Here it says: *A mind and its accompanying mental factors possess the five aspects of mutual similarity because of having similarity of basis, object of observation* – observed object, *migs yul*, when we talked of observed objects before -, *aspect, time* – duration -, and *substantial entity*.

Mainly the *mental factors* are those aspects of consciousness within a primary mind which are understanding or differentiating some particular aspect of the perceptual field like discriminating, knowing, feeling. All of these different kinds of mental events within a consciousness are called *sems jung* (arisen from the mind) or here it calls them mental factors or you could say that which is arisen from the mind.

As they are within the entity of the mind, they are the same substance of the mind and they have to have the same basis. That is to say for an eye consciousness, the mental factors within it have to arise in dependence on the same basis, which is in this case the eye organ. The primary ear consciousness and its mental factors have to share the same support or basis, that is the ear organ.

How about the mental consciousness? In that case, the mental is organ is what? A previous moment of ...

Student: ...of mental consciousness

Of mental consciousness? It wouldn't have to be a previous moment of mental consciousness. Any previous moment of any consciousness can act as the mental organ.

The feeling within a mental consciousness couldn't be having a feeling about some other consciousness than what the primary consciousness was taking as its basis. The basis here is the previous moment of consciousness.

They both have to have the same observed object (*migs yul*). The mental factor can't be knowing something about a different object than that which the primary consciousness is experiencing. That almost seems self-evident, right?

They have to share the same, or similar, aspect. The Tibetan can mean same or similar.

They have to have the same duration or time. What does it say here? ... *because the accompanying mental factor is also produced at the same time the main mind is produced...* or during the same duration as the main mind.

And they have to have the same substantial entity: ...*because a main mind and its accompanying mental factor are produced qualified by being one type of substantial entity and are not produced as different substantial entities*. Sometimes there are slightly different meanings here; in one of the Abhidharma texts it means just that they are not different substances.

If they were different substances you could kind of take out the mental factors; you could get a kind of strainer or a very fine cloth and you filter the mental factors out. Could you do that? No, they are the same substances. They are one entity. It's not like Chinese soup or something and you could take out the dumplings, the mental factors being the dumplings. They are one entity.

It can also mean in some cases that if the primary mind is conceptual, the mental factors are also conceptual.

Can you have mental factors that are not conceptual? Do mental factors have to be conceptual?

Student: No

Why not?

Student: Actually, I'm thinking right now that if one has a direct realization it's non-conceptual.

Are there any mental factors present?

Student: I'm going over the 51 mental factors

Laughs

Oh you're pretty good. You get extra credit. You're going over the 51.

Student: So my mind is going through the set of the virtuous.

Some mental factors are conceptual and some mental factors can be conceptual or perceptual. There are some mental factors that are definitely conceptual, like anger and attachment and so forth but a feeling can accompany a direct perception and a feeling can accompany a conception.

Can there be feeling within the eye consciousness? We said before that there can.

Can there be feeling within the body consciousness? Yeah - like pleasant and unpleasant feeling. Is that conceptual or perceptual?

Students: Perceptual

That is non-conceptual. It can't be conceptual? What do you think – "oh that's a nice feeling, wow"; isn't that conceptual? But that's not in the sense consciousness, right, that is mental consciousness observing the sense consciousness and feeling, and then thinking that that's nice. But that mental feeling arises because of it, maybe to embellish that. The same thing with negative or unpleasant feelings. Say for instance we get bitten by a mosquito or something disturbs us in some way and then our mental consciousness makes that worse by getting annoyed about it. You don't have to get annoyed about it, do you? That makes it worse and kind of exasperates the problem, right? Could you be possibly even happy about it?

Student: Yes

How could you possibly be happy about it? Give us an example.

Student: In the case of a masochist

How about a bodhisattva?

Student: Feeding a mosquito

Feeding a mosquito. A bodhisattva actually feeling mentally happy even though there's pain.. Or say for instance the example we brought up before, the fellow whose arm was caught under the rock; do you think he felt some pleasure when he was successful in cutting off his forearm?

Student: Not by the account I read.

Student:2 He was glad to be alive

That's what I'm saying. Of course there was a feeling within the body consciousness that was unpleasant and he couldn't overcome that, but his mental consciousness, at that moment when he got his arm out and he could move, even though there was still pain in the body, was his mind happy perhaps?

Student: It might have even happened before that because he realized mentally that he now had a chance even though he was going to have to keep doing this.

Right. So there can be many kinds. It can be something which is merely on the level of survival or it can be someone who is transforming adverse conditions into the path. It could when something adverse is happening, could be physical suffering, or harsh words, which would be something your mind apprehends, but your mind could be actually happy when negative karma ripens in that way and when some kind of suffering feeling arises within your sense consciousnesses. It's possible.

Student: When they use the word *aspect*, how are they referring to it?

There's a difference between the *referent* and the *aspect* in that, say when you refer to something as a referent object, say flower, the aspect that you may be perceiving is its colour or shape.

Student: Or its size

Its size or its value. I don't know; you wouldn't be perceiving that with the eye consciousness but you could maybe with a mental consciousness. You could be investigating and apprehending other aspects of it - its impermanence. You wouldn't be realising the impermanence although the impermanence of the flower would be appearing to you and so it would not be an appearing object in that sense; usually the appearing object is the main object that appears and that would be for the eye consciousness shape and colour. But impermanence and all of the properties of the flower that are one entity with it, are appearing simultaneously; all the impermanent ones are appearing to the eye consciousness but they are not necessarily apprehended, because eye consciousness cannot apprehend impermanence, etc. They are kind of like of appearing objects but they are not actually called the appearing object because the appearing object is synonymous with apprehended object and you don't apprehend impermanence with the eye consciousness.

Student: Yes, I don't even think that the eye consciousness....you are not even aware of impermanence, it doesn't have this aware in consciousness.

Actually a Buddha's eye consciousness actually can perceive the subtle impermanence of phenomena.

Student: Well that is speculation!

Alright! That just speculation.

Student: Couldn't the eye consciousness perceive gross impermanence though? Like if you see a piece of paper go up in flames...

What you have perceived is a change of colour. With your eye consciousness you have perceived these different colours at different moments. Your mental consciousness make sense of that, I think, but I don't think you're apprehending....

Student: There's the raw data and the mind is making some sense....

*Vasubandhu's Treasury of Knowledge (Abhidharmakosha) says: ...synonymous.* The word synonymous is not part of that sentence. Sometimes one word runs into the next verse, so that's the end of something else. Then: *Mind and mental factors have five aspects of possessing similarity* - primary minds and mental factors, we talked about that.

*When mental factors are divided, there are fifty-one* - Not fifty two! Are there fifty two mental factors? No! Aren't there numberless, aren't there 84,000.....

Students: That's illnesses

84,000 delusions.

How many of the fifty-one are delusions? Twenty-six, right? Because there's six primary or root delusions and twenty secondary.

So if we take out the twenty six how many are left? So you would have to say that there are 84,026 mental factors at least. When Buddha talked about the mental factors these are the primary things that he talked about. Although there may be other aspects or qualities of mind, these are the principle things that Buddha talked about.

So we talk about the five *omnipresent mental factors (kun dro nga)* *Kun dro* means always going – they are always functioning or omnipresent. *Nga* means five.

So those are present in any consciousness which is sort of awake. At a time of sleep discrimination may not be fully present, may not be manifest within the consciousness. Feeling may be not be fully qualified there. Or at the time birth or the time of death, when the mind is absorbing or evolving, not all of these five omnipresent mental factors will necessarily be present, but for the most part any kind of consciousness that we would be debating about in general would have these five. So these are:

- *feeling* – this is the one we were just talking about a minute ago which we could call *sensation*.
- *discrimination* – sometimes translated as *recognition* or *discernment*; I like discrimination, I think when we investigate what that means *discrimination* is quite a good one
- *intention*
- *mental engagement* – sometimes translated as *attention* but maybe that could cause you a headache, having intention and attention, then which is which? They are actually quite similar.
- *contact*.

Is *contact* a mental factor? What is contact? What's the mental factor contact? It's not like the contact you feel when you touch, it's not that kind of contact.

Student: Is it engagement?



No, it's a coming together of the consciousness and the object and sense base such that the sense base is then empowered to work. That's called contact; it is a factor within the consciousness that then allows the consciousness in the succeeding moments to experience feeling, discrimination and the other things. They always have to be preceded by contact. If there is a lack of contact, say the eye consciousness is not in the eye organ, then there is no contact, and if there's no object there is no eye consciousness. What would you say, in a completely black room, is there eye consciousness?

Student:1 Sure

Student:2 If you close your eyes and kind of like rub your eyes you kind of see something.

You do. You see Bjork.

It might be that seeing black could still be the eye consciousness, but after some period of time and if there is not stimulation then maybe the eye consciousness recedes away from that, somewhat like sleep, and you wouldn't even be noticing the eye consciousness. But at first if you are out in the dark and you are trying to see something there would definitely be some object. There would be *contact*.

Let's take a little break. Let's have some contact with some tea, some feeling in your taste buds – and then we continue in a moment.

## Tea break

Let's go over some text here:

*However, it is not definite that these omnipresent mental factors must exist manifestly, because at times such as the occasion of the subtle mind of death, or the time of just having made the connection to one's next rebirth, i.e., having just entered the womb or when absorbed in an equipoise of cessation, some of these – feelings and so forth – merely engage their object in a dormant manner. In a non-manifest manner. So they are not always manifest but in general they are going to be manifest.*

*With respect to the first from among these, feeling, there are two parts: definition and divisions.*  
So again, *feeling* here means what you might call *sensation*. In Tibetan we say *sor wa*, in Sanskrit *vedana*.

*First, the definition of feeling is a knower that is distinguished by being that which experiences.* So the special quality of the mental factor of feeling is to experience, pleasure, that which is unpleasant or that which is neutral or equal (equally between the two).

*Feeling and feeling aggregate are synonymous.*

*Second, when feelings are divided, there are three: two-fold division, three-fold division, and five-fold division.*

*With respect to the first, the two-fold division of feeling, there are the two: physical feeling and mental feeling.* I forgot to look it up in the text, but I think it is *lu sor*, physical feeling, body feeling, and mental feeling. Even though it says physical, it refers to all of the feelings, the eye, ear, nose, taste and tactile mental factor feeling, within any of those consciousnesses, those are called physical or body feeling.

Student: I don't understand how the eye can have feeling other than by touching your eye.

I think if you got hit with something or someone stuck a finger in your eye or a piece of dust or a fly flies in; that feeling is not the feeling within the eye consciousness, that's within the tactile consciousness, right? You have to check but there may be feelings in your eye consciousness, certain things that are soothing to see, certain colours that actually give rise to a pleasant feeling with the eye consciousness. That's something for you to investigate. Certainly we recognize, like Sister Theo brought me this very nice tea that I find pleasant on my tongue consciousness(my karma is such) because she's very kindly put some milk and sugar in it but it's also got some mango?

Sister Mango

Mango flavoured... Of course my mental consciousness also judges that and can exaggerate. Sometimes as an object of observation – just to observe what is being experienced – you can experience something because it is the ripening of our karma - either pleasant, unpleasant or neutral - within any of the senses. But I agree; the ear and eye consciousnesses are more subtle to recognize what that feeling is. It's not just seeing a beautiful babe or guy at the beach or something like that. That's not necessarily eye pleasure. Maybe it's called eye candy, I don't know.

Student: I've you're married that's all it is.

That's all it is.

Student: Even if it's something like a delicious cup of tea, isn't that still the mental consciousness because someone else might hate tea. I have friend who hates chocolate – that's like crazy.

How can he hate chocolate! Sometimes you can overdose... Say for instance you've eaten chocolate so much and you get sick of it and then someone brings you more chocolate and you are forced to eat the chocolate. You are in solitary confinement and all they give you to eat is chocolate. So maybe you would get to the point where it would not longer be experienced pleasurable. But that's not uncommon – different things, according to your karma or the situation, can be experienced as pleasurable or unpleasant but the individual sensation at that time is either pleasurable or unpleasant. Maybe they have a grudge against chocolate and they don't want to eat it or they might have some mental reason for not liking it but there may be some pleasure...you have to check; how much of it is mental satisfaction but there is some pleasure within the sense consciousnesses. Certainly some things are for the tactile sensation what we consider to be pleasant. Rough feeling is unpleasant and so forth.

Student: Objective pleasure and pain

It's not really truly existent. Well, according to Sautrantika, it would be truly existent but it's ripening and the main way that karma ripens on our aggregates is through the experience of feeling.

Student: I've had the experience from light hurting my eyes. Is that the experience of feeling within the eye consciousness?

I'm not sure. That's what we were talking about before; whether it's a loud sound or a bright light.

Student: No, it doesn't have to be a bright light just maybe at middle intensity or less.

Just some light. Poor guy ...I don't know. There are things that you have to check. How can you know what the feeling is? You have to check in our own observation (whether you call it meditation or whatever) whether something is actually pleasant to your tongue or nose consciousness. Some things, even if you don't know what they are, you haven't sought them out, you just say "Wow, that smells nice. What is that?" Don't we say that? Of course that's a judgment immediately, after, in our mind consciousness but that mental judgement is based on some kind of experience, isn't it? It based on some feeling within the nose consciousness.

Let's go on here.

One way of dividing is into physical and mental feelings. The Buddha said that actually what is stable and long lasting and more important are mental feelings. His Holiness often mentions this in teachings – if you spend your life always trying to find physical feelings (good taste, sensual, sexual satisfaction, good food, warmth, clothes, food, pleasant smells) that doesn't lead to long term satisfaction. What really is satisfying is our mental feelings, when there can be mental pleasure. And what is more tiring and more disturbing is mental unhappiness – unpleasant feeling within the mental consciousness, we could call that unhappiness.

Physical feeling which is *feeling which is a sense consciousness and external feelings are synonymous*. It's just another way of calling that – external feelings.

Mental feeling which *feeling which is a mental consciousness and internal feeling are synonymous*. We call them external and internal feelings but it doesn't mean feelings somewhere outside. It means a feeling with respect to external objects, that are different from your consciousness.

*Also, there is a two-fold division of feeling into materialistic feeling and non-materialistic feeling.*

Do you remember this Venerable, from so time ago? It's synonymous with contaminated feeling and here it says: *The first i.e. materialistic feeling and contaminated feeling are synonym. The second non-materialistic feeling and non-contaminated feeling are synonyms.*

Are non-contaminated and uncontaminated slightly different in English? Some words can be both or they sometimes are different, when they have "non" or "un" before them.

Student: Could one refer to one that might have been contaminated at one time?

Maybe, you could check.

Here uncontaminated feelings are feelings within the continuum of a person who is not grasping at those feelings as truly existent. I think later the text says within the continuum of an arya, maybe... Aryas have not necessarily eliminated all grasping; I don't think all of their feelings all called uncontaminated – I may be wrong. In general the Buddha's feelings are uncontaminated and an arhat's feelings are uncontaminated because they are not grasped at as "oh, that feeling is great", as truly existent feelings; they recognize them or they are not grasping at them as truly existent, even though appear as truly existent, even feelings appear to be truly existent..

Student: Does that mean that until we realize the wisdom of emptiness that everything that we feel is contaminated?

All our feelings are contaminated feelings and therefore they give rise to the afflictions. Until we realize the emptiness of phenomena and the emptiness of the feelings, they can give rise to the afflictions; pleasant

feelings give rise to attachment, unpleasant feelings give rise to one of the variations of anger/repulsion, wanting to be free of that, and neutral feelings give rise to continuity of ignorance. It's said that contaminated feelings are the cause of the afflictions arising – one of the causes.

So then the most important division is threefold. *The three-fold division of feelings is into the three, pleasurable feelings, painful feelings, and feelings of equanimity.*

We all know what those feelings are. If you stick a needle in your finger, in general that's not pleasurable, right? If you get cut. Is it a pleasure for you?

Student: I'm an acupuncturist.

Oh, I shouldn't say such things..if you place a very thin needle it can be very pleasurable right? OK, I try to think of something - if you get stuck by sowing or something like that or you step on a nail or something like that ...

So why do they call it equanimity and not neutral feeling. Well because this is the word *equal* and in Tibetan it comes in three different contexts.

So whatever is pleasure or pain is necessarily feeling but if something is *equanimity* it is not necessarily feeling because there are other meanings and uses for the word equanimity. For instance, there is equanimity which is a neutral feeling, and there is the virtuous mental factor which is called equanimity which is once you've developed a very high state of concentration and you no longer have to apply effort to engage the antidotes to sinking or excitement. If you still exert effort and are vigilant and watching if there's any scattering of the mind or if the mind is sinking when you don't need to, that can prevent you from actually attaining single pointed concentration – final full tranquil abiding. So at that point you have to learn to let go of that and that action of letting go of the vigilance is called equanimity. That is a mental factor which is included among the eleven virtuous mental factors.

There is also immeasurable equanimity, devoid of desire and hatred. Sometimes the translations say devoid of desire and hatred and partiality. Is that a correct translation? Maybe if it would say free of partiality such as attachment and hatred, because it's not free of three things; the partiality is referring to being close to some out of attachment and distant to others out of sense dislike or hatred or whatever.

We had two-fold division of feeling – physical and mental or materialistic and non-materialistic feeling. We had a three-fold division and now follows the five fold divisions of feelings into: *pleasurable feeling, mental pleasure, pain, mental displeasure, and the feeling of equanimity.*

That covers both equal feelings of body and mental feelings. Pleasurable feeling in these five refers to physical pleasure and mental pleasure refers to just mental pleasure. Pain refers to physical pain, not just of the body but of the eye, ear nose, taste or touch. Mental displeasure or unhappiness refers to the unpleasant feeling within the mental consciousness. It doesn't divide it up into six but puts equanimity down for both.

*Whatever is mental pleasure is necessarily pleasure....*OK, let's see if you can catch this. Who's really sharp tonight? Pat are you really sharp?

Ok let's try anyway.

*Whatever is mental pleasure is necessarily pleasure but is necessarily not the pleasure that is within the five-fold division of feeling.* Why is that? Because in the five-fold division of feeling, if you just say pleasure, it means physical pleasure. So although mental pleasure is pleasure it's not the pleasure of the five-fold division.

If you had the three-fold division of feeling: pleasure; pain and equanimity, mental pleasure would be that pleasure but not in the five-fold division, because the body pleasure and the mental are separated there. Mental pleasure is pleasure in general, the pleasure of the three-fold division, but it is not the pleasure of the five-fold division because that refers only to physical pleasure. That's pretty simple.

Student: Let's go back to the three-fold division. Are you saying that equanimity is basically the lack of pleasurable feeling and the lack of painful feeling?

It is an actual feeling. For instance right now if I ask you about the tip of your nose – can you feel it? Not with your finger, but by just putting your attention to the tip of your nose.

Student: I can bring my attention to it but I can't feel it.

You're sure you can't feel it. Maybe that's an example of neutral feeling. If our sense consciousnesses are alert, then there will be feeling, but a lot of the time the feeling that we are experiencing, like in the ear lobe right now, are neutral. There are times, when you get a fever, that your ear lobe might feel hot or unpleasant, but do your ears every feel pleasure? Maybe when Carrie gives you acupuncture in your ears or you have a massage, or Theo has put some essential oils on your ear, maybe it feels physical pleasure in your tactile consciousness of the ear. I'm not talking about your ear consciousness but just about the ear lobe or ear or something, not your ear consciousness.

Most of the time our feelings are neutral and it may be that we are inattentive of those. Maybe if someone specifically asks you if you are feeling pleasure or pain, and at that point and you say no - I don't know if that would constitute an actual observation of neutral feeling. You have to investigate that, whether you have to actually recognized that and you were unambiguously feeling some neutral feeling. That's generally what it means. It is a feeling, because there is always feeling there.

*The latter four omnipresent mental factors, discrimination, and so forth, are to be known from the lower and upper Knowledges that is, from Vasubhandu's Treasury of Knowledge and Asanga's Compendium of Knowledge (Abhidharmasamucchaya).*

The two brothers Vasubhandu and Asanga wrote these two famous texts on Abhidharma. The *Abhidharmakosa* was written by Vasubhandu and Asanga wrote what we call the *Mahayana Abhidharma (Abhidharmasamucchaya)*. It wasn't like a brotherly competition, they wrote them for different reasons. The fifty-one mental factors that we are talking about mainly come from the upper Abhidharma (*Abhidharmasamucchaya*).

I think one Theravadan monk actually translated it into French and if you speak French you might be able to find that translation of the *Abhidharmasamucchaya*. Is it in English also?

Student: It was translated by Poussin – the French monk

Is it published? Good. If you could share with me where I could get that, it would be a nice reference.

Student: Barnes and Noble

Barnes and Noble – ok

Student: That's where I got mine.

I can just imagine big Al when he was in grade school. He must have been a real handful. How old are you, 39, 40, 42?

Al Yeah

Something like that. OK I know you are serious.

So in this text it doesn't go over the other mental factors of discrimination and so forth and so Mark and the rest of you will have to wait for the *Minds and Mental Factors* course to go into detail about that.

The next group of five are called the five what is sometimes translated as *ascertaining mental factors* but some scholars have said that this not a good translation because they don't ascertain. Ascertaining consciousness usually refers to a conceptual consciousness. These mental factors can be present when something has been ascertained or they can become the cause of ascertainment. So there are sometimes called the *five ascertaining mental factors* or something similar to that.

So those are called:

*aspiration* - that's kind of like wish or desire.

*belief* - or appreciation is another way that that is translated.

*mindfulness* - now we get to the ones that are more clear.

*stabilization* - stabilization means this word samadhi.

*wisdom* - that means prajna.

So these are present, usually, in mental/conceptual activities but different scholars have different ideas as to whether they are present in the sense consciousness or not – you have to check.

Here it says:

*Aspiration aspires to or seeks the object.*

*Belief engages that object joyfully.* It's a mental factor which has previously experienced something and wants to seek it. In fact it is one of the things that helps to develop mindfulness - the appreciation of something and wanting to seek it.

*Mindfulness apprehends the object of observation and the aspect.* Here it says apprehends but maybe we could say *holds*.

*Stabilization abides one-pointedly and.*

*Wisdom analyzes individually.*

*The first i.e., that aspiration aspires to or seeks the object is established because aspiration ('dun pa), wish ('dod pa), and seeking (don gnyer) are synonyms.* So it is seeking or desiring or wishing.

It is different than the mental factor of attachment. This aspiration is might be confused as attachment by someone who wouldn't know, but this one does not have to be deluded. In fact there are two kinds of aspiration that are present with bodhicitta. Do you know what the aspiration in bodhicitta is?

Bodhicitta is a primary mental consciousness but it is accompanied by the mental factor of aspiration toward enlightenment and it is caused by the aspiration to free sentient beings from suffering.

*Thus, if there exists an aspiration that seeks a certain phenomenon, effort for the sake of that phenomenon is begun.* It's sometimes said that *aspiration* is like Saddam Hussein's "Mother of all Wars" ; it's like the mother of all effort comes about from desire or aspiration. When we study how to develop single pointed concentration, first you have to develop some aspiration for those qualities (faith can help to do that also). Then that can lead to actual effort in developing it. Otherwise, without desire, without aspiration, you are not going to engage in any kind of effort.

*The third group of mental factors – the eleven:*

There are eleven virtuous mental factors which Theo has memorised. Here the primary one is *faith*. Is faith a mental factor or can it be in a sense consciousness? Can you have virtuous mental factors in the sense consciousnesses? Venerable? Can your tongue have aspiration that chocolate should be coming. Can it have aspiration? Can your tongue consciousness aspire?

Sister If you see a deity, not with your eye but just out here, would that be part of the sense consciousness?

You don't see them with your eye consciousness?

Sister: No, you do.

I thought you said you don't

Sister: No, you see them walking across the room or something like that. Would that be your sense consciousness?

You guys have such great experiences. I don't' even have good dreams and you see deities walking around your room. That's great.

Sister: I didn't say I saw them. I said what if you did see them.

Oh I see.

Sister: Would that be your eye consciousness that saw them?

I general when people have visions of deities, it may be that there are some that are sense consciousnesses. If it's not experienced by others then that may be not sense consciousness. I mean it might be sense consciousness but that is very rare.

Lama Tsongkhapa had a direct vision of Manjushri; and Sakya Pandita had a direct vision of Manjushri. Actually what they experienced was perhaps slightly different, according to their nervous system, Manjushri might have appeared slightly differently. But maybe that was a mental appearance.

It might be in some cases that it can be something perceived by the sense consciousness but that is not generally the case.



Sister: OK

So there are eleven mental factors and if you have a chance to do the course on *Minds and Mental Factors*, we will actually go through each of these and their definitions and divisions both from the lower and upper Abhidharma – very interesting.

So those are:

faith,  
shame,  
embarrassment,  
non-desire,  
non-hatred, } the three roots of virtue  
non-ignorance }  
effort, perseverance  
mental pliancy,  
conscientiousness similar to shame and embarrassment,  
equanimity the one we just talked about which is the desisting from engaging in the antidotes.  
non-harmfulness synonymous with compassion.

These are *virtues by way of turning away from their opposites, non-faith, and so forth. Thus, they are called the “eleven virtuous factors” and are a definite enumeration.*

*However, faith in that which is not an object of faith, such as demons, and so forth, and effort in the direction of non-virtue are imputed faith and effort, but not actual faith and effort. Since this is so, it is necessary to distinguish these.*

For instance we might think that we know a business man who has so much *joyous effort*. He works day and night, but what he or she may be doing is accumulating money or power or something like that - making effort for non-virtuous objects is not necessarily *joyous effort*. If your aim in accumulating wealth is to have the leisure to practice the Dharma, to help others and also to share that with others then that's not necessarily non-virtuous, but sometimes it is out of just non-virtuous desire and so forth.

What have we talked about so far? The *omnipresent mental factors*, five, those that are present when you determine an object (*object ascertaining mental factors*) and eleven virtuous mental factors.

Then there is the two groups of afflictions. We say kleshas or delusions. There are six root delusions and twenty secondary afflictions or delusions.

The six: *desire which is that, i.e., a root affliction*, - actually what she translates as *desire*, we usually translate as attachment, in Purbuchok's text it's actually *dod chags* which means attachment and not just *desire* which is like a synonym of *aspiration* above - *anger, pride, ignorance, afflicted doubt, and afflicted view*. Sometimes *afflicted view* is divided into five kinds, then you have the five afflicted views and the five afflicted non-views. The non-views would be attachment, anger, ignorance, afflicted doubt and pride.

Notice jealousy is not there. In tantra sometimes we don't talk about doubt, we talk about jealousy, right? It has a different reason for being in that list of five there, but in the sutra tradition when we talk about the six root delusions, jealousy is not one of them. Jealousy is one of the twenty secondary afflictions.

You could translate this word *klesha* (Tib: *nyon mong*) as disturbing conceptual minds. That's a basic quality of the *klesha* or root afflictions; the basic characteristic of *klesha* is something that disturbs the mind and takes away its ability to discern things properly and clearly.

*Whatever is either desire or ignorance is not necessarily a root affliction for these occurring in the continuum of a bodhisattva superior are not root afflictions because they are diminished in capacity, like poison overcame by medicine or mantra.*

What does that mean? Venerable do you know? In an *arya bodhisattvas'* continuum it is said that ignorance and the attachment are not root afflictions. Have you ever heard that before? Why would they not be root afflictions?

Venerable: Because an *arya bodhisattva* has overcome the ignorance believing in true existence.

The *arya bodhisattva* doesn't have any more grasping to true existence?

Student: He still has appearance of true existence

He or she doesn't grasp true existence? Until they attain the eighth ground or Mahayana arhat, still they are eliminating, so there is still some grasping but on the path of seeing when one becomes an *arya*, one overcomes what one calls the *twelve link's ignorance*. So the strength of the ignorance grasping to true existence is no longer strong enough to create new throwing karma. It can still create negative karma but one no longer creates the throwing karma to be born in the lower realms. I'm not sure if you can create karma to be born in the upper realms, something I have to check.

So maybe that's what is being referred to here; that the strength of the attachment and the ignorance are such that they are no longer technically called afflictions, in the sense that perhaps they can't karma to throw you into one of the three lower realms.

Are all the afflictions necessarily non-virtuous? Attachment is not non-virtuous?

Student: Attachment to buddhahood or helping others is not non-virtuous

Even attachment to one's guru or to enlightenment or to helping others, if you actually check what the meaning of attachment is, that would also be an affliction in general.

Student: It was worth a shot

It was worth a shot.

Just being attached to one's guru can give rise to anger if someone criticizes your guru or you can be jealous or so forth. Lama Yeshe used to explain how one should not even be attached to the Buddha or one's guru although at first that might seem to be a very virtuous state.

But not all of these afflictions are necessarily non-virtuous. For instance ignorance – grasping to true existence – is always present in our continuum even when we create virtue. It is called *contaminated virtue* because it is accompanied by ignorance grasping to true existence. So not all of the afflictions are non-virtuous but other than ignorance, they probably are non-virtuous. Ignorance can also be with non-virtuous minds but it doesn't have to be.

Student: In here it says that external distractions are wholesome

External distractions are wholesome? What book are you reading. What page ????

Student: Page 161.

It says “of distractions there are six kinds. External distraction; all wholesome states of mind within the realm of desire such as learning, reflection and so forth have this quality...” It means that they can distract the mind. I don’t know where you’ve come to this - ..... “it arises whenever the mind is unable to remain directed outward towards a wholesome referent for a sustained period of time” ...That means that wholesome states of mind within the desire realm are susceptible to distraction. It doesn’t mean they are distractions

Let me just try to finish. We have only got a couple of minutes and for auspiciousness we just want to finish the text even though some parts we didn’t go so much over.

So then the fifth group is the twenty secondary mental factors which I won’t enumerate. You can read them there. They are close to or secondary to (*nye nyon* in Tibetan) the primary delusions.

Then there is a final group of mental factors: the four *changeable mental factors* which can be virtuous or non-virtuous depending on the situation. Here it says *sleep, contrition, investigation* and *analysis*. For *contrition* you could say *regret*. For instance, if you regret virtue then that is non-virtuous and if you regret non-virtue then that is virtuous. So it depends. If you investigate how to cheat on your income tax or something that can be non-virtuous and if you investigate how to help sentient beings then that can be virtuous. The same thing with analysis. Sleep also can be virtuous or non-virtuous depending how you motivate beforehand.

Then it says: *Ancillarily, with respect to the mode of asserting tenets, Vaibhashikas, Sautrantika Svatantrika Madhyamikas, and Prasangikas* - leaving out Cittamatra - *assert that direct valid cognizers are limited to three: sense direct perceivers, mental direct perceivers, and yogic direct perceivers.*

There are three groups here - the Vaibhashikas, one kind of Sautrantika, and the Prasangikas – who don’t accept self-knowing direct perceivers. Only the Sautrantikas, the Cittamatrins and Yogachara-Svatrantika-Madayamikas accept self-knowing direct perceivers.

*The Sautrantikas assert that whatever is a direct perceiver is necessarily a non-mistaken consciousness, but the Cittamatrins do not, for Cittamatrins assert that a sense direct perceiver in the continuum of an ordinary person apprehending a form is a mistaken consciousness.*

Because for Cittamatra, their tenet is that there are no external forms existing as separate entities from the mind apprehending them. So my eye consciousness perceiving this cup as an external object is a mistaken consciousness. The other schools do not accept this.

And here, this is interesting:

*The Sautrantikas assert that whatever is a direct perceiver is necessarily a non-mistaken consciousness, for they assert that a sense direct perceiver in the continuum of an ordinary person apprehending a form is a non-mistaken consciousness.*

Well that's not so amazing. Where's the part that's interesting? Here we go:

*Sautrantikas and Cittamatras, as well as Svatantrikas, assert that direct perceivers are necessarily free from conceptuality,*

Do the Prasangikas accept that?

Student: Obviously not otherwise....

Ah very quick. You see she knows how to take the tests. "Obviously not or otherwise you wouldn't have asked me". But sometimes I fool them and I am crafty and I ask something the other way around, so you have to be careful.

So the Prasangikas say that if something is a direct perceiver it doesn't have to be free from conceptuality. This is going to throw you for a loop. Generally a direct perceiver is free from conceptuality, right. For the Prasangika if something is a direct perceiver it doesn't have to be free from conceptuality.

*They Prasangika assert "incontrovertible knower" to be the definition of "prime cognizer"; that subsequent cognizers are necessarily prime cognizers; that among direct prime cognizers there are both conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses; and so forth.*

The Prasangika says that a valid or prime cognizer doesn't have to be new, it just has to be incontrovertible. They say that prime or valid means realising the main object. They also say that subsequent cognizers are necessarily prime cognizers. If the newness doesn't have to be there then just realising the object is sufficient and then subsequent cognition is also a prime/valid cognizer for the Prasangika.

*And then:.... that among direct valid cognizers there are both conceptual and non-conceptual consciousnesses; and so forth.*

How do you get that? How can have a direct prime cognizer that are conceptual? Can you grok this?

This is a very nice text – Jeffrey Hopkins' *Meditation on Emptiness*. The worms have eaten it a bit over the years. I hope that they have absorbed some of the knowledge. In this edition, on page 704, it is talking about different kinds of awareness. It says "a direct valid cognizer is not for the Prasangika necessarily a non-conceptual consciousness. The word direct merely eliminates dependence upon a sign or a reason. Therefore the second moment of an inferential consciousness is no longer inferential but is direct for Prasangika..."

Does that make you feel good?

"...in that it perceives its object without relying on a sign"

In fact our tenets are very strong – Purbuchok is very strong – in saying that the second moment is no longer an inferential cognizer but is a subsequent cognizer. The Prasangika take it another way and say that it is now a direct perceiver even though it is conceptual. There is no contradiction for Prasangika for something being direct perceiver and conceptual.

Let's just for the sake of completeness mention the final section here which one could spend a lot of time on but we don't have much time at all – *expressive sounds*.

Why are *expressive sounds* here? What are *expressive sounds*? Are they subjects or objects?

Remember in beginning of the texts, there were objects and subjects. This is kind of the subject matter of the text – subject and objects – right? Subjects are those things that have objects. How many different kinds of subjects were there?

Student: I think there were three.

Right. So expressive sounds is one of the three divisions of subjects. How do they possess objects? In that they designate particular objects. Persons possess objects in different ways, consciousnesses possess objects in that they have objects that are perceived by them - that they are aware of.

*With respect to the third, expressive sounds, there are two parts: definition and divisions.*

*First, the definition of something's being an expressive sound is: an object of hearing that causes the understanding of its own object of expression through the force of nomenclature.*

What does that mean – an object of hearing? It is a sound, and it causes the understanding of the object which it is expressing through the force of names – the force of some kind of nomenclature, or language we could say. Although the sprinkling of the rain hitting the pond might give some profound meaning to you but in general that is not an expressive sound. It is not meaning to express something. It could be, in the pure lands, where the trees rustling are expressive sounds because they are actually motivated by the omniscient mind. But in general nature's sounds are not expressive sounds, they are not motivated to express anything.

*When these are divided by way of entity, there are three: names, phrases, and letters. The definition of a name is: an object of hearing that causes understanding of its own meaning. When these are divided, there are two: actual names and designated names.* This is kind of useful to know; actual names are the names that were originally imputed to things and designated names are names that are later given to them. For people we sometimes call them nicknames. But it can be over time that the actual names of things change in any one language. You know the original name wasn't liked for some reason and that's discarded and a designated name becomes the actual name that is accepted by people as that thing – a secondary name for the object.

*An illustration of an actual name is speech calling the king of beasts a "lion."* That means saying that that animal over there is a "lion". "Lion" is an actual name according to this. Whereas if you call it the "king of beasts", that would be a designated name.

There are different ways for designating names:... *names designated by reason of similarity and names designated by reason of relationship.* This is pretty simple. You can read this and be totally amazed and fascinated by this but we won't go into that right now.

*With respect to the second of the threefold division of expressive sounds, the definition of a phrase is: an object of hearing that indicates meaning by joining substratum and attribute.* So a name was like "lion" and a phrase is like ...*"alas products are impermanent, subject to production and disintegration"*

And a letter is: ...*a vocalization that is a basis of forming the two, names and phrases. Illustrations of letters are the thirty letters, ka, and so forth.* In Sanskrit there are thirty letters, it says here e.g. *ka*. When we say the alphabet we say you have to learn your “abc’s” right. In other languages they have a similar thing, you have to learn your “ca, ka, ga”.

So we’ll leave whatever else is significant here for auspiciousness. We won’t even talk about it. Sometimes the lamas leave texts unfinished to create the karma to meet again and study it in more depth later.

I think we did a good job and I think you’ve learnt a lot and next week we will have an examination at this time – same time, same station and if you want to during the week between now and then to see any past lessons just see me and I’ll try to arrange for the television to be up here and we can borrow the DVD and catch up.

Student: Aren’t you going to tell us what to study....

Ah, ah. Not even a hint. It’s only that it’s going to be easy for most of you and it’s more difficult for Clayton who was only here for 20% of the time but being very brilliant he may surprise us all.

I think you’ll find it doable and you won’t be like completely biting your nails but there will be some questions that are challenging and some that you’ll find quite easy.

## Dedication

So let’s dedicate the energy that we’ve created not only tonight but during this course.

All of you came every week, giving up a lot of other activities and pleasures, with the intention of finding real peace of mind and to be able to help other sentient beings. We’ve created lots of virtuous energy and we’ve left imprints of the Mahayana teachings and learned a lot of vocabulary that can help us to understand further teachings.

So think of these virtues as something that although they don’t inherently exist, somehow we can tangibly identify. We’ve created virtuous roots in our continuum and they will ripen within cyclic existence as contaminated happiness, but I can actually direct them by my wishes, by what the Buddha called dedication, the strong mental factor aspiration, that these merits ripen in a particular way, not just praying. Dedication is a kind of prayer but prayer doesn’t necessarily think that because of these merits may these take place. Prayer can just mean “may all sentient beings have happiness” or “may this happen.”

Dedication is trying to link up these virtuous root with a particular result. So think: may they not ripen merely in my samsaric happiness but when they ripen may they always be causes for my continual spiritual practices in this lifetime and future lifetimes, benefiting myself and others, along the spiritual path, developing good qualities but eventually, definitely leading to the highest good for sentient beings that I can achieve with my merit; the achievement of enlightenment through which I am no longer a problem for sentient beings but a total benefit. I’m part of the solution.

That I can lead spontaneously, with an omniscient mind, sentient beings out of suffering and ripening their minds over whatever number of lives are required, knowing their aspirations and their abilities and out of great compassion I wish these merits would bring that about, so that all living beings can be benefited because of this work that I have been pursuing.

Due to these merits may I quickly achieve the enlightened state of a guru-buddha for the welfare of all sentient beings.

Seal that dedication in the emptiness of the three spheres. Let go of your grasping to the karmic seeds as truly existing. Actually not only let go of it but perceive them as non-truly existent and the object dedicated to, the aim of enlightenment, as well as act of dedication (which includes the agent – ourselves) are merely imputed by mind, and although functioning are not truly existent, not findable under analysis within their bases of designation. Illusion like.

Even though these illusory like merits are dedicated to the illusory like goal through this illusory like merely imputed dedication, they still function and can give the result of their intended goal.

Thank you very much.



## Session 13 – Practice Day - part 1

Prostrations: Om Namō Manjushrīye, Namō Sushrīye, Namō Uttama Shrīye Soha

### Meditation 1

So let's begin with trying to set a motivation and engage in some of the meditation that we will be doing today.

Relax your body....Relax your mind....

Relax, and as it says in the sutras many times, place your attention on the breathing first, as Buddha himself did, as an example, to calm the mind....

Go further than watching the breathing and recognize when you are breathing in and when you are breathing out and particularly at the end-points, try to keep your attention....

Notice how difficult it is even to keep your attention single-pointedly on the breathing – even with a relatively easy object. So put a little more effort, to begin to let go of your wandering and distracted mind....

When the mind is beginning to get a little bit settled the respiration is becoming more shallow and settled. Withdraw your attention inward to just your heart. You can imagine bringing your consciousness down from its usual seeming abode behind the eyes and feeling like a little tortoise withdrawing its limbs,, imagine bringing all your attention to your heart and withdrawing it away from the other senses simply to watch the mental consciousness and its contents....

To orient yourself, you can recognize first of all that this is the mental consciousness, of the six consciousnesses. It has both primary and secondary parts, minds and mental factors, and the aspect of the mind is simply knowing the mere entity of the object - the perceptual field – this is the primary mental consciousness within which the mental factors arise....

As yet, this kind of observation of the mind, just watching the entities within it, part of the mind watching the nature of the mind itself, all of this is as yet intellectual, it is conceptual - although the mind is capable of knowing things with direct perception....

Direct perception is qualified by having a very clear appearance, no longer knowing its object via a mental image....

Try to let go of your attention to the thoughts themselves, those thoughts that have their own particular conceived objects – the appearances of things. Let go of those and instead take as your primary focus, your referent object, the nature of the mind which, you can think, would be clearly appearing if we could perceive it directly but for that we have to develop a mental image of first of all, of the clear light nature of the mind....

Remind yourself that it's not the eye consciousness that you are paying attention to, nor the ear or tactile consciousness, and withdraw your attention away from those as much as you can, by focusing just on the contents of the mental consciousness....

All the minds that feel dissatisfied, either because you are not getting what you want, or you are being forced to experience what you don't want, or are separated from what you want, these are all are mental consciousnesses. So let go of their focus; whatever they are focusing on, try to see the nature of the mind within which they are arising, as like a vast ocean or a vast sky....

The nature of the mind is the clear light that we are talking about; the clarity having several different levels of meaning....It's clear like un-obstructing space, in that whatever thought arises within the mind can do so unimpeded without impediment, without obstruction. And likewise, any thought can be removed from the mind....

Let go again and again of the apprehension of the body....

Of the eye and ear consciousness and so forth....

This clarity of the mind is like a clear mirror also, in that the mind is reflective, it has the capacity of giving rise to the appearance of whatever dawns upon it....

Mind like mirror, mind like space, clear light....

Letting go of other avenues of thought, also recognize your understanding of the function of the mind, which is to be aware, to know - because you are experiencing this clear light with awareness, with knowing. The defining characteristic of mind, as we have learned, is that which is clear and knowing....

Whatever arises, even if your mind is distracted to something, recognize that it has occurred within the spaciousness of the mind and could only have appeared and been cognized if the mind were clear and knowing, and letting go of the attention to the distraction, just perceive the consciousness that apprehended it and its nature of clear and knowing....

Even the dualistic sense of an observer that is different than mind itself dissolving away....

Recognize this as the conventional nature of your mind....

And remembering, although we have a life of leisure and endowment, we don't often recall that mind. Recognize its great value. This life that has the clarity of mind, endowed with wisdom to pursue meditation, pursue the spiritual path....

I don't have to be attached or desirous all the time; I don't have to be angry, I don't have to be confused, I don't have to be depressed....Like the great meditators of the past who saw beyond the affairs of this life and began to hold them as less important than their spiritual development, I can recognize the value of this perfect rebirth, its rarity and how it is quickly decaying....Every angry moment, every confused moment, still it's decaying and the opportunity to practice Dharma is disappearing....

Judging by my uncontrolled mind the chances are that I will not immediately experience another human rebirth unless I put some concerted effort into protecting myself from a lower rebirth... And knowing, from before, that the Triple Gem is sole protection from that - not money, not friends, not the pleasures that I

have accumulated and have the resources for, not my fame or praise... Even worldly gods and spirits that teach provisional paths that might bring us some good luck because we please them, or limited spiritual beings that know paths to liberation are not ultimate objects of refuge.... Think that the Dharma – true cessations, true paths – is what can really protect me from suffering, through a direct realization of emptiness... All the subsidiary realizations of the path that lead up to that can protect my mind from suffering to some degree. They were taught out of experience and not just out of philosophical investigation and invention. They were taught by the Buddha through his own self-realization and the Buddha himself instituted the community, the Sangha, in order to support that practice....

He taught his first five disciples who become arya beings first of all and then arhats - the first Sangha.....

Recalling that all of the pleasure, fame and ease of this lifetime is not real pleasure; in fact it can be seen as disastrous, as *dhukka*, as unsatisfactory, because of its illusion-like quality, being contaminated happiness....

The nature of changeable suffering: even from the very moment it appears is not real happiness, it is merely the diminishing of one discomfort by coming in contact with something contaminated which will give rise to more suffering later – recognizing this more and more....

Understanding that the nature of cyclic existence, while we still have a contaminated body and mind, under the influence of our karma and without control, is that we will suffer. That we are in *samsara* and that all living beings are in exactly the same situation, whatever pretence they might make of understanding, of control....

Sentient beings, until buddhahood still with varying degrees of contamination, stains of the mind.....

So going beyond the label of friend, enemy and stranger, just seeing the same buddha-potential within all living beings, and just as we wish to free ourselves of suffering, wishing to free all minds of suffering....

Think: I am going to participate today in the special practice day; today is very close to the celebration of the day when Buddha himself reached enlightenment, when he entered in the womb and passed into *parinirvana*, and I am going to practice today, to get closer to that goal of enlightenment, awakening, so that I can most skilfully avoid harming myself and others, totally and actually being without any needs of my own, and spontaneously and skilfully, with all necessary power, bring about welfare in the perfect way for sentient beings.....

And relax and bring your attention back....

## Teaching

So how's everyone? Big day! How was your meditation, Karen? (no response) Like a trick question or something – 'What does he mean?'

First of all when we do the breathing meditation, do you have any doubts or questions about that?

Student: No

Are you able to focus on the breathing to the exclusion of everything else?

Student: Yes; in my mind there are thoughts, and then I'll pull it back

OK.

Student: When you talk about trying to be with the breath and being aware of that place, I find myself in kind of a rich place and I want to stay there and kind of holding there and then I'm fighting that.

Yeah, that's interesting. It's kind of like a rich location and you don't want to leave. It's kind of like going to grandma's house at Christmas and parents say it's time to go home and you go "I want to stay".

It's good that you are able to actually pay attention to that end-point because often when the breathe is moving and the mind is paying attention to that, it seems like you can apply some effort because there is something to apply your effort to, but when it starts to slow down, just at the endpoints, it's very easy for the mind to be distracted to other thoughts.

One of the benefits of putting special effort there is to get in touch with the attachment or the longing that wants to stay, because that's what happens in our lives a lot, isn't it? Say our kids were a pain when we had to change their diapers and then they reach a certain age and we'd like them to remain at that age all the time - is there some similarity, maybe? - but then they change and want to go out, and mom or dad are seen to be a pain. So we want to hold on but everything is changing; so you can recognize that following the breath reflects all of the impermanent phenomena that we encounter; and it can help you to have an insight into that.

Even this very pleasant current situation is going to change; I've got everything together now, I've got my little room, I've got my car, my job and a little bit of balance. It's very easy to be attached to that but there is nothing to hold onto - that will go too.

I don't mean to make you feel bad Maureen. You've got your nice room and...

One of the subtle distractions of mediation, of concentration is a kind of attachment to the meditative state and wanting to remain in that because of relishing the pleasure. Venerable do you find that sometimes? One might say "Well that's good isn't it. I like meditation". But that can also be a hindrance to the actual meditation because you are relishing that particular state, tasting that, relishing that and it's a subtle kind of attachment. It's good to recognize that.

Then just to observe. Here what we want to do first of all is to be mindful of the breath with also some attendant wisdom that's recognizing - first of all it's analysing a little bit because the mind is moving here, just a little bit: this is exhaling, now it's inhaling and now it's just reaching the end and just changing (this is the point where it's subtle); then occasionally if the mind gets distracted to remind yourself that this is the nature of all phenomena.

When you breath in, you think that this is like giving birth. So there's some meeting – like with a newborn child in a sense - and then there's a period of a seeming abidance, after having grown, there's some period till the end of the breath and then subtly, even at the moment that abidance takes place then actually its beginning to disintegrate, it's going out.

Although at first it's like when the sun reaches the zenith during the solstice the path of the sun in the sky is more or less the same because it's like a wave. It doesn't radically start to change until a little bit later.

During the solstice the path is high in the sky and the next day it's almost the same and just a little bit lower. Later during the equinox the days are changing more radically and the path of the sun changes more from day to day. The days get shorter or longer more rapidly day by day. Right at the peak things look like they are abiding but actually they are changing but they are changing very slowly and we don't notice it yet.

Carrie: Listening to that, I was thinking that one of the things I noticed this time was how hard I grasped to the things that came up; how quickly I grabbed on to and how hard I held on to that peace when a thought would come up. And then I watched a couple of things and then I went "ah what made me go there" and then I'm following the little things that make me follow and I watch.

Does anybody notice the actual subjective state, not just the thought but how the mind, because of a particular thought, may remain in some particular state? Did you notice that Dan? Attachment or sort of being pleased or being bombed out. (Is that a good word: "bombed out"? Why is it a good word? Because it's a bad state - it well describes it, it's a good word in that sense.)

Any particular subjective states that you noticed coming up? What could we say – confusion, depression, doubt, fear, discomfort.... wisdom? Maybe I should say more positive ones and you would be more inclined to share – faith, confidence, bodhicitta-like courage....

Don: No, today it kind of struck me that the thoughts that come up and which I have kind of challenges with, I kind of am those too.

You're those thoughts. Don is a thought. So what does that mean – "Don is a thought"? That's kind of interesting. Would you agree Maureen? Oma is agreeing – Don's nothing but a thought. In a certain sense, when we talk about the highest philosophical view that phenomena are merely imputed, so their only conventional existence is one that is imputed upon their bases, does that mean the thing is a thought, that Don is a thought? Thought is mind, right?

Don: I think I exist and function, but usually if I take one of my thoughts and try to trace back and say where it comes from, it usually ends up being something that is involved with my ego, and if I keep boring down on that, it is just sort of, all of that is just a ripple in my mind.

How about the experience of watching the clear light nature? Anyone have any particular experience or insight or doubt or difficulty as we are doing that again and again?

Student: I keep waiting for that to appear or something.

Should it just appear? What do you think? Venerable, what's your experience? You've meditated on the Mahamudra that his Holiness has taught many times.

Venerable: Let it just appear? I'm not sure. I think what I try to do sometimes is to make it more than it is, you know - to think that it's not enough...

So to kind of project something more, from your own mind.

Venerable: Although you are in a state where everything just flows and everything is ok and everything is just as it is, but it seems to me that maybe I don't get enough into it. I always try to make more of it than what just appears....

So in the Mahamudra teachings, when it talks about watching the nature of the mind - this is one of the sources for this kind of experiential meditation that we have been doing to watch the conventional nature of the mind, it comes from those teachings - it mentions to stay in an un-contrived state and without thoughts. First of all without contriving and, as Venerable was saying, without making it more than it is; But what we have to recognize, and through the study of Lorig I think you can recognize, is that initially it is not the actual clear light nature of mind, what we are developing is a mental image of that. Through observation that the thoughts can come and go; we can develop a mental image of the nature of the mind in the same way that a person in darkened room would develop some kind mental image of the obstacles in front of them, and after a long period of time they might recognize that this was flowers.

Have you ever watch the Stephen McQueen movie about being in prison?

Student: Papillion?

Is it Papillion where he is in solitary confinement and he walks around in the dark and knows the exact configuration of the cell?

Student: - Five steps

Five steps of walking. His nose could just reach the wall and he'd know it exactly even without touching it, because essentially there is a mental image of that, that has developed through experience.

So although you don't want to contrive the mental image, at first maybe we do contrive it, and thinking of the mind as space maybe some help. Later to let go of that and just trying to experience first of all just without any contrivance what is happening within the mind, and to notice that different thoughts arise, and then based on the teachings about the mind, to recognize that these thoughts could only arise if the mind is unobstructing.

And one begins to develop a feeling for that – the unobstructed nature of the mind – it has no boundaries, it has no configuration, it has no colour and those observations of its non-qualities in addition to whatever qualities it does have, one starts to develop a mental image of the mind – this space-like quality that you are focusing on, and when any thought arises within that you can start to see that as actually affirming that clear light nature, because of the fact that it is appearing, like a face appearing in a mirror.

And as soon as that arises you can train in it; instead of focusing on the objective thought using that to trigger, through your familiarity, the understanding that the mind is reflective and clear by nature. So instead of focusing on the particular individual mental event and getting distracted by that and getting into it, which then causes other emotional states – anger or discomfort or whatever – to arise, just to see that event as reaffirming the clear light nature of the mind.

What do you think, Diane? That's more or less what you do? I mean that it's nothing's new, and that it is more or less what you understand meditation to be like?

Diane: I've heard all these things before but I don't think that's happening in my practice.

Student: It seems to me like there should be some kind of light there and I'm actually waiting for this light or something. It says pure light and I keep looking for this light, you know. I keep expecting something to

happen that is maybe a revelation or something. I keep expecting something to open up there that is clear light. I don't know.

Maybe there is some light there. The same word "clear light" is also used in the esoteric teachings in tantra, without going into detail about that. It is mentioned at the end of the death process, when all gross minds absorb, the subtle-most mind becomes manifest, visible, and the nature of that experience is one of luminosity and clarity, like the light of dawn. Like sitting on a hill at dawn and just before the sky filled with the colour of the sun, and the sky is completely clear of dust, like after the rainy season in India, after the monsoon when all the dust is gone from the air – as though you could see forever, that kind of feeling.

So that might be the kind of luminosity. It's not like something blaringly there, or fluorescent.

Student: Robert Thurman says that in clear light you tend to look for the brightest light, like a strobe light or something; you want to have the brightest light and you don't want to have this little light. I don't know, maybe I'm confused about what to expect.

Well it is said that if you could eliminate the sense of darkness from the mind, since that darkness itself is a projection of your mind and not the nature of the mind. So maybe that will help. You can say "This darkness is arising within the clarity of my mind, which is like a clear space" and let go of the darkness and see if you can perceive just the fact that the mind has to be reflective and un-obstructing. We say clear light, in order for this darkness to appear, to just let go of that again and again.

Dan: did you have something that you were going to ask?

Dan: As for what you were saying before, for me, I just seem to get a sense of space but it's so filled with things. When I try to meditate in some way the ego just goes crazy and there's all this activity. It seems like whenever I try to meditate, it's almost like my ego is scared of something. But I see it. When I meditate I feel almost tired sometimes from this constant trying to calm and hold back from that activity and yet there's a process going on where I am seeing it happening. Then I get a sense of space somewhere – there's a benefit...

You start to get a sense of clarity with these birdlike, vulture-like or maybe more dovelike activity in it. Like the example I gave of being at the aquarium. Do you remember the example I said? Like you were taking me to the aquarium and there was a big glass wall of a tank and on the other side fish and seaweed and rocks and you'd say "George look at the water and how clear it is" and I'd say "what water I don't see any water. I see fish, sharks and other things". That's because of not recognizing water, because its clarity is subtle and because of the fact of constantly watching the events within in. The mind is such that if you let go of your attention to the thoughts they will begin to dissipate. In the aquarium if you let go of your attention to the fish, although you can begin to focus on the clarity of the water, the fish are still going to be very prominently there, they don't begin to disappear, whereas in the mind, if you don't give them any attention the thoughts will begin to dissipate, like clouds can dissipate in the sky.

The main thing is that what prolongs those objective thoughts within the mind is our giving energy to them. If you can learn in formal meditation that technique of letting go again and again, that's one way to reach that quiet state in which you can have a less contrived experience.

As Venerable was saying we recognize that it's still a contrivance. And even that mental image of that space, recognize that that itself is a thought/a mental image, whether its light or dark or different colours such as bluish. Let go of that again as you've been doing with other thoughts and try to recognize the



continuity of clear knowing within which that is actually allowed to arise, and let go of that again and again. It's a little bit like with Jiu-jitsu – letting go.

Carrie: did you have a question?

Carrie: Well, just that the thought of focusing on the white light seems to me to be even more of a projection – you're creating a mental image and you're creating a projection.

The meaning of light here is something that is the sense of the clarity of the mind. In the definition that we have in our text that mind is *that which is clear and knowing*, the word is *sel wa* and it's not like light as in light-rays or something, it actually just says "clear".

There are different levels of meaning of that, even within the sutra tradition and also in the tantric traditions. One of the meanings is just the conventional nature of the mind as being un-obstructing, like space, and also clear in the sense of how a clean mirror is able to give rise to a reflection of whatever is placed before. If you have a mirror and you put your face before it, it is not like the mirror has to do anything, it is in its nature to reflect, without effort. The mind has that kind of reflective un-obstructing quality. Focusing on that, without the sense of any particular colour (it's not like white light or something like that or *purple haze*). Don't you wish!

Dan: I do have another question. Sometimes it seems like something comes up that doesn't seem like it's from me and seems like it's from the outside and I call it the "mystery" like maybe a TV form comes or something like that....

In the meditation you mean?

Dan: Yeah and I was wondering if it was proper to engage. It seems like something is coming and maybe I should actually engage it or should I just let that dissolve.

You're taking the analogy of being in your cabin and someone knocks at the door and you wonder whether you should answer it or not. What do you think Venerable? Should he answer the door?

Venerable: No.

No. Say for instance if you've meditating in general and if someone knocks at the door you should just ignore it. At other times there is a reason to answer to door. Like once my teacher Lama Zopa Rinpoche was studying with Geshe Sopa (who is one of my very special teachers) and they were studying either the Lam-rim or a section on emptiness or something and there was a door bell and they could kind of tell that it was the mailman. Lama Zopa Rinpoche's tendency was like in meditation, just to let that go, and he made a point of mentioning that – and how Geshe said "no, no the mailman might be unhappy if we don't answer the door"

So there is a time when you're weighing your own welfare with respect to that of others, to maybe answer the call of others if they need something. It's not like to say "I can't help you, I'm meditating" – if someone really needs help. But if they are calling you out to a picnic or something like that, that's definitely to be ignored.

But I think that the flavour of what Venerable and my own experience is, is that many times in meditation some attractive idea, appealing idea, might appear to the mind and that can get you off track from what

you actually originally intended to meditate on. That should be left. It's said in the teachings that if you are meditating on Shakyamuni, even if Tara appears you should say "bye Tara" and concentrate on Shakyamuni. Same if you're watching the breath and something else appears to your mind – like the ultimate can opener.

What's the thing that they talk about nowadays. It used to be like the perfect can opener. What did they used to say?

Student: The better mouse trap.

The better mouse trap, not the can opener. I always think of can opener ... Yeah the ultimate mouse trap or you've got some idea about how you can solve a problem, in the middle of your meditation. Let it go, because with the clarity of mind you are developing you will be able to understand things much better later.

Often times people think that meditation is something that you just let go and something appears to the mind. Like Sister Omo was saying to be waiting for the light to appear. We do have that kind of sense of expectation that when we quiet the mind something will just happen. We don't believe that when you are actually meditating, that that's the main experience.

What does appear from a Buddhist perspective is that things begin to quiet down as you don't pay attention to them and that experience is something that can be noted in your mind – "Ah! This is real comfort – not being troubled by all of desires or irritations."

Sometimes people say "I've been meditating for years but I have not experienced any Dharma happiness". Have you ever heard that, Venerable?

Venerable: Yes

Yes. Where's the beef. Do you remember that one? What was it? Mondale with Ronald Reagan many years ago, it became ....

Student: It was a T.V. commercial.

Was it a T.V. commercial?

Student: This old lady in Wendy's ...

Wendy's and it was like some criticism of MacDonald's – there was no substance there. Sorry, I don't mean to offend any one who is vegetarian but this is just an example. You know - where's the substance, where's the happiness, what is the payoff.... If we expect a *payoff* that's better than the *beef* because we live in Silicon Valley, and so we think better of the payoff .

Student: ROI

What's that?

Student: ROI – return on investment.

ROI – I see. Is it ROM or ROI.

Student: ROI

ROI – return on my investment. That's right because people might practice for some years and feel their lives are just, you know... 'I'm lonely and I don't have any friends and I didn't see Tara and I didn't see the clear light'...

From the lesser vehicle point of view, a certain bliss that begins to arise is the diminishing of discomfort, of disease, of unease, of the afflictions... when we talk about nirvana being bliss. What is nirvana? Nirvana is the cessation of all the afflicting emotions, right? What do you think Venerable? I'm talking about from the Hinayana point of view.

Venerable: Yes.

Then it is said that the bodhisattva goes from joy from joy. The first bhumi, ground, is called the joyous one; when the bodhisattva realizes emptiness for the first time, on that first ground, the first level arya bodhisattva is called the "joyous one". when that is explained the Hinayanists sometimes say "this is ridiculous, how can the bodhisattva go from joy to joy. There is no joy in cycle existence. The Dharma that one experiences is one of cessation and one of uncontaminated happiness that one can begin to experience, which is not of the same nature as what we are experiencing" We are expecting something kind of – I don't know – neon blazing kind of strobe like. Robert Thurman said "strobe like". You know "ahhh Tara", bright green or something, you know, overpowering.

That experience of that bodhisattvas and buddhahood is such that when one has begun to diminish one's expectation to find happiness in this fluorescent way, like now with contaminated happiness, then that uncontaminated happiness can arise with everything, all the time, whatever one experiences, and one can have great bliss. That's the point, to find great bliss.

But at first we can be grasping to that, we are going to be expecting that great bliss to be the neon fluorescent, contaminated bliss, you know, like the bliss of orgasm or the bliss of hearing I love you, or the bliss of having or meeting some attractive object, some wonderful taste or music or something like that.

So my understanding is that at first one has to have a certain amount of contentment and satisfaction to start recognizing that things are getting better, my mind is becoming less chaotic. It will first seem like it's more chaotic because you are focusing inward and you start to notice the chaos that you didn't notice before, but even then, actually you can feel contentment – "I'm on the path and things are beginning to quiet down" and that itself is the first stage of Dharma happiness.

From the Hinayana point of view, that's the main kind of experience of nirvana.

Like say for instance you had a lot of bills and a lot of worries, and suddenly someone just comes help you to pay off your bills, or you've cleaned up the room - there is a certain feeling of satisfaction in that, isn't there. It's not as though it's fluorescent, neon-like satisfaction but in some ways it is even more satisfying – "everything is ok.."

So I think that is a good way to start in our Dharma practice. To have that kind of feeling or goal and then as we begin to develop some sense of the Mahayana, to feel actual joy in other's joy, we can start to develop a sense that when others succeed and others find happiness we have some sense of joy. That kind

of joy might be approximating some positive kind of joy, but often times that is one that's with attachment, like say your students or your children do well and that kind of reflects on you. "Come and see the soccer game. My son is starting..." or something like that.

Should we try another little meditation? Two suggestions: if we could unplug the clock, if someone take the clock down or put it under a cushion. Don or Mark; could you take the clock down? Did you notice the clicking? When you are meditating, one of the subsidiary bodhisattva vows that you would break it if you would not go out of your way to seek the best conditions for single pointed concentration. So while you are in meditation and if there are distractions, that's not the point to get up and get agitated about it and try to change it, but when you are preparing to do meditation, you try to find a location that's free of distractions and sounds, free of commotion, free of temptation for that matter. If you got video on demand in your apartment, it may not be that good for your retreat.. It may be that your retreat gets a little bit ...you know....weak, because the temptation.

I mentioned before that if you live in the city, maybe to meditate all night rather than during the day, if you can sleep during the day, because at night it is quieter and there are less distractions from the traffic and the water in pipes. Do you notice that? Sometimes someone flushes the toilet or people are taking showers and so forth.

Student: I was going to say that the thing that I notice is that when I'm just getting deeper and you said something about "let go of your body and let go of your feelings", it's like monkey mind and immediately my mind goes there...

Student: Like letting go of my eyes.. All I can think of is my eyes.

When you meditate of course you have to do the best you can. I don't know everybody's mind. You're absolutely right. When you meditate, you have to be your own moderator. But hopefully you can use what I'm offering to you now, when we do some so called guided meditation. I could leave everyone just to their own devices but this is just giving you an idea how you *might* remind yourself, if you do notice yourself going to these things.

If you do notice subjective state rising or if the mind is agitated - to recognize that this is a subjective state because I am focusing on something; some irritating episode in my life or something I am unhappy about and to let go of even of the subjective state, even if you can't tell the particular object that is instigating it.

Maybe it's like a current of some unease, which is under the surface but the manifestation of it – having focussed on it somehow – the continuity of that state's manifestation is quite clear. Even to let go of that subjective mind.

Sometimes, as Oma was saying before, we might focus on light; and if there might be a sense of darkness because you are focusing on light, remind yourself that that's not it. That is appearing within in the clarity of the mind. Even sound consciousness is apprehended within the clarity of my mental consciousness, so withdraw your attention a little away from that and just to experience the mental consciousness as paying attention to that – just the clarity of the mental consciousness.

Before we start again, any questions?

Venerable: How does this relate to what we are studying?

The main definition of the mind is that which is *clear and knowing*; so it is relating to that on one level.

This is also the practice day and that means that we are trying to do some application of what we have been studying. As we go on we are going to be talking about the seven ways of knowing and trying to observe that in our meditation. But here we are trying to get a little bit more experience of this meditation first, that our understanding of the definition of mind does have some relevance, and is not just some philosophical position of the Buddhists or something. It's something we can actually recognize within our own awareness and it does have a sense of guiding us.

This is what we try to recognize – the clear and knowing nature of the mind. Maybe in a sense the knowing, the awareness is something that is indirectly known, because you are knowing it. You are not directly focusing on knowing, you're just focusing on the clarity but you recognize that you know the clarity, so indirectly you are knowing the mind that is clear and knowing

Let's try again.

## Meditation 2

If you like at first to watch the breathing, just for a few respirations, to settle the mind that way...

And when you are ready bring your attention just to the mental consciousness and let go of the breathing. Withdraw your attention even further, just to the mind and its sixth aspect – the mental consciousness....

Letting go again and again helps to prevent the contrivance of your mind, the projection of your mind. Even whatever image you have of the mind, let it go.....

If you find some sense of this clarity, try to hold it single-pointedly....

Even if distractions come, to see that as like a cloud within the spaciousness of your mind, reaffirming the clear light nature, the clarity of the mind....

Now relax again....

## Teaching continues

One of the main objects of the course has been the seven ways of knowing and in a sense that can help us to understand the progression of developing insight. Anyone want to make a stab? I'm going to ask Mark because he has avoided all questions very skilfully. In going from a wrong understanding how could one trace, in terms of these *seven ways of knowing*, the progression from that to a perfect direct understanding, let's say of emptiness or selflessness?

Mark: Are you just asking for definitions?

No. How would one progress from a deluded state, of knowing wrongly, up to a perfect realization, in terms of these *seven ways knowing*?

Mark: If I understand your question correctly - the first stage (using myself as an example), would be that I believed everything to exist inherently, outside, from its own side, which would be considered to be a wrong view

Ok. So is one of the seven ways of knowing called wrong *view*?

Mark: Wrong *consciousness*

Wrong *consciousness*. A wrong view is more limiting. A wrong view is a wrong consciousness but not all wrong consciousnesses are wrong views. Of the seven ways of knowing, the kind of category, that covers enough objects of knowledge that the seven can be said to encompass all ways of knowing, we would have say wrong consciousness. OK?

So you start with wrong consciousness. Then how would you progress from there. Would you have direct realization of emptiness? Would that directly dawn from that?

Mark: I suppose it's possible but not likely. Then you would have a doubting consciousness first leaning towards wrong consciousness.

How does such a doubting consciousness arise? One naturally has just assumed that everything was truly existent and just one day "maybe it's not"?

Mark: Through learning, through inference

From hearing or studying a doubt might be generated in one's mind. Otherwise we might not address at all the fact that things are not the way they seem; our world is very much predicated on that. In fact it's based on that to a super extent, on that advertisement or *propaganda* - maybe not propaganda; what's the word? *Publicity* and so forth – that things are really the way they seem, and that if you have this toothpaste or if you have a Mercedes you will be happy...

So because hearing and study you might generate a doubt. What kind of mind is doubt? What's a distinguishing characteristic of doubt?

Mark: It is two-pointed

It's two pointed. Has it come to a conclusion?

Mark: No

No because it's two pointed and if it had come to a conclusion it would be maybe like the wrong view you said before, that was one-pointed.

Here maybe the person now is a little bit vacillating around that because of having heard something else and has a doubt, and at first a doubt could be very small. Maybe one's heard something – a spiritual teaching or something – and it is just totally leaning in the wrong direction. Over time, if you get familiar with that, then what would happen next?

Mark: Then the other half of doubt where you are leaning towards the correct consciousness.

So you would jump immediately there.

Mark: No I don't think one would jump but there would have to be phasing in.

Would you ever reach a midpoint where it would be kind of equally balanced.

Mark: I'd imagine so.

Yeah. So there would be equal balance

And then a doubt leaning in the right direction. What would characterise that kind of state, do you think? Again it's not definite. The person is not certain, right?

Mark: True

It's still two-pointed so how could it be leaning in the right direction?

Mark: Because it's not one-pointed. There's no surety about that.

Just imagine your own understanding of let's say reincarnation. Does anyone here completely believe in reincarnation?

Some students: Yes

You believe in reincarnation. So could we call that a correct belief? Buddhists call your understanding a correct belief because Buddhists accept that reincarnation does exist. Pat, is your understanding a correct belief?

Pat: It's my correct belief.

I'm not trying to take credit for your correct belief.

Now would anyone have a doubt about that? Would anyone question Pat and say "are you sure that's actually at the stage of correct belief" - because what actually precedes correct belief might be mistaken for it?

Student: Ask the question again

What kind of state of consciousness, in going from a wrong view, say that past and future lives don't exist, to correct belief that they do exist, has to intervene. There's doubting consciousness which Mark was just talking about, right?

It could be that you've actually reached surety, and there's no two-pointedness in your mind, and you're actually completely confident.

Pat: Yes



OK. How about you venerable? Are you completely confident?

Venerable: Yes, I was even born with it. Ever since I was a child I believed that there was more than one life, with no spiritual teaching yet...

Pat: It was the same for me, I believed it already when I was very young

Student: ....

You mean there's a doubt? Now wait a second. If there's a doubt, maybe that's not yet a correct belief. You're sure that it has to be because of past lives; that's not the insight that other people have, is it?

Who would admit here to having some doubt? Sometimes doubt arises in the mind because of delusion, or because of not being familiar, and so forth. Even some so-called Dharma practitioners don't accept the existence of past and future lives.

Student: I think it's a condition of being a Buddhist.

What do you mean a condition?

Student: It's one of the legs of being a Buddhist that you accept past lives and future lives because of karma and cause and effect.

Or you can't be a Buddhist?

Student: I don't think so

Well, there are some people, like Stephen Batchelor nowadays, a school within Buddhism who would argue that you can. But certainly from a Mahayana point of view, or also from a Hinayana point of view, it is considered one of the four seals.... Well, I don't want to say the four seals. What are the four seals? All compounded phenomena are impermanent, all contaminated phenomena are suffering, all phenomena are selfless and empty and nirvana is bliss. So it's not inherent in the four seals exactly, but holding that there are no past and future lives is considered to be a wrong view that can hinder the practice.

How about Stephen Batchelor and other's position about doubting consciousness. What did he call it? "The Hope to Doubt" or "The Will to Doubt" or something like that – (*The Faith to Doubt: Glimpses of Buddhist Uncertainty.*)

Student: Somewhere along the line you've got to make some kind of decision and you can't go on doubting for the rest of your life or else you are not going to make any progress.

Some people's position is that if you can't perceive something, you can't come to surety about it, but I think you can come to some surety even if you don't have a direct realization of that. There are different ways, like through familiarity over time, and continual practice over a period of time.

Student: But would that be still doubting but with leaning in the right direction

I'm not sure. What do you think?

Student:2 You would have to have a direct realization.

You have to have a direct realization?

Student:2 You would have to have a direct realization in order that you are not doubting any more.

What do you think? To go beyond and for it no longer to be doubt do you have to have a direct realization? From our point of view in this class, what do you say?

No. You can have a correct belief that is no longer doubt because doubt is characterised by a vacillation, even if it's a little bit, of two-pointedness of mind. Correct belief or assumption, or presumption, or a correctly assuming consciousness....

Student: If one has a correct belief, I see that there is still a possibility for doubt to come back later whereas if one has a direct realization you are not going to fall back into doubt.

Is that right? So you to have a direct realization for the doubt never to arise again? What about inferential cognition?

Student: I think that it might still be possible for doubt to arise.

So if you have a direct realization of past lives, there will never be a doubt again, that future lives and past lives exist?

Student: I don't know about future lives but in this life, once you've got the realization it probably won't go ....

Let me ask Venerable. If you develop single-pointed concentration, is it possible to fall from that in this lifetime?

Venerable: Yes

Yeah, it's said that's not *that* unusual, sometimes people actually develop *shine* or shamatha and then fall from that.

If you develop clairvoyance that remembers past lives on the basis of developing *shine*, is it possible to fall from that realization? To lose that clairvoyance in this lifetime. Yes, if you lost the *shine*.

So once you've realized that, you've actually remembered your past lifetimes, it's possible to lose that direct realization. And we have certainly had that happening in past lives. We've developed *clairvoyance* in numberless lives in the past, although maybe with lots of distance between them. You might say that you never have, but from a Buddhist perspective, we've been in numberless world systems, and we've actually practiced the worldly path and developed clairvoyance many times. My feeling is that if that were a stable realization, no one should have doubt about the existence of past and future lives. But I think we can fall from that, it is not stable. Even having a direct realization is not a cure. Maybe in this lifetime if you have a direct realization and you still have not degenerated that, that is quite clear. But even if you had an inference, even if it's intellectual, and you haven't had a direct realization of that, I think that also can lead to absolute certainty because that is a realising consciousness and there is not doubt any longer. I think

Geshe Dargye used to say that until we become a buddha there might still be some doubts. But certainly realization is going to help to eliminate doubt.

So we've gone from wrong view to doubting consciousness and then have tried to investigate the demarcation between doubt leaning in the right direction and correct belief.

What would be the next step in solidifying realization? I think I'll let Mark off. No, ok, Mark one more time. What would be the next step after correct belief?

Mark: I think correctly assuming consciousness

So *correct belief* becomes *correctly assuming consciousness*? It's the same thing, isn't it? It's just a different way of translating it. Correct belief is the mind in which we are no longer vacillating. Has correct belief realized its object? It doesn't realize its object even though it is correct. It's like assumption or presumption or intuition or something which is not necessarily based on a perfect reason or experience.

So what would be the next step in solidifying that realization? We went from wrong view to doubt of various kinds and then to correct belief. Then? Would the next possibility to understand that be a direct realization? What would be next? Inferential cognition, right? Would inference be stronger than correct belief?

Could you have a doubt if you had an inference? You might doubt your logic or something. Dorje says yes.

Student: Well it would depend on your definition of inference

What we mean by inferential cognizer here is a mind which has realized its object. It's not a mind that states some reason e.g. "sound is impermanent because it's a product." It has actually realized the three modes. All we really need is the property of the subject, the subject is the sign. Let's say "sound is impermanent because it is product". You've realized that, either through other inference or through experience, and then the forward pervasion that all products are necessarily impermanent. When you've actually realized those and through contemplating this logical sign you can develop a state of certainty/realization that has eliminated doubt, doubt is gone because it became a correct assumption, and now you have realized this assumption with a inferential cognizer - a realising consciousness.

Of the seven ways of knowing, how many of them are realising consciousnesses?

Two?

Even though she didn't say, Karen put up the sign of the three fingers. Some people are saying two. Which two?

Student: Direct prime cognizer and inferential prime cognizer

What are you adding to that list?

Student: I am adding to that list appearance that is not ascertained

No, that is not a realising consciousness.

Student: 2 Subsequent cognizers?

A subsequent cognizer also s. What does it lack that makes it not prime? According to Sautrantika it lacks the quality of fresh or new. So it's not prime but it realizes its object.

So in going from wrong view to a doubting consciousness to a correct belief we would develop an inferential cognizer and then you can have a subsequent cognizer of that, right?

We've talked about wrong view, doubt, correct belief and inference and now subsequent cognition.

According to our Sautrantika interpretation, only the first instant of an inferential cognizer is an actual inferential cognizer. The subsequent moments of it are no longer called inferential cognizers because they are not directly based on the reason, on the sign, and they're subsequent to that, but they are still realising cognitions.

What can arise even more powerfully in terms of realization than the subsequent cognition of that, e.g. that remembering consciousness, that past and future lives exist, or all phenomena are impermanent, or I have a perfect human rebirth, or whatever one is realising? What would be the next step of the seven ways of knowing?

A direct prime cognizer, with following on the subsequent cognitions of that. So that would be the sixth way of knowing.

There can be many kinds of direct realizations that don't depend upon a sign, that don't depend on being preceded by inference, can't there? Can I have a direct realization of anything without it having been preceded by realising it by a sign? What? What can I realize without first having it realized by inference?

Student: Just that fresh moment when one knows...

..that all past lives exist or something? How about just a simple example, a direct perception of flowers? Is that a prime cognizer?

Student: No

No! Why not?

Student: Because one knows the label that one learns at some point in life, that that particular form is called "flower", and so you have an association of a mental image with that as opposed to a direct realization, where it could be a sudden moment, knowing that's a flower without ever having experienced....

Isn't there something called an eye direct perceiver ...

Student: Yes

... and of the divisions of eye direct perceiver isn't one of the divisions prime cognizer...

Student: Yes

... and then subsequent and inattentive. So I can have a prime or valid direct perceiver of the flowers with my eye consciousness. It doesn't have to be preceded by an inference; "flowers exist because....." or something like that.

What kind of direct perceiver has to be preceded by an inferential cognizer? What would be the object of a direct perceiver that we could not have perceived directly initially, but would have had to perceive by an inferential cognizer initially?

Remember there are three kinds of phenomena: manifest phenomena, hidden phenomena and deeply hidden phenomena.

Hidden phenomena are things like subtle impermanence, past and future lives, emptiness, selflessness. They are called hidden because they do not appear directly to our sense or mental consciousness without us having first understood them inferentially, through a logical sign. There are some phenomena like that, right? Do you remember this? Mark, do you remember this?

So there are three kinds of phenomena. Actually we just say two – we say manifest and hidden. Hidden, you could say, is divided into ordinary or superficially hidden and deeply hidden.

Of these two, the way that we can know manifest phenomena initially is through direct perceiver. Manifest phenomena are things that we can perceive with our senses directly, without the need of any intermediary logic. You just see the fire, you taste the tofu or you see the roses. These aren't roses, what are they?

Student: Yellow flowers

Theo, you know all about flowers; what are these?

Theo: I'm not sure. I think it's a type of Iris or Orchid. I think it is an Orchid

Some kind of Orchid. OK.

Student:2 It's an "Alistair Mary"

"Alistair Mary" I would have thought that that's some lady's name or someone on the BBC or something like that - "Alistair Mary now reports the news".

So we can have a direct perceiver of manifest phenomena without depending upon a logical sign, but hidden phenomena, if we can know them with direct perception, that direct perception has to be preceded by knowing them through an inferential cognition. Do you remember this?

Student: Are all manifest phenomena impermanent phenomena?

It looks like they must be impermanent, yes. That's good.

Student: Moving to hidden then, are they permanent?

There are some things hidden that are not permanent. Venerable what do you think?

Venerable: Like subtle impermanence.

Subtle impermanence, yes. Also the qualities of a buddha's mind; different things like that can be impermanent. I think in general the manifest will be, as you say, impermanent, but the hidden are not necessarily permanent.

Venerable: I'm not sure if all of the non-associated compositional factors are hidden – like time. Can you perceive time?

I don't know; that's something to investigate. Of course the different philosophical schools have different ideas of what is meant by time, but in general Buddhism posits that time is a phenomenon.

So when we talk about deeply hidden phenomena, that is also something that can only be recognized first of all through a particular kind of logical sign – a sign developed through belief in the word of an authentic person who have verified as authentic, like the Buddha. Through other means you have verified that the person is totally reliable and a valid source of guidance and because they've said something, and you've analysed what they've said to make sure that it wasn't just an interpretive meaning, therefore at the end you can understand what they've said is valid, like because of this particular gift the buddha said that one would be born an Arhat at this time in the future in that world system with these qualities, you can understand that kind of thing.

Student: Do you start with seven ways of knowing and ....

We haven't finished all of them. There's one left

Student: OK in this book, going backwards it says: wrong consciousness, awareness to which the object appears but is not ascertained. Now does that go with...what?

There's no particular order for that way of knowing but that is a way of knowing which is not included in any of the other six and we have to include that in order to be comprehensive. In a sense these seven ways of knowing include all awarenesses.

Student: So is that the non-conceptual thing because you said there were six that are conceptual. Or do I have it backwards..

No, I didn't say conceptual. Are these six conceptual? No! Direct prime cognizer is not conceptual. Subsequent cognizer doesn't have to be conceptual. Wrong consciousness doesn't have to be conceptual. Doubt is conceptual. Correct belief is conceptual. What am I leaving out? Inference is conceptual.

How about awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained? Is that conceptual?

Student: No

It's not conceptual. So there's two that are definitely not conceptual – direct prime cognizer and awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained, an inattentive perception.

So in going from a wrong view to a right view we go from wrong consciousness to a doubting consciousness leaning first in the wrong direction, then to equally balanced doubting consciousness, and then doubting consciousness leaning in the right direction, then to a correct belief, then to....

Student: Is correct belief the same correctly assuming consciousness?

Yes or presumption, these are different ways of translating it. Then to inferential cognizer. Can you have a subsequent cognition of a correct belief? Diana?

Diana No

Why not?

Diana Correctly assuming consciousness doesn't .

Correctly assuming consciousness doesn't . So you can't call it yet a subsequent cognition. You can only have subsequent cognition of an inferential cognizer or a direct perception.

Student: Is the subsequent cognizer of a direct perception *conceptual*?

If you talk about a subsequent cognition of a direct perceiver, it has to be a direct perceiver. Direct perceivers have three categories: they can be prime cognizers, subsequent cognizers, or inattentive.

But you can have a subsequent cognition generated from that direct perceiver which is intellectual, which is conceptual. Later you can have a remembering consciousness that you saw that and that would a subsequent cognizer generated from that direct perceiver.

If you just said "is a subsequent realization a subsequent cognizer?"

Student: 2 Can it be conceptual?

No, no, obviously it can be conceptual or perceptual but I'm just trying to think how you could phrase your question.

Say for instance if you have first of all a direct perception of something; are all subsequent cognizers which realize that same object necessarily direct perception? No, they can also be arisen as a result of the direct perception. There can be subsequent cognizers that are remembering consciousnesses that remember that later.

How are we doing? Making some sense?

Student: Yes

Let's take a short break and then we'll just do a little meditation before lunch. Let's take a ten minute break, I'm sorry I did not give you a break before...

Student: So when I have correct belief, our minds have become more sort of flexible/malleable and are heading in the right direction and then we start getting more of a sense of our precious human rebirth. Is this the kind thing we are talking about, about how that might actually become a realization.

I think so. At first we might not have any idea of it and it might be, as Rita's pointing out, that we might have some inborn wisdom from previous lifetimes. So we might actually have a correct belief that



something exists. If we were a higher bodhisattva or a higher realized being, it might be that we actually have continuity of that realization from past lifetimes, that we realize that; but I think to have that kind of stable realization is only something that takes place when you've reached the high levels of the bhumis - where you have a realization of that. Right now, we might have some inclination, so that once we've heard something, that it makes sense to us quickly and we overcome doubt very quickly because of familiarity in past lives. A lot of people, when we are talking about reincarnation, they just don't buy it at all. One of my roommates from college, he lives in San Raphael at the other side of Marin county, he won two academy awards for music in "The Right Stuff" and "Amadeus" – he did the music. He came to a couple of my lectures when I taught in San Raphael in the bookstore, and he was very nice but, you know, – "it's very nice to know what you're teaching George, but I don't buy that". What does it say on the computer with regard to the fonts – "what you see is what you get"? Do you know that kind of thing? On the computer they try to extol certain kinds of computer programs because it will reflect what you actually print out otherwise it might look one thing on your computer screen and when you print it out it might look quite different... 'What you see is what you get'. That's what he said.

## Session 14 – Practice Day - part 2

So what about a direct realization of the clear and knowing nature of the mind in meditation. How do you get that? You might say "well once you have that you don't the inference to prove that the might is clear light". But how do you get that direct realization? From having a mental image of that, that is factually concordant first of all, a correct belief, and then that mental image has to become even more precise, there has to be a realization of that, through inference, of that clear light nature of the mind. Then by focusing on that single-pointedly, that can become a direct realization of that clear light nature of the mind. But it has to be preceded by a conceptual understanding and an inference of it. I think it's the same thing with clairvoyance that remembers past lives.

Student: Does it have to be in this life?

So you're thinking that maybe if you had an inference in a past life that you could have a direct realization without going through the inference again? Well, there would still be a mental image. If it was a subsequent cognizer, if your mental image was a remembering consciousness having been based on inference and was an actual realization. That's what I'm saying – I'm not sure at what level that kind of realization continues through the death process. It might be, it is something interesting to ask lamas.

Student:2 That's an interesting kind of quagmire because if we have to infer first from imagining it - I know the definition says that I'm mistaken to put it this way, but we have the great ability to infer something and then to imagine in our mind and almost create a realization. If you have to infer it first and you're not infallible and you're not non-mistaken, you build an image and you then can meditate on that and almost create a realization.

Say for instance one thinks one has inferred it – one thinks I've got the inferential cognizer – and one hasn't, that would still be a correct belief because even if it's based on a correct reasoning but the reason has not be actually stabilised in one's mind and so it wouldn't actually be an inferential cognizer.

Sometimes people might think that, they believe something so strongly and then they hear some reason and they say 'that that proves it!' They meditate on that for five minutes and they say "now I'm absolutely certain because I have a reason also". But that certainty from the correct belief may not have turned into

an actual realization unless they have actually realized the syllogism with an inferential cognizer – one which is based on that reason – and they've realized the concomitance of the subject with the sign and the forward pervasion, that whatever is the sign is necessarily the predicate. Then they can realize the thesis that the subject is the predicate, having realized these other, what we call, establishing cognitions, that give rise to that. It's a subtle difference there.

Let's do a little bit of meditation and then we'll take a nice break for lunch.

### **Meditation 3**

See if you can develop a subsequent cognizer or a remembering consciousness at least, of your understanding of the clear light nature of the mind. If it were a real subsequent cognizer it means that you would have realized it already but let's say a remembering consciousness, at least, that's subsequent. Go back to what you were understanding before and on the basis of focusing on that, try to let go of the disturbing distracting thoughts.....

Remember to bring your attention inward away from your senses....

Now take as an object of investigation the Buddha's teaching on what we might call the perfect human rebirth. The life of leisure and endowment that we have, the leisure to be free of the eight un-free states and we're endowed or rich with another set of ten qualities – five from our own side and five from the general environment - that make this life incredibly powerful, most suitable to practice Dharma....

If we actually have a realization of this meaningfulness, a recognition of this life and its great meaning - the great teachers, yogis of the past said that an indication of that realization (so it would have to be by inference) would be that we would day and night be seeking the essence and not be distracted by the meaningless activities of this lifetime....

So check up in your own mind where we are with this fundamental realization that's said to be a basis for the stages of the path. Have we realized this perfect human rebirth? Do we have a correct belief which is certain about it? Such certainty, one would think that if one could call it to mind and if we could enhance that certainty in meditation, that could help us to overcome different worries of this lifetime.

Recognizing that this life can be used for the Dharma, has incredible power, so as and not to waste on just meaningless activities of this lifetime....Do we have a doubt about this?

Check in your own experience: is that doubt leaning in the right direction, equally balanced or leaning in the wrong direction?..

Do we know people who have a completely and empathic opposite wrong view beyond just a doubt, actually holding that there's nothing special about this life, there's millions of people, the best that can be done with this life, even though it might be sacred and unique, is that we could prosper in this lifetime and work just for this lifetime....

Remind yourself of what the characteristics of a life of leisure and endowment are. Leisure from the un-free states of being born in hell - we can recognize pretty much that we are not born in hell; enhancing the

sense of freedom from that by at least a belief or a doubt that we may have been born in hells in other lives and we could be born there in the future. That this is a special circumstance.

We are not born as a hungry ghost in this life now. We might have been born like that in the past and could be born like that in the future.

We're not born as an animal, which has different experiences than a human.

We're not born as a long life god with every wish fulfilled in the desire realm. A long life god remains in an amorphous dull state for eons, once having been born in that realm, not being able to create any virtue....

We are born as a human so we're free of those un-free states; but when we've been born as humans in the past, we've been born in border lands with barbarians, where even though we had the opportunities otherwise, we were free of those un-free states, we were not free of that kind of environment.

Sometimes as humans we were born with very strong wrong views – another un-free state – holding very strongly that these things don't exist because of imprints from past lives.

Sometimes we were born imperfect organs, so even if the Buddha appeared we couldn't hear with they said and partake completely of the nectar of the teachings.

Sometime we didn't have the fortune to be existent when the buddhas actually appeared in the world.

There are called the un-free states in which case there is little or no chance to practice the Dharma. We are free of those.

We also have the riches or the endowments: we are a human being, in the middle of religious country, in the sense of a country where ordination can take place and so forth, with perfect organs; we can take ordination, we can hear the teachings....We haven't committed one of the five actions of immediate retribution; and we have faith in the teachings of the Buddha.

These are the endowments from our own side. From the outside the buddhas have appeared in the world, turned the Dharma-wheel. Those teachings still exist in the world without having been degenerated.... There are beings who are benefactors and who help to support the teachings and my own practice and so forth, centers like this. And there exists a community of like-minded people that I myself like to join. A sort of spiritual community – a Sangha in a formal sense – and Dharma practitioners that can help to support from the practice side....

The Buddha said that the experience of these eighteen qualities, of eight freedoms and ten endowments, is very rare, very difficult to create the causes for, but when they occur in unison that that is a sufficient condition to practice in this most powerful way – this spiritual path. We have this....

First of all we may not recognize it, being maybe in a sense inattentive, like having a jewel in the hand and not recognizing it. We might disbelieve that we have it. We might have a wrong view or doubt about whether this is so beneficial...

Even if we believe this, this may be very powerful for our spiritual practice - even if we have just a correct belief and not yet realize it....

To recognize that we have these factors is a first step. That maybe is something that we've not attended to before, but then to recognize the implications of that: that with this life we can practice Dharma perfectly, make realizations, eliminate faults from our mind, create the karmic instincts to quickly practice the path in future lives – the great value of this....

Knowing how rare it is also because of how difficult it is to find again, that the causes are very difficult to create – pure morality, generosity and so forth....To develop an awareness of that, which may not be a realization yet, but at least a correct belief...

If you have some feeling for that - some mental image that has arisen, some experience of that – that this is very rare, very valuable, see if you can hold onto that single-pointedly, and leave an imprint in the mind of this kind of experience....

And then dedicate whatever merit we've created this morning: due to this virtue may I and all living beings quickly ascend the stages of the path, realising the stages, developing all the good qualities and eliminating all the faults, and awaken to our own aim of total blissful enlightenment, beyond nirvana, and the aim of others; to be able to effortlessly, with skill, bring benefit to all living beings.

Thank you

## Teaching continues

That covers all kinds of consciousness. Is there any kind consciousness which is not either a primary mind or a mental factor? That's another way of dividing consciousness, like dividing the cake or the pie up with different cuts. The *seven ways of knowing* is a way of dividing it up into seven little slivers and I think that particular way of dividing it up gives a very good insight into the evolution from wrong understanding to right understanding, because it includes prime cognizers and subsequent cognizers. It's a very classic way of knowing.

We will just talk a bit about some other things until the others have come in before we do a bit more meditation.

Remember this book which some of you have been reading, *Compendium of Ways of Knowing*? It's one of your favourites, right? By A-kya Yong-dzin.

Student: Along with Harry Potter

Along with Harry Potter. The name of our material in general is called *Lo-rig*. *Lo* means awareness. *Rig-pa* means to be aware, to know or to cognize. So *lo rig* means awareness and knowing or awareness and knowledge. Here in the title of this text, A-kya Yong-dzin, because he is mainly talking about these seven categories, in the way it is written, the spelling of *rig* is different – it's *rigs*. On the second page after the cover – the white page – under the words “a clear mirror of what should be accepted and rejected” it says Blo-rigs-kyi dom tsi...

Student: It's got a “b” in front.

Yes, *blo* - that's how it is spelt.

This word *rigs* is spelt differently here than the word for knowledge. This word means class or family or type or way. That's why the title of this *A Compendium of the Ways of Knowing*; some people have said that it was miswritten because *rigs* should be without the "s". In Tibetan it means family or field or type or ways of knowing.

A-kyä Yong-dzin is kind of playing on that previously famous genre of literature in which a couple of other authors had written texts on *Awarenesses and Knowing*, Lo-rig, and he just changed the spelling so that it embodied that, being mainly about these seven ways of knowing.

One Tibetan lama, a Sakya lama, Ngor Thartse Tulku, who was one of my teachers, who taught me spoken Tibetan and grammar. You've heard of Ngor Thartse Rinpoche? His brother is Kunga Rinpoche, Lama Kunga. Do you know Lama Kunga? Dorje knows Lama Kunga. I think all of the brothers ... Lama Kunga is mainly Nyingma, right, or Kargyu?

Dorje: He's actually Sakya but he's an emanation of one of Milarepa's students

Anyway, in this life I think he is Sakya. One of his brothers, they call Tsenshab Rinpoche, who has been in Switzerland for many years, he's a Gelukpa rinpoche, no maybe he's Sakya but he is sort of connected with the Kagyü/Nyingma, mainly teaching that. Then one of his is brother is Ngor Thartse Tulku who is a Sakya Rinpoche. Then they might have had one other brother who was also a Rinpoche. I can't remember.

Ngor Thartse Tulku, before he passed away, taught a course to us and he wrote an article once in a Tibetan journal about changing the spelling of the word for woman. Do you know what woman is in Tibetan?

Female Student: I'm surprised they have one

Well, you wouldn't be surprised if you know that the word for woman is *skyes dman*. What does that mean? It means "inferior birth". Like *theg dman* means inferior vehicle (Hinayana), right? So he suggested that by changing the spelling into *smān*, the meaning would become the same as in *smān-bla* – medicine; he said it should be *the medicine of life*, women should be called the medicine of life. I thought that was very intelligent – just by changing one or two letters, even though it sounds the same, the spelling is different and it turns the meaning around.

So why don't we do a little bit of meditation again.

## Meditation 4

It is said that if you are familiar with and trained in the observation of the respiration as an object of concentration, by simply watching nine or twenty-one breaths, just a few a breaths, that you can completely calm the mind. So see if you can first of all begin calm the mind from distracting discursive thoughts by just watching the breathing....

It may be that part of your mind being tenacious and even though you've superficially said that you are just going to watch the breathing, it has just decided that it's going to think about something else in addition. Try to let go of that....

And then again withdraw your attention further inside, away from outer concerns, just to the nature of the mind.

So here the object is very subtle and you have to have found it through analysis; watching the mind for some time. You may have to renew it again by trying to observe the consciousness....

Sometimes the sense of self seems to be centred on the body. There may be that temporary appearance of the self right now as there still is an apprehension of body consciousness. See if you can let go of that....

Whatever appears to your mind, let go of it and again focus on the clear light nature in which that appearance is arising....

And within that clear state ask yourself: do I realize that I must die; do I realize the truth of the meditations on death and impermanence - intellectually I might think I have an understanding of that....

Even an understanding of the inevitability of our death, the nature of death, is only an understanding of gross impermanence. It's said that until we realize gross impermanence there's no way that we can realize subtle impermanence. So this is also a stepping stone in that direction.... the gross impermanence of death.

So within this quiet mind try to develop some of the so called reasons to prove that death is definite.... The first reason that we might posit is that the Lord of Death comes to everyone, or in other words death, comes to everyone, there's no way to avoid it. The great beings of the past have experienced death; even the Buddha manifested death; Christ, Gandhi.... There is no-one throughout history that we can point to, other than some legends of the deathless state, while still under the influence of karma and delusion, there are no individuals who have not grown old and died. We're exactly the same....

Think of your mums and dads. If they are still alive, you have seen them grow older over the years; they will die... Maybe you have some insight into that. We might be the age now that they were when they gave birth to us. So we too will grow old and die like them....

People who are our peers and our age; maybe we can understand easier than understanding that we will grow old that they also get old. In five years they will be this age. In ten years they will be that age. At certain ages there are certain possibilities for arthritis beginning, eyesight lessening, becoming infirm and less able to enjoy the pleasures of the senses. Start to imagine them in your mind's eye, getting older....

We too are exactly the same. The Lord of Death comes to everyone....

Now think of people that are younger than us. Maybe we know some children that are our nieces or nephews or whatever. We know that year by year they will grow older. They will go to grade school and to high school and perhaps university and grow up and have a family perhaps. Maybe they'll get interested in religion, become monks or nuns, but they'll grow older and even that child, who looks young now compared to us, will grow old and die....

The Lord of Death comes to everyone. There's no way to avoid it....

There's no place that we can go – some Shangri-la where there's no aging and where change does not take place and our karma is not changing....

There's no way that we can avoid it through incredible doses of vitamins, massage, acupuncture or hormone injections or cryogenic preservation....

Even the Buddha cannot protect us from the inevitability of our karma and the inevitability of death....

Like a logical reasoning go over this thesis in your mind, several times with these various examples of reason:

The Lord of Death comes to everyone and there's no way to avoid it Him....

Like my father, my peers, like the children....

If you get some sense of the truth of that thesis, try to hold that understanding single-pointedly....

I will die... I will grow old... I am growing old....I *will* die....

Bring your attention back to the present

## Teaching continues

So what do you think? When we do the death meditation, what is it called, Venerable?

Venerable: The nine points

Nine point. And so are those points meant to be reasons? These three roots.

The first root we were meditating on:

*Death is definite because the Lord of Death comes to everyone and there's now way to avoid Him.*

It sounds like a logical reasoning, right? If you thought of that as a syllogism, what's the thesis?

Student: Death is definite

The subject *death* is *certain* because (the reason) *death comes to everyone*.



Is that a legitimate logical reasoning? Is that indeed a correct syllogism?

Student: No one escapes death or something like that. Everyone experiences death.

You don't like *death is definite* as a thesis? That's the name of the first outline in the Lam-rim, right?

Student: Do you have to start with death each time?

Why is that? You mean you don't like to talk about death? Why do you say that?

Student: I don't know. I guess I feel like you're making death the subject and I guess I want it to be the predicate.

How would it be the predicate? All beings die, is that the same as saying that death is definite?

It might be a little bit different but here when we are talking about the certainty of death, this fits into the sequence of treating death as something that we usually don't want to address, right? It's something that most people like to keep behind them. For most of us we don't want address certain things. It's like sometimes you've got bills or something you have to do and in a sense you don't want to address that and that causes us problems. From a Buddhist perspective it's considered very skilful to become aware of that which is true because if you're basing your whole life on either denying or ignoring certain things that are true you're going to .....Is that the same thing: denying and ignoring?

Student: Not totally.

It's a little bit different, isn't it?

Student: Ignoring is putting it away and denying is ...

...is actually saying it's not there. So it is a little bit different – in some cases it's very different. In the case of our culture in the West what do many people do about death? Do they ignore it or deny it or both?

Student: Both

Student: Ignore.

Usually ignore it. Do some people deny it?

Student: Yes

Not verbally of course. That's what I mean, in answer to Oma's response. I don't mean that they would say that they weren't going to die but intellectually in our mind it's almost like, even if it comes up, part of our mind doesn't want to address that; part of it is ignoring and part of it is thinking that won't happen to me – kind of denying it.

Student: I don't think anybody can deny that? Even if they ignore it and don't want to address it, they still can't deny it.

OK so what be the opposite of denial?

Student:2 Acceptance

Acceptance

Student:3 Embracing

Embracing

So most people accept that they are going to die and embrace that they are going to die

Student: I don't know about embracing, but I think that they have the knowledge that they are going to die

Don: At retreat on death and impermanence we were asked if we accepted death and a woman on the retreat said that she didn't....

It might be a different meaning of "to accept". Accept can mean different things, like, you know, "I just can't accept that". That can mean a different thing than "I deny it". It could mean that I find it difficult to come to grips with it – "I can't accept that you've become a monk" or something like that.

Don: She said that she didn't think it was going to happen.

Ah! Really?

Don: Very unusual. By the end of the retreat she was coming around but....

Wow. What do you think Oma? This is Don's experience: actually someone who didn't think...

Oma: That's denial.

That's not just ignoring, that's denial.

OK so there is that element. When we talk about the state of mind of ignorance, there are different kinds. The principle one that we usually talk about is the ignorance that grasps to true existence. It's like an active wisdom; it's not just like ignoring something and not knowing it but it's like denying it and actively perceiving as truly existent and grasping to that. In a sense that precludes or denies that they are empty of true existence.

Capice? Do you know what that is? When I was in Italy they always said that – capice or capito. You don't have to be a rocket scientist. Is your family Italian?

Student: No

No. Who is Italian? Ryan!

Ryan I am as much Italian as I am Irish.

OK. Wow, you must have had good parties in your house. And weddings...

Student: You can probably add some Russian too.

Also they're ruthless, OK

Student: Ruthless drunks

Ruthless drunken Irish-Italian weddings.

So here when we consider the state of mind that is ignorant of subtle impermanence, subtle impermanence; it is also not simply not knowing that and ignoring and being unaware of it - it's actually what's called permanent grasping. Have you ever heard the expression used that way? Venerable?

Venerable: No

You've heard of true grasping or grasping to true existence. Permanent grasping is something that imbues our mind too, until we realize subtle impermanence, and as Oma and many of us say "well excuse me I know I'm going to die and I know that things are impermanent". But there's a difference. We may think that we know that but it may only be a correct belief or a doubt leaning in the right direction. Mainly it's a correct belief, if we do strongly believe we are going to die because there still is an element of grasping to permanence – grasping in a sense to our immortality. And this is just talking about gross impermanence; when we talk about subtle impermanence, if something starts to change it is almost like we're actually surprised, despite everything that we encounter changing moment by moment.

Like you hear that someone is in the hospital and you're upset. One of our friends, the Cayton's dad just died. Mr Cayton who is one of the benefactors of the Land Of Medicine Buddha just passed away. The family knew he was in the hospital. He had a stroke. Then when he passed away there was another shock. I'm not criticising, just saying that's what we usually do, what most people do - but someone pointed out recently how surprising that actually is: you knew that they were old - I think he was 88 but he was in good health, he swam a kilometre a day, up until he was 83 or 85 he swam a mile a day and then he said now I'm going to slow down and then he swam a kilometre a day, he was a very active person. So it was surprising that even though all of the signs were that he could die at any moment, the mind was grasping that he would last.

So even though know intellectually that things are changing, part of our mind is still grasping to that. So that what this kind of logic can help to overcome.

So in the nine point death meditation, of the first point (death is certain or definite) there are supposedly three reasons.

The first reason I think is a logical reason:

*Death is definite because death comes to everyone*

In order for that to be a correct reason what criteria have to be present?

AI The sign needs to be *product*?

OK this is good because in the syllogism "sound is impermanent because it is product", sound has to be a product but it is not always that in every syllogism something has to be a *product*.

The first mode is what's called what? Do you know?

Student: There's the subject, the predicate and there's the sign. The first thing is the sign that has to agree with the subject.

Right . Of the subject, the predicate and the sign, we can say, the subject and the predicate together constitute the thesis. In this case "death is definite". Then there is a reason, "because death comes to everyone". Let's just take that part – "because death comes to everyone". For this to be a correct sign, what would have to be the case? There would have to be what are called the three modes: the property of the subject; the forward pervasion and the reverse pervasion, and remember, generally speaking if the forward pervasion is present, the reverse pervasion is also present. You don't have to prove both of them.

In this case the property of the subject, that would be what here? Who wants to make a stab? "Death is definite because the Lord of Death comes to everyone". What is the property of the subject in that syllogism? That's the name of the first mode. What property does the subject have to have in this case? The subject is what?

Student: It has to have the property of being certain.

No. The property of the subject means that *subject* has to *have the property of being the sign*. The subject has to be sign.

Is it true that (the subject) *death* comes to everyone? Is death congruent with or present with the *Lord of Death coming to everyone*? Yeah, I think you could say that.

How about the pervasion? What's the forward pervasion?

Student: The sign

The sign has to pervade.....

Student: ...the predicate

The predicate. That means that when there is the sign there is the predicate. Is that case here? When there is the sign – the Lord of Death coming to everyone – does that entail that death is definite? If the Lord of Death comes to everyone would it be true that death is definite?

Student:(s) Yes

Of course the exception of this - there is always an exception - is the deathless state. Buddha doesn't *have* to die; but this talking about sentient beings in general. We can just meditate, like we do in the Lam-rim, without understanding these subtleties, just get familiar with it; but what we're actually doing is getting closer to developing in our mind some kind of actual logical reasoning due to which our mind will be having established all of the facts needed to generate an inference, a realization.

How can we establish the property of the subject; that the Lord of Death comes to everyone? With logical reasoning or what? It's observation essentially, isn't it?

Student: Everybody dies at some point

Right; we read books, we look at history, we see in our everyday life. So this is something that can be established by direct observation, direct perception, right? Not always in syllogisms are the different elements, the establishing conditions, proved or developed through observation. Sometimes it is through another logical reason.

So that's why we go through these examples, in order to remind ourselves of the truth in the sense of that property of the subject - thinking my dad will die, he's old and he will get older, he will need a cane, he definitely will... my dad. Then apply it to people that are your age; I can see Dan getting older (I'm older than Dan) and he will probably be a little more grey and maybe the hair will start to thin. No? Dan will not die. I'm sorry. It's something we don't even want to address. If some ravaging disease doesn't come he just dies of old age - but definitely he will die. I myself am like that.

Then we think of someone younger than ourselves and how they will die and there are many other examples, like people in history. Anyone you can think of, great beings. You might think "well if I attain that status". You might think maybe Bill Gates won't die and then you think of great financiers and powerful people in the past. Alexander the Great died. Genghis Khan died. Rockefeller died. You don't think so?

Student: When somebody has a rainbow body do they die?

Well it depends upon what level of realization. One meaning of obtaining a rainbow body might be attaining enlightenment. Another might be attaining the illusory body and on another level it might mean something less than the illusory body. I think if you attain the pure illusory body that you will necessarily attain enlightenment in that life time and you won't die. So that's talking about a person who attains enlightenment in that lifetime. So certainly unless you attain enlightenment in this lifetime, you will die. Put it that way. You might say "what about Milarepa? He didn't have to die because he enlightenment in that lifetime". Yeah, but that's the exception. So unless you attain enlightenment before you die you are going to die.

Student: There's a story in the Bible about Enoch who didn't die.

What happened to him?

Student: He went straight up to heaven.

Say for instance you're Dorje, and you practice Vajrayogini and you're taken directly to the Pure Land of Vajrayogini and all we find in the room are some strands of hair or fingernails or maybe nothing. Dorje is gone. He's left behind his guitar and entire music collection of Bjork. Either's he's been kidnapped or he's gone to Thagpa Kachoe, there's no way he would leave his Bjork collection behind. Right?

Dorje: that's right

Maybe if there was a chance for a retreat with Sakya Trizin or so, but other than that we know that there is something going on here if one day he's here and the next day he is gone. What do you think Dan? If he goes of the Thagpa Kachoe, is he going to die there or is that an exception? What do you think Venerable? "Death is definite because the Lord of Death comes to everyone" so then the Lord of Death will still come to Dorje in Thagpa Kachoe?

It is said that if you remain in a Pure Land it is definite that you attain enlightenment there. It might take a long time but it's safe, so you would haven't have to die because you will attain enlightenment in the Pure Land and so you will be a buddha and then you won't die. But it is supposed to be more beneficial and quicker for Bodhisattvas to achieve enlightenment here in this world – in this world system. It is supposed to be more rapid, because the development of renunciation is more easy here. Even if you are in a perfect environment and even if Vajrayogini is teaching you, it may take a long time for you to achieve enlightenment there.

Dorje: From the point of view of you looking and I'm not sitting here anymore...

You might have just gone to the bathroom or something...

Dorje: ... it would seem from your perspective that I died because I wasn't here any more.

If you went to the Pure Land?

Dorje: Yeah

"Dorje is not around any longer". Yeah but what's your point.

Dorje: I don't know....

Well this a good point. When we have doubts like this it is really good to discuss. Those are kind of things as though you perceive one side of something clearly and then there is some other little doubt that has arisen. Having that doubt is an indication that you haven't really realized something in its entirety and so it good to address that and try to figure out what is nagging. Does that actually mean that this is not true?

Dorje: Like what is death then?

What is death? You work in a hospice, right?

Student: I was thinking of when Buddha's body passed away – what was that?

According to the Hinayana view the Buddha passed into Parinirvana. Mo, you know what Parinirvana is. Were there when I talked....?

Mo It's where you cycle off completely and you just don't come back.

"You cycle off completely". Parinirvana, the Great Nirvana – do you know Venerable, according to the Hinayana idea?

Venerable: Oh it's just complete extinguishment...

Total extinguishing of the mind and body; not only the connection between mind and body - because death in general is the extinguishing of the connection between our mind and this body - it's not talking about our gross mind because our gross mind does extinguish and so in a sense you could say it is no longer connected to this body, but the subtle mind is still existing, and that subtle mind, once it leaves and severs the connection with this body, that's the meaning of death – the severing of the karmic connection with this body, when the subtle mind has left this body. The gross mind does diminish even when we sleep,

right? Do we say someone is dead when there's sleep? No we would say there are not dead, they are still breathing. There are some people that are in a coma or maybe in a near death experience and they stop breathing and then people are trying to start the heart again. Have they died? Maybe some have but it is possible that they have not died because they are revived. The subtle mind has not left the body and severed its connection with it. So death is the severing of this mind and this body.

Knowing these things about *lo-rig* can help to understand all of these meditations in the Lam-rim. One thing you have to recognize when you meditate on death for instance is that understanding always has to be within the context of understanding that the life that we do have now is one of great value. Otherwise the inevitability of death could just be a big bummer.

Not recognizing that you have this special opportunity - like criminals who have the plates to print hundred dollar bills, they have this great opportunity and they know that it is going to come to an end so they want to use it as much as they can. It's that kind of context - not that we are thieves, but that we want to try to make use of this rare and infrequent opportunity, that's so valuable, it's not going to come again in a long time. Without that understanding, just thinking about death can be a downer. What else would you say?

Student: A major bummer

A major bummer. Who's our philosophy major? Mo, did you study the existentialists at all in your philosophy training?

Oma: I did

OK. Can I say Camus was a big existentialist? Kierkegaard was a big existentialist. So is it valid from existentialist point of view to commit suicide?

Oma: It's been so long since I studied that.

I don't know why I thought of Camus? Was it Sartre?

Oma: Sartre – yeah

Was it Sartre or Camus who wrote about committing suicide. Ok it must have been Sartre. How do you pronounce it?

Oma: Close enough.

Close enough, ok. So if you're watching this and you speak French, you can correct my pronunciation.

So from a certain perspective, not recognizing the value of what you can do with this life and only looking at this life as this life is going to finish anyway, not seeing any value to it, it could turn into that existential kind of sense of nihilism and it could precipitate suicide. That's why the order of the meditations in the Lam-rim is such that we are first introduced to the great value of the perfect human birth, so that we recognize the perfect human rebirth, so we are not inattentive of it. Otherwise, the example is like you go to someone's house and see that they have a very precious Ming vase and they are using it to put the grease from the stove into or they use it like a spittoon. I think that it's mentioned in the Lam-rim teaching. Nagarjuna said "the very precious vessel like body, we fill up with garbage, not realising its great value" because we are inattentive of that. It's actually there right in front of us but we are not aware of it.



First of all the meditation on recognizing the perfect human rebirth might be in a sense educating us that we've got a jewel that we never realized, and this stone turns out to be a big diamond or ruby or something. "Wow – I can use this for a different purpose". On the basis of being familiar with that meditation, meditating on death and impermanence has a great meaning because it can impel us not to waste it... Once we recognize what a precious thing this is, we also have to be aware of another step, that this opportunity is impermanent, it's transitory and is being lost.

OK what's the second reason of death and impermanence? Do you know Carrie?

Oma: You didn't do the reverse pervasion though.

What would the reverse pervasion be? So if the Lord the Death comes to everyone it necessarily pervades that death is definite is the forward pervasion. That's true isn't it? There is a pervasion. What's the reverse pervasion? It would be the reverse of the predicate pervading the reverse of the sign. So what would that be in this case? Sister Oma called us to task here and we have to now go over this point. I mean she's just afraid to go to the next point. She just wants linger more.

Student: Yama will come to everyone because death is definite.

No. If death is not definite, the Lord of Death will not come to everyone. The Lord of Death comes everyone pervades death being definite. That means if the Lord of Death comes to everyone, it is certain that death is definite. Here with the counter pervasion you take the opposite of the predicate, which is what?

Student: Death is not definite.

Death is not definite. Death is uncertain. If death is uncertain would it necessarily be true that the Lord of Death would not come to everyone. In general if the forward pervasion is proved you don't have to prove the counter-pervasion. In some syllogisms the counter-pervasion is easier to prove or establish. That's why if you can establish that you don't have to establish the forward pervasion.

What's the second reason in the nine-round meditation on death? The first one was the Lord of Death comes to everyone and there's no way to escape him. The second one is death is definite because.....? Diane?

Diane: I thought it was because you can't escape death - you can't hide from death....

That's the first reason. The first reason has two parts: the Lord of Death comes to everyone and there is no way to escape Him. Venerable we have to call on you again. Sorry, no-one else is familiar with the Lam-rim.

Venerable: The lifespan is constantly decreasing and there's nothing you can add on

Almost in a sense it's very necessary to say that latter point because you might think that even though it's constantly decreasing at the time of death I kind of ask for some extension. You know the Lord of Death comes and I can say "five more minutes. I've go to do my Powa" or "I just need three months to do retreat. ...". Like in the Foreign Legion movies, the person asking for the last cigarette to extend the period of life, right? I think I've mentioned this before – there was a big advertisement in Italy for the National Telecom, it went for many episodes, every day there was a theme, and it showed this guy who is ready to be shot

and the soldiers are standing there waiting for the order and the general has got is swagger stick and the guy has a little cellular phone, talking to his mother, and he says “yes mamma, without this phone, I’d be dead”. That’s how it translates, it was all in Italian.

The subject *death, is certain* or definite (predicate) because the lifespan is constantly decreasing and when the time of death does come there is no way to extend it. First of all is that true? Is our lifespan constantly decreasing?

Students: Yes

Can’t we kind of just do something everyday? What would you suggest?

Student: White Tara

Yeah – White Tara. Chi-gong. Then our lifespan is not decreasing?

Student: Yeah but you can slow it down perhaps.

We can slow it down? From a Buddhist perspective when we talk about death it is important to know these things; what is the main cause of our lifespan, what determines our lifespan at the time of birth? We have a possible lifespan at the time of birth which due to what?

Students: Karma

Karma and not due to St. Peter or whoever or God (from a Buddhist perspective) unless you consider that God or the Omniscient mind help us to create the throwing karma. When we are thrown into a particular situation we have a certain possibility of lifespan, there are other conditions that can arise before that (also due to our karma but a different karma) that can prevent that lifespan from being lived out. For instance because of some different karma that we’ve created in a different lifetime, we could be murdered. Untimely death would mean not living out that appointed lifespan. That could be due to our lifespan being curtailed because we’ve taken a life. It’s still our karma and there’s no way that we could be killed by someone unless we created the karma; of course they are also creating karma at that point.

Or it could be that we’ve run out of resources. It can be that we no longer have food and we die of starvation in the wilderness. Have you heard of things like that? How about that guys whose armed got trapped under the stone? Why did he cut off his arm? Why didn’t he just wait for people to come? He would have died. He knew that unless he had food or water...

Student: Which he didn’t have

Student: He calculated how long he could last without...

Other kinds of lack of resources could be that you’re scuba diving in very deep water and your tank runs out of oxygen and you could die due to lack of air. Or due to lack of warmth; you could be in the Arctic thrust out into the cold and you could die of exposure. These are karmic consequences that could cause an untimely death.

These are points that we would have to establish first of all or develop some confidence in that there is a set lifespan, and of course this something that science might not accept - maybe right now some scientist would, maybe not. This is something that we would come to understand through Dharma understanding –

that throwing karma that throws us into this lifetime has a certain duration and we can't exceed that. We can try to prevent a lot of the things; we can prevent degenerating diseases and infections so that we can live out our full life. That would be also like using Chigong and candles and whatever which could help us to eliminate the adverse conditions but it can't elongate our lifespan, from a Buddhist perspective. Does that make sense to you?

Student: It can't prevent the death.

It can't prevent death itself. It can start to eliminate some of the causes for untimely death which would mean all of those instances of death that take place before the amount that we could live due to throwing karma is finished.

Now in the sutra tradition there is one exception to that I think, and that is that some arhats can in meditation utilise some karma from a lifespan that was foreshortened in the past. Like say for instance you had the karma to live ninety years and you only lived seventy because of some accident or murder or something, and you had twenty years that were unused. In the Abhidharma it says that some arhats can utilise that to extend their lifespan now. But that is pretty esoteric and it's not something we can do very easily.

Student: Banked karma

Banked karma – the treasure under the house or something. In Buddhist tantra of course there are ways to actually extend the lifespan. That's the whole point of tantra – that one can attain enlightenment in one lifetime. Not necessarily one short lifetime, as in kriya tantra – an elongated lifetime, maybe hundreds of thousands of years; one does certain long-life practices, which are very important in the lower tantras. In highest yoga tantra there are ways to attain enlightenment even in a short lifespan of this degenerate age but in kriya tantra there are practices – the vase meditation etc. – to actually create the karma to have a longer lifespan. But in general without those, death is definite because the lifespan that we have is constantly decreasing.

This is something that you can see many analogies of. You can see for instance that even though I bought the super big can of coffee, and I thought "oh boy – I'm set now", with the first spoon you take and shaking it a little it still looks full, and after a week it's only gone down a little, but with every spoon it's getting emptier and emptier, right? The *Nutella*, with every spoonful it's getting closer and closer to it's eventual demise. You can recognize how things diminish constantly, we can see that in every day life through direct perception. To have this reasoning really resonate in our mind we would have to have some confidence or even ideally for it to be an inferential cognition, would it be enough to just be confident that the lifespan is constantly decreasing. That would be enough right? To have a correct belief in that would be to an inferential cognition? No! Come-on! In order for a syllogism to give rise to an inferential cognizer you would have to have realized the three modes: the property of the subject - in this case that the lifespan is constantly decreasing....You have to realize that. And there are only three kinds of realizing cognitions – a prime cognizer, an inferential cognition and a subsequent cognition. So you would have to realize that, either through your own experience or through some other inference.

How could you realize that the lifespan is constantly decreasing? Well, through faith in Buddha as a perfect teacher; by having realized other things – maybe realized emptiness, having some insight into emptiness, and thereby then having determined that Buddha is a perfect teacher because of teaching this incredibly subtle subject, and then developing confidence that his pronouncements about other things are totally valid. That's the inference of belief – that our lifespan is set and is constantly decreasing.

Actually we can see to certain extent that that's true. We can logically understand that our lifespan is constantly decreasing. If we know that we have a certain lifespan it's got to decreasing, right? Does a watch every stand still?

Student: When it runs out of battery

When it runs out of battery. So it would be better when you are afraid of dying to let your clocks run down, then you wouldn't be dying? No, time is still passing, right?

Should we take a short break and then do one last meditation?

Student: So let's go through these pervasions first.

We'll take a break and you and I will go through the pervasions. Let the other people have a little break....

## Break

So before we do the last mediation here, just to remind you – what is the third point? In the nine-point mediation on death there is said to be three roots and for each of them three reasons. The first two are logical reasons, I think, for the most part. What is the third reason for death is definite?

Student: Well the third one is really a good reason for explaining about the certainty. It's that during our lifespan we don't have much time to practice Dharma.

How is it phrased? Is that's exactly how's it's phrased, Venerable? It's close. "Life passes even without the practice of Dharma" is one way that it is expressed. Is this a correct reason? Is that a perfect reason to prove that death is definite? It doesn't seem like a compelling reason in the same way that the first two seemed logical reasons.

I haven't seen this in a text but the tradition says that this third reason is called the "reason for realization" and not necessarily a logical reason. It doesn't necessarily follow a logical syllogism – 'for a person, death is definite because life passes even without the practice of Dharma'. It's not compelling as a logical reason, but this is to help to bring about realization of the first point. Even if we haven't realized with an inferential cognition the first two reasons but we are just developing some belief in this, through familiarity and by seeing things in everyday life, and even though we haven't *ascertained* that our lifespan is a certain amount because karma, we do see that it's constantly decreasing and we develop faith in Buddha and we start to have more and more confidence in these. Then this can bring some kind of culmination when you bring all of these reasons together. Life passes whether you practice Dharma or not.

Most of our life is spent first in childhood, when most of us haven't even met the Dharma... Did any of you meet the Dharma when you were kids? Maybe some of you had the good fortune. How many years did we spend in childhood before we met the Dharma? Say we were twenty or twenty five or thirty or forty - let's say twenty years; or fifteen years at least gone, in my case twenty nine years before I met the Dharma.

Then how many years do you spend sleeping after that. From the time you were twenty until the time say you are forty, how much time do you spend sleeping? Maybe a total of a week? How many hours a day do you spend sleeping - maybe eight hours, let's say a third of the day, then it's more than six years out of

those twenty, a third of our life approximately is spent in sleep and then a great deal of time is spent in seeking food, go to the market, preparing food, eating and savouring the food, washing up afterwards and then finally defecating and cleaning your own mess up afterwards. How much time do we spend doing that during the day, in ordinary circumstances where we can't hire someone to do that for us; we might spend an hour or and hour and a half preparing, searching for the ingredients or even daydreaming about the ingredients – shopping, bringing it home, fighting with traffic, bringing it upstairs and preparing it, preserving it if it's not ready to eat immediately and then eating it and so forth. A couple of hours, at least an hour. Even if you go to a restaurant how much time do you spend a day? Dorje how much time do you spend a day when our food is made here for us?

Dorje: I spend most of the day thinking about food.

Student: Dorje you need to get out more

Get a life Dorje!

Student: If you're working and making money, part of time is just so that you can get food.

It's just so that you can get food, so you can't ignore that. You can't say "well I go to the automat, it's there..." You wouldn't be able to go to a restaurant unless you had the money, which you spent time in getting.

And then in order to have pleasure of the senses, which we see as the main cause of happiness and as protecting us from suffering... We spend so much time working; and often times either apathetic to the Dharma or peripheral to it. We forget to apply the Dharma, even though we could, as a nurse or a doctor, more and more integrate the Dharma, but we often forget to do that.

So this third reason is to enhance the realization that death is certain. It is said that in the face of that reality, of that certainty, disturbing emotions are powerless.

Like for instance Maureen comes in and says "I've just heard on the radio that they've sent a hydrogen bomb here by mistake and it's due in three minutes", and at that point Dorje says to me "Venerable you owe me five dollars".

Dorje: I wanted to get something to eat before it.

It's probably more likely that I would say to Dorje 'you forgot to put gas in the car' or something like that. We wouldn't do something like that; in the face the immensity of that all smaller worries would lose their importance. So it's like that for a person who has realized the inevitability of death through this kind of meditation, developing some certainty, even if it's not an inferential recognition, we develop more and more a correct belief. Sometimes a correct belief doesn't come about because of logical reasoning; correct belief can come though, right? Remember, some of the correct beliefs were beliefs that were not yet inferential cognition but simply on the basis of a correct reasoning not totally stabilised in the mind, not everything totally ascertained, but that can still give certainty. So we can develop certainty. Even doubt leaning in the right direction about emptiness can shake the foundations of our samsara, so certainly a correct belief about things like this can be even more powerful.

Let's do another meditation here.

## Meditation 5

See if you can stabilise first of all, watching the breathing. Bring your mind inside. Particularly because the object is easy to find and if we get familiar with it we can quickly let go of other trains of thought....

Knowing how difficult it is to do meditation in general, say if we do analytical meditation, use that as an incentive for you to now let go of all of these other streams of discursive thought. Just focus on the breathing first....

When the breathing is rapid, the change between inhalation and exhalation is quicker, obviously. Even when the breathing slows down, that moment of seeming stabilisation is just instantaneous....

And withdrawing further to just the mental consciousness, taking that now as your object rather than the breathing, and of the mental consciousness, its clear light nature, being un-obstructing....

Even letting go of the mental image that you've developed previously of the mind, and even though it might be fairly factually concordant, trying to perceive the consciousness within which the mental image is appearing, even more subtly, as though trying to go beyond a mental image to the direct realization.....

And within that clarity that we're using here to stabilise the mind, bring to mind the meditation on impermanence and death – mainly talking about gross impermanence. I myself must die. It's definite that I will die. I can't avoid that. I can't ignore it or deny it. This perfect human rebirth that I have will quickly be lost because the Lord of Death comes to everyone and there's no way to avoid him. We've ascertained this before....

Now go to another reason to try to bring up that feeling, that understanding. The time I have left to live, my lifespan that is yet to be experienced, is constantly decreasing and when I reach the time of death there's no way then to extend it. It's not like having reached the bottom of the can of coffee and then simply finding a solution by going out and getting another can or filling it up by more from another reservoir..

Think of different examples in your life. Large quantities of resources diminishing, even using a small amount of it at a time. A huge can of oil that you think is your resource and you notice a little bit of oil leaking from a crack in the side and you think nothing of it. You come back some weeks later and the oil has gone quite noticeably....

Even with every second, if we look at a wristwatch, right in plain sight the hand is moving and the amount of time that we have left to live is decreasing right in front of us.... Like falling through space, falling through time....

If it were something that we could enjoy, like the slow descent of a parachute, a safe descent, that would be one thing, but many of us are essentially falling towards the lower realms. When we will reach there we don't know.

Every second getting closer and the lifespan that we have is constantly decreasing....

To bring more power to that understanding go back and try to recall to yourself the pervasion – if my lifespan is finite and it's constantly decreasing, I will definitely die. There will definitely come a point where

the lifespan is expended and there's no extra life. I won't continue having with a connection between my mind and body at that time. The mind will leave this precious opportunity of leisure and endowment....

See if you can ascertain each of the individual elements. You have to recognize that I am a person, that our lifespan is constantly decreasing and that it is something that you can observe with your senses because we've already ascertained that death comes to everyone and we have a certain amount of lifespan and with every second we're getting closer to finishing that, whether we're sleeping, whether we're distracted by pleasures, whether we ignore it, time is still running out....

And at time of death, when we reach the end of our lifespan, there are no tricks, no begging and no influence that we can exert to extend our lifespan; no begging or, pleading with the Lord of Death, pleading with God, with Buddha – “just another three months so that I can do retreat, so that I can purify negative karma”....

The feeling of remorse that many people have when their loved ones die without having had a chance to tell them how much they cared. When it happens, when the person dies, it's over and there's no extra life and you can't bring them back to life and tell them “oh I really did love you. I'm sorry”.....

If on the basis of these first two reasons: that the Lord of Death comes to everyone and there's no way to avoid him, and the lifespan is constantly decreasing and there's no way to extend it at the time of death, you develop some greater certainty, a one pointedness like a correct belief, or a realization, try to hold that sensation single pointedly, that insight.....

You can remind yourself of the different elements of the syllogism:

I am a person who has a finite lifespan which is constantly decreasing, and there's no way to extend it at the time of death.

If there is a finite lifespan that's constantly decreasing and there is no way to extend it, one will definitely die.

Therefore I am definitely to die.....

And for the sake of bringing some feeling to that realization think of the third reason:

Most of our life passes without the practice of Dharma. Life passes even if we don't practice Dharma. So it is not a case that ignorance is bliss. Even if we are unaware of it, life is passing. Much of our life has already passed....

Aware that we have a perfect rebirth of great value that is very rare and that death is definite and this life will definitely end, see if you can come to the conclusion of the first three points – the decision that I must practice the Dharma....

If death were not definite, if I didn't have to leave this body and perhaps go to the lower realms, experience something else, less useful, one might argue that I don't need to practice Dharma, no need to put in that effort. But death is definite, I have to leave this life....

And finally think of the virtuous karma, the merit that we've created today and earlier during this course and during our life that has still not ripened and make a special dedication, a strong wish, an aspiration:



May all my work, all the effort that I've undergone, difficult practices, study, offerings, prostrations, result not just in my own samsaric relief here and in the future, but may it become the cause of my continual successful spiritual journey, developing realizations year by year, decade by decade, life by life. Always sharing along the way with sentient beings to achieve the state of enlightenment, awakening, free of all faults, all needs, generous and wise, to be able to share compassionately with all sentient beings, spontaneously, without effort or fatigue, the methods to achieve their awakening....

Due to this merit may I quickly become a guru-buddha in order to lead each and every sentient being without exception into that very same state....

And seal the dedication with meditation on the emptiness of the three spheres:

The sphere of the entity that is being dedicated, the merits. Although they appear real and perhaps even findable in a sense – arisen from some action that we did – they, like all phenomena, have no inherent findable true existence. Conventionally existent merely as name or concept attributed to their bases, their parts. Which does not negate that they have efficacy but they can't be found in the way that our mind perceives them....

The goal dedicated to – our enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings, leading them to that same state – even when conventionally it might occur, it can't be found. The Buddha doesn't exist from his own side. It's merely existent conventionally as a name or concept attributable to that basis....

And the act of dedication – not findable on any of its parts. Merely a name labelled to them, conceptually consistent, having meaning, having efficacy and joining, through that aspiration, the karmic cause with the effect, causing that karma to ripen in that particular way....

I'm not truly existent, nor is my mind, nor are other sentient beings, but still we exist and function conventionally, like a dream....

Thank you very much.

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<sup>i</sup> From Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grok>):

The [Oxford English Dictionary](#) defines *to grok* as "to understand intuitively or by empathy; to establish [rapport](#) with" and "to empathise or communicate sympathetically (with); also, to experience enjoyment".

**Grok** [/ˈɡrɒk/](#) is a word coined by [Robert A. Heinlein](#) for his 1961 science-fiction novel, [Stranger in a Strange Land](#), where it is defined as follows: Grok means to understand so thoroughly that the observer becomes a part of the observed—to merge, blend, intermarry, lose identity in group experience.

**Note from the editor:** Initially, when *to grok* was first introduced during these teachings and in the transcript, there were a lot of uses of the word and it was edited out. At this point however the editor changed her mind and decided to happily tolerate further uses of the word, taking it to more or less mean 'to digest'..... For FPMT Basic Program Online students: there is a forum posting about the word as well.