

## 2018\_05\_27\_am1\_Shamatha\_LMC.mp4

**Carrying Practice:** constantly reminding ourselves of value and meaning of refuge and bodhicitta, holding view of our inherently awakened nature, **Carrying Practice:** continually recognize our experience

[00:02:40] Good morning to all of you. ... For those of you who are... not familiar with our schedule, we have now a session of meditation. And then, after the break, we'll come together and have an opportunity to explore... questions... assumptions... and experiences that you had this morning or previously or expect to have in the future.

[00:04:37] Ostensibly, our time this morning is billed as the practice of calm abiding, or zhinay as we know it in Tibetan. But as usual... in order to keep myself entertained, which is a high priority... [laughter] I always try to introduce some... new aspect of the practice. ... And also, as usual, we begin with the... recitation of the Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer. With or without that... liturgy... it's good to remind ourselves, as many times as possible during the day, and the night... of the value and the meaning of refuge. And the *importance*... of giving rise to... bodhicitta, the awakening mind... that accomplishes... not only our own benefit, but the benefit of all sentient beings. It's a rather *grand* aspiration. And so, we can inspire ourselves by pursuing it with some vigor, which is *easy* to do. With one exception. Which we will get to in a while.

[00:07:01] To repeat what we ordinarily repeat... we are not... *unfamiliar* with the act of refuge. Even if you have never... heard the word Buddhism... we all know all the things that we turn to for refuge... in our lives. All of our material possessions. All of our ordinary... pleasant and unpleasant relationships. Our connections to all things. Our emotions, both the positive ones and the negative ones, we *continually* go for refuge in these things. Of course, with the wish that we will... be happy.

[00:07:57] When it doesn't work, we neither blame ourselves nor the Buddha. Though the Buddha is an easier one to blame. He doesn't talk back to us... much. ... So we want to turn our minds to refuge in the Buddha because the Buddha represents... all of the most excellent qualities, good fortune, kindness. We can make a long list, but suffice that. We would all love to embody and experience all of the qualities of the Buddha. Every time we sit down, it's very helpful... to remind ourselves that we are sitting down in order to first and foremost go for refuge... to all the qualities of the Buddha, which we already inherently possess.

[00:09:16] So often we come... thinking that we are going to... change ourselves... into something *really* good. ... There's a problem... with that approach... since we already possess all those qualities. So we have to give up this idea... of changing... our minds. The inherently... enlightened mind that we each possess. It could not be made better. Is that good news or bad? Should be good, because if it's not, you're on the wrong track. Those qualities... and all of our meditation and practices... are focused on... recognition of those qualities. Not faking it... but recognizing it, just like when we hear our own voice. ... So all of our work is not about... *fixing*... our inherently pure mind. But about recognizing that purity. So, we'll begin by reciting the Refuge and Bodhicitta liturgy together three times.

**sangha** [00:11:13] reciting Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer

[00:13:02] Now, just a very brief... easy instruction. ... Our objective in the practice of calm abiding ... is to allow the mind to settle... *naturally*. ... With our voices quiet... stilled ... and we often also say without distraction.

[00:14:35] But this morning, I want to... also add... this light, hopefully helpful, variation. Normally, when we... encounter distractions... in our meditation, we consider that... as a defect. ... As an impediment to our... proper meditation. There is nothing wrong with that approach. Can be helpful. But for... your pleasure... consider the following. ...We often say... in the profound instructions... that the mind... is unchanging. So here... when we say unchanging, we're not... talking about the inherently pure mind itself. When we think, "How can that be? I change my mind... a hundred times an hour." We're talking about the inherently pure... mind. ... Which is unchanging in the *sense*... that it has always been present. It continuously and always has... manifested... all of our experiences... without exception. Our happiness. Our grief. Our insight. Our confusion. Et cetera.

[00:18:13] That mind... never came into being. ... Has no beginning and no end. ... Here we reference... that inherently pure... what we call buddhanature, the awakened nature. And there is *no* sentient being... no matter how confused... no matter how clear... no matter how wise... no matter how evil... there is not a one... who is not fully endowed with that nature. So there is nothing to fix. Nothing to enhance. Or improve. Just for this morning... hold that view... of yourself, of your friends... of your unpleasant friends. We are not here to fix it. We are here to recognize it. And recognition... is the primary... outcome. Everything follows from it. So, while you sit... you can experience all of your experiences. A little discomfort after a while on the cushion... changes to a little pleasure. Perhaps some insight. Perhaps some relaxation. Perhaps you fall asleep. ... So consider it your job this morning... to just recognize your experience as it unfolds. Not to hold onto it. Not to push it away.

[00:21:21] And if you feel up to it... when you have the experience of... a difficult... emotional state... if you can... rejoice. For in those difficult situations, just like the... wildly pleasant ones... in those situations rests the energy... that's *required* in order to recognize... your own experience clearly and consistently. ... So to your best ability, however well... that short instruction is clear, I hope... do your best for the remainder of this session... to recognize your experiences as they unfold, without judgment, without attachment, without aversion.

[00:22:44] *period of meditation*

**sangha** [00:40:56] *dedicating the merit*

[00:41:38] So we're going to have a break now and we'll be about... 20 minutes maybe until everyone's done with the bathroom breaks. Mostly, that... is our clock. So... take a break. And during the time of this break, before our next session, it would be good to... observe silence and continually bring your mind back to recognizing... what you are doing and what your experience is without judgment and without commentary on it. Just the recognition is enough. Okay?