

Defeat the Klesha

Part Two: By unlimited love and compassion.

Dharma roadside dialogue series.

Lama Tsony

January 29, 2022 #2 Dialogue

Q: I began studying with Thich Nhat Hanh, and then now more with the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Thich Nhat Hanh mainly emphasizes the idea of inter-being, but does not teach as much about reincarnation or the concept of the continuation of the mindstream after this life...he describes it more as a continuation of the inter-being. For me, the concept of reincarnation and the vast perspective of future lives, and the aspirations to serve sentient beings through lifetimes and toward enlightenment in this vast perspective and this different emphasis also creates a slightly different view in how I relate to the world. These views seem to be integrating within me, but I am interested in your perspective.

A: Thank you for this question. I think there is, in all of the different approaches of Buddhist teachings, a common ground. Always. The common ground, you can find it everywhere, in all traditions. At one point you mentioned that emphasis is placed more on this or on that. These seem to be pointing to differences, and our interpretation may be that this is pointing out a contradiction. And then we have this question of comparing. Where actually, all the teachings of the Buddha are talking about relative reality and helping us to figure out what the true nature of reality is. Let's say you take the first cycle of teachings; the Buddha taught more about certain topics like interdependence, but in the sense of cause and effect and karma, and the necessity for morality and ethics, the very important part of mindfulness and meditation. So basically what we call the three trainings: of ethics, *sila* (in Sanskrit,) and *samadhi*, of attention, and *prajna*, of wisdom. And then in the second cycle of teachings the Buddha emphasized more about emptiness, the bodhisattva ideal, and in the third cycle of teachings, which is called the more definitive cycle of teachings, where he reiterated several points he had taught previously; he particularly re-emphasized about Buddha nature. So I think that each teacher appears in a certain time and in a certain environment, and talks to certain people. So the language is very much adapted to the people of the time. Let's say I come from the Kagyu tradition, which is Tibetan Buddhism; how it was developed and preserved in Tibet...but, I am not a Tibetan. At the heart of it, the message I try to convey is the same as my teacher conveyed; I'm definitely not using the same words and using the same language even, because I'm living in another world, and I need to find a way to communicate with people of my time in a way that is not creating a problem. If you are too attached to the words and the language, then people may not understand what you are saying, and it won't make sense. For me it's just a problem of packaging. The product is the same, but the packaging is different...because we are talking to different people.

I think the angle of Thich Nhat Hanh comes from his personality, from his culture, and also from his history, you know, of going through war. He had to escape from his own country, and couldn't go back until he was in his eighties. Then living in the States for a while, but not really being

accepted because of the trauma of the post-Vietnam war...and then finding a place in France where he could really start, and frankly, do a tremendous job. By default when somebody asks me where they should go to study Dharma, I tell them to first read Thich Nhat Hanh's books. Start there. It's easy and he talks to people's hearts. The monastery where I was in France is very, very closely connected to Thich Nhat Hanh's tradition, because all the Anis, the women Lamas who took vows of bhikkhuni, fully ordained, I think 25 or 26 of them received this from Thich Nhat Hanh or his sisters, his elder teachers there. So there is a strong connection between our two communities, and we are not far apart in miles, either.

When I have to talk about death and transition I use Thich Nhat Hanh's book, *No Death, No Fear*. I think that it's very soothing. If you talk about, "You can see the ocean in the clouds," and this has been very prevalent on social media after his transiting and passing away; everybody was using this to overcome the sadness or whatever, the trauma of losing an amazing teacher.

The common ground is bodhicitta. Thich Nhat Hanh's tradition is very deeply rooted in the Mahayana, the Mahayana cultivates ethics, cultivates mindfulness, cultivates wisdom, discernment...in order to be of help. And when you're cultivating discernment, and maybe Tibetans would say the wisdom of emptiness and so on, it is very much influenced by the Indian philosophers and quote them a lot. Thich Nhat Hanh also quotes Vasubandhu and other Indian philosophers now and then, but the way that the view is explained in the Tibetan world, in the Kagyu tradition and the Tibetan world at large, is very technical; it's highly philosophical. It's sort of talking more to your head than your heart. Some people like it, I know in Europe we were studying and spent a looong time in school on philosophy and concepts and we sort of got big heads, but the heart is in the feelings; school doesn't teach much about this, you know? So it's very soothing and refreshing just to attend, and now you can find it everywhere on Youtube, lectures of Thich Nhat Hanh and hear the way he explained things. I really love the Q&A's when kids ask him, "What happens when we die?" It's a kid! So you're not going to quote the 36 levels of consciousness as described by Dharmakirti and Vasubandhu, you have to find something else.

For example, once I was asked that question by a little girl, she was about 4 years old. She couldn't sleep at night, she was so panicked; she was afraid her parents would die. So we discussed that we are all flowers; I was really inspired by Thich Nhat Hanh. We are all flowers on the same ground...and sometimes there are flowers, and sometimes in Winter they die, then the seeds fall on the ground. And then the next Spring they come up to the surface and we are happy to see them again. That's an explanation for a 4 year old, but I think it works for everybody. We understand that we're in a cycle, we are passing, we are flowers, and then we plant seeds, and the seeds flourish again. So for me I don't see a contradiction, I just see a different emphasis placed on different topics. And a different way of presenting it. And personally I feel no shame in using all of them;~}

At times I use Trungpa Rinpoche because he is the best one to talk about neurosis and inner demons. And then when one needs to touch the heart, Thich Nhat Hanh is the way to go. This is

Dharma treasure; I'm using all of them. And what works for you personally is the best. What opens up your heart to compassion; and compassion means that you understand interdependence, inter-being, and inter-being helps you understand that nothing exists in and of itself. If you understand this, you understand emptiness. And if you understand emptiness you can't be fixed on your own little privileges, you are a part of the ecosystem. We're all interconnected. I use permaculture language when I need to...I use everything. Bad jokes mostly;~} But that's the way Dharma was communicated. I'm very grateful for all these teachers and bodhisattvas for their specific talents that help us to understand this timeless wisdom in different situations and different circumstances.

I hope that helps; if there is not a problem then you don't really need my help, but that's my view on all of that. I think there was a time when I was very, very Kagyu centric, everything was this way because at the time it was like you needed to know where you came from, your roots and so on, you needed to work with one system...but now I'm seeing more the universality...and appreciate the different things. Lately I am reading about Dogen, a main figure in the Soto Zen tradition. And in what he says I can hear Saraha and Maitripa in India talking about the non-conceptual mind. Different language, same thing. There is only one Dharma, there are different ways of talking about it. But that's my take on it, maybe some others would say, "Tsony has become very, very crazy!" Doesn't matter;~} I think Thich Nhat Hanh speaks to the heart in a really skillful way. He speaks to the heart, but it resonates in your mind and gives you tremendous determination. When I see his Sangha, of all his ordained sisters and brothers, also lay people but mostly ordained, I'm very impressed by the result of his work to construct this Sangha, because I know; I've been part of this effort and it's a huge job...to herd the cats, you know, into one stream. And he's done a tremendous job!

Keep being nourished by all of this, and find the way that talks to your heart and your mind and that makes things clearer, and if you need to know more about the nature of mind, yes, the Kagyu teachings are much more precise in a sense of going into great detail of what is vipashyana and so on, but sometimes maybe that's just a little bit too nerdy, you know? Nerd language, talking about gigs, mind gigs, but you might need to get back to the touch of a flowing heart and gentleness and poetry...and poetry, and poetry again. Thich Nhat Hanh is so great at that. I think these come together instead of being opposing. More and more for me there is one stream. Okay? So, have a nice journey...;~}

Q: At the end of a recent message from Karmapa there is a very interesting idea or thought that I'd like you to explain. He's talking about the problems leaders have deciding on their course of actions, and he says about choice, "All the choices they have to make are based on the inheritance of both prosperity and poverty, there's no way around this when one chooses; so the very nature of choice is both positive and negative. This illusion of choice is what we are hypnotized by. Practicing the Buddhadharma means letting go of choice and decisions." I suppose this is very profound but I will have to really think about it, because I would like to understand his meaning here.

A: I saw this briefly and only read it quickly, but I didn't have time to really ponder his meaning. But off the top of my head what amazes me, generally speaking, with Karmapa's addresses is that when you read them at first you think, "Yeah, yeah, it's obvious." And in a way, it kind of reminds me of Thich Nhat Hanh. "Of course, it's very obvious." And then when you just pause for a moment and you're thinking about this, it's like, wait! There are many, many, many layers...that you need to dive into and sort of let them open up. Like you open a drawer and it's obvious, but then in the back there's another drawer and you open that, and then there's another drawer, and you keep opening and it becomes deeper and deeper and deeper. And so in response to what you said, what comes to my mind in what you read that Karmapa said is that he is always addressing relative reality problems, but reframing them into a deeper perspective...more into the absolute nature.

Like, for example, one address was about solidarity and the sangha, being together and so on. He was saying that sangha is very important...we find support, comfort, inspiration, and that's a great thing...like, don't we like to be together, it feels so cozy and so on? But that's not what sangha is about...not just a bunch of friends to feel cozy with. So he's pointing out that, yeah, it's good to be together, but aren't we addicted to the need not to be alone, and shouldn't we cultivate connection and belong to the sangha but at the same time cultivate independence?

So here in the quote from this more recent address you mentioned, and in the heat of what's happening these days in the Ukraine and so on, he's of course addressing this; the anxiety and the agony and the suffering of the people in Ukraine and the people who died and the bombing and all of that. So of course we have to address this. But he was also addressing, in this or another message, the fact that we take peace for granted. He says that as we've had peace for a long time we think that this is the natural state of our affairs. But the nature of samsara is to be constantly changing, and with the influx of positive or negative causes and conditions things change. And when peace disappears then we're lost and frustrated, because we have lost what we thought was stable. It is like what Shamar Rinpoche said right before he died, that everything is impermanent, so don't be surprised if something changes; and then the next day he died. So we need to consider all aspects, and not be mesmerized by just one aspect.

Like we're very inclined, we people living in democracy, thinking we have freedom of choice. Okay? To some extent it's true. You can elect people who are supposed to represent you and who are going to support your interests and cultivate a very civil and peaceful society...on paper. In reality it's very, very different. Right? You've got greed, you've got ambition...you've got all of these things that actually get in the way. So when we look at the experiences we have of the world, we tend to project our ideals and we hope that our dreams will come true. We always say that. "I hope my dreams come true." I personally hope my disillusion will be complete. My dis-illusion. That my freedom from illusion will be complete.

Karmapa always points this out. He says, "Yes, of course, let's wish and work to have a peaceful world...but the nature of samsara is confusion and suffering." If things change, don't be so

surprised. It's just a matter of being ready to work with whatever the world throws at us. We're in a democratic environment and we think most highly of democracy, and we think the rest are autocratic, and then people can't decide what they want. I think it's not as clear cut as we'd like it to be. We become very attached to this idea of "my choices." I mean, even in America it comes to the point where it's ridiculous. Like if you say anything that might shock somebody's mind, you're canceled. It comes to a point of ridiculousness. And then, because we are so self-righteous and attached to what we think the reality is and what it should be, there's almost no space for things turning out otherwise, or knowing what to do if they do turn out differently. So I think the general idea that I get from this excerpt is to be ready with discernment and benevolence to work with whatever cause and effect is thrown at us. If it's peace, let's use the peace...not to sleep, but to deepen our kind heart and our discernment. If it's war, conflict, poverty, let's use that by diving into mind training literature and put it into practice.

Q: There is one more sentence where Karmapa says, "This means that we only decide for the sake of those who are still under the spell of hypnotism." So what's the idea? If it was only about us we would just not decide? And because we know it's an illusion, we can just relax because we know it's illusory, but we might need to demonstrate decision making for others or something?

A: Yeah! Exactly. Well, that is the story of the Buddha. The twelve deeds of the Buddha are just an incentive for us. The Buddha didn't need to be born and so on, he was enlightened. Some texts say that these twelve deeds were just for sentient beings, not for himself. You know, being born, and so on, teach and die and reach enlightenment. That's for us, to learn something. Even if we come to a point where we are free. Because we see the illusion, and thanks to our practice of vipashyana we come to really understand the true nature of mind and all the phenomena mind experiences. Even if we are free, it is not an excuse to be indifferent to the suffering of the world. Even if you understand that the sufferings of the world are an illusion, it is not an excuse to be arrogant and condescending towards beings. What needs to be done is using the skills you have gained through your practice, that is discernment, and serve the heart of compassion which is to help beings, and then and only then, educate them so that you alleviate their suffering and you educate them by sharing the Dharma. But first you share generosity...material generosity (food and shelter), moral generosity (protect them from fear, mostly), and then, when they have a little bit more space, help them to understand how they can gain their own freedom. And join the game of the bodhisattvas and be part of the team that works for the benefit of everybody.

If you believe too much in the reality of what's happening, your compassion and your activity will be impeded. You quickly come to your limit and by then you've gotten very angry. And then you chose your camp, choosing sides. Putin or Biden. Or you're angry about this European Union that is not even able to say anything. Then somebody must take the wrath of your frustration. And nobody cares about your frustration, because people have "real" problems, so just "get over yourself." Get over yourself! And then, what you can do, do it! Do it in the awareness that it's illusory...but

necessary. And don't put the carriage before the horse. Saying like, "If you guys knew about the truth of emptiness you wouldn't suffer." That's not the point. Nobody cares about your ideas. Help. Practically. If they need shelter, give shelter. If they need food, give food. If they need to be heard and paid attention to and protected from fear, do that. And when there is a little alchemy, you know, a little space, maybe then you can talk about the bottom line, the real thing. And yeah, get over yourself. There are things you can do and things you can't do, and don't be unhappy because you can't do the big things. Just do the small things you can do. That's good enough. Be one element of the good. One element of the good. You're not here to be the savior. That's just an idea you might have had sometimes. Forget it...be of help, very simple. Organize whatever you can organize; but as you organize, always be careful to keep your discernment and your wisdom so that you remember all of this is just an illusion. All of this appears to be true but it's not really true. Do you see? It seems like a problem sometimes, because if I meditate on emptiness, then I have to deny what's happening, which is ridiculous, because it's really happening...it's not really happening, because it's emptiness. Like, this is your problem...of not being able to reconcile form and emptiness, emptiness and form. So work on it! Get over yourself;~} But for now, you help those who need help; if they ask, give. Give, give, help, help, help. That's all.

Q: Are you familiar with a French metaphysician named Rene Guénon?

A: I am familiar, as I have heard of him, being in France. He was a very important philosophical thinker of his time.

Q:He was very opposed to Theosophy, but he lived in the same time period. He differentiates between vertical causality and horizontal causality which I thought was relevant to the previous question. My question is really basic and I hope you'll forgive me...I have a naturally philosophical disposition, and I'm new to Buddhism. What is a good author to read in that area of study?

A: I guess it depends on what you want to approach. I would say the first thing is to start from the central point, which is "me"...try to understand what is "me." Martin Heidegger, the German philosopher said we define a human being by *sein*, German for "to be." There was a very interesting talk I saw between Martin Heidegger and a Buddhist monk, way back, in the '50s or something...Very, very interesting. And he said that Western philosophy starts with *sein*; man "is," and then everything comes from that...but you guys (in the East) tend to think, how to say in German, *nicht sein* ...not so much. So Heidegger was interested in this exploration. So I would say start with that, because if you can't understand what is the cornerstone of our experience, "me," because from me comes what is not "me," which is the world, and then these two relations and so on, and so all the philosophy will explore this question. So I would start here. This book is called *The Buddhist Psychology of Awakening, An In-depth Guide to Abidharma*, by Steven D. Goodman, and published by Shambhala Publishing House. I really like it because he is talking about what is the "self," what is the being, what is "me?" In terms of both the physical and the psychological elements that compose this experience of me...consciousnesses and the phenomenology of perception, if you

will. How does consciousness perceive the object? I would say that's a good start. Then maybe after if you want, *Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics*, published by Simon and Schuster. It's *Volume 2, The Mind*. It speaks more about the mind, but a highly expanded description of what the mind is. I recommend the first one first.

Q: I like when you are speaking about the "ground." You have nice descriptions, and it seems to me that this ground is everywhere and always there, and today you said that bliss grows up, and then you spoke of the great strong meditators and how important they are. My question is then, can this influence the ground somehow?

A: Thank you for the question, I think it's important because it gives me the opportunity to clarify a few things. First, we have to understand that for the sake of communication we say this ground "is"...with a grain of salt, okay? Because the "is" here is not an affirmation of an existence or substantial reality; this is empty. It's a dynamic space that has qualities of awareness, or compassion, of bliss...and so on and so forth. So this ground mind, *alaya* in Sanskrit, has these qualities of awakening deep inside, and in itself it doesn't need to be increased, it doesn't get better if you know it or if you ignore it. Here's an example: if you think I'm stupid, you thinking I'm stupid doesn't make me stupid. If suddenly you realize that I'm not so stupid, it doesn't make me more intelligent. The connection we have with mind doesn't change mind, whether we know it or not, whether we're enlightened or not enlightened. It doesn't affect the quality of mind, the quality of mind is the same. Across the board, all beings partake of this reality which is not an entity; we say ground, and we might suddenly envision earth, or space.

It doesn't suddenly become better, but with the wishes of the bodhisattvas, combined with their wisdom, there are more manifestations that appear, that become perceptible to sentient beings. Some are very subtle manifestations that only bodhisattvas can perceive, and some are more perceptible; for instance, say a Buddha is born...it seems he is like us, he's a human, and he is, he was, a human, he appeared as a human. He taught as a human and he spoke with people for all this time as a human and then he showed them the path, he helped them, some of them, to understand completely and find their way to liberation, and helped some partially, who were getting better and progressing on the path. And finally he passed away, or he displayed passing away, like many of the great masters who have recently passed, to help us understand that just as they have died, we are going to die also, and we should maybe pay attention and do something to prepare. Reorganize our priorities in the awareness of death.

All of this is for the sake of sentient beings, but what is interesting is that the activities of the bodhisattvas are based on this reality which is always present of the ground...but the ground is sort of pushed into a certain form. By the wishes of the bodhisattvas; pureland, wishes that people can access the Dharma easily, that they have what they need. Like Shantideva says in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*, if beings need shade may they have a tree, or if they need to cross a river may they have a bridge; "May I appear as a bridge, a tree, a spring for water." This is all formless

energy that has a versatile form that appears in the experience of the person in a way that is very helpful to them. Like if you use Western Union or similar to send money to someone...you send money from the US to Africa, say. Your money doesn't physically actually go there...but you create a stream of events that will end up in the hands of this person...hopefully;~} If everything lines up, then the person receives the money you sent, in whatever currency they have where they live. And with this, maybe they could buy a buffalo or make a farm...or some food or housing. But it will appear in that person's world as they need it...you can't imagine how it will be, you just have the intention to help. Bodhisattvas are not really in the details of how it happens, but when they make wishes they do so in great detail. That's what pushes up the blessing...the intention. But the intention of a bodhisattva must coincide with the aspiration of the people; if they are closed to it, it will not work.

You know the story of the man who is very dedicated to God, a very religious person. He didn't know how to swim, and then unfortunately he fell in a river and is drowning. He is yelling, "Help, help, help!!! God help me!" Another man comes along and tries to swim to him and help him but he pushes him away, saying, "No, no, no, God will help me!" Then a boat comes and tries to rescue him, but again, "No, no, God will help me!" Rescue helicopter comes, and again, "No, God will help me." And he dies. Then he gets to heaven and right away says to God, "I called you and you didn't save me, why???" And God replies, "What do you mean? I sent you a guy, I sent you a boat, even a helicopter! You didn't want any of it...what are you talking about?" He was closed to the help, because of his concepts about what form the help should have. That's where the openness of beings collides with the intentions of the bodhisattva. And all of this arises from the ground; the beings mind is the ground...the bodhisattva's compassion is the ground. It all arises from this, like waves from the ocean.

Bodhisattvas are important because they bring an input of positive energy. They dedicate their merit, they dedicate all this flow of goodness to the benefit of all sentient beings. That's very important. But the little work of us beings is to open up and be grateful and appreciative of this blessing. But we are spoiled brats and say things like, "Yeah, it's not enough," or "I wanted something else." "I like the shoes but I wanted a different color." We're always complaining. Because we're confused about what is the self, we are arrogant that the self is superior, and we are very fixed on our preferences and likes and dislikes. This segues with what we heard from Karmapa's letter, "Open up!" Like, relax, nothing is under control. You're not driving everything. There is a moment where you have to relax and open up to the grace. And when I say that it sounds very churchy, you know? But, damn, it's true. It's true. And the only obstructions come from us trying to twist things so they look like we want them to look like. So we have to choose options and make decisions when we try to help, but at the same time we need to be able to just rest and open up to the presence of the blessing, and the Guru Yoga, and all these practices, and asking for the blessings of the Three Jewels, asking for the blessing of Chenrezig; this is opening up. It's opening up.

I think the first instruction I got about this was in the movie *Enter the Dragon* with Bruce Lee. A Kung Fu movie. He is on an island, and he has to stop criminals, and so on, so for like ten minutes he fights everybody, you know, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, Kung Fu, nunchucks, whatever. All his skills are there. Then he comes to a place where all the doors close...he's trapped, and he cannot do anything. And the evil ones appear from a balcony above, looking down and laughing, sinisterly. So at this point Bruce Lee sits down, puts his nunchucks around his neck, and meditates. And I think, "That's it!" When you can fight, fight; when there is no way, sit;~} But don't let the nunchucks get too far away, because once the doors open, then you go again. I found that is a very interesting lifestyle. When you can do something, do it. When you come to the point where you cannot do it, just sit and open up to the blessing, find inspiration, let things move...it's always in flux. Let things move, they will reorganize in a new configuration and then maybe you can do something again. And in the meantime make good wishes, "May I soon encounter a new configuration where I can do something." That's the conjunction between the blessing of the bodhisattvas and the Buddhas and the aspiration and the confidence of sentient beings. That's how it works.

A: This world seems to break my heart faster and faster...and I let my heart break. I mean, I just recycle it. But it's just sometimes...maybe I'm looking for a little comfort or something. I do what I can (which doesn't seem to be much) and living in a time when things are getting worse, I'm aware that I don't like it, so I work with that. Have any advice?

Q: Well, you know, I'm pretty much where you are. It's like, the world is upside down, nothing makes sense, the greed and ignorance are running the show, and the solidarity seems to have disappeared. And now and then I see beautiful people and beautiful acts of generosity, and so, you know, between the cobblestones little flowers will grow. When you look out in the countryside you have these asphalt roads that destroy nature, but if they are unkept for a while you can see the grass growing through the cracks...give it ten years and nature is back. The trees will grow and the grass and so on...I remember Walt Whitman, the *Leaves of Grass*; I believe in the power of the blade of grass, and the goodness, because goodness is at the heart of the mind, but it's obscured by ignorance and fear and greed and all of that, but I also see beauty. At the times my heart is broken, I can see how I am aggravated by it, I get really angry, and then I have to talk myself into peace, by saying things like, "This is not going to help anybody."

And luckily for me, there is Karmapa's words and address...it looks to me like Karmapa is back in Tushita, the pureland, like physically we cannot connect but he makes sure that we get now and then something very, very deep and pithy, yet very accessible. Little nuggets of his wisdom so that we can get by, you know, we can survive. So I simplify my life, just keep in touch with everybody the way I can, Zoom, okay, it's Zoom, let's do it like this, and let's talk about our Buddha heart that at times bleeds when we see how ridiculous all this suffering is and how painful the suffering is. So yeah, I'm like you, at times my heart is broken and well, I try to resist the urge to move to the pureland, like,

let's get away from this place...I've been thinking lately, all these teachers that are just going, like in the last two months, it's just like, "Wow! What's going on?" Even young ones, like Chujun Dudjom Rinpoche who was only 32...you know, he told his attendant, "Tomorrow I will rest, don't disturb me." And he was dead! He was gone! So, what's going on?

I think that the water is so troubled and agitated that the moon cannot reflect on the surface. That's my first thought. Second thought, when somebody like Dudjom Rinpoche, so full of youth, healthy, never been sick his entire life, just goes, I think that is bodhisattva activity. Where he made a massive tonglen, taking it upon himself, taking it upon himself and giving. I think we can say that the world is really at the eve of a third world war, but maybe a positive outcome will come from the generosity of some of these great bodhisattvas. I don't know, that's my interpretation. Maybe like you, I am looking for a little comfort, so I try to rationalize this by saying this is what I think. And as far as I'm concerned I say, "Okay, as long as I breathe, I will try to be the embodiment of what my teacher taught me, and then share that." And that's why I decided to give these teachings on this very subtle aspect of tonglen...because time is running short.

Q: I've been practicing White and Green Tara daily, but one of the Taras blazes with fire at the end of a kalpa, and it starts to feel a little too real.

A: Yeah, but the thing is that it's the blaze of discernment and it's the rattling of love. Never forget that. There is no anger. It's really the pure expression of love that adjusts to the needs of these times. And I think we all need to keep our heads level where we are and just keep doing our little things and just be more and more careful and attentive and bring whatever we can to this world, and the people in need. You don't have to think intensely, "What can I do?" All around you people are asking for help, just listen. But now we're back to Thich Nhat Hanh, practice deep listening. Practice deep listening, and then answer.

Q: Is there an English version of the dream meditation?

A: I have done one in French, but I haven't done it in English yet. I will put it on my to-do list.

Let's stop here for today. Next month we'll explore the third approach of meditation; what we explored today is sort of like a gateway to what will come next month. We've talked about the ground and about the nature of ultimate reality, how to see "ordinary phenomena" in the perspective of ultimate reality, and how everything changes when you are able to do that. We will explore this possibility more using an excerpt from Shamar Rinpoche's *Boundless Wisdom*, which is how to turn afflictions into practice. How to bring them to the path. And particularly working on the 5 major afflictions and how at the heart of them there are the 5 aspects of wisdom. And so if we practice vipashyana correctly, mahamudra vipashyana, we'll be able to recycle everything. Including what seems to be impossible to change, the klesha...we can see their enlightened nature. So we're moving from the first session on the kleshas, which was kind of like on the surface and somewhat

more easy to relate to; this session was already a little bit more into the essence of everything, and then next month is going to be even more into that.

Never forget that you are endowed with Buddha nature, that's the most important.