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*overview of mahayana plus vajrayana's use of symbols and what we can do to recognize our awakened mind, conceptual and experiential approaches, methods of faking until making it including the Safeway story intro and method*

LMC [00:00:55] So this is the time that we can have an open conversation and raise questions and postulate things and so on [laughs] so if you have things on your mind that you think would be useful to raise here in this context... raise them.

Student 1 [00:01:57] My question is about Vajradhara as the appearance. I attended the Mahamudra Seminar and prior to that, really the only figures I'd heard about had been Chenrezig and some of the figures of the lineage, that are important to the lineage. And then sort of in Mahamudra, this new appearance seems to be front and center, in the practice. And I'm not sure how to relate to the blue skinned deity beyond... I kind of recognize him now in a refuge tree. Are you meant to work with that deity like Chenrezig? Or, what's the way into enriching that understanding? I have a very dry definition of it as the primordial Buddha but that's about as far as I get.

LMC [00:03:07] It's kind of brave of you to raise it. It's not dangerous, but it's brave of you to raise it. [something said off-mic] Yeah, that's true actually sometimes and this may be one of those times. We're really, I'm presuming... let me not presume, let me ask you where you heard that?

Student 1 [00:03:04] Heard which portion, the primordial Buddha?

LMC Yes

Student 1 [00:03:46] I think maybe Lama Eric, briefly touched on what the representation was supposed to be. Wikipedia [laughter] but even in my readings, I've never really seen it mentioned much. What readings I've done, which obviously is pretty slim, but I don't see working with that appearance too much.

LMC [00:04:31] So the teachings on the blue deity, Vajradhara, and all the rest of the images and the symbols and the teachings, in what we call the Vajrayana, which is one of the three major categories of practices, meditations and so on. And this is why we start with shamatha. Though I wouldn't say that's necessarily the most skillful to start with shamatha. Sometimes when we start with shamatha for example, I think this is an interesting *cut* here... when we start with shamatha, the idea is that we all have experiences, all the time. And, for the most part we don't recognize *any* of them. They just go by but we never actually see them clearly. Unless, we break our arm or do something that really wakes us up, we just kind of live in this state of things happening but don't really pay attention to them. And, so what want to do, even in shamatha, is learn to pay attention to those things. Because they *are* the image of us. Not what we see in the mirror. That's just another experience. So, we want to become very familiar with all the images, all of the experiences. So that much I think is pretty clear and pretty straight forward.

[00:06:27] But I'll say that the down side of that, is that it often doesn't grab us. You know it's like you come in and you spend an awful lot of time sitting and meditating and, at least in the beginning, we have an expectation that I'm going to have an experience which is important. I mean here is a bunch of people sitting together being quiet. What do you get from *that*? We're

used to getting things from noise, not from silence. [laughs] And, pretty soon we can get totally bored with it. Sit for 10 minutes, okay. Sit for an hour, not so good. Getting difficult, pain in the legs, boredom, all sorts of things come in. And we don't know what to do with that boredom. Usually when we're bored, we get up and move. We go and do something else. We keep ourselves active that way. And part of the practices we're trying to stop being... a *slave* to our own boredom, to our own habitual tendencies and patterns of all sorts of things. Some people's habitual patterns are anger and other habitual patterns that are not particularly helpful, either for the person that has the habitual experience or the people who are around them. So, then we do all sorts of things like... get angry at our friends, divorce our spouses, abuse our children, you know. It's an endless stream of things that can happen by virtue of not paying attention to our own experiences.

[00:08:23] But that's just the beginning of course. From the perspective of the spiritual tradition, we actually want to... experience something that we have never experienced before. And that's the promise, really. That's the standard sense of being asleep all the time to all our experiences. The idea is to wake up to them. And, in *that* state we may have the opportunity to witness, to discover what we are, why we are here, what we're doing, in a way which is really helpful. Not only to ourselves but the further we go into that, we also can be more helpful to others.

[00:9:15] And that moves us into a second phase... like the Mahayana. So, you might say that where we're at right now is sort of the early on phases of it. But, when we move into a larger vehicle of practices, then we get into things like focusing on compassion, focusing on our pain, our pleasant experiences and unpleasant experiences, and what we do with those things, how can we work with those things. So, usually we think of, in the context of our meditations, it's pretty quick when you move into the Mahayana. And start to find valuable things there that are helpful. But just to leave that as a short summary of that, the mahayana is primarily focused on insight *through* compassion... and lovingkindness. Those kinds of what we might call *soft* meditations. And they're *very* important,

[00:10:40] But then there's another school of practice completely where we work with symbols of things. And the symbols are certainly not strictly symbols. It's actually we work with the experiences of symbols that we identify in our experience. So, for example, let's take that blue deity. [laughs] The deity, in a certain way, does not exist separate from the person who experiences it. And here's where we get into trouble. And the trouble is that it just becomes really difficult to relate to it. So you hold an image in your mind, the blue deity of Vajradhara. And then the idea is, is that we give rise to a certain experience *intentionally* by virtue of the characteristics and the meaning of that of Vajradhara.

[00:12:09] And then there's like a whole range of possible ways that we can understand that experience. One of them is you visualize Vajradhara and you make offerings and prayers to Vajradhara. And we understand... at first maybe, that Vajradhara actually doesn't exist. This is an image. And so I have a certain reverence for the *tradition*, but I'm not yet having the experience that I think that probably I should have. But it can take a long time, years, to get the experience from having a *relationship* with something that is fundamentally a symbol. But the symbol itself is also meant to be a mirror of who we actually are. So there's a lot of practices to fill in the gaps there, but it *can* lead us to a place that we otherwise would never visit. And in the process, we can come to have, ultimately, the experience of Vajradhara, which is full enlightenment.

[00:13:27] I prefer, I have to say... the approach described as... you *are* Vajradhara. Which is also one of the ways to approach it, you are Vajradhara. The only problem is you don't know.

But that's not any different from what we were before Vajradhara. [laughs] You can sit here and say, you *are* actually fully enlightened. But then we have to step back from that a little bit and modify it and say, well, actually you are *inherently* awakened. but... you are asleep. So you don't actually know... that you're fully awakened.

[00:14:20] And so then the path becomes an issue of *the things that you do to recognize that mind*, which is already awakened. We don't recognize that awakened the mind and so we fundamentally remain asleep. So many of the practices that we do, even starting from this straightforward practice, which is not necessarily easy, of doing shamatha... it's the awakened mind, which makes it *possible* to do those things. But the *object* is to recognize the awakened mind itself. That's really where we want to go. It's also where we want to stay... is in that space. But it's not simple, as evidenced by the fact that there are so many practices and it generally takes so many years to actually recognize that awakened mind.

[00:15:28] Now, along the way, we can have experiences of the awakened mind and recognize them, but they may be fleeting. And so then we have to make more practices and more things so it can become quite complicated. And most of the great teachers will say it doesn't actually *need* to be that complicated. But because of our confusion about things, we end up having very complicated practices. And generally speaking, just from my own side, I have to say my own *proclivity* about it, is that... it's difficult to make sense out of the actual recognition of what we're doing. And so what we do is, this is my own experience, so I don't mean this from anybody else's perspective. My own experience is that trying to make sense out of it, I have made sense out of it from a conceptual perspective. And there's as much *conceptual* underpinnings to these practices as anything else.

[00:16:52] And since we are in this culture, so focused on the conceptual in *everywhere* and we're we are *masters* of the conceptual. As a culture, we pay high dividends for it, we pay high wages for it. The more that you can do conceptually in certain ways, the more you get paid for it. We get rewards for being highly conceptual... in mathematics and building things and putting things together and taking them apart, all these things. And those things... it's not that there's anything wrong with them, but they often lead us *away* from the actual experience. So while the conceptual can be helpful, it is also a trap. And many teachers have come through, and we've had them, and fundamentally they say that, the conceptual can be helpful. But if you go too far into it, which isn't very far, [laughs] you sort of cut yourself off from the experiential aspect. And so sometimes I feel like... I don't want to teach the conceptual. I'll just teach the experiential.

[00:18:21] Which is also another route which is totally authentic. You come into it from the experiential side, and gradually you get the conceptual thing from coming in from that side. Just like you would get the experiential aspect from going into the conceptual side as long as you don't *mistake* the conceptual understanding for realization. It's just like you learn to add numbers. So I got two and then it becomes four and then it becomes six and so on. B actually you don't *have* anything there. It's just a concept without anything in it yet. So we *can* do and *often* do that with our practice also. We come into it, we learn the things. What does blue mean, for example? Blue has a certain meaning. The shape of Vajradhara has a certain meaning. The body itself has a certain meaning. And those meanings can be highly conceptual in a very elaborate way. Even in the paintings and the drawings, there's a lot of detail and such in it.

[00:19:35] And knowing those things can be helpful and they can also be... a backdrop for misunderstandings and mistakes. And we can get disappointed, like well, I've been doing this for years and I'm still angry. And I have all of these issues that I have not resolved. And so then

people sometimes just leave the Dharma completely. Like it didn't work for *me*. I think I know as many people who have done *that* as have actually stuck with it. So in my mind, it's like I think ideally... *ideally*, we would not present those things to... so my postulate here is impossible to do, but I will say... in my mind, we would not present these things to even small groups of people. We would... design the presentation *specifically* for the individual who is getting the teaching.

[00:20:53] And that would not be given to a group... of any size, it would be given to one person. And another person would get something different and so on. And the problem there is obvious. We don't have enough qualified people to do that. That's just practically not possible. But I feel totally convinced that's the approach that is *appropriate* to something. With that, we are asking a very high level of attention... and commitment to stay with it for a long time. And the number of people who try that and the number of people who don't make it, drop out. The cost in the dropping out is often to completely abandon the whole thing. When actually, it would have been better, maybe they didn't *get* that piece but started at a place that was appropriate for where they were and what would be helpful for them. So that they kind of like ramp up into it instead of feeling like I have to climb a vertical cliff here in order to get to it. So we're not talking about anything specific here, but just kind of the general thing of the tradition.

[00:22:20] And the traditions in Buddhism span a rather wide range. From the kinds of things that are fairly easy to relate to and accomplish, but even the *easy* things many people feel, I just can't relate to that. And yet, in my own experience, I feel like, within the context of the vast teachings of Buddhism, there are things for everybody that are useful. And even possibly, I think, possibly... not coming from *me*, but I think that in my own experience, there's enough to say, there are enough things in the context of the Buddhist tradition that everyone could relate to it enough to really become *committed* to it. And sometimes we try to do too many things at once. And the practices sometimes demand that we pretty much set our life aside for a period of time. And that sounds exciting, especially when you're 17, [laughs] you know, or you're younger. And the idea of making that commitment sounds like that's exactly what I'm looking for. But it is also sometimes the very thing that stops the person from continuing. It's not possible, I think... so this is my own personal thing again... it is not, in my experience possible to... put that all together in a way that it *works* for every person. Some people really stick with it. And we do see people who attain great levels of realization. And obviously our most brilliant teachers are clearly examples of that realization. But the translation from our own culture into the steps along the way, is often a barrier that that people can't get through. ... So how much more do you want? [laughs] I think it's a good thing to raise. You know, when Lama Eric comes here in the not too far future, he will be giving these teachings. It would be good to ask him these questions and see what he says.

[00:25:01] omitted Student 2's 'teaching'

LMC [00:27:18] I think the key, [student 2] is when you said, this is the most important thing to *me*. When you said that. But much of what you said has no context. It's just a name hanging out there and nowhere. So there's quite a bit that has to come in order to make those things meaningful. And even I can say again, I think... in order to make the *meaningful* more than the string of names and the connections and the lines that put all these things together, which in one sense is no different than a nation and its political evolution. You know, in a chart, it'll just look like a bunch of lines and names and what do they do. We start at those things and gradually build up into them. And we read about these various characters. And some of them we read and we think that's not interesting and other ones are and so on. And everybody has their

own path into it and out of it. And I honor all of that. Because I've gone in and out and in and out and in and out and often it's helpful. And often it's not.

[00:28:41] So I think it's a complex tradition. Especially when we talk about the practices in the context of what we call the Vajrayana is *very* complex. And it's highly adept at conceptual formulas. And those conceptual formulas can easily be... I don't want to say confused; I want to say *mistaken* as realization. To be able to understand the conceptual formulas does not equal recognizing the nature of mind. So it does not get more simple as we kind of move up that thing. I think at the place, where personally I like to begin, is what makes the most sense for *that* person. And no two people come to the same place with that. But we often start just in a kind of formulaic way, like everybody comes into the room. We all do the same thing. Do these things a certain amount of times, and it has these meanings and all. But the connection is not necessarily there yet. So my preference is, and I suppose my opinion is, that the very best would be that every person would get the teachings that are appropriate for where they are... that inspires them. And that's an impossible wish to fulfill.

[00:30:34] And that, I think, is where the trouble can begin or end. And where the most skill is required is the beginning, coming in. And it's critical, I think, for most people that they actually *feel*, they actually experience some kind of transformation early on. It can just be the practice of shamatha. Like, whoa, I never actually paid attention to *any* experience that I ever had. It could be just that. But something that actually connects experientially, not just the conceptual piece. And the conceptual piece as what we have *brilliantly* put together and really mastered. I don't mean that we, in this room have, or even any particular lineage, but it's culturally what we are immediately drawn to. And it's not my experience that that's where the gold is.

[00:31:51] And you're mentioning the names is helpful in one sense that I think what we witness in there, both in biographies, are often very inspiring and helpful and sometimes totally not. But when we experience things that warms our hearts in some way... and we feel like, I want to do *that*. I really want to do that. I have some experience from that. That's a good ramp to get on and move on. And gradually, we also know, that you don't need all the lineages. You're actually really kind of only need one mentor... who does it right. And the rest will take care of itself. So it's a very rich series of traditions that are kind of loosely stuck together and acknowledge each other and admire each other, in best case, and then... the job begins. Shamatha is just kind of like an opening gambit in a game, really. ... Okay? [laughs]

Student 3 [00:33:19] I'm not 17 [actually in her 80's], and I want you to know I'm in a hurry. [LMC: You're in a hurry.] I'm in a hurry. [LMC: Well, that's unusual.] Yeah. So I know you won't like that, but... [LMC: I love your honesty. ...omitted other extraneous comments] What I wanted to ask is... during the meditation, you had said something about thinking of an image. And so I thought of the image of the Buddha. The one where he is bent way over weeping. He's all bent over, has his hands over his eyes. And I could relate to that immediately because as a mother, one of my sons has recently really told me off and verbally attacked me. Before he did that he asked me to be quiet, to not respond and to just listen. I agreed to do that, not knowing what was coming. When he was done, I burst into tears. And that's why I'm thinking of the image of Buddha weeping. So some time has passed. And I'm really tired, so not thinking real sharp. You said, one of the instructions was, you can think of a difficult time and try to try to put a preciousness to it. And so I thought of when I got told off and I did weep. And I used the term, I put the thought of preciousness on that. And I could actually *feel* it. That turned into something quite sacred. And the only thing I could come up with... is I kept thinking was... in that moment my son was probably being very honest about some part of himself. So my question though is,

which is the greater reality? The being told off and weeping or the reflection with the concept of preciousness put on it and then it became a sacred... event?

LMC [00:36:59] I don't know about greater realities, but... I appreciate your story. ... What did your son do then? You wept, right? Then what happened? What did he do then? What did he do in response to your weeping?

Student 3 [00:38:03] You know, it was a matter of cleaning the house out, getting rid of stuff. And so he said to me, I don't mean that you have to get rid of the old letters. ... That was his response to crying. [LMC: Was he angry?] Very angry, yes. [LMC: And in response to his anger, you wept?] Yes, I had never seen him like that. [LMC: You'd never seen him angry like that?] Correct

LMC [00:38:52] What could be more appropriate than weeping? I'm trying to think of what could be *more* appropriate. I can't imagine what it would be. ... Your sadness, in response to what he was saying, an expression of your sadness... I don't know what would be better. And in a certain way, this is exactly what we were talking about. So you brought the whole thing into the realm of direct experience. Sometimes anger can do that, too. It's so hot that... it's just a direct experience. But that experience rarely spawns or produces anything other than aversion. ... But when you expressed your sadness, you plant a seed. And the seed is gentle seed, but it is also a very moving seed.

[00:41:04] I'm recalling similar experiences that I had with my own mother. When, as a young man, like maybe 15 or 20... that I would say things that would upset her and then she would cry sometimes. And it took a while for the seeds to grow. But the seeds *would* grow and I *would* reflect. I would reflect and I would go back and renew the conversations and nurture the relationship. But sometimes I was very stubborn. And it would take a year or two. But at some point it would get me. And I have to say that the reason that it got me sometimes was because of my own teacher in this tradition. ...

[00:42:24] So I'll tell you this. It's a good story. It was one year when... the teacher was Kalu Rinpoche. And it was the first year that I met him and he was going to give a series of teachings. And I was anxious, interested, in receiving those teachings. And it was just before Christmas. And normally I would go home at Christmas to visit my parents. But the visit was never pleasant, either for myself or my parents, but I did it anyway. So then Kalu Rinpoche... I had a little meeting with him and I said, I'm not going to go home to visit my parents this year because I want to receive these teachings. And he looked at me for maybe 20 seconds and he said, you should go home. And I had a little kind of an argument, not really an argument, but a disagreement. I tried to say why he was wrong. [laughs] That I that I really should stay for this thing. And he said, why don't you want to go home and see your parents? And I said, well, it never turns out well. It always turns out to be an argument. And then I leave and it's like this separation is always difficult. And so then he said, why do you think that is?

[00:44:19] And we kind of went down this path and it came to the place where he said, you see? The problem is that you go to see your parents because you want something from *them*. That's the problem. ... He says, I can tell you how to do it so that it will actually be a cause of joy. I was barely interested in it... [laughter] like disbelief. And he said, you need to go home and visit your parents and this is what you need to do. You go to see *them* only for them, not for yourself. And you can do that by only... everything you do has to be pointed to *them*. You make their breakfast, you cook their meals, you shop, you do all these things. And I'm thinking to myself, oh

man, this is not good. [laughing] But... I mean, this was one of the most renowned teachers in the lineage. Maybe at that time, *the* most renowned teacher. So there was also that in me. Like, I didn't want to *disengage* from this person. And at the same time, I was coming to this place, I can see I actually have no choice in this. And he said, I mean, like even when you go to the *toilet*, you have to do it for *them*. You do everything for them! You get up in the morning. It's like everything is... is theirs. It's not for any other reason you are there. So anything that they need, you get it... before they even have to ask. At a certain point, it became so extreme that I got interested [laughter] really! And I thought, well, you know, this person is asking me to do it. And day by day, I was becoming more and more like... how unusual this person was.

[00:46:53] I mean, those who knew Kalu Rinpoche then, this guy didn't even look human. He had a strange shape of his head and everything. We often talk to him as somebody from outer space. And he had done the most extraordinary things in his life that you just couldn't believe. Things like living on a ledge in the high mountains by himself with virtually no clothes. A ledge that you could barely even sit on in the howling wind. And which is probably why he ended up looking so weird. And so those of us... who had really the opportunity to get anything from him... those of us who admired extremes. I was one of those. I admired extremes. I wanted to *be* extreme. But I never knew how to do it except in a destructive way. [laughs] And so I went! And I spent just like five days with them. Day and night, I did nothing but take care of them, whatever they were doing. I got up in the morning, I went shopping, got the food they liked. I cooked my father's breakfast before he went to work. I did all those things. And I did it kind of as... not *really* out of loving kindness, I have to say... but by the end of five days, that's what it was. It just was clear. Like, this is what it means. And of course, my parents were *absolutely* joyful. I mean, I think they thought finally! Finally, we have a human being who lives here, instead of a mad dog. And I also felt that joy and reflected it. And I was sad to leave. Sad to leave.

[00:49:08] So... I don't know why I told that story, but it really was a turning point. And both my parents were alive then. In time they both passed away. But I was so *grateful* for the fact that they had lived long enough and that I had lived long enough to actually be present for *that* also. So I think, that your sadness, could easily transform your son. Because it affects people that you're close to when they are sad. And when they're overwhelmingly sad, you can't resist it. It's too much. And so you do something from that. I know my mother at that time was very sad about not seeing me often enough, was really sad. And so then it's like... I experienced her sadness, which I had somehow walled off. And experiencing that sadness, then I felt it was a gift. Whereas previously I felt like it was my hardship, somehow. But when it became a gift, it was something very different. I think expressing your sadness and your emotion without striking back... it's so important not to strike back. I think it's a very powerful thing to do... to just cry. ... Took me a long time, I will say, to learn to cry. But some situations demand it. And if you withdraw it, you withdraw something which is really potent. So that's my thinking on it, anyway.

Student 3 [00:51:29] Thank you very much. I like that.

LMC [00:51:31] Yeah. I think you're a good mother. [bell rang, but LMC added:] Do you want to go ahead? It's okay.

Student 4 [00:52:09] You said, "I don't know why I told that story", and I was thinking when you were telling that story, that it was an answer to the question that I had earlier. Which is, when you said we are trying to realize the fact that we already awakened beings and I was thinking to myself, can we fake it till we make it? And I sort of feel like you did that when you went to visit

your parents. And so, in a way, I took that as an answer to the question that I had. Which is, I mean, not to be flip, but I really wondered, since we don't have the capacity a lot of times to realize this awakened state that we supposedly are already in, that I wonder if I went around faking it and pretending. Making like I realize it. [LMC: Yeah!] Whether that could work. And then your story actually seemed to speak directly to that. [both laughing] Anyway, I just wanted to say that.

LMC [00:53:06] We often have talked like that, like the entire path is faking it till you make it. In other words, when you don't feel like being kind, it's still worth trying. I think not faking it in the sense of being really dishonest, but sometimes to... find an opening that you can have an experience is useful, even though it may be kind of exaggerated.

[00:53:37] There was a time when a teacher told me... standing in an open place, we were talking and I'd only met this person shortly before, but I somehow admired him deeply, rather quickly. And he suddenly turned to me and he said, you are a very stingy man. And it really shocked me in the moment. And I kind of rebelled and I said, how can you say that?! And I kind of listed all the things that were not stingy, you know, [laughing] trying to trying to get my thing back somehow, whatever it was. And I was the president of the center at that time. It was mostly what I did! And I thought, like, how can you say that I'm stingy? I've been doing this for years. And he said, this is Karma Thinley, you know. He looks at me and he says, yeah, that's true. But... you do not allow other people to get that merit. You suck it up by doing all this stuff and there's no space left for them to do anything. And he said that's stingy. [laughter] And it took me about a minute to figure it out, like, how does that work? Then suddenly it just popped. I realized, like, oh, I see what that is. You can't just do all the good things and be someone who's generous. That's not how it works. You have to give other people the opportunity. And not just give it to them or expect that they will do it. You have to provide the opportunity.

[00:55:40] And so that requires a certain level of skillful means to do it. And then *let* them do it and *honor* it. You know. I think it's like good parents do that, right? You make opportunities and you let them take the credit and all these things. With babies, you do that all the time. You don't chastise them for falling down the first time they try to walk. You pick them up and help them and gradually they get it. Our relationships are difficult. The older we get, the more difficult they tend to get. But it should be, if we work it right, it should be that the older they get, the more easy they get, the more harmonious they get. And you can see in certain people that that happens. And sometimes we wonder, like, why is that? I think we actually have the means to do that, but we often don't nurture it enough

[00:56:46] So Karma Thinley asked me at one point... he actually didn't ask me. He said, what you need to do is... I was kind of a recluse then. Like I was not particularly happy to have conversations with just anybody. And he said, what you need to do is, you need to meet and talk to more people. And then I thought, that's impossible. I can't do that. And he said, what you need to do is... you need to meet one new person each day and have a conversation, which sounded impossible. But then... we were right across the street from a Safeway. And he said, you should go into that place every day and find one person that you can have a conversation with. And I began to think, I *think* I can do that.

[00:57:43] So I went across the street right after we parted. And I went in and I'm thinking like, what can I do? And I see this woman and she's like in the soap department, right in the Safeway. And so I just faked it. I went over there. You're '*faking it*' reminded me of this. I went over and I said, can you tell me where the soap is? [laughter] I'm feeling like, whoa, I did it! And



she said, yes, I'll show you. And so she took me around the aisle a little bit and she showed me where the soap was. And then I thought, now what am I going to do? I got to buy soap. And I didn't, actually. But I was just thinking like that, what do I do now? How do I end this thing?

[00:58:36] And so it just took a couple of conversations and I realized... there isn't anybody that I can't have a conversation with. It doesn't have to be long. All it has to be is... isn't it a nice day. It's like almost nothing, and then you just tag one small thing on to it. Well, I'll remember that you said it was a nice day and I'll carry that with me today. And then some little conversation ensues and you feel like that was good. And then you just hold that person and their benefit in mind and that's the practice. It's not complicated! And you can do that one hundred times in the day. And if you fish enough, you catch fish [laughs] and things happen and you develop the ease of doing it. I think it's simple. It's not actually difficult. And there's an advantage when you don't know people is you don't have to prove something. All you have to do is make a connection and say something nice about the person. You look like the day is well with you today. Anything. And they feel happy about it. And you feel like you did something positive. So I don't mean to detract from your sadness, [laughs] but I think also, sadness is an expression of something that is difficult to ignore. In the same way anger is difficult to ignore, except we want to run away from it. Whereas sadness, we often want to just step into it, if we can, and do something that feels positive.

[01:00:39] Okay? The bell is rung. Let's dedicate our merit for the benefit of all beings.

*Sangha [01:00:52] dedicating the merit*