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CLASS NOTES

Course I: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism

Class One: "Three Principal Paths" Overview and Lineage

The Transmission of the "Three Principal Paths"

JE TSONGKAPA (1357-1419) also known as **LOBSANG DRAKPA** (monk's name)
Lord name from mind pure famous

Je Tsongkapa wrote the root text as a letter to **Ngawang Drakpa**, who was also known as **Tsako Wongpo. Pabongka Rinpoche** (also known as **Dechen Nyingpo**) taught the commentary, which was later printed by **Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche**, who taught it to **Khen Rinpoche, Geshe Lobsang Tharchin**, who translated it, with Geshe Michael Roach.

LAM - RIM CHEN-MO
path step/stage great

LAM TSO NAM-SUM
path principal type three
Three Principal Paths: contains Lam Rim in 14 verses

Tibetan names for the three paths:

- 1.) **NGEN JUNG:** First path - renunciation
- 2.) **JANG SEM:** Second path - bodhichitta
Buddhahood mind
- 3.) **YANG DAKPAY TAWA:** Third path -correct view
correct / accurate view

The four great sufferings:

KYE - GA - NA - CHI
taking birth aging sickness death

TOK-PA
realization

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Class Two: Mu-shi Mu-sum; What is Buddha Nature?

SU-NAM

merit

GE-WA

virtue

Virtue is an action of body, speech, or mind which will create some pleasant result for you in the future.

Buddhist logical statements:

MU-SHI MU-SUM: Everything that exists combines in either three or four of these ways:

- 1.) A and not B
- 2.) B and not A
- 3.) A and B both
- 4.) Neither A nor B

How to prove that you need ("A") LAM TSO NAM-SUM (renunciation, bodhichitta, and the correct view) for ("B") successful tantric practice (proof):

(LAM TSO NAM-SUM is represented by "A", successful tantric practice by "B".)

- 1.) A and B both: There can be a case where there is (A) the three paths, and also (B) successful tantric practice.
- 2.) Neither A nor B: There can be a case where there is neither (A) the three paths, nor (B) successful tantric practice.
- 3.) B and not A: There can be a case where there is (B) successful tantric practice without (A) the three paths. * WRONG*
- 4.) A and not B: There can be a case where there is (A) LAM TSO NAM-SUM without (B) successful tantric practice.

Mahamudra:

Tibetan: CHAK-GYA CHEN-PO means the direct perception of emptiness.

English: gesture / seal great / big

Sanskrit: *mudra* *maha* (*mahamudra*)

Two main causes for Buddhahood:

TAP

and

SHERAB

method (i.e. bodhichitta)

wisdom (the correct view of emptiness)

Renunciation, the third of the three principle paths, is the preliminary or prerequisite for bodhichitta. If one isn't concerned with freedom from one's own suffering, one won't see the need to free others.

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Course I: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism

Class Two, continued

Two bodies of a Buddha:

CHU - KU
Dharma body
Sanskrit: *dharma kaya*
(refers to mind)

SUK - KU
form body
rupa kaya
(emanation body of Buddha)

The bases for these bodies:

YE-SHE KYI TSOK
wisdom of collection
The collection of wisdom is the
basis for the Dharmakaya.

SU-NAM KYI TSOK
merit of collection
The collection of merit is the basis for the Rupakaya,
(which is the Sambhogakaya plus the Nirmanakaya)

Our Buddha nature is the emptiness of our mind. There is no other Buddha nature or Buddha seed waiting to be uncovered.

Obstacles to becoming a Buddha:

SHE - DRIP
knowledge obstacle
Obstacles to knowledge
Prevent you from Buddhahood

NYON - DRIP
bad thought obstacle
The obstacles of bad thoughts.
Prevent you from nirvana

When they are removed, you will become a Buddha. You comprehend all objects of knowledge simultaneously. A Buddha is omniscient but not omnipotent.

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Class Three: What is a Qualified Teacher?

What to look for in a Dharma teacher:

(From the *Sutralamkara* by Asanga)

- 1.) SHE - NYEN DUL - WA SHI - WA NYER - SHI - WA
spiritual friend subdued / tamed peace very peaceful

Tamed morality - the first of the three trainings. If a teacher is not tamed himself, how can he tame another?

2.) The teacher has **mindfulness and concentrative awareness** to keep his mind on what he is doing to avoid violating his morality.

3.) The teacher has the training of wisdom where the lama applies the special concentration of shamata to investigate reality (i.e. **the teacher must have attained full calm abiding.**)

The above three trainings are mental qualities.

- 4.) YUN - TEN HLAKE - PA TSUN - CHE LUNG - GI CHUK
good qualities special/exceeding effort has from scripture rich

He must be rich in **scriptural knowledge**, as it is not enough just to have those mental qualities.

- 5.) DE - NYI RAP-TU TOK-PA MA - KE DEN
thusness / emptiness really realized speak wise skilled master has the quality
A person who has the **training of wisdom to a very high degree** (perceived emptiness directly) or has understood emptiness very well via scripture and intellect.

6.) The teacher should have **exceedingly good qualities**, in excess of the student's abilities.

The above six qualities refer to the teacher himself; the next four refer to the way in which he teaches:

7.) Knows the **right order of the teaching** for that student, and knows the **student's capacity** for learning.

- 8.) TSE-WA DAK-NYI KYO - WA PANG
love embodiment disgust/ being tired got rid of it

Teaches because of **love and compassion** and not out of desire for gain, fame, or the respect of others.

9.) The teacher has a very deep rooted **joy in helping others.**

10.) He **does not get tired** if he has to explain something repeatedly.

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Class Four: What is an Authentic Student and Dharma?

What is the authentic Dharma?

NYAM - SU LEN - JAY CHU
which you can practice Dharma
Dharma which is worth studying

CHU KUNG ME LA LO - TONG DU DRUP-PA JE-KYANG
Dharma primordial not to year 1,000 for practice do but
source

TOK-PA TSEN - DEN NE - CHIK MI - KYE
realization authentic/correct sliver one not develop

Do practice for 1,000 years which is not authentic Dharma, but you will not develop one sliver of authentic realization.

Three qualities of an authentic dharma:

1.) TUN - PA SAN-GYE KYI SUNG-PA
the Teacher (Buddha) him by spoken

Teachings spoken by the Buddha are called in Tibetan:

KAN-GYUR

word translated = 1,108 books of the Buddha's teachings.

The **kangyur** consists of (a.) *Vinaya*, or the collection of teachings on vowed morality, (b.) *Prajnaparamita*, or teachings on the perfection of wisdom, or emptiness, (c.) Three sections of *sutras*, which are open (i.e. not secret) teachings, and (d.) the *tantras*, or secret teachings.

2.) PANDITE KYUN SEL-WA
pandit, wise man corruptions clean

Masters must have torn apart, analyzed, and cleaned corruptions from the teachings.

Teachings commenting on the sutras are called in Tibetan:

TEN - GYUR

words spoken by a human translated

The **tengyur** consists of commentaries on the **kangyur** by Indian masters, consisting of 3,400 treatises. They contain commentaries on tantras, perfection of wisdom, middle way (*madhyamika*), sutras, mind-only school, abhidharma, vinaya, Jataka tales ("birth stories" on the Buddha's previous lives), and epistles, or letters, logic and perception, as well as "minor sciences", such as sanskrit, medical scriptures, fine arts, etc.

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Class Five: What is Samsara and Renunciation?

Karma is the movement of the mind and what it motivates (makes happen).

SAK - CHE NYER - LEN GYI PUNG - POY GYUN YAG -NE YANG - DU
stain/impurity taken on (by of heaps / piles stream again and again
force of karma)

LEN PAN KOR-WA YIN
take that's what samsara it is

Samsara is the condition of having to take over and over again a stream of impure parts which were forced on you.

Liberation means being reborn with pure parts.

Renunciation means not wanting our samsaric, dissatisfactory condition.

What keeps you in samsara?

LE - NYUN GYI CHING
karma bad thought by chained Being chained by bad thoughts and karma.

Two meditations to eliminate half of our desires (desires for things in this life). (The other half of desires are for things in future lives).

1.) DEL NJOR NYE - KA
leisure fortune to find difficulty

The difficulty of finding a life with leisure and fortune.

2.) CHI-WA MI-TAK-PA
death gross impermanence

Meditation on the inevitability and uncertainty of death.

Eight Worldly Dharmas (things):

JIK - TEN CHU - GYE
world thought eight

1 and 2) NYE DANG MA NYE
getting something and not getting something

3 and 4) DE DANG MI - DE
feeling good and not feeling good

5 and 6) NYEN DANG MI - NYEN
well-known and not well known

7 and 8) TU - ME
say something good to you say something bad to you

You can't avoid these things; the point is not to be attached. If you care about these, you don't have renunciation. Being happy or unhappy about them is to be under the influence of the eight worldly dharmas.

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Class Six: Four Principles of Karma; Six Problems of Life

Karma can be produced by body, speech, or mind. Good karma is any action of body, speech, or mind which produces an attractive result.

These are the **four principles of karma**:

- 1.) **LE NGE-PA**
Karma definite (in the sense that good produces good and bad produces bad).
- 2.) **LE PEL CHE-WA**
Karma increase bigger
- 3.) **LE MA-JE-PA DANG MI-TRE-PA**
Karma not did and not make contact / touch
(If you didn't do the karma, you will never meet a result.)
- 4.) **LE JE-PA CHU MI-SA-WA**
karma done just not disappear

Six Problems of Human Life:

- 1.) **NGE-PA ME-PAY NYE - PA**
certainty there is no bad thing : There is no certainty in life.
- 2.) **NGON-PA ME-PAY NYE-PA**
satisfaction there is no problem : You're never satisfied.
- 3.) **LU YANG-NE YANG-DU DOR-WAY NYE-PA**
body over and over again discard problem: You must discard your body over and over again.
- 4.) **YANG-YANG NYING-TSAM JOR-WAY NYE-PA**
over and over crossing border join problem: You must be born over and over again.
- 5.) **YANG-YANG TO-MEN-DU GYUR-WAY NYE-PA**
over and over high low to to become problem : After high, then comes low.
- 6.) **DROK ME-PAY NYE-PA**
companion there is no problem : You go through life alone and die alone.

How to know when you have developed renunciation:

NYIN-TSEN KUN-TU TAR-PA DUN-NYER-LO
day night all at freedom to aspire mind

JUNG - NA DEY - TSE NGEN-JUNG KYE - PA LAK
when it happens at that time renunciation developed it is

Renunciation has been developed when the mind aspires to freedom all day and all night.

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Class Seven: Bodhichitta and its Benefits

JANG SEM (in Sanskrit: *bodhichitta*)

JANG = JANG - CHUB SEM = SEM - KYE
clean comprehend mind
(Buddhahood)

Bodhichitta is the wish to achieve enlightenment for all beings. When the first moment of bodhichitta arises in the mind (in a deep way, not superficially), you are a bodhisattva.

Renunciation and bodhichitta are the same feeling; renunciation is the feeling focused toward yourself, and bodhichitta is the feeling focused towards everyone. The first bodhisattva level (*bhumi*) occurs when a person with bodhichitta in his mind (and heart) perceives emptiness directly. You can be a bodhisattva before you even understand the concept of emptiness intellectually or perceive it directly.

JANG-CHUB SEM - PA = bodhisattva
bodhi mind warrior

(Not translated as the Buddha's mind, but the mind which wants to be a Buddha.)

The benefits of being a bodhisattva, or of cultivating bodhichitta:

1.) GE - WA NAM - KYEN GYI GYU
good deed omniscience of cause

If you have bodhichitta, your good deeds are a cause for omniscience.

2.) HLA - MI CHAK - JAR U-PA
god human bowed down to to be worthy

You are a person worthy to be bowed down to by humans and gods (pleasure beings).

3.) NYEN - RANG SIL-GYI NUN-PA
listener self-made Buddha to outshine

You outshine hearers and solitary realizers (who perceive emptiness, attain nirvana, etc.)

4.) GE - WA CHUNG-SE TEK-CHEN GYI CHU
good deed tiniest mahayana of Dharma

The very tiniest good deed that you do is mahayana Dharma if you have bodhichitta. Once you really have bodhichitta, the mind is permeated with bodhichitta, and all deeds have some element of it. Even bad deeds are less detrimental. The tiniest virtue is the cause for Buddhahood if you have bodhichitta.

5.) GYEL-SE KYI CHU-PA
bodhisattva of the activity

The smallest action is the activity of a bodhisattva.

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Class Seven, continued

- 6.) SANG-YE NAM - KYI SE - SU GONG
Buddha (plural) by them son daughter consider
The bodhisattva is considered by the Buddhas as their son or daughter.
- 7.) JANG-CHUB SEM-PA NAM KYI PUN DU CONG
bodhisattva (plural) by brother or sister as consider
All bodhisattvas consider you as their brother or sister.
- 8.) TEK CHEN LA SHUK
yana maha into entered
You have entered into the mahayana (lit. "big capacity", means you have a big capacity to take things on.)
- 9.) TSE-CHIK LA TSANG - GYA
life one in to become a Buddha
If you have bodhichitta, you can become a Buddha in one life (i.e. you can practice tantra and it will work).

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Class Eight: How to Develop Bodhichitta

Two ways to develop bodhichitta:

- 1.) **DAK - SHEN NYAM - JE**
 I, me, self others equal exchange

Equalizing and exchanging self and others, i.e. being concerned with others' benefit more than one's own. Meditation taught by Shantideva. Exchanging my self-concern for what makes others happy.

- 2.) **GYUN - DRE MEN - NYAK DUN**
 cause result personal advice seven

The seven-part instruction in cause and effect:

- 0.) **TONG - NYOM**
 equanimity
This must be present at the beginning for the rest to follow.

- 1.) **MAR - SHE**
 as your mother recognize
Recognize (not pretend) all others as your mother. This does not mean to think of them as, or pretend that they're your mother, but gain that realization.

- 2.) **DRIN - DREN**
 kindness remember
Remember the kindness of your mother. (Does not refer to whether you like her, but the fact that she carried you for nine months, and suffered pain without choice for you). She gave up her freedom for you. You wouldn't be alive without her.

- 3.) **DRIN - SO**
 kindness repay
Repay the kindness of your mothers.

- 4.) **YI-ONG JAM-PA**
 lovely, pretty love
You love people like your child. Love is wanting to give them happiness; you are obsessed with making them happy.

- 5.) **NYING - JE CHEN-PO**
 heart lord great
Have great compassion. (Compassion is wanting to remove suffering.)

- 6.) **HLAK - SAM NAM - DAK**
 extraordinary state of mind totally pure
The feeling that I will help everyone myself, even if nobody else helps. This is the

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Class Eight, continued

feeling that comes just before and is the direct cause of bodhichitta. Not being discouraged.

7.) **JANG-SEM**
 bodhichitta

The state of a bodhisattva - wanting to be a Buddha to be able to help other people.

Proof of past lives: Awareness comes from similar stuff, from the previous moment of awareness. Mental stuff has to come from mental stuff. Mind is separate from body. Body has form and place (you can touch, cut, burn it, etc., while you can't do that with mind) Therefore, mind doesn't come from form or body. Right now you have awareness which must have come from similar stuff - from mental stuff. If you accept that mind comes from a previous moment of mind, then there must be infinite past, endless mind and awareness.

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Course I: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism

Class Nine: What is the Correct View of Emptiness?

DEN-PA NYI
truth two

To perceive emptiness, one must perceive the two truths. Truth here does not mean "true", as in true vs. false, ie. accurate. It refers to a division of existence, or reality.

YANG-DAK-PAY TAWA
correct view

The two truths:

1.) KUN - DZOB DEN-PA
completely deceptive (fake) truth

Things which appear to us differently from the way they really exist. This refers to what we call "reality". These appear true, but fool you. They seem to be one way and they really are another way. The word "truth" isn't accurate. It doesn't have the meaning "true". Instead, it means "reality" or "object".

2.) DON-DAM DEN-PA
ultimate truth

This is the situation where the reality is accurate to the way it appears.

All objects possess both realities, but are not both realities. They have emptiness, but are not emptiness. Emptiness is a negative eternal thing; it is something not there. You cannot see what is not there.

To perceive emptiness, you must first see the two truths. If you don't have correct view, you can't attain Nirvana, which is a state in which all mental afflictions are permanently removed. You can understand emptiness (correct view) intellectually or directly. To perceive emptiness directly, your mind must be in the first level of the form realm, and you must be in a deep state of meditation.

Dependent Origination:

TEN - DREL
dependent origination

That which occurs through dependence and origination. This is a way to describe the deceptive aspect of things.

Dependent origination is the positive way of describing the situation of reality. It is dependent or deceptive. Emptiness is the negative way of describing the situation of reality. It (reality) is not what you thought.

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Class Nine, continued

The lower three schools (functionalist, ie. *Abhidharma*, *Sautrantika*, and *Chittamatra*) describe it in terms of cause and effect.

<u>Functionalist schools</u>	Hinayana	1.) Abhidharma school (knowledge) 2.) Sautranitka or sutra school (logic)
	Mahayana	3.) Chittamatra or Yogachara (mind-only)
<u>Independent school</u>		4.) Madhyamika (middle-way) a.) Svatantrika (independents)
		b.) Prasangika (consequence)
<u>Implication school</u>		

Functionalist school: The positive expression (dependent origination) is that everything comes from prior causes. The negative expression (emptiness) is that nothing happens by itself; things don't come from nothing. Using cause and effect to explain dependent origination is the lowest approach. Each of the next schools is more sophisticated.

The **Functionalist Schools** say that all things depend upon their causes. This is their definition of dependant origination. Cause and effect is the lowest way to describe dependent origination. They believe that if something has a function, then it truly exists. Their statement of emptiness is that things don't happen by themselves; things don't come from nothing.

Independents (Madhyamika Svatantrikas) say that there are things (like space and emptiness) that don't have causes, and so the functionalist explanation isn't comprehensive. Things without causes are permanent, like space. All things have parts (ex. space has the four directions), and so they say that all things exist in dependence on their parts. This position is not flawed, but the implication school is more subtle.

Madhyamika Prasangika: (Implication school) The positive expression (dependent origination) is that things exist dependent upon you thinking of and calling them as you do. The negative expression (emptiness) is that things don't exist outside of your mind, your calling them or naming them.

MING - DE TAK - TSAM
with a name and a thought labelled just

The **implication school** says that things exist for you in dependence on your calling them and thinking of them as you do. When you are focused upon your perception of something, you are seeing its color, size, shape, parts, etc. You are not seeing the pen, but its parts. You see the parts, and label it pen based upon your perception. You can't see the "penness" (its entirety) as long as you see its parts. When you see the parts, you are not seeing its "penness". You can not see both the "penness" and the "parts" simultaneously. Therefore you are not perceiving the object accurately and completely.

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Course I: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism

Class Nine, continued

Self: DAK Self does not refer to ego. It is applied to things like tables also. It
self applies to non-existent things. It means no self-nature, or nature of its
own. We deny that anything has a nature of its own.

Functionalists say that the self that has no causes does not exist.
Svatrantikas say that the thing self-existing without parts doesn't exist.
Prasangikas say that the thing self-existing without me naming or
thinking about it doesn't exist.

GAK - JA The self-existent thing - what we deny.
deny what we

Dependent origination is truth # one (deceptive truth). Deceptive truth is that things seem to be outside of your mind, but are not truly outside your mind. The emptiness of things is that they are not what you thought they are.

We usually don't even see the deceptive reality of things, let alone the ultimate reality. We don't see either of the two truths (usually). We do see things as they normally appear to us, which is a deceptive reality. This is not the full deceptive reality which requires high realization to see.

Things have ultimate reality or deceptive reality. Ultimate or deceptive reality are not dependent upon our perception to exist. They both exist, and we will perceive one or both of them. Our perception does not create them or in some way contribute to their existence.

Emptiness is a negative state - it is the absence of something (inherent existence). We can not see the absence of something. It's an abstract concept, not an object. We can see objects, not concepts.

Any afflictive emotion is focused on a self-existent thing. You can not have negative emotion toward something unless you mistake it and think that it exists from its own side, rather than from your own past karma. Likewise, compassion must be focused upon what's really there (ultimate truth), not the self-existent thing. Until it is, it's not real compassion.

It's not that if you see emptiness today, then suddenly the world is nirvana. That's not true. If you understand emptiness, then you will keep your morality, and because of this you will be in paradise later. **The key to the realization of emptiness is that it enables you to keep perfect morality to become a Buddha.**

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Class Ten: Karma and Emptiness: the nature of wisdom and liberation

NANG - WA TEN - DREL LU - WA ME - PA DANG
appearances dependent orig. tricky, doesn't and
(deceptive reality) to fail

Deceptive reality (the appearances around us) is dependent origination, and doesn't fail.
Actions definitely yield similar results (i.e. karma never fails).

TONG - PA KE - LEN DREL - WAY GO - WA NYI
emptiness beyond any position understandings two
(can't say that it is or it isn't)

JI - SI SO - SOR NANG - WA DE - SI - DU
as long as unconnected appears for that long
As long as the two understandings that the law of karma and emptiness appear unconnected, for that long ...

DA-DUNG TUP - PAY GONG-PA TOK-PA ME
still the Buddhas real idea realize not
... (you) still have not realized the ideas of the Buddhas.

If you think about karma and lose emptiness, or think about emptiness and lose karma, you still don't understand.

How to apply this in everyday life:

The minute someone appears angry, think of his emptiness. He has no nature from his own side, so my karma supplies the interpretation of the situation. When you think of karma, you immediately think of emptiness, because all experiences are from karma - nothing exists from its own side.

NAM - SHIK REN-JOK ME-PAR CHIK-CHAR-DU TEN - DREL MI - LUP
at some point unrelated not at once dependent origination never fails

TONG-WA TSAM-NYI-NE NGE-SHEY YUL-GYI DZIN-TANG KUN JIK-NA
seeing just by certainty object the way it holds it dissolves
At some point these two ideas (emptiness and karma) are not unrelated (when one idea arises, the other naturally follows), one will appear to you at once when you think of the other.

DETSE TAWAY CHEPA DZOKPA LAK
at that time correct view examination totally complete it is

In a situation where afflictions arise (such as someone yelling at work), the way in which to apply emptiness for your benefit is as follows: **Remember he is empty, that it is a projection or concept and label of my mind. Realize that this perception is forced upon**

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Class Ten, continued

me by my karma. Now by understanding the situation with wisdom, you realize you can choose not to create this karma again for the future by not responding to generate non-virtue. Preferably do benefit; at least do no harm. This is how karma and emptiness are linked together. This is how emptiness creates nirvana and leads to bliss and enlightenment.

Because we see things as empty and as the result of karma, we behave with morality to avoid pain in the future. This leads to only positive karma ripening and to our eventually experiencing everything as nirvana or Buddhahood. There is not some change that occurs when you see emptiness. It merely leads to pure morality, which leads to Buddhahood. Understanding karma is not enough to change your behavior. You must see its emptiness and understand how it works to have the solid basis not to do non-virtue.

Any time you have a worldly dharma you misapprehend the nature of things and see them as self-existent. When you see things as empty, afflictions melt away. The mind can't simultaneously hold two opposite concepts to be true (such as something being hot and cold simultaneously). Emptiness and afflictions are opposite; the mind can't hold both simultaneously. Once you see the angry guy as empty, the afflictive reaction melts away, because you see the situation is a result of your past bad deed. This type of thing continues until you have purified all of your past bad deeds.

Perception of emptiness doesn't change things immediately until all the past karma is done. It does prevent our creating new non-virtue. This is the wisdom talked about. No mysterious wisdom exists. This is it. With wisdom in the mind, you have the key to nirvana, which is defined as the cessation of affliction. Cessation of affliction occurs because we commit nothing but virtue.

For us to experience everyone around us as heavenly angels, etc., we must behave with virtue toward everyone. This is great compassion. Wisdom (emptiness) is the way we understand why it is necessary to act with compassion. We act with compassion because if we don't, then we receive karmically negative results. We see and know this directly through the wisdom of emptiness.

Great compassion is the activity which plants positive seeds which will ripen into our future good results from everyone and everything. Wisdom is the understanding and insight which lets us know that because good definitely causes good outcomes and bad definitely causes bad outcomes, that we must act with great compassion to be happy.

Imagine the most pleasant experience you can remember in your whole life. That's one moment of one day. Now imagine that something can give that to you every moment of every day, that you have that sensation all the time.

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Class Eleven: Course Review

Quote from Nagarjuna:

GANG-LA TONG-PA NYI RUNG - WA DE - LA TAM-CHE
for whatever emptiness appropriate, right for that thing everything

RUNG-WAR GYUR
appropriate is

For anything for which emptiness is right, then for that thing everything is right. (Everything functions because it is empty; if it weren't empty, then nothing would function.)

Miscellaneous ideas:

Once you have bodhichitta in your heart, even if you lose it temporarily, your actions are still motivated by bodhichitta. It permeates your mind, and so affects everything, even if it is not in your thoughts.

You are not a mahayana practitioner until you have established bodhichitta. When you get bodhichitta, you know it. There are definite, almost physical signs (light shining out of your heart, etc.)

Sangha refers to those who have seen emptiness directly, not those in robes.

Tantra is the experience that everyone who exists is an angel, etc. To create that karmically, we must love and benefit every living being, in order to obtain the same result.

Buddha has removed the obstacles of bad thoughts and the obstacles to knowledge, and knows all things simultaneously.

Whatever deeds you do toward powerful or holy objects is magnified regardless of your motivation. The power of the object vastly outweighs your motivation. Karmic results usually return later in this life at the earliest, unless the object of the karma is very powerful. Then it will ripen very quickly.

Compassion is the concern for others' samsaric existence, not for whether they have food, etc. This is concern for the root problem, not the symptoms.

If you don't meditate for an hour or two every day, you can't reach high levels of realization or perceive emptiness. The mind is in the form realm when you directly perceive emptiness. You can't have any sensory perception at that time. It's impossible, as your mind is no longer in this realm.

Learning refers to classroom hours. **Thinking** (contemplation) is the same as analytical meditation. **Meditation** means that after coming to a conclusion from contemplation, you meditate to burn it into your consciousness. You meditate repeatedly to burn it into yourself.