

Thin Veneer of Confusion on an Ocean of Wisdom.

Dharma roadside dialogue series

January 30, 2021 #2 Dialogue

Lama Tsony

Who wants to open the dance?

Q. I wanted to say, I was thinking about when you spoke on the Vineyard not that long ago, and you were talking about one of the guideposts for you as a teacher, as a lama and practitioner, was the ability to articulate thinking of the Buddha without having to delve into the glossary of all the books, that it wasn't all in the scriptures, that it was really the deepening of yourself and the ability to be able to speak, and in your case teach. Is that one of the five practices Gampopa talks about in the book, is that the ability to have confidence in your own speaking about it?

A. Your classic texts will say, the Dharma is almost inconceivable. What it means by this is that it's very difficult to apprehend, at first glance, all of the different layers and subtleties of Dharma. The word Dharma also has many possible translations, it depends on the context. The root verb in the word Dharma, if I am not mistaken, is dhr, which means "to hold." So the Dharma means to hold what is true and valuable. True in the sense that it is unerring, it is not misleading, it is not serving any personal interests, neither the Buddha's nor the listener's, it is only really designed to help people to hold what is true. And the Dharma being inconceivable, it doesn't mean that you cannot grasp it, it means that it is difficult. It means that it is not meant for people who are not interested in this inner quest. People who are not interested with this inner quest will have no interest whatsoever with Dharma. Maybe intellectual Dharma, it's like, okay, I know a little bit of everything, I studied comparative religion, and I know a little bit about everything, but it doesn't really affect me deeply, I'm not deeply willing to let it transform me and open treasures, and also expose things that need to be seen and corrected and so on. I'm not willing to be touched by the Dharma. So then, Dharma means nothing. And I'm not judgemental when I say that, it's just a matter of fact. You need to be proactive in your relationship to the Dharma. It can't be just, the Dharma comes to you, otherwise, you know, we're just by the TV satellite like all the other TV evangelists, you know, just blasting 24/7 Dharma through the TV, internet and so on, and people will be enlightened. No! It's proactive! That's one thing. It's only talking to and appealing to, people who are on this inner quest. Or people who are cornered, or lost, they have tried everything else, and nothing works, and they're looking for something that might help. So they have this desire to discover more and step out of their situation. That's one thing. Dharma is conceivable in the sense that it shouldn't be trapped into scholarly wording. It's not meant for specialists. It is not meant for Buddhologists, you know, people who study the scriptures without the intention to be touched by them. So, the Buddha himself said, in the sutra, that as long as the vinaya, just 1/3 of all the teachings of the Buddha, is not accessible in the language of the people of any given country, the teachings will not take root. It was very clear that for the Buddha it was not a language, it was not sort of a secret in

the sense of something belonging to the happy few. It is something that needs to be made understandable. So I think a lot of the teachers that have some, let's say, success, in the sense of people listen to what they have to say, it's because they spend time trying to figure out the way to use other peoples lingo. What I always say, like "Please, send me your lexicon, please send me your dictionary, so I can see which words you use." Like, if you're a baker, let's talk about bread, if you're a carpenter, let's talk about joinery, let's talk about wood. The Buddha, in his days, spoke in Magadhi. There are many discussions about what language the Buddha spoke, but let's agree more or less that he spoke Magadhi, which was the language of the area he was from. So that means he talked in the vernacular. He used common language. Understood by kings and farmers, by literate and illiterate people equally. And then there is the universal language of what Trungpa calls the authentic being...that is, your realization oozes. And this is the miracle I've seen with great masters. Shamar Rinpoche, Karmapa, of course in the first place, but Gendun Rinpoche and others. Gendun Rinpoche, I've seen people moved by just seeing his picture. Gendun Rinpoche had a chiropractor in Paris that was helping him with some physical issue, and he had one black and white picture, a portrait, of Gendun Rinpoche in his office. He had dozens of people everyday coming in, patients, for treatments. One day one man looked at the picture and said, "Who is this man, I need to meet him." This was the authentic being of Gendun Rinpoche that was perceptible through a picture. And that's why in the '70's we flocked around him. We didn't know anything, he didn't even speak our language, he never spoke our language. The only time I heard Gendun Rinpoche speaking French, I was knocked out of my socks. We were sitting in the yard in the retreat, there was a bird flying above our heads, and Rinpoche said, "Oiseau." I was just like, aaaa!?! And that's the only work of French I heard him say. And so, we didn't speak the same language, but it didn't matter. For many years I'd been asked to interpret for Gendun Rinpoche. In Tibetan, which now is gone, but back then it was really so-so. But I found out that he could speak through me, and if I tried to be using my intellect and my knowledge of Tibetan, it was a catastrophe, because I would block the channel. I would sit next to him, and just receive his blessing, and just try to remember the first word. He would speak for 15 minutes. I would just try to remember the first word, and then I would start from the first word, in a relaxed state of mind, and then it would unravel. And if by any chance I'd forgotten a piece, after the end of my translation, then Gendun Rinpoche would start at this very point. Go figure. I have no idea what happened. I remember one day, I was trying to be the "good" translator and use my intelligence and all my knowledge of Tibetan, which was almost close to zero, and I was just paralyzed. And so he looked at me with sort of a laugh and then hit me on the head, and then he said, "Well today the radio is broken." He called me the radio. So, he was speaking through me, he had capacity so that he could go through the barrier and used me as his radio. Basically, you can have this little device now that you speak into your phone in your language and then it translates, you know, and that's what I was. I was his radio. And then after that, when people heard I was his translator, I was so ashamed. Then they said, "Oh, now you can translate for this, and that, and I was like, "No, I can not." Like a one-use radio, it doesn't work, I'm not compatible with others. And one

time when we were in retreat, Shamar Rinpoche visited us, and he started talking in Tibetan, and he was expecting that I was going to translate and he was talking in Tibetan and his Tibetan was like pure Central Tibetan, and Gendun Rinpoche was speaking the dialect of a farmer of Eastern Tibet, some Tibetans couldn't even understand him, so anyway, Shamar Rinpoche speaks with his really perfect Tibetan, and my mind just draws a blank, I'm just, I couldn't even think, and Rinpoche looked at me, then he kind of went, hfft, then he continued in English. So, this capacity to adjust, at my level, I try to understand the language of the people, if I'm in France, in Austria, wherever, my communication is different because it is based on what I know of this culture. What I have absorbed in my journey, and being with them, and so on, here and there, or in the states now, what I have absorbed of this culture. The melody of the music of their language, their jokes, their sense of humor, which is very particular. All of this gives me ways to adjust my communication, so this is what I do. It's not a translation, if you will, it's a transposition, like in music. What I want to say is written in a certain key, and then I transpose it into another key, for another language. This is what I do. And then a hundred notches above that, is like Gendun Rinpoche, who can speak to you without even knowing your language. And then wayyy above that, there is the Buddha. Who all the sutras say, he could speak to all beings in their own language and dialect, whether they were humans or not. This is the art of communication. And personally, this was my gateway, this is what led me to my utter admiration of the Buddha. His capacity to convey what is inconceivable in multiple languages to all sorts of people. To me that's like, "Namo Buddha." That's the top, because I'm very into this, as you've probably noticed, I like to talk. So, that's my thing. I've been asked to write books, which is so painful, like I can't do it, it's not my thing. There is one that's about to happen, I swear, that's gonna be the last one. Like you can take all of my recordings and do something out of it, I don't care, it's not my problem, it's your responsibility, but I'm not going to do that. I want to talk, because that's what I know. So the skill is something that you cultivate. And it was a challenge for me, changing from my French-centric mind, and first traveling throughout Europe, where you have all these different people, even in one country you have different people, like think about Austria, or Switzerland, you know if your in Vienna, or you're in Graz, it's just another country. I make a joke now, people in Vienna know they're great, people in Graz know they are great. Then Switzerland, then French speaking, then Italian, it's all different! Once I was teaching in Basel, and my translator, this was in Switzerland, which by the way was kind of funny, because the place where I was teaching was a former kindergarten turned into a Buddhist center, right across the street from the house of Carl Gustav Jung. I thought that was really cool, all of that together. And then the translator asked the crowd if they wanted her to translate in German, or Deutsch, or in dialect. And they all said dialect. And they were all so happy to hear these words in their own dialect. And all of that for me is so important. I love the dialect. All of you in Austria know how much fun I had with our dear friend Christian Loidl. Because he was in Wien (Vienna), and he could translate with a strong Wiener (Viennese) dialect, in slang, like Cockney for London, and he had so much humor. Once we were giving a talk, I was giving the talk, but I say we

because it was almost like a group thing, together, and then everybody was having so much fun, it was in a theater, we were on a stage, literally. And someone came up to me during the break and said, like, “Is this improv, or do you rehearse?” He thought it was just a skit, kind of like stand-up comedy. So a friend of mine told me, I’m in the sit-down comedy business, not the stand up. That’s about communication. The bottom line is that there is no communication, because if what I have to say was objective, I wouldn’t need to say it to you because you would already know it. If my jokes were ultimately funny, even my dog would laugh. So what I understand and how I express it is very personal. When you hear it it is already distorted by your own false clarity, your own way of understanding it. But maybe it just rings a bell, I have no idea what I say means to you, I hope it’s good. I hope it’s liberating, that’s all I can do. It’s really fascinating, maybe we could do one talk about communication one day, it’s really fascinating.

But Dharma is inconceivable. It can not be grasped by concepts. Concepts can help you to come close to a point where you can drop it, and get into an intimate experience. For that, the concepts and the words must be extremely sharp, like when you study philosophy, such as madhyamika, every word counts. Every subtlety, if you study abhidharma, every subtlety counts, relatively speaking. So you need precise communication, you need to be listening and in tune with your audience, but the real thing is not happening there. But that’s all we have. And for me this is what is at the source of my absolute admiration for the Buddha. This mastery of communication. That’s my goal, that’s what I want to be when I grow up, when I am older. When I grow up I want to be a Buddha master of communication.

Q. Thank you for your teaching. I have a question about tendencies, I’ve been hearing Dharma talks for a bit now, and I’ve heard now many times you speak about inner happiness, and I know that many years of pursuing this goal of being happy inside, I catch myself trying for outside happiness, even if it’s futile, and now I’m realizing it’s okay, not to feel guilty if I’m appreciating good food or whatever. My question is about the attachment I can feel for all the good things, food, movies, etc, and before I was holding back from enjoying these, thinking this was proper Dharma. What’s your view about living a normal life in the meantime while not exactly renouncing, but somehow enjoying something but not craving it?

A. I think this is an experience we all share. On our way we go through many stages of transformation, and there is a time where maybe you are in maybe a vision of absolute purity, and the renunciation, which means to cut from whatever ties you to samsara, or at least what you conceive as samsara. That means cutting yourself from all of the sensual pleasures and so on, because they are a trap, especially women, why do you do that to men, really? Just kidding.:~) You project your idea of holiness and it has the form of renunciation, in the sense of creating a sort of ideal picture of the “white knight” with stainless armor who is going to help the widow and the orphan and has no desire for himself. This is just bullshit! But there’s a time that propels you, and then come to a point where you say like, “I’m tired of selling to myself and other people this idea.” It doesn’t represent reality. Gendun Rinpoche said all the time in teachings in front of many, many people, a lama is this, a lama

is that, such qualities and so forth, “But it’s not somebody like me, I am just full of emotions, full of kleshas, full of impurities.” And we were like ho ho ho, yeah, sure, we know. But actually, now I know he meant it. I know Gendun Rinpoche, when he looked at himself and saw something that for him was a mountain of negativity that needed to be purified, he was honest. And for me, what he saw as a mountain is not even a dust particle, I would not even see that as a problem. His vision was getting more and more deep and subtle. And he was not fooling himself, and he was not fooling us. He was telling it as it was for him. So, I think it’s important to work with what scares you and what attracts you in a more and more dispassionate way. So that we work with it for what it is, we don’t overdo it, like I keep telling people, we are Dharma practitioners, not drama practitioners. So quit the drama. The drama in comedy, “I want to be a holy practitioner,” the dramatic, like, “I’m just such a piece of crap, I’m so useless, I’m so terrible.” Nobody cares, this is just promoting, your the best of the best or the worst of the worst because you just want to be the first. Who cares. This is not real. So take what comes, like Lama Teunsang, the house is locked, then stay in the barn. Food comes, then take the food. It’s gone, the go without. Whatever comes your way, that’s fine, it shouldn’t change your inner composure, it shouldn’t change your inner stability, your inner mind. You know, there is an Italian author Italo Calvino, I don’t know if you’ve heard of him, a great author, he wrote book called *The Invisible Knight*, it’s about this perfect man, this perfect knight, he’s a perfect gentleman, and he never takes care, he just does good deeds and never let’s down. And then there’s a woman, a lady who falls in love with him, and in the end we find out that actually there is no one in the armor. It’s empty. It’s just an appearance, just a shiny armor with nothing inside. So, if you want to turn your gaze inward, you have to see what “is” inside, okay, I like food, I like men, I like women, I don’t like kale, I don’t like greens, and that’s okay, if I have to eat it, I’m grateful, because food comes on my plate, and I’m very grateful and I eat it, but I don’t like it. But that’s okay, it’s food. Like Milarepa in his cave, when he has nothing but nettles to eat, you know, he put some water, and then he cooked the nettles, and then he said, “Hmmm, these nettles need a little bit of spice, a little bit of salt,” and he added some nettles, and,”Hmmm, maybe a little bit of chili,” and put a little bit more nettle, that he’s just making a soup of nettles, and that’s it. So I think the point is not about suppressing, repressing, it’s not about being overpowered and possessed by your likes and dislikes. It’s to see them, both of them, as liars. They’re not true! They’re not deeply true, they’re just habits that you’re pursuing, and you have to remember that they lead nowhere. I’ve done that before, been there, done that. I can say, been there, done that, didn’t work, I’m not going to go there again. And I’m not going to go there again because I “shouldn’t,” I have to be pure, no! Because I’ve done it, it leads nowhere, I’m tired of this bs. That’s renunciation, renunciation is when you give up bullshitting yourself.

Q You mean that you’re saying that the pleasures are actually the path too?

A. Yes. But it's not like one needs to experience everything, there are things that I experience myself and I know the consequences, I'm not interested. There are things that I've seen other people doing, and inferentially, because I've seen people running headlong into the wall, and I've seen them hurt, so I know I don't want to do that. So I learn from my own experience and from watching other people. And I've been for decades the interpreter for Gendun Rinpoche, and so I've met thousands of people, I've listened to thousands of stories of people, and as they were open, it was like being in a confessional, the place you confess your sins and so on. I've heard so many stories, and you know what? They are all the same. And it's my story. And so I've seen that, and I'm not interested. My wife would say, is she here? She would say, "It's because your testosterone levels are down." Ha ha, she might be right.

Q. I have my own business, that I started almost 4 years ago, I dye wool, and I actually started a web shop this last May, and even with the pandemic I was so amazed, and after a while, after 2 months when the money was really just coming in and coming in, I started feeling unhappy. And shortly after that, I found the Dharma, or the Dharma found me, so this is just half a year ago, and now my passion, that I used to feel about this job, which I always thought this is a lovely job where i can do something creative, it's not harmful to anyone, it's paying off very nicely, but now it feels completely useless, it has no meaning anymore, like just blowing bubbles through the air, and it feels so strange, because I put so much effort and worked so hard to get there, I got there, and now it doesn't mean a thing to me. I'm really confused about it, I'm really thinking of letting it go, because financially I'm not even dependent on it. I could use the time for Dharma, but on the other hand it seems so silly to let it go. What would be your advice?

A. You're in charge of your life, so I'm not going to tell you what to do, right? I'm barely in charge of mine, so I wouldn't dare to be in charge of somebody else's; I think you come to a point where, you know, this false clarity I was talking about, but then it's fading, and this is a good sign, because the clarity comes and replaces the false clarity. Now, with the perspective of clarity, you can make whatever decision you want, you could take it as a hobby, you could keep doing it as a job but you see, it's a different job, because you're a different person. So you could do it as a way to give some joy and beauty in the world of people, I know people like my mom, during the confinement, she has been sewing and knitting, she has so many things that she had to buy another cupboard to put all the things she produced. She said that was her saving grace. If she hadn't had the sewing machine and the knitting and the internet, you know, she discovered zoom and all the rest at 86! This could have been extremely painful being alone in her apartment. Lately, I wanted a hand drum for doing puja. I didn't want to buy a "made in China," and I found on Etsy a little company which is called Gaia something, you know, really woo woo, it's a group of 3 women in Portland, Oregon...of course, where else, where they do these beautiful little hand drums with cedar or maple tree, they build it from scratch, and then you send them, the words, or something that you want them to use while they are manufacturing the drum. So I sent them and asked, can you inscribe inside sarva mangalam, "May everything lead to enlightenment." So then I wait months or so, and then here it is, I received it. I don't know if they live from that, probably

and what a business! And I was very happy when I received my drum, much better than if I'd bought one from Walmart for \$10. Made in China, plastic. So, when I get something that is unique, I keep in mind the joy with which it was produced, and that brings me joy. Like when I was in France, I met a craftsman who is not far from Dhagpo, and he makes leatherwork, but he is using a very ancient tradition of fish skin, the way some of the Arctic circle tribes are tanning the fish skin with birchwood or other plants, like sturgeon and salmon, and so I went to see him, and told him I would like to offer my wife a nice little folder to put her ipad in. He said, "Sure," and asked what I wanted as an ornament. I said, "Could you use fern," because she really enjoyed the time she spent in New Zealand, and fern is important in New Zealand, and he said, "Oh, I just came from Madeira where they have these big ferns and I took many pictures of them." And the guy showed me pictures from his holidays and we discussed ferns and chose the fish and so on, and now my wife is still torturing me to tell her how much I spent for that, probably more than for the ipad itself. But this is a beautiful object. I hope she likes it, but I personally was very happy to give this guy who wants to support an ancient tradition that because of Stalin almost disappeared and that they are rebuilding. It's just a piece of leather with sturgeon skin to put an ipad in. You could say, "Oh, he's very attached, why don't you buy a cheap one?" But there is the hand, and there is the intention, that brings me joy, and I know because we discussed when I went to pick up the piece, I know the guy was very happy to do that. And he also makes his money, I paid the fair price. That brings joy, it's not about the product, it's about the process. I don't know, maybe it's a way for you to think about this, but if you want to quit, that's fine. Quit, because again, it's not the medium, it's the intention.

Q. Yeah, I used to feel joy, I have been waiting for 3 or 4 months now for the joy to come back and it's not. And I've been reading Dharma, and I read about the gap between when you fall asleep and waking, and also between the thoughts in meditation, and I was like, "What, there's a gap??!" I feel like I am in my mid-forties and I still have so much to learn. When will I do that if I keep working? I mean, I didn't even know that there was a gap you should look for.

A. Well, if you take public transportation they tell you when you come into the tramway, "Mind the gap." This is what is beautiful about life, it's all open, anything is possible. Like if you're a photographer, I see my friend Thule on the call, so if you're out taking photos 10, 12 hours a day, when you come home, you don't want to be taking pictures for yourself. Because suddenly your pleasure became a job. I took a lot of pictures and I really liked it, and when I look at the pictures I took now, they're all crappy. Because I don't care, I'm not interested any more. At a time, I thought it was my duty to be a reporter at the center to archive, I was archiving!!!! The pleasure of framing the shot was lost in the duty to archive. So now I have to go on a photography diet, to fast so that I maybe find the pleasure of framing again. But if I don't find it that's fine. There are so many ways to find the nature of your mind.

Q. If we try to, as much as we can while going about our daily activities, try not to grasp, would that be a good training to improve our meditation on the cushion?

A. The capacity to do that in action depends on the skill we have cultivated on the cushion. So we need to balance both. The cushion I call the gym, that's where you build up the muscle, and then life is where you flex your muscles. You use them. If you haven't prepared, you can not lift what you have to lift, and then you may be in a difficult position. So it's very good to have the training, the building of the muscles, in the gym of the meditation cushion. That's very important. Then, in daily life situations, what we think that we have realized through our practice of meditation on the cushion will be put to the test. Then we will see whether we fooled ourselves or if we really have found something. In English we have a saying, "When push comes to shove." We'll see what you can do. In French it's, we judge by the result. Everybody can be a great meditator, just on the cushion, and not talking to anybody, but the Tibetans would say, we recognize a learned person by the way he or she speaks, gently and calmly. We can see a meditator by the way he or she controls their mind. So, the daily action will reveal what you have found or not found, will expose what you think you have found as real or as untrue. But to come back to grasping, grasping essentially is to hold for true the self of the individual who perceives and hold for true the object that is known by this self. That's the essential grasping, the dualistic clinging. We cling to these two aspects as being substantially existent, permanent, and independent. It's kind of difficult to see it when we are in the midst of the action because, let's say, a part of our capacity to know is used by dealing with the situation. Like when we began our zoom session, I was still trying to figure out how this darn screen could go on the other screen, and I was trying to talk to you, and I needed to let people into the session, and I was clinging to the reality of the screens and everything as mad. See, we need to cultivate, in meditation, this skill of recognition and letting go, and it will translate as a plus, as an asset, in our daily action. So, long story short, we need both aspects. People sometimes ask things like, "If I'm doing the dishes mindfully, does it count as my meditation." No! It counts as your taking care of chores in the house. It doesn't count as meditation. And besides this, who counts meditation? Do you keep tabs? Is there a bookkeeping of your hours of meditation? This is totally nonsensical. Ideally wisdom will be 24/7....actually so 24/7 there will be no time anymore. But I would say it's a validation. It validates what needs to be cultivated, needs to be taken care of, and that's very helpful for that.

Q. I have a question about my experience, it may sound very funny, but when I look in the space in front of me, or around me, and I point my attention to what is looking through my eyes, I see that the space in front of me and what is looking through my eyes are the same thing. Is this an experience of emptiness?

- A. It depends how you see it. You see, because when you said, “When I look at what sees and what is seen at the same time, and then I see it’s the same thing, who is knowing this? Is it the mind that looks at the object, because then you’ve got a second mind, you’ve got a mind that is looking at the object, and the object who is the same as the mind, and then you’ve got an extra mind who is looking at the subject looking at the object and seeing that’s the same thing. Is it something like this? Do you have a second mind?”

Q. No. I’m not thinking about, I don’t have any thoughts. I just have a feeling that these 2 things are the same. Because I’m not thinking about my feelings, I’m not thinking about my sight, my senses, I just see that what is looking through my eyes is actually space. Empty.

- A. Okay, that’s a good start, keep digging. It’s hard to use words for trying to explain an experience beyond words, to translate this into words. We use words and just agree it’s a way to try to communicate. So, when you look at this thing, when you realize what sees through your eyes and what is seen is the same thing, then look at this. What is it? Is it just a blank space with nothing? Is it also vibrant? Is it also that there is a sense of awareness even if we don’t “see” something? I would suggest when you come to this experience, if you come to this experience, that you dig into this, that you look at that in your meditation.

Q. I feel that there is a huge potential, that anything can happen in this space. Like the outer world.

- A. Yes, that’s the natural radiance, the natural creativity of mind. But I think it’s good, it’s a good starting point. And I would really recommend that you keep observing and, I think the way you do it is probably a good way, it’s just look at it without trying really to find words and concepts and then wrap it into some sort of manufactured project you can communicate. You know, like showing me, hey, this is what I found. And so, keep digging in this direction, and keep placing your attention on this. Begin to see whether this has some kind of fixture, some sort of substance, or is it illusive, it’s nothing. But is it really nothing? Because there is still this thing that sees. It’s clarity, and the creativity and all the potential. And as you say, whether it is the outer manifestation or inner manifestation, everything is possible. So keep looking at it, until that becomes really a stable confidence, a stable certainty. Keep looking at it. And I mean there’s no time frame, you don’t have to rush, you don’t have to come up with some nice algorithm or some sort of definition for it, nobody cares. Just explore it to the limit of it, or maybe beyond, because maybe there is no limit. But think you are on a good track. Just keep observing.

Q. I’m not sure, but I think I heard Jigme Rinpoche say, the main cause of our suffering is our attachment to thoughts. Because usually we say that the cause of suffering is ignorance, but he said our main cause of suffering is the attachment to thoughts.

A. Well, attachment to thoughts, and I would add to this, attachment to thoughts as being substantially real, autonomous, and existent is an expression of ignorance. So that's the loop. You suffer from this. Basically it's a non-recognition of reality. So we're back to what we were discussing in French. As long as you don't see that the subject and the object, that is the thought and the thinker only appear to be existent in this interdependent origination process, we tend to cling to the thinker as an entity, and what is perceived by the thinker as "another" entity, which is dualistic clinging. In Tibetan they say *zung-zin*, *zin* is to grasp, *zung* is to be grasped. So what grasps is the mind, what is grasped is the mind, and the grasp grasping and grasped only arises because mind doesn't know itself. And that's really the reason we look at this mind, to come to the definite meaning, the certainty that yes things appear, they do appear, yet they have no substantial existence. They appear in an independent origination process. And all of that is fueled by habits and tendencies and so on and so forth. So when we see that we can relax a little bit. Because we know that there is nothing we have to achieve, and there is nothing we have to abandon. That's another way of describing Mahamudra. There is nothing to gain and there is nothing to reject. In some approaches it's a path of transformation where there are things to be achieved, like nirvana has to be achieved and samsara has to be abandoned, but in the perspective of Mahamudra what has to be, not even abandoned, what has to be seen is confusion, and as Gampopa puts it in the Four Dharmas, the famous Four Dharmas of Gampopa, the final step is, may confusion dawn as wisdom. Confusion arises and is revealed as wisdom itself.