

**RIGPA
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME**

**ANCIENT WISDOM FOR THE
MODERN WORLD**
An Introduction to Buddhism

November 2004

COURSE MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Amidst the tremendous uncertainty of our lives, we need to find a way to meet difficulties, crises, problems and troubles to understand, transform and overcome them with deeper acceptance and compassion, and so discover the peace of mind, stability, and fulfilment that we need so much to face the challenges of the world today. In these troubled times, following a spiritual path has never been more urgent. It is a great source of hope that the teachings of all great spiritual traditions are still available.

Sogyal Rinpoche

More and more people around the world are recognizing the tremendous gift that Buddhism has to offer, one offered with no notion of conversion or exclusivity, and to people of any faith or none. These teachings hold the key to qualities that we urgently need today—peace of mind to bring us inner strength, confidence and happiness, and the compassion and good heart to help us free ourselves from our destructive emotions. In a world racked by turmoil and mental suffering, Buddhist teachings could not be more practical. They speak to us all, and any one of us can put them into action so as to live our lives with more wisdom and more compassion.

About this course

ANCIENT WISDOM FOR THE MODERN WORLD—*An Introduction to Buddhism* offers an introduction to Buddhist ideas and approaches. Taught by the Buddha over 2,500 years ago and passed down to us by a lineage of masters who studied these words, reflected deeply on their meaning and experienced their truth personally, these principles are as useful today as they were when first spoken in the gardens and groves of India so many years ago. Their timeless applicability comes from the fact that they address the basic human desire to find happiness and are not limited to any particular social or political environment.

Presentations by instructors, group practice, study, and interaction among students are combined to create a supportive environment in which to become acquainted with these teachings. Advice will be given on how to turn this information into a living understanding that can guide us in facing the challenges of daily life.

Course level and prerequisites

ANCIENT WISDOM FOR THE MODERN WORLD—*An Introduction to Buddhism* is one of the entry points to the Rigpa Education Programme. More detailed information on the programme is available through your local group or national Rigpa centre. A short introduction to Rigpa and Sogyal Rinpoche can be found in Appendix One of this manual.

Aims of this course

This course will give you a simple introduction to Buddhism, its vastness and profundity, its relevance to modern life and the principles governing Buddhist thought and action, as well as an intellectual grasp of its framework. Through it, we hope to open a door to the rich storehouse of wisdom hidden in each of us and to point out some of the tools Buddhism offers us, developed and fine tuned for over a thousand years in the laboratory of the Himalayas, to uncover our true potential and live it to the fullest. This course is open to everyone, from all walks of life, no matter what religious background you have, or whether you have one or not.

The principal focuses of study

What Buddhism is (and what it isn't).

The essence of the Buddha's teachings.

Principles of Buddhist view¹ and conduct.

Verifying the truth of these teachings in the reality of your life; integration.

This course presents the approach of Sogyal Rinpoche, based on the oral lineage of instruction and guidance handed down to him by his teachers in the *Nyingma*² or ‘ancient’ tradition of Tibetan Buddhism.³

Materials needed

The course manual.

The course video (optional except for students participating in the online course).

Each session uses extracts of Sogyal Rinpoche’s teachings, recorded on video. The teaching extracts used in this course are available for purchase on video, audiocassette and CD. Order information can be found in Appendix Five. See Appendix Three for the course video content.

Source material

Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, Revised and Updated (Referred to as TBLD in charts)

Sogyal Rinpoche, *Natural Great Peace*, Revised and Updated (Referred to as NGP in charts)

Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Future of Buddhism*

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *Ethics for the New Millennium*, and *An Open Heart*

How to use this course manual

Rigpa’s approach to study is a gradual process of deepening our understanding and inspiring the right environment in our minds to engage with these teachings. To get the most from this course, we suggest you participate in three ways:

Study: listen to the teachings with an open mind and heart.

Practice: take time to reflect on the words and their meaning.

Integration: engage with them every day to assess their validity and relevance in your life.

These three elements—study, practice, and integration—form the backbone of this course.

A complete overview of this course is given in chart form in Appendix Two.

Summaries

There are many levels of meaning and understanding to discover in Buddhist teachings. Our first encounter with a teaching usually allows us only a superficial understanding. With this in mind, a summary of the essential points of each of the teaching selections is provided. They are meant to help you remember what you have heard and to encourage you to further study.

Essential points for the *main* teaching(s) are included in each section of the manual. The points for the *optional* teachings can be found in Appendix Four.

If you prefer another method of remembering the main points of the teachings, feel free to use it. The point is to engage with the teachings and really think about them. We encourage you to be as creative and imaginative as possible.

Terms and names

Here you will find a short explanation of any Tibetan, Pali or Sanskrit terms used in the teaching excerpts and a brief biography of masters referred to in the teachings. We have also provided the intended meaning of English words when they are used in a particular way.

Points for reflection

After listening to a teaching, it is especially important to take some time to reflect on its meaning if you want to understand it fully. Buddha exhorted his disciples to test his teachings “like analysing gold, scorching, cutting and rubbing it to test its purity.”⁴ In the same manner, we should analyse each teaching to confirm its truth for ourselves. The best time to do that is when the teaching is still fresh in our mind. The questions in this section are offered to inspire this reflection.

Practice

In this course, reflecting on the meaning of the teachings is the main practice. In Buddhism, the practice of reflection is an integral part of the process of

developing understanding and integration. In each class, participants will be guided through a period of reflection related to the main points of the teaching presented. Everyone is encouraged to continue this type of practice regularly, at home, between sessions.

Further study: Recommended reading

This section offers readings from relevant books to complement the ideas presented in the teachings and to encourage your exploration and reflection.

Further study: Recommended teachings

Here you will find other teachings to deepen your understanding of what you have studied so far and to inspire you. All recommended teachings are available from a ZAM⁵ distribution outlet in your country, or you can order from the online store: www.zamstore.com (for Europe) or <http://store.yahoo.com/zamamerica/index.html> (for North America).

Feedback

As *Ancient Wisdom for the Modern World* is currently a pilot course, your feedback, suggestions and comments are extremely important to us. An evaluation form will be provided at the end of the course. If you prefer, you also can send feedback directly to C.E.P.feedback@wanadoo.fr (for regular courses) or distancelearning@rigpa.org (for Distance Learning courses). We greatly appreciate your taking the time to help us in this way.

1. WHAT BUDDHISM IS (AND WHAT IT ISN'T)

Looking at the world today, we might easily forget that the main purpose of our life—you could call it the heart of being human—is to be happy. All of us share the same wish, and the same right, to seek happiness and avoid suffering. Even following a spiritual path, or the religious life, is a quest for happiness.

In the case of Buddhism, it is for the ultimate happiness of enlightenment that we follow the spiritual path. Some of you may think, “Enlightenment, well...that’s not for me. It is only for holy men and women. I want something practical.” Actually, there’s nothing more practical than wanting to obtain enlightenment. Because what is enlightenment? To put it simply, it is to be completely free from suffering and to find ultimate and lasting happiness. Until we realize enlightenment, whatever happiness we have is only temporary.

So, where do we find this lasting happiness? In the realization of the ultimate nature of ourselves. Everything is here within us. The truth is within us. Happiness is within us. True happiness and peace of mind cannot be found in anything external; it can only be found within.

Sogyal Rinpoche

Aims

To clarify what Buddhism is and what it isn’t, to give a sense of its historical authenticity, and the timelessness and universality of its message and to show its relevance.

Study

A basic overview of Buddhism.

An introduction to Sogyal Rinpoche’s way of teaching.

Practice

Listen wholeheartedly and with an open mind.

Reflect on the meaning.

Integration

Take the teachings into your life to test their relevance and validity.

Study

About the teaching

The teachings you will watch in this section were given by Sogyal Rinpoche in Sydney, London and Palo Alto, CA. in 2000 and 2001.

You will find these extracts in the video and audio compilations for this course. See Appendix Three to locate it on the course video. The complete Sydney teaching is available as “The Benefits of Meditation” on audio tape ZAM order number TAP319.

If there is time, an excerpt from the teaching of 2 July 2000 in Stockholm might be studied too. It is quite short and gives you another perspective with which to view the ideas presented here. It is included in the video compilation for this course so you can also view it at home between sessions, to inspire your practice of reflecting. A summary of this teaching can be found in Appendix Four.

Learning how to listen—a beginner’s mind is an open mind

In the Buddhist tradition great emphasis is placed on how to listen to spiritual teachings. Listening is in itself a practice and a skill that needs to be learnt. In this short excerpt from *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, Sogyal Rinpoche invites us to take a fresh look at the way we listen to the teachings:

Listening is a far more difficult process than most people imagine; really to listen in the way that is meant by the masters is to let go utterly of ourselves, to let go of all the information, all the concepts, all the ideas, and all the prejudices that our heads are stuffed with. If you really listen to the teachings, those concepts that are our real hindrance, the one thing that stands between us and our true nature, can slowly and steadily be washed away.

In trying really to listen, I have often been inspired by the Zen master Shunryu Suzuki, who said: “If your mind is empty, it is always ready for

anything; it is open to everything. In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's mind there are few." The beginner's mind is an open mind, an empty mind, a ready mind, and if we really listen with a beginner's mind, we might really begin to hear. For if we listen with a silent mind, as free as possible from the clamour of preconceived ideas, a possibility will be created for the truth of the teachings to pierce us, and for the meaning of life and death to become increasingly and startlingly clear. My master Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche said: "The more and more you listen, the more and more you hear; the more and more you hear, the deeper and deeper your understanding becomes."⁶

One of the unique features of the Dharma is that not only does it speak of the rewards of following a spiritual path, it also tells you exactly how to attain them. As your study and practice progresses, you will hear more about how to listen and hear the teachings, take them to heart and apply them in your life. These three activities—listening, contemplation and meditation—are called the 'three wisdom tools'. If you would like to know more about them now, you can read the section devoted to them in *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, Chapter Eight, p. 125

Notes

This space has been left for you to write down any notes you may wish to make.

It is often easier to remember the main points if you write them down as you hear them. Another way of remembering the essence of a teaching is to write down what you remember as soon as you have finished listening to it.

Summaries

The Benefits of Meditation

Sydney 13 January 2000

- The Buddha said,

We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with an impure mind,
And trouble will follow you
As the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart.

We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with a pure mind,
And happiness will follow you
As your shadow, unshakeable.

‘Look how he abused me and beat me,
And how he threw me down and robbed me.’
Live with such thoughts and you live in hate.

‘Look how he abused me and beat me,
How he threw me down and robbed me.’
Abandon such thoughts, and you live in love.

In this world
Hate never yet dispelled hate
Only love dispels hate.
This is the law,
Ancient and inexhaustible.

*The Dhammapada*⁷

- An alternative translation reads,
Just as fire cannot destroy fire

Anger cannot destroy anger.
It is only through love.
This is the law,
Ancient and inexhaustible.

- This teaching encapsulates everything, because we are what we think. I would like you to keep it as a guide and reminder in the innermost recess of your heart, and foremost in your mind.
- Not only are we what we think, but it is with our thoughts that we create karma. Every one of us is in a world of our own.
- While the West was developing a material technology based on science, the best Tibetan minds were devoted to the realization of wisdom and compassion, and the innermost essence of the nature of mind. This is the wonderful contribution that the great Tibetan masters and practitioners have made to the world.
- The truth of the teaching of the Buddha is universal, and transcends religion. I know many Christians who feel no conflict between Christian and Buddhist teachings whatsoever. The teachings of the Buddha can even bring people closer to God and to Christ.
- Ultimately, the point is not about becoming a Buddhist or a Christian. It is about coming to understand the innermost essence of the nature of mind, the nature of God.
- As His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, the twentieth century has been one of the bloodiest of all, but he hopes that the twenty-first century will be more spiritual, because people are beginning to realize that material progress *alone* does not bring lasting happiness, that there is more to life than that.
- In fact, 'finding ourselves', understanding and realizing the truth that lies within us, is even more important than following a religious tradition. And what is extraordinary about the teachings of the Buddha is that they are directed towards this very end, towards the realization of our true nature.

- We come into touch with ourselves when we understand our mind, because mind is the universal ordering principle, the creator of happiness and suffering, of samsara and nirvana.

- But the trouble with us is that we get busy and carried away by our thoughts and emotions, and this prevents us from finding the root of the mind.

- Padmasambhava said, “Do not seek to cut the root of phenomena, cut the root of the mind.” Cutting the root of the mind accomplishes everything in one action. But if instead we seek to cut the root of every arising thought and emotion, we will be forever stuck, because thoughts and emotions emanate from the mind—they are not the mind itself. Instead of being carried away by our thoughts and emotions, we have to understand the mind from which they all rise.

- We need to get hold of ourselves, to tame this mind of ours, and realize its nature. Failing to realize the nature of mind is the cause of all confusion, whilst realizing its nature is the source of enlightenment.

- As it is said in the teachings, “one ground, two paths.”
—‘One ground’ means that in terms of our fundamental nature there is not the slightest difference between ourselves and the buddhas.
—But on the path, the buddhas recognized their nature and became enlightened, whereas we did not and became confused.
—This is why enlightenment is often described as less a matter of ‘becoming enlightened’, and more a matter of ceasing to be deluded.

- For example, when the clouds dissolve, the sun shines. But the sun was there all along; it didn’t just pop out of nowhere. In the same manner, we are not always able to experience our true nature because of the thick clouds of turbulent thought and emotion that obscure it from us. We mistakenly believe our thoughts and emotions are our true nature. We fail to go deeper and realize what solace, hope and meaning there is in the nature of mind.

- Getting in touch with our fundamental nature, even if only for a moment, makes a world of difference. It is tremendously healing and gives us a new

perspective on ourselves and the world. And we see that confusion and negativity are only temporary conditions, not our ultimate nature.

- Therefore, the mind can be changed—it *can* be purified. This realization inspires us to work with ourselves, to abandon the unwholesome actions that cause suffering, and to adopt the positive actions that bring us happiness.

The Dharma

London 16 January 2001

- The Sanskrit word for the teaching of the Buddha is *Dharma*. In Pali, it's *Dhamma*, and *Chö* in Tibetan.

- The word 'Dharma' has many meanings but can be translated literally as 'that which holds.' These teachings hold and protect you.

- Interestingly, Buddhists do not often apply the term 'religion' to the action of putting the word of the Buddha into practice. His Holiness the Dalai Lama often says that Dharma offers a bridge between those who follow a religion and those who don't. For those who don't, Buddhism is a science of mind and a way of life, whereas for those who do, it also happens to be one of the great world religions.

- The incredible thing about the Dharma is that it's so all encompassing, so open in its approach and vision. Essentially speaking, the Dharma actually is 'the truth.'

- It's good to remember that the term 'Buddhism' is a Western coinage—the word doesn't exist in Tibetan. What this implies is that 'following the Dharma' does not necessarily mean you have to become a Buddhist. The Buddha did not manifest in this world to teach Buddhism, he came to show us our true nature, the inherent nature of existence.

- Dharma reveals in us the wisdom known as "the penetrating insight into the nature of reality." And realizing the interdependent nature of phenomena, the nature of the world, reveals our love and compassion. This is the essence of the teaching of the Buddha: wisdom and compassion.

- Tibetans call themselves *nangpa* . As *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* says, *nangpa* means “‘inside-er’: someone who seeks the truth not outside, but within the nature of mind,” and in the inherent nature of phenomena. There is no truth beyond this.
- Even though our true nature exists within us, our ignorance has prevented us from recognizing it and as a result, we’ve lost our way.
- All the various negative emotions that cause us to act negatively arise out of ignorance. They lead us onto the ‘wheel of suffering’ that is *samsaric* existence.
- The Dharma is the path that leads us back to the truth. And the embodiment of the ultimate realization of the truth of the Dharma, the *dharmakaya* , is enlightenment.
- Put simply, the point of Dharma, and the first precept taken by someone committing to the path of Dharma by taking refuge, is to refrain from harm, to do no evil.
—Secondly, it is to do good, to develop the good heart of love and compassion. As the Dalai Lama often says, “My religion is very simple, my religion is kindness.”
—And thirdly, the purpose of Dharma is to tame our minds.

Palo Alto 3 November 2000

- What I share in my teachings is the quintessence of the teachings of my masters. These teachings are not written scriptures, but the oral teachings and direct word of the Buddha and the masters, which form the ‘profound’ and experiential approach of the *yogi* .
- The extraordinary thing about the great masters is that they have understood and practised the entire teaching of the Buddha, and experienced it in life. So what they give us is a pith instruction distilled from the ‘vast’ approach, the heart advice of the teachings of the Buddha.

- In this modern day and age, we don't have much free time, so this essential approach is particularly valuable for us. Whatever we learn, we should have a basic understanding, an ABC of spirituality. And there's also an extraordinary universality to this teaching. You could say it is the heart of spirituality.
- As His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, if the true message of religion is taken to heart and not lost in religiosity, religion can foster love, compassion, tolerance, and patience, and turn us into good human beings.
- You will find that this is the universal message of the great teachers of all traditions, yet each teacher has a unique approach.
- The unique quality of Buddhism, and particularly of Tibetan Buddhism, is its direct, experiential know-how, which is known as the living lineage. This living lineage is not a hierarchy, or a tradition, so what is it?
- It's one thing to have the word of the Buddha preserved in the Buddhist scriptures, but another thing entirely to understand and interpret it. Sometimes the meaning of the scriptures is literal, and at other times the true meaning is hidden. One characteristic of the living lineage of Tibetan Buddhism is a tradition of extremely thorough study.
- The Buddha himself explained directly the definitive meaning of his teachings, and transmitted that authentic understanding and wisdom to his disciples.
- From that time on, this knowledge has been kept alive down through the generations by masters empowering their main disciples with the wisdom and realization of the Buddha that they themselves embody.
- My master Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö, for example, was an extraordinary teacher. He was like the light of the world, the master of all the other masters. Nobody could imagine what life would be like without him. But after he passed away, I experienced,

...in the most vivid way, the truth of how a master can transmit the blessing of his wisdom mind to a student. One day Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche gave a teaching about devotion and about our master Jamyang

Khyentse, which was extraordinarily moving; the words flowed from him in a torrent of eloquence and the purest of spiritual poetry. Again and again, as I listened to Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and watched him, I was reminded in the most mysterious way of Jamyang Khyentse himself, and how he had been able simply to speak and pour out, as if from a hidden inexhaustible source, the most exalted teaching. Slowly I realized, with wonder, what had happened: the blessing of the wisdom mind of Jamyang Khyentse had been transmitted completely to his heart-son, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, and was now, before us all, speaking effortlessly through him.

At the end of the teaching, I turned to Khandro [Jamyang Khyentse's spiritual wife] and Chokden [the master of ceremonies], and I saw tears streaming down their faces. "We knew that Dilgo Khyentse was a great master," they said, "and we know how it is said that a master will transmit the entire blessing of his wisdom mind to his heart-son. But it is only now, only today, only here, that we realize what this truly means.

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, p. 145

- So this is the living lineage. The real, definitive meaning is transmitted, and that's why these great masters are so precious. I have no greatness, but at least I have had the great good fortune to have met and studied with some of these great masters. I merely repeat what they have told me. Therefore, what I say is safe.

Terms and names *Key to references is found in Appendix Seven: Glossary*

Buddha nature: saints and mystics throughout history have adorned their realizations with different names and given them different faces and interpretations, but what they are all fundamentally experiencing is the essential nature of the mind. Christians and Jews call it 'God'; Hindus call it 'the Self', 'Shiva', 'Brahmin' and 'Vishnu'; Sufi mystics call it the 'Hidden Essence'; and Buddhists call it 'buddha nature.' [TBLD]

Dharma: this term has a number of different meanings. In its widest sense it means all that can be known. It can also simply mean phenomena. Dharma also means the teaching of the Buddha. [PR]

A way for each of us to realize our potential for enlightenment
Sogyal Rinpoche, Myall Lakes, 18 January 2004.

Dharmakaya: upon the attainment of buddhahood, enlightenment manifests at three levels known as the three bodies of the Buddha. They are: the Absolute or Truth Body, or dharmakaya; the Enjoyment Body, or sambhogakaya; and the Emanation Body, or nirmanakaya. The enlightened mind is dharmakaya. [LM]

Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (1910-1991): an incarnation of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, he frequently gave teachings, including those of the Great Perfection (Dzogchen), to the Dalai Lama. Many of the younger generation of Tibetan lamas consider him their root teacher. [PR]

Enlightenment: the state achieved by any person who has completely awakened from ignorance and opened to his or her vast potential for wisdom. [TBLD]

Ignorance: ignorance, which underlies all our emotional and cognitive states, is the root factor that binds us to the perpetual cycle of life and death in samsara. [WTB]

Interdependence: the principle that governs the relationship between causes and their results. [WTB]

Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö (1896-1959): the most outstanding Tibetan master of the last century. Authority on all traditions and holder of all lineages, he was the heart of the “non-partisan” movement in Tibet. [TBLD]

Karma: all pleasure and pain depend on karmas, or former actions that have created predispositions in the mind. Karmas can be divided into virtuous and non-virtuous according to whether they produce pleasure or pain in the long run. [HP]

Khandro Tsering Chödrön: the spiritual wife of Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö, regarded as the foremost living woman master in Tibetan Buddhism. [TBLD]

Lineage: accomplished masters who investigate and realize the teachings through study and practice preserve the power of the teachings within their own experience. The transmission of this living realization is what is meant by lineage. [WE]

Padmasambhava: the “Precious Master”, “Guru Rinpoche” is the founder of Tibetan Buddhism and the buddha of our time. [TBLD]

Samsara: our conditioned existence in the perpetual cycle of habitual tendencies. Ignorance, which underlies all our emotional and cognitive states, is the root factor that binds us to the perpetual cycle of life and death in samsara. [WTB]

Taking refuge: we take refuge in the Buddha, the truth of his teaching, and the example of his practitioners, and so awaken a confidence and trust in our own buddha nature. [TBLD]

Taking refuge creates a spiritual connection that, on the one hand, protects us from the fears and anxieties we may have about suffering in samsaric or conditioned existence. It also protects us from obstacles in this life, and in death, until we reach enlightenment. To take refuge until we reach enlightenment on behalf of all beings is to enter on the Buddhist path; it is the basis of Dharma. [LM]

The three wisdom tools, *tö sam gom sum* (Tib.): in Tibetan Buddhism there is a basic, normal, elementary spiritual education ... which gives you the essential vocabulary, the ABC of the mind. The bases of this training are what are called “the three wisdom tools”: the wisdom of listening and hearing; the wisdom of contemplation and reflection; and the wisdom of meditation. Through them we are brought to reawaken to our true nature, through them we uncover and come to embody the joy and freedom of what we truly are, what we call “the wisdom that realizes egolessness”. [TBLD]

Yogi, or yogini: a spiritual practitioner who practises *yoga*, literally a method for uniting with the natural state. [PR]

Points for reflection

- Why is mind such an important factor in our quest for happiness?
- What is the meaning of the word ‘Dharma’?
- What can Buddhism offer to the modern world?
- What is the essence of the Buddha’s teachings?
- What is the meaning of the word *nangpa*?
- Reflect on the Buddha’s statement: “Hate never dispelled hate, only love dispels hate.”

Practice

If you are interested, it is helpful to contemplate the subjects mentioned, and then research them more extensively to broaden your understanding. The more you explore a topic and subject it to mental scrutiny, the more profoundly you understand it. This enables you to judge its validity. If through your analysis you prove something to be invalid, then put it aside. However, if you independently establish something to be true, then your faith in that truth has powerful solidity. This whole process of research and scrutiny should be thought of as one form of meditation.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama⁸

In Buddhism, reflection is an indispensable tool on an individual’s path towards understanding. First we listen to the teachings with as open a mind and heart as possible. (See p. 12, **Learning to listen**) But the deepening of understanding comes through contemplation and reflection—the second ‘wisdom tool’.

As we contemplate what we’ve heard, it gradually begins to permeate our mindstream and saturate our inner experience of our lives. Everyday events start to mirror and more and more subtly and directly to confirm the truths of the teachings, as contemplation slowly unfolds and enriches what we have begun to understand intellectually and carries that understanding down from our head into our heart.⁹

Contemplation or reflection will be the practice emphasized in this course, to complement our exploration of these teachings. In this way mere intellectual understanding is avoided, and the teachings are allowed to permeate our experience. The activity of reflection is integrated into each part of the course through exercises during each class, and you are encouraged to continue this type of reflection at home through **Questions for reflection** and other pertinent subjects in the **At Home** section below.

Integration

The purpose of integration

The Buddha's teachings are not so much a religion as a way of life; their simplicity, clarity, power, and usefulness can only be appreciated if you open yourself to the opportunity they present.

Basing his teachings on profound common sense, not doctrine or dogma, Buddha himself encouraged a spirit of enquiry in his followers; he told them not simply to accept his teachings on faith, but to test them out for themselves. He said:

O bhikshus¹⁰ and wise men,
Just as a goldsmith would test his gold
By burning, cutting and rubbing it,
So you must examine my words and accept them,
But not merely out of reverence for me.

- 'Integration' means taking an idea that has been presented in the teachings and using it as your frame of reference in your relationship with yourself, your life, and other people, and watching to see if and how it changes things. You try it out on your life; you give it an opportunity to prove its value. You are experimenting with a different way of being in order to establish an honest relationship with it, one that can be built upon over time.

At Home

Studying the teachings

- Listen to or watch the extracts of the teachings again. Do this with the open mind spoken of in **How to listen**. Without judging one way or the other, try simply to understand what is being said and its implications.
- Revisit the key elements of these teachings by referring either to your own notes or to the teaching summaries.
- Read Chapters One through Three of *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*.

Essential steps in the practice of reflection

- Make yourself comfortable, either on a chair or sitting cross-legged on a cushion on the floor.
- Sit still and quietly for a few moments to let your thoughts settle. To help prevent drowsiness, keep your back straight and your eyes open.
- Once you feel settled, take one of the ideas presented in this session's teaching and reflect on it. Go back to the original words by either listening to the course CD or watching the course video.
- Reflect on the passage or subject for reflection by asking yourself any of the following questions:
 - Is this clear?
 - What is it saying?
 - Try to explain it to yourself.
 - Do you agree, disagree?
 - Reflect on the deeper meaning.

Alternatively you can choose any of the **Points for reflection** listed above as the subject of your practice.

—Alternate reflecting and simply resting the mind, without thinking about anything in particular. If you have arrived at a deeper understanding, just let it sink in.

Or, if you feel stuck or tired, drop the reflection and simply return to sitting quietly, focusing simply on awareness of your body and the environment.

—At the end the session, leave your thoughts and come back to a simple awareness of the present moment and the environment around you. Sit quietly like this for a few minutes.

—Note down any thoughts you may have in the **Reflections** section on page 28.

Try doing this for a few moments once each day in the period between classes.

Integrating the teachings

The more you explore a topic and subject it to mental scrutiny, the more profoundly you understand it. This enables you to judge its validity.

—Reflect on the meaning and purpose of integration.

—When we study Buddhism, we begin by developing our capacity to listen and to hear. We can practice this in everyday situations. For example: whenever someone talks to you, try listening to them completely until they finish talking, rather than thinking about what you will say to them. Make a note of any changes or reactions you notice in yourself or in others because of this.

Further study

Recommended reading

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, Chapters One-Three

Ethics for the New Millennium, Section I, “The Foundation of Ethics”

Recommended teachings

“Finding Peace in a Changing World,” London, 8 July 2002, TAP346

“Discovering the Mind of the Buddhas,” Paris, 19 November 1997, TAP079

Reflections

If the teachings or your reflections on them spark something in you, take the time to write it down here—moments of reflection are rare indeed these days. The time you are taking to participate in this class is time you are giving to yourself to explore. Keep a record of your journey.

2. THE ESSENCE OF THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS

*When Buddha himself was asked to summarize his teaching, he said,
Commit not a single unwholesome action,
Cultivate a wealth of virtue,
To tame this mind of ours,
This is the teaching of all the buddhas.*

To say, 'Commit not a single unwholesome action', means to abandon unwholesome, harmful and negative actions, which are the cause of suffering, for both ourselves and others. To 'cultivate a wealth of virtue' is to adopt the positive, beneficial and wholesome actions that are the cause of happiness, again for both ourselves and others. Most important of all, however, is 'to tame this mind of ours'. In fact the masters, like Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, often say that this one line captures the essence of the teachings of the Buddha. Because if we can realize the true nature of our own mind, then this is the whole point, of both the teaching and our entire existence.

Sogyal Rinpoche, Natural Great Peace

Aims

To give you an essential framework of the teachings of the Buddha.

Study

The essence of the Buddha's teachings.

Mind as the universal ordering principle.

Practice

Listen wholeheartedly and with an open mind.

Reflect on your understanding—is it clear and do you have a complete picture of the teaching?

Reflect on the difference between understanding and realisation.

Integration

What kind of actions are in your true self-interest?

Study

About the teaching

The teaching you will watch in this section was given by Sogyal Rinpoche in Cologne, Germany, on 15 April 2002.

You will find this extract in the video and audio compilation for this course. See Appendix Three to locate it on the course video.

There are many Tibetan words used in this teaching and Rinpoche speaks of several masters whose names may not be familiar to you. Don't let this distract you from the content of the teaching. It might be helpful to read through the section, **Terms and names** to familiarize yourself with them before you watch the teaching.

If you have time between classes, listen to or watch the optional teachings for this section, Sydney 13 March 2001 and London 16 January 2001, to inspire and deepen your reflection. These teachings cover the same subject, but as they took place in a different country and a year before the Cologne teaching, you may find the way Rinpoche expresses himself gives you a different perspective on the ideas presented. The summaries for these two teachings can be found in Appendix Four.

Notes

This space has been left for you to write down any notes you may wish to make. It is often easier to remember the main points if you write them down as you hear them. Another way of remembering the essence of a teaching is to write down what you remember as soon as you have finished listening to it.

Check the **Terms and names** on pages 35-38 for explanations of the Tibetan words and names appearing in this teaching.

Summary

Learning how to 'be' Cologne 15 April 2002

The teaching of the Buddha is vast. Just the 'Word of the Buddha' alone fills over a hundred volumes. Then the commentaries and treatises by the great Indian scholars fill another two hundred and more, and this is not even counting all the works of the great Tibetan masters. Yet at the same time, the teaching of the Buddha can be essentialized in a very profound way. I remember my master Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche used to say, "The teaching of Buddha is both 'vast' and 'profound': the 'vast' is the approach of the learned, the pandit, and the 'profound' is the approach of the yogi."

Sogyal Rinpoche, *Natural Great Peace*

- When the Buddha was asked to encapsulate the essence of his teaching, he said,

Commit not a single unwholesome action,
Cultivate a wealth of virtue,
To tame this mind of ours,
This is the teaching of all the buddhas.

- Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche said that these lines contain the essence of the three vehicles, or *yanas*, of the teaching of the Buddha.

Yana means 'vehicle', a means of evolution or spiritual development. In general there are three *yanas* or vehicles of Buddhist teachings: Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. With Hinayana as the ground for beginning the path, Mahayana opens an expansive vision of the journey to enlightenment. As a special vehicle of the Mahayana, Vajrayana actualizes the enlightened state within one's own present experience.

Sogyal Rinpoche, *Dzogchen and Padmasambhava*

- "Commit not a single unwholesome action" is the basis of the Hinayana tradition, "cultivate a wealth of virtue" is the basis of the Mahayana, or

Bodhisattvayana, and “to tame this mind of ours” pertains to the Vajrayana.

- Many great masters connect the first two lines of the Buddha’s essentialization of his teachings to the taking of refuge and the generation of bodhichitta, two of the main practices of the Buddhist tradition. Refuge is the basis of Hinayana, and bodhichitta is the heart of the Mahayana tradition.¹¹

“Commit not a single unwholesome action”

- Trulshik Rinpoche, one of the Dalai Lama’s teachers, says that “commit not a single unwholesome action” is the basis of refuge. When we take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the precept we take, and the very essence of taking refuge, is to refrain from harm. He also links bodhichitta, the altruistic thought of benefiting others through loving kindness and compassion, to the second line, “cultivate a wealth of virtue,” and to the bodhisattva vow.

- You may wonder how we can possibly manage not to commit a *single* unwholesome action, but what this line means is, as much as possible, try not to harm others. We achieve this by abandoning all the unwholesome, harmful or negative actions which are the cause of suffering for ourselves and others.

“Cultivate a wealth of virtue”

- And to “cultivate a wealth of virtue” means, whenever possible, to adopt the positive, wholesome and beneficial actions which bring happiness to ourselves and the world. As the great eighth century Buddhist saint Shantideva said,

Whatever joy there is in this world
All comes from desiring others to be happy,
And whatever suffering there is in this world
All comes from desiring myself to be happy.
Bodhicharyavatara

- The Dalai Lama tells us that if we want to be selfish, we shouldn’t be foolishly selfish, but wisely selfish. If we reflect on what actions are truly in our self-interest, we will realize that if we harm others, we harm ourselves. Even when we look at it from the perspective of enlightened self-interest, rather than from an altruistic point of view, when we help others, we benefit ourselves.

- Therefore, our happiness and well-being are connected with the happiness and well-being of everybody else. This means that none of us are independent, that circumstances and phenomena are interdependent.

“To tame this mind of ours”

- One of my own masters, the great Dzogchen teacher Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, often used to begin a teaching by saying that the heart of the entire teaching of the Buddha is captured in this one line: “To tame this mind of ours.”

- Who gives the orders for us to do something? Our heart and mind. We act on the world through the ‘three doors’ of the body, speech and mind. The three doors determine whether our actions are positive or negative, and the most important of these three is the mind. Mind is the boss.
—‘Mind’ and ‘heart’ are one and the same thing.

- Mind is often known as *kunjé gyalpo*, ‘the king who is responsible for everything,’ an absolute monarch. A more contemporary translation would be ‘the universal ordering principle,’ the creator of happiness and the creator of suffering, and the creator of samsara and nirvana.

- As Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche used to say,
Samsara is mind turned outwardly, lost in its projections;
Nirvana is mind turned inwardly, recognizing its own true nature

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying

- Samsara is mind lost in its projections. We are all over the place, and nobody is at home. We are completely lost in our projections and in the stories we make up about our own inadequacies and the hurt we’ve been caused by others. That is what samsara is.

- Don’t you notice that we are not at all free and independent? We are enslaved by our thoughts and emotions, and have no control over them whatsoever. Whatever thoughts we have, we become. Whatever emotions arise, we are swept away by them. If we feel anger, we become angry. My

heart goes out to people when I see how their thoughts cause them so much mental anguish and suffering.

- The older we become, the more stories we create, and the more we get hooked on them. It's frightening to see how stuck we become. How are we ever going to be free of them? The answer is extraordinarily simple—we have to cut the story, to turn off the film projector.

- The problem is we're too involved with our thoughts, words and actions, and think so many unnecessary thoughts. As Pascal said,

All of Man's difficulties come from his inability to sit quietly in a room by himself.

We've simply forgotten how to be with ourselves.

- Meditation practice disentangles us from our thoughts and brings our mind home. Quite simply, it is when we remain in our true nature that we find peace and happiness.

Terms and names *(For both main and optional teachings)*

Awareness: if one has very concentrated mindfulness (*drenpa*, Tib.), one immediately notices a thought arising and this becomes awareness (*sheshin*, Tibetan), and one knows what is occurring. [KT]

Bodhichitta Vow: bodhichitta itself has two aspects: aspiration and application. Aspiration is simply wishing to attain enlightenment for the sake of all beings. Application begins with taking the vow of bodhichitta and promising to put it into action. [FLDN]

Ego: in Tibetan, ego is called *dak dzin*, which means 'grasping to a self'. Ego then is defined as incessant movements of grasping at a delusory notion of 'I' and 'mine', self and other, and all the concepts, ideas, desires and activity that will sustain that false construction. [TBLD]

Egolessness: the principle of egolessness does not mean that there was an ego in the first place, and the Buddhists did away with it. On the contrary, it means that there never was any ego to begin with. To realize that is called ‘egolessness’. [TBLD]

Emptiness, or shunyata (Skt.): nothing has any *inherent* existence of its own when you really look at it, and this absence of independent existence is what we call ‘emptiness’. [TBLD]

Impermanence: all composite phenomena ... are momentary: the very conditions that brought them into being also cause their disintegration. [WTB]

Longchen Nyingtik Ngöndro: *Longchen Nyingtik*, ‘The Heart Essence of Infinite Expanse’, or ‘The Ultimate Truth of the Universal Openness’, is a cycle of mystical teachings that represent the innermost meditation of Dzogpachenpo, revealed by the great scholar and adept Jigmé Lingpa (1730-1798). *Ngöndro* denotes ‘the preliminary practices’ of this tradition. [MM].

Maudgalyayana: one of the Buddha’s chief disciples. [TBLD]

mengak (Tib.), or upadesha (Skt.): ‘pith instruction’, or, ‘the experiential instruction given by the master’. [DP]

Milarepa: Jetsun Milarepa, Shepai Dorje (“Laughing Vajra”, 1040-1123), the most famous of all Tibetan ascetics. Disciple of Marpa Lotsawa, father of the Kagyu lineage, he was the archetype of the perfect disciple, practitioner and teacher. [S]

Mindfulness: when there is a distraction that takes one away from resting in meditation, one is able to return to one’s state of meditation repeatedly. With mindfulness one thinks, “I’m not going to be fully under the influence of this distracting thought” and mentally returns to what one is doing. [KT]

Nirvana: freedom from conditioned existence. [WTB]

Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche (1932-1999): born in the Derge region of Kham in Tibet, he was a consummate master of Dzogchen and an authority on the

teachings of Longchenpa. He was the teacher of many of the younger generation of lamas. [HE]

Shantideva: the eighth century scholar and adept who revealed the famous Mahayana text, *Bodhicharyavatara*, ‘The Way of the Bodhisattva’. [WB]

The Three Jewels or Buddha, Dharma and Sangha:

Buddha—the pure nature of mind —emptiness, clarity and unlimited potential—has been with us forever, although masked by veils obscuring its qualities. Buddhas ... have purified or unveiled their minds, allowing all the innate qualities of buddha nature to blossom fully.

The particular buddha for our time, Buddha Shakyamuni, is the person referred to as ‘the Buddha’ in this course and in all suggested reading material.

Dharma—Buddha’s speech is the “rare and sublime Dharma”, of which there are two facets: the Dharma of the scriptures that show us the path toward enlightenment, and the Dharma of realization, which is the practical and genuine experience of the meanings of the written Dharma.

Sangha—those who study, practise and transmit the words and experience of Dharma make up the Sangha—the community of practitioners of Buddhadharma. [LM]

Trulshik Rinpoche (b. 1923): one of the foremost masters of the Nyingma lineage, a pre-eminent Dzogchen master, considered to be a manifestation of Buddha’s disciple Ananda. He is abbot of Thupten Choling monastery in Nepal, and has ordained nearly ten thousand monks and nuns. His teachers include Dudjom Rinpoche and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, to whom he was like a heart-son. He has offered many rare teachings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche (1920 –1996): an accomplished scholar and practitioner of the Kagyu and Nyingma schools, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche was famed for his profound meditative realization, as a teacher of Dzogchen and Mahamudra, and his method of teaching, known as “instruction through one’s own experience“. [RY]

Yana: vehicle, a means of evolution or spiritual development. In general, there are three yanas or vehicles of Buddhist teachings: Hinayana, Mahayana and

Vajrayana. With Hinayana as the ground for beginning the path, Mahayana opens an expansive vision of the journey to enlightenment. As a special vehicle of the Mahayana, Vajrayana actualizes the enlightened state within one's own present experience. [DP]

Vinaya, sutra, and abhidharma: The teachings of the Buddha have a twofold nature: explanation and realization. The explanations include the twelve *angas*, which were compiled into the three collections of vinaya, sutra and abhidharma.

Vinaya—the word vinaya is associated with making decisions, determining which actions of body, speech and mind promote calm and clarity, and which lead to confusion and suffering. The vinaya teachings address the subjects of identifying wrong action, identifying the causes of wrong action, redressing wrong action, and overcoming wrong action.

Sutra—means 'summary' or 'brief indication of the teachings'. The Sutras contain the direct transmission of the Buddha's knowledge of the nature of existence. They are associated especially with training the mind in meditative concentration.

Abhidharma—associated with training in wisdom. Its treatises describe the constituents of experience, the functioning of the body and mind, the workings of karma and emotions, the stages of the path, and the obstacles along the path. [WE]

Points for reflection

- Sometimes the teachings of the Buddha are summarized in one line. Why?
- What is meant by being ‘wisely selfish’?
- Why is mind responsible for everything?
- Rinpoche’s teaching describes how we get lost in the stories of our mind. Think of times when this has happened to you and what happened.

Practice

During the time of the Buddha, a young man who was very enthusiastic wanted to study the teachings. So he asked, “What is the essence of the teachings?” One of the disciples of the Buddha told him that the essence of the teachings of the Buddha is:

*Commit not a single unwholesome action,
Cultivate a wealth of virtue,
To tame this mind of ours—to keep your heart and mind pure.
This is the essence of the teaching of the Buddha.*

To this he said, “Well, even a child of five years of age can know this. It is very simple.” Whereupon the monk replied, “Yes, that may be the case, but even a man of eighty might have difficulty realizing it and embodying its meaning”.

Sometimes I notice that we have a little bit of arrogance when we hear a statement like this [the four lines above]. We think, like the young man in the story, “Oh yes, I know. I understand”. But to realize it, and to put it into practice, is something else again.

Sogyal Rinpoche, Sydney, 13 March 2001

- Sit comfortably and let your thoughts settle. Then reflect for five minutes on the difference between understanding and realisation as indicated in the story.

- Note your conclusions in the **Reflections** section.
(See other subjects for reflection in **At Home—Advice on practice.**)

Integration

When we read a text, or hear a teaching, we should rely not merely on the fame of the author but rather on the content. And when grappling with the content, we should rely on the subject matter and the meaning rather than on the literary style. When relating to the subject matter, we should rely on our empirical understanding rather than on our intellectual grasp. In other words, we must ultimately develop more than mere academic knowledge of the Dharma. We must integrate the truths of the Buddha's teaching into the depths of our very being, so that they become reflected in our lives.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama¹²

—Watch what happens in your life between sessions and see if it is true that mind is responsible for everything.

—Make a note of your findings.

At Home

Studying the teachings

... how hard it can be to turn our attention within! How easily we allow our old habits and set patterns to dominate us! Even though ... they bring us suffering, we accept them with almost fatalistic resignation, for we are so used to giving in to them. We may idealize freedom, but when it comes to our habits, we are completely enslaved.

Still, reflection can slowly bring us wisdom. We can come to see we are falling again and again into fixed, repetitive patterns, and begin to long to get out of them. We may, of course, fall back into them, again and again, but slowly we can emerge from them and change. The following poem speaks to us all. It's called "Autobiography in Five Chapters."

*1) I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk
I fall in.
I am lost . . . I am hopeless.
It isn't my fault.*

It takes forever to find a way out.

*2) I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I'm in the same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.*

*3) I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk
I see it is there.
I still fall in . . . it's a habit
My eyes are open
I know where I am
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.*

*4) I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk
I walk around it.*

5) I walk down another street.¹³

—Read Chapters Four and Five of *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*.

Advice on practice

The French philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal said, “All of Man’s difficulties come from his inability to sit quietly in a room by himself.”

—Try sitting quietly in a room by yourself for five minutes each day between classes. While you are sitting, gently focus your mind’s attention on the thoughts that come up, without getting involved with them or following after them. Begin simply to develop an awareness of them.

—Keep notes of your experience.

(If you have a meditation practice please continue it as part of your daily practice.)

Integrating the teachings

—Whenever you can during the time between classes, think about the difference, if any, between immediate satisfaction and true self-interest, as defined by the teachings. Think about this in the context of actual situations in your life.

—Take note of your reflections on this.

Further study

Recommended reading

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, Chapters Four and Five

Ethics for the New Millennium, Section II, “Ethics and the Individual”

Recommended teachings

“You Are What You Think,” Europe, 19-26 October 1999, TAP316

“The Essence of the Three Yanas—Overcoming the Homelessness of Your Mind,” Marseilles, 20 December 1996, TAP051

“The Power of Compassion,” Nice, 19 December 1996, TAP050

“Mind is Not Real,” Los Angeles, 25 March 1999, TAP/VID309

“Living and Dying Today,” Paris, 13 October 2003, TAP/VID/CDE362

Reflections

In the quiet spaces in our life, if we listen carefully, we may hear our own inherent wisdom talking to us. Sometimes this is called intuition. You can use this space to help yourself remember those insights.

You can also note down whatever thoughts come to you as a result of the ideas presented in this section. It is interesting to look back on them as you progress through the course.

3. BASIC BUDDHIST PRINCIPLES

I ask myself often: “Why is it that everything changes”? And only one answer comes back to me: That is how life is. Nothing, nothing at all, has any lasting character. The Buddha said:

This existence of ours is as transient as autumn clouds.

To watch the birth and death of beings is like looking at the movements of a dance.

A lifetime is like a flash of lightning in the sky,

Rushing by, like a torrent down a steep mountain.

Sogyal Rinpoche¹⁴

Aims

To present the fundamental Buddhist principles of view and conduct.

Study

The reality of impermanence and interdependence.

The natural law of cause and effect.

The importance of motivation.

Practice

Reflect on the meaning of impermanence, the ramifications of interdependence and the logic of altruism.

Integration

Watch impermanence and interdependence at work.

Notice our tendency to ignore impermanence.

Study

About the teachings

This section presents a compilation of several short teaching excerpts by Sogyal Rinpoche in:

Cologne, 15 April 2002

Myall Lakes, 6 February 2001 and

Washington. D.C., 22 May 2002.

You will find them on the video and audio compilations for this course. See Appendix Three to locate them on the course video.

If you have time between classes, we recommend you watch or listen to these selections more than once. They are all quite short and each one will give you a slightly different perspective.

Notes

Use this space to write down the points from the teaching that you find important. When the teaching is over, compare your notes to the summary of the teaching provided in the next section.

Summary

The View and Conduct of Buddhism **Cologne 15 April 2002**

- For Buddhist practitioners, the philosophy of Buddhism is not a mere 'philosophy'; it is a view. It is only a 'philosophy' if we don't practise it.
- The fundamental Buddhist view is that all phenomena are impermanent, which shows us that all phenomena are also interdependent, that no object exists independently of other phenomena.
- Therefore, whatever we think, say or do has consequences. So impermanence and interdependence are directly connected with karma, the natural law of cause and effect.
- If we contemplate and realize for ourselves the truth of impermanence and interdependence, we will understand that our own happiness is directly linked with that of others. This realization quite naturally inspires us not to harm others.
- These simple points have profound implications. They are, for example, the principles the Dalai Lama lives by.
- So the basic view of Buddhism is that all phenomena are interdependent, and the fundamental conduct or practice of Buddhism is to refrain from harm, to practise non-violence.
- Viewing phenomena as interdependent and conducting ourselves non-violently can have a powerful influence on our lives. Ultimately, the view of interdependence leads us to the realization of the wisdom of *shunyata*, which is often translated as 'emptiness', and the conduct of non-harming gradually leads us to altruistic, or compassionate behaviour.
- So, just as the Dalai Lama says, the view of interdependence has practical implications—it's not abstract philosophy. In fact, if you really examine what is meant by interdependence, you will find that this is how things are.

- What are the practical benefits of the view of interdependence? Take the example of being provoked by someone. The normal response would be anger, and for the person provoking you to become the object of your anger. Your mind zooms in on the object of your anger, and you start thinking how stupid he is, and put all the blame for the situation onto him.
- But this simplistic response can only be the result of failing to look into the circumstances fully. If we were to stop and analyze what is happening properly, we would discover that there are many contributory causes and conditions. The circumstances are far more complex than we assumed. And we ourselves are one of the main factors involved—we're a large part of the problem.
- As we realize that our predicament came about through many causes and conditions, sanity suddenly returns.
- The nature of emotions is such that if we cannot direct them at a particular person or object, it is very difficult to prolong their existence. If we project a film into empty space, there's no film to see—there has to be a screen. Quite often, we are the ones who project our emotion onto a particular person. So when we see that this person is perhaps only ten or fifteen percent responsible for the difficulty we're in, our anger will slowly diminish.
- This is just one example of how the view of interdependence is very practical and useful. It helps us train our mind and work with our emotions, and to see life objectively. And that in turn helps us to refrain from harm.

The Logic of Altruism
Myall Lakes 6 February 2001

- When we investigate the view of interdependence, we find that it is the basis of existence. In fact the Dalai Lama says that nowadays, the idea of national independence, of each country functioning independently in the world, is virtually obsolete. The interdependent nature of the world is becoming increasingly apparent.
- The view of interdependence shows us that nothing exists independently of

all other phenomena, that there is no such thing as an independent and self-existing entity. The right hand, for example, does not exist independently of the left hand. Everything that exists, exists interdependently.

- Interdependence is also strongly related to cause and effect. Nothing occurs without having causes and effects.
- Our world is also impermanent. It is in a constant state of flux. This truth leads us to the view of egolessness or emptiness, that the self, and all other apparent phenomena possess no intrinsic or definable permanent existence, because nothing exists independently of other phenomena. As Sogyal Rinpoche explains in *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*,

Nothing has any *inherent* existence of its own when you really look at it, and this absence of independent existence is what we call 'emptiness'. Think of a tree. When you think of a tree, you tend to think of a distinctly defined object; and on a certain level, it is. But when you look more closely at the tree, you will see that ultimately it has no independent existence. When you contemplate it, you will find that it dissolves into an extremely subtle net of relationships that stretches across the universe. The rain that falls on its leaves, the wind that sways it, the soil that nourishes and sustains it, all the seasons and the weather, moonlight and starlight and sunlight—all form part of this tree. As you begin to think about the tree more and more, you will discover that everything in the universe helps to make the tree what it is; that it cannot at any moment be isolated from anything else; and that at every moment its nature is subtly changing. This is what we mean when we say things are empty, that they have no independent existence.

- Everything we see is a manifestation of particular causes and effects, the result of specific karma. Therefore, our motivation is of crucial importance. The motivation behind our action, our mental attitude, determines whether our action has a positive or negative effect. And that's why Buddha said,

We are what we think.

All that we are arises with our thoughts.

With our thoughts we make the world...
The Dhammapada

- Viewing phenomena as interdependent naturally leads us to altruism. Why? Because if everything exists interdependently, how can we possibly maintain an independent point of view based on an independently existing self? If everything is interdependent, it must follow that altruism is the only logical basis for our conduct.
- Thinking only of our own well-being is what prevents us from finding happiness and only serves to create more problems.
- Focusing on the benefit of others puts our own problems into perspective, and helps us become happier.

The Implications of Interdependence
Washington, D.C., 22 May 2002

- What is the fundamental Buddhist view? It is that everything is interdependent, that nothing is independent.
- And the action, conduct or practice of Buddhism is non-harming, or non-violence.
- In fact, the view of interdependence inspires our conduct. It's not 'merely' philosophy, it's extremely practical.
- For example, if we find ourselves in a situation that aggravates us, and that causes conflicting emotions to rise in us, we normally select one particular cause of the circumstances, an object or a person, and project our blame onto that object. And then that object engenders even more frustration and anger inside us.
- But if we take a long, hard look at the situation, we will find that it involves many causes and conditions, and that we ourselves are one of those causes and are partly responsible for our current difficulty. And once we've realized this, the anger and blame we directed towards a particular person or object

slowly starts to dissolve, and we return to sanity.

- So the view of interdependence helps us to refrain from harm.
- The relationship between interdependence and impermanence is extremely close. We could even say that phenomena are interdependent because they are impermanent, and they are impermanent because they are interdependent.
- As all phenomena are impermanent, whatever we think, say or do has consequences; hence karma and personal responsibility come into play. Therefore, karma, impermanence and interdependence go hand in hand.
- Ultimately, the view of interdependence leads to the view of shunyata, which is often translated as 'emptiness.' The conduct of non-harming leads us to altruism, which itself gradually blossoms into compassion.
- As the Dalai Lama says, if you want to be selfish, at least be 'wisely selfish'. Recognize that, even from a perspective of enlightened self-interest, if we harm others, our action harms ourselves, and if we help others, our kindness towards others will benefit us.
- Seeing that we benefit from positive conduct and are harmed by our negative actions, we slowly come to realize that we are all intimately connected with each other, that we are not independent, but interdependent. Our happiness is dependent upon the happiness of others.
- Thus the view of interdependence inspires us to practise non-harming. We then realize that our happiness and well-being is interconnected with that of others, and our 'wisely selfish' perspective slowly develops into altruism, and ultimately into compassion.

Terms and names (*Terms and names already explained have not been repeated here. Use the Glossary in Appendix Seven for easy reference.*)

Ego: in Tibetan, ego is called *dak dzin*, which means 'grasping to a self'. Ego then is defined as incessant movements of grasping at a delusory notion of 'I'

and 'mine,' self and other, and all the concepts, ideas, desires and activity that will sustain that false construction. [TBLD]

Egolessness: the principle of egolessness does not mean that there was an ego in the first place, and the Buddhists did away with it. On the contrary, it means that there never was any ego to begin with. To realize that is called 'egolessness'. [TBLD]

Emptiness, or shunyata (Skt.): nothing has any *inherent* existence of its own when you really look at it, and this absence of independent existence is what we call 'emptiness'. [TBLD]

Impermanence: all composite phenomena ... are momentary: the very conditions that brought them into being also cause their disintegration. [WTB]

Shantideva: the eighth century scholar and adept who revealed the famous Mahayana text, *Bodhicharyavatara*, 'The Way of the Bodhisattva'. [WB]

Points for reflection

- Can you think of anything that is not impermanent and not interdependent?
- Sogyal Rinpoche pointed out that interdependence is not just a philosophy but has practical applications. What are they?
- Why does understanding interdependence lead to acting altruistically?
- How does benefiting others help you?

Practice

Although we have been made to believe that if we let go we will end up with nothing, life itself reveals again and again the opposite: that letting go is the path to real freedom.

Just as when the waves lash at the shore, the rocks suffer no damage but are sculpted and eroded into beautiful shapes, so our characters can be molded and our rough edges worn smooth by changes. Through weathering changes we can learn how to develop a gentle but unshakable composure.

Our confidence in ourselves grows, and becomes so much greater that goodness and compassion begin naturally to radiate out from us and bring joy to others. That goodness is what survives death, a fundamental goodness that is in every one of us. The whole of our life is a teaching of how to uncover that strong goodness, and a training toward realizing it.

So each time the losses and deceptions of life teach us about impermanence, they bring us closer to the truth. When you fall from a great height, there is only one possible place to land: on the ground; the ground of truth.

Sogyal Rinpoche¹⁵

- Reflect on what impermanence means to you, referring back to page 27 for step-by-step process if you need to.

Has your understanding changed since you began this course?

Integration

...The way in which things and events unfold does not always coincide with our expectations. Indeed, this fact of life—that there is often a gap between the way in which we perceive phenomena and the reality of a given situation—is the source of much unhappiness.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama¹⁶

—Watch for examples of impermanence and interdependence in your life.

—Try to become more aware of the ways you act or think that ignore impermanence and interdependence, as described in the quote above. Note down your observations in the **Reflections** section that follows.

At Home

Studying the teachings

—If you can find the time, watch or listen to this section’s teachings a few times, or listen to the excerpt you find most meaningful several times.

—Read Chapters Six through Eight and Twelve of *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*.

Advice on practice

—Using the instructions on page 26, reflect on the principles of impermanence and interdependence as they were presented in the teachings this week and in your reading. Turn the words over in your mind to look at them from several angles. Then try to go beyond the words themselves to understand their deeper meaning and its repercussions.

—Notice your attitude towards these ideas. Do you reject them out of hand for a particular reason? Do they make you uncomfortable? On the other hand, do they confirm something you’ve always known?

Try doing this at least once each day during the time between classes.

Integrating the teachings

When we come to see that everything we perceive and experience arises as a result of an indefinite series of interrelated causes and conditions, our whole perspective changes. We begin to see that the universe we inhabit can be understood in terms of a living organism where each cell works in balanced cooperation with every other cell to sustain the whole. If, then, just one of these cells is harmed, as when disease strikes, that balance is harmed and there is danger to the whole. This, in turn, suggests that our individual well-being is intimately connected both with that of all others and with the environment within which we live. It also becomes apparent that our every action, our every deed, word, and thought, no matter how slight or inconsequential it may seem has an implication not only for ourselves but for all others, too.

Furthermore, when we view reality in terms of dependent origination, it draws us away from our usual tendency to see things and events in terms of solid, independent, discrete entities. This is helpful because it is this tendency which causes us to exaggerate one or two aspects of our experience and make them representative of the whole reality of a given situation while ignoring its wider complexities.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama¹⁷

—Try to take impermanence and interdependence into account in your interactions with people this week. Try to find at least one situation where you can trace all the interdependent factors that made it happen.

—Try to be aware of ways you act that tend to ignore these two laws. What is the result?

—Watch the news or read the newspaper at least once and make a list of examples of impermanence and interdependence you find there.

Further study

Recommended reading

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, Chapters Six-Eight, Ten and Twelve
Ethics for the New Millennium, Section III, “Ethics and Society”

Recommended teachings

“The Benefits of Altruism” Lerab Ling, July 2001, TAP/VD341

“The Path to Happiness 1 & 2” Amsterdam, 15 November 2002 and Cologne,
19 November 2002, TAP351-2, VID351

Reflections

Keep a record of your reactions during your study of the teachings this week so you can reread them and reflect on them later. Also note down any questions you may have or points that are not clear for you. Be sure to bring them up for clarification in the next class.

4. INTEGRATION—A PATH TO HAPPINESS

If humanity is to survive, happiness and inner balance are crucial. Otherwise the lives of our children and their children are more likely to be unhappy, desperate and short. Material development certainly contributes to happiness—to some extent—and a comfortable way of life. But this is not sufficient. To achieve a deeper level of happiness we cannot neglect our inner development.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Aims

Acknowledge our ability to change, gaining confidence in that, accepting responsibility for ourselves

Study

A deeper understanding of the mind.

Practice

Reflect on what stops us from changing.

Integration

Decide to change and make a start.

Study

About the teaching

The teaching extract you will watch in this section of the course was given by Sogyal Rinpoche in Munich on 2 October 2002.

You will find this excerpt in the video and audio compilation for this course. See Appendix Three to locate it on the course video. The complete teaching is

available from ZAM on video or DVD, audio CD or tape as “Discovering Who We Really Are: The Ultimate Goal of Meditation” TAP349.

Notes

Use this space to write down the points from the teaching that you find important. When the teaching is over, compare your notes to the summary of the teaching provided in the next section.

Summary

Discovering Who We Really Are Munich 2 October 2002

- It's a mistake to grasp onto thoughts and emotions, or to identify your thoughts and emotions as 'you', because they are always changing.
- What then *is* constant and unchanging? The clarity and cognizance of our fundamental mind stream.
- The quality of the mind is to know. For example, the teachings define a 'human being' as being 'someone who can understand and communicate'. And what is it that understands? The knowing quality of mind, cognizance, or clear light.
—This pure consciousness is with us through the whole of our life, and will continue with us until enlightenment.
- But the trouble with us is that we do not recognize our pure consciousness. Instead, we grasp onto our thoughts and emotions, which are merely manifestations of the mind, and not the mind itself. It is our grasping that causes our insecurity, and our hope and fear. As Sogyal Rinpoche explains in *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*:

...we cannot remember our true identity, our original nature. Frantically, and in real dread, we cast around and improvise another identity, one we clutch onto with all the desperation of someone falling continuously into an abyss. This false and ignorantly assumed identity is 'ego'.

So ego, then, is the absence of true knowledge of who we really are, together with its result: a doomed clutching on, at all costs, to a cobbled together and makeshift image of ourselves, an inevitably chameleon charlatan self that keeps changing and has to, to keep alive the fiction of its existence.

In Tibetan ego is called *dak dzin*, which means 'grasping to a self'. Ego is then defined as incessant movements of grasping at a delusory

notion of 'I' and 'mine', self and other, and all the concepts, ideas, desires and activity that will sustain that false construction.

- For the moment, our knowing mind is misused by the ego to grasp onto thoughts and emotions. So the whole point of the spiritual path, and the highest goal of meditation practice, is to free the mind of its grasping and to return it to pure knowing.
- To start with, meditation is oriented towards methods, such as mindfulness, but ultimately the point is to free the mind of grasping, to allow our cloud-like thoughts and emotions to dissolve, and reveal the sky-like nature of pure mind.
- When we discover our pure mind, and realize that it is unchanging, we are freed of hope and fear, and all the limiting stories we make up about our lives. Our emotions or thoughts might be constantly changing, but our fundamental nature is constant.
- Out of our fundamental goodness arises great simplicity, joy, contentment and happiness. Even when the external world seems complex, once we've discovered the inner freedom of mind, everything remains uncomplicated inside us, and we develop a carefree dignity.
—This awareness is not only connected to the mind, but also to the pure heart.
- Just as our thoughts prevent us from seeing our true nature, when it's cloudy, we aren't really in touch with the sky. But when the clouds dissolve, or when we take a plane and go beyond the clouds, we can experience the sky of our mind and heart directly.
- And incredibly, we become our own master, because by being in touch with our essential nature we are no longer controlled by the fickleness of our thoughts and emotions—we have conquered our mind and perception, and appearance can no longer disturb us.
- Just as the Dalai Lama says when he is asked how we can find happiness,

Granted external circumstances can contribute to one's happiness and well-being, but ultimately happiness and suffering depend on the mind, and how it perceives.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Howard C. Cutler,
The Art of Happiness

- When we are in a negative state of mind, we perceive everything around us negatively. For example, if we feel a little paranoid, we even become suspicious of our friends, and easily mistake a helpful word from them for criticism.
- What is it that makes us so uncomfortable? Hope and fear. Our mind is constantly full of concerns—"How will I look? How will things turn out? What will others think?" Others will think what they think. You can't control them.
- Our conduct must be in accord with others but our problem is that we can become extreme. We are not particularly in touch with ourselves in the first place, and on top of that we try to be what we think everybody else wants us to be. People are very concerned nowadays with 'transparency', with being transparent in their business dealings, with their family, and all other areas of life. We try to please everyone, which is completely exhausting.
- The amazing thing is, when you come into touch with yourself—when you really become 'you'—and are 'comfortable in your own skin', then you are at ease with everyone else as well.
- The simple solution is that, by becoming genuine and authentic, by 'walking the talk,' we become exactly what our job, our family and our life requires. In this complex world, the best way to survive is to be genuine. People know when someone is being genuine. As the saying goes, "honesty is the best policy".
- When we discover our true nature, life becomes simple and easy. Every situation becomes workable. Once, at a conference of Tibetan lamas, the issue of teaching in the West was raised, and someone proposed a complex method for communicating with Westerners. But the Dalai Lama simply said that he was always himself with Westerners, and always communicated with a good heart and that this seemed to work quite well.

—We are happier when we don't create any duplicity, because we don't have to worry about anyone finding us out; what people see is what they get.

- This is the freedom, goodness and warmth that we discover in the environment of the teachings, and in our practice.

Terms and names

Hope and fear: the eight worldly dharmas constitute our attachment to hopes and fears. We hope for praise, gain, fame and happiness while fearing blame, loss, disgrace and suffering. Entangled in these eight concerns, we give our energy and intelligence to the pursuit of these hopes and the avoidance of these fears. [WE]

Mindfulness: when there is a distraction that takes one away from resting in meditation, one is able to return to one's state of meditation repeatedly. This is reapplying a state of settling the mind. This power comes from the power of mindfulness because one becomes aware of the mind being distracted by some thought. With mindfulness one thinks, "I'm not going to be fully under the influence of this distracting thought" and mentally returns to what one is doing. [KT]

Points for reflection

- What does this teaching say about the relationship between our mind and our thoughts and emotions?
- How does His Holiness the Dalai Lama define the art of happiness?
- Sogyal Rinpoche says the simple solution to dealing with all situations is to be genuine. What does that mean to you?
- Have you learned something about yourself during this course that you find helpful?
- Reflect on your reasons for attending this course and whether or not these teachings have addresses them.

Practice

Everything is here within us. The truth is within us. Happiness is within us. True happiness and peace of mind cannot be found in anything external, it can only be found within.

Following the steps outlined on page 26, do the following reflection.

- Reflect on the quote above. Do you understand the logic behind it? Does it make sense, given everything you have learned in this course?
- Although this is the last section of this course, it doesn't mean that you have to stop taking time for yourself to reflect as you have done during this course. If you have found it enriches your life, use the guidance and suggestions in this manual to help you continue. See **For Further study: Teachings** and **For Further study: Reading** in Appendix Two, for recommendations.

Integration

In this teaching, Rinpoche invites us to get in touch with our true selves and learn to enjoy who we really are. By simply being genuinely ourselves we come in touch with a natural simplicity and ease that will carry us through any situation and bring us a taste of real freedom. Sitting with Rinpoche and listening to the teaching can give us a taste of what that means.

—You can come back to this at any time by simply listening to the teachings again. Whenever it slips away, watch or listen to the teaching again, sitting with Rinpoche as you do. Allow his presence to inspire you into your authentic self.

—Try to keep this awareness alive as you go through your life until it becomes your natural way of being.

At Home

Some advice on continuing

—Schedule some time in your life to continue your study and reflection. Keep up the process you have begun during this course.

—Whenever life gets to be a bit too much, come back to the readings or tapes of this course and let them give you a little space or a new perspective.

—When you are feeling well and everything is going as you hoped it would, take some time to sit and enjoy it, remembering all the while the teachings on impermanence and interdependence.

—Whenever you find yourself in a difficult situation with someone, take the time you need to look at the situation from their perspective, putting yourself in their shoes, to help you understand their words and actions. Remember what the teachings say about interdependence and let that knowledge ease you away from anger or negative words or actions.

If you cannot do this on the spot, take some time as soon as you can to listen to the teaching again, particularly one you remember that helped you before, and reflect on how you could have handled the situation differently.

—There are more teachings listed in each section of this manual under **Further study: Recommended teachings**. If you have found the teachings presented in the course helpful, try some of the other teachings recommended and slowly build up a library of teachings that can act like an advisor or wise guide for you.

—Continue to experiment with the ideas these teachings have given you to explore their ability to improve your life.

Further study

Recommended reading

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, Chapter Ten
An Open Heart, Introduction, pp. 5-25

Recommended teachings

“Applying the Teachings to Our Being”, Paris, 1 May and London 14 May 2002, TAP344

Reflections

Write down your impressions of the process you have gone through while taking this course. Record any changes you have seen in yourself and the way you think and why you think they have happened. This may be interesting to read a few months from now.

APPENDIX ONE: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO RIGPA AND SOGYAL RINPOCHE

WHAT IS RIGPA?

Rigpa is a Tibetan word that in general means ‘intelligence’ or ‘awareness’. In Dzogchen, however, the highest teachings in the Buddhist tradition of Tibet, *rigpa* has a deeper connotation, ‘the innermost nature of the mind’. The whole of the teaching of Buddha is directed towards realizing this, our ultimate nature, the state of omniscience or enlightenment—a truth so universal, so primordial that it goes beyond all limits, and beyond even religion itself.

Inspired by this, Sogyal Rinpoche gave the name ‘Rigpa’ to his work and to the vehicle he was developing to serve the Buddha’s teaching in the West. Now an international network with centres and groups in eleven countries around the world, Rigpa seeks:

To make the teachings of Buddha available to benefit as many people as possible,
and

To offer those following the Buddhist teachings a complete path of study and practice, along with the environment they need to explore the teachings to their fullest.

A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF SOGYAL RINPOCHE

Born in Kham in Eastern Tibet, Sogyal Rinpoche was recognized as the incarnation of Lerab Lingpa Tertön Sogyal, a teacher to the thirteenth Dalai Lama, by Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö, one of the most outstanding masters of the twentieth century. Jamyang Khyentse supervised Rinpoche’s training and raised him like his own son.

In 1971, Rinpoche went to England, where he studied comparative religion at Cambridge University. He went on to study with many other masters, of all schools of Tibetan Buddhism, especially Kyabjé Dudjom Rinpoche and Kyabjé Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, serving as their translator and aide.

With his remarkable gift for presenting the essence of Tibetan Buddhism in a way that is both authentic and profoundly relevant to the modern mind, Sogyal Rinpoche is one of the most renowned teachers of our time. He is also the author of the highly acclaimed and groundbreaking book, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. Over 1.6 million copies of this spiritual classic have been printed, in 28 languages and 55 countries. It has been adopted by colleges, groups and institutions, both medical and religious, and is used extensively by nurses, doctors and health care professionals.

Rinpoche has been teaching for over 30 years and continues to travel widely in Europe, America, Australia, and Asia, where he addresses thousands of people on his teaching tours and is a frequent speaker at major conferences.

APPENDIX TWO: AN OVERVIEW CHART OF THE COURSE

<div>Topic</div> <div>Headings</div>	What Buddhism Is PP. 11-28	The Essence of the Buddha's teachings PP. 29-44	Basic Principles PP. 45-58	Integration: A Path to Happiness PP. 59-68
Study	A basic overview of Buddhism; an introduction to Sogyal Rinpoche's way of teaching	The essence of the teachings, the importance of mind	The reality of impermanence and interdependence the natural law of cause and effect; the importance of motivation	A deeper understanding of the mind
Teachings	Sydney 13 Jan. 2000 London 16 Jan. 2001 Palo Alto 3 Nov. 2000	Cologne 15 April 2002 (if only one session)	Cologne 15 April 2002 Myall Lakes 6 Feb. 2001 Washington D.C. 22 May 2002	Munich 2 October 2002
Optional teachings	Stockholm 2 July 2000 or any of the above	Sydney 13 March 2001 London 16 Jan 2001 (if 2 sessions)	Any of the above	N/A
Practice	Listen with an open mind and heart and reflect on the meaning	Listen with an open mind and heart and reflect on our understanding.	Reflection on impermanence and interdependence	True happiness and peace of mind can be found within each of us
Integration	Take the teachings into your life to test their relevance and validity	What kind of actions are in your true self-interest?	See impermanence and interdependence at work in daily life	Take responsibility for ourselves and our happiness

Reading	<i>TBLD</i> Chapters One-Three	<i>TBLD</i> Chapter Four and Five	<i>TBLD</i> Chapters Six-Eight and Twelve	<i>TBLD</i> Chapter Ten
For Further study: Teachings	<p>“Finding Peace in a Changing World” TAP346</p> <p>“Discovering the Mind of the Buddhas” TAP079</p>	<p>“You Are What You Think” RL Jan. 2000, TAP316</p> <p>“The Essence of the Three Yanas” TAP051</p> <p>“The Power of Compassion” TAP050</p> <p>“Mind is Not Real” VID309</p> <p>“Living & Dying Today” TAP/VID362</p>	<p>“The Benefits of Altruism” TAP341</p> <p>“The Path to Happiness 1” TAP/VID351</p>	<p>“Applying the Teachings to Our Being” TAP344</p>
For Further study: Reading	<p><i>Ethics for the New Millennium,</i> Section I, “The Foundation of Ethics”</p>	<p><i>Ethics for the New Millennium,</i> Section II, “Ethics and the Individual”</p>	<p><i>Ethics for the New Millennium,</i> Section III, “Ethics and Society”</p>	<p><i>An Open Heart,</i> Introduction, pp. 5-25</p>

APPENDIX THREE: COURSE VIDEO CONTENT

	Title	Length	Begins	Ends
Part 1 Main	Sydney, 13 Jan. 2000 London, 16 Jan. 2001 Palo Alto, 3 Nov. 2000	15 m. 7 m. 7 m.	30 sec. 15m. 22m.	15m. 22m. 29m.
Optional	Stockholm, 2 July 2000	8 min.	29m.	36m.
Part 2 Main	Cologne, 15 April 2002	22 min. (13 and 9)	37m. 49m.	49m. 58m.
Optional	Sydney, 13 March 2001 London, 16 Jan. 2001	26 min. 14 min.	58m. 1h. 25	1h. 25 1h. 39
Part 3 Main	Cologne, 15 April 2002 Myall Lakes, 6 Feb. 2001 Washington D.C., 22 May 2002	10 min. 5 min. 6 min.	1h. 39 1h. 49 1h. 54	1h. 49 1h. 54 2h. 00
Optional	Any of the above			
Part 4 Main	Munich, 2 October 2002	25 min.	2h. 00	2h. 25

APPENDIX FOUR: OPTIONAL TEACHINGS —SUMMARIES, TERMS AND NAMES AND QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Part 1. What Buddhism is (and Isn't)

Benefiting from the wisdom of the Dharma *Stockholm 2 July 2000*

- The Buddha himself urged us not follow his teachings out of love or respect for him, but to discover their truth for ourselves, as if we were “analysing gold, scorching, cutting, and rubbing it to test its purity”.
- Gold must be melted and refined several times before it is completely pure. In the same manner, to understand the teachings, and develop trust and faith in them, we use the ‘three wisdom tools’, known as *tö sam gom sum* in Tibetan. First we listen to and hear the teachings, and then we contemplate them, and reflect on what we’ve heard. Thirdly, we meditate on the teachings and apply them to our lives.
- One thing the Dalai Lama recommends us to reflect on is whether or not our actions bring us long-term benefit or short-term pleasure that only brings us suffering in the long run. Clearly, long-term benefit is of more importance than short-term pleasure.
—As the saying goes, “Once bitten, twice shy”. And what has bitten us is our own ignorance and mindlessness.
- At the same time, we can be too clever for our own good. Tibetans say, “If you’re too clever you miss the point”. We sometimes adopt an intellectual approach just to avoid the main point.

- For example, we might question the use of spirituality, and ‘prove’ that we have no use for it, but it’s another story when we’re faced with severe difficulty, or the inevitability of our own death. Ignorance is so subtle and pervasive that we are not always even aware of it.
- So the Dharma educates us. It encourages us to shed our ignorance and concepts and to discover our inherent wisdom and compassion. In this respect, the Dharma offers us the highest possible level of education.
- The Dalai Lama often says that this wisdom must be shared, but not with the intention of converting people to Buddhism. So if you are a Christian, please remain a Christian. It is shared to help you become better human beings. And if you already follow a particular religion, it will help you deepen your existing faith. In addition, there will also be those who genuinely feel that the Dharma is the path they should follow.
- I feel that one of the main contributions the Buddhadharma can make to the world is to help each individual find their own purity, and revitalize spirituality in the modern world. So many people from many different countries, all walks of life and religious backgrounds have gained a sense of meaning by incorporating the Dharma into their lives.
- The truth of these teachings is universal, and speaks to the hearts and minds of everyone.

Terms and names Included in main section, pp. 21-23

Points for reflection

- What are the three wisdom tools? What is the logic behind them? Do you understand it?
- The teachings point out that sometimes we avoid facing the truth? Can you think of specific situations where this applies to you?
- How is faith developed in Buddhism? Is it blind faith?

- Has your idea of Buddhism changed since hearing this teaching? If yes, how?
- Why does Rinpoche talk about the universality of these teachings, e.g., that they go beyond a specific religion?
- Which actions bring long term benefit? Which bring short-term benefit?

Part 2. The Essence of the Buddha's Teachings

The Power of Forgiveness

Sydney 13 March 2001

- The collected teaching of the Buddha, the *Kangyur* (Tib.), consist of 108 volumes. It is so large that not even every monastery in Tibet had a complete set.
- The Buddha's teachings cover many fields of knowledge, but the primary ones are *vinaya*, on discipline; *sutra*, mainly on meditation; and *abhidharma*, which compiles the Buddha's teachings on wisdom.
- One approach for understanding this extensive body of teaching is the 'vast' approach of the *pandit*. A *pandit* is primarily a learned scholar, but is also an experienced practitioner. In Tibet, it took twenty-one years of extremely thorough study to master the 'vast' approach to the teachings of the Buddha.
- But for people like us, who don't have much free time, there is the 'profound' approach of the yogi, the path of the practitioner, exemplified by the great Tibetan saint, Milarepa.
—You don't become a yogi simply by wearing the clothes of a yogi, as some Westerners choose to do. A yogi is someone who has achieved profound inner wisdom.
- A practitioner combines the 'vast' and 'profound' approaches into one. The Dalai Lama is a great example of this. He is extraordinarily learned, but he is also a great practitioner of meditation.
- What I am presenting here is an essentialization of the path of the yogi, the *mengak* (Tib.), or *upadesha* (Skt.), which means 'pith instruction,' or, "the experiential instruction given by the master". (Sogyal Rinpoche, *Dzogchen and Padmasambhava*).

- The Buddha essentialized his teachings by saying,

Commit not a single unwholesome action,
Cultivate a wealth of virtue,
To tame this mind of ours,
This is the teaching of all the buddhas

Translation from *Natural Great Peace*

- Another translation reads, “To do no evil, to do good, to subdue this mind,” and the third line can also be rendered as “keeping our mind and heart pure.”
- Basically, it means to refrain from harm, to benefit others, and to understand this mind of ours.
- These three lines capture the essence of the Buddha’s word, and yet the entire Kangyur, the two hundred commentaries of the great Indian scholars, and the numerous treatises of the pre-eminent Tibetan masters are all essentialized within them too.
- The teachings of the Buddha are often categorized in three *yanas*.

Yana means ‘vehicle, a means of evolution or spiritual development.’ In general there are three *yanas* or vehicles of Buddhist teachings: Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. With Hinayana as the ground for beginning the path, Mahayana opens an expansive vision of the journey to enlightenment. As a special vehicle of the Mahayana, Vajrayana actualizes the enlightened state within one’s own present experience.

Sogyal Rinpoche, *Dzogchen and Padmasambhava*

- Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche used to say that “Commit not a single unwholesome action” expresses the basis of the Hinayana, “Cultivate a wealth

of virtue” forms the basis of the Mahayana approach, and “To tame this mind of ours” is the basis of Vajrayana.

- Of course, all three of these principles form the basis of each of the three vehicles, but the *emphasis* of the Hinayana schools is on refraining from harm. Mahayana stresses the importance of cultivating bodhichitta, and the focus of the Vajrayana path is on purifying the mind of its defilements and recognizing its fundamental purity.

- One of the pitfalls to beware of is forgetting the main principles of the teachings. To remember them, we need to go over them again and again.

- Another problem we face is that the main points of this essential approach might seem too simple. We might think, “Well, I know that already.”

- There is a story about this. A young man asked one of the Buddha’s disciples for the essence of the Buddha’s teachings. The disciple’s answer was the same short quotation from the Buddha that I have given you. The young man was slightly taken aback. “But,” he said, “even a child of five can understand that.” The monk agreed with him. “Yes,” he said, “that may be the case, but even a man of eighty might have difficulty realizing it, and embodying its meaning.”

—It’s not enough to understand the Buddha’s teachings. Their purpose is to transform us, for us to realize our potential for enlightenment.

“Commit not a single unwholesome action”

- We might wonder how we can possibly avoid committing even a single harmful action. What this line means is, as much as possible, try not to do any harm.

- We influence the world and create positive and negative karma through ‘the three doors’ of body, speech and mind. Therefore, we abandon all

unwholesome, negative and harmful actions, because they cause suffering for us and everybody else.

—If you can't help, at least don't harm.

- We also adopt positive, wholesome and beneficial actions, the cause of happiness for ourselves and others.

- The importance of non-harming and of cultivating a good heart is reflected in the vows taken when someone decides to commit themselves to the Buddhist path by taking refuge and the bodhichitta vow.

—We take refuge in the Buddha as the guide, the Dharma as the path, and the Sangha as the friend. The precept we take at this point, the very essence of refuge, is to refrain from harm.

—The fundamental quality of the bodhichitta precept is to “cultivate a wealth of virtue,” to benefit others through generating love and compassion.

- Buddha's teachings are based on profound logic and reasoning, not blind faith.

“Cultivate a wealth of virtue”

- The Dalai Lama often says that we shouldn't be foolishly selfish, but wisely selfish. Even from a perspective of enlightened self-interest, harming others harms us, and helping others helps us. As Sogyal Rinpoche says in *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*,

What do we imagine will make us happy? A canny, self-seeking resourceful selfishness, the selfish protection of ego, which can, as we all know, make us at moments extremely brutal. But in fact the complete reverse is true: self-grasping and self-cherishing are seen, when you really look at them, to be the root of all harm to others, and also of all harm to ourselves.

[...]

All those negative thoughts, emotions, desires, and actions that are the cause of our negative karma are engendered by self-grasping and self-cherishing. They are the dark, powerful magnet that attracts to us, life after life, every obstacle, every misfortune, every anguish, every disaster, and so they are the root cause of all the sufferings of samsara.

- We never get away with causing harm. Nobody in their right mind would hurt anyone if they realized what damage they were doing to themselves.
- This is why the words of Jesus Christ, spoken as he was being crucified, are so inspiring: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do”. (Luke 23:34)
- A true practitioner forgives immediately. He or she realizes that people cause harm out of ignorance, and in the grip of passion. A compassionate master will try to undo the harm people cause by forgiving them.
- Not only should we refrain from harm, we shouldn’t keep anger, malice and hatred in our hearts either. Never keep a grudge, because the world is not perfect, and neither are we.
—“To err is human, to forgive, divine.”
- An action that causes us pain is usually over in a matter of seconds. We ourselves opt to keep that pain alive, which is rather like preventing a sore from healing by continually scratching at it. But all our indignation and anger bring us is mental anguish.
- Scientific research has demonstrated that anger, anxiety and depression are bad for our health, and might even shorten our lives.
—If someone harms you and you forgive him or her, then what harm is done to you?

—As the Buddha once asked, if someone gives you a present that you don't accept, to whom does it belong?

- Forgiveness is at the heart of the practice of compassion. When we manage to avoid reacting negatively in the face of provocation, we stay aware of the bigger picture. We realize that the person being unkind to us is suffering and frustrated, and unaware of the consequences of his or her actions. We are then able to forgive them and wish them well. Our unselfish act even benefits us, as it creates merit and positive karma.

—So rather than stupidly fill ourselves with hatred and anger, why not love instead?

- The very idea of self-hatred is completely alien to Tibetan culture. When Westerners first explained it to the Dalai Lama, he was so surprised that, in spite of his good knowledge of English, he asked the translator to repeat what he had just heard.

- So love yourself, and be a good and genuine friend to yourself.

- The Dalai Lama recently remarked that we usually think of compassion as being of benefit to others, but it is we ourselves who are the true beneficiary of our own compassion. When we express compassion, it is *our* mind that is filled with happiness and joy, *our* heart that is opened to love. And when our perception is pure, there is no room in our mind for negativity.

Taming the Mind
London 16 January 2001

- The third statement is, “To tame this mind of ours.” The essence of the teaching of the Buddha is to understand and free our mind from ignorance and negativity.

—In the teachings of the Buddha, ‘mind’ implies and also means ‘heart.’

- Of the ‘three doors’ of body, speech and mind, it’s the mind that is the boss, and body and speech that are subservient. Mind is called *kungyé gyalpo* in Tibetan, which means ‘the universal ordering principle’. It is the creator of suffering, and the creator of happiness, the creator of samsara and nirvana, heaven and hell. As the Buddha said,

We are what we think.

All that we are arises with our thoughts.

With our thoughts we make the world...

The Dhammapada

- It is the mind that gives the order to help or to hinder, and the body and speech simply obey. Therefore, it is most important to purify the mind and to develop a positive motivation, because it’s not the size of an act that determines its outcome, but the motivation behind it. Even the smallest gesture carried out with a great and pure motivation can sometimes have a far-reaching effect. Once, an old beggar woman called ‘Relying upon Joy’ offered a lamp to the Buddha with this wish:

...through this offering, in the future may I be blessed with the lamp of wisdom. May I free all beings from their darkness. May I purify all their obscurations and lead them to enlightenment.”

[...]

The Buddha had been watching all along, and said, “Maudgalyayana, do you want to put out that lamp? You cannot. You could not even move it, let alone put it out. If you were to pour the water of all the oceans over this lamp, it still wouldn’t go out. ... Why not? Because this lamp was offered with devotion, and with purity of heart and mind. And that motivation has made it of tremendous benefit.” When Buddha had said this, the beggar woman approached him, and he made a prophecy that in the future she would become a perfect buddha, called ‘Light of the Lamp.’

- The Pali version of the Buddha's essentialization of his teachings translates as

Do no evil,
Do good.
Keep your mind pure.

- To tame the mind, we keep our mind and heart pure, so we need to gather ourselves in from our child's play, and stop chasing after illusions. As a famous prayer from the *Longchen Nyینگtik Ngöndro* says,

HO! Mesmerized by the sheer variety of perceptions, which are like the
illusory reflections of the moon in water,
Beings wander endlessly astray in samsara's vicious cycle.
In order that they may find comfort and ease in the luminosity and all-
pervading space of the true nature of their minds,
I generate the immeasurable love, compassion, joy and equanimity of the
awakened mind, the heart of bodhichitta.

- We are just like children who think the moon is drowning when they see its reflection in the water, and then jump into the water to save it. We're continually searching for the crock of gold at the end of the rainbow.
- When we're young, life looks full of really exciting possibilities, but as we get older, we realize it's mostly hollow propaganda. The trouble is, even though we know we're doing it, we get hooked on our habits and wander endlessly in "samsara's vicious cycle."
- And we suffer, because we put our heart and soul into finding a happiness that does not exist. At some point we will realize our folly and see the unnecessary suffering we have caused. We should then wish that all beings might find the truth, freedom and peace in the nature of their minds, because

the only way to discover lasting happiness is to realize the innermost essence of the mind.

- And when we discover it, we realize that these teachings exist not for the benefit of Buddhism, the Dharma, or the teacher—they exist for *our* benefit and well-being, for our liberation.

- We find ultimate happiness by ridding ourselves of our greatest enemies, the cause of all our suffering—ignorance and negative emotions. Once they are removed, we open to the state of omniscience. And this is why ‘taming’ the mind is of fundamental importance.

Terms and names and **Points for reflection** See main section, pp. 35-39

Part 3. Basic Buddhist Principles

See main section, pp. 48-53

APPENDIX FIVE: ORDER INFORMATION

Part 1

- “The Benefits of Meditation”, Sydney, 13 January 2000, TAP319
- “Finding Peace in a Changing World”,
London, 8 July 2002, TAP346
- “Discovering the Mind of the Buddhas”,
Paris, Salle Pleyel, 19 November 1997, TAP079

Part 2

- “Occupy Your Mind with Love”, Cologne, 14 May 2001, TAP 333
- “The Power of Forgiveness”, Sydney, 13 March 2001, TAP332
- “You Are What You Think”, Europe, 19-26 October 1999, TAP316
- “The Essence of the Three Yanas—Overcoming the Homelessness of Your Mind”, Marseille, 20 December 1996, TAP051
- “The Power of Compassion, A Simple and Basic Way to Live the Dharma”, Nice, 19 December 1996, TAP050
- “Mind is Not Real”, Los Angeles, 25 March 1999, VID309
- “Living & Dying Today”, Bercy/Paris, 13 October 2003.
TAP/VID/CDE362

Part 3

- “Letting Go of Conflicting Emotions”,
Washington D.C., 22 May 2002, TAP345
- “The Benefits of Altruism”,
Lerab Ling, 25, 26 & 28 July 2001, TAP/VID341
- “The Path to Happiness”,
Amsterdam, 15 November 2002, Cologne, 19 November 2002, TAP/VID351

Part 4

- “Discovering Who We Really Are”,
Munich, 2 October 2002, TAP/VID/CDE/DVD349
- “Applying the Teachings to Our Being”,
Paris and London May 2002, TAP344

APPENDIX SIX: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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—, *An Open Heart*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 2001

APPENDIX SEVEN: GLOSSARY

Key to references

- [DP] Sogyal Rinpoche, Dzogchen and Padmasambhava
[FLDN] His Holiness the Dalai Lama, A Flash of Lightning in the Dark of Night
[HE] His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Dzogchen, The Heart Essence of the Great Perfection
[HP] His Holiness the Dalai Lama, How to Practise
[KT] Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, The Practice of Tranquillity and Insight
[LM] Kalu Rinpoche, Luminous Mind
[MM] Tulku Thondup, Masters of Meditation and Miracles
[PR] Patrul Rinpoche, The Words of My Perfect Teacher
[RY] Rangjung Yeshe website
[S] trans. Mathieu Ricard, The Life of Shabkar
[TM] Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, Training the Mind
[TBLD] Sogyal Rinpoche, The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying
[WB] Shantideva, *The Way of the Bodhisattva*
[WE] Buddhist Studies at Nyingma Institute, Ways of Enlightenment
[WTB] His Holiness the Dalai Lama, The World of Tibetan Buddhism

Terms and names from all sections in alphabetical order

Abhidharma: associated with training in wisdom. Its treatises describe the constituents of experience, the functioning of the body and mind, the workings of karma and emotions, the stages of the path, and the obstacles along the path. [WE]

Awareness: if one has very concentrated mindfulness (*drenpa*, Tib.), one immediately notices a thought arising and this becomes awareness (*sheshin*, Tibetan), and one knows what is occurring. [KT]

Bodhichitta Vow: bodhichitta itself has two aspects: aspiration and application. Aspiration is simply wishing to attain enlightenment for the sake of all beings. Application begins with taking the vow of bodhichitta and promising to put it into action. [FLDN]

Buddha nature: saints and mystics throughout history have adorned their realizations with different names and given them different faces and interpretations, but what they are all fundamentally experiencing is the essential nature of the mind. Christians and Jews call it 'God'; Hindus call it 'the Self', 'Shiva', 'Brahmin' and 'Vishnu'; Sufi mystics call it the 'Hidden Essence'; and Buddhists call it 'buddha nature.' [TBLD]

Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche (1940-1987): the eleventh Trungpa Tulku, and Supreme Abbot of Surmang Monastery, he received a traditional monastic education in Tibet before leaving for India in 1959. He studied at Oxford University, and in 1968 founded Samye Ling Meditation Centre in Scotland. He was one of the first lamas to teach directly in English, and travelled extensively throughout America and Europe. He founded Naropa Institute, the Buddhist-inspired university, in North America, and was a pivotal figure in introducing Dharma to the Western world. [TM]

Dharma: this term has a number of different meanings. In its widest sense it means all that can be known. It can also simply mean phenomena. Dharma also means the teaching of the Buddha. [PR]

Dharmakaya: upon the attainment of buddhahood, enlightenment manifests at three levels known as the three bodies of the Buddha. They are: the Absolute or Truth Body, or dharmakaya; the Enjoyment Body, or sambhogakaya; and the Emanation Body, or nirmanakaya. The enlightened mind is dharmakaya. [LM]

Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche (1910-1991): an incarnation of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, he frequently gave teachings, including those of the Great Perfection (Dzogchen), to the Dalai Lama. Many of the younger generation of Tibetan lamas consider him their root teacher. [PR]

Ego: in Tibetan ego is called *dak dzin*, which means 'grasping to a self'. Ego then is defined as incessant movements of grasping at a delusory notion of 'I'

and ‘mine,’ self and other, and all the concepts, ideas, desires and activity that will sustain that false construction. [TBLD]

Egolessness: the principle of egolessness does not mean that there was an ego in the first place, and the Buddhists did away with it. On the contrary, it means that there never was any ego to begin with. To realize that is called ‘egolessness’. [TBLD]

Emptiness, or shunyata (Skt.): nothing has any *inherent* existence of its own when you really look at it, and this absence of independent existence is what we call ‘emptiness’. [TBLD]

Enlightenment: the state achieved by any person who has completely awakened from ignorance and opened to his or her vast potential for wisdom”. [TBLD]

Hope and fear: the eight worldly dharmas constitute our attachment to hopes and fears. We hope for praise, gain, fame and happiness while fearing blame, loss, disgrace and suffering. Entangled in these eight concerns, we give our energy and intelligence to the pursuit of these hopes and the avoidance of these fears. [WE]

Ignorance: ignorance, which underlies all our emotional and cognitive states, is the root factor that binds us to the perpetual cycle of life and death in samsara. [WTB]

Impermanence: all composite phenomena ... are momentary: the very conditions that brought them into being also cause their disintegration. [WTB]

Interdependence: the principle that governs the relationship between causes and their results. [WTB]

Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö (1896-1959): the most outstanding Tibetan master of the last century. Authority on all traditions and holder of all lineages, he was the heart of the “non-partisan” movement in Tibet. [TBLD]

Karma: all pleasure and pain depend on karmas, or former actions that have created predispositions in the mind. Karmas can be divided into virtuous and

non-virtuous according to whether they produce pleasure or pain in the long run. [HP]

Khandro Tsering Chödrön: the spiritual wife of Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodrö, regarded as the foremost woman master in Tibetan Buddhism. [TBLD]

Lineage: accomplished masters who investigate and realize the teachings through study and practice preserve the power of the teachings within their own experience. The transmission of this living realization is what is meant by lineage. [WE]

Longchen Nyingtik Ngöndro: *Longchen Nyingtik*, ‘The Heart Essence of Infinite Expanse’, or ‘The Ultimate Truth of the Universal Openness’, is a cycle of mystical teachings that represent the innermost meditation of Dzogpachenpo, revealed by the great scholar and adept Jigmé Lingpa (1730-1798). *Ngöndro* denotes ‘the preliminary practices’ of this tradition. [MM].

Maudgalyayana: one of the Buddha’s chief disciples. [TBLD]

mengak (Tib.), or **upadesha** (Skt.): ‘pith instruction’, or, ‘the experiential instruction given by the master’. [DP]

Milarepa: Jetsun Milarepa, Shepai Dorje (“Laughing Vajra”, 1040-1123), the most famous of all Tibetan ascetics. Disciple of Marpa Lotsawa, father of the Kagyu lineage, he was the archetype of the perfect disciple, practitioner and teacher. [S]

Mindfulness: when there is a distraction that takes one away from resting in meditation, one is able to return to one’s state of meditation repeatedly. This is reapplying a state of settling the mind. This power comes from the power of mindfulness because one becomes aware of the mind being distracted by some thought. With mindfulness one thinks, “I’m not going to be fully under the influence of this distracting thought”, and mentally returns to what one is doing. [KT]

Nirvana: freedom from conditioned existence. [WTB]

Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche (1932-1999): born in the Derge region of Kham in Tibet; he was a consummate master of Dzogchen and an authority on the teachings of Longchenpa. He was the teacher of many of the younger generation of lamas. [HE]

Padmasambhava: the “Precious Master”, “Guru Rinpoche” is the founder of Tibetan Buddhism and the buddha of our time. [TBLD]

Samsara: our conditioned existence in the perpetual cycle of habitual tendencies. Ignorance, which underlies all our emotional and cognitive states, is the root factor that binds us to the perpetual cycle of life and death in samsara. [WTB]

Shantideva: the eighth century scholar and adept who revealed the famous Mahayana text, *Bodhicharyavatara*, ‘The Way of the Bodhisattva’. [WB]

Sutra: means ‘summary’ or ‘brief indication of the teachings’. The Sutras contain the direct transmission of the Buddha’s knowledge of the nature of existence. They are associated especially with training the mind in meditative concentration.

Taking refuge: we take refuge in the Buddha, the truth of his teaching, and the example of his practitioners, and so awaken a confidence and trust in our own buddha nature. [TBLD]

Taking refuge creates a spiritual connection that, on the one hand, protects us from the fears and anxieties we may have about suffering in samsaric or conditioned existence. It also protects us from obstacles in this life, and in death, until we reach enlightenment. To take refuge until we reach enlightenment on behalf of all beings is to enter on the Buddhist path; it is the basis of Dharma. [LM]

The Three Jewels or Buddha, Dharma and Sangha

Buddha—the pure nature of mind —emptiness, clarity and unlimited potential—has been with us forever, although masked by veils obscuring its qualities. Buddhas ... have purified or unveiled their minds, allowing all the innate qualities of buddha nature to blossom fully. The particular

buddha for our time, Buddha Shakyamuni, is the person referred to as 'the Buddha' in this course and in all suggested reading material.

Dharma—Buddha's speech is the "rare and sublime Dharma", of which there are two facets: the Dharma of the scriptures that show us the path toward enlightenment, and the Dharma of realization, which is the practical and genuine experience of the meanings of the written Dharma.

Sangha—those who study, practise and transmit the words and experience of Dharma make up the Sangha—the community of practitioners of Buddhadharma. [LM]

The three wisdom tools, *tö sam gom sum* (Tib.): in Tibetan Buddhism there is a basic, normal, elementary spiritual education... which gives you the essential vocabulary, the ABC of the mind. The bases of this training are what are called 'the three wisdom tools': the wisdom of listening and hearing; the wisdom of contemplation and reflection; and the wisdom of meditation. Through them we are brought to reawaken to our true nature, through them we uncover and come to embody the joy and freedom of what we truly are, what we call 'the wisdom that realizes egolessness'. [TBLD]

Trulshik Rinpoche (b. 1923): one of the foremost masters of the Nyingma lineage, a pre-eminent Dzogchen master, considered to be a manifestation of Buddha's disciple Ananda. He is abbot of Thupten Choling monastery in Nepal, and has ordained nearly ten thousand monks and nuns. His teachers include Dudjom Rinpoche and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, to whom he was like a heart-son. He has offered many rare teachings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche (1920 –1996): an accomplished scholar and practitioner of the Kagyu and Nyingma schools, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche was famed for his profound meditative realization, as a teacher of Dzogchen and Mahamudra, and his method of teaching, known as "instruction through one's own experience". [RY]

Vinaya: the word vinaya is associated with making decisions, determining what actions of body, speech and mind promote calm and clarity, and which lead to confusion and suffering. The vinaya teachings address the subjects of identifying wrong actions, identifying the causes of wrong action, redressing wrong action, and overcoming wrong action.

Vinaya, sutra, and abhidharma: The teachings of the Buddha have a twofold nature: explanation and realization. The explanations include the twelve *angas*, which were compiled into the three collections of vinaya, sutra and abhidharma.

Yana: vehicle, a means of evolution or spiritual development. In general there are three yanas or vehicles of Buddhist teachings: Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. With Hinayana as the ground for beginning the path, Mahayana opens an expansive vision of the journey to enlightenment. As a special vehicle of the Mahayana, Vajrayana actualizes the enlightened state within one's own present experience. [DP]

Yogi, or yogini: a spiritual practitioner who practises *yoga*, literally a method for uniting with the natural state. [PR]

ENDNOTES

¹ 'View' as opposed to 'philosophy'. The choice of words is important here. Philosophy is often a passive accumulation of intellectual knowledge. View is a way of being; you take it into yourself; it defines your attitude and action. It is not simply an intellectual activity.

² The *Nyingma* or 'ancient' tradition or 'school' of Tibetan Buddhism was established when Buddhism first came to Tibet. There are four major 'schools' or traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. For more information see 'The Nine Yanas', from *Dzogchen and Padmasambhava*, by Sogyal Rinpoche, Revised and updated 25th January 2004

³ For a short biography of Sogyal Rinpoche see Appendix One.

⁴ *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, p. 128.

⁵ Sogyal Rinpoche has spoken many times of his vision for bringing the teachings to people in the most appropriate and accessible way. One aspect of this vision is to offer the teachings in different media. ZAM, the publishing and distribution arm of Rigpa, has been established with this as its purpose. The word ZAM signifies 'things coming together in a good way,' and this is ZAM's aspiration.

⁶ *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, p. 126.

⁷ Translation by Thomas Byrom, Shambhala, Boston & London, 1993.

The Dharma Publishing edition of the *Dhammapada* explains it in the following way: "...as a collection of teachings given by the Buddha at many different times and places. Over four hundred verses are gathered under the parasol of twenty-six different themes—forming a rich pattern which interweaves variations on many of the Buddha's most effective and moving teachings."

In a historical note to the Shambhala edition it says: "The *Dhammapada* is a collection of the sayings of the Buddha (563-483 B.C.E.). They were probably first gathered in northern India in the third century before Christ, and originally written down in Sri Lanka in the first century before Christ. *Dhamma* means law, justice, righteousness, discipline, truth; *pada* means path, step, foot, foundation. The *Dhammapada* was transmitted and recorded in Pali, the canonical language of southern Buddhism, and it has become the principal scripture for Buddhists in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia."

⁸ *An Open Heart*, p. 47

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- ⁹ *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, p. 126
- ¹⁰ **Monks**
- ¹¹ **See *The Nine Yanas* for more information.**
- ¹² *An Open Heart*, p. 48
- ¹³ *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, pp. 31-32
- ¹⁴ **Ibid**, pp. 24-25
- ¹⁵ **Ibid**, pp. 35-36
- ¹⁶ *Ethics for the New Millennium*, p. 35
- ¹⁷ **Ibid**, pp. 40-41