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ways to work with anger and even using as basis of compassion for others, working with continual flow of experiences which come out of nature of mind itself, working with holding views

LMC [00:00:26] Maybe the nice thing about having so few people in the evening is that we can talk about anything we want to talk about. And you don't have to worry about too many people listening to you. [laughter]

Student 1 [00:00:47] My question is, what do we do if we really stuck in a... with the uncomfortable feeling? So, I'm experiencing a lot of anger... towards someone I love. And you were saying how if we sit there like... just realize that things will pass, that they're temporary, but... I really seem stuck with these feelings. So, what do we do if we're really stuck with... with anger specifically? And it doesn't seem to be moving.

LMC [00:01:49] Working with anger... is this the issue? Yeah. Okay. Well, there are... a lot of different ways to work with anger within the context of our meditation practice. So, outside of the meditation practice, I don't have too much to say. But within the context of our meditation practice, anger becomes a real obstacle, *usually*... usually. So, do you find that in your meditation practice?

Student 1 [00:03:15] Yes.

LMC [00:03:15] Yes. Okay. [both laugh]

Student 1 [00:03:23] I think especially... like after today, after an argument with a loved one, it's like I'm kind of trapped in the cycle and my mind can't let go?

LMC [00:03:33] Yes. So, let's take that piece. Do you notice that it comes to an end?

Student 1 [00:03:50] No. It just seems to keep going. Like there's this long story in this narrative.

LMC [00:03:57] Are you angry now?

Student 1 [00:03:58] Yeah. Like it's there.

LMC [00:04:00] At me?

Student 1 [00:04:01] No. [laughter] It's inside. And maybe when I quieten down is when it already comes up.

LMC [00:04:09] Yeah. ... When you are still... can you find a place where the mind is not so busy and not so angry and there's a stillness there?

Student 1 [00:04:39] Maybe with practice, but tonight...

LMC [00:04:44] No, I mean, just aside from your practice. So, no prerequisite here. Just... do you experience anger... and you want to be free of it.

Student 1 [00:04:57] Yeah, mm-hmm.

LMC [00:04:57] So of the... hundred ways in which you could deal with it in the context of your meditation practice... we have to find one of those ways... that works. If you can find *one* way to work with it, then the rest of them become easier. It almost doesn't matter where you start. ... But if it just churns, we have to first kind of... admit something, which is that *it doesn't just churn*. ... You're playing some role in that. And if you could identify that role, that would be helpful. What do you do that keeps it from just coming to an end?

Student 1 [00:05:49] I keep thinking about it?

LMC [00:05:50] Ohhhh, thinking about it. Yes. So, is it like personal? Are you angry at yourself or angry at others?

Student 1 [00:06:05] It's someone else... specifically.

LMC [00:06:05] Someone else. Okay.

Student 1 [00:06:07] Yes. Yeah.

LMC [00:06:10] I don't think you're the only one... that suffers from that. But could be. [laughter] So, and let me just add... that I said that in a slightly humorous way, because humor is a great antidote. So, there are *many* antidotes. If you can... know about and experience and work with... numerous antidotes... then it becomes a little bit of a game. You can work with it. So, if one doesn't work, the other one will work. And so on. One thing is to notice... it comes to an end. So, if you don't notice it, it's possible that... as soon as it comes to an end, you just re-enroll... [laughs] right away. And then you continue. So, it *feels* like it doesn't come to an end. But of course, it *does*... come to an end. So, one method is... don't re-up, don't enroll in it again. Don't start it. See if you can... settle your mind enough to just watch it. And see if you can *not* do anything. Don't try to stop it. Don't try to start it. If you don't do *anything*... it has no life. It has no power. So, the issue here is you definitely do something. We all do that. You need to find... what it is that you're doing that you can back away from. And that's just one of many different ways of looking at it. Does that much make sense?

Student 1 [00:08:04] Yeah. I think that... as you saying that I'm thinking about how... maybe I feel angry and then I act on it and then I get really involved in it.

LMC [00:08:14] Yeah, of course!

Student 1 [00:08:14] Buy into it. And I was so surprised because... the whole week I'd been preparing for this conversation and I was feeling really peaceful and settled about it. And then... when it arrived, it just sparked this anger and I got really caught up in it. Now it feels like we're one and the same thing, but.... yeah.

LMC [00:08:58] We started the instruction this evening with a slightly unusual instruction for the practice of shamatha, where we place our awareness on an experience, right. So, normally that's a slightly advanced instruction. To put your awareness on an experience. So, we might think that... it's simple because we're continually having experiences. So... we should be able to put our awareness on it. The problem is that... we haven't built the skill to do that. And so, what

we feel is a constant sense of... kind of like we're the *victim*... of it. And when we feel that, we get more angry. So, the cycle just keeps going like that.

[00:09:50] If you can... sit down and at least settle the body... just relax. Not tense. Not sit straight and stiff, but just relax. Settle the body. And of course, not to speak... to just be quiet. And then when you're in that place, see if you can identify... the experience of that anger. Like do I feel it now? Is it gone now? In other words, you're going to look into it. Not just... kind of be subject to it. You look into the experience itself. Just see, is it there? Sometimes you might find, I can't find it.

[00:10:44] Because you think you're looking for a particular experience, but it's actually *not* a particular experience. So, if you *keep* looking like that, you gradually have a sense of... it's interesting in this way, you gradually can have a sense... that you don't actually know what that anger is. Which should be... not confusing... not disappointing, but just a sense of... okay, I found one thing here. And that is that... it's not what I think it is. That's one thing. Can you *make* the anger, if you would like to have, if I said right now make some anger. Can you do it? Easy, huh? Can you stop for a moment, just for a moment? Not stop the anger. It's no good to try and stop the anger. Actually, what we need to do is let it have its own life and you have your life. So, you look at the experience as it arises. No Labels. No effort to get rid of it, but just... to turn your awareness to the experience that you're having.

[00:12:20] Not for a long time. In fact, it might be that the best way to do it is you place your awareness on that experience. Then the experience disappears. Then... you need to place your awareness on it again. ... If you look very close, you might see that... in order to place the awareness on that anger... you have to regenerate the anger. The anger is *not* what it first feels like. Which is kind of like... I swallowed a snake, you know. And it's just continually... doing something. But when you look close... you will not find the snake. Even if it's somebody who... feels like they're the cause of the anger. So, if you can find a little space in there... where you actually just have the question... or the certain sense of bewilderment for a moment, like I'm not sure that... I'm *used* to being angry when this happens and it's not happening now.

[00:13:30] So, it'll come again. It won't go away easily. But if you can recognize it when it comes... and recognize the *experience*... while you're having it. And just let it go when it goes and not try and do anything with it. It will come back again. And then just repeat that process... for a while. So, there's other things that you can do, but... this might be helpful. ... How long have you had this... disease? [laughter]

Student 1 [00:14:08] Just today. I mean, it's happened in the past, but today mostly, yeah.

LMC [00:14:14] Yeah. And you're probably aware that... the person that... you identify as the cause of your anger... is also suffering from the same thing. That doesn't help. Doesn't help. So, there's a certain way in which you can also kind of separate things into pieces and work with each one by itself. Like maybe the other person is someone who you actually like or wish you could like or *did* like them and now you can't like them. And it's like, all of those things are going on. So, when the anger comes up, then you can also remind yourself that that other person also has this. And maybe they have less to work with than you have. Like maybe you're getting a handle on it and understanding what it is... and they're not. So, that's an opportunity to give rise to some... loving kindness, some compassion. Like, this person... I wish they had this and that would be really nice. The fact that they can't doesn't mean they're bad, it just means that they're not able to find the... source of it and work with it.

[00:15:43] There's nothing worse than anger. I think grief is better than anger. Almost anything. Our teacher, Bokar Rinpoche, who we used to go to every year and visit and sometimes still do in India. And on a couple of occasions, he made a statement, which for some people was surprising. And that was that he said... *nothing good ever comes from anger*. So, I remember at the time thinking, I'll bet not everybody agrees with that. [laughs] Because we feel, when we're angry, we feel like we're right. Like we're right, they're wrong. And that could be almost true, but it doesn't *fix* anything. It actually throws more fuel onto the fire. So, I think that's what he meant was nothing good ever comes from it. He actually, I think said nothing good ever *has* come from it.

[00:16:49] The only thing that's good about it is when... you see its nature and overcome it. Otherwise, nobody would choose to do it without the cause that they probably don't even recognize yet. So, simple things are really useful. Too much complexity? Better go get a therapist. But... in the context of Dharma practice, in very intense things, especially when they're emotional things, the best thing is find something that is very simple. In all of the practices, if you can find something that feels to you like... this works for me! Then... you can stick to that and gradually find many more things that are helpful. Kind of build on that basis.

[00:17:47] Come back... you know. Talk to other friends, especially friends who have a natural inclination to feel... compassion for the person that you don't feel compassion for. And that can give you a sense of, well... my friends are not crazy. So, this person actually maybe they *do* deserve some compassion. And generally speaking, we would say... there is no one... who deserves to suffer. It's like, there *is* no one. Never has been anyone... who deserves to suffer. No matter what they did, they don't deserve to suffer. And having them suffer, will never resolve the issue. This is how we get into wars. It's not how we get out of them. So, we don't want to be in that position. We would like to be a cause... for our own peace of mind, our own happiness, and a cause for the peace of mind and happiness for others. You're very close to it when you're angry. You're not actually further away.

[00:18:57] I saw you raise your eyebrows. [laughs] It's okay, really, because you get inspired by the things that are the most difficult. You have full authority to be free of the anger. So then, if you can get into the place where you feel like, okay, I see how I need to do these things, try these things and work on these things. It begins to work and you feel inspired by it. I see... it's not what I thought it was. So, gradually then you kind of get it. It's not really a disease. It's a disease that we all have, so there's no point calling it a disease. Everybody has suffered from anger... and suffered from... kind of being at the hands of somebody else who is angry, also.

Student 1 [00:19:55] I think what I realized about it too, is that it's kind of a mask on top of more vulnerable feelings. It comes out as this really strong feeling. But underneath it, there's actually a lot of tender, like... vulnerable feelings. So, like as I'm, as I was sitting it with, with it here, I just realized how much hurt is underneath that anger inside of me because I do really love and care for this person. And maybe the feeling of love and care is so strong that I don't know... but there's anger that comes out first. But yeah, but if I give it time, then that... the softer, more painful feeling comes up.

Student 2 [00:23:26] So, I found the instructions for the meditation tonight, we'll I think you've given them before... over the last month or so, but... I find that practice confusing. And I guess I want clarification. Sometimes I think I mix it up with, like, uh, shamatha with no object kind of approach. And I don't think that's what you're asking us to do. When I... bring my attention to my

experience... like tonight, I had a lot of distractions and I was sleepy. So, a lot of times when I'm sleepy, it's like this movie starts playing in my mind. You know, it's just like talking and people and it's almost like a dream, except I'm actually awake. And so then, I kind of come to... with awareness and I realize, oh, I'm distracted! But then I don't know where to put my attention. So, I'll just put it on whatever the next experience is, I guess. But it feels like I've just constantly like a pinball. Just kind of going around and around in it. I'm not sure that that's what you're aiming for. I don't mean it like that. What do I want to say? I just want to know that I'm following the instructions, I guess... the way you mean them.

LMC [00:25:05] That's helpful to know that you're following the instructions, but only if the result is changed. [laughs] So, if you're still having the same pinball effect, then the instructions are not working also. One thing to consider... is, and I think it's I think it's fair to say... this is not necessarily easy... to use the experiences that we just naturally always have. In other words, if I say that I'm going to put my awareness on this [holds up the wooden stick] and I set it down very carefully and then I put my awareness on it... I feel a sense of control... over the whole thing. But... if a little bug walks up on my table and walks across and I think I'll put my awareness on the bug. That's *very* difficult. Because... pretty soon I'm talking to myself about the bug. If it was a dead bug, that would work better. There's a certain way in which... we have an expectation when we sit down to meditate that... we *will* silence the mind. But from a much deeper perspective... what we understand is... you're not going to silence the mind. And we can talk about it from a lot of different angles, but fundamentally... the mind's job is to generate experiences.

[00:26:52] It's helpful now if we make a *distinction* between the mind and the brain. So, the brain, we might actually be able to silence. ... It doesn't have the same job as the mind. The mind and the nature of mind itself... is an experience generator. It just never ends. In technical terms, we, we call it the Dharmakaya, which is the *source* of all experience. And I think we tend to think... the source of all experience... well, that's fine. But... it should be kind of metered out at a certain rate, but it doesn't work like that. It's always going. All the time. It's like Niagara Falls. So, it's a little more difficult... when we have the expectation that I'll get it down to a drip, drip, drip and I can put my awareness on that drip. [laughs] Instead of being flooded by this. All of these things. Suddenly we're *angry* again at something and then... something we remember and it changes our position, and now we're thinking about something else. It just goes. That *is* the nature of samsara.

[00:28:13] The confusion is not necessarily the nature of all of these experiences that just keep coming. But... from the perspective of doing... shamatha practice... this is why we normally... put something like a little statue of the Buddha in front of us. So, that we can sort of hang on to it. So that... when we're distracted or irritated or... afraid or joyful or whatever, we have this little statue that we can go to. But at some point, along the way, and this is primarily why we would talk about it here, we have to get to the place where... we understand the nature of *all* of our experiences. And our experiences, all of them... come right out of the nature of mind itself. ... Positive. Negative. Those are all the things that we put *on* the experience. So, those things *also* come out. Well I don't like *that* experience. That also comes out. Arises spontaneously from the nature of mind.

[00:29:34] So, if you're going to practice shamatha from the perspective of... thinking that you would come to the place where you could rest... in the nature of mind itself, we first have to go for this kind of... very difficult ride. To understand that the things that arise from mind itself are just like... when we're sitting around and like, everybody leaves here, let's say. And you're

alone... in here. And you don't have anything to do. But, you know, somebody is gonna come and pick you up in an hour. And so you decide to just sit there. ... Does your mind remain still? [laughs] No! It's almost like it says, cool! She's gonna just sit there. I'm free! [laughter] So, it just takes off. It takes off. And the experiences begin to unfold. But then... while you're sitting there, you also will have the experience, probably... mind is still. ... It is not empty of experience. It is *always* generating experience.

[00:30:53] You know, the last line of the Dorje Chang Thung-ma. You remember the last line? [off mic: every thought that arises is new?] Yes. That's it. Can you connect that to this thing? ... It's like Niagara Falls in the sense that... every drop of water that comes over Niagara Falls is new. ... You could ask the question. 'Well, I don't know. That's not quite right. I mean, doesn't that water come back somehow?' Well you know, it turns into steam and humidity and then maybe it snows and various things happen. And finally, it ends up being in the river again. And then Niagara Falls comes. In a certain way and you can say, well, that's kind of like my thoughts and experiences. They just seem to be kind of renewed and similar from time to time. But really, it's a great and important view to hold. The *view* is all critical here. That there's no such thing as an experience which occurs twice. You can say over and over, I just keep hearing that song. But it is *never* the same... if you look close, ever. It's always different. Same with anger. Say, like, oh, now I'm angry again. But it's not the same anger. It's always something new.

[00:32:35] And that is not necessarily good news. [laughs] Because we're kind of used to dealing with small things like I'm irritated, you know. So, I can just sit somewhere else or I can go outside if it's hot and cool off in the breeze and so on. We're continually *fixing* ourselves in some way or another. Getting more comfortable. Getting more entertained. Too much entertainment, turning things down. We're just trying to... manipulate our experience of ourselves in the world perpetually. So, that does not go well with... the continuous outflow of experiences. So, we start with one thing. You have an experience. You sit down and you're going to have an experience. If you think about this a little bit... all of our practices are designed to give us an experience. ... You could say, 'Well, I don't know about that. How about Mahamudra?' [laughs]

[00:33:51] *Mahamudra is nothing but experience.* [laughs] It's like, it never stops. It's always there. Sometimes it feels... *still*. But there is something going on. And... I think the guy who penned the line, every thought is fresh... or new... understood that... I never have the same experience twice. Ever. And people will say, I'm having the same experience I had yesterday, but *this*... is an illusory fantasy. And in order to progress in this, it's really important to get clear... that there's no such thing as the same experience that happened yesterday.

[00:34:42] The truth of interdependence, we often say, like all pervasive interdependence, like the web of interdependence that permeates everything... is always there. So, anytime that something happens, like in a web... where I think to myself, oh, I'm bored, the Web moves. [laughs] You know? ... You decide you're not bored. The Web moves. It moves continuously. And we're sitting there saying, 'Oh, I'm having that same experience again that I had yesterday.' But in the next moment you're having another experience. We don't remember our experiences as they unfold. They just flow constantly all the time. When you walk on the beach, you don't say oops, I stepped on that grain of sand again... right?

[00:35:37] It's good... you get your own kind of understanding about it. One of them that I think is one of the best, is the ocean. You go to the ocean. You go to the coast, and you'll walk down to the beach and you're excited to see the waves rolling in. Would you ever say, 'Look, that wave

is there again... that was there before.' You would never say that! You fully understand. That wave is not the same. And furthermore, it never existed before this moment and will never be seen again. We need to embrace *that* view and use *that* as a way in which we experience all things. And then we'll have the experience that all things are fresh.

[00:36:24] When all things are fresh, it's impossible to be bored. That's one thing. It's impossible. Never had that experience before. But it's not the way that our habitual patterns work. Our habitual pattern is... well that's a pattern like this. I call that this thing and that thing has happened. Oh, I had that last week. It's like we're go to that whole thing. We need to crumble that thing, as often as we can. Remind ourselves. Like, here I am getting up at 6 in the morning again. I wanted to sleep till 7:00. And we just, it's almost like we're trying to convince ourselves that an experience is happening that we had once before. And we're disappointed in it. So, then pretty soon we're calling it the same disappointment. All of these things are happening. Our meditation should be an antidote to all of that.

[00:37:23] And one of the ways to have the antidote, I remember going to Lama Tsang Tsing about this on retreat. And just saying, like, how do you have that experience? How do you, like, drop all of that? And his thing was, this thing of... you have to hold the view. You have to hold the view. The view is not always replicable in our reality, but in this case, it is 100 percent replicable. Therefore, it's easier. You hold the view that not anything I ever experience or say or do has ever happened before, and it will never happen again. And you need to hold that *sense*... like that. If you hold it long enough, pretty soon, that's the experience that you'll have. It's kind of an insane experience from time to time, but we all know... so what! I mean, as a certain fraction of our experiences that are feeling insane anyway, so why not have... the realization of understanding that... this is the nature of how things unfold?

[00:38:38] I remember hearing from a teacher, the Dharmakaya is like this tube. It's like all this experience just flows down continuously. Call it whatever you want. Sticks and stones, rusty beer cans, twigs, things that people threw in the river of consciousness, you know. [laughs] And they're just coming down and flowing all the time. And we're saying, who threw that beer can in the river? And then we get pissed off at the person, the make-believe person who threw it in the river.

[00:39:15] The Dorje Chang Thung-ma is actually, if you understand that prayer... and you don't have to understand in the most deepest way, but you need to get some understanding of, some conceptual understanding. It's a magical prayer because it deals with your experience directly. And the grandest experience of all is to rest your awareness on all of your experience as it unfolds. No judgment. No wish for anything else. No propositions. No nothing. It's like just the experience unfolds... and you're with it... all the time. ... I remember at the San Francisco Zen Center... that there was, I had a friend there who just said, yes, Sazuki Roshi calls that presence. It's just presence. ... Ordinary. Very ordinary. ... Okay? You ready? [laughter]

Student 3 [00:40:40] So, I have a simple question I think about working with views during a formal practice session. So, for example, I'm working right now on Seven Points of Mind Training and I'm working with some commentary by Thupten Jinpa. And he talks a lot about... working with the view in the same way that you talked about... dharmakaya. Things clearly appearing but not really existing, that kind of stuff. He's talking about things that are kind of a little hard to grasp conceptually, like... hold the view that things in your experience are clearly appearing but not actually existent. And so, what I'm wondering is, when you are doing a formal practice session and you're supposed to be *holding a view*... I realize I'm not exactly sure how to

do that. So, what happens is, I remind myself of the view... and then I sit... and it's kind of like you put some spice into a soup, it has a certain flavor. But if I keep bringing it up, that conceptual act of bringing up the view and reminding myself... disintegrates the shamatha. And so, I'm wondering, what's the actual *method* for holding the view while you're sitting on the cushion in a formal meditation? How do you keep from making it into... a long conversation with yourself? In which case for me there's no shamatha...

LMC [00:42:22] Or you're concretizing it.

Student 3 [00:42:23] Oh, yes, exactly. Yeah. Yeah. Thanks.

LMC [00:42:38] I don't, I don't know that everyone agrees with me on this, but... in my own experience, the piece of our tradition, especially the vajrayana, but also the mahayana... the teachings about views... is one of the most useful teachings. So, in this particular case, where... what example did you use? You just... [off mic] appearance and emptiness. Boy, you really picked the hard one.

Student 3 [00:43:18] Well, we, we can pick any view. You know, *my anger is my responsibility...* any view.

LMC [00:43:23] That's not helping! [laughs] Let's do some examples. So, an example of a *view* is... that... you have an experience, let's say. So, in the summer here, it got pretty hot on some days. And then sometimes... we'd finish our meditation and go outside and there'd be a little cool breeze. And there's a natural inclination was, oh, there's that cool breeze again. So, that is *not* holding the view. Holding the view is... you walk outside... and the breeze blows and you feel a bit of cool. And you don't say... to yourself, there's the cool breeze. It's okay to say... a cool breeze. But the *view* is to remind yourself... *this* experience has never occurred before. So, that you're just kind of like wearing down the sense... that our life is comprised of continuous repetition... of experiences. Which not only is... kind of demoralizing in the depth of boredom, in one way, but it's also just not true.

[00:44:57] Anyone... doesn't need to know too much to know... that that breeze that touched my face... has never occurred before. The experience maybe feels like another time when I had that experience. But *that* little breeze has never occurred before. And especially then, you hold the view... which is very helpful. The view is... the experience has never occurred before. And *furthermore*, it will never occur again. So that we get to this place first conceptually that... the nature of impermanence is not iterative. It's not like something happens periodically that is impermanent. It's like there never *is* anything to *be* permanent because it is in a constant state of transition. *That* should be fairly easy to overlay on the experience.

Student 3 [00:46:04] So, I want to check my understanding. So, are you saying, for example, if I'm working with a view of impermanence, that when I'm sitting shamatha, I should periodically, throughout the shamatha session... go conceptual and talk to myself. Things are impermanent. Then I sit until that view seems to dissipate. And then I remind myself again. So are you suggesting a shamatha session where I'm talking to myself throughout the session 50, 60 times in an hour? Reminding myself conceptually of the view?

LMC [00:46:42] Okay. Yeah.

Student 3 [00:46:43] That's really my question. So, well, let's say... so, if the view I'm trying to hold, for example, is: things are impermanent. So, I remind myself at the beginning of the session, everything is impermanent. Nothing is permanent. Then I sit and I rest down into shamatha and presumably I watch that.

LMC [00:47:05] Yeah.

Student 3 [00:47:05] So, then for me, after about a minute, two minutes... that thought, that view will go away. And so, then am I supposed to talk to myself? And say, everything is impermanent. And then back to the shamatha? Because the *holding* of the view for me, it begins with a conceptual reminder. I'm talking to myself.

LMC [00:47:33] Yes. So, I think that the answer... to the question, am I supposed to continually remind myself of this? I think that the answer to that has to be... maybe... but not necessarily. Because... really, the idea here, is not to just develop a *conceptual* sense that things are impermanent. We already have that sense before we ever heard of Buddhism. We actually knew that things were impermanent. But I like to say a little bit jokingly, our sense of impermanence was that things just weren't made well. [laughter] And so they tended to break. They didn't last long and so on.

[00:48:26] So, we're looking for an inherently impermanent something. Like a sense of our own life, a sense of our own being. We're attracted to teachings, sometimes, that tell us... that you may die, but it's not the end. When in fact, the deeper teaching is, oh, yes it is. *It's the end of everything you ever knew*. And everything you ever knew, you never knew before and you'll never know again. But is it the end of the flow of experience? Absolutely not.

[00:49:11] So, the view there is helpful... because it channels our awareness in a certain way. So, it's kind of like... a profound level of shamatha. Because what we're doing is... let's say that... okay, I played with impermanence... for decades. I am so convinced of impermanence, like nobody needs to tell me anything about impermanence. That's what I felt the first time I heard Kalu Rinpoche talk about impermanence. I thought, are you kidding me? We've all been to college. It's like what is permanent? There is no such thing as permanence.

[00:49:52] We already knew that. But that's *not* what we were trying to learn. We were trying to learn the *experience* of impermanence. To actually *witness* the change as it occurred. Without saying, Oh, it's impermanent! You know, which is to solidify it... at that point. *It...* is impermanent. *It...* has changed. That's a natural phase in the progression of dealing with the issue of impermanence that we need to come to full on. Not just to have a sense of... eh, over time, things deteriorate. You've got to repaint the building and so on. That's not what impermanence is about.

[00:50:41] Impermanence is more about the last line of the Dorje Chang Thung-ma, which is... this taste has never occurred before. It's like the wave on the ocean. You're out on the boat. You watch the waves. It's a great meditation. If you're out on a boat, the next time you're out on a boat, think like, Whoa. Here we are! It's like I'm looking at something... that from moment to moment is never the same. And furthermore, so easy to hold the view... that wave will never appear again. That collage of waves will never appear again, ever! And the one that's coming in this moment has never happened before. It's a great... meditation, if you don't throw up... [laughter] from being seasick or something. That's what the view is for.

[00:51:35] The view is meant to take... our intelligence, our intention to accomplish the practice. They were having so much trouble. I understand the conceptual way that you're supposed to do the practice of Shamatha. So simple. Easy. To know what we're supposed to do. We put the mind there. And on a good day, it stays there for a couple of minutes, maybe it stays there five minutes. But more likely it stays there for a few seconds and then... it's over. And then we're like slightly disappointed and we're trying to put it back together again. We get it back together again. We have the same thing again. It's like putting a marble on top of a marble.

[00:52:21] So, the more... some people would say, we shouldn't be talking about this. Because the truth is, is that... this is in a certain way, it's like too much. It's too much. We can't put our awareness on a simple... feeling in the body. And when the feeling in the body vaporizes, we suddenly notice, oh it's gone! We're lost suddenly. So, so we're running a little bit of an, of an experiment here. Can we do this? Can we actually... notice a sensation? An emotion? ... A physical feeling of some kind and put our awareness on that and just let the awareness rest there. And of course, feelings are not... permanent. We already know that. We actually have the sense that feelings are actually really ephemeral. Even if it's painful in any given moment, it could be completely gone... and then back again. So, putting our awareness on it... we have to get good at feeling... okay... about a very short shamatha session. Where we just got our awareness there... and then, of course, *more* experiences are coming.

[00:53:59] The mind itself... is not still. ... The mind is not still. We have to make a distinction between the body, which includes the brain... and the mind. So, when we look at the body, we can see the body can be very still. Experientially, it can be like totally still. But the mind is never still. There's always something going on. And it's not... when we do shamatha and we can never place our awareness on the experience, we feel like we're a little crazy. Like, my mind is totally like, always going places... constantly. They should be talking about the brain... going places all the time. The mind is never still. Actually, we can go to sleep and feel very still, physically. Wake up in the morning, you know, sit up and just relax and feel like there's a lot of stillness. But the mind is never still. It's not its job. [laughs]

[00:55:12] That's why we have that, that *thing* we call the dharmakaya. Which we normally translate that as emptiness, right. The dharmakaya we translate as emptiness. Emptiness... is where all the experience comes from. Which is why we could also say... that's what the dharmakaya is, the source of all experience. We also say, all experience comes from the dharmakaya. It all arises out of emptiness. So, if we practice enough, one of the long-term goals is to come to the place of *recognizing* that the experience is inherently empty. Which is another piece of the thing. The experiences arise from the dharmakaya. The dharmakaya is emptiness. So, every experience is already completely, fully endowed with emptiness. So... we always say... they're the same.

[00:56:14] So, it might be right if we said... I get all the experience. Putting my awareness on that experience is very difficult. ... But you can try it. You can sit down. You can have experience. You can put your awareness on the experience and just let it rest there. And, you might find yourself able... to notice that experiences are just constantly coming and going. You might have the experience of, 'Easy! I suddenly see. These experiences come and go. Suddenly, I get it! That no experience comes twice. Ever.' And so, recognizing *that* you can also easily, conceptually first understand... therefore... the experience I just had will never occur again. Easy. It's like the wave on the ocean. A drop of water flew in your face. You experienced that little drop of water hit you in the forehead and you go, Whoa! I hope no other drops of water hit me like that. But you already know... there is no such thing. It never happens.

[00:57:38] That basis, if you hold that view... long enough, until it becomes just... automatic. It's an interesting sense of automatic because... the automatic is that nothing is automatic.
[laughter] So, you have to like get out of the word game with it, which is like a vortex. If you go into it like we're going into, then you get a sense of like, how do you get *out* of this thing? That's the problem with the words. And that's the reason why... people will place their awareness on an experience and *just let it sit there*. And the experience will come and go... and change continually. And then you have this sense of... I see what it is. The experiences continually come and go, dissolve, come and go, dissolve. It's like going on all the time, whether you're awake or asleep, whether you're aware of it or not. And so, the whole point of the meditation is to become fully aware of it. Not to be fooled. Because when we're not aware of it, we're definitely fooled.

[00:58:57] So, the truth is, when you leave here tonight, you will not remember any of this.
[laughs] Which is okay, because that's just the experience that we were looking for. Okay? Well, we won't be doing this again soon. [laughter] So I hope that was okay... or ever. Yeah [laughs]

sangha [00:59:32] *dedicating the merit*