

## 2018\_05\_27\_am3\_QA\_LMC.mp4

*learning to recognize our experience with sense of gratitude without commentary, using the energy of what we recognize to stabilize the recognition*

**LMC** [00:00:07] So for any of you who are not familiar with our scheduling process... this is the opportunity that we give ourselves to... explore the concepts and the experiences, whatever is on your mind related to your Dharma practice... primarily. But... anything you'd like to raise... we'll explore it.

**Student 1** [00:00:44] I, I have a practical question about method. Particularly dealing with sound as today we had a lot of sound. I'm just wondering... I've heard in the past, one way is to drill into the sound. Go right into the sound. But because sound is not like thought, which comes and goes. Sound stays or sometimes it's erratic and periodic and jumping around. So we don't have any control over the sound, obviously. So, I'm just curious if there is any special techniques for rising above, or below, or ignoring sound, or dealing with sound. Anything you have on that?

**LMC** [00:01:33] Yes... well I'm not sure that sound is a special case. [laughs] I mean, if I frown at you, that's pretty much the same thing. I mean, we're dealing with experiences that arise. And those experiences may be triggered from something external like sound. But they could also be triggered by a memory of something that happened five minutes ago or five years ago. So in a sense, it's just the same thing. Our experiences arise from... the inherently pure mind itself. Continuously... without a pause. And... we would refer to many of those things as memories. But also many of them... feel like they've never occurred before. And we generate more of them by talking to ourselves about... what the experience was. Which often leads us away from... just the bare recognition of the experience that we're having.

[00:02:53] Than we have... sounds that have meaning. Like hearing conversations that are going on. So those can be more difficult, depending upon... what the meaning is. If you hear two people talking and then you stop for a moment and you listen, you realize they're talking about you! [laughs] That's a different thing to recognize. In one sense, maybe easier, maybe more difficult, but... probably more difficult. Whether it's positive or negative. These are the things... that, are actually the most important. The *easy* stuff is like, [looking in his cup] Oh, there's water here! Well, I wish it was hot or I wish it was cold or I wish it was something else. Generally speaking, we don't get much energy from that. But if we're really carrying a load of anger about an encounter we had yesterday or last year or whatever it is... that has *a lot* of energy.

[00:04:04] And that energy, if we just *recognize*... that experience that we're having... and practice just having the recognition of it... which is a *prerequisite* to anything else that happens with it... we can get a *lot* of practice in there... in a way which feels... to us authentically often, like *that was really good*. So we can actually feel a sense of *gratitude* that we... had that experience or have that experience. Which goes back to the place of... the instruction, which is actually maybe not always so helpful... to *feel* a sense of gratitude in difficult situations. Often we'll say, Oh, that's easy for you to say, but this person did this to me. [laughter] So, so we can't quite get there.

[00:05:07] But the *instruction* is... so helpful... when we actually *feel* that sense of gratitude. Like we see through the experience we're having. And we recognize that the experience is *our* experience... no matter what the cause. Someone else didn't have it. *I* had it. And I recognized it

as an experience, neither adding nor subtracting or... altering any of it, just letting it... like the cloud. The cloud appears. Cloud disappears. We often say the cloud doesn't go anywhere. When the sun comes out and the cloud disappears, *it doesn't go anywhere*. So, in the same way, we have that experience with many of our experiences is that... they, they arise... they're there for a while, then they disappear. Some of them we're glad they disappear. Some of them we wish we could *make* them disappear. But they *all* disappear... in the time when we stop feeding them anyway. So just the recognition... brings about... the end of that. Which of course is always replaced by another experience.

[00:06:29] So, in the course of practice... I have to say, a fairly high level of practice... to recognize your experience as it occurs and just pay attention to it without commentary, without judgment of any kind. And when it goes, it's just gone. No need to talk about that either. So... with that in mind, we can also *forgive* ourselves some... inadequacy of being able to do that because it actually is... very difficult... to just recognize the experiences as they arise. Even when they're not highly charged. What to speak of then, when they're really charged? Is that okay? Just barely, right? [laughs] It's a practice.

**Student 2** [00:07:46] So hearing that discussion reminded me of... an instruction that has been incredibly helpful for me, which is the one that says be grateful to everyone. Which can be *really* hard depending on who... that is. But... it's like with practice, you can kind of, sort of, find a way to do it. And it's just... this incredible relief from suffering... [laughs] if you can.

**LMC** [00:08:16] Yeah. It's also right parallel to the instruction... a very profound practice is to take every experience that arises as a gift from your teacher or your guru. That... puts all experiences in a different category because you feel like you have a *relationship* with that person, with every experience that arises. It's really the same thing. Slightly different spin. Yeah.

**Student 2** [00:08:48] Yeah. I mean, it seems to have this quality of... you're no longer being helplessly buffeted around by experience or by... relationship with a person or whatever, you know. It's just, you're kind of free from that feeling of like... I'm being buffeted around by what the person did or what this experience was. It's just, I'm helpless and it's just beating me up, you know. You don't particularly feel helpless anymore, no matter what it is, you know?

**LMC** [00:09:21] But don't you love to be buffeted around? [laughter]

**Student 2** [00:09:25] I've learned a lot from that, time to time.

**LMC** [00:09:28] Thanks.

**Student 4** [00:16:26] No real question, but... I was kind of amused to see... the different ways that I experience the quote unquote noise from outside and the noise from the little bodhisattvas in training... [laughter] on the lower level and the attitudes that I was developing toward them. It was quite interesting to see... the different ways I experienced those two things. I love to hear the kids. I mean, it's not a distraction at all to me. That's little buddhas up and coming... and I love that. And the outside.... um, well, today I didn't get angry at him. Today I thought... I wonder if... we could get him to meditate with us. [laughter] And I thought... okay it's just... it's just somebody doing his thing and it's... it's not *him* that's bothering me. It's the machine... noise that's annoying. And, you know, it really isn't, really isn't bugging me... the way it used to. It's okay. And... you know, maybe if I were really good, I could hear it as Chenrezig's mantra. But for now, the fact that... it's not making me angry... that's okay. It is a good thing.

**Student 5** [00:18:26] I did not share [her]... love of the little voices. [laughs] However... I got to uncover... an irritation that I had going on with my body, which was sort of endless. And... then I noticed that... distraction, as we call it, was pretty much ongoing when I would try to escape the external distractions. ... It seems like it's just an endless... pile of distractions and like... trying to get into any space of recognition... of this as *the voice of the teacher*... is very difficult. I can recognize that I'm deeply distracted and it's one thing after another. And... maybe I just have an extraordinarily busy mind and not enough meditation practice. But boy, it's ongoing. That's my total comment.

**LMC** [00:20:16] Well, I suspect that... that I'm not so different from everybody else. And one of the discoveries that I've made about myself is that... it's helpful to have a number of instructions on the practice of... zhinay, or anything else, a number of different approaches to it... so that... on any given day, I'm likely to find one of them that is more helpful. And the longer that I try to work with a *single* approach, the more likely I am to just go deeper into distraction and... all sorts of... things that we would not necessarily identify as meditation. [laughs] And so that's actually the *intention* of the instruction to... recognize what you're doing.

[00:21:20] So the word recognition is carefully chosen. That is to say, we're not trying to put our *awareness* on the irritation. Not right off the bat. But, we begin by just recognizing... I'm irritated. And once we recognize that we're irritated, we've also connected to the *energy* that's there. We don't try to avoid things which have no energy. We just kind of like float through them. It's no big deal.

[00:21:54] I mean, there is sound in this room right now. Continuous sound. If you listen! But we don't rise up and say it's too noisy. But in the moment that we see it, we can... recognize it as something... and that's *very* helpful from a meditation standpoint. *Just* to recognize. To develop the *ability*... to recognize, I have a little irritation now. The irritation... provides me with a certain amount of energy that I wouldn't otherwise have. So that energy can be used to recognize and stabilize the recognition.

[00:22:33] And gradually, I like the cloud metaphor, where... clouds pass over in the sky on a regular basis. And, often they obscure something... like a full moon on a night. When there are clouds moving, we can have the sense that the moon has been *obscured* by the clouds. But, in a short time, the clouds will either vanish or they'll move on. But the metaphor that we use for that is, that the clouds vanish. They appear. They're there for a while. Then they disappear. The reason why the *distinction* is important is because [what] we want to have is the view... that the clouds... do not go anywhere. When they vanish, *they don't go anywhere*. But they also do not stay. ... They don't go anywhere and they don't stay.

[00:23:42] So, that's a helpful *view* to hold because we know that actually... there's nothing that is really coming and going. If my irritation comes, it's just some irritation. It doesn't bring with it any insight. It doesn't bring with it... any grief. The grief all comes by our reaction. Our irritation all comes by our reaction. The sound doesn't bring us irritation. The sound is just sound. So, when we *recognize* the irritation... and it's connected at the same time with the sound, we can have an insight there that we otherwise wouldn't have. So it's just a very simple little practice.

[00:24:35] Recognize your experience. It doesn't say recognize your anger. *Whatever* the experience is. Like, I want to get out of here. I'm tired of being here. That's a concept. But there is an experience that's behind it... of agitation, of irritation of some kind. Without calling any

names, we can recognize the experience. And that's very helpful. Just to be able to *recognize* it. Not to name it. Not to change it. Not to put it somewhere else or increase it. Just to recognize it. Helpful... now in this very simple instruction and helpful later in more... complex practices, also.

[00:25:39] We'll dedicate the merit of our efforts.

***sangha*** [00:25:48] *dedicating the merit*