



**Commentary on
Je Tsong-kha-pa's
Lam Rim Chen Mo
By Venerable Jih-Chang**
**English Commentary Book 12, ver 2.0
(Lamrim Vol 1, Chapters 22, 23, 24)**

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For use by students of the monastery only

Purpose:

This book (version 1.0) contains the translation of Master Jih-Chang's commentary of the following chapters of the *Lamrim Volume 1*:

- ***Chapter 22 “The Attitude of A Person of Medium Capacity”.***
- ***Chapter 23 “Ascertaining The Nature of The Path Leading to Liberation”***
- ***Chapter 24 “The Nature of The Three Trainings”***

This book is for use by BW Monastery students only. It serves to facilitate students' understanding of the Lamrim as explained by Master Jih-Chang.

Student Feedback:

- The translation of Master's commentary in this book is still a draft and will be improved.
- All students are welcome to provide your feedback to improve the translation. Kindly submit your feedback via the feedback form that is available in the BW Monastery web page, where this book can be downloaded from.

Contents

Chapter 22:	The Attitude of A Person of Medium Capacity	1-42
Chapter 23:	Ascertaining The Nature of The Path Leading to Liberation	43-141
Chapter 24:	The Nature of The Three Trainings	142-297

Chapter 22
The Attitude of A Person of Medium Capacity

THE ATTITUDE OF A PERSON OF MEDIUM CAPACITY

- b) **The measure of the determination to be free**
- c) **Dispelling misconceptions**

[p327, English LR Vol 1]

[81B, 03.58 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p21L3)]

What about the measure? So now we have this number two here, the measure of the determination to be free.

[81B, 04.08 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p21L4)]

[p327, English LR Vol 1]

b) The measure of the determination to be free
You must understand in detail the characteristics of cyclic existence, both by way of suffering and its origin and by way of the twelve factors of dependent-arising. [258] Once you understand these characteristics, you will develop a desire to abandon and to quell suffering and its origin. At this point, although you may have a simple determination to be free,

The first one, for the earlier section, the mental training for the persons of medium capacity is divided into two sections. The first section is on suffering, origin, cessation and path, the four noble truths. [In particular, it expounded] on suffering and origin. The

other section was the twelve factors of dependent-arising. After understanding the characteristics of cyclic existence, at this time, you will feel that it is entirely meaningless! What we regard as happiness turns out to be absolutely without merit. Not to mention suffering [as suffering itself]! And then we found that there is a cause for this suffering! Since there is a cause, there is the possibility of eliminating the suffering. Who wants suffering? Therefore one will want to obtain the cessation from quelling the suffering. Hence you "**may have a simple determination to be free.**" As soon as you have a little bit of this, it would count as the determination to be free.

[81B, 05.25 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p21L12)]

At this point, this sentence becomes very important for us. Why? This is because we now understand that for any consciousness, a causal period consciousness, as long as you have a causal period consciousness, when there are future conditions that will nurture it, it will issue an effect. The first thing that takes effect is this. However, from the beginningless time, you have followed ignorance to engage in compositional activities that deposited latent propensities in the consciousness. But now you have understood the sublime teaching, the "compositional activity" motivated by clear "cognition" has produced a new "consciousness." This is it. Therefore, even though it may be just a simple notion now, this determination, it is the consciousness. This is now correct. It is exactly what we want! But is it enough? It is not enough!

[81B, 06.14 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p22L3)]

[p327, English LR Vol 1]

you should not be satisfied merely with this.

It is not enough because it is still in the causal period! We now want the effect to be issued. What remains in the causal period cannot solve the problem. The effect has to be issued for one to attain the quintessential state.

[81B, 06.29 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p22L6)]

[p327, English LR Vol 1]

Hence, Candrakirti's *Commentary on the "Sixty Stanzas of Reasoning"* (*Yukti-sastika-vrtti*) says:

Once we are certain that living in the three levels of cyclic existence—impermanence's blazing fire—is like entering a burning house, we want to escape it.

To what degree should the determination be? It should be as if we are in the midst of a great fire. What kind of great fire is this? It is impermanence's blazing fire. This fire is scorching. Therefore, it is a "**blazing fire**." Under this circumstance, anyone will desperately try to escape. There, this is the measure that we want. Then it will be correct. It has to be exactly right! This is why we must recite this every night. What do we always recite? What do we recite? We recite the verses of caution from the Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, "as if to save your burning head." Ah! It is exactly like that. You must quickly strive!

(Translator note: cannot find the translation for the verses of caution, so the suggested translation is here...

The day has passed and the lifespan has reduced. We are like fish living with ebbing water, what happiness can there be?

Everyone, you must joyously persevere as if to save your burning head. Recollect impermanence and guard yourself from laziness.)

[81B, 07.23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p22L12)]

[p327, English LR Vol 1]

And, as cited previously:⁵⁴⁸

Just as, when a chance arises

For prisoners to flee from prison...

This was explained earlier.

[81B, 07.31 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p23L1)]

[p327, English LR Vol 1]

Develop an attitude about cyclic existence like those who feel aversion for their confinement in a blazing house or a prison, and want

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

to escape. Then progressively increase this feeling of aversion and desire to escape.

However much you can develop in your mind, it will be correct. This is the measure you should reach. You should continue to enhance this attitude, continue to enhance. When we say to

cultivate, to cultivate, there is nothing else to cultivate but this! There is nothing else, absolutely nothing else. It does not matter whether you are in the sect of Zen, Pure Land, Ethical Discipline or Mantra, this is the root right here.

[81B, 08.13 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p23L6)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

Sha-ra-wa described a superficial determination to be free as being like when you pour powder into inferior beer; the powder forms just a thin layer on the surface. If your ability to see the undesirability of true origins—the causes of cyclic existence—is superficial like this,

This one past master had an amusing way of describing this. Even though it is very amusing, there is great pain in this! This is much like what some of the former teachers would say, "In my laughter, there is pain in my laughter." Even though this appears very amusing, it seems pretty funny, but it is also very painful and agonizing. For the aforementioned principles, if it is only superficial, only something that you talk about, like the powder forming a thin layer on the surface of an inferior beer, the beer has even turned sour - there is absolutely no use for that! The powder would only be on the surface. Normally, we might see many things which are floating on top, just a little bit of it. This means that there is no use at all!

[81B, 09.08 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p23L13)]

If this is how you understand the principle, **"If your ability to see the undesirability of true origins—the causes of cyclic existence—is superficial like this..."** It is because you do not understand the principle. Since you do not feel the suffering, of course you will not be seeking for liberation. If you do not seek for liberation, you will not be looking for the cause and the path to liberation. Even if you understand it, it would be of no use! You will be talking about it but have no feelings for it. So you must correctly reflect and analyze in order to generate a deep disenchantment for this suffering. You will then find the cause to this suffering and feel, "Ah, this is devoid of any merit!" **"Ability to see the undesirability"** is developed this way.

People would frequently ask me this, I used to say this as well, "Ah, this attachment, I am very aware that this attachment is no good. This is clearly explained in the scriptures. I seem to understand it but why can't I get rid of it?" It is just like that. This is because you have not found the cause. You have not found the cause. It is because you have not found the cause and that is why you find it desirable. Ah, it is really good! After you have found the cause, have understood it clearly, that is when you will feel, "Ah, this is devoid of any merit! This is devoid of any merit!" That is when you will want to abandon it and thus generating disenchantment!

[81B, 10.30 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p24L8)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

then your search for liberation, the cessation of suffering and its origin, will be the same.

However, you do not seem to be afraid of suffering now. You are unafraid! You will then accumulate causes for suffering. Of course you do not understand that you are accumulating for future suffering. You still feel quite happy! Since you are happy, of course then for this cessation to end suffering, since you treat suffering as happiness, you will of course not be willing to put an end to it! Of course you will not want to. Therefore, for "**the cessation of suffering and its origin**," you will not want that either. Since you do not want it, your desire to attain liberation, the cessation of suffering will be the same.

[81B, 11.11 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p24L13)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

Likewise, your desire to attain the path to liberation will be mere words.

Therefore, to say that you want to train on the path will be mere words, will be mere words! It is because we have understood this one thing - the suffering. That is why we have moved on to find the cause of suffering. Ah! We know then that we need to break this from here. After we break it, we will attain the truth of cessation. That is true happiness! Then you will want to train on the path. To train on the path, you will perhaps become a renunciate, keep ethical disciplines, learn meditative concentration, train in wisdom, recite the Buddha's name, practice Zen, learn the teaching and practice the Mantra. Beyond that, not able to bear the suffering of the sentient beings, you will go further to propagate the teaching. This is the order. It must be this way.

Therefore it is says this next,

[81B, 11.51 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p25L3)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, you will not be able to develop either the compassion that cannot bear to see the sufferings of living beings in cyclic existence

Because you have seen the characteristics of cyclic existence as great suffering, this is why you will want to escape it. But as you think in others' place, you will see that for others as well. Ah-ya, you cannot bear to see their sufferings! Because you cannot bear this, you subsequently develop compassion. But if you have not developed feelings for what is explained earlier, then for this compassion, where is the source of this? This is why at present there are many who would always feel, ah-ya, as they see the pains of others, they would feel: ah, they cannot bear it! But do these people know their own suffering? They do not know at all what their sufferings are! If they do not comprehend their own suffering, why would they be unable to bear to the suffering of others? This is a problem. This is a problem! This is something we need to check within ourselves. But this does not mean that we do not have this [feeling of compassion for the pains and sufferings] in the mundane world. Yes, when you see people become sick in the mundane world, it is great pain! Right! That is good for us [to feel empathy]. That is good intention. But is it enough to just have that? It is not enough! This is not what training in Buddhism is. This is not what training in Buddhism is! There is a special meaning. And we now understand it.

[81B, 12.56 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p25L13)]

Therefore, real Mahayana practitioners do not act this way, ah-ya, as they see someone sick, they want to heal him. This is not the real issue. You will have to get to the root cause. That is why you will go understand the principles explained earlier and pull it up from the root. Only then can you talk about propagating the teaching. After you have developed compassion, in order to complete your compassion, that is when you will be "seeking for the path to Buddhahood." In order for you to complete your compassion, you will have to know the method. That is when you will have to learn great wisdom. There, this is then called the great spirit of enlightenment. If you have not even developed this compassion,

[81B, 13.35 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p26L4)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

or the uncontrived spirit of unsurpassed enlightenment that instills you with strength.

This is very obvious! Compassion is the root. If you do not even have developed the root, then for you to say that you want to develop the spirit of unsurpassed enlightenment,

[81B, 13.50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p26L6)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

Hence, your understanding of the Mahayana will also be merely intellectual.

Oh! Then this term to you is mere talk. One would say that the Mahayana is great. Everyone is stuck on this "self." Whatever that has to do with the self must be good. Since Mahayana is the best, so of course I am in the Mahayana! But what is involved with Mahayana? I do not need to know! Just like that. Here, the difference is right here. The difference is right here. Therefore, after we understand this point, we need to strive diligently. But we should not mind others' affairs. Oh, this is explained time and again - we need to mind our own affairs.

[81B, 14.27 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p26L11)]

Conversely, because we are learning the Mahayana teachings, we will strive to work on ourselves on the one hand. On the other hand, we would still see others say, "I need to save him!" Yet I do not have the ability to help him now [from merely speaking it]. However, even though this person may be just saying it, eh, I am still happy for him! Why is that? I do want to help him but I do not have the ability at present. But he said with his mouth. At least he had spoken it. He has casted a shadow [in his consciousness]. Once the shadow is cast, when I attain accomplishments in the future, I can help him by using the causal period consciousness that he has just planted! Therefore, even when people are just talking with their mouths [without having real understanding], I still very much rejoice the act and am very pleased. But I will never talk like this [without substance]. Do you understand this? Why do I make a point to talk about this? Many of our afflictions now come from this. After we understand the principles, we do not use it to look at ourselves but choose to use it to examine others, "You have explained at length but they are mere words!" Are you a Mahayana practitioner? You are a Mahayana practitioner. If you are a Mahayana practitioner, for

what I understand now, as long as someone is even willing to say it with his mouth, I would feel incredibly happy for him. This is the reason for it. Are you clear with what I said? Therefore on all occasions, what matters is not whether you are in the Mahayana or the Hinayana, but that you need to grasp the root at every juncture. And with that, we use it advance and purify ourselves.

[81B, 15.43 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p27L8)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, you must practice these teachings for the person of medium capacity and regard them as crucial instructions.

Oh! Now we understand this. This is the reason for the indispensable order to go from the teachings for the persons of small capacity to the teachings for the persons of medium capacity. If you do not have this, to speak of Mahayana, it is like speaking of castles in the air. It would be beyond reach. This is the reason for it. This is the measure.

[81B, 16.10 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p27L12)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

c) Dispelling misconceptions

But many people have gotten it wrong, gotten it wrong! We need to discern the error here. Otherwise, you would be busy for a long time but end up training blindly. What a loss it would be!

[81B, 16.28 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p28L1)]

Some people have said it in this manner.

[81B, 16.33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p28L3)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

Qualm:

Although it is appropriate in the Hinayana to cultivate disenchantment with cyclic existence, it is inappropriate for bodhisattvas, for, if bodhisattvas were to cultivate intense disgust and disenchantment with cyclic existence, they would be like the *sravakas* and fall into an extreme of peace, having become displeased with their involvement in cyclic existence. [259]

Some people have said this. They said, "Up until now, for what you have explained earlier is all on disenchantment and determination to be free [from cyclic existence]. Yes! After the earlier training, you will develop disgust and generate the determination to be free. This situation seems correct for Sravakas, the Hinayana people! They would '**fall into an extreme of peace.**' This is because they have disenchantment and do not wish to abide in cyclic existence.

Therefore, for the practitioners of the Hinayana, this is excellent! But this is not permitted for Bodhisattvas. They should not be training this." Some people will say, "Bodhisattvas have to save people. If they should cultivate disenchantment, then who else will save the sentient beings?" This type of misconception is prevalent. So the great lama particularly explains this here. Look

at this! The great lama does not explain this without a source. He references the scriptures and the commentaries. In other words, these are the proper and stainless teachings from the Buddha. They all say the same. What does the sutra say?

[81B, 18.03 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p28L12)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

As the *Sutra of Showing the Tathagata's Inconceivable Secret* states:⁵⁴⁹

Bodhisattvas, thinking of the maturation of living beings, view cyclic existence as beneficial. Accordingly, they do not view great nirvana [liberation] as beneficial to the maturation of beings.

This says that Bodhisattvas will consider others in one's own place. In order to help all living beings mature, they will care for them. To help them, Bodhisattvas will have to be in cyclic existence to do so. Based on this, they see that there is great and auspicious benefit to saving people in cyclic existence. This is something that cannot be achieved in nirvana. After you attain nirvana, you will not be able to help others. This benefit is lost.

[81B, 18.49 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p29L4)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

And further:

Were bodhisattvas to fear involvement in cyclic existence, they would fall to a destitute place.

Furthermore, they would say that Bodhisattvas will end up fearing the involvement in cyclic existence. Ah, they would say, "It is horrible in cyclic existence!" Eh, you are wrong.

This sentence, if you only look at this sentence, you will be interpreting it out of context.

Because it would seem to you that it is saying Bodhisattvas should not fear cyclic existence! But if you read this together with the earlier and the latter portions of the text, you will understand what the sentence means.

[81B, 19.24 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p29L8)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

And also:

Bhagavan, whereas the sravakas fear involvement in cyclic existence, bodhisattvas voluntarily take innumerable rebirths in cyclic existence.

In the same sutra, this "**Bhagavan**" stated here would mean that someone had come to discuss this with the Buddha. They said, "Sravakas fear involvement in cyclic existence. They are afraid! Ah! they wholeheartedly want to escape." But "**Bodhisattvas voluntarily take innumerable rebirths in cyclic existence.**" In any case, they will, at all times, always, without fail, voluntarily take rebirths. They want to be in cyclic existence. But you should look at this word, they "**voluntarily take**" rebirths! That does not mean they think cyclic existence is adorable! Thus, due to a mistaken understanding of one word, it results in a huge deviation [from the original, intended meaning]. They still see the faults to it [i.e. cyclic existence], but they will still voluntarily take rebirths.

Why? Because in cyclic existence, there is great, excellent benefit. What is that? That is to help others. If one cannot see this point, then one would get it wrong. And this is why he would conclude that, "Ah, Bodhisattvas should not be disenchanting!"

Therefore, it says this next, in this case,

[81B, 20.46 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p30L2)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

***Response:* This is a great error that misconstrues the sutra's meaning.**

It is mistaken!

[81B, 20.51 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p30L4)]

[p328, English LR Vol 1]

For, the sutra passage that says, "Thus, bodhisattvas should not become disenchanting with cyclic existence," does not teach bodhisattvas not to be disgusted with the sufferings of birth, aging, illness, death, and so on—the result of our wandering through

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

cyclic existence under the influence of our karma and afflictions.

This is not the meaning! When the sutra said, "**should not become disenchanting with cyclic existence,**" this means that

we should not wander through cyclic existence under the influence of our karma and afflictions. This means that we are amidst afflictions. We have no control of ourselves and that is why we wander in the cyclic existence to suffer. This does not mean that we should not be disgusted with the sufferings. That is not the case! So what should it be?

[81B, 21.20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p30L9)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

Rather, this sutra teaches joyous perseverance. In order to train in the bodhisattvas' activities for the sake of others until the end of cyclic existence, bodhisattvas must put on armour [courage]. Once they do this, even if all the sufferings of all beings were collected and the bodhisattvas constantly experienced them mentally and physically, they would still persevere joyously, delighting in the magnificent deeds that help others, without becoming disenchanted with or frightened by sufferings. Thus, the Buddha said that bodhisattvas must not be disenchanted with cyclic existence.

This is how a Bodhisattva truly feels. A Bodhisattva would have a deep fear of afflictions and karma! It is because he is frightened by them that he is able to consider others in his own place. Furthermore, even though he is able to put an end to this but he will not completely do so. He will continue to stay in cyclic existence to explain to others what he knows and to help others. Therefore, his goal is to benefit sentient beings. His intention will last **"until the end of cyclic existence."** What would a Bodhisattva be like? He would **"put on armour [courage]."** This is his pledge. To have joyous perseverance, the first thing to do is to put on armour. Why is he able to joyously persevere? It is

precisely because of his aspiration to save the boundless sentient beings, to learn the ways of the Bodhisattvas. What is his attitude at this time? "**...even if all the sufferings of all beings were collected,**" even if he has to experience all the sufferings of all the sentient beings, he will not be frightened. This is great perseverance! It is in light of this that Bodhisattvas should not be disenchanted with cyclic existence. This is the idea. Therefore,

[81B, 22.59 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p31L6)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

The master Candrakirti says:

Bodhisattvas, who take on the sufferings of all beings moment by moment until the end of cyclic existence, do not fear harm to their bodies or minds.

Oh! This aspiration of the Bodhisattvas is truly magnificent! For all the sufferings of sentient beings, without leaving any behind, they will take on all of the sufferings. As for how long they would do this for, it is "**until the end of cyclic existence.**" That is from now until the end of cyclic existence. There is not one moment in which their body and mind are unharmed, but they are not afraid. "I want to generate great perseverance!" Even though we may not be able to do this now, we must have this attitude in the causal period. We should not be doing some trivial thing and say, "Ah! Ah-ya!" This should absolutely not be done. Therefore, as we think of this point, for me to have some minor ailments now, I would frequently feel happy about it: Ah! It is good to have these minor ailments! It is indeed good! If I can take this minor illness, then I will be able to bear an illness that is much greater. For a small suffering, if I can tolerate a small suffering then I will be able to tolerate a greater suffering! For any trivial matter, if you choose

to shrink back, then it will be useless. But if you can stand up to the trivial matters, then your mind will gradually and gradually get stronger one step at a time. You will increase in power. Actually, it is the same for anything that we do. This is why when we go through school, we will go from elementary school to middle school and finally to college. This concept is very important, very important!

[81B, 24.14 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p32L3)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

Bodhisattvas, who take on the sufferings of all beings simultaneously until the end of cyclic existence, delight in this activity. Each instant of such joyous perseverance acts as the cause whose effect produces boundless collections of wealth, bringing omniscience to all beings. Once bodhisattvas understand this, it is appropriate for them to take hundreds of rebirths.

In order to emphasize this point, Candrakirti then cites the aforementioned sutra passages from the *Sutra of Showing the Tathagata's Inconceivable Secret*. [260]

He will take on the sufferings of all beings. He will have great delight in this activity. What is this activity? Ah! It is to save all beings, bringing omniscience to all beings. This is a boundless collection of wealth that he is accumulating. But in order to accumulate this collection of wealth, he must act on it right here! Therefore, upon seeing this incredible and auspicious benefit, no matter how much suffering there is, he is willing to do it. For this reason, this explains why Bodhisattvas are not disenchanted. This is the reason for not being disenchanted. In regards to the subject of not becoming disenchanted, we must wait until we get

to the teaching that is shared with persons of great capacity - no, it should be the unshared teaching for the persons of great capacity, the unshared teaching of joyous perseverance in great capacity. At that time, you will understand that when you truly develop joyous perseverance, it is a happy thing to do. It is not miserable. But before we understand the principles, , if we ask you to do anything, you will feel that it is miserable beyond words! Indeed, you are unable to have perseverance at this point. Therefore what is truly the most critical thing to have? It is the correct view. After you have obtained the correct view, it would be impossible for you to not initiate perseverance!

[81B, 25.44 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p32L13)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

This same sutra states that cyclic existence should be viewed as beneficial because bodhisattvas gain happiness proportionate to the effort they make when they strive for the welfare of living beings.

There! He continues to say that why would a Bodhisattva view cyclic existence as beneficial? That is because Bodhisattvas see that great benefits derived when they strive for the welfare of living beings. This is why they strive. By doing so, they will gain happiness, not suffering. Hmm!

[81B, 26.24 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p33L4)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

Hence, the Buddha says that not being disenchanted with cyclic existence means not being disenchanted with

accomplishing the good of living beings in cyclic existence, as well as enjoying this activity.

Therefore, "**not being disenchanted with cyclic existence,**" what does not being disenchanted with cyclic existence mean in the Mahayana? It is that by being in cyclic existence one can accomplish the good of living beings. One is not disenchanted with this. He should actually enjoy this. At this point we might want to stop for a moment. The intention of the Bodhisattvas is to help others, to enjoy doing that. Now that we are trying to emulate the Bodhisattvas, we should strive to do this in the causal period. Therefore, sometimes when others ask you to do something for them, ah, you would always feel that you are bothered and annoyed. "Ah! You are..." You would reject others. Wrong! If you want to learn to be a Mahayana practitioner, you cannot be that way! To learn to be a Mahayana practitioner, he will indeed have to help others in a wide variety of ways in the causal period. In case you are not able to accomplish this, what should you do? It is what we have just learned last night. If you cannot accomplish it, you will at least have to be perfect in your attitude. "Ah! How come I am so inferior, I cannot accomplish it! I must strive to help him, to help him!" This is the first step to cultivation in the very beginning. To learn to be a Mahayana practitioner, not only should this be the case when you help others, but to attend to the Buddha, to offer to the Three Jewels, this is how you gradually, gradually condition yourself. Then it will work! That is what is most important. If we can actually put this to practice, to accord with the teaching, there is no reason for Buddhism not to prosper.

[81B, 27.58 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p34L1)]

Why has Buddhism declined to the state that it is now? It is exactly because of this! When you speak, you speak of Mahayana. But all day long, all you do is take care of yourself with great concern. If you have to give someone else a little help or to lose out a little bit, you are not willing to do that. Setting aside people, buddhas and bodhisattvas are those who ought to be respected! Yet when you go to a monastery, when you are requested to do something minor for the monastery, ah, you would feel that you cannot oblige because you feel that doing so would hinder your cultivation. For true cultivation, if you do not cultivate from here, what are you cultivating? If you say, "I am a Hinayana practitioner." Ah, then I would agree with you. That would be fine! What type of attitude would Hinayana practitioners have? We might as well take a look. One would indeed go out with his alms bowl. It would not matter if he gets foods that are salty, sweet, or sour. He can get full. If he cannot get food even after asking from seven households, it would be fine for him to go hungry. He would still devote his entire attention to cultivation. Yes, everything else is unnecessary! Therefore, let's take a look at Thailand, who have their merits. However, are the practitioners completely immersed in the same type of spirit? This is something that is worthwhile, which we should take note of! Therefore, at this point, we need to determine the right from wrong very clearly!

[81B, 29.09 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p34L10)]

Therefore, under such circumstances, he would tell you, "You do not need to worry about anything!" Hence, when the Buddha was on earth, he praised the practice of dhūta. Even houses are

unnecessary, everything is unnecessary. One practicing this would devote his entire attention to it, to the problem of life and death. Even if there is a fire, even if the head is on fire, "That is fine. That will have to wait a moment. I need to handle this first." You would feel that you need to handle this first. At that point, yes! You need not care for anything else. This is what we need to be very clear with. Therefore at this point, you can try to relate to it in whichever way you can. Conversely, after you have understood this principle, you should not say, "This is what we should practice!" What is the reason that we cannot advance? We would say, " Ah, my karmic obscurations are very weighty!"

[Translator's Note: 頭陀 dhūta, also 杜多; 杜荼 shaken, shaken off, cleansed. To get rid of the trials of life; discipline to remove them and attain nirvāṇa. There are twelve relating to release from ties to clothing, food, and dwelling: (1) garments of cast-off rags; (2) only the three garments; (3) eat only food begged; (4) only breakfast and the noon meal; (5) no food between them; (6) limited amount; (7) dwelling as a hermit; (8) among tombs; (9) under a tree; (10) under the open sky; (11) anywhere; (12) sitting and not lying down. There are other groups.]

[82A, 00.08 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p37L1)]

Since your karmic obscurations are very weighty, why do you not seek methods to clear away the obscurations? Why do you not accumulate the collections of merits? These are all the best ways of accumulating the collections of merits. This is said very clearly earlier – making offerings to the Three Jewels. And then, with your love and compassion, you kindly provide aid to all sentient beings. Therefore, "The merit field of treating someone with a sickness is the supreme merit field." Perhaps this person does not

have any illness. Even though this person is not physically sick, but his mind is ill. So, you might as well appease him, appease him! If you can truly do that, that is the best way to clear away obscurations, the best way to accumulate the collections. On the one hand, you will have done the work. Others will be grateful to you. You will be delighted as well. You will have also accumulated the collections and attained accomplishments. The happiness of cultivation is truly delightful! It is truly delightful! If everyone does this, when you gather people like this together, it will be very harmonious. Upon coming to the monastery, ah! this monastery is thriving. It is just this way. And this requires mutual encouragement between one another. How can Buddhism not prosper under this circumstance? This point, I thought that I will mention this in passing. The details of this will be explained in the great capacity. This will be explained in detail, one by one. This is what we should be joyful about. On the contrary,

[82A, 01.23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p38L1)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

When you wander through cyclic existence by the power of karma and afflictions, you are tormented by many sufferings. If you are unable to accomplish even your own aims, what need is there to mention that you cannot accomplish those of others?

Conversely, if we do not understand this principle, we cannot even begin to discuss this. Due to the potency of our own foolishness, ignorance, afflictions and karma, we wander through cyclic existence. In this case, "you are tormented by many sufferings." This type of person cannot even solve his own problems, not to mention helping others.

[82A, 01.53 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p38L4)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

Since such wandering is the door to all problems,

This is the source of all problems! This type of emotional state.

[82A, 02.02 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p38L6)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

bodhisattvas must be even more disenchanted with cyclic existence than Hinayana practitioners and must stop their own wandering caused by karma and the afflictions.

Do you not think of yourself as a Mahayana practitioner? Yes! Even a Hinayana practitioner will see this and therefore only seeks for his own [liberation]. If you are going to help everyone to be freed, can you still be like this? This is why he says this! If we think we are Mahayana practitioners, we should know that this does not mean we must accomplish this now, but at least in the causal period, in our minds, we should know how to fulfill our virtuous aspirational prayers!

[82A, 02.34 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p38L10)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

Nevertheless, bodhisattvas must enjoy being reborn in cyclic existence through their aspirational prayers and compassion.

Now you understand this principle, which has been explained earlier, you will put yourself in the place of another and develop great compassion. At this time, you will say, "I am not afraid!" Even though this will clearly bring about extreme suffering [to yourself], you are willing to do this for them. This is the type of mental capacity you should have! Therefore, it is absolutely not the case where, ah, as you have encountered a little suffering, you find it unbearable. No matter how great the suffering, you will be able to do this on behalf of others! Therefore, genuine Mahayana practitioners are definitely extremely courageous – such is their mental state. To help others in this way, one **"must enjoy [being reborn in cyclic existence.]"**

[82A, 03.15 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p39L2)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

These two ways of being reborn are not the same.

We should distinguish these two ways clearly!

[82A, 03.19 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p39L4)]

[p329, English LR Vol 1]

Failing to make this distinction leads to qualms like that above. The *Bodhisattva Levels* says that if the proponents of such a position have taken the vows of a bodhisattva then they have committed a

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

misdeed permeated with afflictions. However, fearing too many words, I will not quote the passage in full.

Between these two, you must distinguish them clearly. If you cannot distinguish them clearly and follow the earlier [misconception] - ah! What was stated earlier? Cultivating the determination to be liberated based on the faults of cyclic existence is something that practitioners of the Sravaka vehicle do. The Mahayana practitioners do not need to do this. That is bad because you are mistaken! That is the case. If you are one who has taken the vows of a Bodhisattva, to have this type of attitude would constitute a transgression of the vow. I will not explain this here. I will not explain this in detail here.

[82A, 04.00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p39L10)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

Hence, it is amazing that bodhisattvas see the defects of cyclic existence and are thoroughly disgusted, yet do not give up their vow because they are motivated by great compassion.

This is true. Therefore, as you see clearly that cyclic existence is good for nothing and devoid of any merit, you will be thoroughly disgusted. What is the reason you do not leave [cyclic existence] even after generating disgust? It is because you are motivated by great compassion. Ah! Although I am able to escape but all of my mothers are in here. You do not have the heart to leave! It is because you do not have the heart to sever your ties that makes this correct. This is what is rare and difficult to find! On the contrary,

[82A, 04.40 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p40L2)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

If those who see the wonders of cyclic existence as like a celestial mansion—

Ah, [if] all the wonders of cyclic existence seem incredibly excellent!

[82A, 04.50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p40L4)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

without reducing their craving even in the slightest—

There is not the slightest reduction in attachment at all.

[82A, 04.55 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p40L6)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

claim to be serving others, how could their unwillingness to abandon cyclic existence please the wise?

But you claim, “Ah, I am benefitting others! This is why I will not abandon cyclic existence.” Those who are truly wise will not do this!

[82A, 05.11 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p40L8)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

As Bhavaviveka's *Heart of the Middle Way* says:⁵⁵⁰

The scripture is used as reference.

[82A, 05.17 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p40L10)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

Since bodhisattvas see the faults of cyclic existence, they do not remain here.

Because they care for others, they do not remain in nirvana.

In order to fulfill the needs of others, they resolve

To remain in cyclic existence.

(Translator note: according to Master's explanation, the text is translated to be more like this in Chinese, Since Bodhisattvas see the faults of cyclic existence, no existence remains in their minds. Because they care for others, they do not remain in nirvana. In order to fulfill the needs of others, they resolve to do that which is prohibited, to remain in cyclic existence.)

Since you have seen the faults of cyclic existence - to have truly seen it, this is not the case where you have not seen it! After seeing this, you will most certainly generate a great disgust! Therefore for you, in fact your mind will no longer bear this "existence." This "existence" is the factor of "**existence**" in the twelve factors of dependent-arising. What is the existence factor in the twelve factors of dependent-arising in accord with? It accords with the defilements of craving and ignorance. He will not have this. But why does he not escape (from cyclic existence)? "**Because they care for others, they do not remain in nirvana.**" Ah, because of his compassion, he will not remain in nirvana. At this time, "**in order to fulfill the needs of others, they resolve [to do that which is prohibited].**" It is because he wishes to benefit others, he will do that which is prohibited. What is

"prohibited"? It is something that you are not supposed to do if you are doing it for self-interest. But if you are doing this for others, you will need to engage in it. This is it. This is to say that it is not allowed for a Hinayana practitioner to do this but it is allowed for a Bodhisattva. This means **"that which is prohibited"** is actually an action that is mandated by the vows of a Bodhisattva. It is under such circumstances that a Bodhisattva will **"remain in cyclic existence."**

[82A, 06.33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p41L8)]

Therefore, in the Levels of Yogic Deeds, it has clearly explained the vows of a Bodhisattva. For practitioners of the Sravaka vehicle who seek self-liberation, they should have fewer tasks, fewer actions, and fewer expectations. A Bodhisattva will likewise need to develop disenchantment, [but] a great disgust that is far more intense than that is felt by Hinayana practitioners. But in order to serve others, even if one perceives the horrendous and disgusting nature of this, for the sake of others, he will take this on! Hence, it is based on this type of mindset of the Bodhisattva that "fewer tasks, fewer actions, and fewer expectations would not be good." (Translator: apologize for being unsure of this translation.) This is what we should understand.

[82A, 07.05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p41L12)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

Once you see the limitless sufferings of all living beings—such as the one hundred and ten sufferings explained in the Bodhisattva Levels—you allow this to be the cause for great compassion.

There, there, there! The Bodhisattva Levels speaks of the Bodhisattva ways, but it does not avoid the topic of suffering! Quite the contrary! Earlier on, we have only talked about the eight sufferings, the six sufferings, the three sufferings and so on. Ah, the *Bodhisattva Levels* actually explains one hundred and ten sufferings. You have no idea of the variety of sufferings. As the Bodhisattvas see these sufferings, they will develop a great fear and a great disenchantment. Ah, from this disenchantment, a Bodhisattva will put himself in the place of another, and this will become "**the cause for great compassion.**" Hence, it is not the case where they do not see [the sufferings] or have no disenchantment.

[82A, 07.44 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p42L3)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

At this time, when you cultivate a heart that has a forceful and enduring inability to withstand the sight of others' sufferings, it would be contradictory to be not even slightly disenchanted with cyclic existence. [261]

Look at this! Upon seeing the limitless sufferings, what arises in his mind? Forceful and enduring. The disenchantment with the suffering is very forceful. What is "enduring"? It never ceases. Just like that. This is the kind of disenchantment of cyclic existence. One will feel disenchanted even if it is for his own interest. One will feel that this is horrendous and so difficult to put an end to. You can imagine that you would be extremely disgusted by this! Now that you wish to help all beings, the kind of disenchantment you would have would be an even greater measure, to the extent of the extreme. You can imagine that. Therefore, to say that Bodhisattvas are not disenchanted, that is

completely wrong, completely wrong! Hence "it would be contradictory." Bodhisattvas are absolutely not like that!

[82A, 08.40 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p42L9)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

The theme of Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas* is the stages of the path upon which bodhisattvas develop great revulsion for cyclic existence and then, seeing living beings as their close relatives, enter the ocean of cyclic existence for their sake.

What is his actual state? You have already seen the faults of cyclic existence and have the means to be liberated from it. But what is the reason for not leaving cyclic existence? This is because one sees that all sentient beings are one's parents and close relatives. Therefore, despite the sufferings, you will enter cyclic existence to help them! It is for the sake of others! That is the case! **"The theme of Aryadeva's Four Hundred Stanzas is the stages of the path..."** All the great scriptures and commentaries state the same.

[82A, 09.24 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p43L1)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

In his commentary on that work, the great master Candrakirti clarified this:⁵⁵¹

[82A, 09.31 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p43L3)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

Due to the Buddha's explanation of the faults of cyclic existence, his disciples learned to fear it and desire freedom from it. The Bhagavan said the following so that they would develop a strong connection to the Mahayana: "O monks, among all who have passed through cyclic existence for a long time, there is not one being among all the various types of living beings who has not been like a father, mother, son, daughter, relative, or step-relation to you."

It leads you to this next. Now that you understand cyclic existence, ah! It is devoid of any merit and has all kinds of faults. And then, you will develop great fear and seek only for liberation. Now, in order to initiate your Mahayana aspiration [at this time] - if you seek liberation at this time, it is over, you will only solve your own problem - this is when the Bhagavan will explain further to us. "O Bhikshus! Everyone! Among the sentient beings, to be able to find a few, even one or two people who have never been your father, mother, or relative, it will be impossible. For all the sentient beings in the Dharma realm, every sentient being has been your parents or close relatives. If you wish to find one who has not been your parents or close relatives, you can't even find one or two." As you think of this, "Ah! Right! Since this is the case, I need to repay them and save them. Therefore, at this time, one cannot only think of pursuing one's own benefit. So, this is a cause for entering Mahayana. Now, you are clear of this concept.

And further:

[82A, 11.14 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p43L13)]

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

By understanding the words of the Bhagavan, bodhisattvas are able to leap into the ocean of cyclic existence. They do this so that all beings who have been their close relatives—like father and mother-throughout beginningless time and who are now bereft and without a protector may be freed by the boat of the Mahayana.

It is exactly like this. After we understand the principles explained by the Buddha, we know that a Bodhisattva practitioner who wishes to emulate the Buddha does not train on the path of the Hinayana. Instead, he trains on the path of the Mahayana, which is much like a boat that brings salvation to all the fathers and mothers who are bereft of any protector and to those who are sinking in the ocean of cyclic existence. Therefore he is at peace as he enters the ocean of cyclic existence to bear the sufferings.

[82A, 12.00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p44L5)]

[p331, English LR Vol 1]

The unsurpassed mantra vehicle also requires this method.

This is the case for the Mahayana of the Sutra vehicle. It is also the same for the Mantra vehicle. This is shared among all of Mahayana. This was indicated at the very beginning of this treatise, there is absolutely no difference in the fundamentals of the Sutra and the Mantra, it must comprise these things - the attitude has to be the great spirit of enlightenment which is great compassion and the actions are the six perfections, the vows of Bodhisattvas and the myriad associated practices.

[82A, 12.26 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p44L9)]

[p331, English LR Vol 1]

For, as Aryadeva says in his *Lamp Which Is a Compendium of Deeds*.⁵⁵²

Through these stages, you should engage in these activities wholly free of elaborations. The stages for doing this are as follows: in the very beginning, you should recall the beginningless sufferings of cyclic existence, and then desire the bliss of nirvana.

Therefore, you should completely give up all agitation, and even cultivate the idea that the rulers of kingdoms suffer.

These are the stages that were mentioned to us earlier. It is very clear. The first thing is to understand the nature of cyclic existence and then to consider others in one's own place. Just like that. These are the stages. So what should we do now? After we understand these stages, we "**should engage in these activities.**" When we truly begin to engage, we should be "**wholly free of elaborations.**" I need to explain the word "**elaboration.**" Anything that does not accord with the teachings would be elaborations. Even though you may eloquently discuss about the teachings, but if your mind does not accord with the teachings you have talked about, this is called elaborations. That is why he calls it, "**wholly free of elaborations.**" You cannot even have a little bit of fault. So what are the stages now? For practitioners, look at this! The very first step, "**you should recall the beginningless sufferings of cyclic existence.**" This is what we should do. From the beginningless time, ah, there have been unspeakable sufferings! You should only seek for this, "**desire the bliss of nirvana.**" You should only desire the bliss of nirvana. What should you do then? You should "**completely give up all**

agitation." This means all defilements in the mundane world. So, the word "**agitation**" includes those things which are inferior. Of course, in the present days, if we are asked to be beggars, we would consider that inferior. And you may say that you want to be someone of superior status. But from Buddhism's point of view, even a king's throne is considered inferior and defiled. Even being a deity would be viewed as such. You should "**cultivate the idea that the rulers of kingdoms suffer.**" We should understand this principle. We should understand this principle.

[82A, 14.28 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p45L10)]

So, in those days when I was first ordained, someone asked me something. It wasn't easy for me to answer the question then, but I completely understand it now. What did he ask? And it is very possible that you may be approached with this question, "Well, didn't you say you are learning the Mahayana practice? But you keep insisting on disgust, disenchantment and renouncing things. Isn't that too pessimistic?!" Yes! If you look at this superficially, it would indeed seem that way. It would indeed seem that way. But if you look at this from a deeper perspective, then it is entirely different, entirely different. There is a quote from Confucian school, "If a man takes no thought about what is distant, he will find sorrow near at hand." If you do not have a far-reaching goal, I am sorry! You will not be able to sort out your present problems. On the contrary, once you have a far-reaching goal, you will not be faltered by the present problems. Let us use the simplest analogy. This is something we frequently use. I will use it again today. If we want to make money, oh, let's say for a teenager, there is shortage of workers for the jobs out there. You can immediately start to make money if you apply for the job. Ah, but any parent who is slightly more capable and sensible will never

allow the child to earn a living at this time. Not only will they keep the child from earning an income, they will support the child financially. What is this for? To send him for more schooling. Right? The way we would look at this could be, "Ah, you are ludicrous! Everyone else wants to make money, why would you not want the money?" But as a result, ah, he is the one who rakes in the fortune.

[82A, 16.11 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p46L6)]

Thus, after understanding this point, we must know that for those who genuinely seek to train in Buddhism, the primary objective remains to be freed from suffering and to seek the perfection of happiness. In other words, one must completely eradicate suffering. This is unlike the style of the mundane people where they would seek treatment when there is a headache, seek treatment when there is foot pain. This kind of person is shortsighted and ignorant! Hence to such person, it is indeed difficult for him to make sense of your true intent, your true intent. This is why in the ancient time, not to mention Buddhism, but even the sages in the mundane world would say the same thing. There is a passage in the writings from *Zhuāng Zi*. He said that for a sparrow on a fence, it is like an ordinary little sparrow, it would not understand the ambition of a large swan. The swan mentioned here is more like the roc [enormous legendary bird of prey]. As soon as the roc expands its wings, it could soar upward for tens of thousands of miles. It has such kind of mental capacity. The little sparrow will fly for a long time only to travel a short distance. Therefore, the sparrow will not be able to relate to the mentality of the giant Peng bird. It is certain that ordinary people in the present days are shortsighted. This is something that we really need to know. We need to advance from the mundane

world to the world of Buddhism. And after we enter Buddhism, we need to delve deeply, level by level, delve deeply, level by level. This is a concept that we must know.

[82A, 17.39 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p46L15)]

Therefore no matter what others say, um, it does not matter! I am the one who needs to have a correct understanding. So the most important thing at the very beginning is to have the correct view, which is most imperative. If you can recognize the correct view and use it to advance step by step, in the end, others will be impressed with you. Not only will they admire you, you can also save others. Therefore we should never look down on things that may seem trivial now. We would frequently say, "Ah, the activities others are doing seem to be bustling with noise and excitement!" It does not matter. Others can be bustling with noise and excitement. I am doing something that is bustling with noise and excitement as well! What sort of activity am I doing? I do it with my doors closed. I am planting the causes. The seeds that I plant are "**wholly free of elaborations.**" They are wholly free of elaborations! This is absolutely important, absolutely important! Yes! You want to propagate the teachings! How do you begin to propagate the teachings? You must first understand the teachings and put it to practice accordingly. Only then will you be able to propagate the teachings! That is very clear and apparent here. Therefore, if we truly practice the correct way in the causal period, that is when our practices are wholly free of elaborations. There is no need for you to be busy competing with others right now. This is very clear and apparent. This is something we must know, something we must know.

[82A, 19.01 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p47L9)]

But I must remind you in every aspect! I must remind you in every aspect. What is the main point of this concept? It is for us to observe ourselves. We should know that we are beginning practitioners. Speaking of those people out there, how do you know that they are not Bodhisattvas? This is absolutely true, isn't that right? If we look at history, there were all kinds of Bodhisattvas. For the two Bodhisattvas, Hán Shān and Shí Dé, they were extraordinary. But they manifested as beggars. Even these beggars can be Bodhisattvas, let alone those people we had just mentioned? If a person can create such a great undertaking, he is truly a Bodhisattva. The day before yesterday, I was asking the senior abbot for advice on that. He told me the story of Cí Háng Bodhisattva. Ah! I was extremely moved as I heard the story. I had not heard of it before. Let me tell it to you now!

[82A, 19.48 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p48L1)]

You should know that during those times Cí Háng Bodhisattva was well known to everyone. His disciple, Lù Háng Bodhisattva was also remarkable. When he left this world, the sign of purity manifested by him was utterly beautiful. He passed away while reciting the Buddha's name. He had known about it a few days earlier before his death. So when he was about to leave, there was an auspicious sign. He had been reciting the Buddha's name since early morning and instructed others to send him off. At the last minute, he said, "Ah, I cannot go now." Why? He said that of all his disciples, the youngest one has yet to come. So he needs to wait for him. When his disciple arrived at noon, "He is here. I

can leave in the afternoon then." After he took a bath, he happily chatted with the disciples and even told them, "Look, you just have to practice like this! 'There will be no suffering from sickness.'" After he was done speaking, he left as soon as his eyes closed. He had personally...those people who surrounded him were watching! His own practice was indeed excellent, he also thought that the Pure Land practice was excellent. So he had advised his teacher to follow. He wholeheartedly advised his teacher, Cí Háng Bodhisattva, to learn the Pure Land method. Cí Háng Bodhisattva said, "You can train in the Pure Land method. But I do not want to." He truly was a returning Bodhisattva. He saw that there was great benefit in cyclic existence, so he did not want to go to Pure Land. But his disciple kept persuading him. So he said, "Alright, fine, if you persuade me to go, I will go!" So he posed in the lotus position. As he sat down, his breath ended. He left just like that. He had this kind of ability!

[82A, 20.59 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p48L11)]

Ah! Many of the disciples were there and they were complaining to him, "Look at that, look at that, what are you going to do now?" As a result, Lù Háng Bodhisattva....Ah! He became frightened. He prostrated, pleaded, cried, and kept going at it. He kept on prostrating, "Ah! Master, you cannot leave us! Everyone, now everyone really has to depend on you!" But his teacher ignored him. He was not breathing. He was dead. But after all the commotion, his teacher opened his eyes. Yes! Do you have such kind of ability? This is why we should not be observing [the faults of] others, we should not be observing others. The Bodhisattvas are really here in this world, you cannot tell who they are. Therefore, to the best of our ability, we should view everyone else as a Bodhisattva. What kind of benefit will this bring you? There,

[this means] I must quickly strive to learn from him. Thus for the principle that was covered earlier, it is necessary for you to understand it correctly. There are only advantages without any harm.

[82A, 21.48 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p49L3)]

Please turn to page 190 of *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment* (English Lamrim Vol 1, page 333). The medium capacity is divided into four parts. The first part is "**the mental training**." This describes the content of medium capacity. This is the first one. The second one is "**the measure of the determination to be free**." The content to which one should train in describes how the quality (attribute) must be correct. The second one describes the quantity (the measure) that needs to be achieved, there has to be an adequate amount. The third one is "**dispelling misconceptions**." There are many people who are not clear with the principles, they may even have misconceptions. This leads to all kinds of problems. This has to be cleared away. This has to be cleared away. Regarding the third point, this is especially important for us. We must be able to eliminate the mistakes before we can establish what is correct, establish what is correct. The treatise has specifically explained this point. Many people have misconstrued disenchantment to be a practice that belongs solely to the Hinayana. They claim that the Mahayana practitioners should not cultivate this attitude. This is a grave mistake. It is fundamentally wrong. The ultimate goal of this treatise is actually the true reason for the Buddha to appear in this world, to guide us towards the ultimate path, the ultimate path.

[82A, 23.50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p49L11)]

Meanwhile, by the way, we should not stop short of just cultivating disenchantment alone. After we have initiated disenchantment, we need to go a step further to elevate this disenchantment to a higher level. It is by generating this disenchantment that one can then take another step further to solve the problems of all sentient beings. In fact, this will help you to truly solve your own problem as well. This part will be saved for explanation later. Therefore for us beginners, there is a paragraph from the first sentence of page 190 (English text, page 333). For beginners, the most important thing is that we must understand the sufferings of this beginningless cyclic existence. Having understood that, you will wholeheartedly seek for the bliss of nirvana which releases you from this great suffering. You have to understand that everything in this world is nonetheless suffering, is nonetheless suffering. Not to mention this worthless mundane world, even a king's throne, even the throne is not worth for you to stay on. Not only is it not worthwhile, it is the root to your suffering. This is what we as beginners should recognize in the first step. With this, we are able to establish the entire Buddha-Dharma.

[82A, 25.22 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p50L4)]

Having obtained this recognition, we will go a step further to ask, "Yes, now we know what it means to seek for liberation and the measure for this attitude. We have also refuted the misconceptions. So now, we want to wholeheartedly practice. How do we begin to practice?" Therefore..

[Note: please refer to Master's commentary of Chapter 23 of the Lamrim vol1.]

Chapter 23
Ascertaining The Nature of The Path Leading to Liberation

ASCERTAINING THE NATURE OF THE PATH LEADING TO LIBERATION

- d) **Ascertaining the nature of the path leading to liberation**
 - i) **The kind of life through which you halt cyclic existence**
 - ii) **The kind of path you cultivate to halt cyclic existence**
 - a' **The certainty of the enumeration of the three trainings**
 - 1' **The stages of disciplining the mind**
 - 2' **Their results**
 - 3' **The objects that they eliminate**
 - b' **The determination of the order of the three trainings**

[82A, 25.49 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p50L7)]

[p333, English LR Vol 1]

d) Ascertaining the nature of the path leading to liberation

Here it explains the kind of path we should take, and that by walking this path we ultimately reach the goal of liberation.

[82A, 26.09 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p50L9)]

[p333, English LR Vol 1]

Exhort yourself and meditate on the faults of cyclic existence.

As Sri Jagan-mitrananda says:⁵⁵³

**Although we have sunk into the midst of cyclic
existence,
An ocean of suffering with neither bottom nor shore,
[262]
We are not disenchanted; we have no fear; we are
pleased and excited.
What is going on in our minds?
Although we have entered a fire constantly blazing
With problems, poverty, hardship in acquiring food and
shelter,
Effort in keeping and finally loss, as well as
separation, illness, and aging, We boast of
happiness. This seems insane.**

He says this to first remind us. What is the condition we are in now? We have "**sunk**", that is we have sunk in the water, in the ocean. What ocean? It is the ocean of "**cyclic existence**." Cyclic existence comprises of the desire realm, form realm, and the formless realm. Not only is the desire realm devoid of any merit, the human realm, the heavens, and even the form and formless realms that give you great pleasures, these are all still within cyclic existence. These are all part of the ocean of suffering. It has neither bottom nor shore, which explains its immeasurable depth and vastness. In other words, the suffering is limitless and endless. Under the threat of this limitless and endless suffering, not only do we not understand and not disgusted by it, but we also enjoy it. "**Excited**," excited usually means being distracted. This is to say that even though I have learned, my mind is still distracted, and I do not diligently strive. We neither understand, nor afraid, nor disgusted of the fact that "the reality of the mundane world is nonetheless suffering." Ah! What has shrouded my mind? There, it first explains this.

[82A, 28.06 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p51L6)]

It then describes to us the poverty in the cyclic existence. It is difficult to obtain whatever that you are after! Therefore, there is "**hardship in acquiring**." You have nothing for your own protection. Everywhere, everything will be lost and perished. "**Separation**" is that the fundamental nature of cyclic existence is the nature of separation. One will eventually die. But before death, there will be sickness, aging, and deterioration, nothing but great suffering. This great suffering will never cease. It is therefore "**a fire constantly blazing**." Under this circumstance, we can even feel happy. Ah! Would this not make us preposterous and ludicrous? This is how we truly are!

[82A, 28.56 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p51L11)]

And:

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

**Alas, the worldly have eyes yet
are blind; Although you see the
obvious,
You do not think about it at all.
Has your mind become hardened?**

People of the mundane world, even though we have eyes, we often act like blinds. We have eyes yet blind, have eyes yet blind. Why? Even though the principle of the great suffering of the world appears before us frequently, and the fact is on display clearly, we just do not diligently reflect and analyze it.

[82B, 00.07 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p53L1)]

We do not even think about it and analyze it in the slightest way. What is going on in our minds? Our minds, we would frequently say that our minds have become like animals, like a piece of wood. A piece of wood would mean something that is dull and coarse. This here describes that we have "**hardened**." Ah! Such great suffering, but we are not affected at all! This is truly our foolishness. This is the mindset we should have.

[82B, 00.35 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p53L4)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

The foremost, the truly important matter is to spur and encourage ourselves to continuously reflect and analyze that there is no good whatsoever in cyclic existence, in fact, it is rife with disasters and faults.

Next,

[82B, 01.01 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p53L7)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

Consequently, as Guhyadatta's *Edifying Tale of the Seven Maidens (Sapta-kumarikavadana)* states:⁵⁵⁴

We see the things of the world as wavering images of the moon in water.

We see attachments as shadows of the hoods and coils of angry snakes.

We see these beings to be ablaze with the flames of suffering.

**We therefore go to the cremation grounds, O King,
delighting in the determination to be free.**

See the things of the world as "wavering." This means impermanent and illusive, like the reflection of the moon in water. It is unreal to begin with. The reflection of the moon in water appears to be there, but in fact it does not exist. And it is wavering, constantly changing and impermanent. We should recognise this. What this is really saying is that we should recognize this is how we currently are. We find it difficult to part with things and let go. What is this? It is "attachment." All of our attachments are like angry snakes. "Shadows of the hoods," when a snake coils its body and raises its head, what kind of a state is it in? It is ready to attack. When the snake is slithering about, when it is slithering about, it is not dangerous. But when its body coiled and head raised, you happen to walk by being unaware of this, "pa!" It will kill you with a deadly bite. Attachment is that fearsome. It will strike at any moment. As soon as your attachment arises, you are doomed. We have just explained the twelve factors of dependent-arising. For the projecting factors of the twelve factors of dependent-arising, how are the projecting factors of the causal period brought to fruition? It is because of craving and grasping. What are we craving and grasping? It is desire, attachment. It is exactly that. Thus, as soon as you crave and grasp, this attachment will immediately begin to mature the bad causes. This is why cyclic existence is so horrendous!

[82B, 03.12 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p54L12)]

"We see these beings to be ablaze with the flames of suffering. We therefore go to the cremation grounds, O King, delighting in the determination to be free." And then, we see this is happening to us and to all sentient beings. All sentient beings are indeed in

this state. All in the state of afflictions, karma and suffering, in the midst of cyclic existence! There is no security in anything, nowhere to run for safety. We are in this blazing fire of impermanence! Therefore for me, for us now, ah! Upon seeing this, we feel that it is devoid of any merit, and disgusted deeply by it. Where do you want to be at this point? "Be freed." You are determined to be freed. You wish wholeheartedly to escape this. Where to? The "cremation grounds." The cremation grounds are cemeteries. This is a place that the Buddha praises repeatedly.

[82B, 04.11 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p55L3)]

The people nowadays are truly preposterous. People are truly preposterous. Everyone says that we have progressed, have progressed. I too used to think that we have progressed. After meeting with the excellent teacher, he told me, "Ah! People are truly preposterous. When the wrong views are on the rise, what is obviously wrong is perceived as progress!" The way it used to be, for instance, in the past, there were all kinds of inconveniences while at home. Now that things have been made more convenient, the ugly truths have been covered up. For example, there was such a story in China. I believe that it came from this text "The Scholars" or "Ru Lin Wai Shi." It said that a person was sick with a carbuncle. So he asked to see a doctor. This doctor turned out to be a quack. Upon seeing the carbuncle, the doctor said, "Alright, alright, this is easy." He mixed some flour with water and applied this concoction on the carbuncle. It looked good. "Alright, alright, alright, the ailment is gone." This is a problem that we all have. Looking at the surface and deceive ourselves that our sicknesses are cured. Is there such a thing?

[82B, 05.23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p55L12)]

Why does he say this? It is that presently, we are all focusing on the appearance. For instance, the restrooms, now we would feel, "Ah, it is so clean. It does not smell at all." Everything is made for your comfort and convenience. For everything that is not ideal, all kinds of ways are enacted to deceive you of its fault, to make you feel happy and at ease. Even when people die, ah, when you go to the funeral home, wow! You would feel that place is... I have not paid attention to how they are here. But the funeral home in the United States, as you enter, the solemn atmosphere, the decor, you would think you entered a place of enjoyment. If you are not the loved ones of the deceased, without feeling the sorrow, you would think that you are going to a banquet. It is like that!

Therefore, there is nothing to set our minds thinking about how the world is full of suffering. These things actually deceive us. Hence true practitioners are not like that. What would they do? They would go to the cremation grounds. Actually, the burial sites for the ancients are places where corpses were discarded. So you can look at that. Ah, it is horrendous and dirty. It stinks and is rotting away. After seeing this, you will realize this is what happens when people die. In the end, the same will happen to me. After busying for so long, it is meaningless! That is when you are motivated. Of course you were already motivated when you began to practice. But in the beginning, this kind of determination is not strong. Ah! You would start with great momentum but you would forget after a while. Eh, but as you observe, you will realize, "Ah, this will not do! I need to exhort myself to strive."

[82B, 07.00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p56L9)]

Hence for the true practitioners, we should absolutely not get this wrong! This why we mentioned this again and again earlier, after

we arrived at the monastery, if we still fuss over this and that, we are completely wrong. The more sufferings you encounter at this place, the more you are initiated. Therefore [the question is] do you want to learn from the Buddha or do you still want to learn from yourself? If you want to learn from yourself, you do not have to come here! You can go earn a lot of money and enjoy yourself. But to learn from the Buddha is something entirely different! This is what we absolutely need to pay attention to!

[82B, 07.32 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p56L13)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, when you see that cyclic existence—environments and beings—is like a moon in water that is stirred by the wind—impermanent, disintegrating, not resting even for an instant;

It explains this next. Whether it is our bodies – the direct fruition, or the world that we live in – the material world that a person depends on, these are all disintegrating moment by moment. They are much like the moon in water. It is empty itself, it is false. Not to mention that it is wavering there all the time. You may not be able to tell that it is empty and false for a moment. But the fact that it is wavering is clearly evident. Yet you do not see. This is why even though we have eyes, though we have eyes but blind! And then,

[82B, 08.18 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p57L4)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

that sensory objects—like shadows of the bodies of poisonous snakes—hold little value but great danger;

Ah! It looks like the desire for the sensory objects may bring tiny advantages but in fact bring great harm! It is much like poisonous snakes! As soon as you touch it, you will lose your life.

[82B, 08.42 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p57L7)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

and that the five types of beings are scorched by the blazing fires of the three sufferings; then you give rise to a disposition like that of northern children, a disposition that has completely turned away from attachment to cyclic existence. When this happens, there occurs the determination to be free—a longing that delights in liberation.

Furthermore, not only is this true for us, but you will also see that is true for all five types of beings. Even if you were reborn in the happy realms from the miserable realms, even if you were reborn in the heavens, sorry, it is futile! One is still scorched by the blazing fires of the three sufferings. There is no exception in this cyclic existence. The sufferings are very intense. Thus to truly practice is to have "**a disposition that has completely turned away from attachment to cyclic existence.**" You generate disenchantment, abandonment because you understand its faults. To what measure will it be sufficient? This has been explained earlier, and here is an analogy. This says that in the north, I believe that this is describing Lama Tsong-Kha-Pa or the people of that era. What sort of state is this describing? This says that for any type of sensory object in the world, no matter how they appear, we want nothing to do with them. We only seek for liberation. Of course we would not want to go to hell, animal or the hungry ghost realms. We would not want to be a human or a deity either. We would not want fame, profit, wealth, nothing. There is only one thing that we are after, to seek for liberation. So this is,

[82B, 10.20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p58L3)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

The expression "northern children" is to be understood as follows:

What is this?

[82B, 10.22 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p58L5)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

in the north, roasted barley flour is scarce, and consequently the inhabitants eat small amounts of turnips. Once, there were some children there who, being hungry and wishing to eat roasted barley flour, asked their mother for food. Since she had no roasted barley flour, she offered them fresh turnip, which they refused. Then she offered them dried turnip, but they did not want that either, so she then gave them cooked turnip. But they turned this down as well. Finally she offered them frozen cooked turnip, whereupon they turned away with a great feeling of nausea, exclaiming, "Everything is turnips!" [263]

This is it. So, it has been said that in this particular place, the roasted barley flour, eh, is better. Not only is it better, but it is also scarce. They would normally eat turnips, turnips. So, when the children are hungry, they would always want to eat something better. So, they would ask their mothers for roasted barley flour. When a mother does not have such good food, she would give the children fresh turnips. They would not want it. Since they do not want it, the mother would try to deceive them by giving them the dried turnips. But they would not want it. So, she would offer them cooked ones. They would not want the cooked ones either. They

would not want the frozen cooked turnips either. No matter how the turnips appear, I just do not want it because they are all the same. This is how we should feel now!

[82B, 11.35 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p59L1)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

Likewise, with respect to whatever worldly happiness is seen, heard of, or remembered, you must, as the Kadampa (bKa'-gdams-pa) teachers have said, generate the same feeling, thinking, "This is the world," "This also is the world," "Everything is suffering," and "I want nothing to do with it."

(Translator note: for the part on "I want nothing to do with it," the Chinese text translates to be the feeling of wanting to throw up.)

This is what we should do now, what we should do now. Whether we are seeing, hearing, or a thought arises in our minds, for every desire of the mundane world, this is what we should say always, "Ah! This is the cyclic existence of the mundane world. This (suffering) falls within that, that (suffering) also falls within that, that (suffering) also falls within that, and that (suffering) falls within that too. There is not any exception, everything is suffering!" This suffering is devoid of any merit and there is no remedy for it. So as soon as you encounter something, you will feel, "**I want nothing to do with it.**" It is a feeling of wanting to throw up. What is the actual state of this like? That is as soon as you see it, you feel an extreme disgust. That is the feeling of wanting to throw up. To explain it this way, it is not trying to be coarse or to make us relate to it better. What is this actually explaining? For the first real step to cultivation, it is the five meditations for settling the mind and ridding it of the five errors. What is the method to remedy attachment, does everyone remember this? What do you do? You

have to cultivate the vileness of all things. To meditate on the vileness of all things, there are several methods, including the meditation of the skeleton and the great impurities. When you are training in the impurities, by the time you generate the proper cognition, this is what would happen to you. Ah! As soon as you see foods, you will feel that they are dirty, rotten, smelly, and vomit-inducing. They are vomit-inducing. It will become like that! Therefore, as soon as you see, whenever you see attractive objects, you would develop this kind of mindset. So, will you still be attached to it? This is why we are told to cultivate, to cultivate, to cultivate. This is the principle behind it.

[82B, 13.17 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p59L13)]

However, by this time, after you have heard this, you will feel that, "Let us practice this quickly!" I am sorry, if you have not established the previous foundation, you will not make a connection, will not make a connection. This is what we should understand. Therefore, he tells us at every juncture very clearly that what is the first thing we should cultivate? We should cultivate refuge. When you go for refuge, if you have not cleared away the obscuration and have not accumulated the collections, under this circumstance, no matter how you train, you will not be able to cultivate successfully. You must first clear way the obscuration and accumulate the collections. Then you will be able to accomplish it. And within this, a few things are explained: one must clear away the obscuration, accumulate the collections, use pure ethical discipline as the foundation, and make stainless aspirational prayers. This is our first step. This is our first step.

[82B, 14.06 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p60L5)]

[p334, English LR Vol 1]

In this way, by contemplating your previous beginningless wanderings through cyclic existence, you become disenchanted and revolted, and by contemplating the necessity of continuing to wander

[p335, English LR Vol 1] **here indefinitely, you give rise to fear and anxiety. With a determination that transcends mere words,**

You want to contemplate accordingly. What do you contemplate? From the beginningless time, we have wandered in this ocean of cyclic existence. Ah! There are all sorts of faults to this. Now that I recognize and understand this, an insurmountable disgust arises. My only wish is to escape this! If you do not escape this, you will continue to wander. What is the measure for this type of mindset? You must "**give rise to fear and anxiety.**" You truly develop a great fear. Ah! As soon as you think of this you are frightened and ill at ease. Then it is correct!

[82B, 14.55 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p60L11)]

We brought up many stories earlier that this was the case for older ones or younger ones. Like Nanda, the younger brother of the Buddha, he was born in the royal family, was endowed with great wealth, and had a beautiful wife. Ah, if we were in this situation, it would be very difficult for us to give these up? Eh, of course it was difficult for him to give these up as well. But he was more fortunate. Eh, he was able to meet the Buddha! He was then shown the true relationship of cause and effect, the phenomenon of dependent-arising. "Ah, I do not want these things anymore!" He further understood that even though one can be reborn in the

heavens, one will still end up in the miserable realms. Ah! He was extremely frightened. Do you still remember the story! If he had thought about the true states of the three realms that he had seen before a meal, he will not have the desire to eat. Even if he could eat, he would vomit immediately. In reality, the three realms are truly frightening! Therefore, even though our eyes are open now, we have eyes yet are blind! We cannot let this go and cannot let that go. Yet we frequently claim that we are helping others. You are inept to help yourself. Wouldn't it be completely preposterous to say that you want to help others? This is where we need to take great pains to introspect. This cannot be just mere words.

[82B, 16.21 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p61L5)]

At this point I need to bring something up. Yes, for the people who are sitting here, you are all very diligent. This is a good thing. However, there are a few who are still careless and nonchalant! So, you should not say, "Ah, alright, alright, alright, I can be careless as well." There are a few who are indeed like that. We do not necessarily have to be like them! The majority of the students are very diligent. As you become diligent, something will happen. Ah, you will realize that you do not seem to do anything right. That is when you will panic. Eh, if you can feel that you do not seem to do anything right, that means you have progressed. The first step to progress is to have this happen. Hence, we must pay attention to the causal period. It has been told this to us earlier, the scriptures have already told us. Do you remember what is said by the *Collection of Indicative Verses*? If those who are childish know that they are childish, eh, they are wise. This is to say that indeed we are childish now. But if we know that we are childish, then we are wise. Why do we say that you know that you are childish? This is because you have already seen what is correct. As you compare yourself, examine yourself, this would mean you are

most certainly comparing yourself to the teaching. Ah! You will discover the self is doing everything wrong. That is when there will be a force to motivate you. Cultivation begins from this.

[82B, 17.38 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p62L1)]

Hence when we come across situations like this, sometimes we would be so worried that we would not know what to do. Some people will say, "I should quickly go into recluse in the mountain to practice." Ah! Sometimes people will say, "I must quickly recite until one pointed concentration." You will quickly want to do something. But in fact, haste makes waste. There are definitive stages that you must go through. Therefore, it was said earlier that we must understand the stages. So, for now, we should follow the stages step by step to advance, to advance.

[82B, 18.03(手抄稿 第十一冊 p62L5)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

you must, as Nagarjuna's *Friendly Letter* says, stop your birth in cyclic existence, the root of all harm:⁵⁵⁵

**Cyclic existence is like that; birth—
Whether in the lands of deities and
humans, hell-beings,
Hungry ghosts, or animals—is not
auspicious.**

Understand that birth is a vessel of much harm.

This text explains the same thing to us. This text explains the same thing to us. This is composed by the Nagarjuna Bodhisattva. This says that the true characteristics, the true nature of cyclic existence are exactly these. You should know this. This is what

we should know! In cyclic existence, no matter where you are born among the six realms, whether you are reborn as a deity, as a human, or as a hell being, there is not one place that is excellent. As long as you are in cyclic existence, "**birth is a vessel of much harm.**" All kinds of sufferings will come from this. All kinds of these things will arise this way.

[82B, 18.58(手抄稿 第十一冊 p62L12)]

Therefore earlier, in the trainings of the eight sufferings, the six sufferings, and the three sufferings, we talked about the five appropriated aggregates. It said that as long as you carry the burden the appropriated aggregates, that you persist to conceive this, then sufferings will forever follow you. This is what we should understand. So now, for this burden that we carry, we should truly be disgusted, disgusted, and disgusted. Therefore, we should not say, "Ah, this is not working out and that is not working out." Everything is great! The only thing that is not working out is the fact that you are attached to it. That is what is not working out. You cannot even grasp the core. Thus, no matter what you think or what you say, they are mere words! This is what we should understand, truly understand. Thus, if you can grasp the real vital point, then afterwards, you will gradually, gradually figure things out from this [vital] root. You will then be able to reach your goal quickly. Otherwise, you will be circling about on the incidentals, the end twigs and branches. Even though you will still finally get to your goal but there will ultimately be some wasted journeys.

[82B, 20.04(手抄稿 第十一冊 p63L6)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

You should know that this rebirth that accords with defilements in cyclic existence is the root. You must sever this root. You must sever this root. The cause for this root was explained earlier using the four noble truths or the twelve factors of dependent-arising. We have understood that and we must sever this root. In order to sever it,

[82B, 20.34(手抄稿 第十一冊 p63L10)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

What is more, you must eliminate both causes of birth in cyclic existence: karma and afflictions.

If you wish to sever the root to cyclic existence, what should you do? What is the cause for this? What is the cause? There are two: afflictions and karma.

[82B, 20.49(手抄稿 第十一冊 p63L13)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

Still, between these two, if you have no afflictions, you will not take birth, no matter how much karma you have.

We already understand this.

[82B, 20.53(手抄稿 第十一冊 p64L2)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

Hence, you should destroy the afflictions, by cultivating a path that is complete and without error, because, once you

have afflictions, even if it were possible to eradicate previously accumulated karma, you would immediately accumulate new karma.

Conversely, if you have afflictions, even if you do not have karma, eh, "**you would immediately**," that means you will do something right away. As long as you have afflictions, when afflictions are generated, the accumulation of karma will instantly occur. After you create the karma, it will eventually produce an effect. Hence,

[82B, 21.10(手抄稿 第十一冊 p64L5)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore what is our true cultivation now, what should we be doing? We should be destroying the afflictions. Therefore for our final objective, beginning from the sufferings, we have induced that in order to alleviate suffering, what is our final objective? We need to destroy the afflictions. We need to obliterate, obliterate the afflictions. In order to eliminate this cause,

[82B, 21.32(手抄稿 第十一冊 p64L9)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore we must train. But if you want to train, you must train correctly. This is very important! You must train on the path that is complete and free of errors. There are two criteria here. The first one is "free of errors." This means that the quality (attributes) must be correct. And then it has to be complete. This means there has to be adequate measure (quantity), adequate measure. One who has the most complete measure is the Buddha. Those who have less complete measure would be the Sravakas and Pratyekabuddhas. But if you get this wrong, I am sorry, you will

still remain in cyclic existence. And if there is a mishap, you may still have to experience the effects of miserable realms. Therefore a correct understanding is of great importance. Hence, at this point we should think of the story of Yú Jìng Yì Gōng Meets the Kitchen God. He thought to himself, "Ah-ya! I have done so many virtuous deeds. I have done them for so many years. How come there were no good effects but instead bad effects?" Had he really done virtuous deeds? He had not! He had not! What is this? It was an erroneous path. He had completely gone astray but he did not know it. Therefore for us to be truly cultivating in Buddhism now, the first thing to do is to gain a correct understanding. This is imperative, imperative!

[82B, 22.55(手抄稿 第十一冊 p65L5)]

So, alright! Now that we understand this, oh, the reality of this world is truly suffering.

In order to eliminate that, one must deal with the problems that occur in the causal period. Step by step, we have finally traced the root cause to be afflictions. We need to train on eliminating afflictions. This is indeed unmistakable. Now that we will proceed to train, how should we train? There are two things that are required: the first one is the kind of life you need and then it is the kind of path to cultivate in order to eliminate it. Therefore,

[82B, 23.30(手抄稿 第十一冊 p65L9)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

Ascertaining the nature of the path leading to liberation has two parts:

- 1. The kind of life through which you halt cyclic existence**
- 2. The kind of path you cultivate to halt cyclic existence**

Let us now take a look. In order to cultivate, you will indeed have to rely on one thing - the so-called collection that we would normally speak of, it is this human body of leisure and opportunity. We have already explained this before. Since we are on the topic now, he makes it a point to reiterate it.

[82B, 23.59(手抄稿 第十一冊 p65L12)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

i) The kind of life through which you halt cyclic existence

The *Friendly Letter*:⁵⁵⁶

To be reborn with wrong views or without a conqueror's word,

Or as an animal, a hungry ghost, a hell-being,

An uncultured person in a border region,

A stupid and mute person, or a deity of long life

Is to be afflicted by one of the eight faults that are

conditions which lack leisure. After you have

attained leisure, which is freedom from these

rebirths,

Strive to end birth.

This has been explained earlier. If you are born with the eight conditions in which it is difficult to see a Buddha or hear his Dharma, any one of them will leave you incapable of true cultivation. Hence only if you can avoid these eight conditions, unscathed by the eight conditions, will you then have an opportunity to cultivate! Thus to have actually obtained this human

body of leisure and opportunity, it is a rare, rare treasure. It has great importance. Eh, once you obtain this, you must strive diligently! It has been told to us again and again earlier that suppose we have obtained this human body of leisure and opportunity, but we do not cultivate. Instead, we busy ourselves with matters of the mundane world. We are then worse than animals! This is absolutely true. What we are busy with now? We are busy like animals, "know nothing more than grass and water." We only care about our stomach, only care about making ourselves comfortable. Animals can do that too! In fact, we are inferior to animals in these aspects! When they want to fly, they can fly away instantaneously. We cannot fly. If they want to fight with you, their teeth are sharper than yours. Their claws are more powerful than your hands. They can jump higher than you. When a flea jumps, "Boing!" As soon as it jumps, it can jump many times the height of its body. No matter how I jump, I cannot even jump as high as my own height. Ah!

[82B, 25.35(手抄稿 第十一冊 p66L11)]

So what is truly precious about having this human body? It is that among the three realms, in all of cyclic existence, the only tool that you can use to escape cyclic existence in the very beginning. And what is precious about having this human body? It is for us to be able to listen to the teaching now and be able to properly contemplate. Pay attention here! Every one of these has its own set of significant causes and conditions. Now that we have obtained it, we need to make good use of it, need to make good use of it. The first thing to do is that one must find an excellent teacher. After that, one needs to properly listen. You should absolutely not train blindly! And you will still have to properly reflect. Oh, there is this concept that has been explained to us before in the section of refuting misconception. We would

frequently say, "Ah, we should not discern." There are special meanings attached to not discerning at times. But we do not understand it. We would frequently be entirely muddled and decide to not worry about anything in our minds. You are then doomed! Cultivation is absolutely not like that. You must properly reflect and discern – to cast aside what is wrong and to choose what is right. Therefore there are many practitioners these days who have become duller as they train, become more foolish as they train. They have obviously gone astray. Thus for us to truly cultivate the path, we must choose one that is error free, that is unmistakable. And it has to be a complete path.

[82B, 26.59(手抄稿 第十一冊 p67L7)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

It is not possible to stop birth in cyclic existence if you have no time. Therefore, once you have obtained a life of leisure and opportunity, you must stop it. [264] I have already explained this.

This was explained earlier.

[82B, 27.08(手抄稿 第十一冊 p67L9)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

**The great yogi Chang-chup-rin-chen said:
Now is the time to make ourselves different from
domestic animals.**

So great yogi Chang-chup-rin-chen tells you, this great master tells us, "You need to remember this! Now is the time for us to truly be different from animals." He did not say to escape from being in the

three realms [i.e. cyclic existence], but just to escape from being animals. There is a reason for that. To escape from the three realms [i.e. cyclic existence], the reason you are not able to escape is because of ignorance. The only way to solve this problem is to acquire wisdom. In other words, you cannot be ignorant any further. After obtaining this human body, if you do not skilfully make use of your wisdom, this would indeed make you worse than animals.

The earlier comparison of being worse than animals takes the viewpoint of the negative aspect [of how your abilities are inferior to them when it comes to seeking food and shelter of the mundane world]. This is now a comparison of the positive aspect. In this respect, you are still worse off than animals. The animals are dictated by their karma. They are just that way and will not accumulate enormous sins. But for us humans, if you are not adept, great sins are all created in the human realm. This is what we must understand. Now that we have obtained this, as you compare the advantages and the harms, the difference is too great, too great! Therefore as long as we can take a little time to make an honest comparison, no one will be an exception, everyone will become fully motivated with all of their attention, "Ah, must cultivate. We must escape [cyclic existence]!" This is a very important understanding to have.

[82B, 28.31(手抄稿 第十一冊 p68L6)]

[p335, English LR Vol 1]

Also, Bo-do-wa said:

For as long as we have wandered through cyclic existence in the past it has not stopped by itself. Given this, it will not stop by

[p336, English LR Vol 1] **itself now either. Hence, we must put a stop to it, and the time to do so is today, when we have obtained leisure and opportunity.**

This says that we have wandered through cyclic existence from the beginningless time. We have not been able to escape. To escape means to "**stop.**" And then, I am sorry, to escape cyclic existence, to stop this, it will not naturally happen by itself. If you do not cultivate the remedies, it will be absolutely impossible for that to happen. Therefore you will have to cultivate the remedies for it to cease. In order to cultivate the remedies for it to cease, the time to do it is when you obtain this human body of leisure and opportunity. The reason we call this a human life of leisure and opportunity, you should try to recollect the meaning of this. For those of you who have not listened to that part before, you can make it up by listening to the tapes and reading it through thoroughly to motivate yourself.

[83A, 00.12(手抄稿 第十一冊 p71L1)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

For those who have attained a life of leisure and opportunity, dwelling in a household presents many obstacles to the practice of religion and has numerous shortcomings. However, the life of a renunciate, being the opposite of that, is the very best for stopping cyclic existence. The wise, therefore, should delight in such a life.

Oh! I now wish to cultivate. But to cultivate, ah! It is difficult to practice being a householder. You have no idea how difficult it is to practice this way! Not only is it difficult to practice, on the other hand, it is indeed too easy for a householder to commit sins. Of all the variety of things that you do at home, all day long, whatever

that you think you should do at home actually all result in sins. But the life of a renunciate gives you the exact opposite. The life of a renunciate gives you the exact opposite. This is why it has innumerable auspicious good qualities, innumerable auspicious good qualities. Therefore, "**for stopping cyclic existence,**" the life of a renunciate is most excellent. Those who are truly wise, they should delight in such a life and they must live the life of a renunciate!

[83A, 01.13(手抄稿 第十一册 p71L8)]

Remember what was said earlier? This was said again and again in a few places. The first place was in the criteria for powerful actions. He particularly told us that there are these two people who are practicing the same way, who are both Bodhisattvas. But one is a householder Bodhisattva and the other is a renunciate Bodhisattva. The householder Bodhisattva would offer as much as the three billion world systems, using the best things to offer. But the result is that the merit produced from the renunciate Bodhisattva holding a lamp wick coated with a trifling amount of butter, ah! The merit produced from this act of the renunciate Bodhisattva is unimaginably greater. So then he said that in terms of attitude, the two Bodhisattvas had the same type of aspiration. The only difference is what? One is a renunciate and the other is a householder. Hence the situation is not only limited to what is described in the previous paragraph where it said, oh, there are many shortcomings for being in the household, it is difficult to practice at home. In fact, for the same thing that you do, even if you do the same thing, but because you wear this robe which represents the pure insignia, an enormous effect would be generated by a small deed. We have given you so many examples throughout the lessons. I can explain that again here. This is much like when we want to go somewhere and we need

transportation. You might say, "I can use my two legs to walk." You can! But these two legs will not be as good as a bicycle. A bicycle is not as good as a car. A car is not as good as an airplane. And now there are rockets. May I ask which one do you want to use? There are many places where you can walk there with your legs. But there are many places where you cannot get to by walking. If you want to go to the United States, try walking there with your legs! This is what we must understand! This particularly explains the auspiciousness of becoming a renunciate, the auspiciousness of becoming a renunciate.

[83A, 02.58(手抄稿 第十一冊 p72L11)]

And then, it told us later that truly for optimum cultivation, it is not ideal to just have a regular human life of leisure and opportunity. You will need the most complete tool. What is the most complete tool? You will have to become a renunciate. He is not talking about just being an Upasaka and living close to the temple. In other words, it will not work to just observe the five vows, the eight vows, or the fundamental trainings of the novice monks. One will have to observe the fundamental trainings for a monk in its entirety. He then went on to particularly analyze this. He said that if by becoming a renunciate, your desire is to only become an Arhat. Then there is not much meaning to that. It does not mean that it does not matter. It does matter but it does not matter much. We would say that it is difficult to become an Arhat. But actually, if a person is an Upasaka who observes the eight vows, abstains from sexual activities, he will be able to accomplish that. Even novice monks will be able to accomplish that. And novice monks only have to keep ten vows. You have to observe more than 200 vows. But you will get the same result. So why should you bother to do this? Therefore, this is not it! What are you doing this for? This is so that you can train for the most complete teaching.

[Hence] in many places he would praise the life of a renunciate. The life of a renunciate is incredibly auspicious! We had already said the many good qualities of it earlier. So we should frequently recollect and analyze them.

[83A, 04.20(手抄稿 第十一冊 p73L5)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

Repeated reflection on the faults of householders and the virtues of renunciates will lead those who have already become renunciates to have a firm attitude, while leading those who have not yet become renunciates to develop good inclinations [to become renunciates and the like] and then act on them.

If we continue to contemplate in this way, what would be the benefit? Ah! It is excellent! There are all kinds of faults and problems with being a householder. There is unsurpassed merit to the life of a renunciate. If you have already become a renunciate, you will have a "**firm attitude**." Ah, you will feel joyous and happy! Eh, do not overlook this. It is exactly this type of joy and happiness that will make our attitude to become a renunciate strong on the one hand. On the other hand, this joy and happiness is the good quality of rejoicing. This helps you to grow your collection of merit. Therefore for the same phenomenon of being happy, if you are a householder, after feeling some happiness, I am sorry! You will be rejoicing defilement. This will surely cause you to sink deeper and deeper in cyclic existence. But if I am sitting here, leading the life of a renunciate, "Ah! I am joyous, I am truly happy!" This type of rejoice would become immeasurable and boundless. This is why the life of a renunciate is that auspicious. In any case, you absolutely cannot compare the two. The more we understand this, the more we reflect, the firmer will be our attitude. What is

particularly good about this is that the contemplation of this is in itself one of the greatest merits. To contemplate like this also creates one of the greatest merits.

[83A, 05.41(手抄稿 第十一冊 p74L1)]

For instance, for us householders, what are householders thinking of? Ah-ya, the stocks are going up or going down. The housing values are rising or falling. How is my business doing? These are what we do as householder. These follow as a matter of course. You will have to earn a living to support your family and so on. These are nevertheless defiled karma. Therefore there are "**many obstacles**" and "**numerous shortcomings**." But for us renunciates, even though we are like this now, "Ah-ya, I am full of errors. I still cannot accomplish what is right!" Eh, but your very thought already accords with the teaching." Look at that! When the householders think that they are 100% right, those are the times that they are completely wrong. When we feel that, ah-ya, there is nothing right about ourselves, that is when we have begun the path of the sublime teaching. Think about it. How can you compare the two! These two can never be compared, can never be compared! Therefore, this point is something that we must know, must know.

[83A, 06.40(手抄稿 第十一冊 p74L9)]

Therefore, "**those who have not yet become renunciates**," they will reflect and analyze in this way "**to develop good inclinations**." If you have not developed good inclinations, by doing this, you can develop this type of marvellous inclinations. You can plant the seed first now. There will be a day when this seed will sprout. Eh, it will be fast. It would be best if it is this

lifetime. If it does not work out in this lifetime, then the sooner the better. Whenever this seed manifests, you will have accomplishment.

[83A, 07.14(手抄稿 第十一冊 p74L13)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]
I will explain how this is so.

This point is very important so he still needed to explain this.

[83A, 07.21(手抄稿 第十一冊 p75L1)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]
Householders, if they are wealthy, suffer in their efforts to protect that wealth, and, if poor, suffer from exhaustion brought about by seeking wealth. In this way they lead confused lives that have no pleasure, and they imagine these lives to be pleasurable. Understand that this misconception is the result of bad karma.

Those who are wealthy will have to protect their wealth. Ah-ya, there is indeed great hardship to do so. Ah-ya! You will want a safe. If the safe is not enough, you will engage the service of an insurance company. It may not work out with the insurance company and people still end up robbing you, you will then try to sue in court. You will want to do this and want to do that, there is not one thing... actually, these are all meaningless. They are nothing but suffering. How about the poor people? Ah, poor means you do not have anything. But the sufferings from pursuing these things are boundless! Not only that, for what is obviously suffering, we confusingly perceive it to be pleasurable. Therefore

between these three things, there is not one which does not increase the defiled karma of cyclic existence! You should know that this is the result of bad karma! The past causes have produced the present effects. If you do things this way now, this will then produce another effect in the future. There is no value in this at all.

[83A, 08.28(手抄稿 第十一冊 p75L9)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

The *Garland of Birth Stories*:⁵⁵⁷

Never consider as pleasurable

The household, which is like a prison.

The household, which is like prison, do not consider it as pleasurable. It would be preposterous to do so! The word "household" in Chinese is an intriguing word. The top part of the word "household" is a "cover" which indicates the house. This indicates that, there, you are thus bound inside. In other words, you will make this your primary focus. But the bottom part of the word "household" is a "pig." Ah! Those who are foolish would feel this way, "Ah! This is a pleasurable place." This is called home! Therefore we should absolutely understand this. The ancient noble beings are truly magnificent! They are truly magnificent! If we take a look at this now, this is a point that we should absolutely pay attention to. You should not say, "Oh! I have become a renunciate. I have become a renunciate." No! What have you renounced? You should recognize the subjective aspect of becoming a renunciate. Just because you have shaved your head, you should not say, "Ah, I can go there to enjoy the product of others' efforts." Then you are doomed. You will be worse than householders! They will tell us next the true characteristic of becoming a renunciate.

[83A, 09.33(手抄稿 第十一冊 p76L3)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

**Whether they are rich or poor,
Those who dwell in households are greatly ailing.**

It does not matter whether you are rich or poor. There are great faults to being a householder! There are great faults!

[83A, 09.45(手抄稿 第十一冊 p76L5)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

**One undergoes afflictions by
guarding wealth, While the other
becomes exhausted by seeking
it. Whether they are rich or poor,
They have no happiness.**

[83A, 09.54(手抄稿 第十一冊 p76L7)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

**The confusion that delights in this
householder's existence is merely the
consequence of sin.**

This is obviously something that is wrong and preposterous. Yet you do not know and delight in it. Why? This is the consequence of your sin: the fruitional effect, the causally concordant effect and the environmental effect. These are the three. You should not misconceive this and say, "Ah-yo, this person is rich now." Being rich – this is the fruitional effect. When you have money, you will

want even more money – this is the causally concordant cause and effect. And for the mundane world now, people would feel, "Ah-ya, we have progressed!" This is the cause and effect of the environment. These were all produced from sinful karma. Therefore we should absolutely pay attention to this now!

[83A, 10.36(手抄稿 第十一冊 p76L13)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, keeping many possessions and discontentedly seeking more is not the business of renunciates. If it were, they would not differ from householders.

There! Here it comes. Here it comes. It says, "Alright, we are going to be renunciates." After becoming renunciates, we keep "**many possessions**." Ah-ya, there is not enough of this, not enough of that. I need more of this and more of that, the more the merrier. And we would be "**discontentedly seeking more**." This indicates a lack of understanding of what it means to become a renunciate. This is being like householders. The householders will use their hard work in exchange for food. They should do that. As a renunciate who wears the robe of the pure insignia, what right do you have to use these goods from others? By just doing this will cause you to become an animal. And for you to be wearing this purity insignia and engage in activities that destroys the teaching, this will certainly result in you going to hell. Therefore this is a point that you must know!

[83A, 11.24(手抄稿 第十一冊 p77L6)]

Therefore, I remember the story of the Xu Yun abbot. When Yun Abode was being reconstructed, he lived in the bullpen during the

time. After the construction completed, people asked him to live inside the newly built abode. "Eh, I am fine here! I am fine here! I will still live here." These are models provided by the ancient sages! We now live in such a comfortable place. Yet we think that we do not have enough of this and do not have enough of that. In summer, it would be best that we could have air conditioning because fans are not good enough! Therefore, this is a point that everyone must absolutely pay attention to! We used to suffer a lot in the mainland... when we ate, we would only drink a small amount of soup. And by chance you may scoop up a piece of tofu. But everyone is happy. Though we now have such a feast every day, but people would still say that there is not enough nutrition in this, not enough nutrition in that. You would complain that there is no fruit and there is no that... Ah! I do not know what we are busying ourselves with. This is what we absolutely need to pay attention to!

[83A, 12.16(手抄稿 第十一冊 p77L13)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

Furthermore, since living in a household is at odds with religion, it is difficult to practice religion there.

So then the earlier section is explained to us renunciates. But for the householders, you should understand that.

[83A, 12.27(手抄稿 第十一冊 p78L1)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

The same text states:⁵⁵⁸

If you do the business of the household, [265]

**It is unfeasible to refrain from
speaking falsely, And it is
unfeasible not to punish
Others who do wrong.
If you practice religion, householder pursuits suffer;
If you attend to the household, how can you practice
religion?**

To do things as householders, it would be impossible to not speak falsely. This is even more apparent these days. This is indeed the way things are in the mundane world. The westerners would say something like this, calling something "a white lie". Speaking falsely is to lie. But they would claim that it is white. One should not lie. But now they are saying that lying is necessary and these are what one should lie about. There, there, there, there! So this is done with public consent. I believe that is how things are with us here too! This is a classic example of being a householder. I am sorry! If you do say something like this, you will certainly fall into the miserable realms. But the situation is such that you are forced to do it. If you have sinned, you must not leave it alone without rectifying it with punishment. Hence if you are going to do things according to reason, according to Buddhism, you will not be able to come to agreement with the members of your household. If you want to be in agreement with the members of your household, you will certainly not be able to succeed in your practice of the teaching.

[83A, 13.32(手抄稿 第十一冊 p78L9)]

[p336, English LR Vol 1]

Religious activity is peaceful;

A householder's aims are achieved through ruthlessness.

[p337, English LR Vol 1]

**Therefore, because of the flaw of being at odds with religion,
Who, desiring to help themselves, would live in a household?**

You should note that learning Buddhism is something that is very peaceful. Pay attention to the word "**peaceful**"! Matters of the households are done with ruthlessness. Hence the two types of activities are completely at odds. Thus those who genuinely desire to help themselves will never become attached to the household.

[83A, 13.57(手抄稿 第十一冊 p78L12)]

[p337, English LR Vol 1]

And also:

**A household is a nest of vipers
such as**

Arrogance, pride, and delusion.

**It destroys tranquillity and the
bliss of happiness, And is a place
of many unbearable sufferings.**

Who would stay in a place so similar to a snakepit?

Contemplate again and again the defects of dwelling in a household, and aspire to the life of a renunciate.

This is what we should understand. This is how it is in the household – a nest of vipers such as arrogance, pride, and delusion. The snake is hostility, ignorance and attachment. This is the most terrible and heinous place of all. That is how it is being in

the household. It is exactly like that. For everyone, not to mention those of us who have higher ranks, but even for the common folks, they worry about their face. Ah, they would always feel that that there needs to be some type of a facade. What is a facade? These are nevertheless arrogance and pride. What is said is the very minimum that one would want to have done, [such as] one must look presentable. If this is even the case, not to mention others matters! All these things "**destroy tranquillity and the bliss of happiness.**" The real bliss of happiness, the real bliss of happiness is truly obtained through tranquillity. Only the bliss of peace is real. The household has "**many unbearable sufferings**". Not only suffering, but that it is unbearable [and intense]! Ah, it is like the pit, the snake pit, who wants to live there?! Therefore, we should continue to reflect on its defects. And then, for those who have become a renunciate, make the attitude firm. For those who have not become a renunciate yet, you should aspire to become a renunciate. The good quality of becoming a renunciate is very auspicious! Yes, in the very beginning you may feel that you are not used to it, you are not used to a new environment. But if you have a correct understanding, there will be a motivational force that will draw you forward. To breakthrough this difficulty is exactly making progress. Wait until you gradually become concordant. That is when you will feel, "Ah, it is so beautiful to be a renunciate! It is so beautiful to be a renunciate!"

[83A, 15.45(手抄稿 第十一冊 p79L12)]

I have heard this from quite a few people. What have I heard? I feel this way myself. People would say, "If you have to choose a path for yourself, what path would you take?" "To become a renunciate!" Suppose this is not a path which you could choose? I will still become a renunciate! To be a householder is indeed something that is devoid of any merit. Once you are able to truly

experience it, you will naturally realize there are things whose beauty is beyond words. In reality, what we are able to experience now is still the most coarse and superficial. We have not been able to experience the deeper meaning yet! Suppose we are able to experience, just like... last time, my memory is suddenly failing me again. To be like Virasena, who became a renunciate for one day and one night, and thereafter, went to the heavens seven times in twenty-one eons. Ah! And then finally, he came down from heavens and attained the fruit (abhisambuddha). He had only done that for one day and one night! It is just that we are unable to see the merit of this! We must reflect and analyze this some more! It is truly auspicious to be a renunciate. By being a householder, under any circumstance, no matter what you do, you will not be able to produce this kind of effect.

After you become a renunciate, what should you do? Oh! Here it comes.

[83A, 16.58(手抄稿 第十一冊 p80L6)]

[p337, English LR Vol 1]

In reference to this, renunciates are content with alms, simple religious robes, and alms bowls. In solitude, they remove their afflictions and aspire to become objects of others' veneration.

(Translator note: please note that for the word "simple" here, it is explained as coarse and inferior in the Chinese text.)

This is what we should do. What should we do? Whatever that is coarse and inferior, you would use things of this nature whether in clothing, food or things that you use. You will go out for alms. You will need to beg for food. Being "**content**," this describes a state of

mind. This sentence is what we should hang on the wall and broadcast. I really want to write this sentence down and hang it in the kitchen. We should have coarse and inferior (simple) religious robes and alms bowls. What do "**religious robes**" refer to? They refer to our contact and feeling. For us to be living here, the conditions here are already very good. There are stools here to sit on. But, ah, after sitting on it for a while, ah! You do not feel comfortable. So, you would look for a cushion to put on top of it.

[83A, 17.51(手抄稿 第十一冊 p80L12)]

I remember the time when I went to India, what material things did they have? Everyone would run out, "bong, bong, bong." They would have important lessons first. Then there would be some classes outside. They would go outside for dialectics afterwards. They would just pick any place. They would sit at whatever place they picked. If the ground was dirty, they would put some leaves down. Alright, alright, the filth would then be covered. Then they would go on to do what they need to do. However, for us in those days, we would feel that, "Ah, it is miserable here." The principal would then come and reproach everyone. The principal was indeed excellent! He said, "When we were in school, I was in school for more than ten years and I had never worn socks." Do you know where he went to school? You should know that for the mountains in Tibet, needless to say the wintertime, we would not even be able to stand the conditions in the summer. For the little sufferings that we have now, ah, when I think about this myself now, I really feel ashamed and embarrassed! In the beginning they had to get used to the coldness. Outside their classrooms, it was not like what we have here. There were no levelled grounds, no cement filled grounds. There were just rocks, jagged and uneven. That was the case. After the teacher finished giving instruction, "pa!" They would immediately go outside [for dialectics]. After a

while, they could no longer feel whether it was warm or cold with the bottom of their feet. That was the case! Everyone was like this. Their feet would be red or even black from the cold. They would even say, "That does not matter. That is not a problem." This is why they obtained true attainments. This is the crux! But for us now, we have no idea what we are busying ourselves with all day long. We should be deeply vigilant about this.

[83A, 19.15(手抄稿 第十一册 p81L10)]

"**In solitude, they remove their afflictions,**" why is it that we are unable to accomplish this? Actually, we are rife with afflictions in our minds. Therefore, we should understand the benefits of becoming a renunciate. What is the purpose of becoming a renunciate? It is to clear away our afflictions. If you can clear away your afflictions then this is when you can "**become objects of others' veneration,**" become objects of others' veneration. When I was first ordained, I had this misconception for which I regret constantly to this day. I always felt that, "Eh, I am a renunciate now. I deserve others' prostrations. I deserve others' offerings." When others came, it was as if, eh, he is supposed to serve you food and water. For you to carry out some tasks, you would feel that you have been taken advantage of. And you would want to direct them [in their activities]. This pains me deeply and I regret it. If I have cleared away my afflictions, then I would have made myself worthy of others' veneration. But I am rife with afflictions now! Therefore, the scriptures had explained it this very clearly: if you are not able to accord with this, it would be terrible!

[83A, 20.21(手抄稿 第十一册 p82L3)]

However, there is one point [that you need to know]: this is not telling us that we must accord immediately. We must understand and then strive on the path to accord. Then we would be correct. Thus, the path that we should walk as beginners is to have the correct view. This is so that you know you have done wrong and [can correct yourself to] advance. This is what we should do now. This is what we should do now. You need to be clear of this concept. It is not the case where you must accomplish it immediately. The reason I emphasize this is because we do not understand the real situation. We thought that as soon as our heads are shaved, oh! We presume ourselves to be Bhikshus. So, when renunciates arrive – you should bow to me, should make offerings to me. This is the wrong concept, the wrong concept. To have this concept is to accord with afflictions.

[83A, 21.07(手抄稿 第十一冊 p82L9)]

Therefore, we should always understand that as we progressed step by step from the beginning, there had been this special characteristic, a unique feature [to the teachings]. What is it? There, up to this point, what you are truly supposed to do is to break your afflictions. Why do you want to become a renunciate? You became a renunciate to break your afflictions. This is the purpose of the becoming a renunciate. Thus, for you to be churning your afflictions after becoming a renunciate, are you in accordance? This is the situation. Once you are able to grasp this point, even though you have not eliminated afflictions, it does not matter. Suppose you have already eliminated your afflictions, then it does not matter whether you are a renunciate or not. The reason I became a renunciate is to eliminate afflictions. This is pretty obvious. Thus, it is indeed true that you have afflictions. But as long as you recognize it and apply the remedies to eliminate the afflictions, this is exactly what we as renunciates should do.

So, what is the key to this? It is the view. Do you understand it? This view is not just a principle. We need to use the principle to gauge our own minds. This is why you will frequently realize, "Ah, I am wrong!" That is right and we need not be hasty at that point either. This awareness of our own faults will propel us to move forward. Then it will be right!

[83A, 22.08(手抄稿 第十一冊 p83L3)]

The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, page 192, second paragraph. (English text, page 337). We have already discussed this yesterday, oh, we now want to train on the path and we need to know what is necessary in order to train on the path. You will need one condition to train on the path – the human life of leisure and opportunity. This is the only way to practice. But to have the human life of leisure and opportunity is not enough by itself. You will still need all kinds of good qualities. These good qualities are exclusive to the life of a renunciate. This is why the auspicious qualities of a life of a renunciate are praised on all occasions, on all occasions. If you have already understood this then you can reflect and analyze this whenever you get a chance to. On the one hand, not only will you become aware of the particular advantages for being a renunciate, but that this type of reflection and analysis would be a great merit in itself. We already know that. Why is that the case? What is the primary component to karma? It is the thought. The primary component of karma is the thought. Therefore, reflection and analysis in itself [on this topic] will increase the collection of merit. After you think about it, [you will realize,] "Ah, the good qualities of a renunciate are excellent!" You become delighted. This is the good quality of rejoicing. This in itself will indeed bring about incredible merit.

[83A, 23.37(手抄稿 第十一冊 p83L12)]

There are many of us who would say, "I am scared!" True! If you do not live the life of a renunciate correctly, it is very horrendous. This is absolutely the truth. But what is the problem? It is because you are not skilled. The most important part of being skilled is to have the correct view. If you obtain the correct view, things will become extremely convenient. Even if you just sit here and contemplate, you will be increasing your merit. It is exactly like that! Normally we would have to be busy for this and be busy for that... this does not require you to get busy to do something. All you have to do is to sit there and contemplate properly. Just by doing this will increase your merit. And then, if you put the teachings to practice, you truly do not have to worry about food or living. That is absolutely true. However, on the contrary, if you say, "Ah! After becoming a renunciate, all the necessities will be offered by others anyhow." You will be greedy for all that is made ready for you. Then you are doomed! This is not the case where you can solely look at the appearance. This is a fact that we should absolutely understand, a fact that we should absolutely understand.

[83A, 24.31(手抄稿 第十一冊 p84L4)]

What is the purpose for becoming a renunciate? It is for obtaining the ultimate and complete happiness, to completely alleviate all sufferings. Therefore, you will have to make a little effort now. You will have to pay a little price for it. By any means, by any means, nothing in the mundane world can be compared to the [immense] retribution that you will obtain for this little price that you paid. This is what we must understand first. Therefore, when you are first ordained, you will indeed have to know this concept and thereafter conduct yourself according to the teachings. This is why he said,

"In reference to this, renunciates are content with alms, simple religious robes, and alms bowls. In solitude, they remove their afflictions..." Oh, only then will they become **"objects of others' veneration."** In appearance, whether it is clothing, food, living, or traversing – the objects used should be coarse and inferior. We should use the coarsest and most inferior objects and all the while being very content. As for your mind, in solitude, you will remove your afflictions. This is what we should really be doing. If you understand this and have obtained the correct view, then you will indeed become more delighted as you contemplate this.

[83A, 25.53(手抄稿 第十一冊 p84L12)]

Not to mention having an extensive amount of correct view. Even if we just use the readily apparent facts that we frequently refer to as examples, all sorts of stuff in the metropolitan areas are indeed devoid of any merit! They are devoid of any merit! Whatever that may seem like a little pleasure is in fact a deception. Look at us. As we sit here now, how comfortable, peaceful and happy we are! It is truly excellent! We would never have to say, "This piece of clothing of mine is worth this much money. I am going to do this with this piece of clothing." When it is dirty, you will just wash it. When there is a hole, you will sew it up. It is that simple! If you leave it somewhere, even thieves will not want it. You will not need to have to safeguard it neither will you need to suffer in order to seek after it. These are all unnecessary for us. We can still be warm and get full. How great is that? Look at that! And there are immeasurable merits to this. Even though it may seem a little bit miserable to you right now, but actually after some careful examination, you will realize that this is not suffering but rather happiness! Those people have made a golden shackle for their necks. It weighs on them so heavily that they can barely breathe.

We have now removed this and feel utterly free. How can this be miserable? Hence, for this point, how we feel about it is mainly dependent on the view we take.

[83A, 27.15(手抄稿 第十一冊 p85L6)]

Since you are seeking for profit and fame in the mundane world, you will have to greet and bow to others. Of course, you will have to greet and bow to your managers and bosses. Conversely, since this is the age of the democracy, in order to be selected as an official, to whoever you see, you will have to please them with pleasantries and smile at them. Otherwise, they will not vote for you. You cannot do otherwise to them! This is exactly the situation. But when we are here, we do not ask for any of these things. These are exactly what we disregard! Look at that, how free and happy we are! Therefore, for situations like these, we must understand them [correctly]. When wrong views are prevalent, do you remember this from the earlier section when we talked about karma? When wrong views are prevalent which is when we are amidst our wrong views, we will see sufferings as happiness. We will not be able to tell what the truth to happiness is. This is the greatest pity of all! This is truly ignorance!

[83A, 28.10(手抄稿 第十一冊 p85L13)]

So now, even though we have understood the principles, but our habits remain. Therefore, indeed it will take some effort to break this habit. Therefore, we should not only be thinking about being happy [now]. To truly become a renunciate, we must understand this: to become a renunciate, yes, this will require effort. Before we become a renunciate, we would compare the many benefits of being a renunciate to the faults of being a householder so as to

engender the desire to be ordained. But once we have become renunciates, we realize that as renunciates, to obtain these benefits, we will have to make an effort. You will have to make efforts before you can gain these good qualities! There is not one thing in this world that would just fall from the sky and into your lap. This is what we should understand. Therefore, the context of the way they live are first explained. The next part will reference the scriptures.

[83B, 00:03(手抄稿 第十一冊 p87L1)]

[p337, English LR Vol 1]

As it says in Guhyadatta's *Edifying Tale of the Seven Maidens*.⁵⁵⁹

**When will we thus come
To shave our hair,
Don clothes from the
garbage
And seek solitude?
Gazing ahead only a yoke's length,
When will we, blameless,
Take in our hands, earthen alms bowls,
And, from household to household, partake of alms?**

**Attached to neither material gain nor veneration,
Cleaning up the bramble swamps of the afflictions,
When will we become
Recipients of the townspeople's donations?**

When will we, we seek wholeheartedly for what? "**To shave our hair.**" Hair is what we would normally refer to as part of the beauty of the mundane world. You would keep the hair long for a while, cut it short later, perm it, leave it straight down, do this and do

that. You have no idea what you are doing this for! But now even this hair is completely shaven, leaving the head completely bare. All we have to do is wipe our head, and oh! We are done. This problem, this is affliction. We do not want any of this. It is just like that. And then, "**Don clothes from the garbage.**" The clothing that we wear is the garbage of others. It is garbage that we pick up from others. There are two meanings here. What the people of the mundane world want, they want these things because of their transposed views. Truly, they do not want what they should want. So, they would throw it away for us to have it! Alas! The mundane world wants ignorance but we want a "clear cognition"! Therefore, for these two things, we should know the nature of these.

[83B, 01.08(手抄稿 第十一冊 p88L2)]

"**And seek solitude,**" the mundane world ordinarily engages in mere elaborations and defilements. But what we truly yearn for is this - solitude, a place of quiet and peace, a place of quiet and peace. A true monastery should be a place like this. This is why as we enter the monastery, if we are still fighting or merrymaking, this is completely the opposite of what should happen. What we truly want to obtain is an internal bliss of peace. Not to mention, the bliss of nirvana. Even if you can somewhat calm your mind down, nothing of the mundane world can be compared to this kind of happiness. The bliss obtained from meditative concentration is still a part of the mundane world. However, once you obtain this bliss from meditative concentration, any other mundane world pleasure would seem like "chewing wax" to you. So, with my whole heart, I will ask, when will I be able to do this? For those who have not done this, they can continue to desire this in their every thought. Because when you think of this in your every thought, as soon as an opportunity arises, you will do it. In fact, even for us who have already become renunciates, we will still

need to persist in this. This is because our renouncement was not only done in appearance, we need real substance. In other words, it has to be your whole heart's desire. And it is this type of force that will propel you to strive to progress. That is how it is.

[83B, 02.22(手抄稿 第十一冊 p88L11)]

At this time, "**Gazing ahead only a yoke's length, when will we, blameless, take in our hands earthen alms bowls.**" Ordinarily when we have not much to do, we would go about leisurely. This will not happen now. You will devote your entire attention here and learn what you are supposed to learn, ethical discipline, meditative concentration, and wisdom. One will invest all of his energy on the matter. It is just like that. So, when he walks, he will have a certain form. When he sits, he will have a certain form. In all of walking, standing, sitting and laying in bed, there is not one single moment where we can just let ourselves be lazy and defiled. That is how it is. The eyes will focus just like that. Of course, this is the case when you learn meditative concentration. But it is also the case when you learn ethical discipline. Do you remember the four preconditions explained earlier? The first one is restraining sensory faculties. Just like that. After you get this down, the second one is acting with vigilance. For anything that we do, at any moment, we need to maintain this [vigilance]. There! This is what we should do at present. We should strive in this way in the causal period. That is why the text talks about "[the eyes] **gazing.**" But this is not only limited to your eyes. For all of your movements and gestures, there are necessary proprieties. So, this part is on physical actions.

[83B, 03.36(手抄稿 第十一冊 p89L4)]

How about food and drinks? It is exactly this. In other words, we will no longer busy ourselves with matters of this life. Under this circumstance, we will be resolutely steadfast. In this mundane world, we will be able to sustain the pure insignia of the Buddhas of the three worlds according to the teaching. That is when everyone will commend, praise and look up to us without assigning any blame. This is truly then the meaning of becoming a renunciate. **"And, from household to household, partake of alms."** We partake of alms from household to household. If we conduct ourselves otherwise, wherever we go, people will look at us and say, "You are a renunciate. But how come you are like this?" [But if we conduct ourselves as indicated in the passage,] this will not happen! Oh, as they look at us, ah! Everyone will be delighted. And the reason for that is this. This is why you should take a look at another example. Venerable Shariputra, the one with great wisdom, was extremely brilliant. He was a so-called great philosopher in India in those days. From the perspective of the Buddhists, he was an astounding non-Buddhist. As a matter of fact, he was one of the most brilliant scholars at the time. But there was an instance when he saw Bhikshu Aśvajit who was a Buddha's disciple. Oh! When he saw the conduct of this Buddha's disciple, he thought, "Such stately deportment truly exists!" He thought that if the disciple is already this exceptional, the teacher must be even more exceptional. So, he went to consult the Bhikshu and immediately began to follow the path. Therefore, the pure insignia of a Bhikshu has a special significance.

[83B, 05.15(手抄稿 第十一冊 p89L15)]

Now we should not say, "Now that we have become ordained, we should not worry about any of this!" It would seem like you could do whatever you want. You should not do that. This is why Dharma Master Yìn Guāng kept emphasizing this one point,

"Recite the Buddha's name. It is good to recite the Buddha's name! During the degenerate age (or the Age of Dharma Decline), of course all you can do is to recite the Buddha's name. But you should not become a renunciate." He is not saying that it is not good to become a renunciate. There are limitless good qualities to becoming a renunciate. But in order for you practice as one, you will indeed need to invest your effort. You will need to be as described! What is described here is what will truly enable others to see the pure insignia and plant virtuous roots. You will then be able to sustain this insignia. Even if you can do so for one day and one night, you will obtain great merit. This is what we should understand. Even if it is for one day and one night! For us now, wow! We have been ordained for many years? But we may not have necessarily been in concordance with the teaching since then. However, from now on, every one of us can strive, can become motivated. Under this circumstance, there is not anything that cannot be accomplished. You will certainly be successful in everything that you do.

[83B, 06.27(手抄稿 第十一冊 p90L8)]

You are "**attached to neither material gain nor veneration.**" It had just described the outward appearance [earlier]. This here describes the internal attitude. At this time, you will have begun to distance yourself [from the mundane world] in terms of the outward appearances. Then, you will go from this coarse and shallow component of the appearance and advance in-depth step by step. This part is what is described by "Stop all non-virtues, engage in all virtues." And you are now moving toward "purifying your mind." At this time, you would have given up all the fame and profit of the mundane world. Whether it is tangible material gifts or intangible veneration, [attachments to] these are all afflictions. These things are all like brambles that harm us. They are like

swamps, filthy defilements. These are all purified. This is when you have truly become a merit field! At this time, for the nearby towns, you have truly become worthy of their offerings, for them to cultivate this merit field, and for you to be the recipient. That is when you have truly become the recipient! Therefore, what is the true Sangha merit field? It refers to monks of the ultimate truth (or Shramana of the Way of Sages).

These are people who have had proper realizations in accordance to the teaching. It is like that.

This is what we must understand.

[83B, 07.37(手抄稿 第十一冊 p91L1)]

[p337, English LR Vol 1]

Renunciates are content with meager food and drinks, and with clothes heavy with frost from sleeping without a roof over their heads in bedding made of grass. They aspire to sleep in their place on soft grass in front of a tree, nurtured by the happiness and joy of the teaching.

(Translator note: Please note that in the Chinese text, it says "frost and dew.")

What should we be really wishing for in our minds? This part speaks of the outward appearance. Where we sit should be any place that has some grass. If this place is clean, you do not even need grass. But it will be a little softer if you have grass so that you can be steadier and more comfortable when you sit. There, this is how it is! As for the place to sleep in, you will sleep wherever you can. That is why there is no roof or bedding. At night, you would have "**clothes heavy with frost from sleeping.**" Of course, this is with regards to India. India's climate is more

temperate and warmer. Hence there is more dew. Where we are now, during the severe winter times, we need to have better shelter. However, what this indicates is the attitude of not caring for any of these things. These are all unnecessary for us. For all the pleasures of the five senses at present, however much you can let go off, that is however much benefit you will derive. However, much you are stained by them, I am sorry, that is how you will be bound to them tightly. You will have only gained a small benefit [from your defiled desires]. But the side effect of this small benefit is immeasurable suffering. Food and drinks are a particularly important aspect. We should feel satisfied with meagre food. You should be **"on soft grass in front of a tree."** What is that for? The purpose is that. **"They aspire to sleep in their place on soft grass in front of a tree, nurtured by the happiness and joy of the teaching."** Whether it is during the day or at night, whether one is sitting or sleeping, whether one is awake or asleep, one will only entertain himself with the teaching. This is the real important matter.

[83B, 09.31(手抄稿 第十一冊 p91L13)]

But what should we busy ourselves with now? We should understand the teachings and contemplate accordingly. As long as you are able to understand and contemplate, this joy of the teaching will immediately arise. This is absolutely the truth. I think that there are quite a few students here who have gradually, gradually come to feel this way, come to feel this way. For instance, we can use the example raised earlier. There is a fellow practitioner who has many views and thoughts. His original intent is nothing more than telling others his principles. But he was despised wherever he tried explaining his principles. He has now stopped to insist on giving his reasoning. He has [actually] understood the principles and felt remorse. Ah, everyone praises

him. The senior abbot praised him yesterday, and a few days ago as well. I also commended this in my mind.

[83B, 10.23(手抄稿 第十一冊 p92L5)]

Therefore, people are just that flawed. After you truly understand the teaching and remove your own views, ah, just when you thought you have taken away [your dignities], you gain respect and praise from others. What is it that we actually want? Originally, we wanted to reason with others, all we wanted was... let's not even consider the requirement for a renunciate, or the supramundane world. Even just from the perspective of the mundane world, you just want to show that your reasoning is solid, so as to convince others to believe you. But the more you speak, the more others despise you. Your best case is, they will just let you speak and ignore you. This is it. [But] if you remove [your own view], others will respect and praise you. This is why Buddhism is marvellous! Well, we have not really touched on Buddhism yet, just the most shallow aspect of this mundane world. But if you can go in depth step by step from this point, you will [remove] the afflictions of thought and emotions... the happiness [you gain] will not only be limited to this! If this is the case, then afflictions are not that formidable at all. I have just described something that is simple and close to our daily lives to allow you to easily relate to it. That is all. Indeed, as long as you can go in depth according to the teaching, this kind of happiness will immediately arise.

[83B, 11.34(手抄稿 第十一冊 p92L14)]

Furthermore, speaking of us recently, everyone has been very diligent, striving assiduously. May I ask then, after you have been working hard, if you compare this to the times when you lazed

around doing nothing, which brings you more happiness? I believe that everyone feels happier now right? Actually, after you are done... when you just sat there, just because you did not have to work, were you happy? You were not happy! The whole place is dirty, yet no one is willing (to clean up)! Ah, but now, after everyone has worked hard (to clean up), everyone is happy. I am not even talking about Buddhism here. It is something really simple and easy to see! So, I am only using something simple and close to our daily lives as an example. In our minds, we should try to relate to this simple example and advance one step at a time. You will feel the difference with every step of your progress. Therefore, our true goal here is to be "**nurtured by the happiness and joy of the teaching.**" We should practice this as our way of life, no matter day or night, at sleep or awake.

[83B, 12.37(手抄稿 第十一冊 p93L7)]

[p337, English LR Vol 1]

As is said in the *Edifying Tale of the Seven Maidens*.⁵⁶⁰

**When will I become unattached to my body,
Rising from a pile of grass,
Clothing heavy with frost,
And taking only humble food and drink? [266]**

**When will I, clothed in
soft grass- Green like
the parrot- Lie down
in front of a tree
With a banquet of the blissful things of this life?**

Ah! This is marvellous, marvellous! Ah! When will I... it would be best, and this is indeed the case of how I feel now if you ask me. Ah, [it would be best] to throw away the table, the bed and the

sofa. As long as there is grass, or something, then it is good enough. A place like this is good enough. During the day, you can sit. During the night, you can sleep. If it is too cold the next day, it is good enough as long as you can shield yourself from the wind or the rain. Just like that. You can get full on whatever you eat. You can go for alms and fill yourself with whatever you receive. Good! You are not attached to these things at all. And you will never become a slave to this defiled body. At present, we are all slaves to this. But what exactly is this body? This body happens to be the result of past non-virtuous karma. Yet at this time, you keep revolving yourself around this and work hard for it. This is truly preposterous! Hence this is what you should do now. This is where you wake up. You would sleep under a tree, wherever there is soft grass. Look at the green grass. It is great as you think about it! And what will you do at a place like this? You are enjoying "**a banquet of the blissful things of this life.**" If you practice accordingly, not only will you attain the ultimate certain goodness and the temporary high status, not only that, but your mind will also immediately accord with the teaching.

[83B, 14.21(手抄稿 第十一冊 p94L5)]

[p337, English LR Vol 1]
snow fell on the roof of the house

Under this circumstance, no matter what goes on outside, we would not worry. We would feel, ah! so happy.

[83B, 14.29(手抄稿 第十一冊 p94L7)]

[p337, English LR Vol 1]
Bo-do-wa said:

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

The very night after snow fell on the roof of the house, I became happy because something like this occurred in the *Edifying Tale of the Seven Maidens*. I want nothing other than to practice in this way.

(Translator note: "The very night" in the text is translated as "yesterday" in the Chinese text)

There! This is a classic example of the past master. "Ah! I recalled this yesterday."

This yesterday may not necessarily refer to last night. It is every time one thinks of his cultivation,

"Ah! I think of how my cultivation is much like what is described in the *Edifying Tale of the Seven Maidens*. I have practiced as such.

Ah, I am very pleased!" This describes all that I wish for now, other than this, I want nothing else. Why? He has thrown away all bondages. Look at that, how straight forward that is! Ah! All the bondages, I was bound by money, bound by stocks, bound by real estate properties, bound by this and that. You have no idea how tightly bound you are. Now you can throw this away, throw that away, throw that away. You have nothing left. Even your clothing, your clothing is discarded. What I am wearing now is [clothing] discarded by others. I just picked it up to wear. Ah, you will never have to worry about someone else stealing your clothes or laughing at you. How excellent! Ah, what happiness, what happiness!

[83B, 15.40(手抄稿 第十一冊 p95L3)]

So I also frequently recall this interesting incident. In the past, when I had first come here, I was occupied with the things of the

mundane world, busy with the mundane matters. Everyone was the same. Ah, we focused on studying, building a family, developing a career and studying abroad. It was like that. Later on, I was ordained. Even though I became a renunciate, I still had the same mindset. Then I went to the United States, I got a car. Ah, so I thought, "I now have a car." It would seem that I was pretty satisfied with myself. But after some time, I looked around and thought, "Ah, my car is not as good as those of others." Even though I had become a renunciate, I had not altered my mindset. However, I was fortunate enough to have an excellent teacher next to me who frequently brought this to my attention. Gradually, gradually, [I realised] "Precisely! What for I busy myself with these?" Later when I was able to let this go, I felt, "Ah, what a burden it is to have a car!" But you cannot go places without a car! Later, I moved to Los Angeles and did not need a car there. Occasionally there were important matters that I had to tend to, the benefactors would come pick me.

[83B, 16.51(手抄稿 第十一冊 p95L12)]

Occasionally, I would go out to buy some stuffs or I would go for a walk. The United States' streets are packed with cars, unlike ours where there are still pedestrians on our streets. [In the U.S.,] You cannot find people walking on streets unless one purposely goes for a stroll or walks the dog. But people would usually just walk around their neighbourhood. Other than that, you will not see any one on the street. If you go for a walk, you will see a lot of cars. At that time, I suddenly had this thought, "Ah, I am truly happy now!" If this happened to me earlier on, I would certainly feel, "Ah! How come I am so shabby that I do not have a car? Others all have cars." But I now feel completely different. Ah! These people are all ludicrous! They have been bound tightly by these things. I feel so free all by myself! How much does it cost him to maintain that car?

He has to make enough money to buy the car, to maintain the car, and to be busy working on the car. He is worried about that all the time. It would seem that all these are indispensable. He needs to travel many miles to work, ... Now I do not even want the most basic thing [self], why would I care for a car?

[83B, 17.51(手抄稿 第十一冊 p96L6)]

That was the time when I felt, "Ah! This is absolutely unmistakable!" It is easier, still easier to deal with enemies. What is the difficult one? This is the most difficult to breakthrough. What seems like a best friend is in fact a great con artist. It is truly a great con artist. Hence, I feel that for the very little that I have done which really cannot be counted as cultivation, as long as you are willing to follow along to reflect and analyze, you will feel the happiness in you. Therefore whenever I had gone out to see others, ah, I would feel compassion, sympathy and pity. And I would feel more delighted as I contemplated [about myself], more delighted as I contemplated. I would think about the time when I first became a Buddhist or wanted to become a monk, I decided to become a vegetarian. When others heard that I was a vegetarian, they laughed at me. Ah, I was embarrassed! It was fine when I was by myself. But when I went to work, I was embarrassed. When others talked about my faith in Buddhism, I was even more embarrassed. After I became a monk, I felt as though I could not come out in the open. But by this time in my life, I felt completely the opposite. No matter who came to me, I would behave the same. It was like that. This is because I feel that these people are truly that pitiful! A person who is insane will never think that he is insane. The crazy ones will only see the insanity of others instead of the insanity of the self.

[83B, 19.04(手抄稿 第十一冊 p97L1)]

But by that time, it did not matter to me... As a result, when everyone else was busy, I was assiduous in my learning. When others were done with what they were busy with, yet felt discontented, they would come to me. I can then tell them what is going on. Ah, they would feel that I made a lot of sense! At that time, it does not matter who comes to look for you. They could be paupers, directors of big companies, government workers, or even president. Ah, they could not resolve their problems and will come to ask you for a solution. They will bow to you and prostrate to you. Of course for us who are training in Buddhism, we do not care about these things. But those are the times when you can clearly explain, "There! This is the real pre-eminence of Buddhism. If you compare the mundane world to Buddhism, the mundane world is devoid of any merit, devoid of any merit!" This is why great master Bo-do-wa felt the same way. Of course there is much more depth in what he did. But as long as you practice this, ah, as you think about it, you will truly be delighted! At this time indeed, other than this, everything else is unnecessary. Ah, you would feel that you cannot throw things away fast enough!

[83B, 20.02(手抄稿 第十一冊 p97L9)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

Renunciates aspire to dwell in a meadow or on the bank of a river, reflecting on the similarity between their own bodies and lives and the arising and disintegration of waves. They aspire to stop, by means of discerning wisdom, the conception of self—root of cyclic existence and creator of all bad views.

Another step further, step by step, not only will the text advance step by step [in content], but it will approach this topic from different directions, different angles and different viewpoints. This is to bring us the correct understanding and arouse our interest by going at it from different directions. In brief, we would on all occasions aspire to live at a place like this. Where it mentions "**meadow**," this is referring to grass, which really indicates any ordinary place. "**On the bank of a river**," this refers to a quiet place. This is one thing. What else is there? "... **the arising and disintegration of waves**," this is exactly used to exhort you: ah, this is how our lives are as well, how our lives are as well! This is to inspire what? It is to inspire the realization of impermanence, suffering, and emptiness – the nature of things. Then you will use discerning wisdom to stop the conception of self. What is the conception of self? The conception of self is the root of cyclic existence. What is the reason for you to whirl in cyclic existence? It is affliction that gives rise to karma which will in turn produce effects. And affliction is the cause of all sorts of things. Where does it begin? It begins from this. You will find that for this "self," ah, it does not exist at all. It is just impermanence, suffering and emptiness. Hence there is no self. After you understand this, you will no longer be attached.

[83B, 21.57(手抄稿 第十一冊 p98L7)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

They aspire to overcome their obsession with the pleasures of cyclic existence, and to reflect on the animate and inanimate world as being like a magician's illusions.

This is truly excellent of being a renunciate. How would it be possible for the householders to do this, what do you think! Ah! The householders are so busy... If they do not have money, they

will be busy making money. After they have money, ah, they become even more involved in making more money. You will never stop doing this. If you are an employee, you would just look at the clock, "Seven o'clock is still early It doesn't matter if I wait a little longer. It will be just right if I start at 7:30." This is not how the owner thinks. Oh, if he has to open by 8:00, he will be busy preparing for all kinds of things. But people are so deluded. People are so deluded. Hence for this, do you still remember? The craving in the diagram of the twelve factors of dependent-arising, what is craving? The drawing consists of a drunkard. And there is a woman next to him. Fine wine and beauty, these things, these indeed describe the subjective aspects of the mind. You will always crave for more and never feel that you have too much. You will forever increase this craving. This is how serious it is. And what is the root cause to this? It is the conception of this "self." Under this circumstance, one is solely busy for this self in the mundane world. One is tightly bound in this thick and defiled ignorance. So it is impossible for you to realize this. It is only after you have become a renunciate, having your coarse afflictions removed and empty your mind, then you can gain the wisdom to go in depth step by step. Only then can you truly recognize the reality of this and apply the remedy to eliminate it. Hence to truly cultivate, one must become a renunciate. And this is the reason.

[83B, 23.56(手抄稿 第十一册 p99L5)]

And what is described here for a renunciate, not including the special merits that could be produced, is that being a renunciate itself has such excellent benefits. Hence there are exceptionally great advantage of being a renunciate. This is because it is the pure insignia of all Buddhas of the past, present and future. Let's take an analogy to illustrate this. For instance, there is a piece of cloth. The cloth itself is just a piece of cloth, very simple and there

is not much meaning to this. Yes, you can use it to make clothing, to wipe your face, to do something. It only represents this piece of cloth.... So the above-mentioned talks about the merits of becoming a renunciate. Now, becoming a renunciate also represents the pure insignia, which is the emblem of all Buddhas of the past, present and future. This is much like the flag of a country. Ah, the flag of a country is priceless because it represents the entire country! Now the appearance of a renunciate represents all the Buddhas of the ten directions and the three temporal divisions! This is why this monastic robe is that valuable, that magnificent! We are now working hard to recite the Buddha's name. It is really not that easy to recite to the point of one-pointed focus. But as long as you can wear this robe and learn according to the teaching properly, even if it is for one day and one night, if you can really put the teaching into practice and dedicate this merit - for you to go to Pure Land, it is guaranteed and you will be reborn as the middle class. What is the reason for this? There! It is the merit that comes from wearing this monastic robe. this is what we should understand.

Therefore, under any circumstances, nothing can compare to the merit of becoming a renunciate.

[83B, 25.20(手抄稿 第十一冊 p100L1)]

Therefore for the Three Jewels, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, well, even though there are Bodhisattvas, but Bodhisattvas are not mentioned as one of the Jewels here. But "Sangha" is the jewel. Why is that so? Do you understand this? There, it is exactly this reason. This pure insignia, if you practice accordingly, then you will be able to maintain the Buddha's perfect teaching in this world, not a Bodhisattva, not an individual. This is what we must understand. That is the case. So about the point on this merit, ah! That is even more... This is not explained above. But if we want to

obtain the merits, how do we obtain them? That is, if you can practice according to the text mentioned earlier, to contemplate, to observe and to feel rejoice by this. Only when you feel rejoice in your heart, then you will be able to let go of your attachment to the mundane world. When you let go of your attachment to the mundane world and practice accordingly. If you practice accordingly, you will develop this joy in your heart. And the merit you will get is immeasurable. Therefore, look at this, how can anything in the mundane world be compared to this!

[83B, 26.19(手抄稿 第十一冊 p100L9)]

This is why I repeatedly admonish everyone who has already been ordained. Yes, if you are not a renunciate, you should try to develop good inclinations. For those who are already ordained, you should feel fortunate. If there are a little unhappiness, you should always feel, "I need to keep up my motivation. Even if this means losing my life, what does it matter if I lose my life? I just have to sustain this pure insignia." Well, if you can sustain this, you will be able to go to the Pure Land. Isn't that good? This world is devoid of any merit. If you truly think about this, you are indeed willing to give up everything. If you can truly give up everything, for what you want, there is nothing you can't get. What we must immediately grasp for the first step is knowledge. Pay attention to this! I have said this many times before. To have this correct view does not mean you must immediately accomplish what you know. With this correct view, there is order of stages to achieve it. It does not mean that when you have the correct view, you force yourself to accomplish it. That is not Buddhism. Buddhism has its skill-in-means. But for whatever that you do, what is the first step? It is to establish the correct view. This is so-called being mentally prepared. This is the most important. This is why it is important!

Let us continue to read.

[83B, 27.30(手抄稿 第十一冊 p101L3)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

As is said in the *Edifying Tale of the Seven Maidens*.⁵⁶¹

When, dwelling on a river bank or
in a meadow,

Will we come to see again
and again That the rising
and falling of waves

And the world of this life
are similar?

When will we rid ourselves
Of the view of the perishing aggregates—
The mother of all bad views—

And not crave the enjoyments of cyclic existence?

When will we come to know

That the animate and inanimate worlds
Are like dreams, hallucinations, a
magician's illusions, clouds, Or a city of
the *gandharvas*?

He says this in various aspects, "Ah, when will I be able to do this! When will I be able to do this!" For those who truly understand, they will be wholeheartedly seek for this. It will absolutely not be the case where he would say, "Ah, I need to get rich at this point. I need to do this at this time..." He tried so hard to rid himself of these things, to run away from these things. Why would he be busy for these things? Ah! What he truly desires is being able to do as described by the passage! When will I be able to get this! When will I be able to get this! Just like this, the place to live is

this, and then the objects that surround us are these. When we observe, we observe these things. We will look at how our lives are like the waves. Ah! It is devoid of any merit. If you can live like this and observe properly with this type of simple life, then you can try to eliminate the root cause of all bad views. This bad view is the root cause of cyclic existence - the view of the perishing aggregates is the mother of all bad views. **"Mother"** is the root cause! By that time, ah! You will completely uproot it, uproot it. By then I will come to know the animate and the inanimate worlds. It is really like a dream, like hallucination. **"...a magician's illusions, clouds, or a city of the gandharvas,"** these are nothing but illusions, dreams, bubbles or lightning, that's all. It seems to exist but is in fact nonexistent. You will know what is real and no longer be deceived by them.

[83B, 29.10(手抄稿 第十一冊 p102L1)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

All of these persons lived as renunciates, while at the same time aspiring to these higher achievements.

This is exactly what I hope for! If you wish to obtain these things, you will have to live as a renunciate. The purpose for becoming a renunciate is to do exactly this as well.

[84A, 00.03(手抄稿 第十一冊 p105L1)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

As Chay-ga-wa said:

If there is someone living as a sage in the Valley of the Ascetics, then the father has fundamentally raised his child well.

If you can follow the sage, "**sage**" is our Buddha, the conqueror who truly lives in the mountain to practice ascetics. Didn't we talk about the different types of happiness earlier? Well, you should know that this happiness is a misery to the worldly people. As a matter of fact, it is true that when you really try to practice this, you will have to overcome many of your habits! Normally, you live in peace and contentment and comfortably eat what you like. And your friends...by that time, you will have to overcome all those poor habits. It is indeed miserable to do that. But the result produced is incomparable happiness. Therefore to truly become a renunciate, this is a point that we must understand. Hence, we need to persevere to make this kind of effort. If you are able to do this, then you are truly the son of our Buddha.

[84A, 00.58(手抄稿 第十一冊 p106L1)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

Sha-ra-wa said:

When householders are very busy, you, monks, should dress nicely and visit them. They will then think, "The life of a renunciate is wonderful!" This establishes in them a latent predisposition for a future life as a renunciate.

Hey! After you become a renunciate, this is not only good for yourself. For the householders who are busy, you can wear this robe, well! You should let them see you. [Then they will come to realize], oh, "Ah! I am busy with these things. Look at how wonderful it is to be a renunciate!" This will establish in them a latent predisposition, a latent predisposition. At this time, even the act of going to the houses of the householders, this also produces immeasurable merits. But you should pay attention to something. You must wear this robe in accordance to the teaching! Therefore

at this place, there are many lay practitioners here. I believe that all the ordained practitioners here know that for the vows of renunciate, to the extent of how you wear your robe and your every gesture, there is proper deportment. Why? There! It is to allow him to feel that you are actually different from others by just looking at your external appearance. Therefore we should not say, "Ah! Now that we are ordained, it seems that we should not be concerned with these manners." It is completely wrong! These are exactly what you do when you become a renunciate! These are exactly what you do when you become a renunciate! This is absolutely true. You have to keep this sentence in mind. There are too many people at present... I want to emphasize this again that there are far too many people do not understand the true reality of becoming a renunciate. It's a pity. You must understand the characteristic of this.

[84A, 02.28(手抄稿 第十一冊 p106L13)]

We have just talked about the story of how Venerable Shariputra met Bhikshu Aśvajit during the Buddha's time. We have also mentioned before that the great Confucius scholars, Chéng Yí and Chéng Hào, from the Song dynasty. They were so remarkable! Not only were they renown in the Song dynasty, even after Song and Ming dynasties, they were still the acknowledged leaders in Confucianism. They were mundane world people with very high moral standards. But when they visited a temple and saw an ordinary monk, ah! They deeply admired him with great respect. They said, "Ah! The characters of a noble being that we admire are all right here." This is what we should have. If you can do this then you can go to someone else's house. This is why I am really happy for a fellow practitioner here. He has the opportunity to help us put together the true image of a renunciate. Gradually,

gradually we will all have this opportunity. We will all have this opportunity.

[84A, 03.32(手抄稿 第十一冊 p107L5)]

Let us continue. After he saw this, this one thought of happiness would establish in him a latent predisposition to become a renunciate in the future. This is much like when we watch commercials normally. Merely disliking it will establish in you a latent predisposition, let alone having been pleased upon seeing something. As he establishes this predisposition, sorry, you will have increased in merit as well. And this merit does not stop growing. It continues to increase. When you walk on the road and others see you, "Eh! This person is different. This person walks with great dignity." Even if he feels that you are strange, but if you are in accordance with the teaching, ah! This will establish the virtuous root in them. As long as this seeds virtuous roots in others, your merits will increase. Such supreme benefits! Would it be possible for lay practitioners to do this? Absolutely impossible! This is what we should understand.

[84A, 04.24(手抄稿 第十一冊 p107L12)]

But, be vigilant! Always be vigilant. It is not adequate to just have your head shaved and wear this robe. If you have already shaved your head and you wear this robe, but you annoy others with your presence, yes! [It is true that] others will have planted the seed. But the first thing that will happen to you is that you will go to hell. This is very not worthwhile to do! Furthermore, if others find you annoying, they will experience an adverse effect. And you will have to pay for the harm that has been done! The relations between karmic outcome, cause and effect are what we must

understand, are what we must understand. Similarly, for what we have said earlier, for the things that you had done in the past, whether you felt the suffering or happiness, it was like a dream as you recall it. But the feeling that is at present is real. What you will have to feel in the future is waiting for you! If this is the case, why don't I put in more effort now? The past has been like a dream. Therefore, though you strive a little more, you will not feel much unpleasantness presently. However, the recompense that you will receive now and, in the future, will be immense. Ah! Its beauty is beyond words! As we think of this, inclination and enthusiasm arise naturally in our minds.

[84A, 05.34(手抄稿 第十一冊 p108L6)]

Recently, there was a fellow practitioner who had become very pleased and happy after learning this treatise. But he was worried, "Though I have learned this but I cannot accomplish what is taught!" How are you not able to accomplish it? We do not need to be preoccupied with the profound principles just yet. Even for things as simple as that which appear before you, after you understand the concepts and shift your views, then you will say, "I am sweeping the floor today, ah, I am happy! I had been busy with the defilements of the mundane world in the past. But now I am here to maintain the domains of the Three Jewels." This can be applied to everything! As a matter of fact, why would you say this? If you have to limit cultivation within a certain boundary then it would seem miserable. But in fact, cultivation is not like that at all! Under any circumstance, [you can be cultivating] when you sweep the floor, light the incense, sound the gong, or even when you eat. "I used to care much about the taste of the food. Now that I know, ah, that is not what I should be concerned with at all!" Even though you are unable to accomplish it, if you can think of this in your mind then you will be increasing your merits. Even when you

are sleeping, you might say, "Ah, this is how I used to sleep at home, but not now. The bed that I sleep on here is in accordance to the teaching. What will I do after I have slept? I will rise again tomorrow to practice assiduously." Therefore, as long as you are truly skilful, you will be able to apply the principles at all times, increase your merits at all times, and cultivate at all times! You can cultivate at all times!

[84A, 06.57(手抄稿 第十一冊 p109L1)]

In particular, the text has already explained a principle earlier. It states that suppose you have weighty karmic obscurations and little wisdom, what is the best method to overcome this? Making offerings. Does everyone remember this? This is explained clearly and plainly in the offering section of refuge. Therefore for us to be saying this now, "Ah! I am a renunciate so I am here to cultivate. Why should I busy myself with these things?" Ah, that is why you should stop and think about it. Though we have not learned the profound principles, but we have a good understanding of the purpose of becoming a renunciate. We have an understanding of the basic concept, what is that? We know karma and dependent arising, emptiness, cause and effect, dependent arising. Why did you not live in the Buddha's time? Why are you not in the Pure Land, but in this Saha world? There is no other reason than karma! Upon contemplating karma, realise that the situation that you are now in is the result of the karma that you have accumulated from the past. Since you want what is good, you should quickly strive on creating the causes! If that is the case, then there is nothing to complain about. This is the first thing. The second thing is that if there is no opportunity, it is indeed regrettable because you cannot accomplish what you know. However there are gold pieces everywhere on the ground now. All you have to do is pick them up. What are they? They are exactly

these things! Do you not reside in a temple, a monastery? Elders are there. All you have to do is to make offerings. It is very simple! You can light an incense stick, very sincerely light an incense stick, or wipe the table. "I am going to wipe it really clean today." You would do so like that.

[84A, 08.28(手抄稿 第十一冊 p109L11)]

Therefore, when I see you now, honestly, I have benefited from your zeal. Ah! I praise and rejoice, as well as have compassion for and sympathise with you. For instance, regarding cleaning the lavatories, even though I had told you that you do not have to clean them so scrupulously, students still worked hard at cleaning them. I am pleased, nevertheless, "Ah! They worked really hard." But some people are not like that. When you ask him to wash a towel, he will just put it in the water for a little bit and somewhat whirl it around. He does not even bother to roll up his sleeves. Ah! If it was me in the past, I would feel, "What is he doing?!" But now I feel sympathetic. I will think, "Ah, this type of people is truly pitiful!" What should I do? I should quickly strive! After I strive, I will be able to think of some ways. I will have to help him somehow. It should be like that. This is because I have understood the principles myself. Therefore, if you have indeed understood the correct view, even when you are not doing anything, ah, you will discover that you are still accumulating your merits. May I ask, "Other than becoming a renunciate, other than learning the correct view, can you obtain this opportunity elsewhere?" Therefore, the foremost important thing is this. By then, your mind will be clear and you will be that happy!

[84A, 09.37(手抄稿 第十一冊 p110L6)]

We can just use anything to illustrate this. For instance, for the fellow practitioner I had just mentioned, this is what the senior abbot said. Ah! He praised the person. "Ah! For this person to have transformed, he will surely be brilliant in the future. I am so pleased! I am so pleased!" After he finished saying this, he further said, "You have no idea how stubborn he was. Oh, he even argued with me at the time. But I did not lose my temper. I only pitied him. Ah! I felt that he has such great potential. But he was still obstinate even after learning Buddhism. He did not obtain the correct view." After I heard this, I thought, "Ah! This is the real magnificence of the senior abbot." If we had encountered this normally, we would get mad. We would feel, "As a great elder, I have given you proper advice in accordance with the teachings. But you do not want to listen!" Now under any circumstance, though one encounters a situation one is not agreeable with, one does not harbour any hostility. The first thing this does is to accomplish one's patience. Furthermore, this will engender in him sympathy and compassion. This hostile situation which could have brought hostility, this negative situation ended up increasing his merit instead. You can also increase your merit by rejoicing virtuous encounters. Therefore, when you take action, it is good when you take action. When you do not take action, it is also good when you do not take action. Ah, this is indeed excellent! This is indeed an excellent! This is the first thing that we should understand now. After we understand that, what is the second thing we should do? We should contemplate in accordance to the teaching. This environment is indeed excellent!

[84A, 10.54(手抄稿 第十一冊 p111L1)]

Therefore, when I was here in the very beginning, aho! I was afraid of having too many people here, having too many people here. It was like that. But now, gradually, gradually the way I feel

about having many students here is that I am only afraid there will be less. The more the better! If there is one person here, eh, I can rejoice him. But the merit of rejoicing is limited to rejoicing just that one person. If there are ten people here, I can rejoice ten people. If there are 100 people here, my merits will be incredible! Our fellow practitioners, this does not extend to only us but every person. Therefore, at this point, we think, "Ah, it is truly excellent!"

Now, he cites from the sutra to explain this to us.

[84A, 11.29(手抄稿 第十一冊 p111L6)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

Also, the *Questions of Householder Ugra Sutra* says that bodhisattvas who dwell in households should aspire in this way: [267]

For the principles explained earlier, the commentaries were expounded by past masters. And here, the sutras were expounded by the Buddha.

[84A, 11.41(手抄稿 第十一冊 p111L8)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

Householder bodhisattvas should think, "When will I leave the household, an origin of suffering,

This says when will I be able to leave this place of suffering? What place of suffering? The household. Of course the householders should try to leave the household. But renunciates should pay attention to this as well! Do not think that just by having your head shaved means you have become a renunciate. Ah, pay attention

to the definition of "household". Do you accord with the meaning [of a renunciate] in your mind? This is the most important. The real important matter of the mind is whether your views have changed. This is number one. As long as you are able to change that, all the rest of the problems are solved. Naturally, you will be able to progress step by step. Just like that.

[84A, 12.19(手抄稿 第十一册 p111L13)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

and experience the life of a renunciate? When will I rest in the actions of the community, the action of purifying and nurturing vows, the action of lifting restrictions,

Ah, this is so beautiful!

[84A, 12.29(手抄稿 第十一册 p112L2)]

[p338, English LR Vol 1]

and the action of veneration?" In this way they should delight in the thought of being a renunciate.

(Translator note: the Chinese text uses the word "karma" for action.)

So what will you have to do after you become a renunciate? This is what you will have to do! Alas! This is in accordance with the teachings. You will have to rest in the actions of the community. Karma is the Sanskrit word [for action]. These are the actions that we take when we come here, actions which renunciates ought to take. What is the significance of such actions to be taken? If nothing else, the actions increase and magnify our virtuous and

pure karma, **"the action of purifying and nurturing vows"**. **"The action of lifting restrictions,"** there are various kinds of practices. There are methods for setting the practices and there are methods for changing the practices. This is a simple way of explaining this. When we are on the topic of ethical discipline, we will explain these things more clearly. In brief, for a true and genuine Sangha community, there are practices and rules for everything. Hence, there are precepts and disciplines. "Disciplines" are the guidelines for our conduct. For our everyday conduct, every gesture and movement has its own unique significance.

(Translator note: please note that **"the action of veneration"** is translated more as "the action of harmony and veneration.")

By then, you will engage in **"the action of [harmony and] veneration."** Hence what makes up the Sangha community? It is harmony and veneration. It is harmony and veneration. Harmony is the six points of harmony or unity. There is the harmony in the principles for us to collectively realize. There is also the harmony in actions for us to collectively train. "The principles" are shared. So everyone will surely "realize" them, will realize the nature of phenomenon - emptiness and dependent-arising. This is the so called existing in the Absolute or bhūtatathatā and so on. The "actions" are the six points of harmony or unity. What precedes these six points? Perspectives, views, the views that everyone shares, this is the most important, the most important. After obtaining these [views], everyone will share in this harmony and veneration. Ah, that is truly joyful!

[84A, 14.15(手抄稿 第十一冊 p112L14)]

Households are held together by affections. This type of affection is exceedingly defiled. When we get together, we might feel that is incredibly great. But when something goes wrong between people, we are incredibly miserable. This is why every household has its own hardship to tell. Yet we are bound by the defiled affections and are unable to leave. Since we cannot leave, so all day long, ah, the fights only add to the miseries. After you become a renunciate, if you do not do things right, after ridding yourself the affections of the mundane householders, you still will not have established the teaching in your mind. What would happen is that when you all come here, you will observe the faults of others and others will observe the faults of yours. There will be problems. But with what is said here, this type of situation should not occur. This place will help us purify our defiled latent propensities. After being purified, there will be good rapport among the community. There is a standard for purification. There is a guideline. A guideline is what we collectively follow. It is our goal. Therefore, for the views, it is the harmony or unity of the views - all of us will move toward this perfect goal and work with each other. I will help you and you will help me. There is nothing better than this. You will naturally feel immense harmony and happiness. You will have tremendous admiration and revere [for the community.]

[84A, 15.26(手抄稿 第十一册 p113L9)]

For the phenomena of the mundane world, for any material goods, if you get these then that means I will have less of these. If I get these then you may not have any of them. This is why there will always be disputes. But Buddhism is so marvelous that it is beyond words. If I give things to you, not only do you benefit but that this is even better for me. Conversely, if you give things to me, not only does this benefit me, but that this is even better for you. It is that great. It is that great. We do not even need to tell

you what Buddhism explains on this matter such as how the Buddha obtained the thirty-two forms and the eighty physical characteristics from giving away [many of his possessions]. Even if we look at this from the mundane world perspective, for Mr. Yu and for Mr. Yuan, Yuan Liao Fan, he had only done a small good deed and given away some things. As a result, he got promoted to a higher ranked official status, had a son [that he had hoped for], and lengthened his life. Look at this. Isn't this very obvious? Even though he had given away things to others, but he got more in return. From the perspective of Buddhism, this only portrays the teachings for a person of the most basic small capacity. He only wanted mundane world retribution! Buddhism is truly beautiful! Hence under this circumstance, how can you not be in harmony and veneration?

[84A, 16.36(手抄稿 第十一冊 p114L2)]

Therefore, for you to be lazy when you have this opportunity now, when you have the opportunity to accumulate merits, truly, I feel how you have wasted it! On the contrary, [for those who work hard], I feel happy for them! But what is more important is do not act for others. You are the one who is the most important in this. It would truly be best if you accumulate the merits yourself. Other people will rejoice you and you will be happy. How can you not be happy in this kind of a group? If you do not feel happy, you will immediately become aware that, "Eh, here it comes. Here it comes. Here it comes! This is my nonvirtuous latent propensity from the beginningless time." You will immediately be alarmed and rely on the correct teaching to purify it. You will feel this coolness right away. This is excellent, excellent! What have I relied on to do this? I have relied on the fellow practitioners, the guidance of my teachers, the admonishment and counsel of the fellow practitioners. Even if no one speaks to you, as you watch

others, "Oh, look at how he is so assiduous. I need to quickly strive!" Here comes your motivation! Therefore, this is an action of harmony and veneration. **"In this way they should delight in the thought of being a renunciate."** This is what we should do.

[84A, 17.37(手抄稿 第十一冊 p114L10)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

This passage states that such bodhisattvas should principally aspire to full ordination.

This passage said that this is what we as householders should do. On the other hand, this explains the many advantages of being a renunciate!

[84A, 17.48(手抄稿 第十一冊 p114L113)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

What does this primarily indicate? Bhikshu, [the full ordination,] note this, only this indicates having the perfect qualities.

[84A, 17.55(手抄稿 第十一冊 p115L1)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

Furthermore, the *Ornament for the Mahayana Sutras* says:⁵⁶³ The class of renunciates Has limitless virtues. Therefore, the bodhisattva who observes vows

Is superior to the one who is a householder.

(Translator note: the Chinese text also describes the householder Bodhisattvas to be assiduous and excellent in maintaining their vows.)

We must know that the merit of becoming a renunciate is immeasurable. It is immense! This was said time and again earlier. This was said time and again earlier. Therefore, by just being a renunciate [Bodhisattva], this in itself is superior to being a householder Bodhisattva. Even though a householder Bodhisattva is learning as well, but he is a householder. And what else is there? "Assiduous and excellent," this is a very diligent and excellent, a very excellent householder Bodhisattva. But for a renunciate Bodhisattva, you just have to do a little work and your merit will far surpass the householder Bodhisattva. Ah! Thus, you can see the incredible merit of becoming a renunciate. As we think of this, ah! One will certainly walk this path. Just by you sustaining the insignia will produce great merits. If you go as far as just doing a little work, it will be even more incredible. There is more to cover next. We will pause here for now.

[84A, 19.03(手抄稿 第十一冊 p115L8)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

This being the case, the life of a renunciate is praised for achieving the freedom that is liberation from cyclic existence. In addition, it is taught that it is the best life even for the accomplishment of omniscience by way of the perfection and mantra vehicles.

Not only does it say “cultivation and liberation”, this liberation is only liberation from cyclic existence, in such situation only the life of a renunciate is the most marvellous, the best, [really] the most marvellous and the best. At this point, we might want to remember the story of the old Bhikshu who was made fun of. He was made a fool by others. He was told to sit in the corners. They knocked his head with a ball and he attained the first fruit. Would this have been possible if he was a lay practitioner? Let me tell you: impossible. Why? What do the householders regularly worry about? They [certainly] do not care for that. Right? They are in their own circle. The circle that they are in is this - "oh, he has great wealth but I do not have that!" This is what they busy themselves with. "Oh, when winter comes, he wears a fur coat. But I do not have one!" He would admire that as well. "He is going to switch to a new car soon!" You would admire that. Just like that. One will admire these things all day long. The more he is busy with these things, the deeper he is in the sinkhole.

[84A, 20.24(手抄稿 第十一冊 p116L4)]

After you become a renunciate, what would you do? He is bound by another type of circle. Even though the old Bhikshu was not able to accomplish many things, but he was able to admire this, "Ah, look at how diligent these young folks are." With his whole heart he was overjoyed, excited and had a high regard for them. Even though he had no strength but he was extremely respectful and filled with admiration. That was the attitude! Eh, consequently, even though the young people made fun of him and knocked on him four times with a ball, he was able to attain Arhatship. This was exactly the case.

[84A, 20.54(手抄稿 第十一冊 p116L8)]

There are two things that are involved here and I have explained this previously. I will expand on this again here. The first thing is after one has become a renunciate, his external environment and his mind will be completely different! This point is rather important! This is what we first need to establish now. You should not say, "Ah, look at the renunciates, they get to eat everything that is readily made available by others. I should do that too!" Then you are completely wrong. On the other hand, it should not be the case where just because you are ordained, so you will look for a master with a great temple that can offer you both food and board. Then you are completely wrong too! What should it be like? Eh! If this place is proper in accordance with the teaching, no matter how hard it is, it is what you desire. This is what we hope to see. Therefore, as you go to a place like this, every inconspicuous place should serve to admonish you, "Ah! Others are assiduous. I should strive as well. I should not be lazy even with the trivial things." This is what the life of a renunciate can exhort us to do. And the most important thing is to grasp the focus of a renunciate - the correct view.

[84A, 21.54(手抄稿 第十一冊 p117L1)]

The second point, it was said earlier that you must remember this again and again. This thing, in other words, this kasaya [i.e. monk's robe], it is the pure insignia of the Buddhas in all ten directions. As soon as you wear this, there is great merits. Just like transportation vehicles, everything you touch would compare to a rocket. As long as you can act according to the teaching, in other words, if you are skilled in controlling the rocket without problems, to get to the United States... bounce... you are there! You will be there in this instant. It will be that fast. So, it says **"the life of a renunciate is praised for achieving the freedom that is liberation from cyclic existence"**, this is absolutely true!

[84A, 22.36(手抄稿 第十一冊 p117L6)]

Hence due to these two reasons, even though he was old and feeble, he admired and had a high regard for the life of a renunciate. Then as long as you act according to the teachings, when external conditions become favourable, eh, by being hit four times, he was able to achieve attainments. For us now, we do not even need to be hit four times. After you become ordained, say you practice accordingly and wish to enter the Pure Land, then you will be born in the middle grade there. This is absolutely true! This is what we need to understand. And then, **"In addition, it is taught that it is the best life even for the accomplishment of omniscience by way of the perfection and mantra vehicles."** And for Mahayana... the earlier part describes how one seeks for liberation for oneself. Moreover, for Mahayana, it is the same for Mahayana as well. Conversely, if this is already the case for Hinayana, needless to say that if you want something greater, of course you will have to be even more suited. And amongst all six realms, the real perfect suitability is this kind of a life. It is exactly this kind of a life. So then,

[84A, 23.34(手抄稿 第十一冊 p117L13)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

Furthermore, among the three sets of vows, it is the vows of the renunciate that are the vows of individual liberation. Therefore, you should respect the vows of individual liberation, the root of the teaching.

To become a monk does not only mean to renounce the household. There is a specific significance to this which is exactly

the keeping of the vows. This "**vow**" that is indicated here is the "**vows of individual liberation**," which is the vows for the Bhikshu.

[84A, 23.56(手抄稿 第十一冊 p118L2)]

Now let us continue. That is to say when we train, what kind of qualification we should have – the kind of life we should have, we now understand this. Ah! So that is what it is.

After obtaining this tool for cultivation, what kind of path should you cultivate?

[84A, 24.18(手抄稿 第十一冊 p118L4)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

you set it aside when your head is on fire? Eh, that is what people who train in Buddhism should do! What should you busy yourself with? You need to truly strive on what you should work on. It is to eradicate

ii) The kind of path you cultivate to halt cyclic existence

There are three parts to this explanation:

- 1. The certainty of the enumeration of the three trainings**
- 2. The determination of the order of the three trainings**
- 3. The nature of the three trainings (Chapter 24)**

Train in the path which is the threefold precious training. The *Friendly Letter*:⁵⁶⁴

**Were your head or clothing suddenly to catch fire,
You should still set aside extinguishing these fires
And strive to eradicate birth-
There is no purpose higher than this.**

Whether your head or clothing catches fire, you can still set aside that, let that go for a moment. When we think of this, we might say, it is alright to set aside for a moment if your house is on fire, but how can birth, to eradicate birth. Why should we go to this extent? This is because nothing is more important than this. Even if your body catches fire, sorry, the body will perish even if you save it! It is still useless to you. Right? In the end, you are still in cyclic existence. But as long as "birth" exists, there will be unending suffering. If you can eradicate that, eradicate birth, then it will not matter what happens to your body, will not matter what happens to your body. Especially at a time like this when the Buddha has given this greatly adept method out of his compassion - one can seek to enter the Pure Land. It is just right for you to discard this reeking bag of skin and go to Pure Land. You cannot ask for more! It is exactly what you want! Hence at this point, truly, you should absolutely make a note of this! You should absolutely make a note of this! When you are physically strong, you should not say, "Ah, it is still early for me." You should quickly strive when you are strong and able. If you wait until you are sick, it will be too late. But by the time you are sick, you do not have to worry either. Ah! Sickness is a cause of death. Since I had wanted to go to Pure Land all the time, now that I am sick, it is just the time to go. I am overjoyed and ecstatic. And you will quickly want to get there!

[84A, 26.17(手抄稿 第十一冊 p119L4)]

I had heard this before. One of my teachers said that he had heard a practitioner said that he hopes to get some type of pulmonary disease. When I heard that I was astonished. Why would he do that? He said that if he got any other type of disease, he may have to die very quickly. In the present day, of course pulmonary disease is not as horrible. But this used to be a very difficult disease to treat. Oh! If you got that, it is very troublesome. In general, this type of disease will drag on and on, and on until death. But he said that when he thinks of his disease, he will not busy himself with anything else but to recite the Buddha's name quickly and desperately. It will serve him just right to have a few more years to recite the Buddha's name. As he gradually and desperately begins to recite, recite, and recite, he will reach a level where he will no longer be afraid. By then, he will feel like this, "Ah, the sooner the better, the sooner the better." Eh, others will only look at him as a patient. Yes! Not to mention householders. Even for renunciates, a sick person indeed does not have to do anything and can focus entirely on that. When I think of this, it does really make sense. When you are still physically fit, ah! Even though you know the principles, but you just cannot let it go when you run into situations. But now, [if you are sick,] as soon as you think of your sickness, ah! Death will follow after this sickness anyway. So, you will be able to let things go. This will help us let go. This will help us let go of what we should let go and motivate us on what we should be doing. It is just excellent!

[84A, 27.44(手抄稿 第十一冊 p119L15)]

Hence this place indeed, yes, if you compare the mundane world to Buddhism, the goals differ in depth and time frame. But the real ultimate goal is the same. Everyone wants to have happiness and to alleviate suffering. But the mundane people are short-sighted.

The more correct way of putting this is that their views are topsy-turvy. If you can correctly understand things, this is ultimately what would happen. This is what is most important. Everything else is secondary. This is what we should busy ourselves with. How do you eradicate birth?

[84A, 28.18(手抄稿 第十一冊 p120L4)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

**Through ethical discipline, concentration,
and wisdom, Achieve nirvana, an
undefiled state of peace and restraint:
Ageless, deathless, inexhaustible;
Free from earth, water, fire, wind, sun, and moon.**

There, we should use the three trainings, the three trainings of ethical discipline, concentration, and wisdom to achieve nirvana, to train until that occurs. Nirvana is completely undefiled. This is disciplined, peace and happiness. There are no inexhaustible birth, old age, sickness and death. You will not be disturbed by the earth, water, fire, wind, light or darkness... all the mundane composite characteristics. You will not be disturbed by them. Therefore,

[84B, 00.03(手抄稿 第十一冊 p121L1)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

**a' The certainty of the enumeration of the three trainings
This is explained in terms of three aspects: (1) the stages of
disciplining the mind, (2) their results, and (3) the objects that
they eliminate.**

This is what we should learn. Hence, for us to truly lead the life of a renunciate, this is what we busy ourselves with - ethical discipline, concentration and wisdom.

[84B, 00.13(手抄稿 第十一冊 p121L3)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

Then for the next section, why does he talk about the three trainings? These are the contents that we really need to learn. We have to be certain that there are exactly these three things. With regard to the enumeration and the stages, this was described earlier. Whatever that has been set in this text, there is certainly an absolute standard. This is a point that we should gradually, gradually begin to learn. We had explained this yesterday that the first hurdle to overcome in taking a test is the relevancy of your answer to the test question. We frequently do not have a grasp of what the question is asking. So, we will answer something else and write something completely irrelevant. It is not a big deal if you answer with no relevancy to the topic in the mundane world. But if you get it wrong in cultivation, you could wind up wasting your effort. Therefore, for true cultivation, one must learn the three trainings. Why do you have to learn the three trainings? What are the contents of the three trainings? There has to be a very clear and apparent boundary for you to make a correct judgment. If you are able to practice in the causal period without any mistake, of course you will obtain the perfect effect. Absolutely. Otherwise, if there is something missing in what you know, you may think you have gotten something - true, it could be unmistakable. But it is like a blind man trying to feel the elephant – you have only touched a single hair of the elephant. An elephant is the biggest animal [on land]. But to you, an elephant is this tiny. Can you say that you have not touched the elephant? You have. But can you say that you have figured out what an elephant is? You have no idea how

wrong you are. Isn't that very obvious? This is what we absolutely must pay attention to! Hence, this place of the text explains this.

Now, let us take a look.

[84B, 01.47(手抄稿 第十一冊 p122L6)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

1' The stages of disciplining the mind

The three trainings bring to completion all the tasks of yogis and yoginis as follows.

There, what do we need when we train in Buddhism? We need to discipline our minds.

For what used to be defiled and filled with errors, we now want to make it correct and pure.

There are stages and exact contents on how to do this. Based on the required contents and stages, there needs to be these three things. Yes!

[84B, 02.10(手抄稿 第十一冊 p122L9)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

The training in ethical discipline makes a distracted mind undistracted. [268]

To make your distracted mind undistracted, you will need "**the training in ethical discipline.**" Oh! This is what this place tells us, the true meaning of ethical discipline. Look at that! It is said very clearly. Hence the real meaning of ethical discipline is this. This is the fundamental aspect, the heart of the matter. But why

do we need to have these forms and restrictions. These forms and restrictions help to segregate us from the external environment. If we create such an ambience, for instance, from what I know, during the Age of the True Dharma and the Age of the Semblance Dharma when everyone had excellent cultivation, there were mandated specifications and demeanours for renunciates. For anyone who becomes a renunciate, everyone else knows how you are supposed to behave when you are out. That is why you would not dare to misbehave. After you take on the ethical discipline, you would not dare to misbehave. The external environment will force you to do so as well. But more importantly, you need to be internally motivated.

[84B, 03.07(手抄稿 第十一冊 p123L3)]

With regard to this matter, the Southern tradition has kept up the forms most completely. They would say that the renunciates cannot make any mistakes! It is unlike how we say that once you are renunciates, the householders should prostrate to you, should make offerings to you. There is no such thing! Yes, they should make offerings. But why should they do so?

That is because you have become a true recipient! What makes one a recipient? It is that you act properly in accordance with the teaching. To act in accordance to the teaching is a mental matter. However, in your every gesture and movement, there is a set of defined rules for your manners. These set rules help us to gradually, gradually... Even though we say it is good for you to study, but if you stay around dance halls and theatres, can you actually study? You will not be able to concentrate. You will need to stay away from these places, find a quiet place and make use of the environment to protect yourself. This is the first step. The true essence of this is to initially stay away from those types of

[distracting] external environments while at the same time work on disciplining the internal mind. Thus, we should know the characteristic of ethical discipline. You will have to make use of both the fundamental and incidental things together but know where the emphasis is. This is ethical discipline.

[84B, 04.15(手抄稿 第十一冊 p123L11)]

Thus, it explained the four preconditions earlier. As soon as something arises in your mind, you will feel, "This is wrong, wrong!" I need to pull myself back. As soon as something arises in your mind, you will feel, "This is wrong, wrong!" In the sutra of 《遺教經》, the Buddha told us this in his final words. The *Sutra of the Forty-Two Sections* also told us that "the mind is the director." This is the root of everything. You do not want to just say, "I need to keep the vow of silence." You should ask yourself to see if you are mentally distracted. That is important. When your mind is distracted, you should settle your mind. That is the most important. The second one is concentration.

[84B, 04.48(手抄稿 第十一冊 p124L1)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

The training in concentration—or mental training—balances an unbalanced mind.

Though you have removed your coarse distractions, but the subtle distractions remain. The strength that you have at this time, there is still inadequate amount of power to analyze with wisdom. Hence, after obtaining the ethical discipline as the foundation, then you will be able to advance to learn concentration.

[84B, 05.06(手抄稿 第十一冊 p124L4)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

"Samadhi," the training in concentration - that is to make the mind balanced, unlike before. So, this is the mental training which moves from the external to the internal.

[84B, 05.20(手抄稿 第十一冊 p124L7)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

The training in wisdom liberates an unliberated mind.

Though you have obtained concentration, you have not been truly liberated yet. What is liberation? It is to be liberated from karma and afflictions. And affliction is the predominant factor. Furthermore, after obtaining concentration, you can then truly and subtly conduct your analysis to find the truth of the reality. You will then discover that affliction is actually ignorance. What is wisdom then? It is a clear cognition, which is the exact remedy. Alright! Problem solved.

[84B, 05.53(手抄稿 第十一冊 p124L11)]

[p339, English LR Vol 1]

Once you have these three things, all the tasks for true practitioners have been brought to completion. This is the first one. Hence, if you look at this from the content of topic and the stages of training the mind, you will need exactly these three things. Moreover,

[84B, 06.10(手抄稿 第十一冊 p125L1)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

2' Their results

He said that this is what you will need for disciplining the mind. Finally, you will need to see that for the result that you wish to obtain, what you will need? It said,

[84B, 06.19(手抄稿 第十一冊 p125L3)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

The results of ethical discipline that have not degenerated are the two happy rebirths of the desire realm [either as a human or a deity]. The result of ethical discipline that has degenerated is rebirth in the miserable realms.

To maintain ethical discipline that has not degenerated, to be pure, what is the result of that? You will obtain the two happy rebirths of the desire realm, to become a person or a deity. A degenerated ethical discipline will result in what? Rebirth in the miserable realm. But you will need a rebirth in the human and deity realms in order to cultivate! And then,

[84B, 06.43(手抄稿 第十一冊 p125L6)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

The results of the training of the mind are the two happy rebirths of the higher [deities' form or formless] realms.

What is the result of concentration? It is rebirth in the form and formless realms. Like that. In fact, what is more important is that

after obtaining this trained mind, you will be able to analyze with wisdom.

[84B, 06.59(手抄稿 第十一冊 p125L9)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

The result of the training in wisdom is liberation.

From the perspective of the result, what is the result that we are seeking? It is high status and certain goodness. With ethical discipline and concentration, you are able to attain high status. Because of concentration and wisdom, you are able to obtain certain goodness. These results will have to depend on the three trainings and so these three are indispensable.

[84B, 07.21(手抄稿 第十一冊 p126L1)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

In brief, the results of the three trainings are the two goals: high status [as a human or deity] and certain goodness [of liberation or omniscience]. Since the former is twofold—happy rebirth in the higher [deities'] realms and happy rebirth in the lower [that is, desire] realm—the trainings that accomplish these are threefold. These first two certainties of enumeration are mentioned in the *Levels of Yogic Deeds*.

Therefore, in brief, for what we are after, it is no more than high status [as a human or deity] and certain goodness [of liberation or omniscience]. "High status" would mean the upper and the lower happy realms. In other words, the lower realms would mean the desire realm. The upper realm would be the deity realm. This is very clear. Hence there are also two methods for obtaining these.

There are also two methods. These two methods are explained in the *Levels of Yogic Deeds*. Ethical discipline is foundation. And then there are the concentration and wisdom. Through these, you will obtain the two results [mentioned]. Or you can say that through ethical discipline and concentration, you will obtain high status. Through concentration and wisdom, you will obtain certain goodness. Ultimately, certain goodness is the result of wisdom. But without concentration, one will absolutely not be able to attain wisdom. Furthermore, without ethical discipline, you will absolutely not be able to attain concentration. Between these three trainings, there is this inevitable relationship. This is to look at it from the results.

[84B, 08.45(手抄稿 第十一冊 p126L10)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]
this is the characteristic right here.

[84B, 09.41(手抄稿 第十一冊 p127L3)]

3' The objects that they eliminate

The former teachers asserted that, in relation to the objects they eliminate—the afflictions—the trainings are threefold, according to whether they eliminate afflictions by (1) weakening them, (2) suppressing their manifest forms, or (3) eradicating their seeds.

The former teachers, in other words, those who have already had attainments, used another perspective to assert this. What is the reason for us to remain in cyclic existence, what is the root cause? It is delusions, which are afflictions. In order to eliminate afflictions, you will also need these three things. The first one is "**weakening**

them." The second one is "**suppressing their manifest forms**". The third one is "**eradicating their seeds**." It is ethical discipline that weakens the afflictions. So, do you see that here? What is the characteristic of ethical discipline? It is to weaken afflictions! This is what we need to pay special attention to here! If we talk about ethical discipline and use it to argue with each other, may I ask what is the purpose for you to maintain ethical discipline? You have been adding to your afflictions! Therefore, you must understand that for ethical discipline.

However, not to mention the situation at present, there was already strife like this during Buddha's time, already strife like this during Buddha's time. Buddha had explained this to us then, explained this very clearly that the problem is not ethical discipline itself. What Buddha had explained is a teaching medicine that treats the sickness of our minds. If you have a different sickness, of course your medicine will be different. For amateurs like us, we would say "Ah! You are taking white colour medicine, why am I taking a yellow medicine? Your medicine looks like this and mine ..." Of course! You have a cold so you should take the cold medicine. I have diarrhoea and so I should take the medicine for diarrhoea. How can you mix the two? This is exactly what the situation is and it is something that we should understand. Hence before we fully learned the teaching, we should absolutely not assess the situation haphazardly with our own point of view! I had particularly explained this yesterday during the second lesson. And here it has pointed out the fundamental with this sentence – ethical discipline weakens the afflictions. Now we know the manifest forms of the afflictions and we have understood the principles, so when you have studied the ethical discipline, increased your knowledge, [and yet you do this,] "Ah! I am right and he is wrong." Then you are completely wrong, completely wrong!

[84B, 10.53(手抄稿 第十一冊 p127L12)]

After disciplining the manifest forms of the coarser afflictions, you will be able to go further to learn concentration and stop the afflictions from manifesting. But even though they do not manifest, the seeds remain. So you will need analytical wisdom to finally eradicate the seeds. Thus you will also need the three trainings. Ah! This is why you must have the three trainings, no matter what standpoint you take. More than these would be unnecessary; less than these, it would be impossible to succeed. This is much like the analogy that we had just discussed. You would not just touch the hair of the elephant [and say that it is the elephant]. It is certainly incorrect when you claim that the hair is the elephant. But it would be the same if you touch the nose or the tail and claim that to be the entire elephant! Your situation is nothing like that. You have opened your eyes to see the entire elephant. This is exactly what the elephant looks like. If you add something else to the elephant's body, sorry, whatever you add to the elephant is not a part of the elephant. So it does not work with extra things. Neither does it work if something is missing. This is what we must know. The contents of training in Buddhism cover exactly these topics – ethical discipline, concentration, and wisdom. This is the enumeration. What about their order?

[84B, 12.01(手抄稿 第十一冊 p128L5)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

b' The determination of the order of the three trainings

The order of the three trainings is demonstrated in a passage from the *Sutra Requested by Brahma (Brahma-pariprccha-sutra)* quoted in the *Levels of Yogic Deeds*:⁵⁶⁵

Ethical discipline is a very steady root;

**Concentration is the delight in a serene state of mind;
In wisdom the views of noble beings and the views of sinners Are acquired and forsaken respectively.**

This came from a commentary, the *Levels of Yogic Deeds*. But he is still referencing the sutra. In other words, this was indicated in both the sutra and the commentary. Regarding the order, the first one, what is ethical discipline? It is that we need to skilfully abide by the root of training in Buddhism. We should skilfully abide by the root. This is further explained later. In order to advance, you must have mastered this root. Then you can advance to obtain concentration which is "**a serene state of mind.**" Finally, "**in wisdom the views of noble beings and the views of sinners are acquired and forsaken respectively.**" You will be in accord with the views of noble beings and in discord with the views of sinners. This is wisdom. You will then be liberated.

[84B, 12.49(手抄稿 第十一冊 p128L12)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

Among these, ethical discipline is the root

Why?

[84B, 12.52(手抄稿 第十一冊 p129L1)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

because the other two grow out of it.

Concentration and wisdom will have to grow out of ethical discipline. If your mind is filled with afflictions, may I ask how will you be able to learn concentration? Therefore, people nowadays say hurriedly "I need to learn concentration. Ah! my mind is very distracted!" At this time, the text tells us very clearly that ethical discipline is used to tame a distracted mind. Thus, when people do not want to learn ethical discipline but want to learn concentration, they are indeed mistaken, topsy-turvy! Hence this is what we should know. By the time your coarser afflictions are disciplined, you can sit in a lotus position and learn properly. You will certainly achieve that goal. But this is not the ultimate result you want! What is the ultimate goal? It is wisdom.

[84B, 13.35(手抄稿 第十一册 p129L7)]

[p340, English LR Vol 1]

Concentration, the second of the three trainings, depends on ethical discipline and takes pleasure in putting the mind into meditative equipoise. Wisdom, the third of the three trainings, depends on meditative equipoise and forsakes the view of sinners while acquiring the view of noble beings in order to see reality exactly.

By the time your mind can depend on ethical discipline or shila, you will be able to obtain concentration. You will take "**pleasure in putting the mind into meditative equipoise.**" After obtaining concentration with your mind, your analytical capability will be enhanced. You will be able to accurately see reality. Hence you will acquire the view of noble beings and forsake the view of sinners. In regards to the view of noble beings and the view of sinners, I will not explain in detail here. This is because the final portion of the treatise specifically addresses this. This is the core of Buddhism, the core of Buddhism. For now, we should learn this

to the best of our ability. So far, we just need to understand karma and the twelve factors of dependent-arising. If we are able to grasp these concepts, this would be more than enough for us now. When we practice according to these concepts, then we will be able to correctly understand the later sections. If we understand these now but do not put them to practice, even if we get to the later sections and understand some of the words, sorry, it will be impossible for you to know the true intent. These stages are certainty.

Chapter 24
The Nature of The Three Trainings

THE NATURE OF THE THREE TRAININGS

[84B, 14.58 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p130L1)]

[p341, English LR Vol 1]

The nature of the three trainings is as the Sutra Requested by Brahma states:⁵⁶⁶

So the enumeration was determined and the stages were determined. Then what are the characteristics of the nature of the three trainings? This references the sutra as well.

[84B, 15.09 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p130L3)]

**Ethical discipline has six branches;
Concentration is the four blissful abodes;
The four aspects of the four noble truths
Are always pure sublime wisdoms. [269]**

The first one is ethical discipline. Ethical discipline should have all the six branches. Concentration has four abodes. **"Four blissful abodes,"** these are to be accomplished. And then finally wisdom has four aspects. Each of them has four aspects. Once you know this, you will have the perfect wisdom, the pure sublime wisdom.

[84B, 15.37 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p130L7)]

With respect to this, the training in ethical discipline has six branches:

It says this next,

[84B, 15.42 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p130L9)]

1-2) Both (1) the possession of ethical discipline and (2) restraint by the vows of individual liberation

The first one is "**the possession of ethical discipline.**" The second one is "**restraint by the vows of individual liberation.**"

[84B, 15.50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p130L11)]

demonstrate the pure ethical discipline that certainly leads to liberation.

What do these two explain? They are the rites that lead to attainment of liberation. This must be pure. So I will briefly explain this, will briefly explain this. The details are in the Levels of Yogic Deeds. The first one is to have pure ethical discipline. One must abide by the pure ethical disciplines. This is in general. And then, after abiding by that, you need to skillfully safeguard it, safeguard it. This absolutely does not mean (just) having a shaved head, having gone through the complete commandment ceremony, got a few incense burn marks on the head, and brought back the monastic robe. No! That is a beginning. After this beginning, we need to truly strive. It is just like you now, oh, you have been accepted into this school, you have registered and so after that you need to study diligently. That is when you need to skilfully study. This is number two. Number three.

[84B, 17.01 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p131L7)]

3-4) Both (3) rites and (4) possession of the range of support

[84B, 17.06 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p131L9)]

The third one is the "rites." The fourth one is the "**possession of the range of support.**"

demonstrate unimpeachable, pure ethical discipline.

What are rites, what is possession of the range of support? What are the characteristics of these two things? They should make your ethical discipline unimpeachable. What is "impeachable"? It is to be ridiculed, to be slandered by others. So it is something that we must do right. The rites that are described here are your usual deportment (or way you carry yourself), your every gesture and movement. You have a proper standing posture. Normally we would say that you would stand like a pine tree, move like the wind. It is exactly like that. You would sit like a bell. Is that not so? You should sleep like a bow. There are defined rites, defined rites for these things. I have seen the monks of the older generation. We do not see them any more now. When they sit, they are unlike us. At any time, they would sit like this. And when they stand, there is a certain standing posture. When they wear the monastic robe, they are certain to do what? The robe will naturally drape in a certain way. There is a certain manner when they wear the robe and another manner when they do not wear them. There is also a way they hold the praying beads. When they walk, they would never glance left and right. Their steps are always steady.

[84B, 18:24 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p132L4)]

As for how they sleep, I have not actually seen that. But I can imagine. If they do those three things so well, they most certainly would sleep properly. Why? This is because we now sleep in individual room. When did they ever have single room? They just had one long connected bed. Look at the Zen halls, just below the beds are where they meditate. They would connect the beds and sleep on them after meditation. Everyone's blanket is folded like a square. At night, how can you extend your legs? No way! Everyone sleeps with the same pattern. This you can imagine so. This is why it is called a Buddhist monastery, a Buddhist monastery. Everyone will look at you and point their fingers. So if you have willingly entered the monastery, of course you will not want to fall behind others. This is the reason I would constantly remind you of this after your arrival. For I have deeply benefitted from this and this is the way my teacher was.

[84B, 19:17 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p132LL4)]

Up until recently, did I not mention this to you before? I had gone to Jìng Lv monastery this summer. This fellow practitioner told me, "Eh! You forgot to do this. You did not do this right." In the very beginning, I could not get used to that. But fortunately my teacher had mentioned this to me before. Ah! I was overjoyed. I have for many years not had a friend who would correct me bluntly. I would absolutely not say, "Ah! I am a senior monk for decades, how could you ... and you said that you want to learn from me, yet you reproach me like this!" I did not feel that way. I respected him more and more due to this. When I was there, sometimes I would leave in a hurry, "Ah!" He would say, "You forgot to bow to the Buddha." Yes, yes! I would feel so happy [that he told me]! There is someone who would constantly remind

me of things. Why do I say this? I want to make it a point to tell you this here, after you have truly decided to stay here, you should absolutely pay attention to this! Do not just give into your latent propensities, and complain that, "This person says this and that person says that..." [If this is the case,] you should quickly return home. There is no point for you to be here. You should absolutely remember that others had taken the time to help you by pointing things out to you, hence you cannot even thank him enough.

[84B, 20:19 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p133L7)]

I remembered the styles of the ancients. I do not know exactly what occurred during the ancient times. But the Japanese have kept this style. In the Zen halls, after one is hit with the board, one will need to put his palms together to express his gratitude. Consequently, the first time I visited such a place, ah-ya! I was in great pain and I had to thank him. Internally, I was getting irritated. Um! But I thought about it, "There is no wrong in what he has done! I am sitting there meditating and doing my own training. He is not doing meditation and is instead helping me. If I do not thank him for this, who else should I thank?" There is no mistake in this at all! Therefore you need to pay attention to this, what did this realization depend on? It depended on whether you have obtained the correct view. What did I come here for? Oh! I came to purify my defiled latent propensity. Therefore, when others tell you, "So and so, you have done wrong!" You should quickly thank him. This is why the mundane world sages will say, "Zi Lù is happy upon hearing his own faults." Zi Lù was virtuous. When others told him, "Zi Lù, you have made a mistake!" Ah-ya, he was overjoyed! He was grateful! You can only correct yourself if you know what you have done wrong! This type of thing is called what? It is called rites. That is for everything that you do,

on all occasion and in all places, there are definite rites for your conduct.

84B, 21:33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p134L1)]

There are two traits to these rites. One trait is that it does conform to the mundane world. It does not go against the customs of the mundane world. You will still need to conform to the mundane world. Vinaya told us...you must accord with this. This is our rite. Hence for this ethical discipline, when it was set into motion, it indeed conformed to the customs of the mundane world. Perhaps you might ask, "Buddhism is a teaching of the supramundane, why do you have to talk about this?" This is the law of cause and effect, of dependent-arising. It is very simple! The law of cause and effect, of dependent-arising, that is how phenomena are. Cause and effect describe the characteristics. Characteristics are spoken in the conventional truth that is recognized by the six pure consciousnesses of the mundane world. Between that which is correct and false, you can gradually improve based on what you know is correct. So of course you cannot be apart from this. Rites are therefore said and used based on this point. You should not say, "Ah! I am a renunciate, I am the Three Jewels. What you do belongs to the mundane world. I do not have to worry about that." This could work, but what you will have to be like? You will have to manifest like the living Buddha, Jīn Shān. You could be nonconforming and appear crazed. It would be fine for you to appear crazed if you can tolerate others putting this bin of fecal matter on your head, "bong." You would not care. Eh, you can keep this bin of fecal matter on your head, "bong, bong, bong," and run down the street. When he was hungry, he could pick up anything to eat, even if it was a metal nail. If you have this kind of ability, fine! We are only afraid you do not have this ability!

84B, 22:56 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p134LL4)]

I remember this story. The living Buddha, Jīn Shān, had already become reputable. There was a very famous person in Shanghai who invited him for a meal. Ah-ya, the family prepared many things for this Dharma Master. They were busy in the kitchen that day and the living Buddha, Jīn Shān, had arrived. He never wanted others to receive him with great fanfare. Since he had accepted the invitation and so he went. The day that he arrived at their house, since he ordinarily wore a scruffy robe, he did not enter from the front door but the back door. The back door led to the kitchen. Everyone was bustling in the kitchen when he arrived. After he arrived, since everyone was really busy, they said, "Ah-ya, what is the deal with you poor monk? Leave at this instance!" The monk said, "What are you doing today?" "The lady of the house has invited a great Dharma Master." "Eh, that would be me!" "What type of great teacher are you? You seem so shabby!" Just like that. The monk made a fuss. "So then...sorry, I am hungry, can you..." He wanted something to eat. So weren't they busy preparing food all this time? The stems and roots of the vegetables were thrown away in a big disposal bin. "Fine! You can eat those." Just like that. Do you think we can eat those things? If we ate it like that, even if we do not die we would get sick. He went to the two big bins and ate everything inside them.

84B, 24:17(手抄稿 第十一冊 p135L8)]

After he finished eating, the people in the kitchen were astonished, "Eh, what is going on with this monk?" Just think of our own food disposal bin. Two big bins like that, he just ate all the discarded food inside. So everyone was engaged in this big commotion. Ah! Everyone was surprised, was surprised. The lady of the house who was in the front came to say, "Time is almost up and why are

you not working but making all this fuss?" As she went to the kitchen to take a look, a poor looking monk was there. As she took a good look at him, it was the Dharma Master. "Pa!" She prostrated to the teacher. "Ah-ya! Please step to the front side of the house." "Teacher, how come you are here?" The kitchen workers froze. And then, the teacher said, "Ah! I am already full. I am already full." They asked him to go eat a fancy meal but instead he said he was full. Um, so it would be okay that you do not conform. If you have this type of ability, we are only afraid if you do conform. Hence for a renunciate, whether he inducts beings by following the customs or by going about it in an unorthodox way, he has his level. This is what we need to pay attention to. If we do not have the ability, then we should follow the rules. Then when other people look at you, ah! They would be in awe. This is what is really important for us.

[84B, 25:19 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p136L2)]

Hence what is this called? This is called "**rites**" and "**possession of the range of support**." We just described rites. What is "**possession of the range of support**"? This is acting with vigilance in the section of the four preconditions mentioned earlier. How should I do this and where should I go? These were particularly explained in that section. There are many places where we cannot go. For instance, we cannot go to theatrical places. For instance, we cannot go to the red light district. Yesterday, a fellow practitioner told me that if you are in Thailand and you go to the markets in the afternoon, everyone will be staring at you. It is absolutely true. Therefore the vows had stipulated this very clearly that there is a certain time for you to go out and a certain place to be. And for renunciates, why would you go to the theaters? That is absolutely not allowed! There will certainly be a few places where you are not allowed to go. You

should not go to the homes of high officials, of butchers, of those who do not accord with the vows. These are places that we should not go to. This is "**possession of the range of support.**" And what are these two for? It is to show that your ethical discipline is impeachable and cannot be disparaged. This is very important.

[84B, 26:28 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p136LL4)]

5) Dread of even the smallest misdeed

This is number five.

[84B, 26:34 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p136LL2)]

demonstrates pure ethical discipline that is unspoiled.

For this one, "**dread of even the smallest misdeed,**" this is really difficult. But let me tell you, this is really good for us. Indeed, when we ask you to truly uphold the major ethical disciplines, it is not easy to keep. Honestly, we might say, why would we commit the sins of sexual activity, killing and stealing? This is only because these sensory objects [or situations] are not present! Do you remember the story of Yú Jìng Yì meeting the kitchen god? When we encounter the actual situation then it is hard to say! Do you remember Liǔ Xià Huì and the man from the country of Lǚ? The aspect that is praiseworthy about the man of Lǚ is exactly this. Exactly this. Oh! Liǔ Xià Huì had the ability - he did not behave improperly with a girl in his arms. He did not even have a bad thought. If you have that kind of ability, you can stop yourself before the sensory objects. So, what do we do when the sensory objects appear before us now? It is that in your every

thought, "Eh! I am a renunciate. I cannot do this. I cannot do that." If you can at all times prepare yourself like this, you will be able to stop yourself from committing major sins. Why? Everyone can think about it. Do you understand this reasoning?

(Translator's note: So I have heard that the story is Liǔ Xià Huì was staying overnight somewhere and happened to come across a homeless girl who needed a place to stay. To prevent the girl from freezing to death, he held her in his arms and covered her in his clothes. The night was spent without ever any improper actions. For the man of Lǚ, the story is a widow in the neighborhood came to ask him for a place to stay because her house was destroyed by the storm that night. He said that he could not open the door. The widow asked him to imitate Liǔ Xià Huì and he replied that he could not do what Liǔ Xià Huì had done. And that his refusal was exactly his way of practicing to be like Liǔ Xià Huì.)

[84B, 29:43 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p137L8)]

Let me tell you, what is your mentality right now? Think about it. What is your mentality right now? It is a beginningless defiled latent propensity. You are just leisurely & distracted, indulging, and unsettled. Right? Oh! When you see something, you will look at it. When you hear something, you will take a look. You are constantly pursuing the sensory objects. Just like that. Because of this habit, when you hear a few people chatting, you would slip away to find out what is going on. You cannot even stop yourself. "Pa!" You are there. Just like that. When you hear that there is something delicious somewhere, if that is something you enjoy and none was left for you, you would grumble for days. Just like that. Can you say that you have been able to stop yourself? Why? This is because you are constantly immersed in

beginningless afflictions. You have not practiced. So even though you have understood the principles, it is useless. What do you have to do now? You need to begin from the small matters. "Eh! I should not do this. I should not do that." Under this circumstance, what is your mentality like? It is completely different from before.

[85A, 00:09 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p141L1)]

Indeed with small matters, it is very easy to practice. Eh! Just like normally, food is the number one condition that is conducive to endless rebirths. Honestly speaking, about not being attached to this, I do not know about you all, but if you ask me and I tell you that I am not attached, then I will be deceiving you. When I see something that is good - Ah! The index finger moves*. So what should you do? So, by regularly paying attention to my arising thoughts with regards to small matters, on all occasions, this has grown to be a habit. Therefore, my mind will not pursue sensory objects blindly. I am often in control of my mind. When you become accustomed to controlling yourself, when sensory objects appear, then it will be very easy for you to deal with them. Eh! You can control yourself and bring the correct thought to mind. Because you are able to bring the correct thought to mind, ah, you will realize the harm that food has brought you and the great advantage for preventing and stopping yourself from this attachment! At that time, since you have properly contemplated and analysed beforehand, thus as you try to bring the correct thought to mind, it will arise quickly. Eh, you will be able to stop yourself! [This is why] adhering to the most minor ethical disciplines will provide you this great advantage! Now what happens when we normally train in Buddhism? "Eh! This is a minor ethical discipline. We do not have to observe it." Since you do not observe the minor ethical disciplines, there is no need

to mention whether you observe the more serious ethical disciplines. This sentence exactly describes it.

(*please note that this came from a Chinese story how before this one person is about to eat something delicious, his index finger would first move.)

[85A, 01:20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p142L2)]

But the good thing is what? The good thing is that we are still fortunate enough to have a monastery to protect us. Without the protection of the monastery, we would be doomed! This is absolutely the truth. We should not be thinking of those great Bodhisattvas. The level at which these great Bodhisattvas operate, the way they blend in with the conventional folks is not something that we can do! The great Vimalakīrti manifested as a person of the troubled world. He was able to accomplish that. So we should not say, "Eh, but they do this." Oh, the way a lion walks is not something a rabbit like us can imitate. This is what you need to pay attention to. This is how it is with the various conducts. On the contrary, if you dread the smallest misdeed and deeply respect ethical discipline ... what is ethical discipline in itself? It is the pure insignia of all the Buddhas in the three worlds. If you develop one thought of respect to this, the merit is incredible and inconceivable. Even if you are unable to accomplish it, you can say, "Ah! This was stipulated by the Buddha." If you still give it your utmost respect, there will still be infinite merit. This is what we should understand. Whichever way you approach this, after you understand it, it is indeed not difficult to do it! Not only is this not difficult, but the merit is enormous!

[85A, 02:27 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p142LL5)]

What is even better now is that we have this environment here. Whether it is the senior abbot or the fellow practitioners, we have such great personal instructions right before us. Therefore, in the near future, we will be able to truly advance from this learning. Ah! I am overjoyed! In addition, everyone has been so diligent. Furthermore, this is called "**unspoiled**." There! It is because you have completed your practice at the inconspicuous places, there are no holes in your ethical discipline. You will then be able to accomplish the more serious ethical disciplines. This is why we normally have this saying, "If you do not patch up the small hole, you will have trouble when it gets bigger." If you do not patch up the small holes, you will not be able to do anything when they get big. It will be too late when they get big. Finally, number six,

[85A, 03:14 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p143L1)]

6) Correctly undertaking and training in the fundamental trainings demonstrates flawless, pure ethical discipline.

After taking up ethical discipline, what else do you need to do? You will need to "**correctly undertaking and training in the fundamental trainings**." You will have to learn these well! What do you have to do? The ethical disciplines will have to be flawless. If you do not strive to learn, sorry, you will not understand. Therefore, to truly learn about ethical discipline, why is it that you will have to rely on your teacher for five years after you are ordained? The real meaning of this is for you to truly learn! For us to learn anything in the mundane world now, one will certainly have to spend at least ten years on it. And now for you to train in Buddhism, do you think that it can be done by simply shaving your head, by being there and going through the

ceremony? Of course it would be impossible! That provides you a status in which you can now begin because you had made this aspiration. You can now work on it and strive to learn it. After you learn it, you will then know what is right and what is wrong - to be flawless. To be rid of the flaws is when you can perfect it. This is ethical discipline. When you have all six branches, pure ethical discipline will be perfect. This is when it becomes truly perfect.

[85A, 04:18 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p143LL5)]

After understanding this, we can think back on Questions of the Naga Kings of the Ocean (Sagara-naga-raja-pariprccha). This expounds the ethical discipline. In the section on the "certainty of karma," it told us about these four: the correct views, the rituals (rites), the ethical discipline and purity livelihood. We are now completely clear about this and completely understand it. The correct view is this, "correctly undertaking and training in the fundamental trainings." You will then be able to understand its fundamental spirit, the fundamental spirit. The second one, it is the nature of concentration. It is

[85A, 04:49 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p143LL1)]

"Four abodes" of mind refers to the four meditative stabilizations.

These are the four dhyānas.

[85A, 04:53(手抄稿 第十一冊 p144L2)]

It means the training of mind, which is "blissful" because the mind abides blissfully in this lifetime.

It is exactly referring to these four things - the four dhyānas. We would normally call these - "the first dhyāna that experiences the joy of leaving the evils of life," "the second dhyāna which is the paradise of cessation of rebirth," "the third dhyana, which is the land of wondrous joy after the previous joys," and "the fourth dhyāna which is the Pure Land of abandonment of thought, or recollection (of past delights)." Since the section on serenity specifically addresses these, we will not go into them.

Finally, **"the four aspects of the four"** are the training of wisdom. **"The four aspects of each of the four truths"** are suffering, the origin, cessation and the path. Within each of the truths, the truth of suffering has four aspects. It is the same for the truth of the origin, the truth of cessation and the truth of the path. Within suffering, there are these four, **"impermanent, suffering, empty, and selfless."** Within the origin, there are these four, **"cause, origin, arising, and condition."** Within cessation, there are these four, **"cessation, pacification, excellence, and freedom."** Within the truth of the path, there are these four, **"path, correctness, achievement, and deliverance."**

[85A, 05:53(手抄稿 第十一冊 p144LL5)]

The four [where the Sutra Requested by Brahma reads "The four aspects of the four"] are the four [noble] truths. The four aspects of these four are the four aspects of each of the four truths:

[p342, English LR Vol 1]

- (1) for the truth of suffering: impermanent, suffering, empty, and selfless;**
- (2) for the truth of the origin: cause, origin, arising, and condition;**
- (3) for the truth of cessation: cessation, pacification, excellence, and freedom;**
- (4) for the truth of the path: path, correctness, achievement, and deliverance.**

The sixteen aspects—the knowledge of these sixteen aspects—constitute the training in wisdom.

Complete comprehension of these sixteen things, that is wisdom. This understanding advances step by step through study, reflection and meditation. Up to this point, suffering and the origin have been briefly explained. The truths of cessation and the path have not been explained here. This is because the treatise progresses from small capacity and medium capacity to great capacity. In the great capacity, the two truths of cessation and the path are even more thoroughly explained. Since they are even more thoroughly explained, the more basic parts of the topics will not be discussed here. This is the same for concentration.

[85A, 06:35 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p145L1)]

In regards to the truths of suffering and the origin, as long as you can reflect on the earlier sections, the suffering of the three miserable realms that was specifically addressed in the teaching that is shared with the persons of the small capacity, the six sufferings, the eight sufferings and three sufferings that were addressed in the teaching that is shared with the persons of

medium capacity, and also on the principles of mindfulness of death, then you have a basic understanding of suffering and impermanence. After going over the twelve factors of dependent arising, you also grasp the fundamental concepts of emptiness and selfless. In regards to exceptional concepts such as emptiness and selflessness, these are covered in the later sections, in the sections on serenity and insight. In the chapters on "insight," these are thoroughly explained. The cause, origin, arising, and condition in the truth of the origin, these are covered in the twelve factors of dependent arising and the four noble truths. You can recollect these. These have all been clearly explained. The truths of cessation and the path will be explained later.

[85A, 07:37(手抄稿 第十一冊 p145L7)]

If I were explaining here the path of persons of medium capacity alone, I would have to give a lengthy explanation of the three trainings.

It says next that if we are only explaining the path of persons of medium capacity alone, then we will explain this in detail.

[85A, 07:49(手抄稿 第十一冊 p145L9)]

However, since this is not the case,

But this is not the case here.

[85A, 07:52(手抄稿 第十一冊 p145LL3)]

I will explain the trainings in wisdom (insight) and in mind (meditative serenity) in the section on persons of great capacity and will not elaborate at this point.

Therefore, for the trainings in wisdom and in mind, these will be covered in meditative serenity and insight in detail. These will be explained then and so will not be covered here.

What is the discussion here then? Ethical discipline! It is specially discussed.

[85A, 08:15 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p146L1)]

Thus, I will briefly discuss the training in ethical discipline here.

It is still a brief discussion. Why briefly discuss? This is to say that the most imperative for us now is to attain high status rebirth. Hence, we need to at least grasp the fundamental spirit of ethical discipline. If we can grasp this and undertake ethical discipline, there will be the ethical discipline's manifested forms and ethical conduct! After you understand the fundamental spirit of ethical discipline [or precepts], you will be able to obtain the essence of precepts when you undertake the precepts. If you have obtained the essence of precepts, you will engage in ethical conduct. With ethical conduct, you will possess the ethical discipline's manifested forms. Then you will be right on! Hence this characteristic is first covered here.

[85A, 08:46 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p146L6)]

In the beginning, reflect repeatedly on the benefits of ethical discipline and develop enthusiasm for it from the depths of your heart.

This is most imperative, most imperative. You will need to contemplate repeatedly on the sublime benefits of ethical discipline. We have already covered this before, it was expounded greatly. Though you may understand the principles, however, what will you need to do in addition? You need to contemplate, contemplate accordingly to the teachings. The best treasure that humans have, the most valuable tool is the ability to contemplate with your mind. You absolutely do not want to use your mind's ability to contemplate on garbage! Ah, you will misconstrue this and misconstrue that. After obtaining this treasure, it will be a waste to abandon it!

[85A, 09:33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p146LL3)]

You need to analyze this according to what is stated here. Ah! This describes a variety of auspicious benefits of ethical discipline. Then when you contemplate, you will sever the current manifestations of afflictions. And then, what you are increasing now, eh, proper reflection. Not only will this bring you happiness now, but that you will also harvest good effect in the future. It is this excellent! The more you think about this, the happier you become. The more you think about this, the happier you become. Therefore, in your mind, you will "**develop enthusiasm for it from the depths of your heart.**" This is exactly karma that has been accumulated! What has been accumulated? Joy. "Ah! this ethical discipline is so excellent!" This is the first one. Why should we do this? When this produces this type of effect on you, you will become very interested [to practice]. This is much like

when someone says, "Ah! the United States is great!" When you first heard this, it did not matter to you. But after someone tells you, ah! he would tell you how great the United States is. The more you listen, the more you realize how great it is. The more you listen, the more you realize how great it is. So as you think of this, "Ah! There is nothing good about staying where I am now. The United States is absolutely great!" By then you will find it unbearable to stay put. Ah! You will desperately want to go there.

[85A, 10:30 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p147L6)]

Everything before us works in the same manner. Therefore, it is the same when we want to learn anything. However, this type of mundane desire is called attachment. What we have here is called a "yearning for virtue." Oh, this is truly excellent! This is a method! We can get all kinds of benefits from this! Through this method, it will inspire a powerful yearning for virtue. Therefore, "faith is the basis for yearning, yearning is the basis for diligence." You will then be diligent. When you are diligent, everything that you do will be successful. What is the basis for diligence? It is right here. To obtain the so called "conviction," we are told earlier that we have to rely on proper contemplation. The sutra states,

[85A, 11:14 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p147LL3)]

As the Great Final Nirvana Sutra states:⁵⁶⁷

Ethical discipline is the ladder to all virtues. It is their foundation, just as the earth is the foundation for plants and the like. Just as a master trader goes first among all traders, so ethical discipline goes first among all

virtues. [270] Like the hoisted banner of Indra, ethical discipline is the banner of all teachings. It cuts down all sins and eliminates the paths to the miserable realms. Since it cures all the illnesses of the sins, it is like a medicinal plant. Ethical discipline is the stock of provisions for the terrible road of cyclic existence. It is the weapon that destroys the afflictions, the enemies. It is the spell destroying the poisonous snakes of the afflictions. It is the bridge to cross over the waters of sin.

(Translator's note: the sentence that says "It is the weapon that destroys the afflictions, the enemies." In the Chinese text, it is more like this, "It is the armor that shields and the weapon that destroys the afflictions, the enemies.")

Ah! He uses all kinds of analogies from the perspectives of both the mundane and the supramundane worlds. The depths of the analogies range from the basic to the profound. The first one, to climb upward, so it is like a ladder. The second one, to be able to establish and support anything, it is like the "**foundation.**" The third one, you want to gain "**virtues.**" Virtue is your guidance. For business people, they have a "**master trader.**" This used to be called the master trader. But nowadays, this is what it is! When you do business, you certainly need information. This kind of person investigates very thoroughly the required information. He is the expert. He knows everything. So as long as you follow him, you can do no wrong. Ethical discipline is the "banner of all teachings." Ah! You need to raise it up. It is exactly like that. It is the "**hoisted banner of Indra.**" Whatever that has been established, this banner represents it. We may not have seen the banner of Indra. But I know what a national flag is. Speaking of which, oh, this represents the country. There is an associated power to that.

[85A, 12:41(手抄稿 第十一冊 p148L9)]

"It cuts down all sins and eliminates the paths to the miserable realms."

To eliminate all sins, you will have to begin from this. Not only that, it is a **"medicinal plant"** that cures all the illnesses of the sins. Conventional medicines treat physical illnesses. This treats mental illnesses. Once the mental illnesses are resolved, the physical illnesses will be completely resolved as well! There are all kinds of benefits! What is the root to this [problem]? The root. The root is this non-virtuous road, this terrible road of cyclic existence. The stock of provisions for the terrible road of cyclic existence is needed. The predominant cause for remaining in cyclic existence is afflictions. What destroys afflictions is this too. Guarding against afflictions is the armour whereas destroying afflictions is the weapon. Therefore, not only does it guard against afflictions like the armour, it also destroys afflictions like the weapon. It is like **"the spell destroying the poisonous snakes of the afflictions."** That is like when ghosts or spirits come to hinder you, eh, this is what you will use. **"It is the bridge to cross over the waters of sin."** This is easy to understand.

[85A, 13:40 [(手抄稿 第十一冊 p149L1)]

The protector Nagarjuna as well says:⁵⁶⁸

That was from the sutra, the Buddha had said this. But what did past masters and bodhisattvas say?

[85A, 13:47(手抄稿 第十一冊 p149L3)]

**Ethical discipline—like the ground supporting the animate and inanimate worlds—
Is said to be the foundation of all good qualities.**

Everything depends on ethical discipline.

[85A, 13:53 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p149L5)]

And the Tantra Requested by Subahu says:⁵⁶⁹

**Just as every harvest grows without fault
In dependence on the earth,
So too do the highest virtues depend on ethical
discipline,
And grow by being moistened with the water of
compassion.**

The Tantra Requested by Subahu said that everything that is harvested grows from the land. And this thing has no fault but many benefits. Therefore, all the virtues, all excellent qualities depend on ethical discipline, depend on ethical discipline. However, this ethical discipline has to be kept at a higher level. Not just at the level of the Hinayana, everything is moistened by the water of compassion; this is the deeper level. Not only do you have to resolve your own problems but the problems of everyone else. All begin from here.

[85A, 14:37 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p149LL2)]

[p343, English LR Vol 1]

You should reflect on the benefits of keeping ethical discipline in accordance with the above-cited passages.

Oh! Ethical discipline has these many benefits. On the contrary,

[85A, 14:42 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p150L1)]

There are very grave consequences for you if you undertake an ethical discipline and then fail to keep it.

If you have undertaken ethical disciplines but do not keep them, the consequence is grave! This was explained earlier. We need to understand both sides of this. It is much like a very sharp sword. It can do all kinds of good. It can destroy the enemy. But if you do not do it right, then the consequence can be very serious. Even though the rocket is the fastest transportation, but if you do not know how to navigate it, you will end up being very confused when you are inside the rocket. And if you happen to fly it, you will certainly crash it and kill yourself. Oh! There are these great benefits to it. Eh, but if you do not do it right, there will be many problems.

[85A, 15:26 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p150L6)]

The Sutra Beloved of Monks (Bhiksu-prareju-sutra) says that, once you undertake a training, it will proceed in either an advantageous or disadvantageous direction:⁵⁷⁰

**The ethical discipline of some leads to pleasure;
The ethical discipline of others leads to pain.
Those who possess ethical discipline are happy,**

Whereas those who break ethical discipline suffer.

The sutra tells us that some ethical discipline will lead to pleasure. Some ethical discipline will lead to pain. Why? If you follow it to conduct yourself then you will have pleasure. If you break this, you will have pain. Therefore, as we undertake ethical discipline, we must consider both sides of this! At this point, some people will say, "Ah! As I think of this, I feel frightened!" The goal of this is not to frighten you. But when you think of the harm from breaking ethical discipline, there will be a force that pushes you from behind, "Ah! I cannot back away from doing this." When you think of its benefits, this force will keep pulling you forward. You will strive to move forward. There is this force that pushes you from behind and another force that pulls you forward, then you will succeed! Hence, we need to understand how to adeptly interpret this, how to adeptly interpret this.

[85A, 16:29 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p151L1)]

Therefore, you should also think about the drawbacks of not keeping to ethical discipline and thereby generate great respect for the training.

How do you train in ethical discipline? Eh, he does not talk about the positive side of this but instead talks about these four things. These are,

[85A, 16:37 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p151L3)]

There are four causes of an infraction: not knowing the precept, carelessness, disrespect, and various afflictions.

Do you see this? It tells us to prevent first, to prevent the flaws. In other words, you will have to purify first. After you clean it all up, then you put something good on it. Now let us take a look. What causes us to commit an infraction? These are the four main things - not knowing the precepts, carelessness, disrespect and various afflictions. We will talk about it one by one.

[85A, 16:57(手抄稿 第十一冊 p151L7)]

As a remedy for not knowing the precept,

The first one is not knowing the precept. You do not have a correct understanding of the precept. What is the remedy for this? Remedy is the exact antidote that can treat this problem.

[85A, 17:07 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p151LL4)]

listen to and understand the precepts.

This is why it was stated earlier that we need to learn the precept! If we truly do not want to commit an infraction and we want to keep the ethical discipline, the most important thing is to have a correct understanding of it. There are many people who are ordained now but do not want to learn. I do not know why they renunciate? Ah! This is why everyone should remember this case study firmly. You do not want to say, "Ah-ya! It works just as well when an old lady recites the Buddha's name." You do not want to say, "The sixth patriarch had become awakened [without much learning]." I have said this time and again that if you want to learn this way, you are really good for nothing! You should then learn to be like the Buddha, who had gone to this place and lifted his head, ah! He attained his enlightenment. If

you choose to look at these cases, there is one thing that you must realize - there were exact causes that produced these fruitions. You should try to analyze your own mind. If you think that from the time you were born, you had been very clear [like the Buddha]. Ah, [like him,] you would walk seven steps and say, "In all of heaven and earth, I am the most supreme." Alright, then you will not need these learning. But can you do that? You should examine yourself. Not to mention being like the Buddha. Even to be like the living Buddha, Jīn Shān, [can you be like him]? We should take a moment to examine ourselves.

Therefore, the first thing we should understand is whether we know our own minds. If we do not know our own minds now, we do not have to be afraid. You just need to learn well! Yes, even the mundane world people will work very hard. Now that we wish to obtain such auspicious advantages, how can we not learn, is there such a thing? This is the first thing that we must understand. So we should learn. But in order to learn, you will need an excellent teacher. Otherwise, this person will say one thing and you will say something else. If you happen to err in your learning, you are doomed! If you happen to err in your learning, you are doomed! Why? Because what you know is wrong. If you continue to busy yourself with this in the causal period, may I ask, would you get a good result? This is the first important thing. The second one is that even though you know but you do not conscientiously put it into practice. This would be useless. Therefore the second one is called carelessness. You cannot be careless. You should proceed in your daily conducts with great caution.

[85A, 19:04 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p152LL2)]

As a remedy for carelessness, train in attitudes such as mindfulness, which does not forget which ends to adopt and which to cast aside; vigilance, which immediately examines the three doors of body, speech, and mind and understands the right or wrong in which you are engaged;

After you understand this, after you learn and understand it, you know the things that you should adopt and the things to cast aside. You know what to take and what to leave aside. **"Which does not forget which ends to adopt and which to cast aside,"** this describes the mentality and the actions of the body and speech. You need to keep up with one thing, what is that? **"Mindfulness and vigilance."** Do you remember the four preconditions? The first one in restraining the sensory faculties was "You restrain them with a constant maintenance of your mindfulness and a continuous persistence at mindfulness." Do you still remember this? **"That with which you restrain the sensory faculties."** In other words, what do you use to restrain? You will need to earnestly and persistently use your mindfulness and vigilance. This is it. Now that you understand, you will need to bring to mind your vigilance and mindfulness. **"Vigilance"** means moment by moment we are observing our body, speech and mind. We must understand our body, speech and mind as to how they are acting.

[This is why I just said this, that you must pay attention to the most minor ethical disciplines. I have already explained this. We might feel fine when we are not observing ourselves. But as soon as we examine ourselves, we will discover that, what do we do at every given moment? We are wasting our lives in an ethically neutral state. And what is this? It is the causally concordant consciousness that has been nurtured by our defiled habitual tendencies since beginningless time. If we do not intentionally bring the correct thought to mind to counter it, there will never be hope for liberation. We are destined to continue our

"compositional activities." This is exactly the heart of the problem that we are trying to remedy, the real reason for us to understand the five aggregates. Therefore, if you want to learn now, your first step is ethical discipline! This is the first thing that you should understand, that you should understand. After you understand this, you must strive. Therefore you will not want to be careless. At this time you will be vigilant. Have you seen clearly what your arising thought is? Therefore to learn, indeed, this is said very clearly here! No, you absolutely cannot have a nonchalant state of mind! Do not think that, "Ah-ya, I prostrate so many times in a day." And when you prostrate to Buddha, your head is tucked close to your shoulder. After you finish your prostrations, ah-ya, you feel really tired and want to rest. I am not saying that you should not rest! Of course you need to rest. Eh! But when you prostrate, you need to focus - with all your attention. After you finish prostration, you should say to yourself, "Ah! All right, I am being diligent and I shall take a rest now." If you think like this, you will still be persevering. This is then correct!

[85A, 21:50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p154L4)]

What's primary here is the subjective aspect of your mind [or mental behaviour]. This is what we need to grasp. Understand what is the state of our minds now? That is "understands the right or wrong in which you are engaged." He had told us before that on all occasions our minds should focus on "virtues and that which is ethically neutral." We should focus on only these two things. What is ethically neutral? It should be unobscured and ethically neutral. That is when you are walking or when you are sitting, you follow the rules and act properly. This is called the state of being ethically neutral. That is OK. Otherwise, you can also have virtuous thoughts. "Ah! I need to strive." Even if you

want to sleep, you would say to yourself, "I have been striving for a while. I may not have enough strength later if I keep this up! So I need to sleep for now." If you have this kind of attitude, even if you think about sleeping, it is still a virtuous thought. It is still virtuous as you are sleeping. You are still accumulating virtue. What does this rely on? It relies on this. There! It is mindfulness and vigilance. You need to be examining yourself moment by moment. If we can truly do this, we will certainly do it [i.e. uphold ethical discipline]. On the contrary, if you cannot do this, sorry, you will certainly commit an infraction. If you commit an infraction after adopting the vows, it will certainly bring you problems. This type of condition describes that as internal. There is more that pertains to our entire conduct.

[85A, 23:00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p154LL2)]

shame, which shuns faults committed with respect to oneself or the teaching; embarrassment, which shuns wrongdoing and thinks, "Others will criticize me"; [271] and trepidation, which fears the future karmic fruition of wrongdoing.

In your mind, to have mindfulness and vigilance to analyze your thoughts to see whether they are virtuous or non-virtuous, this requires your own mental power or the power of teaching. So once you understand this, oh! You know your arising thoughts will create karma. Virtuous karma will bring good effects. Non-virtuous karma will bring non-virtuous effects. Ah! By then, you will work hard to be in concordance with the teaching. This is by the power of your own and/or the teaching. Ah! You would say, "For someone like me, how can I do something like this! Ah, this is so not worthwhile, so not worthwhile. I must strive [to change]!" So you will feel this shame. And we look at others, "Oh! They are

so good and I am so inferior!" We will feel embarrassment. Therefore, the subjective aspect [or mental behaviour] of "shame" is the same as embarrassment. But this shame is derived internally. When the same subjective aspect arises from looking at others, this is then called embarrassment. This is why the sutra describes shame and embarrassment as being the two best virtues. When you carry this thought at all times, when we feel that we are incorrect in many places, we will strive to improve. And we will also be afraid of the fruitional effects from non-virtues! If you become this way, you will strive to learn. This is number two.

Number three,

[85A, 24:33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p155LL5)]

As a remedy for disrespect,

Disrespect.

[85A, 24:36 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p155LL3)]

have respect for the Teacher, his rules, and your fellow practitioners.

This is number three, the remedy for disrespect. This is very important! It is very important! With disrespect, you must make great effort to engender respect. Disrespect has great faults, has great faults. It does not matter whether the object is the "Teacher" who is the Buddha, "his rules" which is the teaching, or "your fellow practitioners" who are the Sangha members. You

must respect the Buddha, the Teaching and the Sangha, the Three Jewels. Whatever that accords with these, you should give respect on all occasions. Therefore among us fellow practitioners, I often will mention this person who has improved especially fast. I now have gradually realized something. Before he came here, I had heard others say this about him before. Whenever he visited a place of the Three Jewels, he would always prostrate and pay respect. Eh! I was immediately alarmed as I heard this. I feel really ashamed! I have spoken the principles but I was not able to practice it. This is why I am the way I am now. But actually the earlier part of the treatise has already explained this to us very clearly! Therefore,

[85A, 25:46 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p156L7)]

not only should you view the Buddha and the scriptures this way, but you should do the same for the Sangha members. If you can truly give rise to this attitude, ah, you will accumulate unmatched merits. And there will be great harmony in the group. This is because all our fellow practitioners are Sangha members. You will not be looking at, "Oh! This person is not good, that person is not good." How would you look at them? "Oh-yo! This person has sustained the pure insignia!" You will give your utmost respect to them! And then, you know that by respecting him, you will gain benefits. Fortunately he is able to sustain this insignia. You will be extremely grateful! Naturally, you will be respectful, grateful and reap benefits from doing so. Yes, perhaps he may not have great conducts and end up entering hell. You will have even more gratitude! He has paid the price of going to hell for you to produce the effect of going to heaven, of going to Pure Land, of becoming a Buddha, how can you criticize him anymore? Do you have a heart or not? As you think of this, would you still be criticizing others? So now we always say "Aiyo,

we do understand the concept that we should not criticize others, but putting it into practice is difficult.” There, there, there, there, it is that simple! Therefore as long as you have the correct view, it is extremely marvelous! It is extremely beautiful! So what is the problem now? It is that after you listen to the teaching, you need to properly reflect. Here comes the last one.

[85A, 27:07 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p157L3)]

As a remedy for various afflictions,

What should you do when you are very afflicted? This is the first one.

[85A, 27:12 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p157L5)]

examine your mind and energetically apply the remedies for whatever afflictions predominate.

Indeed there are people who are overwhelmed by the strong latent propensity from the beginningless time. At this time, you should analyze your own mind to see which affliction is particularly strong and strive to apply remedy. Therefore, why did we initially have to learn "the five meditations for settling the mind and ridding it of the five errors of desire, hate, ignorance, the self, and a wayward or confused mind"? This is to say, which affliction is particularly strong for you? As long as you can discipline it, the following problems will be fundamentally resolved.

[85A, 27:33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p157LL5)]

Those who fail to make an effort in this way, who follow the rules in a lax fashion thinking have transgressed, "it is merely a small fault," will gain only suffering.

This is the sentence. If you do not strive and make an effort to train, you would feel, "Ah, it does not matter! This is...I've only done this small thing!" If you feel that way in your heart, this "merely," if you follow the rules in a lax fashion, sorry, there is only one path for you - only suffering. There are two definitions for "only suffering." You can say that this only suffering means there is only suffering, nothing good will come of it. And then, there is only one place which has only suffering, where is that? Hell. The human realm does not have only suffering. The animal realm does not have only suffering. The hungry ghost realm does not have only suffering! Therefore, your mind should not feel, ah, like floating about, ah, feeling that it is probably okay to do this! Actually, we probably wouldn't think that it would be okay. However, this beginningless latent propensity [or habitual tendency] is such that our mind is not vigilant. This is a point that we must recognize! We will stop here for today.

[85B, 00:03 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p159L1)]

Please open up to The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, page 195 (English text, page 343). At this point, we are speaking of ethical discipline which is the most basic and fundamental training. All the previous parts are preparations. After the preparations, we will formally begin by adopting ethical discipline. Whether it is for beings of the human realm, the deity realm, the Sravaka, the Pratyekabbudha, for the vehicles of the Perfection or the Mantra, this is the root, much

like the earth. Every harvest is in dependence of it. For all the Buddhas of the ten directions, when they speak of cultivation, this is what is required. Here, he first tells us that when we train, the primary reasons for us to not accord with the teaching are these. These are pointed out first, are pointed out first. At this point, we should all feel fortunate and realize this is a rare opportunity. After we understand it, we should reflect and analyze accordingly.

[85B, 01:27(手抄稿 第十一冊 p159LL3)]

What is the nature of ethical discipline? It is to destroy afflictions. This is the core of ethical discipline. Therefore, it was told to us earlier that if you wish to be liberated from cyclic existence, you need to know the nature of cyclic existence. It is that we have been bound in cyclic existence. What binds you? What has been bound? What binds us is karma and afflictions with afflictions being the predominant factor. Suppose we can remove the afflictions, then what is left is karma. But this by itself will not produce the fruits of suffering. Hence we have found the root of the sickness. If you treat this root of sickness with the correct remedy, which is what? It is ethical discipline. Therefore, ethical discipline destroys afflictions. Pay attention to this. This is important! It is very rare for all of us to value this and understand this [importance]. However, if you cannot grasp the root cause, even though you mean well, but you could still go a roundabout way and waste your effort. This is what we must first grasp.

[85B, 02:43(手抄稿 第十一冊 p160L5)]

What are the subjective aspects of afflictions? In other words, what are the characteristics of afflictions? And then, what are the

causes of afflictions? What is the order in which afflictions arise? What are their faults? These have all been explained. You need to deepen your understanding of this from reading the words to analyzing your own mind. Only when you can recognize the sickness can you then use the medicine. Otherwise, if you do not even know the sickness, then there is no great effect. We would frequently call that planting a seed. Now that we have learned the twelve factors of dependent-arising, you know that without a yearning for virtue to nurture the seed, there will be no virtuous fruit. For a non-virtuous seed, without attachment, the attachment that accords with ignorance, without the nurturing of craving and grasping, it will not take fruition either. The same principle applies. So before you produce a virtuous fruit, there could already be non-virtuous fruit present. In other words, say you want to maintain ethical discipline, whether you can keep it or not, what are the causes? He tells you these too. There are four main reasons. For the vows of ethical discipline, there are four. Some places will describe five. But it does not matter whether it is four or five, there are mainly these.

[85B, 04:06 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p160LL2)]

The first one is - "not knowing the precept." The first one is - not knowing the precept. Therefore we should know ahead of time that we are ignorant. This was said earlier that despite our ignorance we think we are brilliant. This will make it hopeless, hopeless! There is another type of person who has great worldly intelligence and can out debate anyone. They are considered to be people struck with the eight conditions that make it difficult for them to see the Buddha or to listen to his teaching. What are these people like? They have great worldly intelligence. Not only are their minds versatile, ah! They have great eloquence and express ideas clearly and logically. As a result? They cannot

learn Buddhism. There are people who are struck by the eight conditions. Why? The principles are really spoken for you to recognize certain things. There! What are you trying to recognize? It is your every arising thought. If you do not recognize what goes on in your thoughts, no matter how much you know, it will be useless. In fact we now know that it is not only useless, but it could also actually end up harming us! Therefore here speaks of not knowing the precept. If you want to listen to more teaching, you should begin here.

[85B, 05:10 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p161L6)]

Speaking of listening to the teaching, the previous section on how you should listen is something that we must understand. Otherwise, if you do not understand this, ah, you would either let what you hear pass by you or you would think, "This person is saying this. But I do not believe him. I have my own thoughts on this." If you have your own thoughts, there is no need for you to come listen to this. This often happens, exactly like so. Therefore when you listen, you must first satisfy the prerequisites for listening. And then, what type of person are you going to follow? What should he be like? This is something that we can refresh in our mind, do a little review. For those who do not understand this, you should quickly go to the beginning to study it and then examine yourself, examine yourself. Or else, you'll be saying, "This does not appeal to me!" This means you did not come here to learn. In this case, you did not come here to learn from the outset! You will frequently feel that how come he says things this way? It would seem to you that it should be that way. We are not purchasing goods here! So this is a point that we must understand, we must understand. Ah! This is why before we learn we must meet certain conditions before we can actually put to use what we hear. After we understand things, even though

we understand them, um! After we listen, we just let it pass. This is really a pity. Oh! When you speak, you seem to make great sense [but that is all there is]. This is number two, "carelessness." This will not work!

[85B, 06:36 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p162L2)]

There is also something else here, something special called "disrespect." It is that we cannot have respect in our minds. There is a special significance to this, a special significance. What is the reason that we cannot immerse into the teaching? It is because we have weighty obscurations and lack merits. We do not have the collections (of merits), or it is inadequate. For instance, whatever that we are doing now, wherever you want to go, you may not have enough money to travel. If you want to go to school, you may not have the tuition fees. When you want to buy things, you may not have enough money. These are all examples of not having adequate merits! What is the best way of accumulating merits? It is to make offering. And the most important offering is to offer your practice, this attitude of respect. If you are respectful and pious, even if you are just drinking water, if you earnestly and respectfully offer it, you will accumulate boundless merits. If you do not have anything before you to offer but you are respectful and concord in your mind, just this will produce boundless merits. It is just like that. On the contrary, the cause for the teaching to decline is disrespect. In other words, this is the cause for being foolish and ignorant. We are foolish and dumb now, it is exactly the result of what? It is exactly disrespect. In addition to that, if you think that you know a lot, you have great worldly intelligence, then you are the person who has been struck by the eight conditions. That is even more of a waste! It is the same. It is the same.

[85B, 07:56 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p162LL3)]

Other than these, the last cause is one's afflictions. The latent propensity is particularly strong. He has told us everything. After we understand these, we need to make effort to practice. I have explained this part yesterday and have repeated this part today because it has particular importance. Therefore for this last line of page 195 (English text, page 343), this last line:

[85B, 08:20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p163L1)]

[Those who fail to make an effort in this way, who follow the rules in a lax fashion thinking that even though they have transgressed, "it is merely a small fault," will gain only suffering].

This says, "Ah, this does not matter. It is so trivial!" This will be following the rules **"in a lax fashion."** This is to be lax. This is not to say that you belittle it. But that you are careless. Under this circumstance, you will gain **"only suffering."** In reality, for these inconspicuous places, these trivial things are where we must begin with. For us now, we would always feel, "Ah! This is a minor ethical discipline and we do not have to observe it." We had particularly talked about this yesterday. Then for all of you, for instance, for those who have just begun to formally train in Buddhism, it would be like the Upasakas at the temple or the lay practitioners here, this is the best opportunity now. For instance, we have set many little rules here. How should you look at them? You should look at them as the ethical disciplines which have been stipulated by the Buddha. Yes, at least when the rules were set here, they were made based on the principle. Isn't that right? Therefore you need to grasp the key point. This is the principle. This principle is the teaching. You must use the teaching to purify

your emotions. You must have a very respectful and hardworking attitude in your practice. Even if you cannot do your practice right, your attitude will keep accumulating merit for you, will keep accumulating merit for you. Therefore, we should pay special attention to this: Where does karma begin? Where does it begin? It begins from your mind. It is like that.

[85B, 09:55(手抄稿 第十一冊 p163LL3)]

Yes! We would now frequently say, "We do want to practice. But we are just unmotivated!" There, this is the time that you should become alarmed! Why are you unmotivated?" It is exactly because we have weighty afflictions, weighty obscurations, and lacking merits now. If we are not alarmed by this, you will lose your chance. It is already so weighty that you cannot get motivated. But you are still somewhat fortunate to be able to hear this. May I ask, "If you already have this opportunity to hear this but you still do not get motivated, what is the result?" You are careless and you will end up making your situation worse and worse. There will come a time when you will not even hear it. Will you have a chance to get motivated then? Isn't that right? This is a very important and practical concept, a practical concept. This is why you...why do I explain this again and again? From the experience of the previous practitioners, this is why the Buddha continues to say, "Oh Buddha, no one is born as Matreya. No one is born as the Shakyamuni Buddha naturally." No one is born that way. No Buddha is an exception to this. They all began by small increments of accumulations. Therefore for us now, we should start from the very trivial and inconspicuous places. I have seen so many very trivial things, for the many excellent teachers whom I had been in close contact with, they would frequently pay detail attention to the most trivial things. I used to think, "Ah-ya, why do you bother with these trivial matters?" I

gradually realized that if you gradually pay attention to these trivial things, these are exactly where you can complete your practice. If you can slowly, slowly pay attention to these things, you will be able to practice to do the big things.

[85B, 11:28 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p164LL6)]

For this point, you should pay special attention to this! You should pay special attention to this! If you are sloppy and do not take things seriously, then it remains something you say with your lips only. What will you become in your next life? If you have not done anything bad, ah, you might be a nice person now, so you could possibly end up being a parrot. Ah-yo, you might look beautiful and sing beautifully. But you are after all an animal. There are many examples like this now. The causality, you can clearly see it. Therefore after you understand it, I had frequently mentioned this. I would see the pigeons, I would realize, ah, I see how they are called "doves of peace." Eh, this is because in its previous life, they are people who look nice to you. Ah, they look nice to you. But it had created a projecting karma to become an animal. They are just dumb and foolish. Like that. This is why we should absolutely be aware at all times. It is not the case where we should please others by our appearance only. What kind of karma is brewing in your mind is the most important. And this thing, it is most clear and evident, most clear and evident if we begin to examine our own minds! Therefore you should not say, "Ah-ya, this is trivial!" On the contrary, the place for us to truly begin is exactly something small like this.

[85B, 12:47(手抄稿 第十一冊 p165L5)]

Now let us continue.

For, as the *Exegesis of the Discipline* says:⁵⁷¹

Those who take lightly and slightly transgress
The teaching of the compassionate Teacher
Thereby come under the power of suffering-
Just as one who cuts a grove of small bamboo and
spoils a whole grove of mango.

Here, those who transgress the king's pronouncements
Would not be punished for a few such transgressions.

But were they to transgress improperly the edicts of the
Sage,

They would become animals, as did the *naga* Elapatra.⁵⁷²

[p344, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, strive not to be polluted by faults
and infractions.

This sutra tells us this: for the teachings that the Buddha has formulated, it is completely a work of great love and compassion, of great wisdom. It is a perfect, accurate, and flawless solution intended to truly help us solve our problems. If you just somewhat take it "**lightly**," lightly means you do not value it. If you have any slight thoughts of not valuing its importance, you might feel, "Ah-ya, do not have to pay detail attention to this!" If you slightly transgress, if this is the case, you will only "**come under the power of suffering**." We cannot just say that we already understand what is being discussed here - this is particularly the case when you say you understand. If you do not understand, you would not even care whether you should take it lightly or respect it! Right? You do not understand it at all! However now that you understand, yet you do not take it to heart, that means you are taking it lightly.

[85B, 14:09 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p165LL1)]

This is very easy for us to examine ourselves to see how we are. What do we value in our minds normally? Ah-ya...and then, for the things of the mundane world, for the ordinary things, we would value them greatly. When your body has some minor problems, you really care about it. You really care about little gains and profits. But for Buddhism, when you make this comparison, you can immediately tell the difference. What has the Buddha told us to do? What have we done according to what we think? As you make this comparison, you can tell which one you value more. You can tell which one you value more. Hence you can tell whether you take it "**lightly**" from here.

[85B, 14:45 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p166L5)]

(Translator's note: the Chinese text describes the fruit as Ān méi which is a name not commonly known in Chinese. Hence Shifu explains it. Since the translation in this round follows every sentence Shifu says, this part is also translated.)

If you really want to obtain happiness and alleviate suffering, pay attention to this! You need to gradually, gradually elevate the importance of Buddhism in your mind, elevate the importance of it in your mind. If you cannot do that, then sorry, what would this be like? It is like "**just as one who cuts a grove of small bamboo and spoils a whole grove of mango.**" Ān méi is a type of fruit, a type of fruit. What kind of fruit is this, I am not certain. I think that it should be like mango. Anyhow, it is a delicious and excellent fruit. This fruit has excellent [surrounding] protection. If you destroy the protection, sorry, the grove will be spoiled as well. It is the same with us here. In this life, if you have transgressed the king's pronouncements of the mundane world,

you might be able to get away with it. However, for the ethical disciplines that have been stipulated in Buddhism, by the principle of cause and effect, if you transgress these, you will have to pay the consequence for every little bit that you have done. This is much like the story of Naga Elāpattra.

[85B, 15:58 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p166LL3)]

Who was Naga Elāpattra? I think he was a person of Kāśyapa Buddha's time. I cannot remember which Buddha. But he was a person who lived in one of the seven ancient Buddha's time. My impression is that he lived in the Kāśyapa Buddha's time. But it has been too long since I read that story. He was a practitioner, an assiduous practitioner. He was practicing dhyāna-contemplation and walking meditation. It is unlike us now. Oh-yo! We have skyscrapers and high rise apartments, everything is ready made. He sat in a place for exposing corpses. He sat under a tree. No one trimmed those trees and so the branches drooped. Every time he walked by he would hit the branches. "Um! This thing is really annoying!" He later thought, "Eh, this is not right! The Buddha had stipulated the ethical discipline to not break these." He continued to think, "The more serious ethical disciplines are correct to follow. But this particular ethical discipline that the Buddha has set is meaningless!" He had just this one thought. "Um!" This was on his mind, "This thing, I cannot even touch it. Why did the Buddha set this ethical discipline?" He was a very conscientious practitioner. But he fell into the miserable realms for this one thought. Though he had fallen, fortunately, he still had the correct philosophical view. He continued to be reborn as a naga even until the time of the Shakyamuni Buddha. On his head, there was an Elāpattra tree. This tree had an awful stench. And there were all kinds of bugs on it. These bugs tend to creep in between the scales of the

naga. He could do nothing about it. Ah-ya, it was reeking and there was much suffering! He is still not freed from this even now. This was all because he had that one thought of disrespect.

[85B, 17:33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p167LL5)]

Therefore we should pay attention to this! Ordinarily, in our every thought, we should treat the minor ethical disciplines like the greater ones, revere and cherish them. At this time, as you are striving to advance, even though you may not be able to accomplish things, but you will not have to suffer this kind of non-virtuous effect. This is what we should understand. Why? This is because your karma, the mental karma, in your arising thoughts, you have been wholeheartedly respectful and fully devoted. Therefore you absolutely do not want to do this, ah-ya, be nonchalant to just let things go and not care about it! Just like that. Your present mental attitude will continue to accord with afflictions. This is particularly important for us, particularly important!

[85B, 18:13 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p168L1)]

Hence in our monastery, this is why we remind you of this on all occasions: why are you in the monastery? There! It is that at all times, ah! You would go to the Buddha Hall and see, "Ah-ya, the Buddha is right here!" We would go to the classrooms, "The teaching is right here!" When you see your fellow practitioners, "The Sangha is right here!" These are used to remind us at many places. There is a special reason for this. Now that you look at this, this Naga Elāpatra, he was an assiduous practitioner. But to the teachings of the Buddha, he had this one negligent thought. He went on to think this, "This doesn't seem right! It

does not make sense for the Buddha to be stipulating this!" He was harmed in that way. From this we can imagine that in this kind of a good environment, if you feel this, "Ah-ya! This is terrible, this..." What kind of effect will you have to endure? Oh, this is very serious! It is like that.

[85B, 19:05(手抄稿 第十一冊 p168L8)]

Therefore speaking of this, it is not asking you to spend much effort. But where is the problem? It is in your arising thoughts. For this thing, if you want to say that it is difficult, it is extremely difficult. But if you want to say that it is easy, it is extremely easy as well. That is because when you're sitting here, when you close your eyes, even when you lie down, this is a matter of how you think about it in your mind! If you are respectful, reverential, rejoicing and praising, then there is nothing better than that. Even when you are sleeping, you will be accumulating boundless merits.

[85B, 19:38 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p168LL4)]

Thus on the contrary, if you do not have this kind of mentality, even if you prostrate to the Buddha and recite the Buddha's name, I am really sorry, you will still fall into the miserable realms. This is because your thoughts do not accord! "Ah-ya! It is so troublesome here! Why do we have to do this routine, to prostrate to the Buddha?" But there was nothing you could do about it. In your mind, you would feel sorry for yourself as you prostrate. Are you not heading in the same direction as Naga Elāpatra? He provided a classic example for us. Absolutely pay attention to that! When you come across a situation like that, yes, you should say, "Now that I heard this, ah-yo! Even though I should accord with what is correct, but I cannot seem to do it.

What should I do?" Do not be afraid! At this time, in your mind, you have already detected no accordance. Then you should say to yourself, "Though I have no accordance now, but I need to make an effort! This is due to my sinful obscuration!" This is correct. This attitude itself accords with the teaching.

[85B, 20:26 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p169L4)]

Everyone still remember this right? It has told us earlier that for the preparation before actual meditation, the first one is refuge. However, if you have not eliminated obscurations and have not accumulated the collections of merit and wisdom, even if you go for refuge, you will not be able to give rise to it. Why can't you give rise to it? The reason was not given. Now we know that our actual manifestations of afflictions are very prominent. We have very strong causally concordant latent propensity. Therefore, the first thing to do now is to recognize it, recognize it, apply remedies, and apply remedies - isn't that cultivation? So even though you do not concord now, but once you recognize it and feel this deep shame, then you say, "I need to strive! I need to strive! I need to strive!" This is then cultivation. This behaviour accords with the correct view. And this cause, as long as you advance step by step, you will naturally be making a profit every day. What type of profit are you making? You are making a profit of the Dharma wealth. You have come here exactly for that purpose! This is an important concept! If you want to say that it is easy, it is extremely easy, absolutely easy! Once you have this concept, then for anything that you do, ah! You will naturally experience the teaching everywhere. It would be fine if you are studying, prostrating to the Buddha or doing anything else. Even when others reproach you, it would be fine. Yes! "Eh, it clears away my obscurations! It helps me to accomplish my patience!" Wouldn't that work!

[85B, 21:50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p169LL2)]

Therefore, this is the first important concept. What is that? It is the correct view. This was told to us earlier that the most important thing in training in Buddhism is the correct view. After that, the first step to cultivating Buddhism is ethical discipline. What is the first thing to do when you keep ethical discipline? It is the remedy for ignorance. It is not that we do not have the ability to use our brains. But that where have we used our minds? We have used it in the wrong place. We call that ignorance. The characteristic of ignorance – according to the explanation of Asanga and Vasubandhu Bodhisattvas, it is the lack of understanding of the truth. It is because you do not understand. So even though you try to contemplate, but all your contemplations are wrong. Therefore, it is not that you do not have the ability to think, but that you have thought wrongly. And therefore now, you use the correct view to change it. After you change it, you are still using your mind to think. But it will be right when you think on the right track! An analogy for this is that it is like a sword, like money bills. You can use them to do bad things or good things! Therefore, do not throw away the bills. You need to skillfully use the bills. And these items only exist in the human realm! Therefore, at this point, we should feel fortunate and happy. We need to cherish them and make use of them. This is what we should strive at! We absolutely do not want be "**polluted by faults and infractions!**"

[85B, 23:17(手抄稿 第十一冊 p170L9)]

However, afflictions are weighty. Sometimes even if you are just slightly careless, you will make a mistake. Not to mention us. This is the same for the past masters. I will tell you a story here. The last four masters in the Ming dynasty, it has been 400 some years since the end of the Ming dynasty. These masters are Han

Shan Master, Zi Bai Master, Lianchi Master, and Ouyi Master. Two were from the Zen sect and two were from the Pure Land sect. They were really incredible. Zi Bai Master, people referred to him as "the honorable one." Wow, extremely held in esteem! He had already become greatly awakened. His habit was such that he would always prostrate to the Buddha before he eats. After the prostrations, he would then eat. Hey, hey! One day, something happened, I think he had a believer friend who came to visit. So, they had a great conversation. They proceeded to eat and he forgot [to prostrate first]! There, look at that. A person who had become greatly awakened, who was a master of the time, he actually forgot! But after he forgot it, what he did was drastically different from us! If we had forgotten something, "Ah, how come I had forgotten that today!" We would at most act this way and that would be a pretty good reaction. We might even say this, "Ah, this thing, forget it, forget it. It is so troublesome to do this!" So, you decide to not prostrate anymore. That would be an even more terrible reaction.

[85B, 24:29 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p171L4)]

This is the reason that a master is a master, "Eh! This is a beginningless latent propensity. It is like putting oil into flour! I need to take great pains [to get rid of it] ..." And then he bent over on the ground before the Buddha and called his attendant, "Come! I need you to do a good beating!" He first told the attendant this, "Today, someone broke the rules and you will need to punish him for me." So, the attendant said, "Eh, yes!" The teacher told him to punish someone and so he will do it. But as a result, when the attendant was brought to the central hall, the teacher disrobed and lay on the ground. "Hit me!" Eh, the attendant looked at him, it is the teacher. "Eh! How can I do that!?" And then, the teacher told him that he had to do it. So, the

attendant hit the teacher gently. But the teacher said, "No, you must hit!" And after the beating, the teacher was not satisfied. He said, "Hit again!" The attendant couldn't do otherwise. At the very end, the teacher said, "Beat me until I am black and blue!" In other words, his rear end was bleeding with black and blue bruises. That was the case! This is the reason that a master is a master. In the end he said, "The beginningless latent propensity of the sentient beings, it is like putting oil into flour!" When you put oil into flour, can you take it out? You cannot take any of it out. If you do not apply a good remedy, you cannot make it budge. Ah! When I read this, I was really moved!

[85B, 25:38 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p171LL2)]

So, what do we do in our current state? Not only do we forego correcting ourselves, but we easily forgive ourselves in all respects: "Well, what am I doing this for? I am doing this for propagating the Dharma. It is for benefiting all living beings! If you act like this, they wouldn't come here anymore. They would do so on and so forth..." Ah! This is truly the state of practice of a great Bodhisattva. I know I am a rabbit. I do not dare follow their path. But I can just reflect on myself. This was someone from long ago! This makes me think of my own teacher. I also have a story [about him for you]. At that time, we were already at the American Buddhist Association with Venerable Ren-Jun. We had a meditation room in the back, for the purpose of meditation, so we usually do not wear shoes inside the meditation room. Usually, when we entered the central hall, we wore shoes. However, regardless, people in the U.S. didn't usually have the habit of taking shoes off. Of course, homes were covered by carpets! But in here, because it was for meditation, it was not appropriate to enter the meditation room with shoes, so we all decided to take our shoes off before we entered it.

[85B, 26:35 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p172L7)]

He, at his old age, in winter time, would always read in the meditation room. So, he carried a stool in. He carried a stool into the room. That day, after the rule was decided, he forgot as he entered, and went inside without taking off his shoes. He was by himself, alone. If it were us, we would just quickly exit from the room again, take off our shoes, and that would be it. And then, he probably remembered. I didn't know what had happened before. By the time I saw him, he was already running inside and then outside again. He would put on his shoes, then run over and take off his shoes again at the door, enter the room again, then run out of it again, and repeat. "Peng-Dong, Peng-Dong [sounds of running], what is he doing?" I looked on, standing behind. He was very energetic as he did all this. He kept doing this and never minding me. He went on to repeat the action for a few dozen times. And then what? He went to bow. What do you think that he is doing? Because I had followed him for many years, [so I know.] Ah! At that time, I was so moved, so deeply moved! Nobody saw him! So, I felt, Ah! It turns out that what we call real role models for all practitioners are just like this. A role model for all practitioners is like this.

[85B, 27:35 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p173L1)]

It seems that he later on knew that I was there. He also said, "Ah! The habits are hard to correct! Ah, [this will not change] unless I am resolutely determined!" Just this one sentence, was what he told me. He himself was like that, such a minor issue - going into the meditation room without taking off his shoes! Ah! Once he discovered, he immediately got up. Then, he ran to the door, took off his shoes, then entered the hall again; and then ran here, and then ran there, running with such... Also, whenever he

is doing something; here, there are people who have heard of his way of doing things, bring out all of his energy to go there to do the one thing that he is doing. What does this illustrate? This just illustrates that for us, this is the type of approach we should rely on in our minds. If you can apply yourself in this way, your problems will definitely be solved.

Therefore, if you should become polluted by these.

[86A, 0:00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p177L1)]

However, if you should become polluted by these, do not heedlessly ignore such sins and infractions, but strive to redress them in accordance with the Buddha's teachings.

Do not be careless. You need to strive to redress them according to what the Buddha said. You must strive to redress them! Not only is this the case for us now, I would frequently hear things such as, for instance, whether it was the teacher or your fellow practitioners who said something not to your liking, then someone else will say, "Just don't mind him. He can't do anything to you anyway!" Ah! I shuddered when I heard this! It may very well have been that way for me too. If I had come across a situation like this before and someone said this to me, I might have thought, "Eh, this is my good friend consoling me." This type of person is most scary! He feels that by his relationship with you, he should come to comfort you. That is true. However, for me now, not to mention that I will absolutely not give this type of advice, even if I hear this kind of advice, I will cover my ears and quickly leave. This is what we should be careful with. We should be careful with this. You should absolutely pay attention to this! In terms of concept, this is what we must first understand.

[86A, 1:08(手抄稿 第十一冊 p177LL1)]

As the Sutra Requested by Brahma says:⁵⁷³

**Rely upon the trainings;
Undertake them earnestly, from the heart.
Do not give them up later,
Or break them even to save your life.
Always maintain them diligently
And engage in the discipline.**

This cites the above scriptures. You should strive to undertake them earnestly. With regard to "the trainings," it is exactly the fundamental trainings mentioned earlier. Remember this! With respect to "trainings", constantly keep in mind: Have I come to train to be like the Buddha or train to be myself? If I have come to train to be myself, yes, then "I feel that this is how it should be. This is how it should be." You are right. If you are here to train to be you, yes! Of course, "You think, you think," there is nothing wrong with that. Now, this is not the case here. You need to learn from him. If you want to learn from him, then when his concept does not agree with you, that is when you need to immediately examine yourself, "Right, right, that is what he says. However, I think in this way. Here is our disagreement." And then, you need to carefully understand what the Buddha and the Three Jewels have said. What is the meaning of what he said? How come I am unable to do it? You need to look for each of these things.

[86A, 2:20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p178L9)]

And then, after you understand it, you strive to cultivate, absolutely cannot give them up. Even if it is for the sake of your "life," even if your life is in danger, even if your life encounters difficulties, you will not break them. You will continue to abide in

the actions that accord with them. You follow the rules of the Vinaya. That is because you can afford to lose your life. Even if you do not safeguard it, this life will come to an end anyway! This is very simple to see! But after you have conducted yourself properly and given up your life, what is the result that you will get from this? Ah, this miserable samsara world, this body that dwells constantly in old age and sickness, you will be able to leave and go to a peaceful place. Isn't this what you have been asking for? Therefore, we should constantly keep this idea in mind. This is most important. Therefore, at the appropriate times, you will be able to practice them. Therefore,

[86A, 3:18 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p179L1)]

Moreover, as the Buddha decreed in the Sutra on Having Pure Ethical Discipline (Silasamyukta-sutra) using reasons, you should keep your ethical discipline, even at the risk of your life:⁵⁷⁴

O monks, to lose your life and die is excellent, but to ruin and lose your ethical discipline is not.

Therefore, for the monks! You would rather lose your life to uphold the ethical discipline but you cannot ruin your ethical discipline to save your life! Why?

[86A, 3:39 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p179L3)]

Why? Losing your life and dying expends only the life span of this rebirth,

You would at most lose one lifetime!

[86A, 3:45 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p179L5)]

but, if you ruin and lose your ethical discipline, you will experience a great downfall— separating from your lineage and giving up happiness over ten million lifetimes. [272]

If you break the ethical discipline, you are doomed, doomed! How doomed are you? The first one is, "separating from your lineage." Not only will you lose the opportunity to become a renunciate, even if you continue to be reborn as a human, you will forever be in the lower class. There are two types of lineages here. The first one is a lineage which accords with Buddhism. The other kind is a mundane one. Even if you are born in a better place, you will still be in the lower class. "Given up happiness," that means this could go to the extent of losing rebirth in the human and deity realms. You will have to fall into the miserable realms. The duration, "over ten million lifetimes"! One life may be close to 100 years. But ten million lifetimes is incredibly long!

[86A, 4:35 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p179LL2)]

You should think, "If this need to keep my ethical discipline at all costs were not the case,

It does not matter if it is the cause or the effect, we should understand this here! Therefore, you can lose your life, but ethical discipline is something you must absolutely cherish, absolutely cherish!

[86A, 4:53(手抄稿 第十一冊 p180L1)]

then shaving off my hair and donning monastic robes was pointless."

Otherwise, you should think like this, "I have shaved my hair and don this robe. What am I doing? Why have I done this? It is meaningless!" For the section of the human life of leisure and opportunity, you should thoroughly reflect on it.

[86A, 5:14(手抄稿 第十一冊 p180L4)]

For, as the King of Concentrations Sutra says:⁵⁷⁵

**After you have renounced the world and gone forth into
the Buddha's teachings,
You engage in sinful actions,
And, attached to mounts, oxen, and chariots
Have the idea that wealth and grain are essential. Why
did you who make no effort to train in anything
Bother to shave your heads?**

With respect to Buddha, you have followed the Buddha's teaching to become a renunciate. As a result, what have we done? "You engage in sinful actions." We now understand what current "actions" are. This action is preceded by "sinful." We should use this to examine ourselves. There is a reason for this. For us to be purified immediately, indeed, [it is impossible and] we will have to do it gradually. But in our every thought, at least your correct view should have been established. And then, by using this correct view as guidance, gradually, gradually, gradually you will accord with it. Therefore, at this point, for the situation at hand, I feel very happy about what is going on now. Everyone has been very alert and cautious. This means you have grasped this concept, "I need to strive to accomplish it. I need to strive to accomplish it!" You should absolutely not say, "It

does not matter!" Then, after some people come to tell you this, "Why should you worry about him, why should you care!" This type of thoughts is absolutely forbidden, absolutely forbidden! Therefore, at any time, whenever something arises, "How come I do not accord again, I do not accord again!"

[86A, 6:36 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p181L1)]

This was why I said what I said last night. If you truly accord, when someone comes to scold you for no good reason, he is your excellent teacher as well. When a bug comes to bite you, it is your excellent teacher as well. There is no one who is not your excellent teacher. There is nothing that does not increase your merit. What does this depend on? It is the correct view in your mind! Therefore this is what we understand. If you continue to do your customary karmic actions, what will you be busy with? It will be "wealth and grain." You will be busy for all these meaningless things! You will be "attached to mounts, oxen, and chariots." These are all mundane world things. You will then "make no effort to train in anything." You will not strive. You will not strive to make an effort to uphold it. "To train" here means to train in ethical discipline. You will not conscientiously uphold ethical discipline. This place talks about training instead of ethical discipline. On the one hand, it is to go along with the text. On the other hand, this training means this: there, you cannot only abide by the external forms but that you need to understand the internal meaning. Then, you need to put this in your mind and conscientiously put it into practice! If you cannot accomplish this, why did you shave your head? Why did you shave your head? Yes! Therefore, yes, we must understand the characteristic of this.

[86A, 7:55 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p181LL5)]

You who seek to escape from cyclic existence—the composite—and to reach the city of liberation will not succeed if the feet of your ethical discipline are unsteady. Not only that, you will return again to cyclic existence and be destroyed by suffering.

This says why are we here? We want to escape from the composite, the three realms - this ocean of suffering of cyclic existence. To reach the city of liberation, what will you have to depend on? You will need your two feet. What are these two feet? They are ethical discipline. However, after you have done this, you have wounded your own feet, you have injured them. May I ask then what are you going to do now? For where you want to go, after losing your feet, you will not be able to do anything! You will return again to cyclic existence. Not only will you return but that you will be destroyed by suffering!

[86A, 8:42(手抄稿 第十一冊 p182L1)]

The Buddha spoke of this, with an example, in the King of Concentrations Sutra: ⁵⁷⁶

There are all kinds of examples and so on. This sutra has also explained this.

[86A, 8:50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p182L3)]

**When a man was attacked by a gang of robbers,
He tried to escape because he wished to live.**

**But when he set out, his feet could not move or run,
And so the robbers caught and subdued him.**

This is much like meeting a gang of robbers. You want to run away, but I am sorry! You cannot escape. You are still caught.

[86A, 9:05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p182L5)]

[p345, English LR Vol 1]

Likewise, a confused person whose ethical discipline is impaired,

**Though wanting to escape from the composite,
Cannot escape because of impaired ethical discipline
And is destroyed by illness, old age, and death.**

For those who are confused, after impairing their ethical discipline, in this case, even though one wishes to escape the composite, I am sorry! They have destroyed the means - ruined the method. There is nothing else that can be done. You will still be "**destroyed by illness, old age, and death.**" Yes, to us now, indeed, it is hard for some to give up the external things, hard for others give up the internal things. It does not matter whether it is external or internal. This is where we need to pay attention. We would frequently say, for the sake of maintaining relationship, this cannot be done. For the sake of maintaining relationship, this cannot be done! You should be careful here! Are you here to maintain relationship, or are you here to learn Buddhism? This is not telling you to give up relationship here. In fact, it is precisely because you want to maintain relationship that you need to train in Buddhism.

[86A, 10:03 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p182LL2)]

May I ask you, in your relationship with others, is it your purpose to deceive others or are you truly trying to help others? If you are truly trying to help others, what can you use to help others? You can use Buddhism. To give real benefits, you will need to use Buddhism. Isn't that right? This is absolutely true. This is much like dealing with a small child. Even though you are indeed being kind to the child, but the child cries, wanting to ingest the poison. May I ask you, do you want to give it to him or not? We should truly look at it from this perspective. If you cannot give this up, cannot give that up, you do not need to be here. Prepare yourself before you come here. Once you are here, you need to be absolutely careful. At least you need to pay special attention to your mentality again and again. This is what we need to pay attention to. This is what we need to pay attention to. I am not asking you to give up everything right now. Yes, at least you should first pay attention to this one thing - to establish the correct view.

[86A, 11:00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p183L6)]

Therefore, as this sutra says:⁵⁷⁷

I set forth trainings

For householders wearing secular clothing.

At that time these monks

Did not have even these trainings.

This is what happens in the Age of Dharma Decline. This is saying that by then, the teaching that I give to the householders is extremely simple, consisting a total of five things. But by then, monks will not even be able to practice them.

[86A, 11:18 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p183LL5)]

The Buddha says that in these times when even monks do not completely maintain the five fundamental trainings he taught to lay practitioners,

This is it.

[86A, 11:23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p183LL3)]

effort in the trainings has an even greater fruit. Therefore, you should strive to maintain the trainings.

Ah! Every time I read this, my eyes are wide open. I become really excited. This is the time now. Yes, at this time, it is extremely difficult to truly train! But because it is especially difficult that, if you can strive at a time like this, this merit, the fruit is especially great, especially great, especially great. Hence, if you can truly establish the correct view, this is the best opportunity for us to make a great profit now. It is indeed the best opportunity to make a profit!

[86A, 12:05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p184L3)]

I had heard about this last spring. It was about Mr. Tsai. Yes, this was in Los Angeles. He told me that in the beginning, he was the only Buddhist at home. Everyone at home was against him, everyone was against his belief! But after he learned Buddhism, [I have to say that] he truly had virtuous roots. In many instances, even though he did not know too many principles, but he devoted himself to his practice. Though he did not know the profound

principles, he knew to embrace compassion, to help others instead of harming them. There was a time when his aunt was sick. I do not remember what kind of a sickness, possibly cancer. Anyhow, it was some type of untreatable sickness. What is more is that she was suffering a lot from it. Because of the illness, she was incontinent and so on. However, he frequently attended to her. And for some reason, his whole family was against him, was against him. So he wholeheartedly prayed. Soon after, he decided to go to this mountain where the temple is to prostrate as he climbed the mountain. He did not know much but he prostrated.

[86A, 13:21(手抄稿 第十一冊 p184LL5)]

Once, because he had to attend to his aunt, he had gone to the mountain before dawn, before dawn. Probably something was the matter and he asked someone a question. It just so happened that someone was passing by riding a motorcycle. He asked his question. And the person said, "Young man, why do you not walk on the good path? This path is difficult." The person just told him that. For what he said, it was strange for the person to say that. So Mr. Tsai thought it was strange as well. He did not think much of it. But when he turned around, that person was nowhere to be found. He suspected that it was a spirit. But he decided to ignore it. He just continued with his prostrations. As he did... it was a rainy day, typical weather in Taipei. He became entirely covered in mud. He found a house in the mountain. It was still really early. He was tired. He was hoping to rest there and so he knocked on the door. Someone came to answer the door and saw that there was this person covered in mud. "No one is awake at this hour. Why are you here?" Mr. Tsai thought that is true! Since he was not able to rest so he returned.

[86A, 14:27 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p185L5)]

Ah, he was extremely exhausted and had wanted to rest. But when he returned, he saw his aunt, ah, who was in misery. He thought about it. No matter what, I am still better off. Since I want to learn Buddhism, I should take care of my aunt first. Even though he was fatigued to the point of almost closing his eyes, he made great effort to help her. His aunt asked him, "What did you do?" "Ah, I made a pilgrimage to a monastery on the mountain." "Why did you do that?" "Auntie, it is because of your sickness that I went to pray for you. That was it." His aunt was really moved when she heard this. Ah, she was actually moved. From then on, the whole family was also moved by him. Later on, because of his influence, the aunt also prostrated to the Buddha no matter how much pain she was in. After many of these prostrations, she actually recovered. Ah, it was marvellous! The doctor thought it was strange as well. He did not know how his patient actually recovered. That person is still around. It's a pity that I just casually mentioned it after hearing it.

[86A, 15:23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p185LL3)]

Hence there were many times later when I thought of this. The mental power itself is imperative. It is normally difficult for us to be really motivated. But once you get motivated, if you can truly have such a strong motivation, this will certainly produce an effect. I am not encouraging everyone to do that here. It would be impossible for us to do that. When we push too hard, we can do that for the first day. By the second day, we will collapse. If that is the case, then I might as well have not mentioned it. I might as well have not mentioned it. The point to this story is that once you truly make progress, it will certainly produce an effect. So right here, it has given us the complete stages. If you can

follow the complete stages to advance, all the problems we encounter will be entirely resolved, will be entirely resolved. What I am trying to say is, in particular, **"effort in the trainings has an even greater fruit. Therefore, you should strive to maintain the trainings."** I have seen too many of these examples.

The same sutra says:⁵⁷⁸

For ten million eons—as many as there are sands in the Ganges—[273]

I served with a pure mind

Food and drink, umbrellas,

Banners, and processions of lamps to ten quadrillion buddhas.

So much greater is the merit of whoever practices

A single training night and day

At a time when the sublime teaching is perishing

And the Sugata's teaching is coming to an end.

For ten million eons-as many as there are sands in the Ganges, the sands in the Ganges is already an incredible number. And this is making an offering for ten million eons. Not only are the materials pure, but they are offered with a pure mind. What do you use for this offering? The best food, drink and so on. Not only are these offered to one, but **"ten quadrillion Buddhas."** You can imagine the merit produced from this. It is incredibly, incredibly immense! It says, **"At a time when the sublime teaching is perishing,"** that is the time that we are in now. When Buddhism is coming to an end, if you can practice a single training day and night, this merit produced is not just onefold or twofold. It is **"so much greater."**

[86A, 17:24 手抄稿 第十一冊 p186LL3]

Therefore as I think of this, I feel that, "Ah! We are all busy with these things. We are still busy building a big temple!" The other day, the senior abbot even said this, "Honestly, it is not our affair to build temples. It is not our affair to build big temples. Building the temple is the affair of the Dharma Protectors and the householders." What should we be doing? We should maintain the teaching. Ah! It should be like that. But that's how we build temples, make offerings and make pilgrimage! That is not how I feel. That is not the way. What do I feel then? What kind of temple are you building? You are building a temple with your mind. When you make offering, you offer the practices with your mind. When you make the pilgrimage, you make pilgrimage to the nobles with your mind. You will make this pilgrimage in your mind, make this offering in your mind and build this temple in your mind. This is most important! What should you do in your mind? You will practice the training. What is the characteristic of this training? It is to "destroy afflictions." These are the two words. Just like that.

[86A, 18:20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p187L5)]

In your mind now, you are drifted by the wind of sensory objects. Oh, you could not help getting wavered [by the sensory objects]. You revolve about it. When you see this thing, when you see how others have built this temple, you will be envious in your mind. "I can build a big temple too." I am sorry. There are still merits in doing this. But after all, this is not our primary focus. However if you have already developed the great spirit of enlightenment and you are doing this to benefit all sentient beings, oh, this would be incredible! That is admirable, admirable. Hence what is most imperative here is not about the

external form. It is the issue within your mind. After you examine yourself, this couldn't be clearer, this couldn't be clearer.

[86A, 19:03 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p187LL5)]

Furthermore, you might think that, even were you to incur an infraction, you could confess it afterwards. However, in this case you lack an attitude of restraint that prevents you from committing the action again. So engaging in this infraction is like eating poison and telling yourself that you could always take the antidote later.

This was mentioned earlier, oh, after you have incurred an infraction, you can confess it. You can clear it away by confessing! Yes. This is right, but despite that, you must restrain yourself from incurring it again! If you think that, "Well, I can always confess it!" And then you continue to be careless. This would be the same as eating poison! Hence at this point, it is not like, "Ah, as long as we confess. Then we will be fine!" No, no! If you lack discipline, your practice will not amount to anything great. True, it will still come to fruition. It is a projecting cause that will lead to a projected effect. However, there will be immeasurable eons in between before it produces an effect for you. Therefore, as long as you become a renunciate, even if you have incurred an infraction, even if you fall into the miserable realms, the merit of being a renunciate will still be there in the future. But would we want to wait in the hell for immeasurable eons before this come to fruition? And when this takes effect, you will still have to endure hardship as you practice diligently. So why do you bother to do that? Hence this is what we should usually use to exhort ourselves.

[86A, 20:15(手抄稿 第十一冊 p188L5)]

For, as the Lion's Roar of Maitreya Sutra (Maitreya-maha-simhanada-sutra) states:⁵⁷⁹

Maitreya, in the future, in the final five-hundred-year period of the teaching, certain renunciates and householder bodhisattvas will claim that sinful karma is completely extinguished through confessing the fault. They will disclose the infraction, saying, "After we have become involved in sin, we will confess it." But they will not restrain themselves from doing it again. I tell you that they possess fatal karma.

This is what the sutra explains. The Buddha said this to the Maitreya Bodhisattva, by the time of the degeneration of the Buddha's teachings, **"the final five-hundred-year period of the teaching,"** there will be householder and renunciate Bodhisattvas. These people in this world will claim, "Ah! After you have incurred the infraction, you can confess it. Sinful karma can be completely extinguished through confession!" And then, what happens after you incurred it? **"They will not restrain themselves from doing it again."** After one confesses, one will have to restrain from doing it again. If you have confessed it but do not restrain yourself, **"I tell you that they possess fatal karma."** That is fatal karma.

[86A, 21:12 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p188LL2)]

But there is one thing that we need to pay attention to! The **"infraction"** that is mentioned here, how do you incur an infraction? There are four aspects. You all remember this right? There are: the basis, the attitude, the performance and the culmination. The main culprit in the infraction is not only on the

basis. The primary aspect of it lies with the attitude. It is what kind of mentality you have. Let's say I want to maintain the ethical discipline, but when I try to maintain it, many circumstances arise. For instance, it could be anything, such as maintaining no eating after noon. But suppose you had something to do and you had gone out to buy something. Then you hurried back after your purchase. You rushed to return only to find that, "Ah! I have missed the time!" So you ate [after noon]. It is like that. However, in your mind, you still carried this attitude of restraining and remorse. This can be confessed. But if you say, "Anyway, I can confess it. It is fine. Since we are here on work related matter, ah, since it is for the purpose of work, might as well just take our time on the road." I am sorry. Then it will be useless to confess. You have completely gone astray in your mind. Another type would be, "That is fine. It would suffice to just confess then!" And then, you continue to pursue your afflictions. This is the type of "fatal karma" that is indicated here.

[86A, 22:18 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p189L5)]

What do I mean by fatal? For example, it is like people who ingest poison. They create their time of death, and then end up in a misguided descent into a miserable realm.

Therefore this fatal karma is the poison that is ingested. Although you are just taking a little advantage now, you will **"end up in a misguided descent into a miserable realm."** This was mentioned earlier. Where will you go? You will go to hell.

[86A, 22:38(手抄稿 第十一冊 p189LL4)]

[p346, English LR Vol 1]

And also:

Maitreya, what I call poison in the noble teaching of the discipline is transgressing the fundamental trainings as I have prescribed them. Therefore, do not eat such poison.

Next he said this, "For the trainings that I have prescribed, **“the noble teaching of the discipline,”** what is the poison that is mentioned over here? It is the transgressions of the fundamental trainings. He told you that this is what you should do. But you had transgressed it. This says that for this teaching, you must not transgress it. It would be like ingesting poison!

[86A, 23:08 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p190L1)]

Given that maintaining vows in such a way applies to one who has taken the vows of individual liberation, it is also similar for one who practices the mantra vehicle. For, the Tantra Requested by Subahu states that even householder practitioners of mantra must act in accordance with the texts on discipline, except for the matters concerning the marks [robes] of renunciates, the ceremonial activities, and some factors which are merely regulatory:⁵⁸⁰

**Of the entire discipline that I, the Conqueror, taught—
The pure ethical discipline of individual liberation—
A householder practitioner of mantra should set aside
The signs and rituals, and practice the rest. [274]**

If this is the case, then it goes without saying that renunciate practitioners of mantra must act in accordance with the texts on discipline.

Ethical discipline is the root of practicing the mantra vehicle as well.

Starting from the fundamental vows of Bhikshus, you will have to maintain them in this way, possessing all six branches. In particular, you will have to obtain the correct view. Then you can advance one by one. As for the Mantra vehicle, it is the highest one. Therefore, whether you are a Bhikshu, a Mahayana Bodhisattva or a practitioner of the Mantra vehicle, this is a must. **"Ethical discipline is the root of practicing the mantra vehicle as well."** True attainments of Mantra practices rest on ethical disciplines.

[86A, 23:43 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p190L8)]

The Tantra Requested by Subahu says:⁵⁸¹

**The root of the mantra vehicle is, in the first place,
ethical discipline.**

**From it come joyous perseverance, patience,
Faith in the Conqueror, the spirit of enlightenment,
The mantra vehicle, and the absence of laziness.
Just as a lord possessing the seven treasures
Tames all beings without disillusionment,
So a mantra practitioner controls sins
When possessing these seven.**

The Tantra Requested by Subahu is exclusively a teaching of the Mantra vehicle. This had specifically mentioned that for the Vajrayana vehicle, it is being referred as Mantra vehicle here. What is the root of practicing the Mantra vehicle? The first one is ethical discipline. Followed by patience and joyous perseverance. You will need to have faith in the Conqueror and the spirit of enlightenment. With a mind of pure faith, you will need to develop

the great spirit of enlightenment. Therefore when you truly train in Buddhism, you cannot be lazy. This is like the lord possessing the seven treasures, who perseveres to tame all beings without disillusionment. This lord tames the living beings. We are taming our afflictions. If we can do this, then we will have attainments in the Mantra vehicle. When we have these things as mentioned above, then we will be able to control our sins.

[86A, 24:42 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p191L1)]

Now we would frequently say, "Ah, the Mantra vehicle is the highest. You will not need the fundamentals that is mentioned earlier." Since it is the highest, one could abandon the fundamentals. This is exactly the phenomenon that occurs when the sublime teaching perishes. It is exactly this phenomenon! If you do not have the fundamentals, what is the use to have the highest teaching? The more you speak of the higher teaching, the emptier your words are. Since everyone wants the highest, they will abandon the rest that are the fundamentals. At least when a person does not speak about the highest teaching, he will still make an effort on the fundamentals. As long as the root has yet to be perish, there will still be an opportunity for you to advance. But if you start to talk about the higher teachings and ruin your fundamentals, then you will have nothing. This is such a pity!

[86A, 25:19 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p191L6)]

And, the Root Tantra of Manjusri (Manjusri-mula-tantra) says:⁵⁸²

**If these persons who recite mantras spoil their ethical discipline,
They would lose the highest of attainments,
Also middling attainments,
And the least of attainments.**

To recite anything, whether it is to recite the sutra or the mantra, what is this mainly addressing here? This is about the Vajrayana vehicle. This is saying that beginning from your preparations, it does not matter which of the three lower tantras you are talking about. Wasn't this covered earlier? When you purify your sins, there is a very special and auspicious method - hundred-syllable [mantra of Vajrasattva]. But what must you have? **"Likewise, the winds of ethical discipline fan the fires of recitation."** You will need to have ethical discipline as your root! If you do not have ethical discipline, you cannot make it work! Not only will you be unable to achieve the highest attainments nor the middling attainments, but it would also be impossible for you to achieve the least of attainments. Once the ethical disciplines are spoiled, the root is absolutely destroyed. What else is there to discuss? There is nothing else to be said. It will not work to just do a superficial job.

[86A, 26:15 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p191LL2)]

**The Master of the Sages does not say that faulty
Ethical discipline achieves the tantric path.
Breaking ethical discipline is neither a situation nor a destination
For those going to the city of nirvana.**

The Buddha has never said that you can have attainments by having faulty ethical discipline. This is because it is not a path that can truly lead you in the right direction toward the city of nirvana.

[86A, 26:32 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p192L2)]

**For these miserable children,
Where is the achievement of the tantric path?
[p347, English LR Vol 1]
For beings who have faulty ethical discipline,
Where are the happy realms?
Since they will attain neither high status
Nor the highest bliss,
What need is there to speak of their attaining
The knowledge of the mantra vehicle taught by the
Conqueror?**

For someone as confused, how can one have achievement of the Tantric path! A person with faulty ethical discipline will not even be born in the happy realms. They will not even have rebirth in the human realm, will not even have high status. So how could they have the highest bliss! Not to mention the most auspicious method taught by the Conqueror - "**the mantra vehicle**," how could it be possible, how could it be possible! Therefore, this is not a time to say, "Ah, this teaching is so profound!" No! The teaching is profound, which is absolutely unmistakable. However, whether you can advance step by step from the root according to the teaching, that is most important! Hence, it is good to have this fruit now. However, in the causal period, have you made every step correctly? That is important!

[86A, 27:32 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p192LL4)]

Kam-lung-ba said:

When a famine occurs, everything depends on barley. In the same way everything revolves around ethical discipline in the practice of the teaching. Therefore, apply yourself to this!

This is what the past master said. Much like when a famine occurs, you will not care about anything else. What is most important at that time? It is food! That is how it is for us now too. The most important thing is to learn ethical discipline.

[86A, 27:53 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p192LL1)]

Those who have not thought about karma and its effects will not achieve pure ethical discipline. Therefore thinking about this is a personal imperative.

If you wish to have pure ethical discipline, there is a necessary prerequisite. What is this prerequisite? You must understand the principle of karma and its effects. Therefore, if you want to maintain ethical discipline, you must understand why you want to maintain ethical discipline and comprehend the cause of maintaining ethical discipline and its corresponding fruition or effect. Therefore, you have to reflect on how karma takes effects. On the contrary, if you do not strive to properly reflect on the principles of karma according to the teaching, though you maintain ethical discipline, your ethical discipline will not be pure. Therefore, contemplating karma and its effect is a personal imperative! What does this illustrate? This explains that ethical discipline is not limited to only the external form!

The true importance of ethical discipline remains to be this! You must understand that a cause will definitely produce a corresponding effect.

[86A, 28:56 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p193L7)]

So, in the process of maintaining ethical disciplines, what is the most imperative to enhance? It is your motivation. You need to evaluate whether your mental thoughts are correct or not, are correct or not. Once you understand this, you will then comprehend why the ethical disciplines of the Mahayana and the Hinayana may appear to be different in their allowances but the intended meanings behind them do not conflict at all. The motivation of a Hinayana practitioner seeks only to benefit the self. Therefore, one will only be busy for himself. The motivation of a Mahayana practitioner is to help others. Hence, even though one is still seeking for benefits, while under certain circumstances he will have to do this, but under other circumstances he will have to do something else. This is how it is for us now as well. For the same monastery, when we are going to meditate by ourselves, we will close the doors to stop people from coming in. What is the purpose for doing this? It is to increase our virtues. At another time, oh, this is now the time to benefit all living beings. So, we will open the doors. And at this time we are only afraid that there are too few people. For the former situation, we are afraid of having too many visitors. For the latter situation, we are afraid of having too few visitors. But the intent of both is the same: it is to spread the seeds of Buddhism, to allow them to root and germinate. Hence, after you understand this point, you will then be able to tie everything together. There will naturally be no more problems for you to understand the varied allowances between the different sects, to understand the differences between the Mahayana and the Hinayana. It is like that. Down to even our very first step, this is where we should begin.

[86B 0:12 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p195L1)]

And Sha-ra-wa said:

In general, whatever good or ill happens to you depends on religion. Moreover, within religion, if you depend on what the texts on discipline say, you will not even have to repeat things; you will be confidently pure, consistent, sure, and steadfast. [275]

He also said this. What does whatever good or ill that happens depend on? It depends on religion - it depends on whether you act in accordance with the teaching. According to the texts on discipline, in fact, you will not even have to change much. **"You will be confidently pure, consistent, sure, and steadfast."** As long as you, as long as you examine your mind to see if it is pure... and you will know after you have examined yourself. "Ah, yes, yes, yes, this is right!" And then, after you have examined yourself, whatever that is right, you should make sure that it is consistent. In other words, this type of thought should be consistent in your mind. If after your examination, you discover that your thoughts were wrong, then at this time, you should make sure that they do not stay with you. "Eh, this is wrong, wrong, wrong!" At that time, if your mind is pure and that you have observed yourself to be doing the right thing, then at this time, ah! You will be **"sure"** and **"steadfast"**. Not only will you be very happy at present, there will be ultimate happiness in the future. It is that great!

[86B 1:24 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p196L1)]

Geshe Drom-don-ba said:

One group holds that when you rely upon the discipline, you discard the practice of mantra and that

when you rely upon the mantra vehicle, you discard the rules of the discipline. The teaching that the discipline is the companion of the mantra vehicle and the mantra vehicle is the companion of the discipline exists only in my guru Atisha's lineage.

Geshe Drom-don-ba also said, there is one type of people who relies upon the discipline but discards the practice of Mantra. There is another type who relies upon the Mantra vehicle but discards the rules of the discipline. This refers to Tibet. What about us now? Ah! When we rely upon discipline, we disregard pureness; when we rely upon meditation, we disregard the teaching; when we rely upon the teaching, we disregard others. These are all saying what I have is good and what you have is not. These are all wrong, all wrong, all wrong! These are all wrong, completely wrong! **"The teaching that the discipline is the companion of the Mantra vehicle and the Mantra vehicle is the companion of the discipline exists only in my guru Atisha's lineage."** However, for my teacher...who is that? Je Atisha. This is why he was so brilliant. Not only was he the sect leader of all eighteen sects in India, the same situation occurred while he was in Tibet. "Eh, the complete instruction provided by my teacher does not say this!" **"Exist only."** This means that his teaching includes everything without leaving anything behind. And what does this do? It is to discipline. In other words, the Mantra.... no, this discipline means the ethical discipline. This ethical discipline is the companion of the Mantra vehicle. In other words, we now know that not only do they not contradict, that we should not disparage one another, but that they complement one another, they complement one another. We should understand that!

[86B 2:49 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p196LL3)]

"...the Mantra vehicle is the companion of the discipline..."

This is the same in the reverse as well. I help you out and you help me out. It is true that ethical discipline is the root of the Mantra vehicle. But how is the Mantra vehicle the companion of ethical discipline? That is because once you are practising the Mantra vehicle, you will go deeper and deeper (into ethical discipline). Hence, your comprehension of ethical discipline will not merely limit to rules pertaining to external behaviour and the significance of the content. And you will have ultimate attainments. Of course, after ultimate attainments, you will completely understand it (ethical discipline) clearly. What is the real purpose of ethical discipline? Its ultimate purpose is to attain liberation. It is only after liberation that you can understand completely why the ethical disciplines were established. Therefore, in the beginning, you would just eradicate the manifestations [of your afflictions]. However, the seeds remain. As you advance one step after another, you will be able to completely destroy the seeds. And as you look back, hasn't your upholding of ethical discipline become even more perfect? Therefore, to truly be perfect in upholding ethical discipline, it will still depend on the in-depth training that occurs later. But the later in-depth training must depend on ethical discipline as the foundation. Hence, between the two, they inevitably complement and support each other. There is an indispensable mutual dependency.

[86B 3:59 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p197L6)]

So now we know, "Oh, so ethical discipline does not contradict the Mantra vehicle. And in fact, they help each other. Similarly, when you relate ethical discipline to reciting the Buddha's name,

to practising Zen, to learning the teaching, or to learning anything else, not only is there no contradiction but that they rightfully help each other. It is true that when you are in a particular situation, there may be a special emphasis. However, this does not mean that you do not need discipline. For instance, say we are going to build any sort of house. You will build the foundation first. As you build up, you may feel that this part has nothing to do with the foundation because you are building up. But in reality, when you are building up, you continue to build on top of the foundation. This is very clear and evident. When you cook, you will certainly have to wash everything well first. Even though it may not seem like you are washing anymore towards the end because you are in the cooking stage. But sorry, this continues to be based on the foundation of having the items washed in the first place. This is exactly the case. It is exactly because you have finished cooking and the aroma is in the air, this is when your previous work will show as well. There are all these benefits to washing the items well! Otherwise, if you do not cook it then the washing will have been wasted. Therefore, between these things, they inevitably complement each other.

[86B 5:26 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p198L1)]

So the aforementioned explains that ethical discipline is the companion for the Mantra vehicle. Companion means they complement and support each other. Coming from the other end, the Mantra vehicle is also the companion for ethical discipline. For everything that you do, you can try to relate this to it. In terms of particular events, indeed, when you are going through the stages, there may be different emphasis. But once you understand the paradigm, you will naturally be undisturbed. Otherwise, we will generate all kinds of obstacles for ourselves.

Consequently, you will not be able to learn anything well. You will not be able to learn anything well.

[86B 6:09 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p198L6)]

Also, the Elder said:

There, take a look at this great excellent teacher, Je Atisha. He said,

[86B 6:15 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p198L8)]

When things of great import or unexpected events befell us Indians, those who upheld the scriptural collections would assemble and determine whether these things were proscribed in the three scriptural collections or were at odds with them. Based on this, we made decisions.

In India...I want to particularly remind everyone that when we speak of India, it is the country where Buddhism originated. Those who learnt the Hinayana teaching practised the Hinayana teaching. Those who learned the Mahayana teaching practised the Mahayana teaching. There were different sects such as the one that asserts emptiness or the one that asserts consciousness only. But have you all read the biography of Je Atisha? It did not matter which sect, the Mahayana, the Hinayana, the one that asserted emptiness, the one that asserted consciousness only, the Paramitayana, or the Vajrayana, he was the leader of all eighteen sects. In other words, whenever anything important occurred in any sect, they would assemble the most important heads to discuss it. There

was no exception to this. This type of practice was prevalent in all of Buddhism. This is to say that whenever anything important came up - which is the first kind, or anything unexpected happened, "Ah-ya, we had never encountered this before. What should we do about this?" Eh, by then, **"those who upheld the scriptural collections would assemble."** Look at this sentence. It is not to gather everyone and have everyone decide what to do. Most people have just become renunciates. The way we would describe this now, we are a "motley crew." We know lots of things of the mundane world but we do not accord with Buddhism. It would not work to have this type of people decide on things. Therefore these are not the type of people assembled. **"Those who upheld the scriptural collections"** are assembled. Those who upheld the three scriptural collections do not mean that they only know the words in the collections. There are indeed different contents to sutras, disciplines and commentaries. Therefore in the west, we say they are those (Dharma Masters) who uphold the three scriptural collections. These people are really brilliant. They are truly great excellent teachers. These are definitely the ones called upon to solve the problems.

[86B 7:48 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p199L6)]

And then, **"determine whether these things were proscribed in the three scriptural collections or were at odds with them."** Eh, this is marvelous! Not only do they consult the discipline texts, but that they go through the entire three scriptural collections - sutras, disciplines and commentaries. In other words, the sutras and commentaries will clearly and subtly explain the characteristics and the contents of ethical discipline. They will explain the reason for the proscriptions and the allowances, and also the intended final direction. Therefore from the fundamental to the most

complete maintenance of ethical discipline, these must be exclusively documented in the three scriptural collections. So if one does something like this, would it contradict the principles of the Buddha? This is what this sentence means here. Proscribed means it contradicts. If it contradicts, that means it should be prohibited. After making this type of determination, "**Based on this, we made decisions.**" Everyone will then follow this to practice, follow this to practise.

[86B 8:41 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p199LL2)]

In addition to that, those of us from Vikramasila

This is Kaśmīra, a place where Buddhism thrived at a later time.

[86B 8:51 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p200L1)]

were concerned that there be no proscription among the bodhisattvas' activities

That place is even stricter because this is Āryasthavirāḥ, where Mūlasarvāstivādaḥ is. They were especially strict.

[86B 9:01 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p200L4)]

Not only must this hold true for ethical disciplines but that it is checked to see whether it is proscribed in Bodhisattva vows. Hence we said the realistic school. There, what does this explain here? Between the Mahayana and the Hinayana vows, does this

contradict the fundamental vows of the Hinayana? And then, does this contradict the activities of the Bodhisattvas?

[86B 9:19 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p200L7)]

and no contradiction with them.

Does it contradict? If it does, then it is prohibited.

[86B 9:23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p200LL5)]

Nonetheless, those who upheld the texts on discipline made the final determinations.

This all comes from the desire to fundamentally uphold the ethical discipline, to follow the ethical discipline. The commandments must not be mistaken and the substance of the vows cannot be faltered. By knowing the teachings of the discipline, one obtains the substance. Through this substance, one engages in actions. Through the actions, one completes the commandments. The complete process of this cannot err at all, cannot err at all. Hence for the three scriptural collections, they...you should know what is the distinguishing feature of Buddhism? It is to completely uproot. One therefore needs to be perfect beginning from the fundamental root to the very end. There, there, there, this is the primary philosophy. This is what we need to truly learn in-depth in the future. If we wish to speak, at least by that time, we will have a general idea. We are then not likely to be too far off, too far off. Or else, indeed, it is not that easy to grasp the fundamental point. As soon as you see something, you will be attached to this. When you see something else, you will be attached to that.

[86B 10:30 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p201L4)]

Further, with regard to keeping a pure ethical discipline in this way, Neu-sur-ba said:

Right now, only this internal struggle with the afflictions is important.

Oh! Just like the pure ethical discipline that we talked about earlier, how will you maintain it? The principle was said earlier, you must reflect on karma. Of course after you reflect on karma, afflictions of the motions and so on, you will understand them all. So now, when we train to keep a pure ethical discipline, much like what the past master told us, what should we busy ourselves with now? What matters is what occurs internally. Therefore this is called the internal teaching, the internal teaching. That is to say, look at this, the internal struggle with the afflictions - this is the only thing to do, **"only this."** This is the only thing to do. This is what matters. We should not say this now, "Ah-ya, this is far from being ideal. We need to make this into more of an ideal situation!" You should not ask whether this place is ideal for you or not. I should be asking myself, "Is my attitude ideal or not?" That is what matters.

Therefore when a sensory object arises, we would frequently say, "Ah-ya, look at him, is he being right?" In reality, yes, as you observe him, your assessment may not be wrong. But what is the state of your mind at the moment? This is not a matter of whether the external object is correct or not. This is a matter of the sort of behavior that arises in your mind after seeing the external object! You should actually try to understand whether your current behavior is right or not, what is called right and what is called wrong. There is a standard that we use in Buddhism: that which accords with afflictions is wrong no matter what great reasons you provide. It is an affliction! The affliction of view is in

the concept. The affliction of emotion comes from the latent propensities. These are useless! This is standard in which you should be eager to use to gauge whether you are right or not. This is very important! What is ethical discipline used for? Do you all remember this? What is ethical discipline used for? It is to destroy afflictions. But now you use this thing to grow many afflictions in your mind. You keep twirling in the afflictions of view and the afflictions of emotions. No matter how many principles you can come up with, you do not accord! What is really important for us to do right now is exactly this.

[86B 12:28 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p202L5)]

If you do not struggle with the afflictions, you will not achieve a pure ethical discipline,

This is what we should do. Therefore in the 35-Buddha prostrations, there is one Buddha named Utterly Victorious in Battle. What has the Utterly Victorious in Battle Buddha cleared away? He has cleared away the obscurations of afflictions. It is absolutely unmistakable. This is what he had done in the causal period. Therefore he would use that to bless us. This is what we should not tolerate. You should not be looking at others and ah! You feel that you cannot tolerate them. This person, and that person, they have triggered you to have a certain state of mind. This is what you should be looking at. If after others have triggered a reaction from you and you feel happy about it, "Ah-ya, this person helps me to accomplish my patience!" You should then abide on that. This is what was said earlier. Otherwise, if you feel that others do not make sense and that you need to make sense out of them, then you will be wrong. This is what we should practice, what we should actually practice. The reason it is called "internal" is exactly because of this point. You need to

have "internal illumination." In other words, your mind needs to be clear and distinct. You will have to make your mind accord with clarity. Do not accord with ignorance. This is exactly what Buddhism is.

[86B 13:28 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p202LL1)]

We would frequently say, "Ah-ya, these things do not make sense!" When we look at this sentence, it may appear to be correct at first. But as you examine it closely, there will be problems with it. Why? That is, have you examined your own mind? Whenever an external sensory object arises, what is the reaction that is generated in your mind with respect to this sensory object? What is that? It is consciousness. It is the mental consciousness that we have already identified. Whether this mental consciousness gives rise to virtues, to non-virtues, or to non-contaminated virtues, this is what we should check for. We should check to see whether it accords with ignorance or a clear cognition. When we train in Buddhism, we say that we need to accord with a clear cognition. This is called internal illumination.

[86B 14:22 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p203L5)]

Last night... I will just give you a short story here. For instance, when you see a mosquito normally, an ordinary person would just kill it. But now that we have learnt Buddhism, we will drive it away. But actually, everyone has a different reaction. There will be even people who would, ah-ya, feel that it is like an excellent teacher. For this same mosquito, you may feel that it is just right to kill it because "This thing will pass on germs. How can you not kill it?" Eh, this seems to make sense. But now you would feel, "I have learnt Buddhism. No, no, no, I should do virtue by driving it away."

This makes sense too. This reasoning is better than the previous one. This is not wrong. But one can go even further to say, "Ah, alright, alright, it is my excellent teacher." So this is very obvious. What is right or wrong is not determined by the external sensory objects. How is it determined? How is it determined? It is determined in your mind. Pay attention to this! This is the way we train in Buddhism. Therefore what is really important for us now is to struggle with the afflictions internally. If you do not struggle with the afflictions, you will not have pure ethical discipline. If you do not struggle with this and strive at it, to talk about maintenance of ethical discipline, it will not work!

in which case, you will not attain the

[p348, English LR Vol 1]

concentration and wisdom that, respectively, suppress and uproot the afflictions. Hence, as the Buddha says, you will have to wander continually through cyclic existence.

If your ethical discipline is not pure, then you do not have the root down. Without the root, you will not attain concentration. It is through ethical discipline that you can attain concentration. What is concentration? It suppresses afflictions. After attaining concentration, you can then achieve wisdom. What is wisdom? It can uproot afflictions. After you have suppressed and uprooted afflictions, then they will no longer arise. If you are not able to suppress and uproot them, you will forever wander in cyclic existence. This is how it is.

[86B 16:05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p204L4)]

Therefore, as I explained before, once you have identified the afflictions, reflected on their faults and on the benefits of separating from them, and planted the spies of mindfulness and vigilance,

So how should we struggle with afflictions? If you wish to struggle with afflictions, you will first have to identify them! Therefore it had previously told us to identify afflictions. We cannot just simply identify them because identification alone serves no purpose. You will have to know their faults. You should learn what auspicious benefits you gain after you part yourself from them and purify them. Otherwise you would say, "Ah, this thing is excellent. It is so delicious!" If we ask you not to eat it, you would be reluctant to give it up. But if I tell you this now, "Ah, this is meaningless! It is like a little con artist who gives you a little sweet up front but turns around to harm you!" Ah! You understand that by giving it up, you may feel some loss now, but you will obtain great happiness in the future. Such is the benefit. Um! And you should keep this idea in mind, use vigilance and mindfulness to cautiously restrain yourself. This is the characteristic that we need to understand now. As for how will you go about it? Ah! Look at the next sentence.

[86B 17:07 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p204LL3)]

you must repeatedly fend off whatever affliction raises its head.

Further, you must see any affliction as an enemy and attack it as soon as it arises in your mind.

(Translator's note: in the Chinese text, it is more like this, "You must repeatedly throw spears at whatever affliction raises its head.")

This sentence. As soon as any affliction arises, there is great meaning to **"whatever affliction raises its head!"** You should fight it as soon as it arises. This word **"spear"** here, in other words, you will have to focus on destroying this affliction. We will have to destroy, destroy this bondage of ignorance. This is what it means. Indeed, this is what we absolutely cannot tolerate. And as soon as it arises, you will have to struggle with it. It does not matter what affliction arises in your mind, immediately, this is what **"as soon as"** means. **"You must see any affliction as an enemy."** Our real enemy is no one else but this! This is our greatest nemesis. Therefore, the excellent teacher tells us, "No one else can harm you. The only person who can truly harm you is yourself!" That is because whenever we see other people, we would always feel, oh-yo, how come this person is like this and that person is like this. You will think that he has offended you in this way and offended you in that way. How can he offend you? You are the one who has harmed yourself! What use is there to follow your afflictions around? If you do not follow your afflictions, oh, then it will help eliminate your karmic obscurations, help accomplish your patience, help accomplish your ethical discipline, and help accomplish your joyous perseverance. It is incredibly excellent! Therefore, this is what is truly important to us. And you will fight it as soon as it appears. Just like that. And you will never stop!

[86B 18:36 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p205LL6)]

Otherwise, if you acquiesce when it first appears, and then nurture it with improper thoughts, you will have no way to defeat it, and it will conquer you in the end.

Look at this sentence. If you do not do this, then when it first appears, you will let it go, let it go, what is this? This is thinking

with incorrect principles. If you cannot stop it even when it is tiny, can you then defeat it when it is nurtured and big? You will certainly not be able to. By that time, all you can do is to follow it. You are doomed. You are doomed then! This is really important. This is very important, very important! We usually do not pay attention to the little things. Take the car as an example, if you do not observe the tiny hole and let it be, it will keep leaking. It will leak until "boom!" You will, all of a sudden, get a flat tire. By then, there is nothing you can do. Now with a small hole, you can stop it (the leak) easily.

[86B 19:31(手抄稿 第十一冊 p206L2)]

I remember when I was little, the pot that we used is unlike the aluminium pots we have now. We used an iron pot. It was made of iron. Sometimes, the pots were made with raw cast iron from the foundry. The raw cast iron has little pores. Ah, it is really interesting how the provincials patch up these pores. What did they do? They used the glutinous rice balls. They rubbed them in and patched over with mud. And then they would burn it somehow. Ah, after a while, they would spread some oil over it. And that was it. That was it! Therefore, there is a saying that we use now, "patch up with mud," "patch up with mud." You just use some mud to patch it up. And you can solve the problem of a tiny pore. But if you waited until it got bigger, then you cannot do anything about it. There will be nothing else that you can do. The whole pot will have to be tossed. That is absolutely true! Therefore, at this point, if we truly mean to maintain ethical discipline, then we must be cautious, starting with the inconspicuous places. We should not be careless. Ah, we would always feel that this does not matter. That does not matter. That matters! This matters! It's only when you can strive at these instances, can you then have hope!

[86B 20:25 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p206LL5)]

Hence from knowing this, it is not a moment too soon that we struggle vigorously with it, it is absolutely useless for you to find excuses. So you absolutely do not want to give yourself any excuses. Also, there is the external environment, what would this excuse be? One does not look for excuses on purpose but there are several reasons this situation (seeking excuses) arises. The first one is the lure of the external environment. The second one is your latent propensity [i.e. habits accumulated from the past], lack of the correct view. When one talks about it (the excuse), it is so pleasing to the ears. Ah, the need to propagate the teaching, the need to do this and the need to do that! Yes, one goes into the wrong path because firstly the lacking the correct view. Secondly you did not examine the core underlying concept/thought against the teachings. So unknowingly, you have already gone down the wrong path. Not knowing. This is most pitiful! Therefore, being ignorant is the worst for a person. What is the most important thing to remedy afflictions? Ignorance, this is what you need to remedy. You need to obtain the correct view. And then after that, do not be relaxed. Gain diligence, do not be lazy. Where do you begin (to gain diligence)? You begin from here. As soon as it appears, you do not acquiesce. As soon as you acquiesce, you are ruined. As soon as you acquiesce, you are ruined.

[86B 21:26 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p207L4)]

Therefore I spoke about my habit of waking up in the morning... That was how I was back then. Later, I read this about many masters and also from scriptures regarding this, ah, this really makes sense! He said that you have long been in this eternal night of ignorant gloom. When you all of a sudden rouse by

chance, you should immediately try to be fully awake. If you are roused, you have the opportunity to become fully awake. Otherwise, you would be deep in sleep, and you say, "Ah, I lie down just for a little while." As soon as you lie down, you would sleep. After you fall asleep, you would not know when you would get up again. In fact, this example was in the scriptures. This is how our habits are normally as well. When you hear the alarm rings in the morning, "pa!" You sit up. If you sit up, that moment (of sleepiness) will just pass you by. Otherwise, if you keep sleeping in, honestly, if there is no second board call, you may perhaps sleep for another one or two hours, right? In the long night of ignorance, it is not a matter of one or two hours. If you should fall again, you will not have any opportunity to escape. Why? That is because you will be accumulating bad karma! How could you have any opportunity when you continuously nurture your immeasurable defiled causes with non-virtuous conditions? If you cannot even stop it when you are awake, could you get out of it when you lose the opportunity to be awakened? Is this not simple to understand?

[86B 22:49 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p207LL1)]

Therefore he tells us that we must do this. If we mean to practice, we must do this. Whenever the thought appears, "I cannot do that!" Whenever the thought appears, "I cannot do that!" You will gradually, gradually purify yourself in this way. As you purify yourself, ah, obscuration is gradually reduced. So it will become easier for you to do this. And then, your strength will gradually increase. Of course this will then make it even easier. If you can do this from the very beginning, then when your strength increases and the obscuration reduced, of course it will be even easier for you. This is how you get better at it! Therefore after you understand this point, we would for sure know that, ah, so

this is how it is! Hence when we look at things, we need to look at the bigger picture. But when we engage our actions, we need to start from a specific detail. This is absolutely true! The same thing applies to what we are learning here as well. This is why he told us earlier that to learn the higher teaching we would start from the broad aspect, and this will inspire your desire to learn. But when we begin to practice, we begin from the lowest level, from the most basic and small areas. And then naturally, you will increase your desire to reach for the higher teachings. This is the same principle.

[86B 24:00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p208L8)]

Even if you fail to arrest the afflictions through such efforts, you must not allow them to linger, but must immediately disperse them,

This is how you strive. Even if you cannot arrest your afflictions, you should immediately disperse them. Do not let it linger. What does this mean? For instance, say your afflictions appear and you wish to arrest them. But you just cannot help yourself. However, at this time, you should stop it from lingering on. During a conversation with a fellow practitioner he said, "Ah, yes, indeed for us now, on the one hand, it is important to work on our own practice. On the other hand, the external environment is also important." Of course you will have to choose an environment, being a householder or a renunciate. But to become a renunciate is not just a matter of ceremony. You will need to carry out the purpose. And after you have become a renunciate, you need to discern between excellent teachers and bad friends among the fellow practitioners. It is the same for householders. In this case, as a householder, you cannot afford not to do business. You cannot help but to associate with them

[who are bad friends]. So what do you do? That is the time when you recognize that in many instances, they could not be avoided even if you try with great efforts. What to do then? **"You must not allow them to linger."** I have to really know this very clearly in my mind. "Ah, this is my enemy!"

[86B 25:08 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p209L3)]

Much like what was said earlier, it does not matter whether it is the monastery or the senior monk who tells you to refrain from doing things a certain way and to do them in another way. You feel awkward at heart, so someone comes to console you, "Yes, this is beyond reason. All was well here. He just likes to act this way. Just ignore him!" I used to think, "Ah, excellent. Yes, I just fight him." True, he cannot do anything about you. But this is what you should actually think, "It is not a matter of what he can do to me. It is a matter of how I should exhort myself!" At this time, you will on the one hand make a good effort. On the other hand, you will be alarmed, "Oh, it turns out that this person is not really helping me. He is also afflicted." He may not necessarily have bad intention. But you will now take note at heart. However, you do not have to purposely announce, "Alright, from now on, "pa!" we are no longer associated." We are all still in the same place. But you need to stay alert. And after that, do not let the wrong thought continue.

[86B 26:04(手抄稿 第十一冊 p209LL4)]

as though they were drawings in water. Do not let them be like drawings in stone.

What are drawings in water like? What are drawings in stone like? Look at what is next!

[86B 26:12 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p209LL2)]

But with regard to religious matters, you should do the opposite, as Nagarjuna's Friendly Letter says:⁵⁸³ [276]

**Know that the mind can be like a drawing
Made in water, in earth, or in stone.**

**When afflictions arise, it is best to have the first,
But when aspiring to religion, the last is best.**

We should examine our own minds. How do our minds work? It is like inscribing on water, on earth, and on stone. This affliction, when affliction arises, it should be like inscribing on water. Yes, sometimes we still cannot avoid having afflictions. But when inscribing on water, it disappears quickly, right? If it is inscribed on earth, the marks would stay for a long time. But it can be erased without much effort. But if you draw on stone, after it is done, I am sorry, you cannot erase it no matter what. Ah, this is it! For afflictions, even when they arise, they should be like inscribing on water, very quickly, no trace is left behind. But "when aspiring to religion," this should be like inscribing on stone. When the teaching makes its mark in the mind, it should be like inscribing on stone. Once ingrained, it never disappears.

[86B 27:08 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p210L8)]

But the way we aspire to religion is like inscribing on air, no trace can be found. Some better ones are like inscribing on water. Ah, there is at least some trace. But after it is inscribed, it disappears quickly. This is why we ordinary beings remain ordinary beings.

For us to strive now, genuine effort should be made starting from here. That is when afflictions appear, even though they are not like inscribing on air or water, they should still be made to disappear rather quickly. How is this done? They are purified with the teachings. Therefore our first and foremost important task is to struggle with afflictions! Ah, now that you all understand it you feel so happy. Likewise, do you remember? Why are the stages learnt in the beginning acting as foundations of the stages at the end, struggle with afflictions, this is related to all those mentioned earlier, correct? Therefore, starting from the very first step, as for the stages, you must comprehend them slowly. You can start to truly practice according to the level of understanding you obtained from your study; and depending on the extent of your practice, you will gain the corresponding accordance with the teachings.

[86B 28:13 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p211L1)]

This is said in Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds as well:⁵⁸⁴

We should be obsessed with these afflictions.

Resenting them, we do battle

While making an exception for only those afflictions

That are destroyers of other afflictions.

Better that I be burnt or killed,

Or that my head be cut off,

Than that I should ever bow

Before my enemies, the afflictions.

This is “Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds”. This is what a Bodhisattva who truly practices should do. Normally, when we get angry, who should we be angry at? We should be angry at this, "**Resenting them, we do battle!** Afflictions such as these are those whom I should battle against I shall remember them

and engender great hostility toward them. That is how it is. Therefore, you should look at the wrathful deities of the Mantra vehicle. They are completely in accordance with the scriptures. What should the Bodhisattvas do? They should have great hostility. What are they angry at? They are angry at these. Why do you need great hostility? You need it to destroy the bondage of ignorance. This is it. It entails this special significance here. So we should be angry at these, not others. And we want to become attached, attached to what? We should be attached to the teaching. Bodhisattvas should have great attachments, what type of attachments? We should be attached to the teaching. This is what is really important. Hence there remains only one thing - to destroy the afflictions. This is the only thing to do. Other than this, there is nothing else to do. I would rather die or have my head cut off, no matter what adversities, I will not succumb, will not succumb, therefore **"Better dead than that I should ever bow before my enemies, the afflictions."** But for us now, we would rather bow before the afflictions. We are utterly respectful to them. Ah, (thinking) these are excellent stuffs! Ah, wrong! This is what we should really strive to do correctly.

[87A 0:11 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p215L1)]

Also, Geshe Pu-chung-wa said, "Even when I am buried under the afflictions, I can still clench my teeth beneath them."

This master's conduct is truly worthy of our role model. As we observe the ways of a master like him, we will no longer be dejected, will no longer be dejected. We will instead become very courageous. Great excellent teacher like Pu-chung-wa, ah! He at times was also buried by the afflictions too! In other words, the afflictions would manifest again. They would again raid him. But

what did he do? **"I can still clench my teeth beneath them."** What is clenching your teeth? That is to bite the teeth. Even though I have been buried, buried, buried again, sorry, I just would not concede. I will fight you! If you have this determination, ah! You will be able to defeat it. But now we have not even fought it yet, we already submitted to it. You are completely useless against it. But yet we would frequently say, "Ah, this thing does not work. I cannot go without that. This thing is like this!" No. I would not give in to this, or give in to that, my goal is right here! Even though it is still manifesting, I will fight it with everything I have! Yes, though I am buried under the afflictions now, I am unconvinced that it should remain this way. Great, that is correct! That is correct! This is how excellent teachers come about.

[87A 1:25 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p216L2)]

Upon hearing what Pu-chung-wa said, Bo-do-wa stated, "If you do this, you will instantly stop them."

If you could truly be like this, ah, sorry, the afflictions will instantly subside. When you are buried under other enemies, even though you could clench your teeth, even though you could clench your teeth, sorry, you are less powerful so you cannot change anything. But afflictions are so exceptional that if you truly clench your teeth while you are buried underneath them, they disappear! What is the reason? It is very simple! This is why it is an internal phenomenon. So when we say that it is difficult, it is extremely difficult. But when we say that it is easy, then it is extremely easy! At the moment of awakening, may I ask, what constitutes your awakened mind at that point? It is the subjective aspects of awakening, not the subjective aspects of afflictions! Therefore, it is indeed very simple! It is true that when you try to

learn other things, it is indeed possible that you cannot learn it, you may not be able to learn it! However, as to the learning of Buddhism, after you really learnt it, there is no one, no particular time, and no matter which you cannot learn from. Why? Under any circumstance, your mind is present. It is very simple. As long as your mind is perked-up, you are on the right track!

[87A 2:28 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p216LL4)]

Speaking about engaging in any task now, if you want to go buy something, ah, sorry, the weather is bad; Ah, later (you say) you do not have enough money; it is not convenient to go out right now. You give all sorts of reason, all kinds of imperfect conditions! Far too many things demonstrate this point right before us. You cannot locate a broom when you want to sweep the floor, yet you spend half a day doing this! But for afflictions, the moment you realize it, all you have to do is to clench your teeth, "you will instantly stop them!" right? This theory is very clear! And then I think everyone has had this sort of experience, when you truly focus all your attention to listen to something, ah, that is right, that is right! What is truly important is that, were you not putting up with the afflictions earlier? The most serious and horrendous thing is - we think illogically, and we would feel that, ah, this is making sense!

[87A 3:15 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p217L4)]

Do you remember the six causes of the afflictions? You will have to make sure that you have understood very clearly the materials that were presented earlier. The predominant cause of affliction is the latent proclivity, the seed. When this encounters the sensory object, afflictions will appear. There are several types of objects that we come across: one type comes from social

context, another type comes from bad explanations, and there is another one which comes from your habit. Then there is incorrect attention. You are whirling in your afflictions all day long, paying incorrect attention. Even though you have heard the teaching, you will say, "Yes, Dharma Master, you have taught well. But I just cannot follow it!" Why can you not follow it? What you are doing now is paying incorrect attention. You have not truly clenched your teeth with respect to this. This has to do with the principles that were described earlier. Or perhaps you are not clear of the true characteristics of the teaching.

[87A 4:00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p217LL5)]

If you truly have understood clearly, then you will feel this way, "Ah, precisely! My very thought right now is paying incorrect attention." But I cannot seem to correct it. Why? This is because you do not understand its reality - the ignorance. It is in fact "**animosity**," and "**falsehood**." Do you remember these characteristics of ignorance? Clearly it is unreal. Clearly it is not friendship. But still you hold this to be true and precious. Due to this ignorance, you become attached. This is the first mistake, not recognising the characteristics of such - this is the general one. And then, one by one was... and then you do not know its faults. You also do not know the benefits of purifying it. If you do understand all of these things, then incorrect attention will not arise anymore. You have seen through them clearly.

Hence for the stages, I would like to reiterate this for us now! Let us think through this. First, after you thought through it, you can try to practice it. It is marvellous beyond words! But for all of us sitting here, for what I have experienced - or rather we should say, not only for me, but for quite a few of the students here who have already experienced this. Some, ah, feel that no matter

what they do they just cannot get it. But some would feel, ah! They can change their mindset as soon as they try it, it is so simple. Yes, indeed. It is a matter of whether you have practiced by following the method described earlier. For what you have not tried before, ah, you will always feel that it is really difficult. But as long as you can figure out each stage correctly, once your mind makes the shift, you will feel, ah! It is so readily accomplished, so readily accomplished. Ah, this is it! Therefore,

[87A 5:45 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p218LL5)]

When you rout ordinary enemies, they can take over another country, seize power, and then return again to challenge you. The afflictions are not like this. Once you expel them completely from your mind, there is no other country to which they can retreat; nor can they return. However, we fail to overcome the afflictions because we lack joyous perseverance.

It is exactly like this. For the enemies of the mundane world, even though you can drive them away and live in peace temporarily, after a short time, when he gradually recovers his strength, he will return! Ah, this is troublesome. The afflictions are not like this. The afflictions that are in your body and mind, suppose you can truly uproot them completely from your mind, they will never have the strength to avenge themselves, never have the strength to avenge themselves. But where is the problem? It is **because "we fail to overcome the afflictions because we lack joyous perseverance."** This is really important here. This is what we should truly strive for right now. This is what we should truly strive for! Therefore we should truly strive to joyously persevere.

[87A 6:50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p219L4)]

Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds says:⁵⁸⁵

[p347, English LR Vol 1]

**Ordinary enemies, expelled from a country,
Settle in other countries and take them over;
Recouping their strength, they then return.
The afflictions are enemies of a different sort.**

This is it. This was explained earlier.

[87A 7:06 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p219L6)]

**The eye of wisdom eradicates the various afflictions.
Once cleared from my mind, where can they go?
From where can they regroup and counterattack?
Of weak mind, I have no joyous perseverance at all.**

The reason the afflictions can delude us is because we do not recognize them. Now that you recognize them, you have the wisdom, the clear cognition, or the correct view, the eye of wisdom can eradicate them. After they are eradicated, this means we have expelled them from our minds. Where would they go? They have nowhere to go! Could they live somewhere else and counterattack me again? It would be impossible. Where is the problem? It is just that I have a weak mind and I have no joyous perseverance! The first one is a weak mind and the lack of joyous perseverance. This is already very terrible. On top of this, we would even find all kinds of excuses for ourselves. I cannot go without this. I cannot go without that! If you cannot go

without them, this means you do not prepare yourself from the start. Of course then you are doomed!

[87A 8:11(手抄稿 第十一冊 p219LL1)]

Nyuk-rum-ba (bsNyug-rum-pa) said:

When an affliction appears, do not be indolent, but counter it immediately with its remedy. If you cannot overcome it, stop thinking about it, set up a mandala and other offerings, offer these to the guru and the chosen deities, and make supplications to them to overcome it. Focusing on the affliction, recite the mantras of wrathful deities. Doing these things will cause the affliction to disappear. [277]

This is what one past master said. It is said that when an affliction appears, do not be indolent. This is indeed the time. This is when we should apply the remedy right away to overcome it. If you cannot overcome it, what should you do? You should stand up! The first one is to apply the remedy. That is, you need to recognise it right away. If in case you cannot overcome it right away, you should set up mandala. To set up mandala is to make offerings. Why do we need to set up a mandala here. This mandala is in fact, what we refer to as an altar or the circumference for offering. In other words, even though the mandala is shaped by our hands' gesture now, it means that we offer everything that we have. Therefore, this is still kept in place in Tibet. There are three ways of making this offering. The first way is to take everything in the Jambūdvīpa, everything in the three billion world systems, the best physical form is the Buddha's blissful form and the Pure Land - so you visualize this and make this offering. Why should you make this offering? This was said in the four powers. When you need to

apply antidotes to your afflictions, your power is too weak! Therefore, we need to make offering and rely on the power of the Buddha. You can rely on this Diamond Mountain. This power is immense.

[87A 9:43 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p220LL4)]

And then, because our power is weak, after we make the offering, "**make supplications to them to overcome it.**" Guru is the teacher. As for the chosen deities, if you are the person who recites the Buddha's name, then it would be the Buddha, the Amitabha Buddha for you. If you recite the fundamental Buddha's epithet, then it would be our Bhagavan, the Shakyamuni Bhagavan. Or even the Avalokiteshavara, the Sitigharba Bodhisattva. After recitation, by their power, "**Focusing on the affliction, recite the mantras of wrathful deities. Doing these things will cause the affliction to disappear.**" Toward these afflictions, you will generate great hostility! This is real great hostility to cause the afflictions to disappear, to disappear.

[87A 10:14 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p221L1)]

Therefore, you need to pay attention to this! "**When an affliction appears, do not be indolent.**" You need to apply remedy to overcome it right away. You **need** to understand this. Gradually you will understand why I tell you that I need to respect time. Why this? That is what goes on normally in your mind? All day long, you follow afflictions. Have you gradually understood that? Therefore, then you will know, "This is a rule set by the monastery." Why did he set this rule? It is to "Use the teaching to remedy the emotions. Use the teaching to purify the emotions.

Use the teaching to transform the emotions." Do you remember these three sentences? You are supposed to get overly worked up about this. Yes, there is a special reason for respecting time. Every rule has all kinds of reasons behind it. Oh, when you hear the wooden board sound in the morning, "Pa!" You will get up immediately. It is just like that. On the one hand you will purify your afflictions and on the other hand, you respect the teaching. No matter which way you look at this, it is as plain as that, there are all kinds of benefits to it.

[87A 11:17 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p221L9)]

If you can understand this thing, you will no longer say, "Eh! This is what they do in this other place. That place..." What does that matter! People of other places will use different ways to purify their afflictions. That is all there is. Just like that. The teaching itself, the teaching befits all situations. A certain teaching is used to suit you. That is why it is called dependent-arising! If you can grasp this point, there will be no more problems, no more problems. This is what we should fundamentally recognise!

[87A 11:50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p221LL1)]

Lang-ri-tang-ba (Glang-ri-thang-pa) said:

Even changing the place where you sit or merely turning your head will make the afflictions disappear.

It is said that he struggled with his afflictions.

So, this other person said, he also said - this is still referring to Nyuk-rum-ba - he is just saying that others have told him this: not only does he do that, but that from where he sat before, as

he stands and move to somewhere else, "**merely turning your head,**" this means he is striving to clench his teeth to fight a few rounds with it... just by doing that, he can make afflictions disappear. In fact, what this actually explains is the state of his mind. He devoted all of his energy on that. Hence, from this we can see the way he struggled with the afflictions, the way he struggled with the afflictions.

[87A 12:38 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p222L6)]

Last night, I went down to tell a funny story. Some people already know this. I had frequently mentioned this before. I said that if we do not know, do not know what vegetables look like, then when we ask you to pull out the weeds, you will wind up pulling out the vegetables instead of the weeds. Even though this seems funny, but there is a reason behind this. I had frequently mentioned this, which is about my teacher. Oh, this person is very assiduous, very diligent. When we set out to maintain the monastery, what do we do? We would at times go to the garden to pull out the weeds. He would be the first one to do so. "Pa!" He would roll up his sleeves. "Bong, bong," before others are ready, he was already there. He was done pulling the weeds. But when we looked at the garden, though the weeds were gone, the vegetables were gone as well. And then even though the taller weeds were gone, the smaller ones remained. That was why people frequently found it amusing.

In the beginning, I thought the same as well. But later on, I revered and admired this more and more as time progressed. This is absolutely unmistakable. Even it is overcorrected, but in the beginning, it is impossible to be completely perfect. That is why you must be diligent right from the start. This was the reason he poured every bit of effort he had to do everything. As soon he

does something, he hears something, "Pong!" He immediately stands up and carries it out. Others may still be dragging and slow, still working on it. When you look at everyone's progress, he has already pulled everything out. Even though there is a problem with what he did, but how does this relate to what we are explaining here? I then realized, yes, indeed in any instance, he is geared up to be engaged. This shows an uncompromising attitude. This is what is really important for us now. This is the first thing that we have to learn now, the so-called "correct view."

[87A 14:18 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p223L5)]

Not only do we make compromises now, we even try to shield it, to shield it with all kinds of excuses. If you use the mundane world excuses, then it is relatively not as bad. What is pitiful is when we use Buddhism to shield that. We would always feel, "I practice in the Mahayana. I am doing this to benefit others." This thing, you must absolutely examine yourself in this instance. You must absolutely examine yourself! Even if you desperately try to remedy this, you may not necessarily be able to succeed. Yet you still try to shield it! Not only do you try to shield it, you use Buddhism to do so. Then you are doomed. There is no other way to help you anymore. Buddhism is originally intended to be used to remedy this thing. Yet you use Buddhism to shield your afflictions. May I ask then, "What are you going to do?" If you as a Buddhist use afflictions to shield your afflictions, who can we rely on to propagate the teachings? And you would say, "Everybody needs to propagate the teachings! You are not working hard at it!" Where does that come from? Therefore, for me now... as I think about this, I was like that before as well. I am truly ashamed and embarrassed. I still cannot change that up until now. This is why I particularly want to point out my mistakes whenever we come across them. I hope that my setbacks will

serve as a warning for you. Do not go down the same disastrous track. Do not go down this same disastrous track!

[87A 15:25 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p223LL2)]

Therefore, I tell you, indeed, I cannot say that I can practice Buddhism. I can only share with you my painful experiences, my mistakes! I will say this one more time. It is already not allowed to use mundane excuses to be lenient with yourself. You however can still be saved by Buddhism. But if you use Buddhism for leniency, not only will you be unsaved, Buddhism is doomed as well! At this point, we must put this principle in our mind constantly to caution ourselves. If you can examine your own mind, there is nothing clearer than that. If you can examine your own mind, there is nothing clearer than that! This is my final advice to you, "This is about examining our own minds. Do not examine others. If you use this one sentence to examine others, then you are doomed." Indeed, there are too many great Bodhisattvas who would rather go to hell for the sake of helping others. These excellent beings must blend in with the conventional folks. Therefore, we should not be examining others. During Buddha's lifetime and his previous lifetimes, there were many people like that. Most importantly, we should be looking at ourselves. This is especially important!

[87A 16:36 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p224L7)]

Such disappearance of the afflictions as Lang-ri-tang-ba describes occurs when you do as Gonba-wa said: "What is there to do except to stand guard over your mind day and night?"

For us now, no matter day or night, in fact, no matter whether we are wake or asleep, it would even be fine if you are sleeping. What can you do while asleep? There are still skilful means. Before you sleep, as long as you are able to keep up this idea, sorry, this idea will still remain in your mind during sleep. Just listen to this concept first and one day when we really get the opportunity, I will tell you how to go about this when we actually begin to practise. It is marvellous! Before you sleep, you lazily stretch yourself, "I have been busy for the entire day. I am so happy to sleep." Then you will have all kinds of dreams. What you will need to do is to focus on the sublime teaching first before you sleep. Yes, that is right! And then after you contemplate, contemplate and contemplate, even though after you contemplate, you may not be able to fall asleep, do not be afraid. After you fall asleep gradually, the dreams that you will have that night will certainly be good dreams. Even when your afflictions arise, you will still readily feel, "Why [am I doing this]?" There will be subtle manifestations of this that will continue to struggle with your afflictions. It is that marvellous! This is absolutely a fact.

[87A 17:50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p225L2)]

If you can put this into practice, eh, [such disappearance of afflictions] will occur. And only when you follow this method will you be able to make that occur.

[87A 17:58 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p225L4)]

Furthermore, no matter how many times the Great Elder met someone in a day, he would always ask, "Meanwhile, have you had a good mind?"

This is what Master Atisha said. By the time of Lama Tsong Kha Pa, more than three hundred years have passed. Hence it said, "So it was said." So, they heard it this way. No matter how many times you meet the Great Elder, he would always say, "Have you had a good mind?" Pay attention to this. This is the great explication for us! When we see each other now, what do we do? Ah, as soon as we see each other, you have no idea what kind of nonsense comes out of our mouths. It goes on and on without stopping. But when great excellent teachers see you, they will ask you, "Eh, have you developed a good mind?" Just like that. Therefore, remember what the Zen master, Yún Gǔ Fǎ Huì said, when he saw someone in The Liao Fan's Four Lessons, whoever went to see him, he would throw a pillow at you and ask, "How have you learnt?" This is the example of past masters. The Buddha has an even higher expectation of us. If we wish to learn from the Buddha, we should begin to learn from this. When we ask ourselves questions, this is what we should be asking. When we see each other, this is what should come up. By then, your afflictions will have gradually, gradually reduced. When you encourage each other, this is what you should be encouraging. So, the earlier section covered again on what we should be learning, the ethical disciplines, the characteristics of ethical disciplines, the important aspects, and what we should do now to discipline the afflictions.

[87A 19:21 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p226L1)]

The way to eliminate the afflictions is as follows, beginning with the six root afflictions. Among the great misdeeds, ignorance is the most tenacious, and serves as the basis of all other afflictions.

The way to eliminate the afflictions is as follows. There are basic and advanced stages. The most difficult one to eliminate is the affliction of ignorance. Not only it is difficult, but that it is the basis of all other afflictions. I had particular mentioned this earlier, you should not say, "Ah! I do not have afflictions now." You are just being ethically neutral now, amidst the subjective aspects of ignorance. For attachment and hostility, honestly, even though we are not able to eliminate them now, we at least recognize them. As long as you recognize them, you will have opportunities. But we do not recognize ignorance and yet we feel just fine. We would now frequently say, "Ah! didn't the Sixth Patriarch say, 'if the mind is at peace, why is there a need to maintain ethical discipline!' My mind is at peace now. What need is there to keep ethical discipline?" But actually, is your mind at peace? Not necessarily. Some people are at peace. True. But sorry, some are amidst the afflictions of ignorance.

[87A 20:22 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p226L8)]

What is mind at peace like? This is what the Sixth Patriarch said. And how did he manifest this? Later, there were others who took a knife and put it on his neck, "Bā!" The knife was swung. Eh? How come after the knife was swung, the head was still there? That person tried the second time. He thought his eyes did not see right. So that person did it again. But the head remained intact. This is his manifestation of mind is at peace. Do you have this ability? If so, then indeed, you do not need to uphold ethical disciplines anymore. That is how it is! This is what at peace is like. It is not the case where your mind is just undisturbed and without temper. But if someone comes and slaps your face, not to mention a knife, wow! You would argue like crazy. It would be strange if you do not begin to fight physically! This is not called being at peace in your mind! If someone gave you one thing less, then you

will feel, "Where is my share?" That is not at peace. That is ignorance. This is what we should understand.

[87A 21:18 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p227L1)]

Therefore, as a remedy for ignorance, you should meditate a great deal on dependent-arising and become knowledgeable about the progression and cessation of cyclic existence.

How would you remedy this? You will need to meditate a great deal on dependent-arising. You will need to know the characteristics of life and death and how to make it cease. After you can skilfully understand this, then it would be right. The answer to the last question that I asked of you, I did not give that to you. Let me tell you, I will give you another test at a later time. So, you must work hard and work hard on this. I will tell you when you pass the test correctly, and I would not tell you if you fail the test. But I am at your side, slowly guide you how to recognise it. This is a very important thing. Now, indeed, the best way to remedy this thing based on what we learn up till now — it is this. Actually, in the future it is still this! But the meaning of which will go deeper one step at a time, becoming even more intricate. That is all there is. This is an absolutely true fact.

[87A 22:23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p227L9)]

If you have habitually cultivated this, none of the bad views such as the five afflicted views will occur.

If you can truly train in this, the "five afflicted views" that we have now, all bad views will not arise. This affliction of the views, this is the culprit. The view will certainly precede everything. Once

you take on a certain view, oh, you will feel that this is how things should be done! Speaking of the view, I thought of something really interesting. Where we are now, if we give you an apple and ask you to eat with the skin, you will not want to. That is how we are before as well. The apple is tasty but why would you want to eat the skin? Eh, but for the Americans, if you peel the apple, they will laugh at you. "What? Why would you peel the skin?" "I do not think the apple skin tastes very good. Why should I eat it?" If you ask him if it tastes good, "Of course it does not taste very good!" "So why do you eat it?" "It is nutritious!" What does that display? It is his view. His concept leads him to do this.

[87A 23:16 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p228L4)]

In fact, there are too many things that occur the same way. If you examine this carefully, it is marvellous. As our habits have been formed, we unknowingly behave in a certain way. But to establish a new habit in the very beginning, there are two possible ways: one is that you develop it without being aware; there is another way to form a new habit, which is often due to the view that has been established first. You will feel that you need to have things done a certain way. You will feel that after you have established this view, you will... For instance, this is the case for us most of the time. Ah! People will say, the scientific knowledge tells you this. If you think about it, [you will feel that] there is no fault to that knowledge. So, then you will follow to do it. Therefore, the root to everything is the bad views. You do not know how things happen. Hence the root to all bad views is "the view of the perishing aggregate." Now if you want to remedy this, you will need to take out the root. This will solve everything. And the method for remedying this is to exchange your view for dependent-arising. Just like that. Hence the first thing he does is to point out the root that is the most difficult to remedy. In fact,

there are three main afflictions. Other than ignorance, there are still hostility and attachment.

[87A 24:22 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p228LL2)]

Hostility is the enemy who brings suffering both in this and in future lives, and who destroys the accumulated roots of virtue.

It is easy to understand hostility. But we would frequently become angry. So, he especially tells us, there is not one advantage to harbouring hostility. Not only is there no advantage, but that it brings great suffering! The virtuous roots will be severed right through this. This is what really harms us.

[87A 24:47 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p229L5)]

As Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds says,

There is nothing more terrible than hostility.

[87A 24:55 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p229L3)]

"There is no sin like hatred."⁵⁸⁶ Therefore, never give hostility an opportunity, and make every effort to be patient.

Under any circumstance, do not give rise to this. You must train in patience.

[87A 25:04 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p229L7)]

If hostility does not arise, you will be very happy, even in this lifetime.

This, the second thing to remedy is hostility.

[87A 25:13 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p229L9)]

Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds:⁵⁸⁷

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

**Those who persistently defeat anger,
Will be happy in this and other lives.**

This tells us, if you can maintain peace now, you will obtain a beautiful effect in the future.

[87A 25:25 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p229LL2)]

Attachment—that is, craving—strengthens all previously accumulated virtues and nonvirtues and enhances their power to create cyclic existence.

This attachment is truly terrible! For the previously accumulated virtues and nonvirtues, it "**strengthens all previously accumulated virtues and nonvirtues and enhances their power to create cyclic existence.**" After we understand the relationship of twelve dependent-arising, we now know how

horrible attachment is. We also understand that to truly remedy the problem of cyclic existence, you have to begin here. Right? It is this. Just like that. Therefore, for all kinds of previously accumulated karma, therefore for this karma, this is a causal seed.

And what will cause it to enhance, to manifest? It is this attachment - craving, grasping and existence! Hence this will bring about a force to propel cyclic existence.

[87A 26:32 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p230L5)]

For those in the desire realm, craving arises from the feelings caused by the mental process of contact, which involves sensory objects. Therefore, you should meditate a great deal on what is externally or internally unpleasant and on the faults of being attached to desirable objects, and thereby overcome your craving and attachment.

The best place to cultivate is the desire realm. Hence, he says that for the desire realm that we are in, even though ignorance is the most difficult to understand, but the first step to cultivation begins exactly with that! Indeed, to process the sensory objects, a complete experience requires two things, one is contact and the other is feeling. After you have contact, you will have feeling, the condition of feeling - feeling is the condition that facilitates the arising of craving. So how will you remedy this? **"Therefore, you should meditate a great deal on what is externally or internally unpleasant and on the faults of being attached to desirable objects, and thereby overcome your craving and attachment."** This tells us, how will you remedy this? You will have to do that - to meditate on that. This meditation includes relying on the teacher. Eh, you should not be listening to a person like this, oh, this person may seem nice to you and say this, "Ah,

look at how you are now. This person is so strict with his teachings and these principles do not make sense at all! What is he saying?!?" You should not be like that! You should know this. Hence relying on an excellent teacher is the first one. Secondly, you need to listen to the sublime teaching. And then the third one...eh, after listening properly, you will need to reflect accordingly. What will you reflect on? You will know the faults of these things. Know the unpleasantness and the associated faults. If you truly understand the harms of them, you will reject them in your views. It will not be the same as before. After you train on the unpleasantness of it, you will completely turn your latent propensity around. By then, craving and attachment can no longer come near you, no longer come near you!

[87A 28:20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p231L4)]

The primary goal of Buddhism is exactly this. Hence, we should never use Buddhism as an excuse, "Ah, I am here to propagate the teachings! Ah, if I do not do this, then, then, then the virtuous roots of those Buddhists will be severed!" Well, that is not how it is! If you are not skilful with this, if you do not understand this point, and choose to engage with such attitude, it will not sever other Buddhist's virtuous roots but instead sever the wisdom life force of Buddhism! The Dharma jewel that has been accumulated by the Buddha through countless eons will be destroyed by you with a single blow. This is what we need to recognize clearly!

[87A 28:57 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p231LL5)]

Hence if you use Buddhism in this way [as described by the text], then it will be correct! How would you use it? Ah! You would

contemplate on the faults and meditate on the impurity [of the sensory objects]. By then, no matter how lucrative fame and profit is, as soon as you see them, ah, you would flee in terror without hesitation. You will abstain from these things totally. That is when you have overcome them! This is how you begin. Hence for attachment, hostility and ignorance, each has been remedied. Well, if the main ones are being remedied, of course there will be no problems with the others! If you can overcome the coarser afflictions, you will then be able to progress to overcome the subtle ones step by step.

The great master Vasubandhu says:

**The five beings—deer, elephants, butterflies,
Fish, and bees—are overcome by five desirable objects.
[278]**

**If a single desirable object can overwhelm each one of
them, why shouldn't**

**All five destroy someone who constantly dwells on
them?**

[87B 0:03 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p233L1)]

These five things refer to our five poisons. To have any of these, ah, you will suffer just as much. The harms caused by any of these are already horrendous, but now you have all five. What are you going to do?

[87B 0:19 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p233L4)]

Moreover, the four cravings

These things, it is very difficult to get rid of them and they occur too easily! What are they?

[87B 0:30 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p233LL3)]

for gain, fame, praise, and pleasure and the dislike for their four opposites are quick to occur and difficult to get rid of. Strive to remedy this, and stop these eight worldly concerns

"Gain," things that are gained as profit. "Fame" is reputation. "Praise" is someone commending you. "Pleasure" is happiness. Hence these are the eight worldly concerns. To include the opposites, it would be "gain and loss, defamation and fame, praise and ridicule, pain and pleasure." It is exactly like that. Of course, you should be unaffected by the good things, you should be unaffected by the bad things as well. Since we are trying to remedy attachment, then we have to deal with the four mentioned. Why? These are particularly difficult to eliminate. These opposites, "**... their four opposites,**" after including these opposites, they all together constitute the eight worldly concerns. In these "**gain, fame, praise, and pleasure,**" they give rise to our attachment. And then, "loss, defamation, ridicule and pain" give rise to our hostility. In brief, the root to these is ignorance. This is what we must reject, reject! You should dislike them, know their faults and not be tainted by them. "**Strive to remedy this.**"

[87B 1:43 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p234L5)]

by meditating on the faults of cyclic existence in general and by cultivating the mindfulness of death in particular.

What is the actual method? You have to train in this. This was mentioned earlier.

[87B 1:50 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p234L7)]

Eliminate pride, as it is the chief obstacle to the development of the path in this lifetime and causes future rebirth as a servant and so forth.

Other than attachment, hostility and ignorance, what is "pride"? **Pride is "the chief obstacle to the development of the path in this lifetime."** This is indeed the case. Pride is something you cannot tell by just looking. But when you have pride, you just won't have any means. "Ah! You just explain that all the time." You will feel that Dharma is just like that. "It does not seem that he is better than me. Ah, this is not worthwhile to listen to." So you will always hold your "self" to be better than others. This is it. Therefore, before we train in Buddhism, this is why we must know that we are sick, why we must be respectful. If you cannot give rise to this, it is basically useless to be listening to Dharma. Once you have this, even if he is inferior to you, you will still benefit from him. We know too many theories by now. It is time to conscientiously practice them. If you can truly generate this kind of attitude, even an insect is an excellent teacher to you. When others reproach you, they are your excellent teachers too. Not to mention a real excellent teacher. Hence this section explains pride. It is an obstacle to you at present. What about the future? You will degrade to a lowly status. Hence you will have to eliminate this.

[87B 3:00 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p235L2)]

**The way to do this is stated in the Friendly Letter:⁵⁸⁸
If you reflect again and again, "Just as I have not
transcended
Illness, aging, death, and loss of the pleasant,
So my karma and its results are my own doing,"
You will overcome arrogance because you will be
applying its remedy.**

It is still about reflecting life and death. You see the "I" as so big; as a result, it is the root to birth, aging, illness and death. And then you will have separation from what is pleasant and so on, the eight sufferings will torment you! Under any circumstances, sorry, you cannot escape the effects produced by your defiled karma. This is an inevitable dead end! Just like that. Hence after you understand this and remedy it, this arrogance will not arise.

[87B 3:40 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p235L7)]

Once you have achieved certainty about the truths, the three jewels, and karma and its effects, the affliction of doubt will not arise.

The last one is "**doubt.**" If you can achieve certainty and conviction about the four truths, the Three Jewels and karma, the affliction of doubt will not arise. Now the primary culprit is the wrong views. In other words, you will need to eliminate the afflictions of views. And then, the afflictions of perceptions: attachment, hostility, ignorance, pride and doubt must be eliminated. This is what we should truly strive at present. The earlier section is trying to explain to us that in general what is most important for us to do right now? We need to fight against the afflictions. And the way to fight, it is whenever the subjective aspects of afflictions appear, as soon as they appear, you will

immediately fight off them. Just like that. In order to fight against it, you will need to know the characteristics of afflictions, their faults and the benefits for eliminating them and so on. This section here is explaining the individual ones, explaining the afflictions individually to let us know what they are. So these afflictions.... these afflictions were covered earlier. This section tells us the simple methods to remedy the afflictions.

[87B 4:59 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p236L2)]

Yes, by now we understand this: Ah! So the key point conveyed in the teachings for persons of medium capacity is that if we exert effort on this, there is no one who cannot achieve. If you recite the Buddha's name as your actual practice and use this as your supporting practice, then you will certainly be reborn in the Pure Land. And your status there will certainly be high. That is because you have no more afflictions at present! What is the reason you fight with the afflictions? You are scared of the cyclic existence. Therefore to fight with afflictions is to seek for Pure Land. Therefore your entire attention is on that even when you are not reciting the Buddha's name. Having this mentality is already in itself the best way to recite the Buddha's name. Not to mention having the Buddha's aspiration [to help you]. Similarly, for you to be practicing Zen or learning the teaching, without any exception, every teaching method is based on this. Hence we should know, "Ah! This is why that this section is 'shared with the persons of medium capacity.'" This is the foundation that is used to advance. This is the main point.

[87B 5:58 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p236L9)]

With the stages set as above, for the content of maintaining ethical disciplines, the basic concepts have been covered. Now let us continue.

[87B 6:09 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p236LL4)]

The secondary afflictions—those called sleep, lethargy, excitement, laziness, carelessness, shamelessness, lack of embarrassment, forgetfulness, and lack of vigilance—are quick to occur and hinder your cultivation of the virtuous group of phenomena.

So other than what has been specifically explained earlier, in regards to the importance of ethical discipline, how to maintain them, how to restrain yourself, a few things are covered here. For these few things, even though they seem to be usually pretty minor, but these present the greatest hindrance to our cultivation of virtues. So which are the ones?

[87B 6:49 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p237L2)]

"Sleep, lethargy" describe the times when we submerge [in our consciousness], the times when we submerge. And then when we become too enlivened - it is **"excitement."** And in general, this is what we do, **"laziness, carelessness, shamelessness, lack of embarrassment, forgetfulness, and lack of vigilance."** Let me briefly explain the characteristics of these. Sleep is how we usually sleep. Indeed, after being busy for the day, you will go to sleep. This was explained earlier that even though we must sleep, this is also covered in a later section, even though we must sleep, but the attitude you carry to your sleep is what we need to pay attention to. The body needs to

rest. But the mind does not. The mind does not. The mind needs to maintain perseverance. So during the daytime, when you are sitting or doing something, this lethargy, you will frequently fall into lethargy. For instance when we are learning meditative concentration, we might feel that, "Ah, I am doing great!" But in fact, you were lethargic throughout the session. This does not only occur when we learn meditative concentration. In many cases, let's say when we recite the Buddha's name, there are many who recite the Buddha's name will feel, "Ah, I have recited well." In fact, he was in a state of slight lethargy. In the state of slight lethargy, it seems like you have rested to restore your energy. You still feel really good. But this is actually a big obstacle. If we unknowingly misconstrue this to be the correct way, and we think that we are right, this becomes a problem.

[87B 8:11 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p237LL4)]

Other than this, in fact, the most important thing for you to do is to bring about vigilance and mindfulness as told in the next part of the sentence. Another thing that could happen is when your mind begins to be enlivened, it could turn into excitement. Excitement accords with attachment which will cause you to clamber upon this and that. Your mind will continue to think about all kinds of stuff. Laziness, laziness is not striving to persevere in cultivating virtue. It is like that. So after you give yourself a lot of room, you will become like that. Shamelessness and lack of embarrassment is not feeling shameful and embarrass for your mistakes. The subjective aspects of shamelessness and embarrassment are the same. One will come about through self-reflection, "Oh no, how can I be so terrible!" The other one is a feeling generated by comparing yourself to others. The difference is this.

[87B 9:07 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p238L3)]

So, the real important thing for us to do is to regularly maintain vigilance and mindfulness. On the contrary, once you lose vigilance and mindfulness, all sorts of problems will surface. Therefore, these (secondary afflictions) **"are quick to occur and hinder your cultivation of the virtuous group of phenomena."** These (secondary afflictions) readily appear regularly. Once they arise, you will accord with afflictions. So, of course you will not be cultivating then. Hence when we formally train, this is what we must do. The first step to keeping ethical discipline is primarily this. What is the most important thing in keeping ethical discipline? Correct view. The correct view must be upheld by mindfulness. Those (secondary afflictions) that are mentioned above will most readily defile and even cause you to lose your correct view and mindfulness! Once you lose that, no more need be said. This is why he said that even though this may seem minor, but it will cause you great harm, cause you great harm!

[87B 10:05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p238LL5)]

You should understand their faults and get used to reducing their strength through an immediate application of their remedies.

For a true remedy, there is always a correct method. We should know their (secondary afflictions) harms caused to us. And after you know the harms, you will then get used to thinking that this is the terrible enemy that we must counter. Then, you will actually apply the remedies. This next sentence, **"get used to reducing their strength through an immediate application of their remedies."** "Immediate," that means you do this every moment

in your mind. In fact, this is when you are truly making an effort. Now that we understand the words, by the time you truly engage in cultivation, this becomes very important. As soon as you examine yourself, you will know. When you are not examining yourself, it will be gone. You will be not mindful. You will be lazy. Hence, true cultivation must be like this; it must be like this. When you make real effort, this is a very important matter. It is in your every thought: Yes, I am being mindful and vigilant right now. So, at that time, you will not have to worry about it. There will be detailed explanations later in regard to how to exert effort on this.

So as for the faults, they are as listed before. The faults are explained one by one.

[87B 11:17 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p239L6)]

**With respect to their faults the Friendly Letter says:⁵⁸⁹
Excitement and regret, malice, lethargy
And sleep, longing for the desirable, and doubt—**

[p330, English LR Vol 1]

**Understand that these five obscurations
Are robbers who steal the riches of virtue.**

We usually would say that when we cultivate concentration, there will be these five obscurations. The five obscurations are attachment, hostility, excitement and regret, lethargy, and doubt. Ah, these are most serious while training in concentration because these will obscure virtues.

[87B 11:49 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p239LL4)]

Also, the Exhortation to Wholehearted Resolve discusses the faults at length:⁵⁹⁰

Phlegm, wind, and bile

Occur to a great extent in the bodies

Of those who take pleasure in sleep and lethargy;

Their constituents are in disorder. [279]

This essentially means that if a person loves to sleep a lot and is frequently lethargic, if this is the case, these things will increase [in the body]. When these things increase, the "**constituents**", which are the four elements, (the four constituents - earth, water, fire and wind), will not be in balance. As this occurs, the body and mind will be disturbed.

[87B 12:33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p240L3)]

For those who take pleasure in lethargy and sleep

Their stomachs are unclean because of poor food,

Their bodies are heavy and their complexions unhealthy,

Even their words are unclear.

Those who take pleasure in lethargy and sleep experience all kinds of unpleasantness. In addition, after eating too much, people who eat too much usually have this problem. After eating too much, people become very lethargic. Just like that. The outcome of being in such a state is that the body becomes really heavy, and there is no motivation to do anything. And then, immediately all sorts of things will follow. Because of this, the consciousness becomes muddled, consciousness becomes muddled.

[87B 13:17(手抄稿 第十一冊 p240L8)]

And:⁵⁹¹

**Those who take pleasure in lethargy and sleep
Are confused and their aspirations toward religion fade.
These children lose all of their good qualities,
Their virtues degenerate, and they fall into darkness.**

Those who enjoy sleep are foolish. Those who really strive will focus all of their energy on cultivation. If a practitioner starts to go down this track of taking pleasure in lethargy and sleep, that would be the exact opposite – foolish [or confusion]. It is just that. When we train, the first thing that we need is - a yearning for virtue. Actually, this principle is something we can immediately relate to. For instance, when you are particularly enthusiastic about something, you will have great energy. When others ask you to sleep, you will not be able to do it. We would frequently talk about how people will watch television with great enthusiasm. "Ah, you need to go to sleep a little earlier!" "Eh, no problem, no problem, no problem!" Why? That is because your interest at the time is really high. Your interest is really high. On the contrary, if you are not interested in it, you will not be motivated. This is the way we train in virtues as well. Therefore, usually, there are many who are lazy and indolent. As such, they cannot truly cultivate. Absolutely not! Cultivation must be done with a great power of perseverance. This is necessary. This is necessary. In this case [i.e. one takes pleasure in lethargy and sleep], one would truly be the most foolish and childish ordinary being! He would not be able to accomplish any sort of cultivation, any sort of cultivation. For what one has already gained through cultivation, it will degenerate. The gains will degenerate. Just like that. Therefore, **"Their virtues degenerate, and they fall into darkness!"**

[87B 15:02 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p241L6)]

The *Mindfulness of the Excellent Teaching* says:⁵⁹²

**The one foundation of all the afflictions
Is laziness. Those who have it,
Those who have a single moment of laziness, Will
have no practice at all.**

In the *Mindfulness of the Excellent Teaching*, there is this sentence. In the *Great Treatise on the Perfection of Wisdom*, the Nagarjuna Bodhisattva had particularly cited this. Many scriptures and commentaries will say the same. The one foundation of all the afflictions, what is it? It is laziness, laziness! No matter who, as long as the laziness is there, sorry, you cannot talk about Buddhism. What is laziness? I do not mean some scattered behaviours or simple carelessness. What I am referring to is the direct incompatible factor to joyous perseverance, what joyous perseverance remedies. To say this from the reverse angle, that which is incompatible with laziness, and is the remedy for it is joyous perseverance. It is just like that. In the beginning, the [preceding] mentality is called carelessness. As it progresses, it becomes laziness. The only remedy for that is joyous perseverance. Of all the required collections of virtues necessary for Buddhism, the first one is joyous perseverance.

[87B 16:05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p241L6)]

But you have to pay attention to this joyous perseverance. Joyous perseverance refers to persevering on virtues! There are many people who are busy. They are busy all day long for this and that. They cannot let this go or let that go. They get busy with everything. This is not called joyous perseverance. This is a great laziness! As you think of this, ah-ya, when you normally

feel that you have to do something to maintain a relationship, you cannot let this go, cannot let that go, and you want this....this is great laziness. This is completely not concordant with virtue. After you give up everything, there is only one thing that remains - all of your energy is used on virtues, to fight against afflictions. This is what we should really do now.

And then, you can advance slowly one step after another. So make a note of this! Put this one sentence in your mind. It is the "**foundation of all the afflictions.**" What is that? Laziness. As soon as you have laziness, alright, you can no longer speak of Buddhism.

[87B 16:57 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p242L6)]

The *Collection of Indicative Verses* says:⁵⁹³

**Those involved in carelessness
Are childish people who ruin their minds. As
master traders guard their wealth,
So should the wise take care.**

Before laziness occurs, it is the state of carelessness. The subjective aspects [i.e. mental behavior] that first occurs is: Ah, it does not seem that you care! Immediately, you will lose your grip on virtues. After you lose this, all the afflictions will follow. So as soon as you become careless, not to mention Buddhism, meaning for us practitioners, but even for the mundane world matters, it won't work either. This is very simple. Much like being a businessman, you must conscientiously do your business... if you are careless, you will not have good business. You will not even do the mundane world business well, not to mention training in Buddhism. Hence those who truly have wisdom and train in Buddhism, you absolutely cannot be like that, absolutely cannot be

like that! You must in all occasions lift up, lift up in your mind - ah! Observe yourself, "What am I doing now?" Any slight, slight carelessness is not allowed!

[87B 17:55 手抄稿 第十一冊 p242LL2)]

So now you understand why the ancients were the way they were. Even if they are just sitting, they would be sitting upright. They will engage everything in the same manner. And I now have gradually come to understand why the people in the old days would say that when you rub the ink stone to produce the ink, the ink stone cannot be misshaped as it reduces. Even when Confucius ate meat, when he ate meat, he said that if the meat was not squarely cut, he would not eat it. This meant that at anytime, his mind was maintained well. We would frequently say, for every dot and stroke, he would follow the correct etiquette. If there is a slight deviation, eh, he would feel, "Eh, this is the wrong path. It is not allowed!" Like that. This is the kind of mentality. This type of cautious mentality, in any situation, he would not allow any slight error. In other words, what is that? It is a classic example of perseverance and not allowing for carelessness. On the contrary, what is carelessness? That is, you are nonchalant, careless, and casual towards everything. Your mind is very relaxed and that you feel like you live a good life. These are all characteristics of animals, characteristics of animals. And then, you are like this towards Buddhism; eh, when you go out to get busy with other things, you are quite enthusiastic. There is no concordance. This is what we should understand.

[87B 19:10 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p243L8)]

The Garland of Birth Stories says:⁵⁹⁴

**O Prince of the Deities, rather than cast aside your shame
And act at odds with the teaching in your mind,
You would do better to take up an earthen vessel, put
on poor clothing,
And be seen arriving at the home of an enemy.**

Therefore, the scripture tells us this. Generally, when we encounter a situation like this, we should recognize that, "Ah, I am wrong. I should not do this!" We should constantly remind ourselves to feel shame and remorse. On the contrary, if we do not examine our mind-streams, do not understand our own minds, do not feel shame and remorse, and cast aside this mentality of shame and remorse, even if you become the Prince of the Deities... The mundane world, this mundane world cannot even be compared to the heavens. Not to mention a wealthy business tycoon, not to mention an official position with power, even the president of a nation cannot be compared to the Prince of the Deities! Even if you become the Prince of the Deities, but if you do not... If you become the Prince of the Deities, but you cannot learn Buddhism, and you act at odds with the teaching in your mind, you would rather not become one! Hence, the Buddha's sutras tell us that he would rather go to the hell of the greatest suffering if there is Buddhism there. On the contrary, even if he could go to the heaven but there is no Buddhism there, he would not go. This is the same case here. He is saying, "If you cannot maintain mindfulness, cannot feel shame and remorse, and act at odds with the teaching, then even if you are asked to be the Prince of the Deities, you would rather not!" What would you rather do? You would rather take up an earthen vessel, put on poor clothing and be as poor as a beggar.

[87B 20:41(手抄稿 第十一冊 p244L4)]

The next part said, "**And be seen arriving at the home of an enemy.**" This shows that as you are as poor as having nothing, you will see how your enemy shows his prowess and power. It does not matter. I would rather be a pauper. When you see his power, ah! He is showing his prowess and power. It does not matter! That is what he does. What should I do in my mind? I wish to train in the teaching. But this mundane world thing is absolutely not what I want to do. This is what we should understand. Hence for these terms: carelessness, laziness and perseverance, they describe how one relates to the teaching. In particular, it describes whether one accords with the sublime teaching or not.

[87B 21:23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p244LL6)]

The *Friendly Letter* says:⁵⁹⁵

**Lord, mindfulness of that within the sphere of the body,
speech, and mind**

**Is taught to be the one path by which the *sugatas*
traveled.**

[p352, English LR Vol 1]

Apply yourself to this and maintain it well;

**All virtues will disintegrate with deterioration of
mindfulness.**

So the scripture tells us, "You should know that there is one thing that is really important. What is that? "**Mindfulness of that within the sphere of the body, speech, and mind.**" Therefore in the very beginning the Buddha explained the thirty-seven conditions leading to Buddhahood. In other words, the first

priority to cultivation is called, "The fourfold stage of mindfulness." (Translator's note: this is a part of the thirty-seven conditions.) In the very beginning, to maintain our correct thoughts, that is what really matters for us. This is the only thing that is important. If you lose this, then it will be bad. As soon as you lose this, it will be bad. Therefore the Buddha said, what is the only fault there is? That is when you are unable to keep your mindfulness. When you lose your mindfulness, then it is dreadful. Hence, "**Apply yourself to this and maintain it well; All virtues will disintegrate with deterioration of mindfulness.**" Therefore when we formally begin to train now, the first thing to do, what is foremost important to do? We should strive to maintain mindfulness well.

[87B 22:32 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p245L4)]

Actually, you will need one more thing to maintain your mindfulness - vigilance. Eh, if you know that you are being correct now, then you continue to maintain this correct thought that you are on. At this time you continue to maintain this mindfulness, maintain this mindfulness. Hence the substance of your thoughts at this time rests on a correct thought. You can also call this "**mindfulness of that within the sphere of the body, speech, and mind.**" We should know that to have the substance of the thought or the thought within the sphere of the body, speech and mind maintained on virtue, this is called mindfulness. As soon as you lose this, all kinds of faults will appear. Therefore Buddha tells us that this is the greatest fault. But it was said earlier that laziness is the greatest fault. Here it says that losing mindfulness is the greatest fault. These two may appear to be different. But they are the same in reality. What is joyous perseverance? Joyous perseverance means to keep up your mindfulness, your correct thoughts. Laziness means a lack

of this. In other words, one (vigilance and mindfulness) is a power that will maintain mindfulness, to give rise to mindfulness, to make sure that every thought is positive. The other one (laziness and lack of mindfulness) would go directly against what the previous one does. Hence even though they may appear to be two different things, but they would cause the same behavior. If you cannot accomplish this one thing, then you will not be able to do any virtue. All nonvirtues will appear.

[87B 23:55 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p245LL1)]

Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds says:⁵⁹⁶

**Even the faithful, the learned,
And those who undertake joyous perseverance
Will be polluted by infractions
Through the fault of a lack of vigilance.**

This commentary said this, though you know many concepts in Buddhism - you are learnt. And then, not only are you learnt, you have generated faith and have undertaken joyous perseverance with great enthusiasm. But there is one more thing required. What? Vigilance. That is because if you cannot correctly perceive what you are doing, then unknowingly, you will be "**polluted by infractions.**" This is to say, vigilance and mindfulness are like your left and right hands. This vigilance will inspect at all times, examine at all times. For instance, we are now sitting here to do stabilizing meditation. We might feel that we did well in the session. But in fact, we have already fallen into a state of slight lethargy. This fault is particularly prominent. Or you might have slight wandering thoughts. You don't even know where your mind has gone, yet you are not aware of this. After sitting for a while, you might end up feeling pretty good. But actually, you have no idea how wrong you are. What is the

problem with this? It is because you did not have vigilance. The intricate subjective aspects of this and the way to train are explained very clearly and distinctly in the chapter on "serenity." If you wait until then to learn meditative concentration, then you will be steady and confident in this training.

[87B 25:30 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p246LL6)]

So by this time, for the abovementioned sleep, lethargy, excitement, laziness, carelessness, no shame, no embarrassment, the faults and problems of every one of them has been explained in detail with references from the scriptures and treatises. Hence before we formally begin to train, for the very first step in building the foundation, this is where we should especially make efforts, spend time to understand and finally practice with joyous perseverance.

[87B 26:05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p246LL2)]

Thus, even if you cannot arrest the afflictions or the secondary afflictions, it is indispensable to see them as enemies right now, without strengthening them or taking their side. Hence, side with the remedies and strive to overcome the afflictions. After you have accomplished this, completely purify whatever ethical discipline you have assumed.

Yes, now we have understood this. We know that cyclic existence is suffering. The root of the suffering has been found to be afflictions. Therefore all of the efforts now have been made to eliminate the afflictions. However, you cannot eliminate this right away. **"The afflictions or the secondary afflictions,"** this

means that there are all kinds of bigger and smaller afflictions. But at least there is one point that we must understand - do not strengthen your afflictions. For this right here, pay absolute attention to this one phrase here! Yes, it would indeed be impossible to completely clear them away. And we would even pursue them frequently. But what should you do at this time? You should at least not strengthen or nurture it. What did the past master tell us earlier? Even though there are times that he was buried under the afflictions, but he would not give in just because he was buried. He would continue to clench his teeth beneath them. He would bite down [and keep working at it]. In other words, sorry, even though I have been defeated by you, but I will never give in. I will certainly maintain this struggle with you! This is the kind of attitude that we should have. This is very important.

[87B 27:41(手抄稿 第十一冊 p247LL9)]

Therefore I had said this again and again earlier, citing from the Bodhisattva vows written in the 瑜伽戒本. This is not the case where just because you have maintained the vow for one day, ah-ya, you are already like the Buddha. That would be impossible, absolutely impossible! We are ordinary beings fully immersed in afflictions in the causal period, how can we maintain pure ethical disciplines completely? There is absolutely no such thing in this world. Buddhism especially will not make such claim. So what should you do? You should follow the order and advance step by step. That is when you strive, much like what was said earlier, you need to first know how to correctly understand it. You need to learn, need to learn. Therefore, to remedy this not knowing, this is the first thing to do - to remedy ignorance. And then, after you understand it, you will have to not be careless. Otherwise, even if you have heard a lot, it said

earlier, ah, you know and are willing to practice, but if you are nonchalant, then it will not work! Therefore, you will have to not be careless and generate great respect.

[87B 28:48 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p248L1)]

Even though under this circumstance, the afflictions are still strong, are still quite strong, but it tells us next that, "**it is indispensable to see them as enemies right now, without strengthening them or taking their side.**" This is important. This is important! Even though you may unknowingly be pulled away by your affliction, [in fact], you are frequently pulled by them, what should you do in your mind? You should not say, "Eh, this is good." We should in our minds think, "This is my true enemy of cyclic existence!" It does matter whether you have more attachment, hostility or ignorance. For example, for those who have great hostilities, they will frequently be annoyed with everything. So what happens when they are annoyed? After that appears, one will immediately become aware of it, "Ah-ya, how come I have... how come I have become hostile again?"

[88A 0:11 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p251L1)]

For us ordinary mundane world people, this is the state that we are in: afterwards, even though one has decided to not pursue this at the time upon hearing others' advice, or perhaps the incident has been long over, one may still feel, "This person is unreasonable. I am the one who is reasonable!" What is this? That is "**taking their side.**" He feels that what he does is correct. He does not know the harms to hostility. Similarly, this is the same for attachment. Yes, when sensory objects appear, we may not necessarily be able to stop ourselves. Even though we

do not want our mouths to crave, however, everyone has had this kind of experience: ah, we know it in principle and we talk about it, but when sensory objects appear, we will just pursue them. However, you could pursue it when the sensory objects appear, but before that and afterwards are times that you should keep telling yourself, "Ah, this is not right! That is not good!" But if we are still regularly thinking, "Ah, this is great!" Then that would be wrong, that would be wrong.

[88A 1:06 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p251LL2)]

Of course for us in general, we will not do that for the mundane world things. We will not do that for the mundane world things. For what is easy for us to do wrong, you should pay attention to that. Pay attention to that. For things that we will readily do wrong, we should know: the real purpose for me to be here is to remedy this; do not look at this object as something that will help us. In terms of concept, we must first recognise this very clearly. According to what understand, in regard to this, the most difficult thing to remedy for us is what? It is still food. It is the number one condition that aids cyclic existence. This is indeed true. Even though we will not do this regularly, but as soon as we see food at a certain place, it will start to brew in our minds. What should you do when it brews? Now this tells us, eh, after you come back, you should think, "Ah! This is my enemy in cyclic existence! I need to use some kind of method to remedy this." After finishing [the encounter with food], you should absolutely not say, "Ah! Nutrition is important. This is important. That is important. That is important. And that is important." Then you are completely wrong. Therefore, this place particularly tells us, "**not taking their side.**" This is the meaning of it.

[88A 2:14 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p252L8)]

He had already said this earlier and therefore did not go into it in detail. You should absolutely not look at this as a good thing, a pure thing, as something wonderful anymore and take the side of the afflictions. What should you do instead? You should look at it as what we need to remedy, the enemy of cyclic existence. This the same case with attachment, hostility and all the rest. This is the same for everything. This is to say that it will depend on what affliction is weighty for you. This is not to say that we can remove this thing in one breathe. We must know the steps and stages for removing it. In regard to the steps and stages, for now, the first thing is right here. Hence you should know these two phrases. This is indispensable now. When you talk about cultivation, this is the first thing to do, the first thing to do.

[88A 3:07 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p253LL1)]

Therefore, we **should "side with the remedies and strive to overcome the afflictions."** We should now strive to practice the variety of correct methods that will remedy the afflictions. We should strive to learn and get a good grasp of them in order to remedy the afflictions. If you can do this, then naturally, you will be able to maintain pure ethical disciplines. You will be able **to "completely purify whatever ethical discipline you have assumed."** This is really interesting. Did you see that? The ethical disciplines are not adopted externally. It is done internally. This means that for the ethical disciplines that you have adopted internally, after going through this process, they are purified. If you can be pure in your mind, then naturally, your behaviors will gradually, gradually accord, gradually accord.

[88A 4:02 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p253L6)]

At this point, we are not saying that we neglect the external form. The external form is very important. In the very beginning, to be just talking about how to train your mind right away, it would be speaking empty words. In the beginning, indeed, we need to take great precaution of the external sensory objects. This precaution is to protect and situate ourselves in the best environment. And then we should strive to learn to recognize the root of the problem in the mind. After that, with both the internal and external factors being favorable, you will naturally accord. This is what we must understand. You cannot be biased toward either side. You might hear something and say, "Ah! Yes, I need to remedy my afflictions." It seems as if you would neglect the external form. So, it would seem to you that external forms become unimportant. You would then be speaking empty words. On the contrary, if you persist in grasping the external form, you might feel that you have done it correctly, but you may have completely strayed internally. Then there is no use for this at all - we would call this an embroidered pillow [meaning it is greatly embellished for no real great purpose.] We need to be clear of both these points. Next,

[88A 4:55 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p253LL2)]

As the glorious Gon-ba-wa, disciple of the Great Elder, said to Neu-sur-ba [280]:

That was a great master, a disciple of Je Atisha. He told his student,

[88A 5:07 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p254L1)]

Ye-shay-bar (Ye-[shes]-'bar), if, tomorrow or the next day, someone were to ask all your disciples, "What are you practicing as the core of your personal instructions?" they would answer that it was to attain superknowledges or a vision of their chosen deity. However, they should answer, "It is becoming more and more definite about the causes and effects of karma and, consequently, keeping purely whatever vows I have assumed."

Look, look! Why did he specifically mention this person? There is a reason for this! The complete instructions of the sublime teaching come from here. Hence, take a look at what those practitioners who practiced the complete instructions did; take a look at how they practised. They did this. They said, "So and so, if people later asked your disciples, including yourself, 'What are you mainly learning now?' Everyone would certainly say, 'Oh! I have attained superknowledge. I have seen my chosen deity!'" This is in reference to people who have attained concentration. For our current situation now, we might say, "Ah! We should learn meditative concentration." Or perhaps for those who recite the Buddha's name, they might say, "Need to quickly attain one-pointed focus of the mind!" For those who uphold the ethical disciplines, they might say, "Wow! You need to do this." These, such as the three regulation garments of the monk, the alms bowl... every aspect and every move have to be a certain way. Even when you sit in a meditation session, you will be seeking for concentration. Or they would say, "When I meditate in a lotus position, I can do that for several hours. I can do a full lotus position!" That is all you do, all you say.

[88A 6:23 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p254LL5)]

Look at that. At this point, what did the past master tell us? Hey! It is marvelous. "Honestly, you should say, you are becoming more and more definite about the Indeed, this is determined by the causes and effects of karma." Ah! After correctly understanding this, for the principle of how karmic cause will produce an effect, because you have conscientiously trained on this, you have developed an unwavering view. That is what should occur. Because you have correctly understood that "for a certain cause, a corresponding effect will be produced," that is why you do not dare to do anything bad. You will then strive to practice. The ethical discipline to you at this time will be something that you will maintain assiduously. Hence, you will maintain pure ethical discipline. This is the classic example of a great past master. The next part provides more explanations.

[88A 7:16 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p255L1)]

Therefore, you should understand this to indicate that the phrase "attainments which result from meditation" refers to the achievement of a reduction in afflictions such as ignorance.

When people fight with others—something that yields only sins and suffering both in this and in other lives—

True attainments in meditation is not measured by how long I can sit in a lotus position, how many prostrations that I can make, or how many times I can recite the Buddha's name. These are valid practices. But we must know, what is the core purpose for cultivation? It is to eliminate cyclic existence. What is the root of cyclic existence? It is the afflictions. Therefore "attainments" mean you have attained what? It is that you have gradually

reduced your afflictions. That is the case! Therefore, he said that you should understand what true attainments in meditation refer to. Hey, your ignorant delusions will gradually reduce! This key point is very important. There are many people now who have trained for a long time, ah! They will give extravagant speeches about the principles that sound so persuasive! And if you talk about his effort, he can tell you that he can be in concentration for a few hours a day, but what about his afflictions? Nothing has changed! He perhaps may have more afflictions than others. This, this is not it. This is not it!

[88A 8:33 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p255L9)]

Hence, he tells us that this is the root! For true cultivation, you must from the very beginning recognise the goal of cultivation. In order to reach this goal, you need to explore step by step to find the root of it. This is because the true attainments of meditation are measured by whether you are advancing step by step on this. It is about this. Why? This is the real cause to suffering and happiness. If you can eliminate this, then you will move on to attain high status rebirth. Otherwise, you will "fall [into miserable realms]!" Hence, this delusion, this ignorance will produce sins and sufferings both in this life and other lives. What we should train now is to train on this, to train on this. After you have trained on this, you will gradually attain higher status rebirths in your subsequent lives. By attaining higher status rebirths in your subsequent lives, you will finally obtain certain goodness. If you use this as the reason to recite the Buddhas' names, eh, you will succeed! If you use this as the basis for your sitting meditation, you will succeed! If you maintain ethical discipline in this way, it is correct! If you learn the teaching in this way, it is correct! You just need to grasp the fundamental concept.

[88A 9:39 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p256L1)]

they endure all manner of suffering for however long it takes, even at the cost of their lives.

This is telling us the real important practice now is to remedy this thing. You need to struggle with it. How do you practice this? You will need to struggle with it, struggle with it. When you are truly struggling with it, at that time, indeed, you will have to endure many different types of sufferings, many different types of sufferings. What kind of sufferings? Your beginningless latent propensity is just like this. You now need to turn your latent propensity completely around. This is not an easy thing to do. This is practice. And it is a suffering. But if you are able to turn your latent propensity around, then your problems are solved, your problems are solved. Just like that. Hence, this is a point that we must understand. Therefore, "**even at the cost of their lives**", this is the time to truly strive, to truly strive on that. You will have to strive at this even at the cost of your lives, needless to say the trivial matters that are before us now. This is what you should pay attention to!

[88A 10:41 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p256L9)]

Then they show off the scars of their wounds, etc., and boast, "I received this one at that time." This being the case, it is even more appropriate for us to endure the hardships undergone while persevering joyously in destroying the afflictions.

This is to say that normally for us, like how it is said, suppose we had gotten into some fight. So, as a result of this fight...during a heated argument, there was a physical fight. You may have

gotten injured. Afterwards, eh, you would feel, "Look at that! I was hurt. But I was able to endure the pain and defeat him." You would feel, "Eh! I did well. I did well!" There are many races in this world that are very brave and intrepid. For instance, the Germans, they are very interesting. I had met and seen some Germans before. Once this person came, he would shave and his face would have blood all over. So, we thought, "How come his face has blood everywhere?" We were confused. Oh, we found out later that this was a part of their training from childhood. If this happened to us, if we bleed, oh-yo! We would be so scared! But they are quite fearless. When they do anything, they will give it their full attention. So, if you are normally careless as you shave but you do not bleed, it would mean that you are very cowardly. So, once they have nurtured this habit from childhood, they will absolutely not be afraid of any little suffering! They will have successfully cultivated this extremely fearless and persevering spirit. There is definitely a reason why the Germans have had great success in Europe.

[88A 12:01 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p257L6)]

This is even the case in the mundane world. But for us now, any little thing that happens to us, ah! We cannot take any small incident. If we suffer from a little cold, we will withdraw and huddle ourselves up. Our heads will be down. A little cold will make us lie in bed, unable to get up. Any little thing that happens to us, ah! We will feel like we cannot tolerate this, cannot tolerate that. This will not work! Therefore, he tells us that the mundane world is like this. This demonstrates your bravery! So, as we eliminate afflictions now, we need to persevere joyously and endure the suffering. This absolutely makes sense and it is absolutely necessary, absolutely necessary!

[88A 12:34 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p257LL4)]

Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds:⁵⁹⁷

**Since even a scar inflicted by an enemy for no reason
Is worn as if it were a decoration for the body,
Why should suffering bother me,
When I truly strive to accomplish a great purpose?**

So, the scripture tells us that in the case of the mundane world, we might argue over some very trivial matter. Once we begin this argument with the enemy, of course, this may escalate into a physical fight. We could be injured from this. After we are wounded, we might feel that we have been brave, "Hmm, look at this! That was when I got this scar right here!" We would even feel that it is a "**decoration**" for the body. This decoration demonstrates bravery. For something so meaningless in this mundane world, you would think that means bravery to you. Now, to be persevering for this matchless purpose, this is when you should be even more courageous. This type of courage is your true decoration! If you can do this, the small sufferings will absolutely not cause any problems. This place, this is what we should pay special attention to. We should particularly use this to exhort ourselves!

[88A 13:39 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p258L6)]

So, everyone must persevere joyously, even though... this is where we should take even more precaution. Otherwise... our real first step, at this point, it is to build the right mentality. Building the right mentality is very important. You have to tell yourself this, "I must be able to accomplish this! I must accomplish it! I must accomplish it!" Once you have this kind of determination, when things happen, you will gradually achieve

your goal. Otherwise, before you do something, you will already protect yourself. Where would you keep yourself? You will protect and keep yourself in your afflictions. What use are you?

[88A 14:13 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p258LL4)]

Thus, the one who struggles against the enemy of the afflictions and defeats them should be called a true hero,

If you can do that, then can you be called a true hero!

[88A 14:20 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p258LL2)]

whereas the one who fights against ordinary enemies kills only a corpse, since these enemies will

[p353, English LR Vol 1]

die naturally anyway even if they are not slain.

For you to conquer others, what use is there? We would normally praise ourselves, we feel we have this and that... this is useless! Why? So what if you praise yourself? Even if you do not kill him, he will eventually die anyway. Isn't that right? This is exactly the case! What is really important then? You will need to fight your own afflictions. No matter how powerful the enemy is or how strong the enemy state may be, even if you do not harm them, they will naturally die. Eh, so even if you have conquered them, there is not much meaning to that. But for this affliction here, if you can conquer that, then it is right! The treatise tells us,

[88A 15:05 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p259L5)]

Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds.⁵⁹⁸

**They are conquering heroes
Who scorn all sufferings
And defeat enemies like hostility;
The rest are killers of corpses.**

This is citing from the treatise. What should we do initially as we face this suffering? Scorn. This is very interesting! Normally, we are arrogant. He will tell us later that when we train in joyous perseverance, we should have three types of pride. It is not right to have pride about other things. But we should be arrogant toward afflictions! We should say, "I really look down on you!" We should not be looking down at others. We should look down at our own afflictions. "No matter how great, you the afflictions are, I will not give in to you! No matter how great the attachment, how great the hostility, I will certainly discipline you!" You should have that kind of attitude. That is it. That would make you a hero. For all those others, sorry, for you to defeat the other enemies, it would be like slicing the corpses. Why? They are certain to die anyway. So even though you could bring harm to them, what use is there?

[88A 15:55 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p259LL3)]

Consequently, as the same text says.⁵⁹⁹

**When I dwell amidst the horde of afflictions,
I must withstand them in a thousand ways;
Just as foxes and their like cannot harm the lion, So
the hosts of afflictions will not hurt me.**

If you can truly do this, can truly do this, if you can truly scorn and conquer afflictions, even though you are in this Saha world, this world where the five impurities are rapidly spreading, and there are afflictions everywhere, you will be just fine right here. This is the reason why a Mahayana Bodhisattva practitioner does not want to go to Pure Land. He will want to be in this Saha world. Why? He has that kind of power! Much like the example here, no matter how many "foxes" there are, when the lion king appears, they only dare to stand by the side! If the lion king should roar, ha! Even if they do not run away, they would crouch down, being unable to stand. This is what is required. Then it would be right!

[88A 16:43 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p260L4)]

Thus, do not allow the factors incompatible with the path to inflict harm on you, and conquer them all.

This concludes the explanation of the stages of the path shared with persons of medium capacity.

So here, this talks about the incompatible factors that the training in the path shared with persons of medium capacity specifically remedy, namely the afflictions. Regarding these afflictions, these are what we should conquer. We must absolutely not allow them to inflict harm on us. Up to this point, this is what we should learn, what we should learn.

[88A 17:13 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p260L8)]

Hence at this point, we should refresh our memory to remind ourselves. What really matters for us now? Ethical discipline. Pay attention to this! The most important thing is ethical discipline.

Where do you begin to practice ethical discipline? Where do you begin to practice ethical discipline? You begin with the correct view. This is most imperative. And then, you should take your correct understanding and bring it into conscious in your thoughts. Maintain this correct mindfulness. You should immediately apply vigilance and mindfulness. Immediately means you are cautious at every given moment, "Is this right? Is this right? Is this right?" You continue to do that. For you to maintain your correct mindfulness, you will still need to use vigilance for analysis. You will need to examine yourself at every moment: yes, am I being correct now, am I correct now? If the thought is correct, you continue to maintain that thought. If it is incorrect, you should readily bring to mind the correct mindfulness. This is the first step to cultivation.

[88A 18:04 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p261L1)]

What is the way to practise? He used one word which is very fitting - struggle! You will struggle. It is not good to struggle or fight otherwise, but it would be correct to struggle with afflictions. We need not fight with others. Who we should really fight is our afflictions. What sort of attitude should you have when you struggle with afflictions? You should be scornful. "**Scorn all sufferings.**" Yes, it is pretty miserable to struggle with afflictions. You would in general, be wanting food that is delicious, and wanting something else... by then, even when you eat something that does not suit you well, "It does not matter! I do not care about this kind of suffering! Even if I have to go hungry, it does not matter! Even if I am tired, it does not matter! I have to fight and conquer it!" For the situation at hand, this is something that we might want to review from the beginning. We should carefully take the teaching explained earlier and thoroughly go through them again and again in our minds. From the very first step, note

this, you will have to go through it step by step, step by step. If you can grasp the stages of the path very clearly, by the time you get here, you will naturally not make any mistake, naturally not make any mistake.

[88A 19:13 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p261L10)]

Therefore, you should remember this! There was a sentence earlier. If someone comes to ask you, "You are meditating now. How is your meditation?" You should know that, should know what you have been meditating on. It is not the case where, I have gained meditative concentration or something else! No! Instead, what should you have gained? It is that you have gradually become certain of what karma and afflictions are. It is that. You know that for a certain cause you will produce a certain effect. And your mind will develop a valid cognition of this auspicious view. Even though you have heard others say this, "Yes, yes, yes." However, it was fine when you heard others say it or even when you explained it to others. However, when situations occur, you are just not concordant. Perhaps you would even say, "Even though Buddha says this, but this does not work in this day and age!" Or perhaps you would say, "We need to do this for the sake of the living beings. In order to benefit the living beings, if you do not do this, you are not right!" No, this is not it. You will see your mind very clearly. Even though you have developed great compassion and you know very well that you will fall into the miserable realms if you do this, however, "For the sake of saving them, I will have to fall [into the miserable realms]." [If that is indeed the case,] you are magnificent! Otherwise, whatever excuses you find for yourself, they will all be said in jest. It is amusing to say things in jest. If you actually followed through with it, there is only one path for you - you will fall into the miserable realms yourself.

[88A 20:39 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p262L5)]

What is the reason? This is because we understand very clearly that what is the goal to our cultivation? The goal to cultivation is to thoroughly eliminate the sufferings of cyclic existence.

Whether you are reciting the Buddha's name or practicing Zen, why should you recite the Buddha's name? You might say, this Saha world is filled with suffering! So you must escape cyclic existence yet you do not have the ability. And now you do not even possess the prerequisite. Hence, the only alternative is to rely on the great compassion of the Buddha who has given you this convenient method. This is why you want to go [to the Pure Land]. This principle is very clearly displayed right here. It is because you want to escape suffering. So, what are you "cultivating" now? What is the root to suffering? It is afflictions. Suppose you have meditated for a while but you are unable to reduce your afflictions, so may I ask, what use is your cultivation? After expounding greatly on the principles, and as you speak with others, oh, after the conversation, you feel that you are ever more... pleased with yourself! What is this? It is my view (holding to the ego idea), my pride, my self-seeking, and my own ignorance that are increasing. You will feel that you know a great deal of principles but the affliction root continues to strengthen.

What use is there? Therefore, this is a point that we should understand.

(Translator's note: 我痴 – ignorance in regard to the ego; 我見 – holding to the ego idea; 我慢 – self-esteem, egotism, pride; 我愛 – self-seeking, or desire, both the latter arising from belief in the ego.)

[88A 21:54 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p262LL2)]

The ancients would tell us, what should we do? "We should only eliminate the filth of our own afflictions." We should slow, slowly, slowly reduce the filth of afflictions that are in our mind. "Who can boast of their diligence to others?" I do not remember this sentence that clearly. But it does not matter. As long as you can gradually eliminate the afflictions in your mind instead of boasting how diligent you have been. What is "boasting diligence"? This is an act of increasing afflictions, increasing afflictions. You can understand this now. This is very clear and apparent. If you want to understand this, it is not only through this way. You will need to begin with ethical discipline. Therefore, you must go from the stages explained earlier to move up step by step, step by step. Not only should you not boast your diligence in cultivation, to be talking about the achievements of the mundane world, "Wow! This person used to be this and that!" You have no idea how far you have strayed!

[88A 23:02 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p263L6)]

Therefore, in places like this, speaking of this, we have now completed the teachings on medium capacity. Yes, we will immediately move on to great capacity, immediately move on to great capacity. For those students who are capable, who are following the steps to progress, you must connect them all and have a good grasp of this from the beginning to the end. For those other students, yes, perhaps you may not be able to catch up immediately, that is fine. What should you do? You should at least for the concepts, for the views, you should have a clear grasp of them. That is most important. As for where we begin in our cultivation and the stages in which we go in depth step by step, you should grasp that. Once you know this, you will be

benefited in every way as you choose to practice Zen, recite the Buddha's name, maintain ethical discipline, and learn the teaching. Alright, let us know rest for a few minutes.

[88A 24:03 (手抄稿 第十一冊 p263LL4)]

By this time, we have finished the medium capacity, finished the medium capacity. Before this foundation, there is still the very first section on the small capacity, and also the foundation to the path before the small capacity. Before you train on the path, you must prepare first. After you prepare, you establish the foundation. You establish the foundation and build one layer after the other on this foundation. Hence, between these segments, there is a definite order to them. Without the previous sections, you will not be able to establish the latter. This is a concept that we need to be clear of. Hence, it is the same when we cultivate. As we advance step by step, we are stepping on the foundation that has been laid down earlier, stepping on the foundation that has been laid down earlier.