

## General Introduction to Sangharakshita's Seminars

### Hidden Treasure

From the mid-seventies through to the mid-eighties, Urgyen Sangharakshita led many seminars on a wide range of texts for invited groups of [Order members](#) and [Mitrans](#). These seminars were highly formative for the FWBO/Tiratna as Sangharakshita opened up for the still very young community what it might mean to live a life in the Dharma.

The seminars were all recorded and later transcribed. Some of these transcriptions have been carefully checked and edited and are [now available in book form](#). However, a great deal of material has so far remained unchecked and unedited and we want to make it available to people who wish to deepen their understanding of Sangharakshita's presentation of the Dharma.

How should one approach reading a seminar transcription from so long ago? Maybe the first thing to do is to vividly imagine the context. What year is it? Who is present? We then step into a world in which Sangharakshita is directly communicating the Dharma. Sometimes he is explaining a text, at other times he is responding to questions and we can see how the emergence of Dharma teachings in this context was a collaborative process, the teaching being drawn out by the questions people asked. Sometimes those questions were less to do with the text and arose more from the contemporary situation of the emerging new Buddhist movement.

Reading through the transcripts can be a bit like working as a miner, sifting through silt and rubble to find the real jewels. Sometimes the discussion is just a bit dull. Sometimes we see Sangharakshita trying to engage with the confusion of ideas many of us brought to Buddhism, confusion which can be reflected in the texts themselves. With brilliant flashes of clarity and understanding, we see him giving teachings in response that have since become an integral part of the Tiratna Dharma landscape.

Not all Sangharakshita's ways of seeing things are palatable to modern tastes and outlook. At times some of the views captured in these transcripts express attitudes and ideas [Tiratna has acknowledged as unhelpful](#) and which form no part of our teaching today. In encountering all of the ideas contained in over seventeen million words of Dharma investigation and exchange, we are each challenged to test what is said in the fire of our own practice and experience; and to talk over 'knotty points' with friends and teachers to better clarify our own understanding and, where we wish to, to decide to disagree.

We hope that over the next years more seminars will be checked and edited for a wider readership. In the meantime we hope that what you find here will inspire, stimulate, encourage - and challenge you in your practice of the Dharma and in understanding more deeply the approach of Urgyen Sangharakshita.

*Sangharakshita's Literary Executors and the Adhithana Dharma Team*

## DISCLAIMER

This transcript has not been checked by Sangharakshita, and may contain mistakes and mishearings. Checked and reprinted copies of all seminars will be available as part of the [Complete Works Project](#).

## JEWEL ORNAMENT OF LIBERATION SEMINAR AT PADMALOKA

### Chapters 14 and 15: The Perfection of Patience and Strenuousness.

June 1980

Participants: Ven. Sangharakshita, Anoma, Sanghadevi, Anne McMillan (Parami), Liz Pankhurst (Jayaprabha), Paula Turner, Eve Gill, Gay Voller, Margaret Tisch, Norma Macauley, Faith Johnson, Hilary Swain, Sarah Child, Lois Paull, Vida Browning and Srimala.

S: Chapter Fourteen - The perfection of patience, and if we have time, we'll also be going through the next chapter on the Perfection of Strenuousness. So that we get a balance as it were, between Patience on the one hand and strenuousness on the other. So let's start reading.

"The Perfection of patience

Is summarized under seven heads: The consideration of its defects and qualities, Its essence, its classification, The primary characteristics of each class, Its increase, purification and

Result."

I. IF AN ETHICAL MAN is impatient, he is roused to anger and loses in a moment whatever merit he has acquired from previous liberal behaviour. Therefore it is said in the 'Byan.chub.- sems.dpa'i sde.snod' ('Bodhisattvapitaka'):

Anger, indeed, destroys the basis of the good and whole- some that has been accumulated through hundred thousands of aeons.

S: So let's just stop and consider that. One recalls patience, Ksanti is the third of the six paramitas, the third of the

six perfections. So we're arrived as it were practically in the midst of the Perfections. First one has practiced dana, then one practiced sila, and now one comes onto the practice of Ksanti, so why is this? Why are they mentioned, or why are they talked or practiced in that sort of order? First of all you get, dana you learn to give, to be generous and in that way you practice non-attachment, and then you consolidate your ethical behaviour, you perform skillful rather than unskillful actions. You are responsible in your dealings with other people and so on. And in this way you practice dana and sila and as a result of your practice of dana, as a result of your practice of sila you acquire a certain amount of what is called merit, you develop to a certain point. You make a cer-

tain amount of progress. But it's not very difficult to undo that. You've only got to get angry once and you undo; you throw away all that merit, all that punya, and you're virtually back where you started. It's therefore very important to avoid anger and how do you avoid anger, you avoid anger by practicing Ksanti, patience. And this is how patience comes to be introduced at this point, at this stage, at this level. Because you've made a certain amount of progress, you've consolidated certain, what we might refer to as spiritual gains, but you want to be able to go on consolidating, you want to go on, as it were, accumulating; you don't want to dissipate your gains and you need a remedy against what is most likely to dissipate your gains: namely, anger and that remedy is Ksanti or Patience and therefore Patience comes in at this stage. The little summary at the beginning just gives the headings under which the whole subject of Patience will be discussed. But first of all there's a statement, and various quotations just underlining the seriousness of the situation, the danger of giving way to anger and therefore by implication, the importance of developing anti. So the text says "If an ethical man is impatient, he's roused to anger, and loses in a moment whatever merit he has acquired from previous liberal behaviour, - that is to say generous behaviour - therefore it is said in the Bodhisattva pitaka anger indeed destroys the basis of the good and wholesome, that has been accumulated through hundreds and thousands of aeons". Now in a sense the question arises how literally are we to take that? Hundreds of thousands of aeons is quite a long time. You could have accumulated quite a lot of merit in that time. And is it all to be shattered by anger? So perhaps we can admit here a certain element of oriental hyperbole, but nonetheless the statement stands that anger destroys merit. Anger disrupts your spiritual life so far. So let's go into that a little. Let's see as it were a bit how that happens. Anger indeed destroys the basis of the good and wholesome, that has been accumulated. Let's take it as far as that. Do you see how this is so?

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Have you ever experienced this? If you get really angry with somebody, well what happens to your previous practice, let's say your practice of dana, of sila, of the dharma generally. Do you actually find that giving way to anger has this disrupting effect so that you~virtually back where you started from? Have you ever actually experienced this?

\_\_\_\_\_ It's immobilizing.

S:     Immobilizing, in what sort of way?

: If you're caught up in anger, then you're immobilized.

Marg Tisch: I think I quite often experience this. I sort of quite often feel that my anger causes, it intoxicates me and I have no sPace to let anything else come through.

S: Well that is just sort of blocking the further accumulation of merit in the present, but the text says that whatever merit you have accumulated in the past is dissipated, which suggests that anger puts you right back. Do you actually feel that? Is it simply that anger prevents you going forward or do you actually damage yourself by indulging in anger to such an extent that you actually fall back. Does this actually happen? Or perhaps you don't ever get angry? (Laughter).

Sanghadevi: Well you lose your awareness.

S: Yes you lose your awareness, but it's more than that surely. How do you feel when you've got really angry?

Sanghadevi: Sometimes I've felt really good.

S: Yes.

~A£~k: I feel out of control.

4.

S: Out of control. I think with some people it can be a very, in a way, demoralizing experience to realize that you've got out of control. I don't think it's just that you've, what shall I say, you've relaxed a control that was over-rigid. But ~hen you get angry, what goes, what snaps, is almost your ordinary human control on which you're dependant, on the maintenance of which you're dePendant, actually for being a human at all. Do you see what I mean? If you lose control in that sense, you can sink to not just an animal level, it's worse than that, you can

sink to a demonic sort of level and that experience can really have a shattering effect upon you because you realize then how frail is your own human individuality. How frail your sense of human responsibility, how easily it can be swept away, and how easily it can be disrupted. And after all your spiritual life is built upon that, grows out of that. So in this way anger can be very shattering, very demoralizing experience. And can put you right back, well it can do more than Put you right back, and isn't just that it puts you back in your spiritual life and development, it puts you back onto a level where there is no question of spiritual life and development, a level which is below the level of spiritual life and development and it is that which is so disruptive and you find it very difficult to make the connection again. As it were to get back onto the human level. If you do get back there with having to start all over again as it were, because the disruption has been so complete. So you mentioned Sanghadevi about feeling good after getting angry. Do you think that is the same sort of experience as Faith seems to be referring to when one goes out of control, one is so angry that one goes out of control. I mean is there a difference? and if so, what is that difference?

Sanghadevi: I wasn't using it in that sense.

S: We're using the word anger for both these sorts of experiences perhaps we should use different words. Perhaps

the translator should have used different words. So what was your experience, or what is the experience when that sort of thing happens, when yes you get angry and you feel good, far e poison is something which is

S: That's true. Also an arrow just sort of hits you, and it's an immediate thing. I mean anger, rage can be like that, can arise in an instant. And your reaction, just as when the arrow hits you, when the arrow pierces you, you feel the pain instantly, in the moment, when someone says something to you that you don't like or something happens to you that you don't like, the rage arises instantly. It's incompatible with patience. So when we are impatient we're like a man pierced by a poisoned arrow, that instantaneous unskilful response because malevolence has entered and then in our mental distress ... malevolence is

ill-will. It's the actual will to do harm to others, and this is where rage or fury differ from anger. In anger, though it is unskilful in a sense, there is not that same desire that same will to actually harm others. It's more as though you're concerned about breaking through the obstacles. But in the case of rage, or in the case of fury, there is that element of malevolence, that ill-will towards others which even wishes to cause them serious injury, even wishes to destroy them. To make them suffer, and that is quite a different thing. "And then in our mental distress we do not experience joy, happiness, or peace and cannot even sleep". So when you're impatient, when you're overcome with rage, with fury, when

you're malevolent, then you're in a state of mental distress. It is said that this is one of the differences between greed and anger in this sense. Greed is unskilful, anger is unskilful, but when you indulge in greed, you experience at least a certain amount of pleasure, but when you indulge in anger in this sense you don't experience any pleasure it's painful to you, you get a sort of perverted satisfaction out of indulging that terrible anger, that rage but you cannot really describe it as pleasurable. So in our mental distress we do not experience joy, happiness or peace, those sort of emotions are completely incompatible with the experience of rage. Therefore, you are doing yourself harm and cannot even sleep. You're in a state of such mental distress, such restlessness, such agitation you cannot even sleep, and sometimes you might find that.

Sanghadevi: What about hatred? Is hatred stronger than anger.

S: Hatred is stronger than ill-will. I think. It's not easy to distinguish these more or less colloquial terms. Malevolence is sometimes said to be gratuitous ill-will; that is to say, supposing someone does you an injury, and you just wish to express your sense of resentment, and to let them know that they've done you an injury and you have a bit of an outburst. That's anger. But if you are so angry that you want to hurt them and punish them and revenge yourself upon them, well that is hatred. If that becomes uncontrollable and sweeps aside all other considerations that is rage, that is fury. If you're of such a nature that you even want to inflict suffering on others, and even destroy them without them ever actually having done anything against you, is it's gratuitous, that is malevolence. So the last is of course, quite rare. You find it in some people, they seem to have, well, it may go back to experiences very early in life or in previous lives, they seem to take a gratuitous delight in injuring others, without ever anything having been done to

them, certainly not by those particular people. So perhaps one can graduate in this way or distinguish between anger, hatred rage and malevolence. So anger under certain very definite

conditions, or within a certain context might be skilful but hatred, rage and malevolence can never be skilful. In the case of anger, that particular explosion of energy is still contained within the structure so to speak of your individuality and isn't allowed to disrupt your basically individual or human relationship with other people. But in the case of hatred, the disruption definitely begins. In the case of wrath, in the case of rage, the process of disruption is more or less complete and you know it's very definitely complete in the case of malevolence. There you deny any sort of link between you and other people. So it would probably be an exaggeration to say that an explosion of anger in the first sense would destroy all your merits, but explosions of wrath, rage, or explosions of hatred, malevolence would certainly do so or very very seriously damage it in the case of hatred and rage.

\_\_\_\_\_ Impatience here is tied up with malevolence. It wouldn't be a similar sort of thing happen with impatience which you get like a sort of impatient to break through. Well here it's just tied up with malevolence. If you're impatient, then malevolence

S: You're saying there could be a positive aspect to impatience? Ah, yes, in a sense, but here patience is translating the word 'anti', we cannot quite take it in the ordinary English connotation we've got to think back to Sanskrit term "Asanti". In that case what you're saying may not quite apply. It could only apply if impatience could only be positive if your understanding of patience was relatively negative. That is to say if your understanding of patience was just sort of putting up with things and bearing things, and all right everybody puts it onto me. Well that's not really patience in the positive sense. So if you say patience in that rather

negative sense, weak sense then impatience can become a virtue; it becomes a form of virya then. You see what I mean.

But if you take patience in terms of 'Asanti' then you cannot have impatience as a positive virtue. You can only have impatience as a positive virtue if you make patience in the English sense a little bit weak and negative to begin with. Patience doesn't mean knuckling under. Just doesn't mean giving way out of weakness or timidity. So "when one adopts the attitude that has felt the sting of malevolence Mind does not experience peace. Since one does not find joy and happiness One becomes sleepless and restless. And, In brief, there is no such thing as anger in happiness". When you are happy, you cannot become angry. When you are angry, you don't feel happy. So why is this, Why is it when you are happy you don't become angry. What's happening, what's going on?

Marg Tisch: How I would see it is like happiness your heart's open. My solitary I really felt this. And anger seems to me to be the complete opposite, when you just close up; that's how I see it.

S: When you're angry, it's as though you're very sorry for yourself and to that extent you're self-centred, self-pre-occupied.

\_\_\_\_\_ I think that is what I meant by the word 'immobilized'.



S: Yes, of course the happiness must be real happiness. It mustn't just be a sort of self-indulgence, self-satisfaction because things are going your way. That sort of happiness, or pseudo happiness, is very easily disrupted, and very easily turned into anger, just if it is disturbed. But happiness means real inner happiness of you as an individual, content. So people who are angry or prone to anger, and much more so in the case of hatred etc cannot be happy. The two are incompatible.

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Parami: quite often seem to find that happy-go-lucky type nature seems to go alongside the hot-tempered one. I mean does that mean the happy-go-lucky isn't really happy, or the temper isn't really an expression.~ You know what I mean, say in Latin temperament, volatile temperament, people seem to be happy but easily moved towards sort of anger.

Marg Tisch: Spirited.

S: Yes, it depends how far it goes. If they seem happy-go-lucky, and in a good sort of mood, but change very quickly and can even stab you, well then you might say, the positivity, the happiness didn't really go very deep.

Parami: I was thinking of less extreme.

S: But I believe these volatile southern people are capable of that sort of thing. But I think one must emphasize that it is real happiness that is meant here. If you're truly happy, you cannot very easily be moved to anger, much less still to hatred. But if it's a sort of superficial happiness, dependant upon your continued sense gratification and things going your way, that can be very easily disrupted and turned into its opposite.

Parami: That's like the correlation between the love/hate relationship.

S: Yes right. And you find that with people very often that so long as you are going along

with them, and satisfying them and gratifying them, well they like you, but if you change well their so called liking can turn into violent dislike. All right go on with the next paragraph and quotation.

"Through impatience hot anger arises because malevolence has penetrated to the core.  
Friends,

companions and servants then get tired of us and we are not liked by them even though we spend money on them. So also it is said:

His friends get tired of him, And though he entices them by liberality, they do not stay.

S: An angry person makes a very difficult companion, a friend, an employer. Have you had any experience of this sort of thing? I had some experience as you might recollect, those who have read my memoirs. I had this very hot-tempered, and bad-tempered friend with whom I travelled around for a bit, and that sort of person is very, very difficult to get on with, and it makes friendship, companionship almost impossible and when I was in Poona last year, I got some news of this old friend of mine who is now living in Bangalore who is still a Buddhist monk; one of his pupils came to see me, also a Buddhist monk, and said my old friend was as still as bad-tempered as ever, to such an extent that his own disciple of whom he has few, weren't even able to live with him because his temper was so bad~ and the disciple who came to see me said that this old friend of mine had already had two serious heart attacks due to losing his temper and if he had a third one it could be fatal and people hardly dared to stay with him in case he got angry and had another heart attack. They kept out of the way; they didn't want to be responsible for inducing a heart attack, however inadvertently, because he still gets angry so easily and flared up into such terrible temper. And when you're the age he now is you cannot afford to do that sort of thing. You really ought not to be able to afford to do it at any time of life.

\_\_\_\_\_ What do you think is the cause?

S: I really wondered about that. I mean what is the cause of this really furious anger, this rage, where does it spring

from? I personally think, and I thought this in his case after reflecting upon this~ That it really stems from a very sensitive ego that is very easily threatened and feels so threatened that it can only react or respond with total violence. This is the conclusion to which I came.

\_\_\_\_\_ : I would think it would be reinforced like a habit-forming thing, so you would be used to reacting with anger and you wouldn't be able to stop.

S: It's as though you're deeply insecure. Your ego is very insecure let us say and when something seems to touch that, well it's as though you're threatened with death and it is a sort of life and death situation where you so you react with that total rage which you just want to destroy the other person because you feel that he threatened to destroy you. And it can just take a few words to make you feel like that, perhaps, if you are particularly sensitive and particularly insecure.

\_\_\_\_\_ It's a defense that works very well in fact, because as you say as friends you'll be very careful with people in that condition.

S: It works very well in a negative kind of way because you know you never have to face up to the problem that you've got. People are wary of you "oh he loses his temper very easily, we don't want that to happen", so people treat you with kid-gloves as it were, but it means you are left with the problem, the problem is not solved.

How would you actually break through that?

S: Well, I don't really know. I thought about it.

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And I thought about it quite a lot, especially when I was with this friend. I didn't at that time see any way at all. I saw, alas! how disruptive it was because the same friend would bitterly regret his outburst afterwards and they were completely disruptive. It was as though he had to start all over again. It's as though to do anything, to be able to help in any way, one must almost be able to give that person the sense of security that they should have been given, and acquired perhaps much earlier in life. I couldn't find anything in what this friend told me about his early life to account for his terrible explosions, or these explosions of rage on his behalf. He was brought up in an ordinary Indian family. He did have a lot of elder brothers and sisters, but he seems to have been very much indulged as a small child and got away with a lot. So I could find that he'd been repressed or ill-treated or anything like that when he was small. So I was not able to account for it. But it seemed something ~most demonic. Almost as

if he was possessed by some devil, some evil spirit, it was as serious as that. We'll go onto that in a minute perhaps.

Sanghadevi: Perhaps what you were saying about he was allowed to get away with things, sometimes such children some sort of framework and maybe if he was allowed to do whatever he wanted.

S: I think infants are said by psychologists to have this sort of feeling of infantile omnipotence. Originally they are accustomed to Mother at least being at their beck and call. Their every whim is attended to, pondered; but it's necessary at that stage for their survival. For instance, some babies, some children almost don't get beyond that stage and they go on expecting the whole of the world to just cater to their needs, to meet their needs. "The world owes them a living as it were", and if it doesn't because they haven't developed any more mature sense of other people, and responsibility in relation to other people, when they are thwarted, they just react as the infant~ reacts with total rage. So in a way also

the person who is very much liable to the experience of total rage is a very immature, even infantile sort of person who has not learnt that there is anybody in the world really apart from him. He thinks that he is everybody. He's got a strong sense of his own, one mustn't say individuality, but existence but not that of anybody else. If he wants something, he's jolly well got to it, now; otherwise he just screams his head. And this is what people even go on doing in later life. It's infantile, it's regressive, and some people regress in this way more quickly and easily than others. It could be that this friend of mine had been really indulged and pampered when he was very very young and got into this sort of way: getting his own way through a continued throwing of tantrums and never got out of it. In adult life, people don't usually give into you to that extent, they expect you to behave more as a mature responsible adult. So I think in bringing up children, this is a very important point, you don't want to repress and thwart them to such an extent that they have problems but you don't want at the same time to accustom themselves too much to having their own little way, that they don't mature and don't adapt to other people and realize that other people also have rights and feelings. The criminal in the strict sense, the person who is pathologically criminal is someone who has no sense of the existence of other people, who is in a sort of infantile state.

\_\_\_\_\_ Surely with children you allow them to express their distress through an outburst and because you are disinterestedly allowing it to be expressed then they don't use it as a tool to challenge your authority.

S: I'm thinking of this sort of situation. Supposing you're got two little children, two very small children and (one of them has got a toy and is playing with it happily, the other child comes along and wants to take it away and so the first child doesn't want to give it up, he wants to go on playing with it, the second child flies into a rage. So what do you do then as an adult, as a parent? You have to try to

make the child who has flown into a rage aware of the other child. "But look, it's his toy, he is playing with it! You have to try to make the second child aware of the first child's existence and the fact that he too has got his needs and his wishes, just as you have. It isn't that "you're the only child, the only person in the world and whatever you have, whatever you want you've got to have, immediately regardless of anybody else's wishes"~ So you have to try to make the child realize in this way that he or she is not the only person in the world, that there are other people who have equally got their needs and their feelings. This is exactly what we find the Buddha doing according to the Pali text when he once met or came across a group of small boys tormenting a crow. And what did he say "If you were tormented like that, would you feel pain and suffering, Yes, well why should you do it to the crow. The crow doesn't also like it' It's as simple as explaining in this sort of way and getting the child really to understand and to that extent the child relinquishes, or grows out of this feeling of infantile omnipotence, feeling the only person in the universe, expecting everything else to revolve around it, and recognizes there are other people who have to be considered, and this is the essence of maturity. But if it's a spoilt little brat and it's somebody else's child,

"you want ~ toy, darling~" and take it away from the child who has got it and give it to the one who is kicking and screaming - well, that's way to make him in later life a little pathological criminal. And some children are brought up nowadays a bit in this way. It's easier to keep the children quiet, give them what they want. But this is laying trouble up for the future. So you've got gently to socialize the child, without at the same time repressing it or creating problems of other kinds. We've probably gone too much in the direction of just letting children have their own way, nowadays.

Parami: Tying up that with what you said earlier about your friend and his insecurity reminds me about something you said

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before about how often delinquent children aren't ones that come from broken homes, but are ones that have come from homes where two things are happening:- on the surface they're actually being given what they ask for; they're being given what looks like security, but actually they aren't getting a real genuine human security so they're getting the two things happening at the same time and they get confused - possibly that would be it.

S: It could, I don't quite see how.

Parami: I don't quite see how but because somewhere on the one hand you're getting possibly anger and temper comes from feeling insecure because you're not getting what in a way really need in human terms, and so you shout about a bit, and you're mollified by the reacting, and maybe it strengthens it.

S: I think in the case of infants to start with, it's just quite ordinary little things. First of all it's food; the breast, they cry for that, and at once they're given, so for a while this is how it has to be, but if that pattern continues into later life, that at every stage you give the child everything it wants in every respect, well that is storing up trouble for the future because the child's needs will come into conflict with the needs of other children, other people, other adults in later life and the child will have never learned to give way, and therefore will continue to expect instant gratification. And this is why you find in late on in life if people who have grown up ~TL that sort of way, say, enter into human relationship of any kind, they'll be purely exploitive; they'll be expecting everything from the other person. The other person is just an instrument, just an object. They don't expect themselves to have to give anything or to make any contribution to the situation, and therefore of course there is trouble because the other person is not going

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to stand that for very long. After all the other person, the other human being is not the all-indulgent mother after all. So it's important to follow this middle way; of not crushing the child's desires, instincts, but not on the other hand giving way to such an extent that the child never matures. It's not an easy thing to do, just to follow the middle way.

\_\_\_\_\_ Somebody who is functioning like that, whose expecting everything from the other person, it seems to me they're functioning from greed, and yet they're inclined to fly into fury when they don't get what they want, but actual focus of life is to want. The greed and hatred seem so closely tied up.

S: Right, well ordinarily speaking anger, or hatred is just frustrated greed. But in the sort of anger which we were talking about earlier on, which was relatively positive, this is just the frustrated energy of an individual as such. So the expression of that frustrated energy of the individual within the limits of individuality, and within the general overall framework of communication with other individuals, that sort of expression, that sort of explosion even, is not necessarily unskillful; but in the case we are discussing there is no framework of

individuality developed at all. There's no question of even disrupting anything. It's never been created and this is one of the most important parts of the whole educational process. Taking education in a wider sense, that you enable or help the child to structure his or her energies within the framework of a growing individuality aware of other individualities.

Liz Pankhurst: When you've got somebody who's supposedly adult, who's relating on those terms, do~hUave to go right back and give them more or less what they want in certain situations.

S: I think you might, it's very difficult to generalize, because people and situations differ so much, but you may have as it were, to satisfy them before you can usefully start pointing out? "look, don't you realize what this is likely to do?", don't you realize that you behaving in a very immature way~~ Perhaps you have to sometimes satisfy them, give them whatever it is they want, whatever equivalent of the dummy it is for the time being and then try to reason with them. But otherwise if you have to give into them and satisfy them all the time, every time, you are going to get pretty fed up in the end, and you're going to start rea~ng. Even parents sometimes get a bit fed up with the demands of their small children, and in sheer self-interest have to insist on the children on being a little less demanding, a little more considerate of mother, and father in sheer self defense al-most, which is probably a healthy thing for the child. That the child has to acknowledge the parents also are people with needs and difficulties of their own and we not just unlimited sources of unlimited gratification. So "the friends companions and servants can get tired of us and we're not liked by them even though we spend money on them". You cannot make up for anger in other ways. It makes you so difficult, so uncomfor- table to live with, to work with that even if you offer people extra in other ways, they won't accept it. "His friends get tired of him and though we spend money on them, entices them by liberality, they do not stay."

Sanghadevi: It's like bribery, almost.

S: Yes, you have to almost bribe people to stay. If you are a really bad tempered master, you have to give people double wages to stay~ even then perhaps they won't.

Sanghadevi: The imagery reminds me of a volcano. The idea of penetrating to the core.

S: The hot entrails!

Janet Smith: You've got a fault to start off with, so you have to find another fault to try and compensate the first one.

\_\_\_\_\_ There is the possibility of transformation.

S: Anger is quite easy to transform, hatred can be transformed even, but I think rage is quite difficult, because when you say I transform, what do you mean? The transforming agent is the growing developing individuality, but rage shatters that so what have you got left at least for the time being to transform with? I mean maybe the electrical analogy is appropriate here. You've got such a thing as a transformer, but if the current is so powerful that it smashes the transformer itself well how are you going to transform the current? This is what happens. So it is as though you have to, once you've given way to real rage, it's as though you've got to make a completely new start, you've got to rebuild your individuality. This is what it means, because it's only the individuality which can transform the grosser energies into more refined ones. This is what the development of individuality means.

Sanghadevi: So you really feel someone who is prone to rage should concentrate on cultivating the positive rather than "getting into your rage, getting out of your system".

S: Oh yes!

Sanghadevi: I've heard of ~oups where the idea is to get into your negativity. I don't know whether it actually means get into your anger or whether people

S: Well I think unless you make this distinction between anger on the one hand and what I call hatred, rage and meanness on the other, you can slip very easily from the one to the other (as we are going to see in a minute) and you can be just going round and round in circles in what I call a negative spiral. Just going down and down and down and down into increasingly more negative states.

It seems you have to fuse the transformer with awareness.

S: So I think this whole ideology almost, of getting into, and experiencing your negative states is entirely counter-

productive. One could possibly apply this to anger, but then once would be enough. But to go on experiencing over and over again is not experiencing the past anger and exhausting, or the past rage and exhausting it, it is recreating it, again and again and indulging in it in the present. And this is what goes on in the name of some forms of psychotherapy or whatever.

Parami: When you say cultivate the opposite, in this instance do you mean cultivate patience? How do you cultivate patience in practical terms?

S: Well we're going to come onto that. The greater part of the chapter is about that (laughter) Wait and see. I'm afraid we haven't quite finished with the unpleasant subject of rage. But anyway let's get a little further on with it. This next paragraph and quotation:



"Then as is said in the 'Byan.chub.sems.dpa'i sde. snod' (Bodhisattvapitaka):

He whose mind is angry is open to the assaults of Mara and obstacles come his way".

S: Now, he whose mind is angry. I think we can understand this as he whose mind is full of rage, or hatred, or malevolence is open to the assaults of Mara and obstacles come his way. Now Mara comes in here, who is Mara?

Sanghadevi: The evil one, negative forces.

S: General Buddhist tradition explains Mara in four different

ways. There is what is called Klesa Mara, Klesa means all unskillful mental states. Literally klesa means defilement. So Mara is the personification, or embodiment if you like of all our unskillful mental states. And then one has got. Muchu - Mara in Pali or Mitru (?) Mara, Mara as Death. If you like the Lord of Death. We usually regard Death as something evil, something terrible, so Mara can be understood as Death. If you're very attached to Life, Death obviously seems something unpleasant, something opposed to your wishes, something against you, something inimical, something evil, so Mara. And then there is what is called skandha-Mara which is, skandha means here conditioned existence, conditioned existence consists of the five skandhas: rupa, vedana, samja, sankara, and vijnana; So Mara as the personification of conditioned existence itself, which of course is an obstacle, an enemy if you aiming at the unconditioned. So here Mara is a personification you could say, a personification of our own unskillful mental states, a personification of death, in as much as death is unwelcome to us, and personification of the five skandhas, - in other words of conditioned existence in as much as it is conditioned existence which obstructs our attainment of the unconditioned. Well then there is a fourth Mara, or definition which is Devaputra, or Devaputta (?) Mara, Mara the son of god, that is to say Mara as an actually existing being within the karma-loka, a malevolent being who tries to obstruct us out of mischief, out of malevolence as we try to follow the spiritual path. Now how literally is one to take this? Mara here seems to cover to me a sort of psychological, even spiritual possibility. Let's go into this a little, step by step. The verse says "he whose mind is angry is open to the assaults of Mara". Supposing you continually give way to hatred. You continually give way to rage. You continually give way to Malevolence. You are very open, but what are you open to. You're open to negative influences, negative forces, when you are in a positive state, say when you are meditating, you're open to positive forces, positive influences, you could say Bodhisattvas,

Buddhas. But if you are in a correspondingly negative state, if you're open to negative influences, forces, you are open to Mara. Mara can enter into you, can possess you. And this is where the demonic element enters in because people can get into such a state of negativity, such a state of rage, of malevolence that they are really quite transformed, they become another person. It's as though another personality has taken over. It's as though, I mean, one says, as though because one doesn't know what really happens, but it's as though they're possessed by a demon, an evil spirit, a Mara, this is how it seems to me, this is one's immediate impression. So that is the danger, if you just allow your self to indulge in these negative, intensively negative states repeatedly. You can become open to what appear to be

external evil forces floating around in the atmosphere and can be as it were taken over by them, possessed by them. Whether this is actually what happens, strictly speaking, as it were scientifically speaking, it is very difficult to say, but this is certainly what seems to happen, something very bad and negative sets in and happens. And it seems to me that this is the sort of state that people get into when they encourage themselves to indulge in negative states under the mistaken idea that they've got to get into them, they've got to experience them etc etc. This seems to me extremely reprehensible. You're not exhausting those states. You are just going round and round in the same circle. You're constantly renewing them.

Sanghadevi: You can get very powerful and think you actually become more alive. You've got all this energy and you perhaps look at other people and think they're quite lifeless. They haven't any energy, what's coming off you isn't actually positive.

intoxicant

S: Yes, the word intoxication is appropriate here. You're

taken over.

Liz Pankhurst: It also seems that people I've known who've done this, they're forcing themselves and they actually feel very vulnerable, and very weak and the more they force themselves through this negative realizations, the less they can really take it. Lack of metta.

S: And eventually a lack of individuality. The human personality so to speak is shattered. Your working human base in the language of this chapter or this book is shattered. Your working base is the human psychophysical organism, Well, that is shattered, certainly the psychological aspect or part. So he whose mind is angry is open to the assaults of Mara and obstacles come his way, all of which they do, if that's the state you're in. It's just one big obstacle. There's no question of any progress. And so therefore what does the next verse go on to say:

"When we are impatient we never attain unsurpassable enlightenment because we do not rise to the six perfections which are the path to Buddhahood. This is stated in the 'Phags.pa. sdud.pa' ('Prajna-paramitasamcayagatha', fol.29b):

How can there be enlightenment for him who is in a violent and impatient!"

Well it's obvious isn't it, how can there be enlightenment? completely contrary state but unfortunately it

does seem that some people believe by getting into their negative emotions as they put it, they are actually helped to grow and develop, even to move into the direction of enlightenment.

It's totally absurd.

Sanghadevi: It's as if somewhere they haven't had this sufficient vision.

S: I was just remembering, I had a quite odd experience in connection with somebody some years ago. This is shortly after my original return to England, it must have been in about '66; what happened was this: I had a friend who was coming to my lectures and classes at the Hampstead Buddhist Vihara and he had a friend with whom he'd previously worked in advertizing and this friend apparently had fallen in love with one of the girls they were both working with. But this particular girl wanted nothing at all to do with him, just rejected his advances, quite bluntly. But this particular person, this friend of my friend had been unable to take~no'for an an~wer and had persisted that the wanted what he wanted. He wanted to get what he wanted. He would not take~o'for an answer. So he continued pestering this girl to such an extent, that she had to ask for the protec- tion of the police, and he was warned off by the police and had to stay away from her. But he got into such a sort of mental state, he got into the end such an angry state due to his frustrated desire, that he started talking of committing suicide. So I remember what happened was this. This first friend of mind happened to be with me at the Hampstead Vihara and the telephone rang, Ae'd previously told me that he'd seen this friend and he was in a really bad state; threatening to commit suicide so he had given him the Vihara telephone number, knowing that he was g~ing to be there that evening in case he wanted to ring him. So at about 10 o'clock in the evening, the phone rang and it was this friend of my friend wanting to talk to him. And he said he'd decided to commit suicide. He couldn't have this girl, that was the end of everything and trj~ed to dissuade him from this, and went on talking, talking, talking, so after talking for an hour he found it difficult to continue, it

was so exhausting so he just put his hand over the mouth

piece and just said "could you talk to him for a while", so I said 'yes' so he s~d to his friend~~I've got a friend here with me who is quite experienced in connection with these things; maybe you'd like to talk to him, maybe it could

help. So I took over and I talked for an hour, then my friend talked for another hour, and we kept it up until two o'clock in the morning and we felt we'd talked this chap out of comitting suicide. So we rang off, and said "that's a good evening's work, as it were, we've prevented him from com- mitting suicide". But first thing the next morning, there was another phone call from his mother with whom he lived saying that at five o'clock he had committed suicide by putting his head in the gas oven. But this is the point I wanted to make as soon as I picked up the phone and started talking with him, my immediate impression was I am not speaking to a human being. This is a demon. That was my immediate impression, not my conclusion or what I reflected on, but my impression, ~t was really as though he was possessed; as though there was something else there, that had completely taken over. So what can one call that? This is the only language that one can use, that he was possessed by Mara. Whatever the real situation might be that was actually, that is actually the language which is appropriate to what I act~ally experienced. That is the language which fits better than other\Language~whether scientific or philosophical or whatever; that he was possessed by some demon, some entity. So when the text talks about " being open to the assaults of Mara" I think in a sense, in a manner of speaking at least one can take that quite literally, and therefore one should be so careful not to allow oneself to ~et into these sort of tailspins which ca~y you plunging down and down into the depths. And i~s very difficult to get out again,- even with the help of people; even with the help of Bodhisattvas it's very difficult to get out and we can get into these sort of negative tail-spins just by indulging in frustrated, well~ feelings of frustration

when we don't get our own way. In the case of this particular person I thought about this quite a lot, this quite carefully; supposing you're in a situation like this, you become interested in someone

of the opposite sex, they don't want anything to do with you. Well, what would be a healthy person's reaction? A healthy person's reaction is "well never mind, there are more fish in the sea (laughter)". That's the healthy person's reaction. But I think if you persist, that doesn't necessarily show the strength of your desire for whatever it may happen to be that you want; it shows the persistence of your egotism. It doesn't because that particular man went on persisting that this girl should respond to his advances, didn't mean that he had a very very strong desire for her, even say a very strong sexual desire, it meant that his ego could not accept the rebuff and it was his ego, that from that point onwards he insisted on being satisfied.

\_\_\_\_\_ : He's going back to the childhood infant.

S: Going back to the childhood infant: "I want. I will not take 'no' for an answer". It's on a sub-mature level. You just sink back to that level and when that is frustrated more and more, you can get into some very negative states indeed. Sometimes one can see oneself, one can catch oneself when you don't get something that you want, you can stop and say "all right, there's another alternative, there's something else just as good, or something different which will serve just as well". But if you say "No I want that, no, I will not take 'no' for an answer", this is your infantile egotism beginning to step in, and that way there is only disaster.

\_\_\_\_\_ Bhante, I was interested in you describing your telephone conversation. I was in the Samaritans some years ago and you'd get a lot of this. And we too used to say that we felt this almost inhuman influence and it was very difficult not to have some of it rub off. You could feel really quite exhausted, and really quite affected, even over the telephone.

S: Because when you are... what is it that makes you exhausted? You become exhausted when communicating, in a general way, when communication is one-sided because usually when you're communicating with another person you give and the other person gives, there is a feedback, there is an exchange. That is what is meant by communication. But when you're dealing with somebody in that sort of state there is not a person there really, there is just a black hole where there should be a person, so you pour your positivity into that hoping that that black hole will reflect something of that positivity, but you don't get anything back from that black hole, so it is very draining. It's not only that you are giving energy but that you're not getting feedback and you find talking with people in fairly ordinary situations, maybe very ordinary conventional dull boring social situations when you're just engaging in empty meaningless party or social occasion chatter. You don't get any feedback, any real human communication, any real exchange, it can be very tiring, very exhausting. You can even find it in another sort of way with children, if you are completely cut off from adult contact and you're only with very small children who are demanding all the time. This can be very worrying, because they're not mature enough yet, and you accept that to be able to give anything back to you, there's no possibility of communication. Not in a mature way and this can be tiring if you haven't got any mature relationship involving communication with some other adult.

Sanghadevi: It often strikes me that people who work a lot in quite demanding situations with social work; I mean they're often not in a very good state themselves. They're trying to do something, which in a sense they haven't got sufficient capacity.

S: I really came across a terrible example of this the other day~ I don't know whether you know about it0 in the newspapers there have been reports of people let out of Broadmoor. And

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after being let out, they almost immediately committed similar crimes for what they were originally put away for; and there was one particular report I remember reading, where there were five people were let out of Broadmoor who had relapsed in this way and they all been certified as fit for release by the same psychiatrist. Now along with one of these reports, there was a photograph of that psychiatrist- and as soon as I saw it, I thought this man is very sick and the thought crossed my mind whether he himself had this pathological element and had almost released these criminals, in a way almost letting them loose on society to express something of his own. And I thought this is really a terrible thought. It almost crossed my mind "should I not write to appropriate authorities about that", then I thought~no, if anyone was to do that sort of thing you'd have that whole medical establishment down on you. "They are the same people". They are the people who determine what is sanity and what is insanity. If you were to attack that, well almost anything could happen0 ~ou could even be certified yourself by them to protect their position. It seemed to me to be so obvious from this photograph of this man0 Well, I think I know a mentally sick person when I see one even a photograph and this struck me as a really terrible thing that this person is the man to have the final say as to whether these sort of people are let out into society. And this seems not to have occurred to anybody, that he might be at fault, at risk himself0 it could be through dealing with all these people over such a long time~~~ was quite an elderly man but what attracted him to that profession in the first place? It really makes one wonder.

Sanghadevi: It seems like that really there's a possible ? element that lets people get in

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The Jewel Ornament of Liberation Seminar June 1980

The Perfection of Patience Chapter 14

Day 1 Tape 2 Side A

Paula I experienced this myself, I used to be married to a prison officer and I really felt that you could sort of, he chose the job because he was expressing his power,- really into this power or authority thing.

S. I remember once some years ago we had a friend who was coming along to our classes and he had a wife and she was quite a difficult woman and made some difficulties about him coming along to the centre and all that sort of thing but he persuaded her to, you know, to come along and see me, ~o I talked with her and sort of said, 'Well, your husband is developing this sort of interest, why don't you, you know, try and develop your interests sort of, to balance his?' She was a woman in early middle age and sort of quite healthy and reasonably educated. 'Isn't there anything you'd like to do, any sort of unfulfilled ambition?' She said, 'Oh, yes, there's one thing I've always really wanted to do,' so I said 'What's that?' so she said, 'A warden in a prison, (laughter)

yes, so that explains to me quite a lot about the difficulties

which the husband was having.

(laughter)

but the way she said that this was what she'd always wanted to

be, a prison officer, a warden in a prison (laughter)

Well you need somewhat thuggish people to build a building like

this.

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Sangha At the same time they were the protectors. devi I mean they weren't very aware of other people themselves....

admittedly they were training but I mean they weren't particularly mature, but probably in a couple of years time they were going to be, you know, taking it out on other people who weren't very mature either.

S. Well, it's just that they're on the side of law and order,... are enforcing that at least in principle and they're under the control of the state so to speak. ~he situation within which you live and work does affect you so powerfully-, it moulds your whole character, so you do have to choose very carefully the sort of influences you're going to allow yourself to be exposed to.

(pause)

Sangha The question of theatre comes to my mind, because I know a devi friend who recently, well she went on a week's drama group course

and she was demonstrating to me what she'd done and like she was full of it, but I really felt that she was possessed when she was expressing these different sort of emotions and feelings, you know sort of...., and acts and it was really like she wasn't communicating, I mean she was just totally in this state, and she was saying how amazing it was and it had a very powerful effect on the audience, and I mean I could feel it must have done, but I mean it was like this, well like a demon or something. It was quite sort of, well it was.

S. I mean, talking about having a powerful effect on the audience, I mean there are quite a lot of people who can only experience

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S their own power, let's say, when they see the effects of their exerting their power on other people. They're not really in touch with themselves, to feel themselves to experience themselves,. they have to see it demonstrated in this sort of external way.

Scottish Is this ? There was a bit Voice  
? ?

S. Well it seems more and more that, you know, directors juSt make films that gives them an outlet for their personal hangups. You know sometimes I've used the term, you know, clinical art, I think one can talk of the clinical film too; just you know, somebody vomiting on the screen, well it may be necessary for them to vomit ? it's a~ bad as that sometimes.

(pause)

So you know one can begin to see, you know, just to come back to what we started from,- one can begin to see, well I mean, how the indulgence in a rage can totally disrupt our spiritual life. It's not just a question of outbursts of anger within the context of your life as an individual, within the context of your communication with other individuals~ ~ou know it's a question of your allowing yourself to be possessed and taken over, and your whole individuality disrupted and destroyed

you know, by this u~sur~e of ra~e (developed nurelv) from the psychic depths of yourself. So one should be very careful not to allow that to be,. especially, you know, anger, by all means, if it does seem, at least in the long run, a skillful thing to do, but it must be contained within the

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S. structure of individuality. It cannot be allowed to do any actual harm or dama~e. either to oneself or to other people. (pause)

V. Can it not also be a means of purification?

If you experience it once and maybe it could be necessary to

S. You mean anger in the more modern sense.

V. ... to dismantle the structure and start again, maybe it would be necessary to  
(pause)

S. I wonder about that. I wonder in the case of dismantling it through rage. In a sense, yes, you need to dismantle or rebuild your whole, you know, your ego structure, your whole individuality but, I mean, are you really enabled to do that when you just blindly smash everything? I think that is very unlikely It's more just to mindfully rebuild it.



V. It made me think of the image of breaking through that, ~Breaking through to Buddhahood'mitrata and Vajrapani, and that sort of feels really positive, but the sort of destructiveness of rage, I mean, just feels like a different thing rather than sort of breaking through.

S. You even destroy the foundation on which the new individuality is to be built. It's as though you go as far as that. You don't leave yourself even with a foundation. (long pause)

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S. Anyway that's a somewhat un~pleasant sub~ect. so let's go onto the more positive side of things, which we begin to do with, you know, the next very important - the next little verse, 'On the other hand'

V. 'On the other hand, when we have patience we possess the very best of the good and wholesome. As is said:

There is no evil like malevolence And no austerity like patience; Therefore one should in various ways, Earnestly pay attention to patience.

S. ' On the other hand. when we have patience we possess the

very best of the good and wholesome. '

Probably we'll see that in detail later on, but meanwhile I think we'll have to just take note of the fact that patience doesn't really express the meaning of Ksanti very adequately. Clearly it isn't just a question of putting up with the way other people happen to treat you, or put up with the difficulties. It's a very positive quality, in fact it's the best of the good and wholesome. So the Buddhist's conception of Ksanti goes far beyond the ordinary English notion of patience, but no doubt that will become quite clear a bit later on. In the meanwhile there is this verse.

'There is no evil like malevolence, This is in a way requires reflection, doesn't it? 'There is no evil like malevolence. ' because this destroys the good. It destroys your mind, it destroys you, as an individual, so completely its such a negative way that there is no evil like it.

5, 'And no austerity like patience.

This requires perhaps a bit of comment. We do find these two lines occur in the Dhammapada in the form of, well, this line occurs in the form of 'Patience is the supreme austerity' Do you remember that? Which is a bit like, 'there is no austerity like patience.' Now let's go a little bit into this question of austerity. This 'Tapas' in Pali. Tapas usually means a sort of spiritual practice, a spiritual exercise which is designed almost to burn the evil out of you. So asceticism has got much the same sort of connotation, even though that wasn't the original word. In order to sort of burn the evil out of you, we indulge in all sorts of ascetic practices, do you see what I mean? This is what people tended to do in the Buddha's time. There were all sorts of ascetic practices, or there are even today; even, you know, the well known ones like, you know, the well known ones like~ you know~ stretching yourself on a bed of nails. This is a way to bring the evil in you under control, to eliminate it, to purify yourself; but the verse is saying, or the line is saying, as it were~~you don't really need to do that, just be patient, just practice Patience, ksanti, in the affairs of everyday life. That would give you opportunity enough for the practising of forbearance or asceticisms for yourself. Just go on living your ordinary life, meeting people, who are often difficult enough to deal with, and just being patient, just practicing ksanti. So, I mean, this also draws our attention to an interesting point, a point of general interest, that we must be careful that the religious life or spiritual life doesn't involve us in devising special situations in which to develop, you know, particular, you know, virtues, when

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S. our experience, so to speak, of ordinary everyday life would enable us to develop them even better. Do you see what I mean?

Well, it's like the story I used to tell about the man who was developing metta: he was sitting up in bed developing metta, you know, early in the morning, and you know, developing love towards everybody and then someone brought him in a cup of tea, who happened to trip over the rug, dropped the cup of tea with a crash, thereby interrupting the man's metta, so he was so furious (laughter) that (laughter) he seized a stick lying there and started hitting the person, you know who brought him in the cup of tea, and as he did so he shouted, 'You fool, you idiot, why did you disturb me? Can't you see I'm practising metta?' (laughter). So you see, that is very often the attitude that we take. I mean life itself provides us with the opportunities very often. We don't need to create, you know, artificial you know, ways of experiencing them.

(pause)

So it's just like that with all therapy. I mean there's no need to create special situations in which we have to be patient. Life itself is presenting us with opportunities all of the time. But I mean, maybe there's no need to dwell on

that. 'Therefore one should in various ways, earnestly pay attention to patience.'

V. Something that occurs to me from what you said a little earlier about that patience doesn't one's, most peoples' idea of patience isn't really what ksanti is and something that I've

been aware of that a lot of the positive emotions that have come up in Buddhism; I realise only just now, I

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V. start to realise that they are just so completely different from what I've even thought of, conceived of, that it's no wonder that ~'ve sort of made mistakes, or that people do make mistakes.

S. Right, well, perhaps one has been misled by the connotation of the English words, that are used to translate the Pali and Sanskrit words. As we say metta, if you just translate it as love to the ordinary beginner, to the newcomer, of course they're going to misunderstand because, you know, love has got all sorts of connotations that have got nothing to do with metta.

V. I think that's part of it but also we were studying Apatreppa recently and the whole question of guilt came up.

S. Studying what?

V. Apatreppa and Hiri

S. Oh yes, right, yes, right.

V. Fear of blame, and you know we ~ot into the whole sort of area of guilt and how it can be mistaken for that and it occun~d to me that it was crazy in a way that we should even, that should come up, because it was such a completely different emotion that we were talking about, that the fact that we should ever get confused with guilt seems sort of really disgusting, that it should even come up, and it sort of occurs to me, I can just sort of feel that I'm going to get com~letelv different idea of patience even though I've had

V. before me the Buddhist ? actually studying this,  
because I always see patience as being something squashed.

S. Well, you think of Chaucer's story of Patient Grizelda, Patient Grizelda do you remember that story? It's a very edifying story from a certain point of view about an obedient wife who, however badly she was treated by her husband, never complained, she was an absolute doormat, (laughter) and this is presented by Chaucer as an example to all wives; this (laughter) is ? whatever her husband does she just doesn't murmur, doesn't even think of murmuring - she just bears it all, and this is a lot of people's conception of patience isn't it? Just indefinite putting up with other people's ill treatment of you and yet, this is, you know, in some contexts, it's almost presented as a virtue. Of course she's rewarded in the end, as her husband comes back to her, and what bigger reward could there be than that? (laughter) and allows her to live with him. I mean, having treated her most cruelly, to test her of course; and she puts up with it all, meekly accepts it all, he's right, he's right, she's in the wrong as it were, but you know this is patience as a sort of medieval Christian virtue. So this is certainly a far cry from the Buddhist conception of patience.

V. So it seems that the difference may be, might be that patience in the real sense is something where you actually think for yourself, where you're actually aware, whereas the other would seem that it's an unthinking accepting.

S. It's a submissiveness.

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V. Yes.

S. And perhaps patience in that sense, patience is also submissiveness in that sense, is also bound up with the idea of authority and power. You submit to the superior power, the superior authority, and in the case of Patient Grizelda of course, one mustn't forget that from the sort of medieval point of view it was the duty of the wife to submit to the husband because the husband had authority over her. Just as his feudal superior, his lord, had authority over him, just as the Pope had authority or claimed authority over all the kings; just as God had authority over the whole universe. So within that sort of framework submission to the authority next in order above you is a virtue.

Scot. That was when we did study that at White Row we did come up with Voice that bit. In a way it's because we're used to a power

mode and we're now trying to function in the love mode. Somehow it's just a revolution that we have to actually undergo.

S. So patience has got nothing to do with the power mode. Patience is usually understood as you being submissive to another person's exercise of power. But Buddhist Ksanti has got nothing to do with that at all. If you want, it's your positivity towards the whole of existence, and your receptivity to the reality of things. In other words you're concerned with, you know, what you know, in contradistinction to the power mode, we call, not very satisfactorily, the love mode. You wrinkle up your nose at the word love, well, fair enough, but we need another word,

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S. we don't have a word unfortunately. Love is in some ways quite, you know, unsuitable; but we need some word which will give us the impression of something intensely positive.

V. Metta.

S. But without the slightest trace of, you know, coercion. But even metta is not enough because metta is still mundane, it has to be a least Mahametta (laughter) or mahamaitra - the great friendliness; but you know, friendliness even is weak isn't it?

(short pause)

It's a sort of mysterious positive X factor and it's quite different from anything we normally experience, because in our ordinary human relations, and dealings with people, we are so ready to invoke the power mode, either directly in the form of power, coercion, force, compulsion, pressure or indirectly in the form of emotional appeal, emotional blackmail, cursing, circumvention, manipulation and all the rest of it. Yes, we very very rarely actually rely upon or perhaps can rely upon what I've called you know, the Love Mode.

V. I mean, it just seems terribly unhealthy (laughter) how, I mean when you said about most people not ever being

human, I mean, surely this is more however on a human level we should be behaving. I mean it just

S. Via the love mode.

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V. Yes, at least.

S. I think if you become really aware of the love mode and, you know, operate more from that, I think you go quite a bit beyond the human as ordinarily understood. I think the human as ordinarily understood, you know, consists in operating from a more refined form of the power mode, and with a reasonable balance of the powers between people, you see what I mean; but I mean, it's you sensibly taking into account their power and adjusting. I think this is what usually happens in the positive group.

V. Power moving in the same direction.

S. Well, yes, either moving in the same direction or you know, you give way a little bit if they would give way a little bit. This is an agreement you know, with regard to the uses, well on the nuclear level it's what's called 'The Balance of Terror' I mean this is not at all surprising, this sort of nuclear Balance of Terror because this is what happens on a global scale; But you know on the individual level it's much the same. Alright, if you won't punch me in the nose, I won't punch you. There's just that sort of agreement.

V. It's what we know as a state of peace.

S. Or if you're nice to me, I'll be nice to you, if you help me, I'll help you. So, you know, this is what it's like within the positive group, let us say; but you know, this what I call the love mode, introduces a completely different pattern, and that is very very rare, you know, between people. It can only arise when there is real individuality

S. real openness, real receptivity, real communication, real trust. One reason why even in quite close, quite intimate relationships people invoke in one way or another the power mode is they don't trust the other person, in relationship to themselves that is, because they've got to guarantee you know that person's presence, or their, you know, the continuity of the relationship. They've got to try and tie it up because they're not sure of, they can't trust the other person.

V. It reminds me of what you said before of guilt being, ~~r  
coming from, in a way from, guilt is A conditioned world. ...

S. This has to be unconditioned, I mean, I say the love mode, but if you use the word 'love' at all, it's a sort of unconditioned love~ It can't be, you know, conditioned~ it can't be you know, the subject of calculation and manipulation or enforcement, or anything like that. In a way it's a very sort of delicate part, but at the same time quite indestructible.

V. But it seems that there's a difference. I mean there obviously is a difference between that and say the housewife who becomes the doormat and accepts the husband back even though he's ill-treated her, that's not love is it? it's something

else or is it?

S. Well, it could be if the wife happens to be a Bodhisattva, if the wife happens to be a Bodhisattva, well, it could be that she was operating from the love mode, but I think that is very unlikely. (laughter) you know, wives are not often Bodhisattvas or Bodhisattvas are not often wives. (laughter). But I think

S. probably anyone who actually behaves like that would be, you know, behaving like that out of weakness and in the interests of her or his own development would need to stand up for themselves more, and just say 'No', just refuse to accept that sort of thing.

V. So actually there'd be a lot of resentment there, would there in that case perhaps.

S. Well, I mean, I refer really to Chaucer's picture of Patient Grizelda. In a literary sort of way, in a poetic sort of way she's convincing enough: but maybe not psychologically. You know whether anybody could actually behave like that, probably you have to have a very strong religious conviction of the rightness of the authority placed over you, in this case your husband; to be able; Lo remain positive, you know in that sort of way under that sort of treatment. ... but even so, it seems a bit it's very difficult to believe you know, that someone treated like that however positive~ they were and whatever their beliefs, wouldn't experience some kind of resentment.

V. She probably talked about it with her maid, or something. (laughter)

S. Well no, that, no, no, Grizelda is depicted as a perfect wife. She doesn't murmur, she doesn't even think any resentful thought according to Chaucer.

V. She must have been a sea of repression.

S. No, she comes across as quite beautiful in a way. Chaucer

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S. somehow manages to convey that. Well, I suppose, perhaps you should read that, you know, in the Penguin translation of Chaucer into modern English you find this tale of Patient Grizelda. It perhaps would give an insight into the ideas or the beliefs or attitudes of earlier ages, which of course to some extent underlie our present attitudes. This is where it's quite useful to your development.

V. How?



S. It's the ideal wife - as doormat. (laughter) there's something of that lingering still as everybody knows, so see the ideal, as it were in it's full glory, and appreciate and savour it and then you can sort of maybe trace it's influence even down to the present. If you see it in this extreme exaggerated and quite unashamed form. Chaucer is not apologizing, he's clearly ? into someone else's mind. He's presenting Grizelda as the ideal wife - as a model, as a precedent of all wives. Of course he does also present the figure of the wife of Bath. That is another story altogether. She's not altogether approved you know, in the same sort of way but then he depicts her, or describes her in her own person, whereas you know Grizelda is described as a sort of heroine in a story and is clearly held up for emulation on the part of all right thinking wives. (short pause)

But clearly this sort of attitude of, you know, allowing oneself to be made a doormat of has got nothing to do with the Buddhist conception of ksanti. You don't put up with anything, you

gladly accept anything, you know, with awareness and intelligence.

(pause)

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S. You're receptive rather than passive Griselda was just passive, she wasn't receptive. So....

'There is no evil like malevolence,

And no austerity like patience;

Therefore one should in various ways

Earnestly pay attention to patience

How one does that we will be seeing in the course of the chapter. Alright, let's carry on, the next little prose portion, the next quotation.

V. 'When we do so we attain happiness and ultimate good in our position in life. As stated:

He who earnestly overcomes anger Is happy here as elsewhere. '

S. 'Here' means in this world, in this life. 'Elsewhere' means in some other life, in some other world after death, when one is reborn. But one can take it as meaning that he who earnestly overcomes anger is happy under whatsoever worldly conditions because his happiness is in his own mind. And anger is such a source of affliction and suffering. You

overcome that, and well, you'll be happy..

Happiness is incompatible with anger. Anger is incompatible with happiness. Anger of course, clearly here, in the sense of rage, malevolence.

V. Is the ultimate good - enlightenment?

S. No, sorry, just a moment; it says 'happiness and ultimate good in our position in life' so it doesn't seem to imply enlight.'~'rne;~ That comes later. What were you saying?

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V. Well, the question of the idea of giving up one's life. People you read about, Bodhisattvas saying, 'well, they'd even give up their lives'~ I mean that can often be misunderstood. I think most people are more likely to. ... I mean it could be something quite passive. I mean if one understood.

S. Allowing yourself just to be killed.

V. I was just thinking about Christ actually, whether I mean, whether Christ was actually, whether it was more a passive move, rather than genuinely creative~ I mean the sort of symbolism and the ideas behind it.

S. Yes, that's interesting because yesterday evening I went with Ko'iida to see Eliot's, 'Murder in the Cathedral' where this theme came up. You know, Eliot's play, 'Murder in the Cathedral'? And of course Beckett sees his own martyrdom, his own forthcoming martyrdom against, you know, the background of Christ's allegedly sacrificial death. But it's quite interesting how it's developed because, well you know the history of Beckett, and it's recapitulated a bit in the play, but he seems to have been a very ambitious man and he was first of all the king's Chancellor, Then the king made him the Archbishop of Canterbury; intending that, as archbishop of Canterbury he should, you know, carry out the king's wishes, but, of course he finds himself then as Archbishop, in his own eyes with a higher authority than that of the king, because he represents the Pope, and he represents God. You know, he represents a higher power than the king but he is still, and this is very clear, thinking and

feeling very much in terms of power and authority, operating from the

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S. power mode, not from the love mode, despite of course, you know, the Christian language of love and all that, and he gets himself into a sort of dilemma. He is in a way, a bit conscious of what is happening and his consciousness of what is happening, you know, comes to him in the form of various temptations in the first part of the play, and you know, then in the beginning of the second part there's I think quite a famous scene where he appears in the pui.pit and preaches his Christma-- sermon before his death. In that sermon he escapes from the dilemma by convincing himself, well the dilemma that, well the dilemma that, or the difficulty or the problem that if, you know, even though he is, you know, doing God's work and is the representative of the Pope and of God, this may still be pride, even wanting to be a martyr may still be pride, because it's what he wants to do, he escapes from this by convincing himself that it's the will of God, he's not doing anything, he's submitting to the will of God. It's God who wants him to be a martyr. Yes, and you can see how the whole thing works out within the Christian framework. You know, that he allows himself to be sacrificed - he is sort of quite, well in a sense is quite passive, but in a sense he isn't because he's doing what he wants to do; that is the only wayV'left,~ out, you know. He's antagonised the king, he can't get any further along the present line, he can't exercise his power as Archbishop of Canterbury. Alright, he can be something even better than Archbishop of Canterbury. He can get himself martyred and be a saint in heaven.

So you can see he courts the martyrdom - this is quite clear to other characters in the play. He wants to be killed, he wants to be martyred. So he hasn't given up his own will, he's still asserting his own will, but he is convincing himself,

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S. or telling himself that it's the will of God that he is carrying out, and this is so dangerous. I mean, you appear to submit, you know, yourself to a higher power, but who says that, that higher power exists, who believes in that higher power? You do. So it is your indirect way of getting your own way. Yes? I mean I knew someone, or rather, in fact I still know him, someone involved many years ago, you know who believed that he was inspired by God, and that he was carrying out God's will. I knew his wife also, and his wife told me one day., God's Will, it's just his way of getting what he wants', and doing his own, you know, carrying out his own will and I could see that, Yes, I could see, you know, his own wishes, you know, coming back, sort of filtering through his so-called meditations and trances in the form of instructions from God. It was what he wanted to do, yes, but by crediting it to God attributing it to God, he invested it with a weight and authority that didn't belong to himself and therefore he had to accept, and others had to accept it was the will of God. So, you know, you could say, you know, in the case of Christ even, taking him as an historical character, which I think personally is rather difficult, but even so, taking the story at its face value, as a historic event, he got himself into a fix and the only way out was just to die. Well, whatever he did he would have got killed according to the story apparently anyway, but he represents or that is represented by the Christians as a voluntary submission to the will of God, and that being part of God's plan of salvation etc., etc. In that way the whole thing is glorified. But actually, it's someone doing what he wanted to do. There's no question of God's will, it's your will, all the time. In other words you refuse to abandon the

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S. power mode, you pretend to abandon it; you're giving up your will, you're giving up your life, you're sacrificing it, but that is a still more subtle assertion of it, a still more subtle operation of the power mode. You can, you know, you can overcome this power mode only through, you know, what Buddhist's call or what we call the love mode; only through wisdom, only through prajna. But going, you know, beyond individuality as we normally experience it altogether. But this I think Christianity has not succeeded in doing because it's so trapped in this language, this thought pattern of authority; 'for thine is the kingdom,' you know, the kingdom, you know, the power and glory. This sort of language, what does it convey to you? It makes God into a sort of glorified monarch.

(pause)

So, you know, the Buddhistic ksanti is very much in the power mode, sorry, in the love mode. Submission is still within the power mode but passively within the power mode rather than actively.

(pause)

So the passive person also cannot be happy as I think I've mentioned earlier when was that?

V. Or the angry person cannot be happy.

5. No, yes, that also, but I have mentioned that the no I was talking with somebody some days ago sorry I'm mixing it up. You cannot be happy while you are passive, happiness is an active state. So when you submit, when you're a Patient Griz elda you can't be happy while you are passive, happiness is an active state. So when

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S. you submit, when you're a Patient Gizelda you can't be happy because you're completely passive, and happiness is a positive thing, an active thing, it is a sort of continual production of positive skillfull mental states.

Anne What about contentment? is that?

S. Well, content is not passive. It may look like it but it isn't. You're not just sort of sitting still and letting things come to you. Contentment is more like you are, well, your continuous production, you know, of a certain positive mental state.

Anne I suppose I'm thinking of...., I'm thinking of, with stillness, simplicity and contentment, that same experience, though

it's state yet, it does seem static.

S. Because, to the extent that you're leading a spiritual life you cannot but go forward, yes; so, you know, the stillness consists in, well, the fact that you go forward. The contentment is contentment with the continual state of going forward and not contentment with the actual state in which you are now in a literal sense; that would be complacency. If you are content with an existing structure which remains unchanged it is because that existing structure, the fact that it remains unchanged provides you with a regular basis you know, for your continual further effort, not because it provides you with an opportunity of settling down. So if you're content say with your work situation it doesn't mean or it shouldn't mean that you know you're content with it in the sense of being satisfied with it because it enables you to

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S. settle down in something. You're content with your work situation because it provides you with a continuing basis for your continuing effort. Yes.' And that's a very different thing.

(pause)

It's as though you need that continuous basis, you know, for your further effort and you're content with the situation because it provides a basis for that further effort, not because it enables you just to stop making an effort for the time being.

(pause)

You're content with the current because the current is bearing you along.

Anoma I was just wondering, I'm not quite clear about it but I

was saying earlier on about people sort of confusing positive emotions in the Buddhist sense sometimes with negative things whether this doesn't come into it somewhere, this sort of....

S. The contentment.

Anoma The confusing, some of the passivity seems like friendliness can seem a bit kind of wishy washy.

S. Anaemic

Anoma Anaemic, and even the perfect being sometimes can, people can.

S. He's too good to be true.

Anoma Yes, well, sometimes one thinks of perfection as static,

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S Yes, and so you say, 'oh the Buddha is perfect, yes, but it doesn't mean that the Buddha is just like a marble statue is perfect, yes, finished, ho the perfection means, consists in the perfect adaptability to any situation that may arise. The adequacy to any situation that may arise. And that's an active dynamic thing. The capacity to respond appropriately to any kind of situation that may arise, that is, it is in that, that the perfection consists. Not, you know, of having attained to a certain static condition of being, yes, which remains unchanged, unmar~d; though you know, sometimes the language of some of the sutras suggests this, you know, you're like a great rock, you know, unmarked by all the winds that blow. Well, yes, in a sense you are, but in another sense you're like the wind itself, or you yourself are like a wind continually blowing and moving. So perfection is not something rigid and hard and uny'~lding and fixed and set once and for all, but that is what very often the word perfection itself suggests. There's nothing further to do, nothing more to do. Just like a statue as I said that's finished complete.

Anne It's seeing perfection as a noun instead of a verb.

S. Right, yes, indeed, yes.

(pause)

So it seems we have inevitably to begin with, to start with the words that we have and use them, but we need eventually to inject into them a completely different meaning.

V It seems to me that we need to be sort~ 9f quite skillful in explaining their real meaning, I mean perhaps , I mean

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V. obviously example comes into it as well, but

S. Yes, so if you take love or friendliness you know, in some circles, I mean, I've had this sort of experience, there might be a sort of convention that they always express a lot of love and friendliness so they're always hugging you know and making a lot of you in that sort of way~ ~ut you get the impression sometimes this is just a gesture; this is just a sort of thing that they've got in the habit of doing. That there isn't that positive emotion there in fact.

Sangha Somebody was talking to me about that only the other day,' devi saying that she felt you know that the centre was, it wasn't

friendly enough, and I mean although it definitely can become much more fr~ndly. What I felt she was getting at was well people were kind of hugging each other a lot, and I know the circle of friends that she moves in where there is a lot of that, and it is often quite superficial and I actually said that to her, and you know said that I felt you know, it's alright to do that if you genuinely feel it, but if it's you know, as a substitute for a lack of communication on other levels.

S. Yes, well (break in the recording)

V. It's quite strange if somebody comes up and gives you a hug and you don't feel that they're being friendly. I mean you know, you don't quite know how to respond because they're hugging you which is an affectionate move, but they don't feel any affection.

S. A mechanical hug. Give them a mechanical hug back. (laughter)

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S. Alright, you know what you're doing, you're not taken in by it, even perhaps if the other person is, it's just like a handshake~, okay, just treat it like that. It's a token hug, no more, a token demonstration of affection. Just like you know, in society, ladies just sort of peck each other on the cheek, it's just a token of affection, and no one takes it too seriously. One knows that there's no real warmth in it usually, so okay, someone hugs you, okay, hug him back. If it's the done thing in that particular circle fair enough, but don't be misled by what is happening, don't misunderstand it, don't think it means that real affection is necessarily there. Just go along with it maybe. It's not worth quarrelling about you know, at the particular moment, and take it up maybe on some other occasion. But if people are, you know really alienated from their own feelings; they may be under the impression that they're being genuinely affectionate in giving you that mechanical hug; and if you have any sensitivity of your own, you know, if it's a genuine warm friendly hug or whether it's just a mechanical routine hug (laughter)

you know it instantly.

(Pause)

alright, 'Finally', the next paragraph in this quotation.

V. 'Finally, when we have patience we attain unsurpassable enlightenment. This is declared in the 'Yab.sras mial. ba' i mdo' (Pitaputrasama~amanasutra):

Anger is not the path to Buddhahood To think so always develops benevolence Enlightenment is born from patience.'

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S. 'When we' 'finally, when we have patience we attain unsurpassable enlightenment'. This refers to a very high level of patience indeed, which goes far beyond anything that we, you know, ever, I mean, thought of in an ordinary way. This is, I think, (we shall be going into this~ but this is patience in the sense of perfect receptivity to reality itself, or receptivity to the highest truth of things. Well, which is a fairly exalted, you know, virtue indeed, clearly.



No doubt, we will be going into that later and then the quotation says;

'Anger is not the path to Buddhahood'.

I mean, it's as though some people think that anger is the path to Buddhahood, well perhaps there are such people around nowadays. That anger is the way, even rage is the way to personal development; that's not, 'Anger is not the path to Buddhahood'. 'To think so' that is to say to think that anger is not the path to Buddhahood, 'always develops benevolence'. - that is metta.

V. I sort of remember being impressed very much some years ago when someone said, "Oh, I can't stand confusion - clarify! you know, putting his value in Buddhism on. ... and being very angry about people being confused, and I was very impressed.

S. Hmm. Angry about people being confused, let's think, yes, I think one could say that one could have an anger in the positive sense about people's confusion, yes? Because if people are confused it's very difficult to communicate with them, and if they've got all sorts of wrong ideas, all sorts of miccadittis, communication becomes very difficult. So you know you could experience a sort of anger that was a result

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S. of you know, the continual frustration in your communication just due to people's wrong ideas, and you could of course perhaps skillfully direct that anger against these wrong ideas and try to break them down, disprove them, show the falsity of them - so one could perhaps, you know, recognise the validity of that sort of state of anger. But all the same one would have to be careful that one didn't get impatient with people, you know, and remained, you know, in contact with them as best you could and tried to break down their wrong ideas so that you could communicate with them, but not become so frustrated and angry you just wanted to get them out of the way, so to speak.

Anne ~ don't understand that, that verse - 'To think so

S. 'To think that anger is not the path to Buddhahood',, to realise that you know through anger you won't approach Buddhahood, this will help you in developing metta.

Anne I thought it meant to think that anger was the path to Buddhahood.

S. NO, no, no, it's not really very clear, but that is what it means, otherwise it makes nonsense because it contradicts all the other passages. (laughter)

'Enlightenment is born of patience ,

well this is obviously patience in the highest sense, well backed up of course with patience in the lower sense, patience in sense of receptivity to higher spiritual truths more clearly gives birth to enlightenment.

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Anoma What we were talking about earlier; somebody who's very angry wanting to, having their own insecure ego and wanting to sort of build up that-, well it just came into my mind, anger not being the path to Buddhahood and if you're wanting to strengthen your own sort of ego and not being open to what is, I mean, it is going exactly against

S. . . . Yes, it's diametrically opposite.

(pause)

Right, let's go onto '2'. I suspect that this is going to keep us busy for the rest of the session. Let 5 read that prose bit and then the quotation 'the essence of patience....

V. 'The essence of patience is to be prepared for every event. In the 'Byan.sa' (Bodhisattvabhumi) is said;

To be ready for everything without bothering about material considerations and filled with pure compassion is the essence of a Bodhisattva's patience

S. This is really very important because this gives a succinct definition.

'The essence of patience ~s to be prepared for every event,' I mean in what way are you not prepared for every event?

Sangha Devi Fixed ideas.

S. Fixed ideas.

Sangha devi So you can't be open to what is.

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S. So you can't be open.

Sangha devi So if you're not, if you can't be open to what's happening then you get angry.

S. Right, you can't be patient so this is the essence of it, realising that anything can happen at any time.

Anne Also, if you're impatient you tend to always be looking at the next thing instead of getting on with the thing that's happening at that time. ?

S. When you become impatient it's as though you're saying, 'Well that shouldn't have happened'. Yes?that you can't say that sort of thing because life is such that anything can happen at any time: for instance you might have planned to go on holiday and then what happens? There's a strike, you can't get on the plane, yes? But, you know, if you have been prepared for every event you won't experience impatience, because you will have realised, well, that's the sort of thing that can happen so if you sort of insist that, or if you sort of have a usual idea, well this is going to happen, or that is going to happen, it can't be otherwise you know. You don't tolerate any sort of change in your plan, then, of course impatience will develop. So it's having fixed ideas about what is going to happen. And that perhaps does tie up with something that we were talking about in the other group this morning, about attachment to sensuous experiences in the sense of attachment to the way things were going on at present, and not you know wanting to allow any sort of change, you know, expecting

things to go on

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S. indefinitely as they'd been going on. So it's much the same sort of thing here, you've got fixed ideas about the way things are going to be and if those expectations are falsified well, you become impatient, you become angry. ~o you mustn't have any fixed ideas about what is going to happen, about the nature of the events that are going to occur. You may have a provisional idea of course~ I mean you might be expecting someone to dinner so of course you prepare a meal but you don't prepare it in the 100% absolutely fixed expectation that they're going to come; something can always happen, they might be delayed, there could be an accident, but I mean, I've known people who were so sort of fixed in this sort of situation; supposing, you know, they'd cooked the meal and they were ready at seven o'clock. The person doesn't come, they're angry, because they had this fixed idea that they were coming at seven o'clock. Perhaps they turn up at 9 o'clock, and perhaps they've been knocked down by a bus on the road, but that person who'd had this fixed expectation of them, you know, arriving at 7, well, can still sometimes be angry with them for being late, and annoyed and upset because his or her expectations have been disappointed to such an extent that they're unable to sympathize with them having been knocked down by the bus. Really, this can actually happen.

V. People sometimes get angry when their husband or wife dies, don't they?

S. Yes. (laughter)

V. Because they've been sort of thwarted, you know.

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S. Yes, and then God comes into it, you know, why does God do this to me? What have I done to God? I saw this reported I think it was in the newspaper not so long ago,-a woman actually said this sort of thing when her husband died, you know, why should this happen to me?

I've never done anything against God.

V. (inaudible) (laughter)

S. Well, she'd gone to church, you know, she'd kept her side of the bargain. (laughter)  
? ?

Oh, yes, another remark I remember, a woman said when her husband died, 'well it's enough to make you lose your faith' (laughter) ? ?

faith is just, you know, this fixed attitude, that's not a real faith.

V. Sounds like a bad investment.

S. A bad investment, yes, or you know, God is a sort of stock broker that you can't trust anymore (laughter) who made the wrong investment for you. So one must be open. One must be prepared to adapt and to change even though you may have to make provisional plans, that's inseparable from all the business of living but let them not be too rigid, let them be a bit flexible, a bit adaptable, don't pin, you know, your hopes on them too absolutely, too exclusively, and you'll be a lot happier, you'll be more patient when things you know happen differently.

V. It seems to be quite difficult, well I find it difficult, ~to be

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V. sort of whole hearted and sort of clear about what I'm going to be doing and at the same time not to get too involved and, you know, attached.

S. Well, we talked about this in this morning's group also. I quoted a little saying which I proceeded to adopt. The saying is - it's a sort of theistic saying, "that you should pray as though everything depended on God and act as though everything depended on you." So I adapted this by saying that you should, you know, work whether it's your co-op or whatever as though the work is going on for ever, you know commit yourself to it to such an extent that it's as though it's going on forever, but in your meditation, reflect, well it could end tomorrow. Combine the two, this is what you have to do; the intensity as though you expect it to last for ever, but the detachment as though you expect it to end tomorrow. You have to combine the two.

V. You said (laughter)

S. Well, what did I say? You have to commit yourself to what you are doing as though, you know, you were going to be doing it indefinitely, but at the same time remain detached from it, especially in your, you know, moments of meditation, as though it was going to end the very next day.

(pause)

I mean I think a healthy person is able to do this.

V. So in a sense patience is a sort of commitment to yourself,  
and not

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S. Yes, you bring to the situation, more than the situation, you bring yourself. When you commit yourself to a situation you are committing yourself. Your commitment in a sense is to yourself, whether the situation continues or whether it doesn't; so the fact that the situation may not continue doesn't mean that you can't commit yourself to the situation because what you basically commit yourself to, is yourself, in the sense of, you know, your own process of growth and development, and you will continue to develop whether the situation is there or not. So throw yourself into it whole heartedly. You're not doing it for the sake of the co-op - you're doing it for your own sake and you're always going to be there. It's the best thing for you to do today. So do it today, thoroughly, you know, even a house, these particular walls, these particular bricks and stones and wood are not going to be there tomorrow. It could be burnt down in the night, who knows.

V. Otherwise you could leave part of yourself somewhere else.

S. Yes.

Sangha Again the false sort of response is where people don't like devi to plan things or do things because somehow they've experienced

this thing of things not being fixed in an unpleasant way.

S. Yes, well, that's the other extreme, you don't ever go out shopping in the morning because you may not live to eat them.

(laughter) Well, very few people carry it to that extreme.

Sangha Well, actually somebody invited me for a meal and, I mean, devi I turned up and she was sort of surprised that I had turned up

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Sangha devi and she sort of almost assumed that probably I wouldn't.

S. Well perhaps she didn't want you to actually.

V. No, I think it was because she'd been let down before.

S. She starts cooking after the guest arrives.

V. She didn't want to be disappointed.

S. Well, some people are so afraid of being disappointed, actually disappointed, they assure themselves in advance that they are going to be disappointed, you know just to insure themselves against the painful feeling of being disappointed.

Anoma I remember a cartoon once, there's a man knocking on a neighbour's door and the neighbour opens the door and the man says to him, 'Ohay, I didn't want your lawnmower anyway.' (laughter)

(pause)

S. So, 'the essence of patience is to be prepared for every event', which means being totally open. But that doesn't necessarily mean that you're not making provisional arrangements for the events that you can quite reasonably expect to happen. But you're not completely fixed in your ideas about what is going to happen. There is a certain openness at the same time, how things could turn out. You're prepared for that, you're prepared to accept that. So if

you've got that sort of attitude then you can practise patience in the Buddhistic sense: otherwise not. So, you know,

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S. patience is incompatible with any sort of rigidity, any sort of fixed expectations of the way things are going to be because to the extent that these expectations are fixed, to that extent you'll be resentful if they're not met.

V. So to that sort of attitude, life is more of an adventure.

S. Yes.

V. You know, like there are, sort of, so many more possibilities.

S. Yes, but very often people want to be able to fix things in advance and tie them down, because you know, of their own basic insecurity, their own doubts of their own ability to cope. I mean for instance, supposing you're preparing a meal and well you know, that two people are coming, well if you're suddenly told well, there's going to be ten people you could be very annoyed because you doubt your, er even upset, because you doubt your ability to cope. But, you know, a person with self confidence will know that they will cope even if the



situation does change, so they don't bother so much about tying things down. But, you know, there are some people who are so sort of insecure that they have to tie things down as much as possible and limit things and circumscribe them and they don't allow you to go beyond that, er outside that. You have to stick to that because there they feel secure that that is what is going to happen. That's been agreed between you. They dig their heels in and they refuse to accept any change in the arrangements. And that can be very, very limiting and very restricting and very frustrating, you know, for everybody else, as well, of course, as for that

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S. person himself, really.

(pause)

so it suggests that, you know, that patience is also a matter not only of openness, but of spontaneity, A patient person is the alive person.

Sangha I was just going to say, it's more hard work to be I devi always used to plan very far in advance so I could lazily

go on carrying out my plans and so they weren't really in harmony with the situation.

S. Yes, you can get completely out of touch with the situation if you refuse to change and insist on carrying out your fixed plans even though now perhaps they've become totally inappropriate. Some people prefer to do that apparently (pause)

V. It's underestimating life really isn't it?

S. Yes, it is.

V. Being afraid.

S. Being afraid also. There's a lot of fear in that rigid sort of attitude. (pause)

so fixed expectations, these are the absolute antithesis of patience. One shouldn't even come on a retreat having expectations, should one? What sort of retreat it's going to be? Not having fixed expectations about say the weather, or about you know what you're going to get out of meditation, or the

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S. wonderful communication that you're going to have with other people on the retreat etc., No fixed expectations. Just a reasonable anticipation of what is likely to happen, but not to bother about it too much.

V I think when you don't have any fixed expectations, your experiences are that much more intense.

S. Yes, they are intense in the true sense.

V. It's like if something spontaneously happens, some outing or something, you enjoy it far more than if you sort of planned it all and expected this, that or the other.

S. Yes, that's true, yes, right indeed! Well now, there's you know, an alleged sort of ancient proverb which goes like this, 'He who expecteth nothing, the same shall not be disappointed' That is perhaps a bit cynical but you can see a certain truth in it at the same time.

(pause)

But it is really amazing, the extent to which people's expectations or plans are so rigid and so fixed. They leave themselves no room for manoeuvre, 'ell, they don't want to - they don't want room for manoeuvre, they're afraid of that sort of precipitant, so you know, they're unlikely to grow with that sort of attitude, unlikely to develop.

(pause)

I remember, maybe I'll conclude with this little anecdote: I remember when I was in Kalimpong someone wrote to me that he wanted to come and study Buddhism with me at my Vihara this was an Indian, I think writing from South India, so I

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S. agreed that he should come, so he arrived at the Vihara and he was there for a few days, only for a few days because immediately after his arrival he experienced a tremendous disappointment with the Vihara and with me. Yes, I could see he was disappointed and asked him what was the matter, so he said, 'Well, you know, I've come here to study Buddhism,'

so I said, 'Yes, well fair enough, yes, other people are studying Buddhism, you can study too.' He said, 'but how can you study Buddhism here? How can anyone study Buddhism here?' He said, 'there 5 no blackboards' (laughter) It was true there wasn't a single blackboard in the Vihara (laughter). He had this fixed idea that to have blackboards with everything chalked and demonstrated upon and desks where you sat and worked, this was an essential part of studying Buddhism. And this really upset him, and he kept saying 'But there 5 no desks here, there are no blackboards,' for some reason or other it was the blackboards, or the absence of blackboards that especially upset him.. He'd come with the fixed idea that you know, in order to learn about Buddhism in the Vihara you had to have these things, so after four or five days he just left completely disappointed. I mean, it was impossible to study Buddhism at my Vihara, yes~ I had misled him, there were no blackboards and no desks. So off he went: (laughter)

So this is an example, isn't, it of this kind of thing; you know, very fixed ideas as to what constituted ? or how one studied Buddhism, and he wasn't open to the way that we did things in our Vihara, without desks and without blackboards.

Anne It's almost as if the desks and the blackboards are a sort of authority and without that you ?

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S. Yes, right. It represented a sort of structure, a very fixed structure within which you, you know, learnt. He seemed to feel that was the only way.

Anoma I remember on the convention some people from Finland saying they were having trouble with teaching meditation, some people were coming along and they didn't have any certificates. Some people in Finland , meditation teachers have got these certificates, I don't know where they were from but then some people were asking, you know, where are their certificates?

S. Well, there's something even more amusing than that, you know~ I was talking somewhere on a retreat, or something like a retreat, with a group of people. We were discussing the Dharma and getting really deep into it. Some really good communication was going on~ I also got into my stride and was talking away to people and they were all listening, and then somebody interrupted and said, 'Oh, we've got to stop now, there's a tape recorded

lecture by Bhante that you've got to listen to: ' (laughter) So the person concerned who was running the retreat or whatever it was, really had this fixed idea about the programme, couldn't see that well, it was actually happening, that I was talking and they were listening and getting a lot from it. So that had to be broken up so that the tape could be put on and people could listen to, you know, the lecture that was actually sort of on the programme, so to speak. This happened some years ago- not recently, but the person who tried to break it up really did. So in all seriousness, you know, he had this fixed idea

about sticking to the programme.

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V. What did you do?

S. I Don't remember (laughter) I think I said something like, well, you know, 'Let's just go on talking', or something like that, ~hey probably accepted it~you know, probably thought, aBhante~5 getting a bit lax, you know, about the programme". (laughter) But you see how easily you know, you can lose sight of what is essential, you know; lose touch with what is happening, because one has these fixed ideas. Completely shut oneself off. (pause) So the quotation says, 'To be ready for everything with out bothering about material considerations and filled with pure compassion is the essence of a Bodhisattva's patience.'

which as you know is the highest patience of all, barring that of, you know, of the Buddha himself. But I think the short definition of Gampopa is probably the best. The essence of patience is to be prepared for every event. But you know, be careful that one doesn't misunderstand this, it's not like the boy scouts preparing... (laughter)... a knife with twenty blades on it, you know, to cover all possible eventualities. No, not that you've got~you know, a repertoire. Sometimes people think in terms of this. For instance, if you're taking a class and you might encounter questions, some people's idea of being prepared is that you swot up in advance all the possible questions and all the possible replies, but that's not the way to do it~ you just have to be open and to respond you know, yourself, you know, on that occasion, in that situation, to that person.

(pause)

S'devi Where it says about bothering about material considerations, I was just thinking in terms

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S. Well, sort of about, you know, how you will survive, your means of livelihood, your support.

S'devi I was thinking in terms of centres and co-ops.

S. I think it's basically

S'devi In danger of getting, we have to watch that we don't

get bogged down in the question of money, or get bogged down you know, you've got so many debts.

S. Yes, Not that you should be careless about it or incur debts, you know, carelessly, but you know, just, you know, see what the situation is on that level but n~, as you said, get bogged down by it.

(pause)

V. Is it like, you do prepare yourself with questions and answers, but that experience isn't only on that level, so you're prepared on other levels.

S. Well, you prepare yourself basically, you know~ ~ou don't prepare your answers to meet any sort of possible question. You make sure that you are prepared so that you are in a positive frame of mind that you are rested, that, you know, you have got your energy there in the confidence that, well, if you're in that sort of positive state you can cope with

anything that anybody throws at you, in the form of a question (laughter) or even in the form of something else (laughter)

and this comes only with experience and your own development. (pause)

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S. I mean, I've found in the past that somebody, you know, has said to me, well, you know, if I visit a new centre or new group of people somewhere, you know, whoever is organising it will say, 'Well, do you want me to give you some sort of idea about what sort of people you might get and what sort of questions they may ask?'

I say, 'No, I'm quite ready for that, I don't need to sort of you know, prime myself in advance,

let them ask anything they like.'

That's just because I've got so much experience in answering questions put by different kinds of people. I don't feel a need to sort of prime myself in advance, you know, 'They can ask any question they like from any particular point of view, but if you're less experienced you may, you know, feel the need to do that sort of thing.

(pause)

Anne. I'm reading an Anais Nin. at the moment; some lectures of hers called the Woman's Coup and in that, every time she went to give a lecture, she insisted that there was a long period at the end for questions and answers; and the people organising would quite often say, 'but you don't know what they'll ask,' and her attitude was, what people wanted was her and that if she was there and willing to give of herself, it really didn't matter what form those particular questions took because she could only say from her experience.

S. Well sometimes people want a definite answer, a factual answer to a factual question, but you know that doesn't exhaust the possibilities by any means, sometimes, even though people 'may put the questions in that way, what they essentially want is a

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S. response from you; that sort of factual question is only the sort of formal structure, it's not what they're really interested in; they're really interested in you and your response. They want to see that in operation as it were. I mean nothing is more boring or tiresome in a way, you know, for a speaker or anyone at a meeting, to get purely factual questions from people who expect purely factual answers as though you were a sort of walking encyclopedia., you know, 'What was the date of the Buddha's death?'. Alright, you give them that. How many pieces of material are there in a bhikkhu's robes?'. Alright you give them that. Well what

can be more dull and boring than that? So even though, you &

know, the question takes on a factual form, usually of course

the intent is not to elicit a purely factual answer. It's just people's way of getting the ball rolling. They want you - they want to enter into a communication with you ideally. So you should be open to that, you know, be ready for anything. Let them start off in any way that they like; it doesn't matter; anything that gets the ball rolling and gets you into communication.

Anne That's quite difficult sometimes in classes isn't it, you know~ somebody gives a talk or there's you know, the meditations, talk, and then (you feel that there's never any questions) sometimes it's really difficult to get, you know~ you know that if you could get the ball rolling then it would.

S. Well, I think one has to be careful about calling for questions after lectures because very often people need time to think about it. They need to clarify a bit in their own minds. You can't expect them to switch too quickly from a relatively

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S. well, let's say, passive or receptive state, to an active one it's not easy to make that transition very quickly.

They may be still absorbing the effects of the impact of the talk, yes, but you know, if you insist on them, you know, asking questions, well, you may just get superficial questions or they might start asking about something completely separate from the lecture itself, or the subject matter of the lecture, and in that way dissipating its influence, which is a pity. So one has to be quite skillful if one does, you know, invite questions after a lecture to elicit them in such a way that you're going more deeply into the lecture, not departing from it and becoming distracted from it. I mean, the initial purpose of, you know, of questions after a lecture should be to clarify something that the lecturer hadn't made sufficiently clear, or amplify something that needed to be amplified; or apply what he had said to a certain concrete situation. Not to go onto something completely different though.

(pause)

This requires quite a bit of skill

(Pause)

Anyway, let's leave it there for today, and tomorrow we'll be going onto the three kinds of patience.

#### THE JEWEL ORNAMENT OF LIBERATION Chapter 14 Day 2 Tape 1

S: We have got as far as P. 174 Section III right at the bottom. Would someone like to read the whole of that Section III, it is just the classification.

"111. The classification is threefold: patience which

(i) is ready to cope with a harmful person, (ii) puts up with misery and (iii) is ready to investigate the nature of the whole of reality"

S: This section gives us only the classification, that is to say the headings under which the subject will be discussed in the section that follows, so we need not discuss in detail because we'll be doing that in the next section. But just to get a broad general view let's make quite sure that we understand as it were the basis of distraction, the basis of the classification.

So the classification is threefold: Patience which (i) is ready to cope with a harmful person. This is one could say, patience which is concerned with, well, with other people, and, you know, clearly, one has to practice sometimes patience with regard to other people. And secondly patience which puts up with misery. You could say that that is patience with regard to impersonal happenings like bad weather, or when you're struck by lightning or things like that, you see what I mean? The third kind of patience is that patience which is ready to investigate the nature of reality, which is receptive to the nature of reality. And the first two mean to show patience by having investigated the real nature of (i) a harmful person and (ii) misery, and they are relative because the person as person is only relatively real, the events as events are only relatively real. And the third which must be taken in an ultimate sense is showing patience by having understood the harmony that runs through the whole of reality. I think this is a paraphrase for Dharmadhatu, or perhaps even Dharmakaya. In other words the third kind of patience is patience in the sense that you accept, you're receptive with regards to whatever is the real nature of things. You offer no resistance to that; it doesn't as it were, make you angry. So it's under these three headings that the whole subject is going to be discussed in detail.

Sanghadevi: It's not that, if you've understood reality then you'll understand the situations more deeply and so therefore will be more patient, whereas in the first two cases, because you haven't understood reality ...

S: Yes. Yes, you can only deal with things, you can only deal with people with situations~within certain limits, when insight, especially in the more Mahayanistic sense, isn't there. You can be patient with regard to people, you can be patient with regard to events, but that's always liable to be upset unless there is some deeper insight into the real nature of things..., unless you have accepted the real nature of things. So in a sense the only real patience as a, so to speak, permanent achievement, any form of patience which falls short of that, one could say, is liable to be upset. Of course one speaks of insight in the more Mahayanistic sense, but it could be you know, that one has also, if one wants to be technical, in-between insight, in the more Hinayanistic sense. If one has insight in the more Hinayanistic sense, and if that is included in the first two kinds of patience, well then you could achieve a permanent, an inflexible patience of that kind. Do you see what I mean?

Voice: No.

S: It isn't clear. It isn't clear where it says that the first two means to show patience by having investigated the real nature of a harmful person and misery and they are relative. But one could say, in what sense are they relative if they consist in having investigated the real nature of the harmful person and misery. They may be relative from the standpoint of the higher Wisdom of the Mahayana. But they're not relative, at least from the Hinayana point of view in the sense that they pertain to °Samat~& rather than to Vipassana. In other words the Mahayana would regard Hinayana Vipassana as being of relative value rather than of ultimate value. But even Hinayana Vipassana is Vipassana, and to that extent represents the permanent modification of the consciousness stream. So if one adopted the broad classification you could say, you could have practice of patience which was based on a positive emotional outlook, the value and significance of which was only psychological, that could be disturbed. You could also have a patience based upon what I've called Hinayana type insight which is limited from the Mahayana point of view, but



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which could not be disturbed, but which was still limited. It could not be disturbed on that particular level of harmful people and harmful events, but it could still be disturbed when it came into contact with ultimate reality in the Mahayana sense, when it came into contact with the Great Void. In order not to be disturbed by that experience or that contact you would have had to develop patience in the distinctively Mahayanistic sense. That is to say, the patience which comes by having understood the harmony that runs through the whole of reality. Do you see what I mean? But this particular text doesn't make all that completely clear. In the next section we begin to go into things in more detail. So would someone like to read number IV. The primary characteristics.

#### IV The Primary Characteristics

A. The first (i) type is to show patience by not wanting ourselves or our relatives to be beaten, reviled, angered or upbraided and by counteracting any wish for hurting. In other words, it is not quarrelling, not doing harm in retaliation and not being insistent.

S: I was just looking back at Section III: the classification is threefold; Patience which is ready to cope with a harmful person. Does this, is this quite . . . here we're concerned with the primary characteristics, the primary characteristics of the first type, that is to say 'Being ready to cope with a harmful person is to show patience by not wanting ourselves or our relatives to be beaten, reviled, angered or upbraided, and by counteracting any wish for hurting.' does that quite correspond? Does it seem to quite fit

Sanghadevi: It seems to be anticipating.

S: Huh? One can understand the classification, that's quite clear. "Patience that is (i) ready to cope with a harmful person." That's pretty straightforward, isn't it. Here is someone who wishes to do you harm. Ur, but you're able to cope with the situation, you're able to practise patience with regard to it. Yeh? But the primary characteristics of the first type is to show patience by not wanting ourselves or our relatives to be beaten, reviled, angered or upbraided and by counteracting any wish for hurting. In other words it is not quarrelling, not doing harm in retaliation, and not being insistent.

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Anne McMillan: You would expect that if you didn't want yourself or your relatives to be beaten that you would beat other people to stop them beating you.

S: Yes um well maybe here one can't expect too close a sort of correspondence. One is concerned with patience with regard to people, yes? That is the first thing, and patience with regard to people seems to show itself in one's wish that one should not oneself nor should others get embroiled in any sort of you know quarrelling, or dispute or row, or upset. Or anything of that sort. Hm? Hm. it is, er, in other words it is not quarrelling, but not only not quarrelling but wishing that there should be no quarrelling, that others should not be involved in quarrelling as well as yourself. It's a sort of peace, it's peaceable, a patient disposition, an aversion for any sort of quarrel or disturbance between people. So that's patience in its simplest form, as it were. Yes?

Faith: It says also not being insistent. Does that imply that you don't necessarily feel that you've got to put over your point of view.

S: Ah well, it seems as if we've got three stages here, you see. First of all there is the, as I

said, not quarrelling, not wishing that there should be quarrels. But then not doing harm in retaliation, that comes next, as though that is more serious still in a way. If someone does harm to you, we're still concerned with people, well, do you do harm back? Well clearly you're not practising patience then, huh? And then thirdly by not being insistent, that is you're not practising patience when you insist on having your own way, as it were. So these seem to represent three successively more serious forms of impatience, of not practising patience in relation to other people. So you practise patience first of all by not getting involved in quarrels, by not encouraging quarrels in any way, by not retaliating for any harm that is done to you, and by not insisting on having your own way all the time.

Sarah: That reminds me of when we were talking about patience in the submissive sense. It feels a bit confusing because it says, showing patience by not wanting ourselves or our relatives to be beaten, which sounds like non-violence, in the way patience which is submissive, you want yourself to be beaten, um, that's just what it isn't....

S: Yes, quite, one could say that. You don't want to bring about that sort of situation within which patient submission is required,

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that is patience. Patience doesn't consist in encouraging others and oneself to submit. So I think it's pretty clear that in relation to others you practise patience by not being quarrelsome, by not doing harm in retaliation, no tit for tat, but perhaps it isn't so clear that you, you know, that you should practise patience by not being insistent. What is this insistence? This is quite an important point.

Voices:

S: Yes, it's to do with your fixed ideas.

Voice: By the ego.

S: By the ego. Yes. Was it in this group that we talked about the man who committed suicide, to whom I spoke on the phone? Well you see, there was in that case a good example of insistence. Eh? He wouldn't take 'no' from somebody for an answer. He insisted, you know, on having his own way. And that can lead to very very negative states of mind, as we saw. Hum?

Lois: But sometimes you can also be convinced that you're right.

S: Alright, well, is it possible for you to be convinced that you are right and in a sense to insist that you are right in a positive way? without thereby becoming impatient in the sense of this

text? Could we make a distinction here? If so on what sort of

basis? In other words what is this insistence which is inimical to patience?

Voice: It's a power thing.

S: It's a power thing, yes.

Lois: It's being intractable.

S: It's being intractable.

Faith: Being in oneself as opposed to self and others (???)

S: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Sarah: I think it's like asserting yourself but in a very vague way, so that it's a reaction, but if you were wanting to say you thought you were right, you would say you thought you were right and bring it out into the open.

S: Yes.

Anne~Mac: It often seems to me the more insistent one is, the less confident actually one is...

S: Yes. Right. But in the case of insistence it's as though it's a life and death issue for you. Yes? Your life depends upon it. But when you have simply an opinion or conviction of your own and you will not give that up because you've not been shown any reason to give it up, and you, in a sense, insist on

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that, well, it's not such a life and death issue for you, it's just your conviction, but you don't feel threatened by its being challenged and you don't have to ins~ on it in this sense almost of defending your very life. I think that is the difference. Your insistence in that case is not so emotionally loaded, so emotionally charged. And I think when one is talking with people if one is at all aware or sensitive you can usually tell the difference. If you argue with someone, or you disagree with them, and they still remain of the same opinion, and say, "Well, no, sorry, you haven't convinced me, I believe that". That's quite different from someone saying, "No, you're absolutely wrong, you know that this is true", etc, etc. You get a completely different feeling then.

Anne Mac: That seems to be when things get dogmatic, and it turns into dogma.

S: Yes. Yes.

Faith: You can hold your own opinions without necessarily feeling you have got to put it over onto everybody else, convince them they've got to think the same.

S: Yes.

Anne Mac: I don't know actually that confuses me, because there are some things that I think, that I think everybody should think. (Laughter) Well do you know what I mean?

S: Well, yes (Laughter)

Anne: So I don't know whether, you know. . you know people tend to say you should be tolerant and let people believe what they want to believe and things, but I sometimes get confused about this because I come up against certain beliefs that I don't think people should be allowed to keep.

S: Yes.

Anne: But I don't really know what to do about it.

S: Well, when you say, "shouldn't be allowed to keep" (laughter) let's say that the phraseology is a little wrong.

Anne: Well I think it's harmful for them to believe these things.

S: Yes indeed. Yes. Yes. What you really mean is should you allow people to in their delusions. This is what you really mean.

Anne: Yes.

S: Well let's assume for the sake of argument that you are right in thinking that their delusions are in fact delusions. Or even, if perhaps you are not right, but you sincerely believe that

S (cont): jol 14.2. 82

that their delusions are delusions, or what you think are delusions in them, are in fact delusions. Well as a human being what is or should be your attitude towards that other person? This is all it really boils down to.

Voices: Compassion.

S: Well perhaps that is putting it a bit too strongly, but perhaps one could at least say that you care about the other person. Do you see what I mean? That if you care about or care for somebody in a human way you would not like to let them get away with delusion. It is not that you in an egoistic way are trying to force your opinions upon them. But you really do genuinely feel that it is a pity that they have got these delusions. That those delusions are going to do them harm, that- they're getting in the way of their development. But if you just sort of leave them to it none the less, even though you believe that, what does that suggest?

Voices: You don't care.

S: You don't care, actually. So it would seem as though there is a middle way to be followed between indifference on the one hand and you know trying to force your opinion on others in an egoistic sort of way. And I think you can always tell the difference with somebody who is genuinely concerned with your welfare and genuinely believes rightly or wrongly that you are on the wrong path and who really wants to help you and put you, if he can, on the right path. I mean for instance if you meet quite a lot of representatives of you know certain Christian groups, and movements, you don't feel that they are concerned about you as an individual at all. I mean you don't feel even that they are aware of you, they don't see you. They are so wrapped up in themselves in their own beliefs, so you cannot believe that they are concerned with your welfare. But if you get to know somebody well and you are in a relationship of honest communication with them, you genuinely feel that they're not on the right track, that something they believe to be true could help them so much, they'd be so much more happy and if you care for them, how can you not try to convince them? And it is a very different thing from trying to put your ideas across forcibly to them. Or you know to enforce your ideas on them, you can put your ideas across "forcibly", but you shouldn't try to enforce them. I think that in England in some ways there is far too little of this honest trying to convince other people of what you believe to be the truth. It is partly because we're, because we are rather shy in our social relations or we believe that there are certain things that shouldn't be discussed, so it is not good

S(cont): manners. I remember that when I returned from India, and a few weeks later or a few days later went on the Buddhist Society Summer School to give some talks and take some classes. I was given to understand that there were two subjects at this Buddhist Society Summer School that must never be mentioned and never talked about: one was sex and the other was politics and I added a third one (laughter), I said humourously, religion should never (laughter). But if you see . honestly feel that with regard to any of these topics genuine conviction, you cannot exclude those topics from your communication with people whom you know and whom you wish well, especially when you you believe that certain ideas do have practical consequences for good or for ill, How can you just sort of agree not to discuss certain things because of some idea of good manners and that kind of thing ? So if you've got a very good friend, from your earlier say pre-FWBO days and you meet them, well how can you say to yourself, "what right have I got to push my ideas about Buddhism onto them. They've got their own way, it is just as good as mine, whatever it is". And so you just keep quite and natter about things of no particular interest or importance and under that false idea of tolerance, you just never discuss with that old friend things which are really of importance to you because after all Buddhism, in the broadest sense and the deepest sense is concerned with human beings, with all human beings. I mean whatever Buddhism teaches is valid in principle for all human beings, can help all human beings, can help all human beings to grow and to develop. to - in a way one has not got the right to keep away from the people that you know and know well the opportunity of benefitting from the Dharma in the way that you have benefitted You cannot but share the good things that you have found with the people for whom you care and with whom you are in contact. I mean if they've closed themselves and are not willing to listen, well of course, one cannot do anything about that, though one~houldn't perhaps necessarily accept the first rebuff. You have to be patient, you have to be persistent also, without working in an egocentric sort of way.

Anne MacMillan. When I first got involved in the FWBO I think I tried to convert everybody that I knew immediately within a week, and I did just turn everybody off, actually. But over a period of a couple of years people have come round quite a lot.

S: Right, yes, well they know now that is not one of your passing enthusiasms. (laughter) You've stuck it for two whole years. (laughter) It seems to have steadied you down quite a bit they might think, or steadied you up. (laughter) Well they might notice that you are happier, more integrated more alive, they cannot but be impressed by this, however little they may care to acknowledge the fact.

jol. 14. 2.

Marg: It seems that being insistent seems to imply quite a lack of awareness of the other person.

S: Indeed, yes.

Marg: Like if you are really aware of someone, then you do want the best for them, and the communication wouldn't be so much just trying to force your way through.

S: Well if you are really in communication with anybody, you know quite well you see quite clearly that you can't force anything. It's like if you offer somebody something to eat and

they don't want it, then don't go just forcing them, however good in the abstract it might be for them to eat it. But I mean, I think there are quite a few wrong ideas in connection with this whole question of tolerance. To be tolerant doesn't mean that you shouldn't ever discuss with other people the things that you believe in for fear of upsetting their present ideas. Well this seems to me always like a rationalization. In fact, well, you've got the right to upset their ideas if you can, they've got the right to upset yours, it is part of human communication. You don't have to treat them with kid gloves, in that sort of way, that they're delicate and fragile and their little beliefs can so easily be upset by a few words from you. So you have to keep very quiet and very cautious and not say anything that might upset them or you know disagree with in any way. So, I mean there is in some Buddhist circles, not the FWBO I hope, this idea that you should never disagree with anybody about anything which you know is labelled religious, because everybody's got the right to their own belief and all beliefs are equally good and they're paths to the same reality etc, etc. So someone says to you, "I believe that Jesus died on the Cross for me, and shed his blood, and if I can accept that I'll be saved". Well you shouldn't as a Buddhist say, "well that is one way of looking at it" (laughter) You should just say, "Nonsense, rubbish, I don't believe that". You owe it to the other person as a human being to express your genuine conviction. So, "I don't believe that for such and such reasons. It is humbug, it is nonsense". You should be honest with the other person, they should be able to take that. And if they say to you, "well all this meditation it is just escapism", well you should be able to take that, without reacting in an insistent egoistic way. But just try to explain whatever meditation really means for you, whatever it might mean for other people. I think we are very afraid of this sort honest human exchange, and disagreement. And really battling out these issues. We seem to think that it's sort of rather bad manners and not quite nice, or not the sort of

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thing that ladies are supposed to do, for instance at parties (laughter) and so to agree with everybody and be nice. (laughter)

Sanghadevi: It is also linked to yourself being more open, .. well I mean you can afford to be open.

S: And confident. It is also linked with your lack of self-confidence or your lack of clarity. Maybe you've never thought about certain basic Buddhist issues. You join the FWBO and you like the atmosphere, and you get on alright with the meditation and the pujas of course are lovely, and you enjoy the retreats. So because in the FWBO people don't believe in God you don't. But what are the reasons for not believing in God? Well perhaps you'd never thought about that, so when you come across someone who does believe in God, and argues with you or is willing to argue with you about it, you don't quite know what to do, or what to say or where you stand, and all you can say is, "well I don't believe in God". (laughter) So you see what I mean? Well sometimes we just haven't done our intellectual homework. So, we are afraid of any clash, or little brush with people who think differently. So we avoid it, we rationalise and we say "ah well, I've got my belief, you've got yours, I guess it will all come right in the end, I guess we are all on the same path." And you leave it at that, which is pretty weak. This is what happens. mean when did, let's say any of you, last have a really tough genuinely intellectual discussion with someone who disagrees with you as a Buddhist? Have you, recently?

Paula: Yes, Lois and I were hitching up from Brighton and we got to Cambridge and somebody stopped who was going all the way to Norfolk and he was a Christian Minister.

S: Well that is good. That the sort of situation that Devamitra loves. He's got him in the car (laughter) for hours. (laughter) So what happened ?

Lois: ~e was . . . he first of all heard why we were coming to Norfolk, and then it gradually came out that he was in the Healing Ministry.

S: Ah, yes, well we've got notit&ng against healing have we ?

Lois: That is what he thought. And then it just got more and more intense. and he did alot of talking and then he said, "well as Buddhists, what do you believe ?", and I said, "well I don't believe in God". And he said, "oh really, I'm very disappointed" (laughter) Because he felt that we'd had such a good communication with him and I believed he was deluded, he'd been a minister for 24~ years, he felt that Paula and I were both deluded.

Paula: Every time I asked about authority or disagreed with him about things, he said " well the people that you must have associated with weren't proper ~hristians l l.

S: Ah yes, This is what I used to be told in my younger days. When I was a very young monk and happened to meet Christians, they'd say, "Well we quite understand you must have had some very bad experiences in the Church but you know you shouldn't have let that put you off.". And T t;~eU to say "Well no actually, I used to go to church at one time and I really app- reciated it, I had lots of good friends there, I liked them, it was Christianity itself that I could not accept." So this is how they'd- try to cut the g:-Ouk~d from under your feet. That you'd must have had ~ bad experience with Christians, or ~ot met any real Christians, or a real minister or something like that.

Lois: But it really put me on my toes, I was aware that there was a sit- uation that I had to cope with in a way, because ~~ was really my faith versus your faith. And although I sort of said, " well it is only a two hour ride, what can I do in a two hour rideu, l l I don't think I really grasped the situa)tion fully and gave it a good shake.

S: But I think what is important, when one meets peop4e like this, is to at least get them to acknowledge that you can be, well letts say, at least as sincere as they are, with a totally different belief. Because many Christians seem to think or to feel that if you believe differently from them, if you're not a Christian, it is either due to some sort of insin- cerity on your part or a lack of information or weakness on your part. Or that your completely way out and bizarre or irrational. So I think that when you meet people who believe in God, I think one of the important things to put across is the pt)reely historical and as it were, compar~~ive religious point of view. That is to say , well leave aside whether there is a God or not. Do you not acknowledge that throughout the ages there have been hundreds of millions of people who have led very good lives as Buddhists, ej}~ical lives, who have been kind, who have performed so many good deeds, who have medit&t~, who we believe have become spiritu- ally developed, even enlightened, even become Saints, but without believ- ing in God. I mean can you not recognise this ? You can say at least as a historical fact, that you as a Christian, believing in God, have to take into account, at least as part of your study of comparative religion, that if you do not believe in God, that it does not mean there is no moral life for you, and no spiritual life for you. IN other words, you have to get them to accept that religions are not necessarily theistic. And that

S(cont):there are people , that there have been in history, hundreds of millions of people, who have led, at least as good moral lives as Christ- ians, and who have not persecuted others and who have not burned people at the stake without believing in God. And then you can sort of suggest if you can get a word in edgeways, well perhaps it's not an advantage to believe in God, that we do not find any lack in our path, in our teaching in our tradition, we find it quite

complete and satisfying.~et you might say", you can say to him, " well that there' 5 a lack because there's no God, but when we look at Christianity, well we find a terrible lack because there's no ideal of human enlightenment, we find that a dreadful lack just as you perhaps find a lack in Buddhism as regards a personal God". So I don't think that you can convince a convinced Christian, at least not on the spot, but at least you have to get him to acknowledge that it is quite possible, you know, rationally and sincerely to accept the Buddhist position and people have done so in large numbers throughout a couple of thousand or more years of history, and that the fruits of that have been at least as good as the fruits of Christianity, in the sense that people have led ethical lives, they have helped others, they have developed spiritually, all without belief in a personal God. So one has to acknowledge that there is such a thing as non-theistic religion if one wants to use the word religion at all, and that therefore you cannot just dismiss people out of hand, because they don't believe in God. I think at least if one can get that point across, some good will have been done. That religion is not to be identified with one particu~&r version of it. But it's quite difficult sometimes , you cant get a word in edgeways. Well there were t~o of you so perhaps you got it in edgeways. (laughter)

Paula: He did say at the end that he found the whole trip very interesting.

S: Yes, at least, if they can at least be left with an impression,"well here were two, apparently sane and healthy young women, who seemed quite happy and positive and friendly, so maybe there was something in their being Buddhists," but more often than not they would look atLatien another way,"well, what a pity"."They were such nice women, they were so friendly and they've been caught hold of by some cult and brainwashed". This is how they would probably look at it, you know, that you have been brain- washed. He'd been taught the Truth, which is quite different. But I think one has to take up these issues too, if they raise this question of brain- washing, well directly challenge. Whereas, if they bring up the question of escapism, well meditation is escapism, "well, what is belief in God, we regardthat as escapism, that you expect God to take responsibility for everything, you expect God to save you, I mean, if that isn't escapism, what is ?, you are escaping from your own responsibility for yourself and

S(cont): for your life, you want God to do it all for you. So I think one should quite vigorously rebuff charges and argu ment of that sort. But you know, you must be an informed Buddhist and you must be rational and articulate. It is no use sort of mumbling and saying, ll~~~l, I don't really know what Buddhism is and oh well, I suppose it doesn't really matter". (laughter). "I guess you'll all get there in the end." I'm afraid some people do just take refuge in these awful sort of vague statements. Well if you cannot explain, you know, reason~bly, clearly why you don't believe in God, what Nirvana is or what Buddhahood means, you should be able to explain simply even though,you know, you cannot exhaust the topic with words~ ~ou know that very well, but at least you can give a provis- ional pointer to someone who ask~ a question. This is why it is quite good practice for Order Members and maybe even experienced Mitras to go along to schools and give talks and answer questions. It is a very good training, because you know it does, well brighten you up a bit, smarten you up abit, ~et you on your toes. Because within the context of the FWBO you are not challenged, ndpne argues with you , it is never discussed whether meditation is a good thing or not, or ~whether there is a God or not. No, you are all agreed on that, so you don't get any practice in argu 'ment, and discussion, even you are abit soft, abit weak, and you are unable to take care of yourselves intellectually and that isn't very good. It is true, isn't it ? So it is good sometimes if you come across an intelligent, well informed Christian, whos thought about Christianity



you know just to ridicule the Jehovah's Witness that is too easy, he is a sitting duck, as it were, but there are intelligent Christians, who you know approach their faith relatively intelligently and you should be able to discuss and keep your point of view with such people.

Anne Macmillan: It always comes as a surprise to me that there are intelligent Christians...

S: Well it comes as a surprise to me. It seems to me,, in many cases it is an example of alienation of human beings between the intellect and the emotions.

Anne Macmillan: And some of the great thinkers of the era have been Christians.

S: Well you know some of them had no alternative; perhaps it was either that or nothing, and to go against a whole existing society is not an easy thing to do. Even if you are clear in your own mind, about certain things. This is why I remember reading in the life of Luther, when Luther rebelled against the Papacy, Even after his rebellion, even after the Reformation had been launched, he still suffered from doubts.

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S(cont): "That how is it, is it possible that Martin Luther, an ordinary monk,

should be right and the whole of Christendom wrong? I mean in

fact this argument was put to him earlier on, quite sincerely in a way by people who came to argue with him from the Papal court. That well Martin, do you really think that you are right, and everybody else, all these hundreds of years, that the whole church has been wrong?"

"That the whole church is wrong, and that you alone have got the Truth, that you alone understand?" And in the end he had to say, "well that is actually what I think". "If the Church thinks this and that numbered theses, then it is wrong." "And I am right, and I'm prepared to discuss the question on the basis that I'm right". But the point is that even after he had taken his stand and launched the Reformation, he still had doubts, or doubts would come to him sometimes, that maybe he was wrong. So it isn't easy to think that you are right and everybody else is wrong.

So this must have happened with others in the past, they had doubts, but they stifled them, or they thought, "well who am I to differ with everybody else?" And what is the alternative? You cannot live outside society. So, they just went along, they made the best they could of the existing system. They tried to soften it down here and there, make it a little less harsh, a little less intractable. Maybe, they had a few private reservations about this doctrine or that, but they conformed and more or less went along. And then of course you know there was the Church's whole way of dealing with heretics, well it was known what happened to them. In most of the church's history they were either imprisoned or burned at the stake. And no one would want to end up in that way. You need to be very sure of yourself and have a very strong faith. A very strong individuality to be able to take these sorts of risks for the sake of Truth. But it isn't surprising - I don't think we should be too hard on those who are unable to opt out.

Anne Macmillan: It should be much easier nowadays though shouldn't it?

S: Oh yes, yes it should be, but a lot of people still find it very difficult, even though they're in no danger of being burned at the stake. But it's early indoctrination, well early brainwashing. And apart from ordinary human weakness, I think Christianity on the whole tends to cater to, not to say pander to, ordinary human weakness. To encourage you to depend on some outside symbol.

Anne Macmillan: But doesn't this emphasise the importance of people who do have strong convictions, that come out and state them, like say the FWBO, it seems that it is very important that the FWBO is willing as a

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Anne(cont): whole almost to make a stand so that people who do.... Tape changes...

S: to establish ourselves and exist at all, because perhaps in our very early days when we were very small and weak we could have been quite easily snuffed out of existence. But we begin to be strong enough now, and that is why for instance I published my 'Buddhism and Blasphemy' and why Nagabodhi has started taking a somewhat offensive line in the Newsletter with regard say to Buddhism and Science and with regard to that European Buddhist Congress a year or so ago. But I feel we must do this more and more. I feel very often that the truth goes by default and there are so many wrong ideas and so many misconceptions about, I think we just have to clarify them and refute them as much as we possibly can. We probably make ourselves a bit unpopular in the process. But you know with regard to taking a collective stand, well that collective stand must be taken by individuals, and that means that individuals must know where they stand. You cannot take your stand unless you know where you stand. I mean, you might say "well I don't believe in God", but put you in front of a Christian audience with a few informed educated articulate Christians, well could you make up much of a case for your non-belief in God? Would you make much of an impression on them? Very few members of even the Order would succeed in doing that and I think people in the Movement on the whole are quite weak in that respect, they're not well enough read, not well enough informed, not sufficiently articulate. You know quite deplorably so in many cases. I think those of you who have gone around giving talks at schools and answering questions may realise that. You need all need to, everybody needs to know a lot more to understand a lot more, to be much clearer in one's thinking and as I said, more articulate, more able to express yourself, to communicate your ideas, and not just your ideas, but your emotional positivity and your enthusiasm.

Lois: Even at Beginners classes as well

S: Yes, that is a good experience, a good practice... But otherwise when people challenge you, just to say, "oh well, I believe in Buddhism, that is just my private belief, and I don't want to disagree with anybody". Well that sort of approach is no good at all, for you or for anyone else.

Anne Macmillan: In a sense beginners classes are... I mean it is true that if somebody comes to a beginners' class, they nine times out of ten, they have got a more open mind, that it isn't the same as coming up against somebody who has a whole different ideology.

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S: Yes right, yes, I think sometimes you have~d~liberately go out into

the world and talk with people that normally you wouldn't meet. I know when you hitch a lift well anything could happen, you could meet any sort of person, it could be an orthodox Christian, it could be a communist, it could be a trade unionist, commercial traveller, anybody4 Devamitra's had some wonderful encounters in this way; he could probably write a book about them.

Sanghadevi: A few people have said to me that they've felt that there's an attitude in the Friends that, basically the Friends is right, in a sense of feeling that we're on the right track relative to other Buddhist groups, as well as ~ther spiritual divisions. And I accttally feel that , but it is very hard to say more than " I do feel that".

S: yes, but one~hould ask oneself, "~hy is this?" when you feel it, and genuinely feel it, and that feeling I believe is justified, but one should be able to back it up with a few facts, with a few reasons, do you see what I mean ? I mean, I mentioned the other day, I think it was in this group, what Diana had said to me in connection with her visit to India and her encounter with some the Tibetan groups there, that were holding programmes and courses for Westerners. That they just seemed to be completely out of touch with their actual individual needs. And just as it were, throwing the whole encyclopedia of Tibetan Buddhism atthem hoping that just abit of it would stick. And you know this is one of the reasons why we feel that the FWBO does things better0 We emphasise very very strongly to begin with, that Buddhism is concerned with the individual. WE try to relate Buddhist teachings to the needs of the individual, we try to cheJ(whether those teachings are actually working in a way that they are supposed to work, do they in fact help that individual, if not, why not ? So we keep our eye on the individual and the individual's dev- elopment, all the time. We're not just concerned with putting across a whole system or structure of doctrine not\to say of the cultural practices and ethnic customs and all the rest of it. So we can certainly say this with regard to the FWBO, that it keeps it's eye on the individual and relates Buddhism all the time,at every stage to the needs of that indiv- idual, in the course of his or her own development. And we discard as irrelevant at least whatever doesn't help the individual to grow and to develop,and that is a basic Buddhist principle.. And this 15 ~~~hat the Buddha has told us we should do, the Dharma is a raft, we take the Buddha's teaching of the Dharma as a raft with full seriousness. The raft of the Dharma is a raft. If it isn't a raft, it isn't the Dharma, for us anyway.

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Anne Macmillan: A girl came to Wednesday c~~s last week and I got chatting to her and I said"~~e you done any meditation before., a sort of standard

open question, and she said "oh,T've been meditating for a couple of " C years, and I said," C~~ that~ interesting.\4hat~&ve£ one ?" thinking she

was going to say T,M. and she said "I've been doing the Padmasambhava visualisation for about two years'. And she knew abs~lutely nothing about Buddhism and had no contact whatever with anyone except a Tibetan lama she had met in Naples, who had given her the

practice. This is the practice that he gives everyone.

S: You see, well you see this is not in accordance with the Tibetan tradition itself. Not in accordance with Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Tradition. You go through the three Yanas. You first of all practice the Hinayana, practice the Hinayana meditations, and then you go onto the practice of the Mahayana, the Mahayana meditations, you develop the Bodhicitta, meditate on the voidness, realise the Voidness to some extent, and then you take up the visualisations of the Vajrayana. So it's as though, in a way, the present day Tibetan monks and lamas are very often not being true to their own tradition. Now if they did it deliberately knowing what they were doing, well that is fine, they might say, well the need of the individual as such, one cannot altogether rule out the possibility of giving someone who doesn't know anything about the Dharma a Padmasambhava visualisation, provided you see that the need and you transmit the whole thing properly. But that doesn't seem to be what happens.

Anne Macmillan: This is just the practice that he gives to everybody.

S: Yes, so one really wonders what is going on. Now again, what we were talking about, I'm not sure if it was in this group, that institutionalisation of the Guru. In Tibetan Buddhism, the Guru, you know is supposed to stand for the Buddha, the Buddha is dead and gone, humanly speaking, you go for refuge to the Buddha, but the Buddha's an historical memory as it were. So the person with whom you are in direct contact is the Guru, so the Guru in the Vajrayana is for you; the Buddha, because you are in direct contact through him with the principle of enlightenment. But personal contact means personal contact, and that is the last thing it seems that within the present day institutionalised Tibetan Buddhism

it's the last thing you have with the Guru~actual human contact. He is a sort of official Guru, and you know there is a prescribed way of approaching him, and a prescribed etiquette and all that sort of thing but you never get into real human contact, real spiritual contact with him. And therefore how can he really be the Guru? You are told, that

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S: (cont) particular person sitting up on that throne is the Guru, or he is your Guru, so you have a sort of ceremonial initiation, but no personal communication. So the whole thing has become as it were, institutionalised and you get a lot of that sort of Tibetan Buddhism around isn't all of that kind, there are exceptions, but many of the so called Gurus function in that sort of highly institutionalised way, which contradicts the very notion of Guru.

Lois: Is this as a result of coming to the west or is it...

S: No I'm afraid it all started in Tibet. It does represent a sort of process of crystallization and hardening and rigidity there itself. I mean not in all cases, there are exceptions certainly, but those who were not the exceptions were very much the institutional guru figures, are much more likely to be going around trying to collect disciples in this sort of haphazard fashion, of handing out all sorts of initiations without any relevance to the actual needs of the person coming along. And you know Diana was saying, that she just longed for a bit of metta bhavana, she seemed to teach metta bhavana or be interested in that, when she could see that some of the westerners who were taking these courses and learning or trying to learn these very lengthy elaborate visualisations just needed plain straight forward metta bhavana

and mindfulness of breathing, but they didn't get it. And some of them were bewildered and confused by all the things that were thrown at them, so to speak, in the course of the courses. And sometimes the teachers, the lamas were just not in touch with the needs of the people coming along. They just learned things, it would just be like you get the book, and just go straight through it, and explain but you don't check up whether people have understood what you have explained. What it means to them, what relevance it has to them, their spiritual life, their personal development~o, you just throw the book at them and that is that.

Lois: Isn't it also that when knowledge is sort of disseminated in this way, it loses its power.

S: Of course it does, yes. It derives its power only from individual to individual communication. I mean the books standing on the shelves have got no power at all. They're just paper and print. So I think if we are asked why we think the FWBO is better than other Buddhist groups, let's say so. BUt it means we have to understand it and sometimes in a way we don't, because after all, knowledge of that sort is comparative. We don't know the other Buddhist groups, maybe we don't care to know them. But if we're going to be handling, as it were, people from the outside we need to know a little bit, at least from hearsay, so we can explain

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S(cont): in what way we do differ, and why we feel that we are better in the sense that we can offer people a better alternative, a more positive path, a more genuine opportunity for development, a more~ositive spiritual fellowship and all the rest of it.

Sanghaddvi: I've only had experience with one other group. I wonder if its even valid to use hearsay. ...

S: Yes, well sometimes the information that they put out about themselves ... that sometimes gives the whole game away. I mean if a lama advertises Annuttara tantric yoga initiation for anyone who can come along and get it if they pay £20, well doesn't that tell its own story? You can deduce quite a lot about that whole set up from your general understanding of Buddhism.

Anne Macmillan: if somebody publishes a book with a Jesus Christ visual-isation practice in it that tends to say a lot for...

S: Oh, yes, it was sent to us for review and for sale and we refused to stock it.

\_\_\_\_\_ : What? By a Buddhist group?

S: Oh yes, last year, we were asked to sell it.

Sarah: On the cross or something?

S: No rising from the dead. (laughter) Yes nicely produced. We were asked to sell it, and on my instruction a letter was sent to Manjusri

explaining that we will be very happy to stock any material that they ~oo ~o~) translated from the Tibetan, but that we A wish to stock that sort of

material.

\_\_\_\_\_ My god.

S: And they probably thought we were being ~~~row~minded or something. Liz P: Was that in a way trying to bring people around by accepting their views and trying to soften them up ?

S: I don't think it is. They might think that it is or justify it in that way, but I think it's just the result of confusion in a way, that well, they think they can perhaps incorporate Christianity into Buddhism in that way. But I think you have to first of all build up BUddhism independently. Otherwise you're surrounded by Christian culture, you could very easily be swamped, if you open the gate in that sort of way.

Anne Macmillan: Incredible sort of compromise, you know putting up with something just for acceptance.

S: Yes, anyway, how did we get into that ? let us retrace our steps.

: Insistence

S: Oh it is important, it's from insis~nce. That, insist~nce is inimical to patience. But the fact that you must be patient in that sense, the fact that you must not insist, that you must not as it were egotistically try to enforce your own point of view, your own will, doesn't mean that you should not stand up in an honest straight-forward way for what you generally believe in or are convinced about. And as a practicing Buddh-ist in the West you may very often be called upon to do that, and you should make sure that you are well equipped, you should be sufficiently well read, sufficiently rational, sufficiently thoughtful, sufficiently articulate, to be able to cope with the people that you might encounter on various occasions.

Sarah: I thought that what you said about seeing the other person and caring for them before you do anything, related to my experience of talking to my father, who has got particular beliefs and I found that in fact, I find he is not that it~ best really to relate to him as an individual, and to just enjoy discussing things with him, which I do less and less, because it gets into our heads rather more, he is into theology and things like that, and he is not really discussing what he has exper- ienced.

S: Yes, it becomes a sort of game in a way.

Sarah: So I feel that what you said about, I'll just try and practice metta towards him and that way it doesn't really... You don't start discussing God...

S: Well, you might just enjoy discussing the different arguments for or against the exist~nce of God, and very often people who are theologically inclined enjoy that kind of game, but even if they think that they are convinced Christians, sometimes you find they don't ever really ask themselves, "well, do I believe in God ?". Well perh~~that would be too much of a question for them. They assume that they do, or allow you to assume that they do, but they never actually, as it were, ask, "well do I really believe in God, and if so what does that belief mean to me ?" But they're quite willing or quite interested to discuss the argument, pros and cons, and thoroughly enjoy that type of question, but that isn't

really communication in a more existential sense. So some times one can play this little game with people just for the sake of amusement, but I must say, as you get older you get quite tired of it. It's alright when you are young, and just for the sake of fun, because you~high-spirited perhaps and have got lots of energy and enjoy games anyway. But to dis-

cuss anything really seriously you must set up a real relationship of

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S(cont): communication. And you can only discuss with other people things that they care about very deeply and are meaningful to you. You can only really discuss them within that framework of openness and mutual communication. Otherwise, alright, if someone is not willing to enter into communication with you, alright, Just play their game for awhile, for as long as it amuses you and don't get misled by that, don't think that you- are communicating- Say, Oh well it's just a game, it is no more than that". Whether it is about theology or whether it is about football or whatever it may be.

Anyway. So the first type is to show patience by not wanting ourselves - - or our relatives to be beaten reviled and or injured and c2u~t~acti~ng~~any~wish for hurting.' In other words it is not quarrelling, not doing harm in retaliation and not being insistent. I think that is pretty clear, isn't it ? But there is a further explanation, let's go onto that, the next paragraph:

11F~rther in the opinion of the teacher Santideva, it is said to mean (a) to understand that those who harm us are not masters of themselves; to analyse the evil of (b) our actions, (c) our body and (d) our mental attitude; (e) to realise that there is no difference between one person having certain, and someone else other, faults; (f) to examine the usefulness (of harmful persons); (g) to understand them as benefactors; to realise (h) the chance they give us for aspiring Buddhahood and (i) their beneficial influence.

S: These are all different means or different methods according to Santideva in the Bodhicaryavatara of practicing patience. Santideva as you

may remember those who've gone through the "Endlessly Fascinating Cry"

goes into this quite a lot. He really goes to town about patience. So "further in the opinion of the Teacher Shantideva it is said to mean that is to say 'patience' is said to mean in the first place, (a) to understand that those who harm us are not masters of themselves" Well, it's go on and see how all these points are explained.

a) the first point can be illustrated thus: A man who harms me as Devadatta harmed Buddha, is not master of himself because of his malevolence, which being related to an undesired object, is not something independent. Therefore, since such a man is not master of himself, it is not right that I should retaliate. Thus it is said:

Everything is in the power of something else,

And man is powerless.

When one knows this, one does not become angry

At everything which is a mere magic spell

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S: Now there is a note on that, No 6. let's read that Now that may not be altogether clear. perhaps it is better to understand it or approach it in more sort of common sense terms. Alright. "A man who harmed me as Devadatta harmed Buddha, is not master of himself because of his malevolence". Now if someone is really carried away by anger, carried away by rage, he is not master of himself. We know that. So suppose in that state he hits you, he strikes you, he hurts you, is he really responsible? He is become like a blind natural force, he is not acting as a human being. So can you really be angry with him? Do you see what I mean? I mean can you really be angry say with the wind, when it blows down a tree that falls on you? Could you really be angry with the tree? So why is this? It is an impersonal force, you can only be angry with another person, so if you see that someone is so possessed by anger that they've lost control of themselves, that they're not responsible for their actions, yet, how can you become angry with them? And if you don't become angry, well you're not impatient, you cannot be impatient. But do you actually ever see this, that people are beside themselves, they are not themselves, as it were, they are out of control, you cannot really react to them as to human beings? You cannot even get angry with them. Has anyone ever actually experienced this.?

Voices: Yes

S: You just have to wait until they've calmed down, before you can do anything at all.

Lois: But that is also the premise that society locks people up as being mentally ill, if they're not in control of themselves, or cannot take -- responsibility for their actions.

S: Well, if they cannot take responsibility for their actions and their actions are harmful to society, what is one to do with them?... It seems to me that there are only three ways, either you can educate them into responsibility, if that is possible, or you can forcibly confine them, or you can sedate them with drugs. I mean apart from killing them, there wouldn't seem to be any other alternative. Do you see what I mean? If someone is persistently uncontrollable and irresponsible and a source of harm and damage to society, well society has to be protected. The best thing would be that that person could be educated to responsibility but in the case of an adult, I think this is quite a difficult thing to do. This is something that needs to be done in childhood. It is more and more difficult to do it later on when it hasn't been done in childhood.

Sanghadevi: I don't understand how that connects with the 'something, independent'

jol.14.2.

~n9h.~aA.evi: Does it mean not individual?

S: Well let's have a look at it then. Ah, it says, "everything is in the power of something else", Well everything arises in dependence upon conditions., so in that sense nothing is master of itself; no one is master of himself what he does is not his own action. Alright, supposing that someone is not even actually carried away by rage, supposing he is just angry, and he speaks therefore some angry words to you, why should you retaliate? Your retaliation supposes complete responsibility on his part for his action, but is he responsible? Why is he angry? After all anger is an unpleasant mental state, he would not willingly entertain it. Alright, something has made him angry, maybe he is angry because he lost some money, maybe he is angry because someone said something unpleasant to him, so if his anger



depends upon some factor outside himself, can he be said to be independent ? Therefore can he be said to be responsible ? And if he is not responsible, how can you be angry with him ? so, in as much as people in a sense are not really individuals, in a sense, that they are not autonomous, not responsible, how can you be angry with them ? Do you see what I mean ? I think this sort of argument proceeds against the general background of Indian thought, which tends to assume that responsibility and autonomy go together. That to be responsible means to be autonomous in the sense of originating your actions. But you know we never do or very rarely do, actually originate our actions ~ our actions

Proceed in accordance with the effects which are being produced on us by other factors outside ourselves, so to that extent we are not autonomous and we are not responsible. So if one can only be angry, if anger is justifiable at all, with someone who is responsible which means someone who is autonomous, which means someone who is independent and if people are not autonomous, not responsible, how can you be angry with them ? So when someone is angry with you, it shows that he is being acted upon by some outside force. In other words he is not independent, not responsible. So how can you be angry with him? He's just acting like some sort of object in the natural world, some kind of natural object,; so all these are arguments which we may or may not find convincing to persuade you to practice patience. I don't know whether you actually would be able to feel or to think or to argue like this.

Faith: I think its quite easy to say it intellectually, but its another thing when the emotions are involved, when somebody does something to you and at once you're emotionally angry; you haven't got time to sort of remember your intellectual understanding. How does that tie up ?

S: Yes, I think sometimes it does work. I've noticed it for instance in

John 14.2.

in this sort of case. If sometimes, say in a community, you get someone who is behaving in a very, what may be, objectionable way, or at least they are being very difficult and even a bit unpleasant, or people don't like their behaviour for one reason or another; but it has happened sometimes within a particular community context, that I've personally known why that person has been behaving in that way, because they have told me, perhaps their whole history, their childhood, their early difficulties, their sufferings, that perhaps has not been known to the other people with whom they are in contact. And it sometimes happened that I've said to say other people in the community, "well, look, do you realise what that person went through? Do you realise what they have suffered ? This is what happened and that's why they're behaving in the way that they do." And then I have quite often found that those other people are really influenced by that and they really modify their attitude towards the behaviour of that person, because they realise in a sense, he is not responsible. He's been moulded by those previous experiences, in a way, it is not his fault, so they can bear that person's behaviour more easily or will react to it less strongly, now that they know why he is behaving like that. Do you see what I mean ? It can work in that sort of way. I've seen it. It is like the French proverb: "to understand all is to forgive all." Sometimes it is like that. If someone is being really difficult and you think "well why should they be so difficult ? This is really annoying " and you think in terms of chucking them out of the community perhaps. But then maybe later on you learn what they've gone through, maybe just a few weeks before, And I have said sometimes to people, " well don't forget what people might have gone through before they came to the Friends." You don't know that very often. You don't know that past history, of trauma, of suffering, and with what difficulties they have got into the Friends, and what it means to them now. But that doesn't mean they're able to rid themselves of the effects of all those past

experiences immediately. So you must be prepared to bear with that with one another, and be more patient. This is very necessary, because we don't know very often what people have been through in the past. And if we did know well we are more understanding, more tolerant in the true sense and more patient with them. So I think, yes, if you do understand in this sort of way, you know how people are not always masters of themselves, they are victims of circumstances and what has happened to them in the past and this is why they behave so unreasonably in the present. Then you can be more tolerant and more patient with them. So" therefore since such a man is not master of himself, it is not right that I should retaliate."

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He is still going on reacting as a result of what happened to him earlier on. Thus it is said, "One does not become a thing which is a mere magic spell." A magic spell, well... a thing which is produced, a phenomenon which is produced, a phenomenon which is produced by a magic spell is not real so you don't need to react against it, it depends upon those conditions. It arises in dependence on conditions, it is basically unreal, unreal in the ultimate sense. Though someone's anger which arises in dependence on past conditions which he's experienced, is unreal, just because, it arises in dependence on conditions. It is just like a magical show, so you shouldn't be angry with that any more than you would be with a magical show. Perhaps put in that metaphysical form it isn't altogether convincing to us. But I think if we look at it more in the way that I mentioned just before, you might find it more meaningful, more relevant.

Right any further points about that ? O.K. onto b).

To analyse the evil of our actions is to remember the harm I am now suffering was caused by similar action on my own part. Therefore, since it is my fault, it is wrong for me to retaliate. As is said: Similar harm I did Formerly to sentient beings. Therefore it happens that now harm comes to me

From tormenting beings.

S: So clearly you can employ this kind of argument to yourself, as a means of developing patience, only if you believe in karma and rebirth in a rather literal sort of way. Otherwise not. But you know sometimes you don't need to go into past lives, you can see the process of cause and effect operating in this life itself. You know, perhaps you shouldn't become angry today with somebody who speaks angrily to you, why is he doing it ? Perhaps well yesterday, you spoke angrily to him and this is the direct result. Sometimes you can see it as simply and as straightforwardly as that. So I think probably most people would find this reasonable in an argument against not getting angry with such cases. But they might find it difficult to believe that before in a previous life they must have behaved like that to somebody therefore they're getting their just deserts now. Therefore they shouldn't become angry now. You might if you were deeply convinced of the truth of Karma and rebirth be able to believe that, and use that sort of argument. But otherwise not.

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s(cont): But at least you can see it working out in that sort of way sometimes and within the limits of this present life and can apply it accordingly.

Sarah: ~ut it seems to relate to me to a lot of (pattern ?) behaviour. Like I get angry in a very reactive way, when someone tells me to do something and I just react. I had that sort of experience the other day, and the other person reacted as well and so we confronted each other. And I began to try to think why I was reacting, and I realised it went back into the past when I reacted as a child like that, and that I had become like a record player. And that I just didn't like people telling me what to do, and it cleared away a lot of the feeling of wanting to react.

S: Yes, I think quite a few people find that there is a pattern which repeats itself in certain situations, especially with regard to other people—that you go through the same sort of pattern in your relationships with a whole succession of people. I was talking the other day with somebody about this, and he said that he had held a whole succession of jobs, that after holding the job in each case for a certain length of time and coming up against a certain difficulty he always just opted out. And he had done that quite a number of times, but now he saw that this is what he had done, and that he mustn't repeat that pattern again. So in this way one can learn you know from... and realise in a bit, what is happening to you is a result of what you have done, of a certain pattern you had got into, and therefore if something is happening to you through or from other human beings as a result of a certain pattern that you have set up, well how can you become angry with them ?

~ause)I mean for instance remember you mentioned this case of, this instance of someone telling you what to do, but it might be that you regularly, as part of your pattern—put yourself in a position where you almost make others tell you what to do, and then you proceed to become angry with them. ~3 you see what I mean ? that what is... So one has to recognise one's responsibility, that what is happening to you, someone telling you what to do, which you don't like them doing, is happening because of the circumstances and conditions which you have set up, so what is the point of your becoming angry then. It is your own karma as it were, you are directly responsible. You have set the whole process in motion.

Voice But you are not doing that consciously are you ? There would be a sort of unconscious....

S: Well yes...

jol.14.2. - IOZ

Sarah: But by stopping yourself and confronting the whole time it does become conscious.

S: Yes, sometimes you confront it and it becomes conscious— I mean when there is a sort of clash and then you have to ask yourself what is really happening. But sometimes I believe people are sort of conscious of what is going on. They're not totally unconscious very often, they sort of know, but they do it none the less. The awareness is not strong enough to break the pattern.

Sarah: I feel the expression of anger in a way helped to bring it to consciousness...

S: Well for instance, I mean, proceeding on the assumption that I made, that you had invited the other person to tell you what to do, you might get angry that they had told you what to do.

But then they might say, "well that is what I thought you wanted me to do." And you might say "No, I didn't", but then they might say, " well this is what you said, - and this is what you did, and that gave me the impression you wanted me to tell you what to do". And then perhaps you realise, "well~yes! that is what I was doing!~ Then you become conscious of the way you yourself create that pattern and invite that person to tell you what to do, and you realise: "O well it is my own karma!" "It is my own karma operating with- in the limits of this present life; this is happening to me because of something for which I am responsible, which I did." And we can often see that sort of thing happening.

Anne Macmillan: It often seems that if you are a victim of something, that if you continuously think something is being done to you, that then it is you setting it up. Thinking of relationships, I had a series of relationships years ago, which seemed to be the other people being dependent on me, and me fighting that back. But years later, I realised actually I was dependent on the need for someone to be dependent on me. (laughter) And I'd set up the whole pattern where people ended up being dependent on me to do certain things. It gave me a *raison d'etre*, somehow.

S: Yes, indeed, yes. What if we take a rather crude, but I think effective example; what would you say of a girl who got raped say five or six different times? You see? It is a bit like that, yeah? But you know we are constantly setting up these sorts of patterns. And inviting a certain kind of behaviour and then we blame as it were, the other person or we blame the objective conditions. This is what happens, we invite aggression, we invite betrayal, or we invite

End of tape.

The Jewel Ornament of Liberation 03

Chapter 14 The Perfection of Patience

Day 4 Tape 2

S. Perhaps it is helpful to think of Karuna, in any case to some extent, as a pattern, as a pattern that you tend to repeat so that when something unpleasant happens to you, you don't just get angry or impatient. You think, 'Well this is a result of a certain pattern of behaviour set up myself.' And one does know, one does see that if you do an action, perform an action

the tendency is to perform it over again. To repeat it and this is the essence of pattern, repetition. So if you are not careful, you know, you weave, so to speak your whole life into a pattern, a particular definitive pattern which you just go on repeating over and over again. And as a result of which results of a certain type, of a certain character are constantly and regularly accruing to you. You have your characteristic experience on account of the characteristic pattern that you have set up. This is why somebody once said, I think it might have been Goethe, that, 'Tell me, what is your characteristic experience, and I will tell you what sort of person you are. If someone's characteristic experience is of say rejection, as some people's is, well what would that characteristic experience of theirs tell you about them? So one can follow this up in various ways. I think we should be quite careful of setting up patterns which are just patterns, which are just sets of repetitions. I think we can sometimes do this as it were in a sort of positive way. I've been sounding a note of warning

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S. about or against people settling down in certain relatively stable, even safe situations, even when those situations are reasonably positive. You know, as for instance in a community or a co-op, where you gradually establish your own particular niche, your own particular line of work and you start to become very settled and secure and you think just in terms of continuing that. Of course also one has to acknowledge that in your life you need a certain element of continuity and stability if you are to develop at all. You can't be constantly changing your address or changing your work situation. This is going to the other extreme. But you must be very careful that the regular base that you set up in a community or co-op, that doesn't result in your setting up a very fixed and even rigid pattern of behaviour and life but just provides you with a continuing base for further and further development, for something more creative. Do you see what I mean? So I have been detecting recently the changes or possibility of the danger of settling down into communities and co-ops in a relatively stable safe situation, in a slightly negative sort of way. I'm sure you get what I'm driving at?

Sangha People have said to me in study groups, regulars' study groups, devi not mitra study groups, 'Well, you talk about breaking your

conditioning, but what are you doing? You're setting up. You are conditioned. You are setting up conditions creating further conditions. And I was talking about creating positive conditions and stepping stones to get you beyond all conditions, but you've got to have some sort of

S. You have.

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Sangha devi But some people want to go from negative conditions to no conditions.

S. Right. Yes, I think also one has got to be careful how you use the word conditions. Conditions mean factors on which one is dependant and therefore by which one is conditioned. So these can be reactive and they can be creative- so conditions are not necessarily a bad thing. You can have a sort of particular kind of set-up which favours reactivity and you can have another kind of setup which favours creativity. And the aim and object of the second set of conditions - those that favour creativity rather than reactivity - is to make you more and more independent even of conditions that favour creativity, so that in the end you can be creative in virtually any conditions, under virtually any circumstances, but to begin with, you need to discard conditions which favour reactivity and set up conditions which favour creativity. But as you said, quite rightly, you cannot go directly from being dependent upon conditions, that is to say, reactive conditions to being dependant on no conditions at all, and being totally free in a Buddha-like sort of way. That is completely unrealistic. If people adopt that sort of point of view, -Probably they don't know what they're talking about. They are just trying to argue with you.

Sangha It's like they don't want to even change the conditions they have got, and use that as an argument, not change at all.

S. So positive mental states arise in dependence on positive conditions, usually. So you have to create those positive conditions.

PP4 ~o(o

S. and then you can develop a whole series of positive mental states over sufficient period of time in dependence upon your positive conditions. Then you can think perhaps of doing without those positive conditions even and functioning positively under almost any circumstances.

V. Do you think positive conditions vary from personality to personality? One person's needs are not another person's?

S. Oh yes of course. If you require stimulation, a lot of contact with people, a quiet country retreat will not be a positive situation for you and vice versa.

V. But you would need to find what is conducive to your own state?

S. But of course in as much as we are all human beings there are certain broad requirements that we all share. But within that there is of course room for individual difference.

Parami When you were saying before about not settling into a cosy niche, does it tie up with what you were saying yesterday about, in the Co-op, throwing yourself wholeheartedly into things and looking at it as something for life but, remembering that there is that flexibility that it could change at any time.

S. Yes. It could end at any time. Not only change but end at any time.

Parami Change is an end in a way.

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S. A change is a sort of an end. Yes. But it doesn't mean that if you find that you've settled down that therefore you must automatically or necessarily change your situation. No, if it can be a genuinely positive situation or opportunity which you have just misused by settling down in it. So it's not that you should necessarily change the situation, but just

change your attitude or make it more of a base for creative effort.

Ja a- Seems to come back to knowing yourself and your patterns. I p raa was just thinking, you can see it takes a long time to discover

one's patterns, but it's quite good to get feedback from other people.

S. It takes sometimes years. Well usually it takes years because the pattern usually extends over certain time-spans and perhaps you're best able to see it when you get a bit older and the patterns are a bit more out in the open They're embodied in actual life decisions.

Sarah Do you think other people mirror your chronic patterns by you start seeing, being critical of other people, and I've noticed that I was being critical of the same sort of things in them, and also they would tell me things more easily than I could see myself. And I don't think it takes so long as years, perhaps, if there are the right conditions to help people to interact and tell you.

S. It perhaps depends also on the nature of Lhe pattern. Because also, it's not that there is just one pattern. Sometimes there

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S. is a number of patterns, all banded together and muddled together. Some have shorter time-spans than others. Supposing you had been married~ say~ three times, or four times, well I presumably that would cover a span of quite a number of years. But if you were to look back and say well~ you've married the same type of person, same type of man each time. Well that would tell you quite a lot about yourself. But you presumably couldn't have crowded all that into a few months. (laughter) It takes time to unwind certain types of pattern. But certain others things, yes the time span might be much shorter.



Parami            Also it seems maybe that you can know your grosser patterns, in a way, but then you find that at subtler levels you're continuing the same patterns.

S.            Well this is the general rule isn't it? You know that the subtler conditionings are more difficult to root out than the grosser ones.

San ha-As a stream entrant, if you've broken the fetter of fixed personality view, would that mean that you'd actually broken through all your patterns?

S.            In a sense, yes. Because that is implied when you become a stream entrant from then onwards progress is assured. That is to say there cannot be anything but continual creativity for you after that. I mean it could be that you don't, well yes, I was going to say that you don't make any further effort, but actually that cannot be in a sense. You cannot stop yourself from making a further effort, once you've become a

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S.            stream entrant. You know your attainment of Nirvana, according to the Hinayana teaching~ is assured, in not more than seven lives. So that means, well, you could speak of a pattern

of creativity having been set up. But that would really be a contradiction in terms. So you can, yes, once you enter the stream, you do not reproduce reactive patterns any more. The pattern making process has virtually ended.

San ha-It's not a question of, well, you've seen the depths of your evi pattern, but haven't yet broken out of them. It's like

later on you break through hatred.

S. Well, you could say you haven't broken all of them. You have broken a great part of them, and the process of breaking them is now irreversible. So that you're not adding to your patterns, you're not repeating your patterns anymore, but there is a diminishing repetition of the pattern, put it that way.

Sarah Perhaps you create a fresh one for each new set of circumstances.

S. Well if it is freshly created each time, it isn't a pattern.

Sarah No but iCs organised.

S. It's organised, yes. It's not just a thing of bits and pieces. It's as though with Stream Entry, your creativity develops an irreversible momentum. You cannot hold back then. It's Nirvana after that, whether you like it or not. (laughter)

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S. You can hold it off for a certain length of time but (laughter) it's quite an exciting thought isn't it? But I think it is quite important, to go back to what you were saying a little while ago, to explain to people that there are positive patterns as well as negative ones. There are creative patterns in a manner of speaking as well as purely reactive ones and, you know, you need to go from a purely reactive set-up to purely creative set-up before you can liberate yourself from all conditions whatsoever.

Sarah Such as meditating?

S. Yes, yes.

Jaya- Is the personality then a series of patterns really? prabha

S. Well yes. One could look at it in that way. There are sorts of behavioural patterns, but there is a deeper sense, perhaps, in which your personality as such is a sort of pattern. It is as though you start off with a pattern, and perhaps here the word 'gestalt' is more appropriate. Your whole life is the working out of a sort of gestalt which perhaps you carry over, in Buddhist terms, from the whole series of your previous lives. So there's a particular conformation which you proceed

to impress upon everything that you are in contact with, everybody that you experience, like a stamp, like a die imprinted on wax. You leave your mark. But of course it isn't quite like that because you can change~gestalt itself, modify the gestalt. But it does seem, you know, if you study

people, if one studies oneself that it's as though you're born with a certain pattern, a certain gestalt which you spend the

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S. rest of your life working out. The gestalt gives you the rough outline to start with and you fill in all the details as you go on, according to the material that comes to hand as you pass through life. And some people just, as it were, passively fill in the existing gestalt, but others actually modify their gestalt and develop it, even change it completely.

San~ha devi: Does that link up with things like horoscopes? And Zodiac birthcharts?

S. I wouldn't like to go into that rather murky field. But perhaps? Or even palmistry, not that I want to go into that- but one hand gives you what you're born with and the other what you're making of what you are born with etc., etc.

But, yes, in all these symbolic ways one is making the point that there is something that you are given, and there is something that you make of it. So start off with something given, determinate and fixed, and the natural tendency in a way is to just go on repeating that through life. But as awareness, self awareness develops, you can modify that pattern - change even the whole course and direction of your life. That you may start off with a deeply engrained tendency to set up patterns of dejection, but you can modify that, you can change that completely in the course of a single life. Some people set up patterns of failure; others set up patterns of success. It doesn't make all that much difference, intrinsically.

Sangh~ devi    Wouldn't it be more positive, a life of success?

S        It could be. But I can imagine it being quite neg~tive too.

PP4    Q

S.    Why was success so important, in that sort of way?

Parami Is it like temperament and character?

S.        Ah, I was reading a book recently, which was explaining the difference. If you like, I'll lend it to you. It was about Art, and it was by Herbert Rea~l. And he made a distinction between character and personality, and according to him, and he made art a very good case for saying~that character was what you really were', in yourself, as an individual, though not using the word individual in the full sense that we use it, and character was the gestalt, or represented the gestalt that you were born with. Whereas personality represented the modification of that character brought about by your interaction with society and the requirements of society. Therefore~ according to him, character was more real than personality and,

again according to him, this was the subject he was really discussing. Romantic Art and Literature comes from the character and the classic from the personality. You see what I mean. I'll lend you it if you~ike, it's quite interesting... He makes the distinction in an interesting way. But you can sometimes.... you know, sometimes that you have your own sort of character that you cannot live out fully in the social context. You know, society requires you to adopt, or develop a sort of personality which is acceptable to society, which will enable you to function in society or through which you can function in society, which may be to some extent in harmony with your character, but which may not be, which may be in fact different from your character and you know if the personality differs too

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S. greatly from the character then serious psychological disturbances can result. If the personality is so remote from your true character that you're compelled to lead virtually a false life, that can result in serious psychological strain.

Parami Jung talks about that quite a lot. In 'Memories, Dreams and Reflections', he talks about how he's, I suppose, what he calls character was his own man) figure, but his personality was what he had to present to the world until later in life the two could be actually more reconciled.

S~rah Like when society requires you to consume, and distrust and question everything it's very difficult to bring out your trust.

S. Yes, Right.

Parami You know when we talk about conditioning. We talk about psychological conditioning<sup>5</sup> is that where your personality comes from?

S. I must admit I think we tend to use the word conditioning in a rather loose way, because after all according to Buddhist teaching, everything mundane is conditioned. And there can be a positive conditioning which leads Nirvana-wards whereas a negative, reactive conditioning which just leads round and round in the same old circle. So I think we shouldn't necessarily use conditioning as a sort of dirty word. Do you see what I mean? There is such a thing as a positive, even creative conditioning. Whereas when you say, you bring up children in the right sort of way, you are conditioning. If you like~

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S. you're brainwashing them in a sense~~ou see what I mean? You've no choice. Perhaps one shouldn't say you're brainwashing, because after all what is brainwashing? No, on second thoughts you're not brainwashing. (laughter) but then again there is brainwashing and brainwashing. (laughter) Well you could say if you wanted to be a little bit cynical, 'How can you brainwash children?' Of course you can't, not yet. But what is brainwashing? I mean

people use this term also a bit loosely. Brainwashing means that you influence people in ways that are not known to them. This is the essence of it. I mean when people say that meditation is brainwashing, well this is not really correct because when someone comes along to a meditation class and asks to learn meditation you explain to him or to her how the meditation works or what sort of effect it will produce and then if they want themselves to produce that effect in themselves well then they practice the meditation, but you're not doing to them on, or trying to do to them, anything of which they are not aware or which they do not realise. But actual brainwashing does do that. It takes hold of people and it tries to influence them in a particular way or in a certain direction without them realising what is happening. So in that way you're treating them not as individuals, not as persons, you are teaching them as things to be manipulated. Now in the case of the child, is it possible for the child to understand the significance of all the things that you are asking the child to do? It's not possible. Is it possible for the child to understand the value of everything that you are asking the child to do? I mean perhaps you should start explaining as soon as you possibly can - why you are asking the child to do something, why you are asking him not to beat his little brother, why you are asking him not to spit his

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S. porridge on the table cloth. Well, yes explain, but you cannot do it from the very beginning.

So in a sense you are influencing the child without his consent because the child is not in a position by virtue of the fact that he is a child, or is an infant, to give any consent. But I think the important point is that you encourage the child to develop as an individual or potential individual and as soon as there is a spark of self-consciousness and capacity to understand then as soon as possible you enlist the child's co-operation in what you're trying to do with and for and to the child. You try to explain to the child, obviously not too much, because then you don't want the child to have to think about things so much that he gets overburdened with responsibility. Sometimes you have to say, 'Well, do it just because I tell you to. Do it because I ask you to.' It isn't always appropriate to stop and explain it, and argue about everything. I mean it's just the parents tact which will decide the right time to do that, and not to do that. So that is the question of brainwashing, but how did that come in?

It was conditions~so I think one is always setting up conditions but in the case of brainwashing one sets conditions for people and influences them in a certain way without their active co-operation and consent and that is unethical. I was going to lead out another point but I've lost it. What else were we mentioning?

Jaya prabha You said that conditioning was not necessarily a dirty word.

S. Ah yes right, yes. So a great deal of the spiritual life in the early stages does consist in setting up perhaps in

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S. co-operation with other people the right sort of conditions for oneself.

Marg. Could I go back to what we were saying earlier about the personality and the character, because I feel that for me that is something that I have in the last few weeks been in quite a lot of confusion about and that people see me in a certain way but I experience myself quite differently and I don't know whether that goes back to childhood things, or quite how to sort it out.

S. I think that it's usually the case that people see you in a way that doesn't altogether correspond to the way that you see experience or feel yourself or the way that you are. If one takes this basic distinction between character and personality in the sense that Herbert Read makes it that character is more what you really are and personality is more what you are or what you seem to be in society. Personality is your social self let's say, your character is your real self, at least from a common sense psychological point of view, then people initially get to know you through your personality or they get to know your personality. They might for instance meet you at a party, they might think~"she's a pretty girl, not a care in the world, look how bright and cheerful she isS1 etc., etc., but by character you may be quite different. You may be thoughtful, reflective, a bit sad, you may not like parties particularly. But they don't see all that. They just see your social personality. So usually it takes time to get in touch with the person S character in this sense. And one has to want to get in touch with their character, you

PP4

S. must want to communicate with her on a deeper level than the (~e~y) social. But usually our contact with one other just remains on the social level. We know one another's personalities but we don't know their characters in this deeper sense and there's no real communication and sometimes there is a tremendous difference between character and personality. And therefore if someone only knows you according to your personality and your character is quite different you can feel well nobody knows me. No one is in contact with me. No one is communicating with me. And you can feel very very much on your own even though you may be leading, in terms of the personality, a very active social life. One can even carry it further than that. You may be actually only a personality even to your own family. Not a character. You may be a personality to your own husband or your own wife. They may have not even established contact with your character. It can go as deep as that. Perhaps that isn't all that uncommon.

Parami I think you can even be a personality to yourself.

S. Yes, because you experience yourself to great extent through other people's experience of you. So if they experience your personality, or they relate to you in terms of that, they're always telling you what you are, 'Oh you're the life and soul of the party,' and you end up believing it: Even though it's deeply mimical, perhaps, to your real character. You see what I mean?

Sarah People who are very busy or who can never sit in a room by themselves, tend to be seeing themselves in terms of an active

PP4

Sarah personality.

S. Well, this is where the solitary retreat is so valuable, because in the course of the solitary retreat, or on the solitary retreat, where is your personality as the social product, or product of the interaction between you and society? Your character has an opportunity to emerge, in the course of a solitary retreat.

Voice But you can also present different personalities to different people.

S. Indeed, yes, well different people meet different social groups, I mean, sometimes to an astonishing degree. I remember I had a friend who used to come along to the F.W.B.O. and he had a problem with his father and among other things he told me that his father at home was just an old wet blanket. An absolute spoil sport, and he and his brother absolutely hated their father. He was so miserable. You can guess the sort of parent. But as he got older, he met some of his father's workmates, his father worked in a factory. He was surprised to learn that in the factory he was regarded as the life and soul of the party, jolly,



happy, cheerful, friendly, slapping people on the back. They couldn't recognise their father from this description of him, but apparently that was what he was like at work. At home he was totally different. So people have got these different personalities for different social situations, different social groups even. In your family you've got one sort of personality maybe in the office at work you've got another sort of personality, maybe when you go along to your local football club

1~) PP4

S. as a supporter well you have another personality, perhaps at school you've got another personality. You've got all these different personalities, perhaps dotted all over the place. So you're as it were estranged from your character, in a number of different ways. And perhaps you're never in touch with your character, perhaps you're never alone even.

Voice Is it like the bundle of selves?

S. Well, yes, perhaps it's not extreme as that. But if your character is completely submerged, well then you've got a bundle of selves. I mean the character should be supreme. The character should be dominant. All right yes, you know that you have to function differently in different circumstances and social situations, that is quite natural, quite acceptable, but that doesn't or shouldn't mean that because you function in a particular way in a particular social group or social situation that you lose contact with an awareness of your basic character. There should be an extension of your character into that particular situation. Perhaps in a somewhat modified way but you should be quite aware of the whole process. You should be yourself in every situation, even though you slightly modify your behaviour according to the situation. You shouldn't be a totally different personality virtually in all these different situations some people are.

Norma Macaulay Does that mean then that Individual, with a capital 'I' would be someone whose character and personality were ~~~s<Ame?

PP4 1 ~c

S. Yes, you could say that. You wouldn't necessarily be an Individual though because character and personality are identical. Character and personality are identical in an animal you could say. You could have, as it were, a low grade character which expressed itself consistently in its usual low grade way in all sorts of social situations. But you need to have—first of all, for want of a better term, a developed character and then be able to function with that developed character in the appropriate manner in different social situations, different social groups, without losing contact with the basic character. So the personality, of personalities and the character would be quite close together, so I think it wouldn't be possible for you to be a real Individual and to have your personality too widely separated from your character. I think a real Individual would not allow that to happen. There would be a sort of modification, yes, but you'd

be as you moved from one, say, social group to another you'd be quite aware of that, it would never estrange you from whatever was your real character.

Sarah I suppose great actors have such strong sense of universal character, they might not have one of their own as actors have problems with their personal lives.

S. I've known actors personally and one of the things I noticed in the case of the one that I knew best, who was a very famous film actor in Bombay. He was known as the Clark Gable of the Indian screen. (laughter) Oh you would have loved him (laughter). He was an interesting character and I noticed that he had lost the capacity to distinguish between when he was

S. acting and when he wasn't. I think an actor either loses contact with his character if he isn't careful or almost doesn't have one to start with. He's got a number of personalities or he can create a personality, as when he acts in a film or for a particular production, but it is as though he just doesn't have a character or as though the character is completely in abeyance.

Voice I've found that with actors that I know in my teaching days. Quite a lot of them seem to be rather, sort of, empty people. And they had to kind of put on these roles, as it were, in order to be able to express something. When they were just out of a job, as it were, they just seemed rather negative. I don't say that's the case for everyone.

S. It's as though to be an actor you need to have a certain type of temperament, let us say for want of a better term, because

as an actor you know, what are you doing? You are appearing in front of people, so it's as

though your dependence upon society is normally strong. It's as though the presence of other people looking at you, and listening to you makes you feel more alive. I think actors actually say this. They do need this feedback. So it suggests that you don't have a character of your own almost. That you almost exist only when you are in front of the footlights. You get this also with some politicians and orators. I mean people used to say this about Hitler. That he sort of came to life when he was ranting at a massive rally, but away from that he was sort of drained, just an ordinary little man as it were, rather pathetic. I think if one observes oneself one will sometimes notice one feeds on the social situation. May be observe yourself the next time,

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S. say, when you go to a party, if you do ever go to a party again, as you sort enter the door, I think it used to be more in the old days when maybe you went to a Ball and you made your grand entry, and everybody looked at you. It's as though you expand, you sort of swell up. There's an enhancement of your existence, your personality gets a bit more blown up. Do you see what I mean? You derive your being, you know, from other people. Well we mustn't take too negative a view of that, I mean, even in the case of your character, yes, there is an interaction with other people, but it must be on the level of character not just on the level of personality. You cannot remain in isolation and define yourself for yourself simply. You need contact with other people. Real contact not personality contact, but as it were, character contact to help you to experience yourself and define yourself in a genuine positive sort of way, and this is what happens within the context of the spiritual community. The spiritual community helps you to find yourself.

Sarah I find the story of Narcissus quite helpful. Recently making me see how just self indulgent, self-expression is. Kind of like kills all the surroundings, and therefore kill myself eventually, and I'd be frozen staring at myself in the lake. I didn't find the actual myth very enlightening but I was looking at this painting by Dali.

S. Good. You'd probably been to see the exhibition?

Sarah No. It was in the colour supplement, but it looked really expressive of death.

PP4

S. Yes. yes. anyway how did we get on to character and personality? Setting up patterns, in a way, you could have, in a manner of speaking, a creative pattern as well as a reactive pattern. Creative pattern being a sort of open-ended pattern.

San ha evi Would character here be like one's deeper patterns, positive and negative, whereas personality more one's superficial patterns.

S. Yes. Superficial. It's the sort of pattern you set up in relation to other people as you encounter them rather superficially. You could say that the, what I call the creative pattern, though it is rather a contradiction in terms, the gestalt, is inherently something that grows, rather than something which is fixed. It is a gestalt of growth. Do you see what I mean?

Parami I'm happier about character and personality. Do you think  
personality can be a skilful means, in a way? Like to perhaps  
present one's character.

S. Well put it this way. Personality should be transparent rather than opaque. It's like a window through which you look out on the world, and through which the world looks in on you. So it's as though you can't apparently dispense with ordinary social life but let the window be as transparent as you can possibly make it, otherwise what we often do is to paint on the window a little picture which is completely unlike what is actually in the room. That is our personality. We paint a nice smiling face, but inside we're very cold and hateful.

PP4

Eve It brings to mind your poem about masks.

S. Yes. Right. The mask is the persona. Or persona is mask. Of course we mustn't confuse it's a question of terminology but in many writings the word personality is used more in the sense of character. But Jung uses it in this more superficial sense, and that is often followed. All right let's get back to the text. ...

Voice "To analyse the evil of our mental attitude means that our own disposition is not bound to an ideal body which must not be harmed by others but is affected unpleasantly by an ugly one. Therefore, since everything is the fault of our own disposition, it is wrong for me to retaliate. As is written:

This abscess resembling a human body

Does not allow itself to be touched and is painful.

When blinded by desire I touch it Pain is felt, so at whom shall I get angry?"

S. Well, this is one of Shantideva's useful little arguments, which we have studied in 'The Endlessly Fascinating Cry. Do you find it very convincing, or do you find an element of truth in it or not?

Jaya- Sometimes I relate to it, but sometimes I can't at all. Your prabha karma has put you in a situation hasn't it?

S. Well it's you who've put yourself in this situation. The karma was you. You were the karma. It's what you did. Sometimes it does happen like that. I mean Shantideva puts it in rather

PP4

S. an extreme way that the fact that you have got a body, the fact that you have taken to yourself a body as a result of your previous karmas and your desires to be incarnate in this world means that you are partly responsible for that situation in which your body comes into

contact with his stick. You have a share of the responsibility. Well, you may not accept it quite in that way but I mean there is a sense in which one can accept it, and relating it to something we talked about earlier, that is that you do sometimes set up the pattern, which sparks off a certain response. So you do have a partial responsibility. Do you see what I mean?

Anoma        Sometimes I've used it as a bit of a joke or somebody has said it to me as a bit of a joke and even though it's a bit of joke it can help.

S.        Sort of diffuse the situation a bit. Yes. Well for instance you're living together with another person, maybe you're not getting on very well together, well, you know, you can blame the other person or you can also say, Well, I'm partly responsible because after all, I chose, or I decided to be here with that person anyway. So I created myself the possibility of that sort~situation. It's not that I am totally innocent, and the other person is entirely to blame.'

What all these points seem to suggest is that we need a lot more self-knowledge.

Anoma        Just remembering the phrase 'his stick and my body'. It's like a little ? in your mind.

S.        All right, let's go on to the next paragraph.

PP4

Eve        'To analyse the evil of our mental attitude means that our own disposition is not bound to an ideal body which must not be harmed by others but is affected unpleasantly by an ugly one. Therefore, since everything is the fault of our own disposition, it is wrong for me to retaliate. As is written:

This abscess resembling a human body

Does not allow itself to be touched and is painful.

When blinded by desire I touch it Pain is felt, so at whom shall I get angry?

S. Not all together clear, is it? (laughter)

Sarah Well does he call it an abscess because it's something that is attached?

S. Because it's something that is very sensitive - What it seems to mean, I'm not certain of this, but what it seems to mean is that when you are in contact with other people, you have to realise that other people are very, very sensitive. If you touch them on their sore spots, you mustn't be surprised if they get angry. So you ought to realise that they are as sensitive as that. So if they become angry as a result of the way in which you handled them, or as a result of your contact with them - well you've no right to get angry or impatient with them. It seems to mean something like that. People are very sensitive. It's quite easy to upset them. So if you do upset them well it means that you didn't take into sufficient consideration the fact that they are sensitive and touchy, and

difficult. So if something unpleasant happens to you as a result of the way in which you've treated them, well, you mustn't

PP4

S. be suprised. You must just be patient rather.

Voice But maybe they're being oversensitive - hypersensitive. I mean more than for their own good.

S. Well perhaps they are, but you still need to take it into consideration in dealing with them. It's like dealing with a lion. You don't say well I thought I could treat it just like a pussy-cat. Perhaps you ought to be able to, but the fact of the matter is that you can't (laughter). Some people are like that. Some people you can go up to and pull their whiskers, if they've got whiskers, you can't do it with impunity with others. You have to know the difference. I th~nk this~the sort of thing that the verse means. The note here.... let's see if it helps us at all. No, it doesn't, it only gives the reference.

Sarah Is it the physical body, or does it refer to the body of the personality?

S. It's very difficult to say; the construction of the sentence in the English Translation is not very clear.

'To analyse the evil of our mental attitude means that our own disposition is not bound to an ideal body which must not be harmed by others, but is affected unpleasantly by an ugly one. I think the translation is quite clumsy. Doesn't really convey a very clear meaning.

'Therefore since everything is the fault of our own disposition it is wrong for me to retaliate. As it is written:

This abscess resembling a human body

Does not allow itself to be touched and is painful

1Zu~ PP4

S. When blinded by desire I touch it.'

This seems to be the evil of our mental attitude 'being blinded by desire'. Pain is felt by the sensitive person with whom I am in contact so at whom shall I get angry?

It's my wrong mental attitude that has come into contact with the other person's sensitivity. So therefore if the other person, due to their sensitivity, reacts and harms me, well who should I blame? I can't blame him, I have to blame myself.

San ha When it says, 'Not bound to an ideal body' is it suggesting that even conceivably there could be an ideal body, that is, somebody

whose

S. It's as though to me, the verse is reasonably clear, but it's as though the translator has translated the words of the text here without really understanding, or even asking himself what it means- one gets that sort of impression.



San ha evi Somebody in a beginners' class asked about the Buddha, or an enlightened being. Would an enlightened being experience physical pain if they were ? ? bodies.

S. What did you say?

Sangha devi Well, I said that they could still get ill perhaps, but they would be able to not get bogged down in the pain, if you like.

S. That's roughly correct. This is what the Pali texts say quite clearly that the Buddha on occasions did experience physical pain.

PP4 iz)

S. For instance when Devadatta rolled a rock down him, and the splinter stuck in his foot, or when towards the end of his life, he suffered from what appeared to be dysentery. He did experience physical pain. But the point is that if you are enlightened or perhaps even if you are developed spiritually to a certain degree, though you experience the physical pain, you do not react to it with any unskillful mental state. That is the difference. Further, you experience the physical pain anyway only when you are in the state of bodily consciousness, when you are conscious of the body. In the case of the Buddha and others who are say, masters of meditation, it is possible for them to, as it were, withdraw into a dhyana state, where body consciousness is not experienced and therefore in which physical pain is not experienced. In fact the Buddha is reported in having said on one occasion 'that now that I am old, my body is subject to pain, and I experience completely freedom from bodily pain only when I withdraw into the dhyanas. But the point is even when one, in that case, has not withdrawn into the dhyanas, but is on the kama-loka level with bodily consciousness; even though one experiences physical pain there is no unskillful mental reaction.. That is the important difference. In the case of the Buddha there are two possibilities, that he experiences the physical pain, because he is not in a dhyana state and does not react unskillfully or he is in a dhyana state and does not react unskillfully or he is in a dhyana state and does not experience the physical pain anyway. So this suggests that your state of enlightenment is compatible either with bodily consciousness, with pleasure or pain as the case may be, and is compatible with the dhyanas states of course within which there is only

happiness, in which there is only a positive experience. But in either case, your

1m)O PP4

S. enlightenment, your insight is not affected. When the Buddha as we say 'dies' or 'enters paranirvana', since there is no physical body left, well there is no possibility of physical suffering after that.

Sangha devi Well like the ideal body is that like the Sambhokaya. I mean the ideal, a body of bliss.

S. It could be but it just isn't clear. So I think that we can just take the meaning of the verse. That when dealing with

people you do not take into due consideration their extreme sensitivity in certain respects that any untoward consequences of your lack of consideration is your fault and so therefore you have no right to retaliate or to experience anger or impatience under those conditions. This is what the verse appears to mean. There seems to be some difference in meaning between the verse and the prose portion. In fact it isn't at all clear what the prose portion is saying in the translation.

Sangha devi I mean is it like it can be it would be alright to be direct with

somebody you may actually tread on their sore spots but I mean you sort of wouldn't then kind of then get angry with them if they reacted.

Sarah Perhaps they're exposing their sore spots because of their, because they want to.

S. Well, that could be so. But if your overriding consideration is communication, well, you're just willing to take that risk and you also, you don't react if your effort is not altogether

PP4

S.       successful and there is some negative reaction.

Voice   If a person isn't aware that you're treading on their sore spots with metta, because you care about them then they're not so likely to react.

S.       I think they're less likely to, indeed.

Parami   But they might immediately react but afterwards

S.       Well there's that possibility too, but they may realise it at the time. And I think sometimes people do. I mean if you are really honest with people, and you really wish them well you can say all sorts things that you couldn't otherwise say. If you are able to communicate somehow or other the fact that you really do wish them well and you're really genuinely saying what you are saying just because you care for them. I think that very often does come across.

Voice   I know in my experience about certain people can touch certain parts of me that I know other people can't.

S.       Well presumably because you trust those people based on your experience of them in the past. I mean everybody has got little sore spots, relatively sore spots, that they don't usually like to be touched. You have to take that fact into account, into consideration in dealing with them.

Voice If you can see something, the negative patterns, with someone, and perhaps you're not aware yourself of what their positive

PP4

Voice qualities are, do you think it's a good idea to leave it until you can become more aware of what their positive qualities are.

S. Yes, I think you should be careful not to make any criticisms simply based upon a knowledge of their weaknesses or their negative qualities. If you aren't in contact with the whole person you cannot really communicate. You couldn't really perhaps positively point out their weaknesses or their negative

qualities. You can't deal with You have to

deal with the whole person. I think it would have to be a very open, very receptive person who could just take your criticism on virtually just a knowledge of those particular weaknesses, or those particular negative qualities. I think before you can deal with things of that sort you have to establish a general communication in a much more sort of total and complete way. Even then it's sometimes difficult to put across your criticism, if that is the right word.

Parami It seems sometimes that we soft spots are the very spots that have to be prodded a bit because sometimes they are soft spots because you've built them up as a defence. So quite often in say kalayana mitrata it does happen that your soft spots have to be exposed a bit.

S. Well you could say in a broader sense, your defences are your soft spots because they are defences. So they have to be attacked sooner or later. They have to be dismantled. And that can be a painful process. All right leCs take one more of these points made by Shantideva before we close.

PP4 I~ffi

Voice 'To understand that there is no difference between one person having certain , and someone else other, faults, is expressed in the following verse:

Some do evil

And some become angry out of deludedness Who can be said to be without faults? Who can be said to have them?'

Therefore we should show patience and shun faults.

S. To understand that there is no difference between one person having certain and someone else having other faults is expressed in this following verse. This is in fact the meaning of the verse. What it really means is: Faults are faults. Very often we're very indulgent towards those sorts of faults that we have but much less indulgent to these sorts of faults which other pe~le have. Ah well if you're a bit greedy well that doesn't matter all that much. But if you're mean with money, well that's quite a serious fault. You tend to classify faults which are not yours as more serious and those that are yours as less serious. Do you see what I mean?

So this is what I think what the passage is getting at. To understand that there is no difference between 'one' person having certain faults and someone else 'other' faults is expressed in this following verse. We do find this don t we? We attach less importance to the sort of faults that we have, more importance to the sort of faults that other people have. 'Their faults really are faults: our faults are just little amiable weaknesses; loveable weaknesses.' (laughter) 'Oh, that's just me. Everybody knows that's just me. No one could mind me just being me.' That's how we tend to look at it in our own case.

PP4

Eve This brings to mind a verse in the Dhammapada, the one about not paying attention to others faults, but look at oneself.

S. Well it says that people try to conceal their own faults and expose those of others just as the player at dice tries to cover a losing throw. We do tend to minimize our own weaknesses and perhaps magnify those of others. But faults are faults! (laughter)

'Some do Evil

And some become angry out of deludedness Who can be said to be without faults? Who can be said to have them?'

Well that1 5 in a more metaphysical way. Well who really owns faults? There's no sort of fixed immutable selfhood which is owning them. It seems one should take it in that sense.

Anoma            Is that passage from the Perfection of Patience in the Bodhicaryavatara?

S.        It seems to be. yes. Yes it is. But the basic point is that faults are faults. We get angry with other people because of their faults. The different ways in which they behave, the things that they do to us, but we forget that we have faults too. But often we forget that because we don't regard our faults as faults. Faults are what other people have. We make excuses for ourselves very often, we understand our own faults, but we don't understand other people's faults. We don't maybe, we re not prepared to mak~the same excuses for them. We say that they're very difficult to live with but we don't realize that we're very difficult to live with too sometimes.

(~\$) PF4

Marg. I seem to experience it the other way round. I tend to think quite often that I'm a lot harder on myself than I would be with others. Like my expectation of myself and my faults are sort of bigger than how I see other people.

S.        Well that can be either positive or negative. Sometimes it's            negative when you just feel guilty yourself.            So you're always

the one to take the blame. But it can be positive if it means that you've just got a high standard for yourself, and expect more of yourself in that way than we expect of other people. I think though it should be roughly equal because you know if you're hard on yourself in a positive way you should be prepared to be hard on other people too because if it's good for you, itt good for them. And if you care for\them well,you give them the same treatment as you give yourself.

Jaya- I found that actually feeling guilty and taking on and prabha accepting those faults is usually due to my being out of contact

with my character.        Out of contact myself.

S.        Or you may be afraid of conflict with other people.            Some

people are very prepared to say 'Oh, sorry, it was my fault'

because they don't want to have a conflict with you. That's

a way of avoiding conflict.

San ha-evil was wondering whether, like the question of some people hit it

of with other people and some people don't, whether it's in a negative sense you get on with people who've got the same faults as you because they don't grate on you whereas you don't get on with people who have got different faults to yourself.

PP4

S. Not necessarily. Do two angry people necessarily get on together?

Parami Also it's been my experience that if someone really irritates me or if it's somebody that I can't stand being around, that if I actually look at it, quite often it's because there's something in me that they're reflecting. They have actually got the same faults as me, rather than they've got different faults because it puts me in touch with my own faults, if I am constantly aware of, facing them in other people.

S. Well~dares reminds you of your own faults?

Parami I've actually found it quite an interesting practice to look at the people that I'm really attracted to and the people that I can't stand. I think it really shows you something about yourself.

S. In what sort of way? If you're attracted persistently to the same sort of person, what does it tell you about yourself? What sort of thing does it tell you?

Parami Well, sometimes it's something in them that I think I don't have because I'm projecting it out onto them. So they compensate....

S. Yes then they sort of complement, or supplement you.

Sarah I was beginning to play with the feeling of my faults like friends which are sort of striking to me, but which are little creatures

S. Like lice?

6

PP4

Sarah But quite sort of, old friends and perhaps they'll go away, if I'm more kind towards them, acknowledge them.

S. I would go further than this, I would say and I think this is what happens over a period of many years that eventually it sort of dawns on you - you have the awful realization that those things that you'd hitherto considered as faults were in fact virtues, and those things that you'd considered virtues are in fact faults. (laughter) Can you imagine this sort of thing happening?

Voices Yes, Yes (laughter)

S. For instance you might have thought at first you were very gentle and mild and



forbearing and that was a great virtue, prided yourself on that virtue but later on after many years you might realise well that was just weakness and to the extent that it was weakness it was a vice. It was not a virtue at all. And you might have been led to believe that your sort of fieryness or impatience was a weakness that you have to get over, or get rid of but you end up by concluding well no that was one of your virtues. It wasn't a weakness at all. So I think one can say this as well - you don't always know what the faults are, or sometimes you may think that something is a fault in another person which in fact may be a virtue. But again ?

? other people in yourself. You may be totally mistaken about yourself. You may not know what sort of person you are and even to the extent that you do know the sort of person that you are you may wrongly evaluate yourself. You may be ashamed of qualities that you should be proud of and vice-versa.

PP4

Anoma How do you discover all this? (laughter)

S. Ni0~~che says for instance that the epochs in our life are when we baptize our sins as our virtues.

Sarah It's like the story of the monk who was going around reciting one of the sutras all completely wrongly, but it was having a good effect on him, and he was getting all devotional and so someone, up above, said 'Come here, that's not the way you say it,' and told him the right way. So he tried it the right way and it didn't have the right effect.

S. I think that's a slightly different moral, but it's a moral all the same isn't it (laughter).

Sarah It seems to be signs

S. That the fault wasn't really a fault. In a deeper sense. Of course in a way yes, he was reciting it wrongly, technically, speaking.

Sarah But the effect was good.

S. But the effect was good.

Parami It struck me also recently that qualities in a way are beyond good and evil rather than being

S. In a way

Parami and some things that I've applied in one context they can be a

Ic?

PP4

Parami fault but in another context are actually quite helpful.

S. It depends on the way you use them. Again to quote Ni~t~sche: 'You're beyond good and evil'. This is quite a thought isn't it? You can't be labelled as good, you can't be labelled as bad. Sometimes you can behave badly, sometimes you can behave well, but you yourself are really beyond good and evil.

Voice I don't understand that.

S. Well you're good or bad relative to certain circumstances so you are able to behave in a certain way if the conditions encourage that sort of behaviour or to behave in the opposite way if conditions encourage that sort of behaviour. But you yourself cannot be sort of totally defined in terms of either kind of behaviour. So when you change, assuming you do, say behave badly, when you change and start behaving well, you don't become, in a sense, a totally different person, it's still you - there's a certain continuity. So in that sense it's you whether for better or for worse. So in that sense you are beyond good and evil. You can be good and you can be bad. Not taking that too literally, as though there is a sort of substantial residual self. It's not really like that.

But it's almost as though you've got a sort of neutral energy which you can deploy in a way that is regarded as good, or in a way that is regarded as bad, or that may be so. But the energy is, as it were, neutral. The energy is beyond good and evil. It can be used in either way. You are the energy or you use the energy. To that extent you are beyond good and evil.

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Anoma How does Vajrasattva fit into this, the idea of the pure, untouched being?  
Does that fit in here?

S. It can be, as it were, made to fit in. But it fits it, well whether or not it fits in you know Vajrasattva represents a sort of metaphysical ideal of you, as it were, outside time, and therefore you as not affected by anything that happens in time. So there's no question of purification because there's no question of ever having become impure. Vajrasattva stands for that sort of thing. So one can think of it in terms of a level within yourself which is never touched, whatever you do. Of course one shouldn't as it were misuse that and say well it doesn't matter what I do because I can't be changed anyway. I can't be made impure anyway. If you really realised that you would only behave in a completely positive

and completely pure way. But none the less your actions do  
not totally define you. This is what it means. The fact that  
you behave badly does not mean that you are bad. That fact that

you behave well doesn't mean that You are good.

Sarah Because you're moving all the time, moving friends.

S. Yes, one could put it like that. So that sort of reflection can prevent you from being too upset, or blaming yourself too much, blaming yourself inordinately, when you do something wrong or feeling too pleased, and too proud of yourself when you do something good.

Sarah I was thinking on a mundane level when we had a seminar about co-operatives and it seems to be related to our standards as a working force. We were talking about professionalism. And Sarah. having a big argument about what it meant because, of course~in a commercial sense it means a lot of things which people are very much against, conflict with their ideals.

S. Like efficiency!

Sarah Yes, and being a bit hard on certain things which you wouldn't be if you were thinking. But we decided that it was just doing your best at whatever you were doing, which sounds similar to the good and bad you just said. There's no absolute professional way of doing something.

S. Right yes. It's not just a style or technique of certain things that you do. it's just doing your best, in that particular situation at that particular job. And that means being wholehearted - involves commitment and the professional Buddhist is the committed Buddhist really and truly.

Parami I was actually thinking of ambition, when I said earlier about things being ? ? because ambition in a worldly sense can be quite wrong and yet in some way you can actually channel that ambitious nature and ambitious force and use it quite skilfully.

S. Anyway let's leave it there for today.

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S: all right then, page 176. We are still dealing with the teachings of Shantideva, with regard to patience. And various reflections which he gives us to help us in avoiding or checking anger. So we have come as f) , so....

f)To examine the usefulness (of harmful persons) means that we must be patient with them, so that evil becomes purified, after which the prerequisites for enlightenment are accumulated and finally we awaken to Buddhahood. In other words we have to show patience, because those who do harm are for the above-mentioned reasons persons of great usefulness. As is said:

In showing them

Patience my evil is atoned for in many ways.

S: So you shouldn't become angry, with people who do you harm because they are helping you, they are helping you in a particular way; they are helping you to atone for the evils that you have committed, ~o you find this a very convincing argument ? I mean after all there are so many occasions ON WHICH YOU GET AWAY~things. You do evil, or at least, you know , you indulge in small weaknesses or petty faults and you get away with it apparently, and then on some other occasion you are unjustly attacked or harmed. So you can think, "Well at least that is one that I won't have to pay for in the future",, \ou can think in that way. So someone who is doing you harm, is in a way, helping you because he is helping you to pay off old scores, he is helping you to expiate previous misdeeds. Anyway this is the reflection that Shantideva gives. You may sometimes feel this. Anyone ever felt it or no~ ?

\_\_\_\_\_ I think more in relation to my enemy being my best friend, him being a positive spur to growth.

S: In a way that comes under g). But under f) it is more actually helping you to expiate or atone for past evil. Do you find that in itself very convincing ? Or Does it ring a bit hollow ?

For some reason it seems to remind me of Christianity somehow. I cannot really relate to it at all.

Couldn't there be a possible danger of courting a situation like that, so that you are atoning for your unskillful states You could go to extremes over it couldn't you ?

S: Well one could go to extremes over anything I suppose. But looking at it quite sort of rationally, well if one is conscious of something unatoned for, well why not invite a situation that will enable one

to atone for it ?

\_\_\_\_\_ Well that sounds as if you might be feeling guilty about it.

S~ Yes, yes.

\_\_\_\_\_ Well that is not particularly healthy is it ?

S: Well is it ? What does one mean by guilt ? If you have done something evil, well what is the emotion that you feel having done that ? I mean .. you mustn't get into a sort of "guilty is always bad" sort of thing. It may be under certain circumstances, there is neurotic guilt certainly. But is there such a thing as healthy guilt ?

\_\_\_\_\_ Perhaps we don't know a good meaningful atoning for evil

S: Yes, what we mean by atonement is a very loaded word in ~nglish, because of its association with The Atonement, with a capital A, which is Christ's atonement for the sins of the world, by means of his own sacrificial death. But perhaps we need another word to cover these things Do you ever feel in a sort of situation<sup>1</sup> where by supposing, you have done something that you feel ashamed of, in the sense that you recognise that you should not have done it, you recognise that it was unskilful- that it has <sup>1</sup>stained you, maybe you have done that, you have committed that particular action in relation to another person, but is it possible for you to feel, when a third person comes along and does to you the very thing that you have done to that other person, or had done in the past, is it possible for you to feel lightened or r~lieved or to feel that the stain has been removed and if so, what sort of word would be appropriate, not a loaded word for that kind of experience, that kind of situation ?

\_\_\_\_\_ Could it be remorse ? That you wouldn't do it again,, because you have now...

S: What would have you done? Would you... would expiation be the word ? Would purification be the word ? But don't forget the special situation that you have done something to somebody on account of which you feel rationally regretful, let us say,

Anne: Poetic justice

S: Poetic justice yes, it is poetic justice. But can you actually feel poetic justice as justice, and be even helped by that, because the statement here is that you are helped by that.

\_\_\_\_\_ It is helping you to take responsibility.

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S: Well is it ? If so , in what way ?

Anne: I cannot help feeling it is a bit of a get out somehow.

Well no, because when you want to give something up you usually help yourself by

trying to do something positive in its place

Anne: But is that the same thing?

S: ~ 11 let's suppose, well let's try to devise a positive example, a concrete example; supposing maybe some years ago, you were travelling let's say on public transport, and you happened to see, let's say, some money sticking out of somebody's handbag and supposing in a moment~~of weakness you took advantage of the opportunity and you took that. Maybe it happened some years ago, maybe you have felt a bit bad about it ever since. You have felt that this was something that you should not have done; it has lowered you in your own eyes. Now all right, supposing years later, you have been travelling by public transport and perhaps you have inadvertently had your purse sticking out of your bag, and you suddenly realise, by the time the journey is ended, that someone had taken it, and perhaps by a coincidence that there was the same amount of money in that purse that you had actually removed some years before from somebody's pocket, would you actually feel relieved as it were on account of this happened to you. Would you feel this as poetic justice which had helped you?

\_\_\_\_\_ It is possible.

S: It is possible.

\_\_\_\_\_ : I don't think that you could feel angry about it, could you?

S: You couldn't feel angry about it, yes, that is a good point, because you would have recognised, well if you became angry about it, you would be just getting angry with yourself. Yes? And perhaps if you had ... supposing you had been sorry for what you had done for a long time, there was no possibility of making restitution to the person from whom you had stolen because you didn't know who they were. But anyway someone else has stolen from you, that sort of evened it up, and also it sort of suggests that people are all interconnected. You don't have to necessarily sort something out with the very same person with whom the difficulty originally arose, it is a question of some other human being, so it is as though human beings are all sort of interconnected and in a way, in a sense, they can within certain limits perhaps take one another's

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points. The fact that somebody had taken from you~may feel psychologically as though the person from whom you had originally taken~had taken back, or that you had been forced to make restitution~ You see what I mean? So it could be under certain circumstances, if your state of mind was such that you could feel actually relieved, actually benefitted or you could feel that a source of expiation had been made. Now do you think, to carry it a stage further, that there would be a difference in your feeling of expiation if that happened, different from let's say your, say, realizing that you had stolen five pounds all those years ago, and if you were to go and say, put it in somebody's charity box. Say in a charity box in a church, or something like that~o you feel that that would have the same effect on you as it would if you had lost it by having done to you the very thing that you had done to somebody

else, and if so, what exactly makes that difference ?

\_\_\_\_\_ I think the direct connection between you taking it and having it taken from you.

~ Evim, it is as though you would feel, well there was justice in the universe, you see what I mean ?...~as though I cannot get away with it0 I am not being allowed to get away with it0 I mean there is such a thing as justice; there is such a thing as poetic justice in the universe and in a way that would be reassuring, because to that extent you would~e) in a meaningful universe. But do you thLnk that you would feel that you had made expiation, that you had been purified, because that is quite a strong word, or is another word really -fleeed here for , to describe what you experience ?

\_\_\_\_\_ I do think that the word justice is the word that appeals to me in that context.

S: Yes , that it was only just0 I had done it to somebody else, it has now happened to me~ ~ou would feel a certain satisfaction perhaps that justice had been done~ that the universe so to speak worked in such a way that justice was done. You would sort of acquiesce in the justice of what had happened, and that would give perhaps a certain peace of mind.

\_\_\_\_\_ I think that it could be a purifying in the sense that you realised that, and then carried on accordingly, but you made sure that you didn't put yourself in that sort of weak situation again. You could feel stronger.

S: Yes. Of course I think at the back of Shantideva' 5 mind is the idea

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that if that experience befell you, that somebody did to you as you had previously done to somebody else, well then the debt is quit~ It is paid so you haven't got to bother about it for the future. But one can only experience in that sort of way, or feel in that sort of way, if, of course, you have a firm belief in the law of karma. In- Buddhist countries people do have these sor~of beliefs. Before I left Kalimpong, for instance in 1964, I think a few weeks before I left, I was away at the time, I was away on tour, and was due back in Kalimpong just, in say~ two or three days time, and within those two or three days, there was a burglary at the vihara, and some of my things were stolen; some of them I got back later, but a few things I didn't, and some of my Tibetan friends were quite pleased, because they said that well, there is a bit of bad karma had happened to me1~1 I was clearly experiencing the results of past bad karma, but it was out of the way before I had actually left and would not get in the way of the success of my journey to England, They looked at it as a sort of karmic safety valve, almost. So it does show that in a traditional Buddhist society that this sort of idea can be quite deeply engrained. They were almost delighted when I told them that this is what had happened,, because it was on the very eve of my departure. It was ~as though I wip~d the slate clean of past old bad karma before I left Kalimpong, so it could be expected that nothing could go wrong now.

\_\_\_\_\_ I can see that in quite a positive and healthy ... but I can't help sort of relating to this in a quite a Christian condit- ioned sort of way.



S: Well perhaps it is bound up with the idea-that of just not an impersonal working of a kind of poetic justice, but of your being punished. As though somebody is lurking behind the scenes and when you least expect it spring out on you, because you have done something bad to somebody else in the past, so now someone is lurking around a corner waiting to get at you and punish you. Perhaps it's something to do with that ?

\_\_\_\_\_ It is sort of fated... that you do something and well you know you feel that you are going to suffer...

S: Well I wouldn't say that was fatalism, that is belief in the law of karma surely ?

But in a negative sense I mean, what that was all about yesterday about~ for instance, getting raped, that your state of mind precipitate further negative ....

S: repetitions of the same situation. Mm, but here it is a question of

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your being repayed for something that you have actually done. But you may put yourself into situations~feeling as though you have done something when in fact you haven't. People do invite punishment, not because they have actually done anything wrong but because they feel very guilty or have been made to feel very guilty. I think that there is a difference between feeling , as it were, a sort of satisfaction in a subjective sense when these sort of things happen to you and feeling as it were, lightened that a debt is paid off. Because in the former case, which is a bit unhealthy, it as though that is only the first installment.

You don't feel as if the debt is paid off~ ~o,you are going to go on paying it indefinitely. You are not free from it . You might think "Oh

I deserved that, of course I deserve it", not because of anything you have done, because then that could be wiped out, but because what you are, and you don't feel that that changes.

Liz: Do you particularly connect the evil with theft and sort of possession? Is it significant that they are talking about theft and burglaries, or are there other evils which...

S: It could be any evil I only gave that as a simple example. You could have murdered somebody else, because the fact that it is something unpleasant done to you, which is expiating something that you have formerly done to somebody else, implies that what you have formerly done to somebody else is something unskilful and unpleasant, but it can be almost of any kind

Anne: I felt that on the last night of my solitary recently, I was raided by the drug squad, it seemed quite relevant that I had spent a couple of years, about three years of my past selling dope,...

S: With impunity

Anne:and the fact that it happened on the last night actually.

S~: Well traditional Buddhists would perhaps say that it had happened as a direct result of your meditation because you were wiping the slate clean; you see what I mean ? They would probably take that view.

Anne: I definitely have quite a feeling when I told people that poetic justice had.. I felt that quite strongly. I didn't get angry (laughter) I was furious (laughter)

\_\_\_\_\_ Living in London where there is quite a few burglaries and thefts; we recently had bikes stolen and I was wondering the kind of result that it had, was that it was useful to us, \ie didn't connect it with a definite evil, but that we were too possessive with objects

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and that it was in a way~we ended up discussing it and getting past the anger and realising that it wasn't the people who stole them, it wasn't their fault~ They were bound up with karma of their own and that for us it seemed to be that we were that much too possessive and that perhaps that was why they were ...

S: \dell there cannot be theft without ownership obviously.

\_\_\_\_\_ That was the conclusion, that we owned them.

S: ~ell it depends to a great extent on their motivation. It might have been a good thing for you that your bikes were stolen, but none the less it could be a bad thing for them that they stole them.

\_\_\_\_\_ This seems to be a bit of a continuing process then, because somebody has done something to you and something that you had done in the past, the same thing will happen to them.

S: Yes someone has got to do something to them so ... to give them an opportunity of expiating what they have done to you.

But it seems to be of a broader field of karma to do with society and the way that they are brought up and we could detach ourselves from that. ...

\_\_\_\_\_ Ho ~ would this way of looking at this tie up with justice in the sense that you have the police...

~: Well some people do tie it up0 Say Christmas Humphreys firmly believe~ that he, as a judge, was an instrument of Karma0 ~ut that is of course to identify the law in the legal sense with the law in the karma sense and the two don't necessarily coincide. But he firmly believed that. That he was an instrument of Karma, even when he was sentencing people to death. He didn't say that he was helping them expiate their past bad karma, but he has certainly said that he is an instrument of karma; he said this quite recently on the radio. That does seem to be his conviction. I think that it is in a way quite dangerous, ~erhaps sometimes you are,) but I think it is quite dangerous to think of yourself as an instru

ment of Karma, because then you might start thinking well, it is your duty to help people to expiate their karma by punishing them. And that might end up as just a rationalisation ~f your own unskilful mental state~

There has to be awareness there of having done what ever is being done to them now

in the past, that they deserved it...

S.- There is a saying in the Bible in the New Testament, which is relevant here perhaps, not that such verses very often are, but it does sometimes happen, "Woe to him, to whom the offence is due, but woe to him

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by whom cometh the offence". Do you see ? You may have committed an evil action, as a result of which some harm befalls you; somebody does something harmful to you. It is just, that you should be punished, but none the less, he has committed an evil act, because he hasn't, as it were, punished you; he has just done an evil act. It is as it were accidental that it falls upon you and that it is a punishment., So far as he is concerned, well he had just performed an evil action. So he has to answer for that, just as you have had to answer for the evil that you did. It is as though the executioner is also morally responsible and has to answer for that. You deserve to be executed for what you did, but he deserves also to be punished for executing you.

Cannot karma come in the way of ~I was just thinking of somebody who really feels that they would like to be punished and sometimes maybe they would never get punished...

S: NAell it is said that there are many people like this. I think that when you have that sort of desire for punishment it is because there is a strong feeling of guilt, I don't see that as being

I think what this sort of what the whole discussion points to is in a way a quite important spiritual principle that, within a spiritual context, let's say, there cannot be any such thing as punishment. You cannot think in those sort of terms at all. Punishment is a form of retaliation. Of course it has the sanction of law and perhaps within the group, it is necessary, but from a purely spiritual point of view, punishment as a form of retaliation is just not on, so you cannot as a spiritual person and an individual take it upon yourself to punish anybody.

\_\_\_\_\_ That is interesting, recently I was called on to do jury service, and I looked at the grounds for disqualification, and I could disqualify myself, by being an ordained member of, I forget what the term was, but anyway I sort of fitted in, and.. but I thought afterwards that maybe I wasn't being a very responsible person, but I knew that it didn't feel right, that ... I see now why, because it is a sort of group thing, that I just couldn't...

S: Of course, it isn't as simple as that; that is quite a simple straight forward example, but can you, dissociate yourself from the group or from group membership all together?, probably you cannot, perhaps one has to accept that even though one is an individual, that in a certain sense one is at the same time a member of a large group.

Anne: I thought about it when it came up; it seemed in some ways that

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somebody with a sense of responsibility would be maybe better at doing it than somebody else, but then it is really difficult to know...

because the system that you have been working in would be quite different from your values, so that is why I saw it as being impossible

S: It is just a question of perhaps, in the last analysis of one having to decide whether as an individual, functioning as a group member within a particular group, you can do some good modifying the situation to such an extent that you are justified in functioning apparently as a group member. That one has to weigh up for oneself; it is quite difficult to tell sometimes.

I wasn't sure if I was just copping out ...

S: Well certainly one has to ask oneself that question, because one shouldn't just cop out obviously. But on the other hand equally one mustn't just automatically go along with any group requirement without scrutinising that from the standpoint of the individual. Supposing someone is charged with an offence that you do not regard as morally an offence, it is only legally an offence, in that particular case you might be justified in doing jury service in the sense that due to your influence on the jury that person might be not found guilty, and therefore not punished for having done something which in your eyes was not an offence at all.

Anne; When you are called up you don't know what you are going to be called upon to. ...

S: That is also true; but I think you can perhaps opt out at a later stage, but I think that you would have to opt out on some sort of pretext which wouldn't be a very good thing, you know~ suddenly feeling ill or something of that sort. But it could be that the individual and let's take it that an order member is an individual per se, or let's say by definition, that an individual is as such prevented or precluded from functioning in certain kinds of ways within a social or economic or political group. But clearly, you know, you have to function in certain respects. You might perhaps be paying taxes, you cannot help paying taxes, you cannot help incurring VAT, so you cannot dissociate yourself entirely from the group, which means that even though you are an individual, you are at the same time at least in the eyes of other people objectively to some extent, a member of a group. I mean if you vote, you function then as a member of the group. So you have to consult your conscience whether through your group membership, you can give expression

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to some of your convictions as an individual, that is the real point. If it seems that through participating in that group activity as a group member you are not able to give expression to any of your convictions as an individual or even to your conviction of the preference of a positive group over a negative group, then you have to consider not participating at all. I think that this question is going to arise more and more as the Movement gets larger. In fact Subhuti and others are going into these sort of things more systematically now, because we don't want different Order members on different occasions saying different things, because that would give us, give an impression of an inconsistency and therefore an insincerity. But it is not easy to function as an individual within a group situation. It is not easy to decide as an individual in what way you could use your influence as an individual that happens to be a group member also, in a healthy manner within the group. And this is especially so where the whole question of one's participation say in active politics would arise. I mean could you as

an individual be a member of a particular political party? It seems to me, with the present state of party politics at least in Britain, extremely doubtful whether you could.

\_\_\_\_\_ It seems that you are saying that the Friends have to consult on the policies of being individuals for their stand outS~'de the Friends.. .to agree howto...

S: IN a sense you do,

It seems contradictory that there should be a policy,

S: Well it depends what you call it, you can call it a policy~ I call it consistency, for instance supposing say in this question of jury service, if you are a member of a religious order you can get exemption so supposing say anOrder member is called up for service and he or she says I am a member of a religious Order, and I therefo~claim exemption and supposing another order member says I am not a member of a religious Order because our understanding of religion is different, well that is at least an apparent inconsistency which is going to give say group authorities the impression that you are insincere, if it is to your advantage to say that you are a member of a religious Order, you ~dy 'Lt and if it is not to your advantage then you don't say it. So you don't want to give that impression because that would not be a true impression which means that you have got to sort out and clarify all of you together what you mean by an Order, what you mean by a religious Order and do you all of you equally, because you are all equally Order members, define yourselves as members of a religious Order or not, for that particular

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purpose. It is not a policy, it is clarifying the situation in every- body's eyes equally. And the same presumably would arise in connection with say national service. But it is important in any case that in relation to the group, which cannot but see even the Order as a group, we behave in a manner which gives the impression of consistency and therefore of sincerity, because if say, the group gets the impression that members of the FWBO are just opportunists and have no real princ- iples, this is not going to help our work within the group. It is not going to inspire confidence in people. But it isn't always easy to sort these things out. Partly because of a lack of clarity in people's own minds and partly because the objective situation sometimes is quite confused and quite complicated. There is currently this whole question of, in what sense are we a charity?, and this is quite a big question, it is very complex. Law itself is not clear.

ANNE: I think that one of the difficulties is that we are completely different, completely new compared to anything that has gone before.

~ Yes, but from the standpoint of the group we have to be classified under something , some provision, some paragraph which already exists.

An~e; In a way there is not ~~Jiy precedent for us, and yet in another way there does seem to be quite a lot of precedents...

S: Yes because when Buddhism became known first in the West , " well the question was raised is it a religion, or is it not a religion. Because that was the only sort of category that people knew, well apart from the category of philosophy or ethical system; so Buddhism had to be pigeon- holed into one of the existing pigeon holes and it is beg'ning to dawn upon people that none of the existing Western pigeon holes really quite fit Buddhism. So this is really what we are up against, that we are new, that we do things in a different way with different principles, but none the less we function, at least objectively speaking, within the

group within the existing social-economic-political order, and they try to find some sort of place for us within that~ in fact we have to have some sort of plac~ within that in a sense to function at all. I mean for instance we may not agree with nationalism, we may not feel that we want to identify ourselves exclusively with a particular nationality, that may be against our principles, but if you want to travel from country to country, you have to do it with a passport; that means that you have to apply for a passport; that means that you have to claim a certain nationality in order to qualify for the passport. Now some people might feel so strongly about this that they might refuse to apply for a pass- port and present themselves at the frontier without a passport and in

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some cases you might get ~cross. But it would be very difficult and if you were a busy ~rder Member flying from country to country giving lectures, you couldn't do this, but some people might feel it so impor- tant that they wanted to do things in this way. I mean there are a few people who, a few hundred, who refuse to recognise nationality and who have issued international passports which some governments recognise.

Anne: Citizen of the world.

S: Citizen of the world, I think there are about three or four hundred of them now. But it isn't easy; one can see that, in these various ways to be an individual, not just within the recesses of your private cons- ciousness, but openly and public~y in the world. I have related about this in my memoir 5 about my own efforts not to have a caste and a nat- ionality in India, and it was very very difficult indeed, espec'~~dly not to have a caste. You must have a caste, everybody has got a caste. But anyway how did we get onto this ? Justice, retaliation, punishment the group.

Anne: You said that i~ ~ context that there is no such thing as punishment, so karma is something comple~ey different ?

S: Vell~ according to traditional Buddhist teaching, karma is a sort of natural law, which operates independantly of the volition, Qthat is-the volition to execute that law)of individuals. All right, supposing to give a sort of traditional example, suppose you have committed a murder ~aybe a few days later you would be passing under a tree and the tree fell down on you. Well I no individual person"s volition is involved here~ ~he Buddhist would say, " well that is a result of your karma." The whole of the Universe as a sort of unity operates in such a way that people get their just d~erts. The point isn't easy for us to understand or to accept, but this is the traditional way of understanding it. The whole universe so to speak operates to even things out.

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't like the word punishment, cause and effect is o.k. or just de~rts, but punishment is tied up with Christian. ...

But in that case I would go so far as to say that within the spiritual community you shouldn't give people their just de~rts. You shouldn't be personally responsible for seeing that they get their just de~rts~ There can be no punishment within the spiritual community. There can be no insuring that people get their just de~rts. To use perhaps a ~hristian word, but perhaps it is appropriate here, within the spirit- ual community, there can only be 'f~rgiveness' This is Blake's great principle, forgiveness of sins, except that there aren't any sins, not

in that sense. It does seem that the group, the social-economic- political group, cannot function without punishment , without law, without courts, without police, without armies, but to the extent that one is an individual one will not participate in that, and sometimes it may be very difficult to come to~ deciSion in an individual instance.

ANNE: There is the argu ment that if somebody is murdering you cannot really allow them to continue to murder. If you know that they have got a pathological condition that means that they might murder the next five women with black hair that they meet, how do you stop that from happening without punishing them?

S: Well, you'd certainly lock them up, I imagine, even if you were an individual, but you wouldn't be locking them up as a punishment, but to prevent them from causing further harm, putting them out of harm's way. Restraining them.

\_\_\_\_\_ So your attitude towards them is completely different ?

S: Yes it would be. You wouldn't feel that they were wicked people, they have got to be punished, no, they are people who for the good of society have got to be restrained in such a way that they cannot repeat the offence that they have committed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I keep thinking of Mila-repa, having to keep building houses and knock them down again,...

S: 'ell,yes,that was regarded as a sort of expiation.

\_\_\_\_\_ When I read it, I wondered did he really have to go through all that ?

S: Well perhaps one should speak not so much in terms of expiation, but counter-acting

End of side one of tape

S: you have done certain things in the past, they have had a certain effect on you, that effect has got to be undone, so you undo that effect by doing things of an opposite nature exploitive and the result of that, you have got yourself into a certain mental state you recognise that and then you resolve to undo it, so you undo it by lavish generosity in various ways, so you counter-balance, you counter- act, or you could say, you expiate, even, but that perhaps introduces another kind of note into it.

That seems to be a more positive respnse, you have got

awareness of what you have done, you are actually making efforts to redress the balance, whereas this is more that you are not aware that some~ng is going to come along and hit you over the

head, because , but it may happen.

~ Tt seems to me that, to go a little more deeply into it, I think that people as it were, need to

make sense of what happens, they don't like the arbitrary ~o if something unfortunate happens to you, in a way it is easier for you to think that this has happened to you because of something that you have done rather than it happened to you for no particular reason at all, especially if it is something very hurtful to you. You can accept a just universe, even though you suffer as a result of that more easily than you can perhaps accept an arbitrary universe. Because an arbitrary universe is devoid of meaning, whereas a just universe, even though you are suffering as a result of that justice, is a universe with meaning. I think it has got something to do with that. One cannot say definitively whether what you are now suffering is the result of something that you have done, unless one is able to see the whole course of previous lives. I mean perhaps it is a bit comforting, 'ah well

this is happening to me, it must have happened to me because of something S,

that I did in previous lives. But you don't really know that, when you

say that, it is more a sort of affirmation of your wish to believe in the justice of the Universe, the justice of Existence. You don't really know, in certain cases that that is the direct result of something that you have done in the past. If it seems to relate to something that you have done in the present life, well fair enough, but that very often isn't the case. Maybe you cannot remember, having done yourself anything like that, but none the less that sort of thing has befallen you. 'Well right'~you say, "I must have done it in my previous life, but this is more an affirmation of your belief which is perhaps only a belief, in the justice of existence, the justice of the Universe, or your faith in the law of karma, of conditioned existence. So it helps you to make sense of the universe, that you are expiating, that it isn't just without meaning.

It sounds to me like a cushy number. It is very easy to say, oh it must be my karma,' and leave it at that, and that covers every aspect of it, and you cannot do much about it, and what is done is done. It feels quite passive.

~S: But of course in the face of life, one is very often in that passive

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sort of position. However you interpret~ it, yes, you are on the re -- Ceiling end. A brick falls on your head, well, you are passive in relation to that, you can say that it is chance, you can say that it is fate, or you can say ~I I guess it is due to my past karma. But you are in still a passive situation.

Hilary: I think that in the Three Jewels you say that you thought that things were only karma as a last resort....

S: ~es."well this is what the Abhidharma says

Hilary: Otherwise you might get into a fatalistic position.

S: You shouldn't necessarily jump to the conclusion that it is karma if other explanations are also possible. In other words, according to the Abhidharma, karma is not the only factor, so to speak, operating in the Universe. It is not that everything that happens is a result of karma but it may be. If you can find or you can assign some other reason then, fair enough, but if you exhaust all the others and none of them seem that well you are justified in



concluding that very likely it is due to karma.

Liz: I don't understand how there can be any other reasons

'ell there is that point of view expressed in the Abhidharma, but in the sense that, well, this is Shantideva's argument too', you have taken the body, so in a sense your taking the body is a result of karma, so whatever happens to you while you are in the body, is in a sense is the result of karma - but then the Abhidharma would further refine and say, well there are things that are the direct result of karma, that is to say the direct result of, the equivalent result of actions previously committed by you, and things which indirectly are the result of karma 'I

simply because you have a body at all. There is that sort of distinction

Anne: It can also take quite an active response to karma, which is what Sanghadevi was saying really, if you do away from karma then you can start believing that you can start building up good karma. Presumably it can work that way, instead of just working against you

S: Well in the Abhidharma there is a classification of karmas and one type of karma is ... one could say counter-active. So in a way that obviates the necessity of thinking of terms of expiation. If you have performed certain unskilful karmas, well, you can counter-act the effect of those unskilful karmas by performing the corresponding skilful karmas so that the one will cancel out the other - one need not think in terms of expiation - at one moment, it is more like a balancing of forces.

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Perhaps that is more healthy, to think in that sort of way. I mean Guenther uses the word *atone* in his translation, but whether that is really proper, that is another matter. All right let's go on.

g) to understand them as benefactors means that since enlightenment is not realized without the perfection of patience, which cannot be developed without a harmful person, the latter helps in the realization of the Dharma and is a benefactor. Therefore we have to be patient with the harm he does. As is said:

Since he is a companion in striving for enlightenment

I must delight in my enemy.

Because I have got one The fruit of patience Should first be bestowed on him. Thus he is the cause for patience.

S: But patience is one of the paramitas, unless you practice the paramitas you will not gain enlightenment, not the enlightenment of a perfect bodhisattva, but you cannot practise patience unless there are people who do hurtful things to you that provide you with the opportunity of being patient. So those people are necessary. And in fact you should be grateful to them, they are benefactors. Now what do you think of that sort of reasoning? Does that sound

convincing ?

Voices: Yes.

S: But they don't intend to help you. Is there any sense in feeling gratitude towards someone who didn't intend to help you? You can recognize him as the cause of your patience or at least the occasion of your patience, but does that mean that you should feel grateful to him ?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, it doesn't matter what his intentions were.

S: Well then, you must find another word for gratitude. That is to say the emotion that you feel when someone does, deliberately, something helpful to you. Isn't there a distinction ? or do you feel grateful ?

\_\_\_\_\_ They are giving you the grounds to help yourself.

S: Fair, but what do you mean by them giving you when they do not consciously and deliberately do that? Can you speak of them doing it, or can you not speak only of that being the result of their action ? Is there not a difference ?

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel that it is more to do with setting up more

general conditions for yourself and perhaps for the other person as a person, but if you are being grateful to them, ~ not to them ~ individually subjective person, but to the general....

S: But here it is the person who is spoken of, "since he is a companion in my striving for enlightenment I must delight in my enemy." Well he doesn't intend to be a companion, it just happens like that. So can you really feel gratitude to him in that sort of way? Can you think it is really psychologically possible ?

Sanghadevi: .. the idea that all beings are trying to gain enlightenment so in a sense although he may not be aware of it, that is....

S: Yes but in what sense can one be said to be trying to gain enlightenment if you are not aware of it ? And here it is a question of him helping you ~ the fact that he gives you the opportunity to practice patience does help you perhaps, but that is not what he intends to do, so can you really feel grateful to him ? Or is gratitude the appropriate word for your emotion that you feel in relation to him ?

\_\_\_\_\_ (indistinct)

S I mean you can recognize his action as the cause or the occasion of your patience but is that the same thing as being grateful to him for helping you, could you feel like that ?

\_\_\_\_\_ I think that if you really felt that you were being helped by them, then I think that gratitude would just arise. But if like I had to have to rationally think about it, that he was helping me then,

S: yes 'it is as though if you really feel that you are being helped, there is a feeling of gratitude wells up in you spontaneously and you are not, as it were, too particular as to whom the gratitude is directed. So all right be grateful to him, he hasn't actually wished to help you but never mind, you feel grateful none the less, you just feel grateful. And your gratitude just flows over onto all those sort of conditions and circumstances within which you are operating. Perhaps it is more like that, rather than that what the text seems to suggest that you argue yourself into a feeling of gratitude in that sort of way. But you start off by feeling

really helped and that involves some objective factor, and when you feel gratitude, it is your consciousness that the help that you are getting is due to some external factor, and it is as though you don't bother very much how you identify that external factor.

He is bound up with it somehow ~ll right, you in a manner of speaking

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feel grateful to him. Or you are still not happy about it ? Well what word would you put to it ?

a sort of rightness that things have evened out and it is getting back to justice again. Gratitude to me seems to imply a sort more of a ( direction .....

S: which implies a more individual to individual relationship, which doesn't exist here in a sense, L:~~cause he hasn't intended to help you. But you can still feel gratitude none the less out of the intensity of your feeling helped, and it sort of spills over onto him, even though perhaps in a sense you recognise that he doesn't deserve it, but never mind you feel gratitude towards him all the same.

SAnghadevi: I find it ~bit of a circular argu ment to say that patience is one of the perfections and you need to practice patience in order to gain enlightenment so

S: Right,you almost feel that couldn't we do without patience ? (laughter) Couldn't you gain enlightenment without it ? Well one can raise that question. What you are saying is , is patience a sort of primary virtue?-this is what you are really asking, or is it some~ng just incidental. I mean supposing, let's put it this way, could you imagine someone, say treading the path to enlightenment and being so fortu nate that nobody ever did anything inimical to him, n~ne ever got in the way of his meditation, n~one ever attacked him, or beat him~ Well theore tically it might be possible if you had millions upon mi ll- ions of human beings treading the path to enlightenment. Tn other words he would never get an opportunity of practising patience , actually practicing it, would that mean that he would not be able to gain enlight- tenment ? He could practise sila,he could practise meditation, he could practise insight; do you see what £ mean ?

\_\_\_\_\_ He would still have to be patient with himself.

Sanghadevi: . . . because of the difficulties of gaining enlightenment, one of the qualities,.. you have got different areas you need to work on and one of them is cultivating patience because of the difficulties. That is how I look at it, not that you need the difficulties to help you practise patience.

S: Yes,but if the difficulties were not there, you could dispense with patience and still gain enlightenment~ patience~ in the sense of patience with regard to other people at least, which is what is meant here. Y0u would have the potentiality for patience, but you would not

actually have to practice it in order to gain enlightenment. But you would be patient if difficulties arose or people created difficulties for you. But you could progress along the path towards enlightenment even without an opportunity to practice patience. You would eventually be a patient person even though you had never practised patience.

I think that one does have to be careful not to think of patience as something that you have to be, therefore you have to encounter difficult situations. It is close to saying; 'well, in order to develop you have got to suffer', which does contradict the Buddha's teaching. You might create sufferings so that you could progress, or even create difficulties or encourage people to maltreat you, so that you could practice more patience and thereby evolve more quickly. I mean some people seem to almost do this. so in this sense, patience does seem to be a bit different from things like sila and samadhi. It is not that samadhi is the higher state of consciousness that, well, you develop if circumstances require that. I mean samadhi is something in the sense of (dhyana), which you have got to develop anyway. It isn't simply a response to certain circumstances. Whereas patience isn't quite like that, patience as actually practiced.

We seem to be talking about patience as a different thing from yesterday, when we thought that it was more like being very receptive and open to all. ...

~ Yes, well that is, as it were, the impersonal patience, but here we are still concerned with patience in the sense of your attitude to towards individuals, but yes there is the Mahayana conception in the sense of your receptivity to higher truths and higher spiritual realities.

\_\_\_\_\_ I feel that you couldn't do without that.

S: NO you couldn't do without that. That is a precondition of the Mahayanistic equivalent of insight. But you could get by it would seem without actually having to practice patience in relation to people, who are inimical to you, though the potential would be there presumably. So patience in that sense with regard to people is not a paramita quite in the sense that say sila and samadhi are -- c(ana, or virya even. There does seem to be some distinction. What is the basis of that distinction ?

That we have to relate to people;

161 S: I think it is more than that. Yes, we do have to relate to people. But in the case of sila, you are having to relate to people. Could you even say with regard to some silas, with regard say to the first sila, not harming living beings, supposing you weren't in contact with living beings, would you thereby not be observing the precept? Supposing you lived on a desert island ?

Liz: It does seem to be more related to karma than the others.

It is as though patience in the sense of patience with regards to people does depend more upon external objective factors, whereas in the case of sila and (dhyana) it is, it consists in rather factors in which you generate within yourself. But anyway this brings us onto something that I think we... something that we can discuss in connection with this particular item, g). I think that we can look at the whole thing in another kind of way, transpose it into another sort of key.

The text says, "To understand them as benefactors means that since enlightenment is

not,~realized~~without the perfection of patience which\_cannot\_be developed without a harmful person, the latter helps in the 'realization of the Dharm,a and, is a benefactor." So the person who actually harms you, you can only probably think of with gratitude and as a benefactor by sort of tour de force of one feelings. But you can think of someone who sort of opposes you, in a sort of Neitzcheian sense,the enem y as a benefactor; Perhaps in a more realistic way. Because this can overlap with a sort of context of friendship. It is as when you have a friendly argu ment with someone. The person with whom you arguing, opposes you, disagrees with you, challenges you, you may not like that, but it is within an overall context of friend- ship. And that can help you in clarifying your own ideas, getting rid of your own vaguenesses, and this is why Blake said, "Opposition is true friendship" . You can show your friendship for someone by opposing them. So perhaps we can transpose the whole reflection or advice of Shantideva's into that sort of Blakeian key, let us say. That~1people don't necessarily help you when they agree with you and are nice to you. they can also help you when they, your friends, can help you and consciously help you, when they disagree with you and challenge you and question your statements.

\_\_\_\_\_ Somebody said to me recently that they didn't want to say some~ng to me for fear of hurting my feelings. And I replied that I felt that on the bas'IS of our friendship it could be done.

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S: Well~ I think within a context of friendship, you cannot really hurt another person's feelings. I mean if it is a real friendship, what you say, even though in a sense,objectively,it is harsh or ~bit inimical it san be accepted and not felt as hurtful~ I think~if a genuine friendliness is there on both sides. I think that is evidence of real friendship.

Anne: It relates to what we talked about yesterday, about abcesses.

S: Ves that is true, oversensitivity. But it is interesting that some one should say, I won't tell you such and such because I think that it will hurt your feelings0 ~ell what is the point in making that statement at all, one might ask ? (laughter) It is almost a way of telling you in slightly negative way that you are a very sensitive person. It would be better presumably to keep quiet~if that is what you really thought. The quotation says "since he is a companion in my striving for enlightenment, I must delight in my enemy"~ Well that can be applied to the enemy who is really a friend, or the friend who sort of functions like an enemy but is not really an e~emy, he is just opposing you, he is just disagreeing with you, honestly and in friendship.

Anne: Is this taking it then that everybody is striving for enlighten- ment or is talking about specifically spiritual...

S: No,here it is not talking about spiritual friendship at all~ this is simply referring to the person who helps you with out intending to; that you should regard him as a companion in your striving to enlightenment, but I think that this is rather difficult to do, for most people anyway. But there is this other application, which I have suggested, this realising that someone who is your good friend, and who opposes you or disagrees with you is helping you1 he is showing his friendship in that way. I think that is a much more br~acing and

stimulating sort of thing, than expecting your friend to always to agree with you and approve of what you do. I think also that we have to be careful of rationalization. Usually if our . if someone does us harm, our natural reaction is one of anger. I think that we have to be careful that we don't sort of suppress our anger without realizing it, and say, "ah well, he is actually helping me", it should be grateful to him. I am sure that this can sometimes happen, because you are in a sense afraid of facing up to the fact of your own anger. I mean you hear sometimes people saying, "I expect it is good for me anyway". They don't really mean that. They are just as it were afraid

to be angry.

\_\_\_\_\_ : So in that situation what would you suggest as being the best thing to do, just to be angry ?

~S: well I no, not to be angry, necessarily, but at least to acknowledge that that is in fact one's state. I mean your so-called gratitude then would be humbug. Sometimes, you find people sort of adopting what they think as the appropriate attitude. I remember at a meeting on one occasion, somebody pointed out that~ let's say (a) pointed out quite a serious fault in~) and (b) said "thank you so much (a), I know that I have my little faults, I am quite aware of it, but thank you for telling me", and you could see, understand that it was so false. He wasn't really thanking him, he wasn't really grateful, it was just a cover up, for his, not exactly anger, he didn't even allow that to show, but it wasn't genuine. So we have to be careful of that too.

\_\_\_\_\_ I find that I go through stages, I get angry, do something about it, and the heat of the moment passes, and then I see it in a different light

~S: I think that you can see that in retrospect what somebody did, though he had no intention in helping you, did actually help you~ I think you can genuinely see that sometimes. And you may not feel grateful to him for helping you, because he didn't intend to, but at least you can feel more tolerant towards him, and more tolerant towards what he did to you, because you can recognise, well, yes, he did help you~ Even though that was not his intention.

All right, let's go onto: h) These are still Shantideva's reflections

h') to understand the chance the give for as in Buddhahood is expressed in the verse; Moreover, what better repayment can there be Than the appeasement of beings, For they are sincere friends And incomparable helpers.

S~: "the appeasement of beings here means helping beings attain to enlightenment; the appeasement, the dying down of all pain and suffering and so on. So one is ill treated by other people, but one feels grateful to them according to Shantideva, because they're helping you spiritually~ So you want to help them. What is the best way of helping them? ~tell, by becoming a Buddha and guiding them. So you can take~~~in this way, S

the fact that they harm and hurt you as an incentive to speeding up your own quest for enlightenment, because you are so anxious to repay them for the favour that they have done you in hurting you. In that way enabling you to practise patience and gain enlightenment and gain more quickly. Again perhaps we seem to be going a little around in a circle. You must take the spirit of it, I think that there may be some people to whom these arguments really appeal. I mean if they don't appeal, well what can one do? One just has to find an argument that does appeal, so to speak. But these are various arguments or reflections suggested by Shantideva. I think that we must have gone through them years ago, when we had the seminar on the Bodhicaryavatara. I cannot remember what was said on that occasion.

\_\_\_\_\_ : I feel quite in tune with them, because they seem to diffuse everything and bring it out in front of you.

S: Well, the fact that one can introduce this sort of reflective attitude or approach into the subject of anger is in itself helpful. Anger: being such a strong emotion and so impulsive, and usually devoid of reflection.

Anne: It is interesting that I can just feel that, that I feel just a bit impatient with. ... (laughter) I feel that when you explain that .. yeah

S: Well this is in a way natural; supposing you are in a certain emotional state, and someone tries to argue with you about it, what is your natural reaction? Impatience. Supposing you are really angry and someone is offering you various reasons why you should not be angry (laughter), well, you get angrier than ever, because you are so impatient because what they say is so out of key, out of harmony with your mood. Or if again you are suffering intense grief over a great loss, and someone says "ah well, never mind you haven't really lost anything," well, you feel just worse than ever, you feel impatience on top of the grief. You say, "well they just don't understand, they just don't know what they are talking about". So yes, actually to an angry person these sort of reflections of Shantideva's will probably make them more impatient still. You have to sort of think over them after the anger has subsided somewhat and use them perhaps to help in not getting angry next time, and practising patience in the future. It really goes to show that where emotions are involved reason has very little chance. You have to wait until the emotions have died down and only then can the voice of reason begin to be heard.

All right I).

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t) To understand their beneficial influence is required in the

verse:

Being pleased in many ways

They have completed perfection.

And in the 'Byan.sa"(Bodhisattvabhumi) we read:

Patience is said to be developed by fostering the five ideas of i) favouring a harmful person, ii) following only the Dharma, iii) impermanence, iv) misery and v) gathering beings around oneself.

S: We must be careful not to lose track here, because we are still on Shantideva's reflections which are sort of supplementary to ""~am.po.pa has had to say on this subject of patience. And this last reflection is now being subdivided into five. Anyway I think we will ve tea first

S: even if you - recognise it objectively, intellectually as valid it doesn't affect you, it doesn't move you, you are not convinced in a true sense. It is quite interesting what people do in the East when anyone gets very angry: it tends not to happen, and they want to calm them down, they never resort Lo argu(ment. I mean this is what happens between men in the East, because there they are usually the ones who get into argu 'ments and start fighting. If someone is in a real temper, and two people are 4oing to try to fight, people get hold of them and they start fondling them and start stroking them~ (laughter) ~es, it is quite interesting; this is what sort of spontaneously happens to calm them down; they don't try argu nents. They establish that sort of friendly physical contact. You quite often see this.

\_\_\_\_\_ does it work ?

S: It works. They sort~do it instinctively.

\_\_\_\_\_: Can you imagine that happening in a p~ brawl ?

S: That would just lead to further violence. (laughter) But in India, this is certainly what happens.

Snghadev~: Perhaps this demonstrates that every situation is a situation for growth, that what ever your interactionary encounters you can use it...

~S: Yes, you are never justified in saying~"well, I couldn't help being angry, it wasn't my fault, he made me angry~1, that is never justified. ~ne is always in control of the situation, it is always within one's choice to either react or to respond, to be reactive or to be creativE

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So, Patience is said to be developed -by fostering the five ideas of I) the first means to show patience by being favourably inclined to a harmful person because in former lives such a man may have been our father or m~ther, brother or sister, or teacher. Since the benefit I have derived from them cannot be assessed it is not fit that I retaliate for the harm they do.

S~: S~ once again, the context of that of a whole series of lives.Let's make a little comparison first, supposing in this life someone whom you had known for a long time commit a hurtful action in relation to you; supposing previously that same person has bestowed upon you many



benefits~ \iell, what will be the effect of all that, when you recollect all those past benefits, in relation to your reaction to the, just one hurtlthay happened to have done you. What ~ould be the effect of that "£

You will forgive them much more easily.

S: You will forgive them much more easily; you will put up with that single hurtful action much more easily, you will be more patient with them. So in this particular passage, the Bodhisattva bhumi of~maybe sGam.~o.pa now i~as it were ,asking you to take a wider view, ~omeone has done some harm to you in this life, has committed a hurtful action in relation to you, your natural tendency is to get impatient and feel angry, "but wait a minute',it says,\$y~~ are only thinking of the present life, there were previous lives, You must have been in contact with this person in previous lives, this person may have been a father,may have been a mother, may have been a brother, sister, may have done you alot of good. So think of that possibility too and not get angry with them just for what they are doing to you now in this life. So this again would be a possible reflection for you if you did believe at all firmly in previous exist£nces, if you did believe in karma and rebirth.

Sanghadevi: I find this much more easy to relate to.

S: Yes you expand the context, and this is what we find happening furthe~ down also. In a way you don't know. You could even say, well I don't actually have any recollection of those previously lives but it could be even if you are prepared to maybe recognize the possibility of that having been the case, that could have a somewhat calming effect upon your anger.

There is something in the phrase, broadening your mind. It is like having a big mind, a mind that encompasses the Universe of all people, you are maintaining equilibrium.

S: Yes you are not just being affected by what happens just here and now

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within the limits of the current lifetime. All right.

ii) the second means that this harmful person does evil because

of certain conditions~nd is bent on doing harm due to these circum- stances, and therefore it is only proper to be patient because there does not exist some absolute entity such as a Pure Ego(Atman), a mental substance, a life principle or a personality that is abusing, beating , reviling or finding faults.

S: One can look at this in two ways: first a sort of common sense sort of way. All right, someone performs a harmful action in relation to you, now why does he do that ? It isn't as though he is taking a sudden purely spontaneous dectsjon to do harm to you. He is affected by various causes,various conditions, he has been brought up in a certain way. His experience has been of a certain type, he has been conditioned in a certain direction and it is because of that that he has performed this hurtful action in relation to you, so when you see that, yQu are less inclined to be impatient and angry. Of course, the passage itself means it to be taken

more radically than that, that the so-called self that you see, the so-called person, the so-called being that you see apparently harming you, is really only an assemblage of certain elements and certain conditions, but you have to be careful how you pursue that line of thought, because it can end up in a sort of Nihilism. It can end up with a negation of individuality even in a relative sense and that is after all the basis that you take your stand for the purpose of spiritual development.

\_\_\_\_\_ : I remember somebody telling me once that they reckoned that people didn't really exist

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S. if we knew who they were, how they had been brought up, all that sort of thing. Maybe they didn't have bicycles of their own etc.

PAUSE

VOICE Bet they did!

S. Bet they did - probably more well off than you - that's another line of thought isn't it?

(laughter)

S. clearly however they'd been brought up, it wasn't having a very positive effect on them

they might have been unfortunate enough to come from very rich families.

SD. Why is it called 'Following only the dharma'? because it is

S. Where's that?

SD. Point two

at the top it's called 'Following only the dharma'. Is that because the Dharma teaches that there's no ~ elf?)

PAUSE

~S. Not so sure about this. It could mean dharma not in the sense of Dharma with a capital D but dharma in the small sense, in the sense of seeing - following or seeing things in terms of the constituent dharmas - of personalities rather than in terms of the illusory personality itself - because this is the same word that is always used. - you reduce the so called 'Ahtma' to a collocation of dharmas, that is to say residual psycho-physical events according to the Abhidharma.

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VOICE Could you explain that a little bit further 'cos I don't really understand it.

a. Well it's tied up with what I was talking about earlier on - no - was it in this group? - about the composite?

V. Yes.

S. Ah! - Well one experiences things as wholes, but if you look at them more closely you see that they are made up of parts; and if you can see them as made up of parts - if you can take them apart - then the attachment that one might have felt towards the whole can be removed; and this is an important part of Theravada practice in particular. And they, as it were, take apart the human individual in this sort of way. The body is made up of earth, water, fire, air and so on; or is made up of bones, blood, flesh, marrow. And the mind is made up of all sorts of mental states. In this way ultimately the whole psycho-physical personality is reduced to a limited number of psycho-physical events which are called dharmas. In other words what you think of as the personal is reduced to an impersonal stream of psycho-physical factors called dharmas. And this is this sort of approach - this sort of method is intended to reduce your attachment to things and to persons. But clearly one must be quite careful how one takes this because as in the example that Aia mentioned it can end up with your - you know - finding yourself in a rather alienated sort of state. I think personally this sort of approach is not suitable for the West. It doesn't seem to have that effect when people meditate in this sort of way in

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the East, that is to say Indians or (Ceylonese?) or Burmese or Thais; but western people seem to be more

prone to this sort of alienation. Therefore I don't particularly recommend it here - except in the form

of the Element meditation which seems to have a different sort of effect maybe because you're

concerned with concrete symbols, even with colours.

P. Are skandhas the same as dharmas?

S. No. Skandhas represent a sort of provisional

analysis. You've first of all got the so-called person, the so-called being. You subdivide them into nama and rupa, name and form. Then you can

subdivide 'name' into four. that is to say: vedana

J s&~r&\$ That gives you, with

rupa, your five skandhas. Then you can divide 'rupa' in the Abidharma into, say 28 as the Theravada does. And then you can divide 'e~n& into three: into rupa~

That can be subdivided

- I forget how many that can be

subdivided into - butveJ~~~~&can be~subdivided into the greatest number or to the greatest degree. In the Theravada Abhidharma that is subdivided into 89 or 121. So do you see what happens? that I think the danger lies if you think of the whole process as consisting in the reduction of the living individual into a limited number of unchanging parts - rather like you take apart a motorbike and find it consists of a number of parts. But I think this is not really how it should be taken. You should think in terms of the total process as comprising so many sort of subsidiary processes, as being something complex but in an

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organic sort of way, not in a mechanical sort of way. But very often in the East the way it is presented is as though it's a mechanical sort of taking apart~ not an organic sort of taking apart.

p. Didn't the Mahayana try to show that difference by showing the~ were empty as well?

S. Yes. The parts themselves were not ultimate. But I think that if one does adopt this approach at all be very careful to adopt it in a dynamic sort of way: not that the living human being is made up of a fixed number of unchanging dead parts but that it

- is not just a simple thing but a whole complex of living forces which are constantly interweaving. I thin~ one should think of it more in that sort of way.

VOT-CE That's why I think the six elements factor that works okay in the west (unclear

because it feels organic.

S. It does seem to

VOICE Using ~ater and air. I was just thinking being up here with the trees and things and nature and stuff that the idea of not being a fixed self seems much easier to swallow than in the town in some ways.

S. Sometimes you feel dead there as though you're made of reinforced concrete

(laughter) - but in 4 comparison with that it's much better to feel that you're like a tree or a flower than the wind.

VOICE I think in the East there must have been a ? with having more contact with the forces of life and death.

S. Oh indeed yes, yes.

VOICE .. and nature and here all we have is ourselves which

we are often alienated from - and packets of

crisps and everything is the nature we are used to.

S. If you think there are so many youngsters who spend their time playing with those little machines - what do you call those things?

VOICE Robots!

S. There are all sorts of them - there are many different kinds aren't there? - they're all horrible. You see them down in London sometimes - in some of those arcades there are hundreds of those little machines. They're all crammed with young people just playing with them - pause - So I think therefore one has to be quite careful how one approaches - you know - this sort of understanding of the alleged pure ego as consisting actually of dharmas. The dharmas are not things. The dharmas themselves are living processes. It's not as though if you analysed the individual he's made up of all different coloured little billiard balls. It's not really like that.

PAUSE

But anyway, to come back to the more common-sense way of looking at this - or interpreting this - if you can understand that someone who is being difficult or unpleasant or who is even causing harm to you - is not really doing it willfully - he's been as it were 'driven' to this: by the way in which he's been brought up, by the influences to which he's been subjected and so on, and (you know) this reflection can help you to be actually much more patient and to give way to anger much less.

PAUSE

All right: 3. Someone read 3.

LQI-E "The third thing that sentient beings are subject to death and the worst harm is to deprive them of their lives. Therefore since sentient beings by their very nature must die it is not proper to kill them. Hence we have to show patience."

S. Why is the first 'harm' is to deprive them of their lives?

SD. Well you've got a conscious body - you don't know what form they might turn up, they might have a worse life next time.

VOICE You're cutting off their chance of evolving.

S. Yes indeed. So this passage seems to envisage a situation in which you are so angry with someone who has hurt you that you're even tempted to deprive them of life - but you shouldn't. This seems to be an argument in a way, against the death sentence doesn't it? Not that people who themselves kill shouldn't be prevented from killing again but you should not deprive them of the opportunity of changing at all. It is possible - that people do change. They have to be neutralised but not annihilated.

PAUSE So this is also a reflection - you're unlikely to I think be in a situation where you feel like murdering someone - seriously I mean - as distinct from just that passing flash of murderous impulse. But if it does happen, well this is a reflection that can check you - that perhaps this person has been very very hurtful to you - but don't deprive him of life even so because he could change.

Human life is very precious - for him too. PAUSE

VOICE Is it possible in the course of evolution that we could reach a state where we don't kill each other in wars and things 'cos I believe there never has been a time where there has been peace.

S. Well it depends what you mean by we VOICE I mean the human race.

S. But there again it depends what you mean by the human race, because do you mean a sort of limited number of beings? Do you envisage those beings as constantly so to speak, reincarnating but then (you know) evolving in each life and then eventually reaching a state in which they continue to be reborn but they were completely non-violent and there was no war? Because you still have to take into consideration possibly the fact that beings are as it were, evolving from lower realms and reaching the ranks or gaining the ranks of the human race and are not so evolved, so it would seem as though, on those assumptions, you always have fresh recruits coming in who are less developed and prone to war and so on. Do you see what I mean?

VOICE I was thinking that it would be (Age of Kalayuga) that perhaps we've had it and that all the kind of doom stories perhaps, just us getting more and more murderous and things and we'll get closer to not having a skillful world to live in and that ° particularly lucky.

a I'm not so sure of that but I think there has been a change in people's attitudes in this respect since the last world war. It might even have started after the first World War, but certainly in connection with

the second world war. I'm talking mainly about the West now. There was formerly a great belief in progress, wasn't there? Not only a belief in material progress but a belief in the progress of the human race - that people were getting better and better - that the standard of human behaviour was improving - the old savage, barbaric practices were being weeded out? But then of course came the shock of the First World War in which millions of people were killed, after a whole century of peace - in Europe that is - with one or two small exceptions - but certainly no large scale war - and during those 100 years people had really believed that the human race was steadily improving. It had emerged from barbarism. It was civilised. It was cultured. This is what people believed in the West. So a great deal of this, I think, survived even the First World War. But then came the Second World War and what happened then? - what was it do you think .... maybe most of you don't see this - don't realise it because you're all (sort of) post Second World War, virtually. But what happened to change

people's view almost of human nature itself or certainly to disillusion them with regard to human progress as distinct from material progress? What was that?

VOICE The atom bomb.

S. The atom bomb? Yes I think that helped, but I think there was something even

VO~CE Was that nazism, the idea of ( ? ) The nazis yes, but what particular aspect of nazism?

~ Concentration camps.

Concentration camps, but no - even more specifically? VOICE Anti-semitism.

S. Anti-semitism, and the fact that six million Jews were liquidated virtually in cold blood by the Nazis and which was something that during the previous century people had sort of convinced themselves that human beings had got over. This sort of thing - they couldn't imagine that sort of thing happening - so therefore I mean the Second World War, after this liquidation of those six million Jews or so to speak of the death of so many millions of people in battle and sometimes in very unpleasant ways as in the case of the atom bomb - people started (you know) feeling again that there hadn't been any improvement in human nature - that human nature under the surface was as barbaric, and savage and brutal as ever, that there had been no moral progress - And this I think (you know) created a great change. I mean I'm old enough just to remember the times before the war and I'm sort of aware of a sort of change in people's thinking in this sort of way. It's reflected in the literature that one reads and even in philosophies perhaps like existentialism - So I think there was a sort of wave of optimism about human nature, perhaps starting with the French Revolution which seems to have been based, very broadly speaking, on the premise that human nature was essentially good but it had been fettered by institutions and that if only you removed the tyranny of Kings and priests, well then humanity would enjoy happiness, especially with all the material improvements and this sort of naive belief persisted. It underlies a lot of Marxism too; and this is why you read say the history of the revolution in Russia and what

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happened afterwards, it's very disillusioning because you get these people, these very genuine sincere people, apparently believing that once you had the revolution, you got rid of the Tzar and you nationalised everything - well it would be Heaven upon Earth virtually - they seem to have believed something like that. But they didn't take into account human nature. They didn't take into account the fact that human institutions far from crushing human nature, in many cases had restrained the beast in human nature. This was something which was not taken into account. So I think nowadays, broadly speaking, in the West, there is a much more sombre view of actual human nature than there was in the last century and up certainly to the time of the First World War and perhaps even afterwards. I don't think things are changed very much but it's as though that century of peace in Europe and the fact that there was a great material improvement did sort of induce people to think there had been a corresponding (material) improvement and I think that now we have awoken to the fact that there was not, and that people are no better in the mass than they have ever been before. You know if you think of people in the mass, what is 2000 years? what is 10,000 years? It is nothing. The individual may change but it's as though the mass of people, the group doesn't change. It's

only the material standard of living that improves - not human nature

So I'm very doubtful whether we can think in terms of 'ages'. Do you see what I'm getting at? and I don't believe you can speak in terms of an Aquarian

Age or a (Kaliyuga). With regards to the mass it is always~ the Kaliyuga and with regard to the individual, to the extent that he is an individual, it is always the Aquarian Age - you could put it like that. But it's not as if there's going to be some wonderful change in the Heavens and the planets are going to be differently related and because of that there's going to be a wave of peace and love going over the human race and that'll be the Aquarian Age. No! I think this is completely false.

P. This would seem to say then that we always have to work with the individual

S~. We always have to work with the individual!

P~ And if there were more and more individuals (unclear  
)

~S. And the spiritual fellowship of individuals has to infiltrate the group and influence it more and more. And I think the best ages of history from a say cultural and spiritual point of view have been those in which groups - one can only call them that - of individuals or certain individuals acting in association have had an unusually powerful influence on the whole group.

P. Do you mean like the Greeks? and the

S Yes ... though even there it was quite limited, it was usually limited to the cultural sphere. It didn't manage to stop brutal wars or anything like that; but there was some influence, a certain softening of the whole group ..., a certain refinement of the whole group at least.

VOICE It's useful sometimes to look and see yourself in the context of history.

S~ Yes indeed, yes indeed.

~. I feel a bit confused actually somehow because basically Buddhist teaching I think basically says that everybody has the germ of Buddhahood, so in a way there is an intrinsic goodness (unclear  
)

S. In a way - no - I wouldn't say 'intrinsic~goodness~' because Buddhahood is not good as distinct from evil, as it were, it goes beyond that distinction. I mean the fact that everybody contains the germ of buddha- hood really means that anybody can go in any direction ... PAUSE Do you see what I mean? .... (laughter) that you aren't bound to be in the future what you are now. You can change. It is not that you've got a sort of little lump inside you which is buddhahood. It means that your nature is, essentially, completely open. Of course to go from A to Z you have to go through all the intermediate steps, but you can do that. I mean whatever you are now you are not bound to be that through all eternity. You can change. That is what is meant by saying that you are

essentially Buddha ....?



P. But what it actually seems to be is that you're so embroiled in greed, hatred and delusion, that en masse it isn't (unclear )

S. But I have noticed that people, let's use the neutral word 'peo~le' for the moment - people really behave differently the larger the group that they are in. I think it is very important to get people away f~om the group or to get a few of them on their own together. I'm afraid you notice this even with - in the context of a community. After all I live in a sense in, in a sense not in, a community here in

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Padmaloka and I really study the situation. You know for me it's like a little laboratory (laughter) Usually they don't realise I'm studying everything that happens but I am; and I notice that if there are 10 community members present it is quite different from when there are 5 community members present. ~hen there are 10 co=unity members present, that's not all that many, it is a little bit more like a group. When there are 5 community members present, say, at a meeting, it is a little bit less like a group. Because if there is only 5 of you say, there is a greater possibility of you all being aware of one another as individuals. But if there are 10 of you it is very much more difficult. Now how much more difficult it would be if there were a hundred or a thousand. Now we know that there have been

- occasions, say at Order Meetings, when there have been 40 or 50 people present but it has not been a group - especially I believe more recently, when occasionally there has been silence for half an hour, and Order Members have just sat you know and looked round at one another .... and that's been much more like a spiritual community than like a group. But where you get a lot of people together, even Order Members, it very easily becomes a group. It's much more difficult to be an individual if there's a lot of other people even if those other people are also capable of being individuals. So this is why one really has to work with individuals. You can't say work with 10,000 people. When you're, say, giving a lecture to 10,000 people you're not really addressing them as individuals. That's very

difficult. So I think it's quite important to work with individuals, individuals in the sense of one person at a time, two or three persons at a time, or four or five or ten or twelve persons at a time. I think this is the only way in which one can do anything really worthwhile

if one does, for instance, writing or painting then also in a way you're dealing with the individual because your books is read by one person separately - so that is ~n individual communication - your picture is looked at by one person. You don't often get more than two or three people looking at the same picture, in the sense of the same version or same reproduction of the picture. So I think we can only affect the mass through the individual, through the spiritual community which consists of small numbers of individuals operating together. So it's no wonder that nations and political parties do all these dreadful things because when people function in that sort of way, in the mass, they sink to the lowest common denominator - you can feel it in yourself, I'm sure, if you're observant.

VOICE This is a side track really, but do you see then that certain media like film, television - there's communication to a mass group.

~. It does seem like that doesn't it yes eh? It seems like - it has been said - I read this recently - I'm still thinking about it - that when a number of people see a film together it's much more of an anonymous group experience or just say group experience than when the same number of people see a live theatrical performance. Now why do you think that is? Is there a difference? In what way?

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P. In my experience it is quite different.

S. It is different. I mean one knows that seeing a film is a different experience from witnessing a live dramatic performance - but in what way is it different in these terms? that is to say with regards to it's being more or less of a group experience?

SD. Because the people are acting, interact with the audience, and if they look at the audience they're going to look at one person at a time (unclear

S. Ah! MM.'

Because you've got live people on the stage, eh? yes? and those people are interacting with the audience. Even if they're interacting with them more or less, en masse, at least there is interaction of some kind and to that extent it's a bit more personal, a bit more individual.

PAR. Also each performance is a new one rather than the celluloid version which is ~tuck (unclear - voices ) VOICE Films can be very manipulative as well. They can appeal to ~ mass emotions. S. Mm.' Mm! Well drama can too, the live theatre can too ... presumably? VOICE X Films can be particularly subjective (unclear the ones that you don't see - because they don't have box office success but they are ... it is a possible (unclear ) S. Yes that's true. VOICE Y I'm just reminded of a story I read in the newspaper I told a couple of people - that - seems to be connected - that - about the difference between having live people

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and a film. Apparently in this cinema in the north somewhere they were showing 'Gone With The Wind' and the minute before the end the film broke down, and so everybody was there with their handkerchiefs at the ready for the big sad ending ... and the film broke down, so the assistant manager and the ice-cream girl turned up ... they acted it because they'd seen it before a few times ... so they sort of acted out the last minut~ ... and apparently they got this amazing applause °.. I find it quite

S. It fulfilled a lifetime ambition (laughter - yes!) VOICE Y It sort of quite struck me in a way because I think

showing films is rather impersonal in a way and suddenly there's these two people up there acting the end. (laughter)

S. Yes. Mm .. Mm (Pause)

Well it's as though, I mean, er, one hasn't perhaps quite dealt with the question of the group eh? or rather perhaps one hasn't looked at the question of the extent to which interaction nourishes the sense of individuality. Because, in the case of the cinema audience, there's no interaction between the audience and the figures on the screen, whereas there is an interaction between

VOICE Feedback.

~S. Eh?

V~ Feedback.

S. Feedback, yes, that in the case of the live theatre there is an interaction, there is a feedback er you know between the people on the stage and the people in the audience, so is it that that makes the difference? Is it that which determines the fact

that the theatre audience is less of a group than the cinema audience? Or is it some other factor?

(Pause) VOICE Like what? (Laughter)

S. I don't know! ... Is it that sort of feedback factor which makes the theatre group less of a group, and if so how? how does it work?

VOICE X ... it's sort of dynamic and sort of incorporated change.

S. Ah, yes mm yez mm. VOICE X .. and attitudes change.

S. In other words you could say that the cinema a~dience is more homogenous and therefore more of a group, whereas in the case of the theatre audience it is more heterogenous eh? that is to say it is more differentiated, more broken up, as it were, eh? Would you say tha~ was so?

SD. Not necessarily, I mean I think you can watch a film, I mean if you're sufficiently in contact with yourself your experience may be completely different from the person sitting next to you, whereas perhaps in the theatre sometimes you may get swept up by the (unclear )

S. Live emotion.

VOICE You do have a certain opportunity in the theatre to influence the acting.

S. Mm~ yes, that's true, yes.

VOICE You can by your response to the, you know, good or bad, or whatever, you can affect the actors.

S. This is only to underline the whole aspect of feed- back but what I'm asking ~s~ you know, is it the fact that there is feedback in live theatre which

makes, perhaps, the live theatre audience less of a group, or would you perhaps not agree that the live theatre group, or you know the live theatre audience is less of a group than the cinema audience?

VOICE It depends on the production - some theatre groups are particularly alive to the modern - er er - frame of mind when they come to the theatre and will encourage participation - by ...

S. But is that necessarily individual participation, I mean in the real sense, participation by

individuals as individuals?

(Pause)

VOICE Well I would think some are striving for that, yes.

S. Whereas in the cinema audience there is no possibility of that at all unless you throw something at the screen - which occasionally happens of course.

VOICE Or else you walk out.

S. Or else you walk out, yeh - but that's opting out in a sense I suppose.

PAR. It doesn't actually affect the film.

S. Mm. Mm.

LIZ Films can sometimes feel much more of an imposition on one. I've sort of left a film and felt the audience being very subdued as if they'd been landed something - you know - which they didn't really want but nobody walked out .. It was sort of

S. Disgruntled perhaps.

LIZ Yes it had them in their power um a bit washed out. PAR. You can get that in the theatre as well. I mean I've

come out after "Richard III" and had e~actly that feeling.

(Pause)

S. Mm. Mm.

VOICE (Unclear ) something to do with directness?

S. Mm. Mm. Directness?

VOICE From what I've seen of sort of live theatre like ... my perception of what's going on is a lot clearer somehow than of um a screen, like the

screen (unclear ) is made up of

little dots and those sort of dots make up people... which is in a sense I suppose the same thing but like everything seems a lot more clear and sharp and sort of like emotions are stronger when I actually see someone sort of there.

S. Mm yes, it does seem as though the live theatre experience is more energising ... would you say that, eh?

VOICE I think there is a lot more energy flow between the actors and the audience, and also I think a lot more identification goes on. You can identify

with a live person on the stage (unclear ) you can't do that to the same extent (unclear ....)

S. I'm not sure about that.

(Voices saying ?Ino~~ etc.)

S. I mean the way people identify with popular films tars (Pause)

Anyway leave aside that particular comparison, that is to~say between the theatre audience and the cinema audience; but it does seem to be a fact that the larger the group within which you find yourself, regardless of the nature of that group, the less likely you are to behave as an individual. And therefore from the point of view of the development

of individuality it is quite important to have contact with people, in a quite intensive sort of way er - within - er - a relatively limited context - just a few people at a time - mm?

SD. I've certainly been finding that at the LBC in terms of teaching and er - with the beginners meditation classes they(re an effective way to first introduce people to the Friends and the Dharma but it's been hitting me, more and more, that it's the one to one contact that have been getting people into small study groups that (unclear ) that's what reallr (unclear )

S. Mm, yes, yes. Of course it's harder work. It requires you know more people, but of course it's much more re~arding, more effective, yes.

VOICE In fact I have said to someone "Don't come on Wednesday!" because she ... I ... described that there were quite a lot of people and she said "Oh no! I don't want that" so I ... was ... told her to rather go on Sunday ... because ... in fact

S. Mm, Mm. I think I've heard of other people doing, of suggesting that someone shouldn't come along on a particular evening, just because there would be so many people. On the other hand one has to be a little careful of that because some people have got this sort of er - pseudo~aristocratic attitude - "Oh I don't want to be there with a lot of other people" as though "I'm sort of a bit special" as it were. Do you see what I mean? I want sort of special treatment, not that they're necessarily, you know, more of an individual than other people are. So one has to watch that too .. Hmm? There's

a sort of snobbishness almost, in some cases, eh?

P. I think sometimes people are just quite scared as well, if they go into something and they find another 50 people there, that they don't know

S. Some are scared if they find a few people - some are more scared - because it's more personal, more intimate. One of our community members met a sort of a friend of a friend in Norwich and told him, well invited them, for the Open Day.

Apparently it wasn't quite clear; the Community member didn't exactly say 1Open D~yfl but he just said something about coming along on that particular day

and (unclear . ) friend of a friend was

quite pleased and said "Oh yes I'll come and bring my wife" and then he said "Well, is anybody else coming?" so the Community member said "Oh yes, it'll be Open Day, there'll be

about another hundred people there" and at once that person's face fell, and he wasn't so sure that he wanted to come. And the Community member got the impression he just didn't want to be treated as, you know, one out of another hundred people, and the Community member remarked that there seemed to be a sort of element

of shabbiness in that - elitism. VOICE But if it gets over that initial barrier - if they don't get put off (unclear )

S. Well the main thing is to get people along, obviously, so you can sort out you know difficulties of that nature later on once you've got them along. If you know they'd rather come when there are lots of people, well invite them when there are lots of people. If you know they'd rather come when there

there was just a few people, well invite them you know when there's going to be just a few people, regardless of their actual motives for wanting to come along in either case. But certainly the more intensive work is done within the~smaller groups, for want of a better term, and, you know, in the one to one contact, so one really needs to make provision for that all the time. But if you think, if every Order member, every Mitra, every year, simply brought

along one other person, every year the whole Movement would double. That's all you need to do, just one other person. If everybody does that .. well .. we'd double every year. That's quite a thought isn't it? (Pause)

But we're not doubling every year, unfortunately, so it means that people are not doing even that. It seems to be left to a few specialists like Devamitra who really goes out and gets them, and drags them in you know, and they love it.' (Laughter) and stay in many cases. Or like Lokamitra used to do He used to pummel~ you into it eh? kick you into it, bully you into it (Laughter) but he got you ordained in the end anyway by hook or by crook ... anyway, let's go on. Four!

P. "Misery means that all sentient beings are affected by its three types. Not wanting them to experience the brand~that~ought to be removed~I must because of this reflection on misery have patience with the harm they do."

S. (pause) hmm. So "misery means that all sentient beings are affected by its three types"? Do you know what the three types of misery, of suffering,

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or dukkha are? ... it's a standard Buddhist teaching, you ought to know?

SD. ... impermanence? Is it the three marks or conditions?

S. Ah! No it's not that. It's the three kinds of misery or suffering.

VOICE (Unclear )

(Laughter)

S. Don't (Unclear )

It's simple You've come across it lots of times before, I'm sure. C ) the three kinds of suffering.

VOICE (Unclear )

S. No~ no. Not the occasions of suffering.

VOICE There's one: dukkha that is dukkha.

END OF 1ST SIDE OF TAPE

S. Yes, that's right, yes. Yes it's the dukkha that is dukkha, that is to say, pain that is pain. If someone say sticks a needle in your finger well that's the pain which is pain. And then there is the pain due to transformation, when something that is pleas~nt becomes painful or that you experience, you know, pleasure at first when you possess something pleasurable, and, you know, when you lose that thing the pleasure is turned into pain, due to the loss. That is the pain due to transformation. And then there is kunda dui~ha - the pain due to the fact that something is of a conditioned nature and cannot give you any ultimate satisfaction. These are the three kinds of suffering or three kinds of 'misery' as Guenther translates it. (Pause)

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So misery means that all sentient beings are

affected by its three types. We all suffer, in

t'

these three different ways. "Not wanting them ,

that is to say sentient beings "to experience the brand that ought to be removed, I must, because of this reflection on misery, have patience with the harm they do."

Well this is as though you just reflect, well people have to suffer so much, (tape fault) in these three differ~nt ways - alright, even though they have done me harm, never mind, let me not add to their sufferings, let me rather remove their sufferings.

It's as though even though they deserve to suffer in a sense, for what they've done to you - but they are suffering already in so many ways - so don't make things worse for them even though they have committed some hurtful action against you - that seems to be the meaning.

SD. These particular C ) seem to involve quite a lot of compassion.

S. Mm! Yes, that's true! or at least 'goodheartedness' (Pause)

Fifth idea - someone like to read that?

VOICE "The fifth idea means that to accept all sentient beings as my wife

~~~ I shall work for their benefit in developing an attitude directed towards enlightenment. When we accept them in this way we show patience because we reflect that it is not reasonable to retaliate for the smallest harm done,"

S. In Tibetan Buddhism very often it is said that one must regard all living beings as one's mother. We

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went into this in the course of the last study retreat quite exhaustively. One should reflect that all sentient beings at some time or other in the course of previous lives have been one's own mother and therefore one should, you know, have the appropriate attitude of loving kindness towards them. But here the statement is made that one should accept all sentient beings as one's wife - thinking that I should work for their benefit in developing one attitude directed towards enlightenment - what does this mean? How does one take, or accept all sentient beings as one's wife or one's wives? How does this work?

VOICE Is it something to do with as a husband you - sort of - take care of and look after certain aspects

S. Yes indeed. This is after all in the Indo-Tibetan context, not in the context of working wives. Do you see what I mean? It's as though you as a Bodhisattva are working towards enlightenment for the benefit of all living beings. In the same way the ordinary householder, the ordinary man, the ordinary husband is working to gain wealth, to gain money for the sake of his wife, for the sake of his family - so even though between husband and wife various little difficulties and disturbances may arise - they're contained, so to speak, within that framework. They're incidental. I mean the husband doesn't stop working and earning money for the sake of the wife just because of some little passing tiff. He goes on working and earns as usual. In the same way the Bodhisattva, even though other living beings may do him harm, goes on working just in the same

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way to gain enlightenment so that he can benefit them. So do you think this is a very realistic attitude to adopt towards other living beings?

SD. Easier for a man!



S. Easier for a man - presumably yes, in psychological terms I suppose. VOICE I think the word to 'cherish' as being rather applicable here (Unclear)

VOICE Do you think for a woman, you know, it could be dodgy, there's a more 'maternal' aspect that comes in, the way a mother looks after her children.

S. As you say it's 'dodgy' just because the whole thing of maternity is so dodgy and difficult to transpose from the biological to the psychological, and from the psychological to the spiritual ... presumably. If one can be a spiritual mother to all living beings - well what could be better than that? But one must be sure one is doing it in a spiritual sense and not just 'mothering' people, in order to satisfy an unfulfilled biological urge; or even psychological urge.

V3~(r. To m~ it suggested an element of something new in this lifetime~ because if you treat all sentient beings like your mother you have your mother anyway - naturally. But with a wife, although in India you would be given ... it might be arranged to quite a large extent - in a sense it's something that your will could be involved in - you haven't chosen it in the east, but it would be a 'new'

S. Well you gladly accept it even if you haven't chosen it - you go along with it very willingly and happily. You gladly accept the wife or the husband, as the

case may be, provided for you by your parents. You have full confidence in their choice. This is what usually happens.

VOIC~ But it's something more to do with choice than your mother.

S. Yes. You've no choice as regards your mother, except in purely Karmic terms of course!

PAR. It is very difficult to relate to this whole passage in this day and age I think - even probably for men.

S. You could look at it in another way, you could say for instance (I may be getting into rather dodgy ground myself here, but we'll see!) (laughter) You could for instance think of the Order in

masculine terms. I mean Order including both and And the FWBO in feminine-terms in the sense that the Order works for the whole movement. Do you see what I mean? Just as the Bodhisattva works for all sentient beings. Could you not think in those sort of terms? As though the Order is collectively the husband and the rest of

the movement collectively is the wife. (Laughter)

S. Do you see what I mean? Because the Order in relation to the rest of the movement does take more initiative and does accept a greater responsibility - just as the Bodhisattva does in relation to sentient beings. See what I mean? Of course there's always the possibility of crossing over. After all the supply of sentient beings is inexhaustible.

LIZ I wouldn't in that respect quite understand what role the feminine side would play. I see femininity maybe as being something a bit em ... could be quite cosy,

quite intimate.

S. Well one could define the feminine as the supportive.

So if one thinks of~ say, the movement (apart from the Order) as being feminine, one thinks of it as 'supportive'. That is to say whether in the case of men or in the case of women who are not Order members but part of the movement, they are supportive rather than take initiative. Whereas in the case of women Order members, even though they are women, predominantly they take initiative in relation to the non-Order members whether they are male or female - see what I mean?

So in that sense, as it were, one could say that the Order was the husband, and the Mitras and Friends

the wife.

LIZ I don't know whether I could agree with the fact that it's always the masculine that takes the initiative. I would say that feminine have a different way of initiating things.

S. That is true also, if you are thinking in terms of individual women. But one can use feminine as a sort of symbol, so to speak, for the supportive, use masculine as a symbol as it were for that which takes initiative because, as I've said, in the case of the Order collectively, which takes initiative, it comprises women as well as men. And in the case of the rest of the movement, which is supportive, it comprises men as well as women.

(SARAH) For the sake of the present feeling of women, it's best to redefine the terms and not always attach supportiveness to femininity.

S. Well one doesn't in a way because one says that

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within the context of the movement it is the mitras and friends, say, regardless of whether they are male or female who are predominantly supportive so one does not attach 'supportiveness' only to females but to males as well in accordance to their spiritual attitudes so to speak.

(Pause)

One could redefine the feminine as that which takes the initiative and the masculine as that which is supportive but perhaps that would be too far from the facts of psychology and certainly our cultural heritage for it to be at all convincing.

Do you see what I mean? In other words the distinctions

aren't altogether arbitrary.

(Pause)

But "all sentient beings as one's wife"?

(Pause)

Maybe it is more difficult for a woman to feel that. In a way no reason why they shouldn't. I

mean if a woman's committed herself spiritually, she's taken an active role - not a one-sidedly active role, but an active role spiritually speaking. So presumably (one) should be able to think of all sentient beings who aren't taking that role, including men as well---s women, as being her or his wife ...

(Pause, some laughter)

well it just goes to show that we mustn't identify with gender too closely. If we start getting a bit confused it means we have identified rather strongly with a particular gender doesn't it eh? We can say if we're an Order Member we can say we're spiritually the husband so to speak. If we're not

we're spiritually the wife, regardless of our actual sex.

(Laughter)

Of course that's just one way of looking at it. (Laughter)

As I say, as an Order Member you're expected to be spiritually androgenous; that's looking at it from another point of view. You're expected to balance the so-called 'masculine' and so-called 'feminine' qualities. But just from this particular point of view, presumably with regard to spiritual initiative and responsibility, the Bodhisattva thinks of himself as the husband and ... the Bodhisattva whether male or female technically ... thinks of himself as the husband and all sentient beings as the wife for whom he must care, for whom he must earn the riches, the wealth of Enlightenment of Buddhahood.

VOICE It does fit in with the other verses because sort of

(unclear ) treating someone who

comes up and gives you a kick (unclear ) S Or - if you regard all sentient beings as your wife even if they do commit some hurt - it's just like your own wife throwing the rolling pin at your head. You don't - I don't say you don't take it seriously - but it's no occasion for a permanent breach, or doing her real injury. You go on working and earning for her just the same. It's just an incidental thing. P/14. It implies some kind of connection doesn't it? S. It implies connection, too, yes. It implies commitment because if you speak in terms of husband and wife, well that's marriage, and marriage is presuma~bly a commitment. So it's as though you're wedded to sentient beings, you can't divorce them.

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You're landed with them just as you're landed with your wife

(Laughter)

for better or for worse! Yeh?

So you're landed with sentient beings, you've got to work for them. You've got to look after them. This is how the Bodhisattva should look at it.

P/1~. Rather than sort of think you're nothing to do with me.

S. Right, yes, yes, - my responsibility! C ) not just my responsibility - just as in the case of ordinary marriage you want that responsibility, you're happy with the responsibility, you willingly discharge it.

VOICE That connects in my mind with what we were talking about yesterday about learning to be more articulate in putt~ng across your vie~qs about Buddhism and not just thinking it doesn't really matter, you know, you don't really care about (unclear .0...) you're not prepared to try and convince them. C

I felt that working outside the movement. I felt I failed in that responsibility if I just allowed myself to sink in with the general

S. Yes, well, again this is an example of what I was talking about before - about the individual being submerged in the group and the larger the group the more easily you become submerged. It's not easy to stand up and be an individual in relation to the group and say what you believe and what you stand for. But one does have to learn to do this.

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VOICE I did feel I - let down - responsibilities by not making more effort

ySARAH~; I find that confidence comes in because of - you have to believe in your own potential of developing the p~wer to express things to other people before you actually feel you can be in a position

S. Sometimes you discover that you can inkact of just trying, of actually doing it. It's not that you feel convinced first that you've got the capacity before actually entering into any situation, and then enter into it. Sometimes you just can't know whether you've got the capacity unless you enter into the situation. So if you wait until you feel that you've got the capacity perhaps you never, then, enter into the situation.

SARAH) The encouragement is a practical experience whether it comes from someone pushing you into it or yourself.

S. Yes.

P/M. I don't think it's always lack of confidence. I think with me sometimes I really just can't be bothered quite honestly.

S. Yes well one doesn't care enough about people or maybe you've had enough of people for the time being.

SARAH\ That doesn't explain it to me 'you just can't be bothered I really.

VOICE tt takes a certain amount of energy to get across to people, to communicate, and if you're in a situation where people aren't really communicating,

everyone's sort of C ) away.

I mean you can easily just get into that.

S. I think even in a quite ordinary C

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SARAH I mean it just labels it. It doesn't explain it to me.

S. Well one can perhaps go further. One thing I've noticed is that it's important~say, if you want to function in a Centre and run a Centre, or start a Centre - you've got to like people - this is becoming very obvious in the case ~certain Centres, and certain people involved with Centres. You've got to like people, otherwise you haven't a hope (Laughter)

of setting up a Centre.

You've got to like them. That's got to come first because otherwise if you don't like them you won't want to communicate with them. If you don't communicate with them there's no energy. So anyway if you see them sitting around all dull and listless, it's not even a question of whether you feel the energy to communicate or not, but do you like people? Do you want to communicate with them. If you don't you can do very little. You may know the Dharma backwards but you won't be able to start a Centre - not a real live Centre. Some people don't like people very much. Others like them much more. This is why it's said in the case of a Bodhisattva - in the case of a Bodhisattva even sins committed through attachment are not as serious as sins committed through anger. Because attachment at least shows an inclination towards other living beings. (Laughter)

And this is what a Bodhisattva needs above everything else. Do you see what I mean?

Pm Maybe the ones who don't like people are the ones who remain spiritual 'bachelors'

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S. Say that again.'

(Laughter)

Pm. If you don't like people maybe you'd remain a spiritual 'bachelor' - you wouldn't take on a wife.

S. Or a spiritual 'virgin

Pm Or a spiritual virgin.

S. Yes, that's right, you don't take on a spiritual wife. Yes, that's a good way of putting it. Yes. That's what a pratika Buddha is - a spiritual bachelor~.

(Laughter)

So you could say - enlarging rather than restricting - if people came along to the FWBO and happen to be married and maybe they don't want not to be married, you shouldn't as a matter of tactics say "well if you want to get anywhere in the FWBO you ought to leave your wife or leave your husband. Instead of that you say "Fine, just take everybody as your wife. Regard

all sentient beings as your wife. Marry the whole universe." You may be saying in effect the same thing but you're putting it in such positive terms, and including their present situation, rather than excluding it, that they find it much more acceptable. Say "No, we're not against marriage. We want everybody to be married. We want everybody to be married to everybody. Because in the Bodhisattva sense of course you take responsibility for all sentient beings. You do your best for them, cherish them," so maybe that's better than saying "Take all sentient beings as your children and care for them" because that might sound a bit patronising. But if you say "Take all

sentient beings as your wife or as your husband" then it doesn't sound so patronising - it's more on a level as it were.

(Pause)

SD. Where did you say that quote came from about attachment?

S. Oh that's in the . Siksha Samuccaya of Shantideva, quoting from one of the Mahayana Sutras - it's in the Order library.

(Pause)

But yes this liking for people is very important if you're going to work with people. You can't work with them unless you like them. It doesn't mean that you've got to be sentimental, or anything of that sort. I mean a genuine honest liking and caring, and concern for people. And you must be able to show it~ It must be evident. It mustn't be something you lock away in your heart, presenting a gruff stern exterior. That won't do. It's got to be evident. People have got to feel it. It's got to be tangible - that you like people. (Pause)

And you mustn't like them because they're likeable - you've just got to like them.

P/M. I think that's difficult. I think I've got a tendency

to like people to begin with but I'm perfectly open to the fact I might like them. But then as I get to know them I start .. to .. sometimes

S. You mean you find out how stupid they really are! P/M. Yes something like that .. sometimes it's quite hard

to be consistently

S Yes, yes - well one has one's own limits because one

has to recognise that yes it's good to communicate, it's good to be with people, but it's also good to be alone. If you start feeling overwhelmed by people, or oppressed by people then you'll start feeling a bit of resistance or even disliking them. So you have to balance things out and spend some time away from people and apart from people on your own. I think this is necessary. Even if you do like people very much and very sincerely it's not easy to spend all your time with them.

It also depends on the degree of intensity of communication. If you're just with them but not much happens in the way of communication - that can be a bit frustrating and you may get tired of them. But the chances are that if you like people you'll put a lot of energy into your communication with them. The communication will deepen and become real communication and you yourself will be nourished by that and you'll be more and more glad to communicate

with people and be with people and help people if you can. So I don't really think you can have - this is what I'm really saying in Buddhistic terms - you can't really have a Buddhist movement, or run a Buddhist movement, unless you've got quite a large dose of Bodhisattva spirit. If you're working in or around the Centre this is what you've got to have. This is what works the magic as it were, not your scholarly knowledge of the Dharma or anything like that. It's just your liking for people, your ability to communicate with them and put across the Dharma in a friendly natural sort of way.

(Pause)

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Anyway - those are the five ideas by which patience is developed. I think we'll have to leave the rest until tomorrow. So any point arising out of what we've done today that isn't quite~clear? We've learned quite a lot about patience204 haven't we?

VOICES Mm, yes.

S. Do you feel that you've got more of a feeling for

patience now? - in this the ordinary sense that we've discussed so far. We'll be going into it in some metaphysical depth perhaps tomorrow.

P/M. I think I'm ge~ting the feeling that I don't have much feeling for it.

S. (Pause) My own personal204 feeling is that we don't

have much patience for other people. This is what I observe. We make lots of allowances for ourselves and we're quite patient with our own weaknesses and our own shortcomings. But we don't extend the same patience or the same tolerance to other people very often. I'm speaking of within the movement. What it's like in the world outside - well, I hardly dare to think. But even within the movement one

finds this: Don't you think? Don't you see this? Does that connect with - VOICE ... on the convention when you were talking about

people not.. being too ready to criticise other people and not enough~to rejoice in merits...?

S. Yes, indeed!

VOICE . 'cause that seems to have had quite an effect on people working together particul~rly. I've been in situations where people didn't work together well before - now there's more understanding

S. appreciate one another.

VOICE . m'o~?r'204e appreciation, yes.

S. . understanding, well, people do have their

difficulties. We so easily criticise people, find fault without understanding.204 We say 'Oh we haven't seen him around the Centre for the last two weeks, I suppose he's cooled off now!' We don't know what has happened. His Wife might be ill, his children might be in hospital. He might have lost his job. He might have had an accident. We don't even wait to find out what is the position.

At once we start criticising This is what very often happens. VOICE  
Somebody at West London ( ) used to come

really regularly and then started coming a bit less regularly; and actually it was because she was finding a conflict between Buddhism which she was beginning to feel really strongly for, and her job, her boyfriend and stuff. So in actual fact things were deepening but because of that she was feeling she couldn't come every week because it was too painful. But you could easily have thought 'Oh she's not really interested.~

S. just losing interest! Yes, indeed, yes. I should be very slow to judge people in that sort of way. Always give them the benefit of the doubt because one always gives oneself the benefit of the doubt.

VOICE - bit of a double standard really isn't it?

S. Indeed it is, yes! Always be encouraging rather than just critical Criticise openly and honestly if that seems to be needed, but be no less enthusiastic and appreciative about what people are doing. People often do need encouragement. They do need support.

P/M. Also it does quite often bring out the best in people if they are encouraged, and if you~really see the best in people and look for that side, quite often that's what you'll get. Whereas if you're more likely to criticise then that's what you're going to get ( )

VOICE I think I used to feel like that - if someone wasn't coming in. Well that's a gross example but I'd immediately feel well I don't like them. I think it's a sort of tendency to want everything sorted out and clear, well they're in or they're out.

VOICE Impatience! (Laughter)

VOICE Well, yes, impatience - rather than letting the situation sort of ...

S. Flow ... People's lives are often quite complicated.

There are many factors that work in them. A lot of things they have to take into consideration. In the case of those who are well and truly in the FWBO, especially the Order Members who are in communities and co-ops, they've simplified their lives to an incredible degree. And they might find it quite difficult to understand the situation or sympathise with the situation of someone whose life is much more complicated. They've got to take all sorts of things into consideration, maybe an aged mother who's living with them and they're looking after. They can't just abandon her, just put her into an old folks home. That's something they have to take:~~into consideration.

VOICE Is that something that happens quite often - you lose touch with what is out there, in the outside world?



S. Yes. I think there is that in a sense it is good that you do, but again in a sense you must be careful in dealing with people who are still living out there in that world ... and not have unreasonable expectations of them.

VOICE I feel that this comes back indirectly to what ~anahadevi was saying before about making personal contact with people who are coming along to the Centre; because if you make contact with someone who isn't in a community, then you can keep a check-~p on what they're doing (Unclear ) other people.

S. Yes - you know what is their actual experience. You know what is happening to them. You know the way things are with them ... yes, and if necessary you can keep others informed, who may not know.

P/M. (Unclear ) in West London because the numbers - say for instance we have a regular Friends night and we really know everyone who comes, but once it gets bigger

it gets much more difficult to deal with.

S. It's too much to make the effort ( ) And certainly if you don't know what a person's situation is, refrain from judging and refrain from criticising. At least you can do that.

We should rejoice in their merits that they come

at all!

Ah well, let's leave it there. Tomorrow we'll

finish patience and make a start with vigour!

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The Perfection of Patience

Day 4 Tape 1

S. Well, now we're still on the Perfection of Patience and we have to make sure we don't get lost in all this classification. So far actually, we've been dealing with the threefold classification. Patience which is ready to cope with a harmful person, puts up with misery and is ready to investigate the nature of the whole of reality. We've finished with the first of these, that is to say, that patience which is ready to cope with a harmful person. We come on

now to the second type of patience which puts up with misery. -

"B. The second (ii) type of patience, which puts up with misery, means not to be fatigued by hardships involved in realizing unsurpassable enlightenment (82a) and to accept them joyfully. This is stated in the 'Byan.sa' (Bodhisattvabhumi):

~T0204204A~c~ptc204th~204[~i~ht hardships inseparable from life. They are essentially the hardship of (i) finding

clothes and food after renouncing the life of a householder. (ii) worshipping and revering the Three Jewels and the spiritual teachers. (iii) listening to the Dharma. (iv) explaining. (V) discussing and (vi) making a living experience of it, (vii) devoting ourselves to 5 ritual exercises instead of sleep in the first and

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S. last parts of the night, and (viii) the hardships that result from striving to do all this for the sake of sentient beings. One must accept them without getting tired of the consequences such as fatigue, weariness, heat cold, thirst, hunger and disturbance of mind. It is, for example, like accepting the misery of being bled in order to relieve the agony of a virulent disease. As is said in the 'sPyod.'jug' ('Bodhicaryavatara' VII, 22):

The misery I have to endure in realizing Enlightenment is measurable:

It is like probing a wound

To stop the pain caused by what is lodged therein.'

S. So, let's take a look at that.

The second type of patience, which puts up with misery means not to be fatigued by hardships involved in realising unsurpassable enlightenment and to accept them joyfully. So what do you especially notice about this? ~iSe~ry~ here seems to represent du~a which is usually translated as suffering or unsatisfactoriness. So the second kind of patience which puts up with - maybe puts up with isn't quite the right phrase here because it means not to be fatigued by hardships involved in realising unsurpassable enlightenment and to accept them joyfully. If you accept them joyfully in a sense they're not miseries, they're not hardships - do you see, do you understand what is meant? - this joyful acceptance of hardships?

Sangha devi It seems that's all part of the process of growing.

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S. Yes, yes, it's quite important that when you engage in any activity and encounter difficulties and obstacles, experience hardships you don't start feeling resentful or you don't carry on those activities in a grudging sort of way but you actually feel joyful. I think this is very important. This morning

Faith It requires quite a different attitude to like something.

S. Yes indeed.... I was going to say this morning in the other group we got on to community living and the common purse situation and it was mentioned that sometimes the common purse situation results in a certain amount of incidental hardship but in a community where there is the right spirit you'll enjoy that even though you're a bit hard up and you haven't got everything you might want or even that you need but none the less you participate in that experience and you, as it were, share those hardships joyfully - you accept the situation. In a sense you don't feel the hardships as hardships - you see that they are hardships but perhaps you don't quite feel it because there are so many other compensating factors. So it's quite important from the point of view of the Bodhisattva Ideal that if you undergo hardships at ~IIObjectively speaking you mustn't really experience them as hardships. It must be a joyful acceptance. Do you think this sometimes happens that we sort of just go on slogging away in a dull, dispirited kind of fashion not really enjoying it, just very conscious of the difficulties and the hardships and even the misery of it - and just trying to convince ourselves - well it's doing us good.

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Anne It seems to be ~hen you loose touch of the vision that that happens.

S. Yes.

Sarah In my experience I've put up with not spending a lot on clothes and I think in that way kind of accepted it so that I just had clothes which weren't very expressive of myself and then I was trying to look at it in a more joyful way and connect it with enjoyment and actually be inspired by other people to look for clothes which, say in jumble sales and all sorts of places which were colourful or which expressed myself just as much as something which cost about twenty guineas.

San ha

evi I find it quite helpful to just read bits that say in a sense there are hardships because I often get sort of bogged down in experiencing things as being important and thinking well I shouldn't, well in a sense you shouldn't but it also helps to realise that in a certain sense there

are hardships.

S. Well, it's both. Objectively, yes there is hardship. You might even feel it's a hardship, even feel it physically, but at the same time sort of interfusing that experience there is none the less the feeling of joyfulness or joyful acceptance. You might be hungry, I mean it's not that you don't experience the hunger, you do, but at the same time you feel joyful. So it's not like trying to tell yourself 'no I don't feel hungry - no, I don't feel cold'- that's just kidding yourself

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S. Say to yourself, 'Well, yes I feel cold, I feel hungry but I'm joyful none the less.' It's not a question of pretending you don't feel what you actually do feel. I mean there different levels of feeling - there is the hunger and the cold - these are just on the level of physical sensation whereas the joyful acceptance is a mental experience and the one can affect and influence the other. Like when you're enjoying a strenuous game of tennis or whatever it is you can be really tired and hot and aching - that's the physical experience but you're so much enjoying the game that it's as though the mental experience, as I said sort of transfuses the physical experience.

Sangha devi Why is it that the mental can in fact overcome the physical?

S. I wouldn't even use the word overcome. I used the word transfuse. It's as though it penetrates through it. It's as though it's a finer medium. It's not that your muscles don't ache, not that you don't feel tired - you do, but none the less running through it all there is something else.

Sarah Is it a bit like the mental body being a sort of ??

S. One can think of it in those sort of terms, yes.

Sarah That it can't help affecting the physical body. (pause)

S. Yes, right. I mean there is such a thing as sense experience. Sense experience can be pleasant or painful. There is such a thing as sense consciousness - it can be pleasant or painful but there's also your mind consciousness - your mental consciousness which can be either joyful or miserable. I

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S. mean it is as though, in the long run the mental consciousness is more important. It can affect the sense consciousness even more than the sense consciousness affects the mental consciousness. Usually of course our sense consciousness colours our mental consciousness, doesn't it? But it can be reversed. It can be that the mental consciousness colours the sense consciousness but usually if you feel cold and hungry you say, 'Well I feel cold and hungry.' That experience, of cold and hunger, which is after all only a sense experience invades the mind, it colours the mind even quite deeply, even completely. You're fully identified with that experience, you've no mental consciousness apart from that sense experience of say hunger and cold. But if the mental consciousness is more independent, if it has more of its own independent life, you know as when you are meditating it can completely suffuse the sense consciousness and transform it so that you can even maybe not notice things like hunger and cold. This is what happened with Mil-repa apparently and people like Mil-repa. So you may not be able to reach that level but at least you can have a mental consciousness which has an independent life, a life of its own which is not entirely dependant on or at the mercy of the life of sense consciousness. ~I think we don't always realise the extent to which we live in the sense consciousness. This is why we live in the Kama-Loka world, the world of sense experience. Our mental state is usually determined by that, but it need not be so.

Eve Yes, I experienced that really strongly on my solitary retreat. Like I would bounce out of bed and feel really joyful and go

Eve for a walk and it would be a long walk and there might be pebbles on the ground or whatever but like there was just that joyful bubbling energy sort of there.

S. Sometimes you can even cut yourself and not notice you feel so joyful.

San ha

eve Is that why meditation is the most direct way of working on yourself because it is mental whereas other things are the senses.

Pause

S. Yes. It's as though the centre of gravity is shifted. Usually the centre of gravity is on the sense level, on the level of sense consciousness but when you meditate, the centre of gravity, so to speak, the centre of your being is shifted more to the level of let's say mental consciousness - to the Rupa-Loka level. (Pause)

But most people, I think~ know that sense experience, their experiences which come through the sense, affect them very deeply and colour and tone their whole experience practically. Even things like changes in the weather, one notices that. You know, whether it's bright and sunny or whether it's dull and gloomy. - that doesn't simply affect the temperature of your body, it affects your whole mental state sometimes.

Sarah You can't just cut off from that, can you?

S. No, it's not a question of cutting off from it but of suffusing it, as I've said, it's not that you deny that you are hot or deny that you are cold, you continue to have those experiences, on the appropriate level, but you don't allow

S. them to invade the levels where they are not appropriate. Those levels have their own life their own experience.

Sarah And they're really a way of living and when it seems like every day you're involved in sensual experiences and enjoying them and heightening your awareness through the enjoyment of them - it's also affecting your mental experience.

S. Yes, because experiences change. Because your sense impressions change so that's alright if it's just, as it were, on the level of sense consciousness, but usually we identify with that so totally, so strongly that when our sense impressions change, we change. For instance, when the sun is shining brightly we are happy; when it's dark and gloomy we're unhappy and so on. This means that there's no mental stability, it means that there's no individuality there actually, if we're too much at the mercy of the sense consciousness, by virtue of the fact simply that it is changing all the time. So it's as though we have to learn to live much more on the level of mental consciousness. I'm using the term mental consciousness, it isn't a very satisfactory one but I mean a consciousness which does not proceed via the sense organs - I don't mean mental in the theoretical or intellectual sense. That is to say that consciousness which does not arise in dependence upon the eye, ear, nose and so on which is separate from them. So very often we are not very alive on that particular level. We live just on the level of sense consciousness and identify ourselves with that so it's not that we shouldn't live at all on that level, no, that level is there

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S. so long as we have sense organs and sense experience but usually our attention, our life is confined there.

Eve But it's difficult to make the transition, like unless you set up different conditions, the transition doesn't just seem to arise.

S. Of course one of the ways in which one can experience the mental consciousness or in a sense, force oneself to experience it is to cut off, for the time being, the sense

consciousness. You know this is why when you meditate or sit this is why for instance you close your eyes. It's just to keep out those particular sense impressions so that you can develop the mental consciousness, in other words so that you can meditate and have

an experience of consciousness which does not arise in dependence on the sense organs - otherwise you hardly ever have that.

San ha

evi What about things like memories which you experience in meditation and in a sense is not to do with anything you're experiencing at the moment. It's memories of previous sense experiences.

S. Well, yes, you have to get over that too. That is still that you are occupied then with the subtle physical senses, so to speak. I mean sometimes when people are starved of actual present tangible sense impressions they'll sort of feel themselves, or nourish themselves on memories of sense impressions, so one has to go beyond that level too and contact a level of the mind which is dependant solely on the mind itself. This is what one can do in meditation.

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Lois I remember that before I started to meditate I wasn't aware of my environment at all, it was only through meditation that I became aware of even of seasons or nature or appreciating them for what they were at all. I suppose that's just where I was at the time.

S. Yes, well you had the experience, you must have had the experience otherwise you couldn't have carried on functioning at all but the awareness was simply not there in sufficient clarity. So this is an interesting point in a way, that as one develops spiritually for want of a better term, one also functions more efficiently in other ways as well, because of that greater clarity, greater integration perhaps.

You don't deteriorate physically as a result of spiritual development. (laughter). You improve on all levels, but the main point here is that it is possible for us to accept these incidental physical hardships involved in the spiritual life joyfully only if we live more on the mental level, only if we live more on the plane of mind consciousness than on the level of sense consciousness-, if we're totally preoccupied with the level of sense consciousness )

are identified with that-then of course we will experience

the hardships as nothing but hardships. It's only if we live on the level of mental consciousness, the mind consciousness that we can accept them joyfully, and also still more so if we have some kind of vision which pertains to a higher level still.

Liz I've found that I've started to get more interested in art and poetry and I've found that really 204y does raise me out of that lower level.

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S. Mm, cause sometimes art and poetry are concerned with, are concerned with representation of, or are representation~ of sense experiences but none the less the sense experience is treated in a particular way and becomes very often the symbol of something higher.

San ha

evi Do you think that doing yoga, well the danger in doing say yoga would be that you could just get to attached to your physical form, if you like in a way it's just continuing to feed your senses.

S. Yes, to keep you on the level of sense consciousness, I'm sure this can happen. I mean sometimes one comes across people who seem over pre-occupied with their physical self in one way or another, over conscious of themselves, physically, even in a slightly narcissistic sort of way. I think people like that have to be a bit careful if they get into things like yoga, massage, bodybuilding, weightlifting and so on, yes?

Sarah I belj~ve the ideas behind yogQ though~ safeguard that so eventually you're led into seeing the body as the mind.

S. Well it depends who you're being taught by, because if you're being led you have to be led by somebody, and even in India there are people who practice and who teach only Hatha Yoga; well Hatha Yoga is a part actually of Raga Yoga but there are lots of people even in India who ignore the total framework, the total system and just concentrate on the physical, Hatha Yoga type ex ercises. So it would depend ~ho you were in contact with. If one was in contact with

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5. someone who took or who practised or who taught the whole Raga Yoga system, well sooner or later they would point out to you that yoga is not just concerned with the body.

I think for a lot of people in the ~est yoga is just concerned with the body. Yoga is simply yoga in a quite narrow sense. I would think 204t't'S even more so with things of Western origin like massage. People say they want to get into their physical b0die5~well perhaps that's necessary, yeh, if they haven't got into them yet, but they must be careful not to stay there, not to get stuck there.

Pause



so this is stated in the 'Bodhisattvabhūṃ':

'To accept the eight hardships inseparable from  
life'

The sort of life that the text quoted seems to have in mind here is the life of the monk or the Bodhisattva-Monk. Do you see that~~ because it says 'they are essentially the hardships of finding clothes and food after renouncing the life of a householder 'one should just envisage the traditional state of affairs. The traditional state of affairs being that you want to devote yourself to the spiritual life, as we would say, you want to gain enlightenment. So in order to lead a spiritual life most fully and effectively you become a monk - you leave the household life - you concentrate entirely on the spiritual life. But then the practical question arises of finding clothes and food because as a monk traditionally you don't have any gainful occupation. You don't plough the fields, you don't sow~, you don't reap, so you're dependent on others for food and clothing. Sometimes that does involve hardship. So how would one transpose th~t~

S. let us say~to what we may describe as the non-monastic spiritual context? That is to say a context which is definitely spiritual but which at the same time is not necessarily monastic,' what sort of hardships would you encounter in that sort of context?

San ha evi Well you still can experience the hardship of affording  
clothes even if you're in a co-op.

S. Yes, you go forth from the group, you go forth from your ordinary sort of job and family life into a community and co-op and you can certainly experience hardships there, because - we were talking about co-ops also the morning - because co-ops need money and they need re-investment so you may be making a certain amount of money, the co-op may have a certain profit but then part of that has to go to the centre, the nearest centre, doesn't it? And then also, you need, as I said, money for re-investment so that means there's very little left for your support and pocket money and whatever yeh, so that might result in actual hardship but you accept it joyfully because you've committed yourself to the co-op, in the light of an overall vision, of which the co-op is part. One can look at it in this sort of way, the hardship of finding clothes and food, the hardship of living on one's support money and pocket money after you've renounced the life of the group and have joined the community and the co-op.

Sarah Of course when you have to learn how to make your own clothes and do your own cooking and do your own plumbing then the hardships become transformed into an understanding of your environment.

S. Yes, yes, you may have quite a tough time - well I know some of you had at Amarav~~but you enjoyed it all the same. I mean the hardship was there, but the joy was there as well running through the hardship. Anyway that's pretty straight-forward so:

'(ii) Worshipping and revering the three jewels and the spiritual teachers.1

Well in what way is that a hardship?

San ha evi     Sometimes you don't feel like it!

S.     Sometimes you don't feel like it!!

(laughter)

Well it isn't easy to keep up your joyful worship of the three jewels and the spiritual  
te~c204hers twenty-four hours of the day, is it? Week after week, month after month - but  
why is that? Does it sometimes ever become a hardship, a hardship to go into the shrine yet  
again? Does it, now be quite honest, occasionally, ever?

Every one     Yes.

S.     Yes, it's strange isn't it that the very things that you want to do, the very things that  
you know are going to help you grow, the very things that you have committed yourself to~  
you can't help, from time to time really feeling as hardships. It's true, unfortunately. So the  
text is saying that~~yes, accept those hardships joyfully~ What does that mean in this present  
context? It's as though there's an even deeper level of joy all the time, even when you  
experience hardships in connection with those very things that are meant to help you

Z ~Z

S     most and these very things to which you are committed. I mean, for instance, why do  
you, when you don't feel like it, when you don't want to at all~why do you get up in the  
morning and trot or stumble into the shrine and sit there and meditate?. What is it that  
makes you do it? It isn't fear, surely.

Anne Faith?

San ha evi     It's because you are committed. There's a sufficiently  
large part of you...

S.     Yes, and so long as you're not a completely integrated person there's bound to be these  
sort of differences. So there's quite a big part of you that wants to do that even though there's  
another part, a smaller part, hopefully, that doesn't want to do it. But could you say there was  
even a joy sustained through all that~- at least a trace of it or..

Faith Yes, I think so, it's as though the joyful feeling carries  
the ? along with it, on a different level.

~6t) S But if that joy was~really there would you not then fully  
find it a hardship? Could you find it a hardship and still have the joy?

Anne It's like you loose touch sometimes with the joy and then maybe it seems like a  
hardship and then you get back in touch with the

S. Yes, just like the faith and the commitment. Perhaps I can give a sort of analogy - it's  
like when you're driving a car or any kind of vehicle it gathers a certain momentum. Now

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S. supposing the engine cuts out, the car doesn't stop all at once. It's going forward  
because of the previous momentum, even though th~e engine is no longer functioning. So you  
can let it run on like that, especially if say it' 5 going downhill, but you've got to get the  
engine started again before it really slows down, before it stops. So you see what I mean?  
It's rather like that even though you don't have any faith actually present or any commitment  
or feeling of commitment actually present; even any joy actually present as an experience-the  
momentum from those things in the past is enough to keep you going in the present, at least  
for a while. I mean everybody I,m sure has had the experience of sometimes going into the  
shrine for a meditation when you've been just not wanting to meditate at all and have even  
thought , "well it's just a waste of time, I'm just not going to be able to meditate"- but you've  
gone and you actually perhaps had a good meditation which has given you a further lift and  
you've been really glad that you stuck it out and did meditate, even though you didn't feel like  
it to begin with.

Lois I think in my experience when that's happened 1204'204ve felt good even in being  
able to overcome myself to actually go into the shrineroom and sit down - just to go that far.

5 Yes, it shows ti~4e resistance, tt~ hardship is only superficial,;there is a deeper level  
whic204h you can contact if you just resist your own resistance on~that superficial level.

Pause.

The~fact that yoi~i~can have a good meditation even though you've not wanteil to  
med~204~tate ~hows that. ~ So It~20415 i;~por~tant

S. sometimes just to give yourself a bit of a push, not just to succumb to what may well be a temporary feeling, a sort of lazy feeling of not wanting to meditate and not wanting to study or not wanting to get up early in the morning or not wanting to communicate, whatever it may be.

Anne It ~eems to be ~ometimes when meditation is what you need most that that's when it's hardest to do it. Well that's what I've experienced - that when I know that what I need is to go and do a mindfulness of breathing that it's the last thing that I actually want to do.

S Well you know the old proverb -'if you can't you must; if you can you need not.'  
(laughter)

Sarah That seems very subtle actually, that through resisting the slothful feeling

S Yes, resisting the resistance.

Sarah That gives you a joy and a resistance which gives you the push to enjoy what you thought you didn't want to do.

Yes, it was rather interesting to see some, I think a few months ago it was sort of discovered that certain people, I think it must have been certain order members hadn't been on retreat, in some cases for well over a year and certain other people, I think it must have been certain other order members noticed this or pointed this out and persuaded or tried to persuade those people that they ought to go on retreat but there was quite a lot of initial resistance but they did go on retreat and afterwards those people who hadn't been on retreat said that they'd not been on retreat for so long that they'd forgotten how good it was - and it's

S. because they'd forgotten how good it was that they'd resisted going on retreat. So it can be a bit like that with meditation - you can get out of touch with it, you forget how good it is, and so it presents itself to you in the light of some dull, routine sort of chore, not a pleasure that you're free to engage in every evening but it's something that's got to be done - a sort of hardship, so therefore,- So therefore, from that point of view also, I mean regularity of practise is important, to keep you in touch with the joy of it. It's important to go on retreat regularly otherwise yes, you do forget how good it is to be on retreat. You resist the suggestion of your good friends that you should go on retreat because things can fade to such an extent and get overlaid, followed by subsequent experiences.

Pause or you can pay so much attention to the present sense  
experience that you forget the past mind experience.

Lois That's like people forgetting the experience of pain very easily.

S Yes, yes.

Lois Even intense pain, you can't actually recall it after a certain amount of time.

S Well there's the classic illustration of the woman who has a baby, maybe she has, especially in the past before anaesthetics and all that, has a very painful delivery and she says never again, never again, I'm never going to go through all that again but you know a few months later she's pregnant again. This is what one sees.

S So it's like that in all sorts of ways, with all sorts of other experiences. You forget how painful things have been. People, for instance, can have a very painful relationship, the~say, ' Oh I'm never going to go through all that again, I'm just going to keep clear of people - I'm never going to get involved in that sort of way, it's just too painful,' but a few months later they're on the same old merry-go- round, whizzing around once more. Eut it's the same with the pleasant experiences too, it's the same with meditation experiences, it's the same with the retreat experiences -you just forget how good they've been. You really do get out of touch in this sort of way. That's why it's sometimes good to keep a diary and jot down things and refresh your memory occasionally by just leafing through the pages of your old diary. Sometimes get a laugh if nothing else (laughter) but it really does seem strange that we should find worshipping and revering the three jewels and the spiritual teachers sometimes a hardship, sometimes tiresome, boring dull.

Anoma I remember on my solitary retreat about six months ago I was feeling absolutely rotten and (it came up particularly because of this being patience) because I was absolutely furious because I knew I had tried every other distraction and the only thing to do was to meditate. I was really furious - I knew that was the only answer (laughter). I wrote that in my diary!

Anne I suppose it's the gravitational pull that makes it so difficult.

S Yes there 5 that too, because one is not an integrated person; one is not a true individual. You say you are committed but actually it's only a very small part of you, the leading part perhaps~but it still has to deal with all the resistance from the other parts of your being. Alright and then:

'Listening to the Dharma' (iii) Do we sometimes find this a hardship?

San ha evi You notice on retreats how people fall asleep during taped lectures. (laughter)

S. Yes, I've known people fall asleep in study groups (more laughter) sometimes of course because they've stayed up very late the previous night talking, but it does sometimes happen. It's happened during the last year, not on the worr~e~s' study retreats I hasten to add, but on others. I won't give you details but yes, it does happen. Not only that but the text speaks of 'listening to the Dharma'- nowadays we tend to read rather than to listen but people do find it a sort of hardship to read about the Dharma. It's as though, even though they're committed spiritually they'd read anything rather than something about the Dharma. A sutra is the last thing that they read. It used to be quite interesting here at 'Padmaloka' when we had a collection of paper backs in the lounge. They've since been removed for reasons which will become evident in a moinent (laughter) and this was not supposed to be touched by people on retreat, but I used to notice~that people on retreat persistently used to pull out odd volumes and read them on retreat. I had a look once to see what they were

S reading. Usually, I'm afraid this was the mens retreat - it was books about Nazi Germany, Hitler and black magic. (laughter) These were the paperbacks that were usually taken out. It was quite extraordinary. There were the classics of £~204nglish literature also there on the shelves but they were undisturbed. Volumes of poetry and philosophy - no, these were undisturbed. There were even paperbacks on Buddhism - they were certainly undisturbed and though they had brought their copies of the Bodhicaryavatara they'd brought their copies of the Life of Mil repa perhaps, but you see, apparently it was a sort of hardship to read those things. It was these p204~perbacks that were more interesting and more stimulating apparently. This wasn't true of everybody but it was true of sufficient people for me to take note of it in this sort of way A few people did stick to their copy of or what ever it was. A few even stuck to their copy of Mil~repa but none the less there was this other trend, this other tendency - it's as though it's a hardship to listen to, it's a hardship to read about the Dharma.

Anne Well I suppose it's because if you read about the Dharma or if you listen to the Dharma it affects you.

S Yes! Well the other things affect you too.

Anne Well yeh but I mean it makes you change. I mean you can read an Agatha Christie novel and don't actually have to do anything about it.

S. Well it challenges you, doesn't it. If you read about the Dharma it challenges you.

Anne Yes. Particularly on retreat I think maybe you're more vulnerable and open to change.

S. Mmm. So that's why we removed all the paperbacks from the lounge.

Liz I found actually, well especially, on solitary that getting into those sort of books was

far easier than it is at

any other time. I found them a real joy on my solitary but since I've been back the books have been unop~ned.

S Wh'j is that do you think?

Liz I think because I feel that I need to get into a real space.

S. ~be right sort of space? The right sort of mind. you have to read them with a particular kind of mind and that means that you must have developed that~kind of mind and that means that circumstances or conditions should have encouraged you or~ at least permitted you to develop that kind of mind. If they haven't, if circumstances have required you to develop and function with another kind of mind entirely~ then how can you read those books in the right sort of way? You need time, you need space to change over, so to speak from one kind of mind to another and you don't always have that.

Lois I think that reading books like that is in a way a kind of safety valve in people to stay in touch with a bit of them that is resisting change. If you read a trashy novel on retreat it's a contact with the outside world, staying in touch with those values that you might actually be

Lois encountering difficulty in giving up.

S. Well, I think that the point or one of the points of a solitary retreat is it enables you to contact things within your self directly but I think one should try to avoid on solitary retreat contacting things~ as it were, at second hand. Of course, if you're completely out of touch with certain aspects of your self then maybe what you say would hold good that you can read a trashy novel-it puts you in touch with some aspect of yourself.

Lois I wasn't implying that actually. I was just saying that that was maybe why people felt that pull.

S. I would say that people were already quite sufficiently (in those

cases i~r~remember) in touch with that aspect of themselves which was demanding attention and didn't want to be transmuted. Let us say, within the context of the whole retreat experience, it was something quite crude and raw and negative that was putting up a resistance. This is what I usually felt. 204 (long pause)

to~ Hardship~explain the dharma0' NAell those who do explain the dharma, well' in what way. - I mean it is not just the difficulty of explaining the dharma. Intrinsic difficulty because it's very difficult to understand and perhaps you don't understand it sufficiently. I don't think that is what is intended here but even supposing you're able to explain the dharma at least to the extent required, but you still find it a hardship to explain the dharma - in what sort of situation is this. Are you familiar with this sort of situation?

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San ha Is it where people you're trying to communicate to - they're not open to it straight away. They don't grasp it straight away so you do have to keep pursuing it. It could be a hardship - you wish they'd see quicker than they do.

S. Yes, or they want you to explain but you don't feel in the mood to explain - this happens, doesn't it? Maybe sometimes people ask you a question at the wrong sort of time. This can happen. They catch you at the wrong moment or you're just not feeling very communicative and here you are, you've got a study group or you've got a 'question and answer' meeting or you meet some new person at the centre and that person starts asking you questions and here are you having to explain the Dharma but you're finding it a hardship. Doesn't one sometimes find this happening? In what sort of way or on what sort of occasion do you find this?

Faith I find this quite a lot in the little group we've got in Devon. If I go along and I'm feeling really good, people ask me things and I explain as best I can. It seems to generate 204 reciprocal energetic feelings, everybody is feeling good, but if I go along feeling a bit, you know, then the whole thing falls flat. I just feel I've let myself down and I've let them down and the result's quite different.



S. So if you're having to explain the Dharma to others it means you've got to communicate and that means you've got to be in the mood to communicate or let's say in a fit state

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S. to communicate, you've got to have energy and this means therefore that if you know you're going to have to explain the Dharma you should make sure that you are in a fit state to explain the Dharma, to communicate, so far as you can ensure that. Make sure that you don't go along tired, that you're rested, that you're refreshed and that you feel happy and open, maybe meditate a little first. All these things are necessary.

Paula I often feel that beginners' classes in Brighton ought to start with communication exercises because often at the end of the~evening when people have had communication exercises everybody's talking like mad - everybody's really open and then it's time to go.

S. That's sad then. Well you'll have to suggest it to Mangala. You'll have to communicate with Mangala.

(laughter)

Anne I find it makes quite a difference if the person who's leading the class and the people who're supporting it sit before hand together. I found that makes quite a difference.

S. Do you mean because of the sitting or because of the together?

Anne I think it's both. The combination of both actually.

S. Have you been actually trying that?

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Anne We try to do that before each class.

S. That's good. That's in West London?

Anne Yes.

S. One really needs to prepare oneself. If you reach a point where you are always prepared, always ready, that's fine but very often you haven't reached that point and you experience your own ups and downs so it's quite important to make sure that when you do take or lead a class or meet new people, meet beginners you're just riding on the crest of the wave. This is what they come for mainly; they've not come for the image sitting on the shrine. They've not come just to read the notices on the wall - they've come for you, basically. They've not come for the Dharma even as an abstract system~they've come for the Dharma as embodied in real, live people with whom they can communicate. So what the centre has to offer is You so you have to make sure that you're, as it were, a worthy specimen (laughter) of an upasaka or upasika or mitra or whatever you may be - but it is important to realise that. That people come for you, the energy that you can impart or the inspiration that you can give them. You're the biggest gift you can possibly give them; it's not just the Dharma in the ~b~t~~t) it's the Dharma as exemplified in your life. That's what they're looking for.

Norma In Glasgow just now the classes are not as successful as they used to be because the people who're leading them are really very busy in the co-op's - because there's so few people

Norma and you sort of arrive about ten minutes before a class and everyone's really tired after working.

S. Yes, because people have got, broadly speaking, just a limited amount of energy. If you have been working hard all day,

especially physically it isn't easy to produce energy in the evening and communicate with people. So one really has to watch that and if one possibly can stop work a couple of hours before you know that people are going to come along, rest, meditate, have a quiet meal.

Norma It just works the opposite way round just now because even after the classes sometimes people go back to work, so it's just a sort of break to go to the class and it's really having an effect.

S. Well maybe one should try to divide people up a bit so that those who are going to be responsible for taking classes in the evening just knock off work early. Perhaps that's quite important, otherwise it could happen that the main thing that people are looking for - personal contact and life and energy well they just won't get it - that means they won't come again. They're not coming for the sake of your abstract philosophical system, they're coming for the sake of something living and that means you, The Sangha.

Norma Yes. Sometimes I find it, well I'm quite concerned that it seems to be going the other way round. That the co-ops are too important - rather than the practise, but I suppose that initially it does have to take up a lot of your energy.

S. Well when there's a limited number of people and quite a lot to be done, especially a new centre to be created, then clearly less energy is going to be put into communicating with the people who come along. But one should be very careful not to let that go beyond a certain point otherwise you'll finish up with a beautiful centre but nobody coming along and you certainly won't recruit people to help you work on creating the centre.

Liz I've felt that at East London, that instead of working together the co-ops~ communities and centres seem to work against each other and I think it's more maybe up to individuals in a way to decide which they're going to give their main energy to, because I felt I was definitely being torn between work and

S. You can't give your energy full time to all three; you can't be a full time community member, a full time co-op worker and a full time centre worker. I mean it's not physically possible, so you have to get your own personal priorities right which means straight and clear. You may feel that the co-op situation is such that it needs the greater part of my energy. Alright I accept this and I would explain my position to others that I can help out at the centre or be present in the community only to a very limited extent. Or you may say or you may decide, well the community needs me most therefore I will cut down the number of hours I work in the co-op. I will not go to the centre so often. I will devote much more of my energy to the other community members but then one should make one's

S. position clear in that case also. Otherwise perhaps one is expected to be full time here, expected to be full time there - it only leads to conflict, leads perhaps to exhaustion when you try to do too much. I think one has to be very clear and very definite and communicate that to other people. I mean it could be that there is room for discussion. They may disagree with you and they may say, 'No, I think you need to give more time and energy to the co-op.' Alright discuss it with them but once the discussion is over, once the discussion has been held and a clear conclusion arrived at well let other people know that so that they know where you stand. So they know that it isn't that you don't care about the centre, it isn't that you don't care about the community, you've decided that the co-op needs more energy, so the greater part of your energy is going there.

(long pause)

Anyway we were discussing the hardships experienced explaining the Dharma. It's basically, I suppose, the hardships associated with communication, you really do need to be on your toes, you really do need to be on the ball, communication with other people, especially when it's communication in this sort of way.

Sangha devi Well at the same time as well as experiencing it as a

hardship I've also been finding it quite an incentive to work on myself harder because I just feel well I've got to improve if I'm going to

S. Yes, well the joyful acceptance of the situation is also there.

S. You accept it in principle, even if not with actual joy at that particular moment. There is a momentum that keeps you going even although you aren't actually at that moment generating energy. I think when you are dealing with other people, dealing with new people you need a bit more than the momentum from previous energy, you need energy actually present in that situation. It isn't enough to inform people- you've got to inspire them. Every class has got to be inspiring, every conversation you have with people who come along has got to be inspiring, which means you've got to be aware of people. I do know that it's a great temptation sometimes around centres and at classes to chat with your old cronies and virtually ignore new people, just leave them standing in the doorway looking in and wondering whether to come in. One really has to watch that. I mean it's less so in a small centre because usually well, it's a bit difficult to ignore them (laughter) but in a big centre

perhaps it's more likely to happen, if they're quite a few yards away you can quite easily just leave them to be looked after by somebody else. You don't of course, have to bounce up to them but sort of just find yourself next to them and just talking to them and asking them if it's the first time they've been along.

Anoma There's also the question of being articulate, like we were saying the other day and that can be quite hard gometimes.

S. Alright let's go on to discussing - well you come from explaining to discussing. What's the difference between explaining and discussing?

Anne There's feed-back in discussion.

S. Yes, there's more feed-back. Perhaps there's more disagreement. So that can also be experienced, at least on a certain level as hardship. Sometimes the disagreement is so foolish and basic maybe people haven't understood, even tried to understand what you ve said. Maybe they're not very open minded so sometimes discussion with very new people, some people, can really be quite tiresome, can really be a hardship. But none the less, you've got to enjoy it. Do you find this? What's your experience? Discussing with new people or relatively new people.

Sarah I find that I'm often a 'but if'er,' and after a lot of discussion I can get a bit more aware of it and I notice it (when I'm becoming aware of it) in other people and that's a real drain on the discussion when you get a negative but if-er, if you know what I mean.

S. That's the hypothetical question? Well the204204 thing to do is to retaliate with another - with a hypothetical answer.

San h- When you keep coming back to the same topic again. It's like - we've got a regular women's study group at the L.B.C. and ther~s a certain woman who each week practically the same thing comes up.

S. What is it?

San ha-It happens to be about God, which on the whole I usually have evi quite a lot of energy to put into (laughter) but we're all

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ha-getting to the point now where we say, 'Oh, No~'

(More laughter.) I mean I don't think she does it on purpose, I think it's because it is something unresolved, that each time it's seemed like something's registered.

S. Yes, and what you've said apparently hasn't been able to resolve it, because it isn't a theoretical, isn't a philosophical question, it's something psychological that needs to be gone into quite deeply and systematically on that particular level. I know that sort of person I've also encountered them.

Sarah I find that discussion is very symbolical, so it doesn't always deal with

S. True, yes.

Liz Sometimes if you do have a di~cussion with someone and you're not convinced it does, you do have to go away and absorb it and feel it for yourself. I sometimes find that discussions can go on too long and you can loose what you might have gained from it.

Eve. I think mood is part of it as well, like you do have to be in a good mood to discuss things.

S. Yes, that too is a form of communication - it's very much a form of communication.

Anne It's also, it's sustained communication in a way, like sometimes you can have just a quick blast communication and

Z~O

Anne that's O.K. but in a discussion you actually have to sustain your energy and your patience.

S. Yes, and also if the discussion is among a number of people and a bit undisciplined and a bit all over the place it can be very exhausting because nothing comes together. I mean things are being dissipated all the time. Just little bits and pieces. I mean some people enjoy that, I mean some people will say, new people especially, after such a discussion, 'Oh, I really enjoyed that' when you can be feeling a bit disappointed, a bit fed up, a bit exhausted perhaps. Or thinking, 'well what was the point of it', but maybe nothing objectively was resolved in a more philosophical sense but people have expressed their energy and they sometimes have enjoyed that very much. So you just have to shrug your shoulders and say, 'well, fair enough, if they enjoyed it, well never mind', or even better than shrug your shoulders, well joyfully accept the situation - that they did enjoy it, that it did them some good. Maybe some people need just to be able to express themselves at all, in any sort of way. For some people it's important to be listened to for once, to be heard, to be seen, to express their own ideas - however confusedly. Maybe you can remember a time when it might have been important to you also to do that. It doesn't in a sense matter what you said

the important thing was that you said something, that you spoke up, overcame your shyness or hesitation or lack of confidence, whatever it might have been. But also something

which we don't always remember is that ideas that may seem truisms to us, unfortunately, because we've read about them,

S. talked about them so often can be absolute revelations to a new person. So you might have felt that the discussion was really dull, it went over the same old ground and there was nothing stimulating, but somebody, a new person present, that same discussion may have opened up a whole new world to him or her, presented so many new ideas, given them such a lot to think about and to mull over. So one has to be aware of this dimension of the situation too.

Anne That seems to me one of the difficulties in leading a beginners class that I've seen, is trying to be inspired while giving out what seems to you like a hoary old chestnut that you've said fifty times before, and that must be one of the real difficulties, I would think, always having your visions fresh.

S. Yes, and then it won't be the same old hoary chestnut, if you want to continue the analogy, you'll be picking the chestnut freshly off the tree each time. This is what you've got to do, you've got to take a new look, not think it's always the same, because of course it isn't, because it's a different person asking it anyway. You're in slightly different mood - it's a different situation. Don't take it as the same old question requiring the same old answer but let it come

(long pause)

Alright six

Making a living experience of it

this means especially meditating. We're still concerned with the Dharma of course, so sometimes this can be experienced as a hardship. You've understood the ideas, you've enjoyed

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S. reading about them, you've enjoyed hearing about them, you've enjoyed explaining them to others, you've enjoyed discussing them but the time has now come to put it into practise and to make it a living experience, and this can be experienced as a hardship. (pause) I mean lots of people never come to this point. There are lots of people in Britain certainly,



perhaps thousands of people who've read books about Buddhism, read all the right books but it has never occurred to them that it is to be put into practise. Of course they talk about practising it, they understand theoretically the need for practising it, but somehow or other that theoretical understanding of the need for practise never actually results in practise. Well they can give a fine lecture perhaps on how practical Buddhism is and how it isn't theoretical, it's very empirical and all that sort of thing. It's amazing:

San ha-Again it seems to be a question of mental space and being able to make something a living experience, in terms of, I mean there isn't much time except if you go on solitary to actually meditate, which means that things are going to sink in. You don't have much time to just sit in your room and contemplate a particular thing you've studied. But somehow it has to penetrate just through, well you study it and you are meditating so

S. It's a bit hit and miss, as it were.

San ha-Yes. it doesn't seem that satisfactory. evi

S. But you don't find that ideas or themes go running on in your head and you think about them, turn them over in your mind.

Z~3

S. You ponder and try to penetrate deeply into them

San ha-I mean the number of things that sort of hit you during the course of a day sometimes there isn't the time to go through it all.

S. You're clearly a reflective type of person. Some people don't even have that sort of

tendency, to turn things over in their mind. I think it's important if one does have that, that one gets a bit of time, a bit of space, so to speak, to do that, because that's the second stage. You may remember the threefold classification of prajna, wisdom. The wisdom that comes by hearing, the wisdom that comes by reflection, the wisdom that comes by meditation. So one first of all hears something, one learns something, and then one turns it over in the mind, reflects upon it, penetrating more and more deeply into it until in the end you are virtually meditating upon it, completely absorbed in it. One needs time to do that kind of thing too.

Sarah I think also you could call it a freedom, I mean if you can create a sense of freedom when you haven't got much time.

S. But you do need time. I think for reflection, I mean the nature of reflection is such, you can't do it quickly. You know there needs to be a great deal of continuity. I mean if you are sufficiently concentrated you can pursue a line of thought even over a period of years, going back to it from time to time as you have the opportunity. In fact you can pursue a number of lines of thought over a period of years, going back to them - to the different lines of thought as you have time, as you have opportunity.

Sarah You mean time which is by yourself?

S. Yes. I think reflection in this sense, is virtually impossible to carry on unless you are by yourself or at least unless you are not disturbed by other people. I mean some people are disturbed by the presence of other people, some are not. But in order to be able to reflect for any length of time you need to be undisturbed.

Sarah I've noticed that Indians who've lived in communities and rooms with other people can meditate even with other people around.

S. Yes, I don't know whether they're also able to reflect. I'm not so sure of that.

Sarah Yes, we saw a slide of some people on the Indian retreat on a silence.

S. Yes, they find silence really quite difficult, very difficult. More difficult it seems than people do in this country. I noticed that the retreats that I attended in India, the ordination retreats, Lokamitra was always telling them off for not observing silence. The ladies were always darting into the kitchen because they sort of took it for granted that well you didn't have to be silent there. It didn't matter there because you were preparing something or doing some work and of course it was natural that you should speak.

Voice I think we do that.

Liz I feel it's interesting~what you said about Sanghadevi being a reflective person because I think there's that in me and there's quite a conflict when I've felt pushed or I feel sometimes other people's presence sort of prevents that happening, but I hadn't realised that maybe it ought to be something that I acknowledge more and I was wondering, '1)1 people vary quite a lot in that?'

S. I think they do. Some people seem almost incapable of reflection. I'm not saying at this point to what extent the capacity to reflect is an essential part of human nature, as essential quality or qualification for an individual. But leaving that aside, there do seem to be people who are literally unable to reflect - certainly not in a sort of philosophical manner, on things that they've heard or things that they've read, but others are able and enjoy doing that and wish to do that. I think this is very useful because, at least for people of this type, if you read, especially if you read a lot you don't really understand until you've had or unless you've had opportunity for maybe quite prolonged reflection. It's as though reflection is half way in between the ordinary, intellectual understanding and the deeper understanding that comes with meditation and even insight. So, yes, one does need opportunity to reflect. I mean, I find I've read a lot in the course of my life and I do find that all sorts of lines of reflection go on all the time, to which I come back whenever I get the opportunity. There are literary things I've been thinking about for years, and eventually you know my conclusions or findings they come out in lectures or they come out in study groups or just in conversation, or perhaps they don't come out at all. Either because I haven't come yet to any definite or

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S. sufficiently definite conclusions or the topic just hasn't arisen or it doesn't interest anybody else, only me.

(laughter)

I mean that sometimes happens. So I don't always get an opportunity of talking about some of the things I've been reflecting upon. But I think it is quite important that one should, as it were, cultivate one's reflections and in that way get deeper and deeper into the Dharma - not just read something and close the book and forget about it until next week when you have another study or open the book again. You know, in between, you should be reflecting, turning it over in your mind, trying to understand it more and more deeply. That's the only way really. Because it's not only a question of understanding those words or that particular passage or that particular teaching, but by reflection, finding out, discovering how it links up with other teachings, what its relation is with the rest of the teaching, with the whole doctrinal system of Buddhism even, with your own life, with other things that you have heard, your own experience. They all need sorting out, sifting, in that kind of way, and that will help you in explaining and discussing. Otherwise if you merely remember a certain form of words, a certain idea but have not done much reflection you won't be able to explain it and you won't be able to discuss. So those who are engaged in, so to speak, teaching with new or relatively new people must spend some time in reflection. Some people like to reflect when they're just sitting down, others like to reflect when they're walking, others like to reflect lying in bed. It depends where you feel quiet and undisturbed.

Lois. I know living in America, well, they actually advised you to set aside a time at the end of the day to simply go back over the days experiences before going to sleep because it was recognised that the day there was full and rich in all kinds of experiences and to actually go back in reverse experience starting with the experience most near to you and go back to the beginning of the day when you woke up. I found to do that achieved quite a bit of continuity.

S. Well the more continuity, the more individuality because continuity means continuity of self-awareness<sup>1</sup> and also you can fix experiences or ideas of importance in your mind, in that way. Otherwise, well you just lose that. We gain an experience, we have an experience but then it's crowded out, we forget about it, the value of it is largely lost. Somebody might have said something to us of great significance and importance, so we need, in a quiet moment to just recollect it, reflect upon it, think about it and in that way make it more a part of ourselves.

Lois Take it in.

S. Take it in, assimilate it. And we need to do that with so many things. Things that we read in books, things that we hear in the course of conversation and discussion, or just thoughts that happen to come to us. We need to fix them too sometimes. Otherwise we discover so many things which are useful, which are valuable but then immediately we throw them away and we waste them, which is a pity. I have sometimes said that I thought I could write a whole book just about the occurrences of each day because so much happens

S. which could give you so much food for thought, even an ordinary day. Just ordinary things that happen, just reflect upon them, or reflect upon their significance. There are very few days that things don't occur for most of us that are worth reflecting upon, and pondering upon, pondering over and trying to understand the significance of.

Sarah I found on my solitary that I had just too much work to do and I wrote very little but I found the little things that happened in the day seemed to be such an enormous amount.

S. Yes. (pause) Well if you are at all alive, if you are at all aware, well you will be conscious that so many things are happening to you, significant things, important things, and one needs some time, at least, to sort them out, to sift through them and as we said make them much more a part of yourself

(long pause)

well then we come on to seven.

'Devoting ourselves to spiritual exercises instead of sleeping in the first and last parts of the night'

(laughter)

that's a hardship too, isn't it? This refers to getting up early in the morning and meditating and meditating in the evening before you go to bed. There's really not much to be said about that.

~ha-15 there traditionally a certain watch?

S. Yes. I can't quite recollect what it is, I think it differs from India to Tibet but I think it's from eight to twelve

S. then twelve till four, then four till eight again. I think these are the three watches of the night. So this envisages that you cut down on your sleep to quite an extent. I think we have to be a little, not to say careful, a little common sensical. What it really means is don't indulge in sleep as an actual indulgence or to a greater extent than you actually need to sleep. Certainly take whatever sleep is necessary for your physical and mental well-being but don't just sort of remain lying in bed just sort of wallowing in the comfort and pleasure and luxury of it. This isn't very conducive to one's development as an individual. But don't sort of try to cut down on sleep deliberately as a result of some pre-conceived idea. I think you'll find as you meditate more, you will need less sleep, but it should happen sort of naturally, but when you have woken up, you have had your full night's sleep, well get up. There's no point in lying there still.

(Tea arrives)

Lois I have this feeling that perhaps I should go back and re-read everything but the prospect is a bit daunting.

S. I think one of the things that one can do is to re-read certain classics at regular intervals, say every couple of years. You can, as it were, measure yourself against them, because every time you re-read well you discover more, you see more, you experience more. It means more to you and then you can know that you are growing. That's a quite interesting experience. For some people it might be King Lear. You know re-read it every two years or War and Peace but it has to be some substantial classic that can

S. stand up to repeated reading, I mean some, well most books can't obviously.

Lois. I find that with playing the piano, going back to pieces that perhaps when I was younger, were difficult pieces that I could play well, which was unusual because I was young and yet I can go back to them and they can be even more difficult to play now.

S. It is sometimes quite interesting to re-read books that you've read when you were young, assuming that you are no longer young and it's interesting because sometimes you appreciate them more, but sometimes you appreciate them much less. You sort of see through them as it were because in a way you've outgrown that particular book. But the classics of

course, the great classics you don't outgrow and that's the advantage of going back to them at regular intervals and as it were measuring yourself against them. Has anyone even done this? To re-read the same classic over a period of a number of years, perhaps two or three different times?

Faith Yes, I've done that with Dickens a lot. I'm very fond of Dickens and I find it means different things all the time.

S. Yes.

Sarah I find it difficult to re-read some of the things. I remember having an atmosphere of magic, an irrational memory.

S. :I think there always is that danger that one loses the touch of magic or even the touch of poetry as one grows older -

I n~an... for obvious reasons. But one doesn't have to lose it, and I think One can recapture it.

\_\_\_\_\_ ~~thering Heights used to be one of my favourites as a child and I read it again a couple of years ago and thought "ooh, depend~nt relationship going on there" (laughter)

S: Yes, a new perspective

Parami: You could read it again and read about animus projections? (laughter)

S: All right. The hardships that results is devoting yourself to spiritual exercises instead of sleeping in first and last parts of the night. Well enough said about that. "Hardships that result from striving to do all this for the sake\_of sentient beingsS The suggestion seems to be that there is an extra hardship in trying to do all this for the sake of sentient beings rather than just for your own sake. Do you think this is so?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, because if you are doing it for your own sake, then you're going to get some result for yourself.

S: Yes. Yes. The, sort of, pseudo-individualistic orientation.

Usually it is more difficult to do things for others rather than for oneself. Unfortunately. Again unless you're motivated

by a really great vision, in this case the vision of the Bodhisattva Ideal. I have been saying recently that I really think that it's not possible to function in centres, maybe not even in Co-ops, without quite a touch of the Bodhisattva spirit. All right. "One must accept that without getting tired of the consequences, such as fatigue, weariness, heat, cold, thirst, hunger and disturbance of mind. It is for example like accepting the misery of being bled in order to relieve the agony of a virulent disease. As is said in the Bodhicaryavatara: The miser I have to endure in realizing

Z~Z

The misery I have to endure in realizing Enlightenment is measurable: It is like probing a wound "To stop the pain caused by what is lodged therein". To change the metaphor slightly, you can even enjoy swallowing the bitter medicine, the bitter pill, if you know that it's really going to do you good. It's really going to restore you to health. It's going to relieve your pain. You don't mind the bitterness. You can even enjoy it. So it's just like that with the hardships of the spiritual life. They should all be suffused by your overflowing sense of enjoyment because you know that all those hardships which are only incidental are carrying you in the direction of enlightenment. You and all other beings. So that sort of joy must pervade your hardships.

Sanghadevi: It's interesting that it says 'measurable' Some sutras say the suffering is immeasurable. Things are well immeasurable, but well, here it says there is an ending. One can see it.

S: Because at the very least, I mean you will definitely one day realize enlightenment and then in a certain sense, or at least from a certain point of view the suffering will cease. It's measurable. In a sense you continue to experience it, but in a sense you don't because you're enlightened. "What does it matter?". All right, like to go on with the remainder of B



right down to C.

"Thus a man who has accepted the misery connected with the Dharma has driven back the army of Samsara and defeated the enemy of conflicting passions and is a great hero. Although in this world he is reckoned one, if he has killed an enemy who after all being human must die, he is not one in fact but merely a man brandishing a sword over a corpse. As is stated in the 'sPyod.'jug' ('Bodhicaryavatara' yI,20):

Those who destroy all misery

And conquer the enemy of malevolence and other evils, Are victorious heroes,

Others kill only a corpse."

S: This passage as it were raises the question: 'who is the real hero?' The real hero is not the warrior, not the fighter in the literal sense. The man who kills others because you may think that you kill them, but they're ~oing to die anyway, sooner or later. So that sort of hero only kills corpses. He kills the already dead. The real hero is the man who has accepted the misery, the suffering, the hardship connected with the Dharma. He has "Driven back the army of S~sara and defeated the enemy of conflicting passions". The real hero is one who for the sake of the Dharma accepts and bears all hardships, but doesn't even experience them as hardships. I think in the Bodhicharyatara, there is a comparison of Shantideva's; he says that in the heat of battle you don't even notice the wounds that you receive, you don't even feel them. So just the same way with the spiritual hero, the spiritual fighter, the Bodhisattva he doesn't even feel the hardships which in a sense he undergoes. In other words the mental consciousness is more alive than the sense consciousness. When you notice that even sometimes with ordinary things like tiredness, if you're involved in a really interesting and really stimu- lating conversation, maybe about the Dharma, it can go on late, it can go on into the early hours of the morning. You don't notice, you don't feel tired and you suddenly look at your watch "good heavens, its two o'clock. I've got to be up on the morning". But you haven't felt tired. Normally, if you were to stay up as late as that, you'd start feeling tired, you start yawning and then you start thinking of going to bed. But on those sort of occasions you become so stimulated, you're so awake and so alive on the purely mental level and the physical level even is suffused with that liveliness, you don't feel tired. This tends to happen perhaps more when you're quite ~oung.

Sanghadevi: I think it was at last Order day, somebody said in their reporting in. Feeling that there were alot of heroes, sitting in the room. Jayananda, I think.

S: I hope he meant hero in this sort of sense. Good. Did you feel that? Yes. Heroes in what sort of way.

Sanghadevi: Well that people, sort of, had committed them- selves. I mean they are actually doing something quite heroic. I mean that we're all actually involved in doing something which, compared to the way most people spend their lives, is heroic.

S: Right. Well it's hardships which are not experienced as hardships. Sometimes you might sort of go home and maybe tell you're parents what you're doing or your friends. I know some people do this and it seems to your parents or your friends as though you must be leading a simply awful life. You tell them that you're living in a squat, you have a bed on the floor; well you don't have a bed, you have an old mattress, and there's no proper electricity even, no shades on the lights, no three piece suite (laughter) and you get £2 a week pocket money, and work over 14 hours a day and they say: "What?" It really doesn't make sense to them. (laughter) But you can't put across the conviction and commitment and the joy that you feel at least from time to time to do all that. It seems to them as though that you've just got into some bod's grip and they're exploiting you (General agreement) You've clearly had that sort of experience, some of you. It's very difficult to convey to others.

\_\_\_\_\_ My Mothers' favourite thing is: "It's all right for you to do it. You shouldn't do it to the children." She sees it very much as

S: Well they're not working in the co-op are they? (laughter)

\_\_\_\_\_ They are actually, part of the time (laughter)

S: Well, nothing like starting them off early (laughing) Well I hope they're above the age of three (laughter) Or at least I hope they can walk. But then the strange thing is also that they must see that you're happy. But very often they are not happy despite everything that they have, despite

their three piece suite and the lace curtains and all the rest of it. One can see that sometimes when one goes home, can't one?

I think this is where inspiration comes in because although when you get older you might find it more difficult to stay up at night, what you can't do when you're younger is sort of prepare for things, by making sure you know where to go for inspiration.

S: Yes. I think as you get older you learn to manage your energy. You know for instance a certain expenditure of energy is going to be required of you on a certain occasion, you sort of quite naturally make sure that you're a bit rested before hand, and you're prepared for it. A young person can be much more easily carried away by the excitement of the moment and forget to prepare for something important. On the other hand they can dip into their energy reserves more easily.

When the impulse arises.

S: In the early days of Sukhavati, you know when it really was a bomb site, there was a

very heroic atmosphere around because people were so evidently living under emotions of considerable hardship and coping with great difficulties. I mean that isn't so evident in some ways now but maybe the

hardships have taken other forms, in some ways, people are working even harder. I

Parami: I think actually there's quite a change in the level of that kind of thing now, which I think is really quite healthy. That that kind of hardship and stuff is necessary at that particular time and that situation, it has been necessary in other situations, Armaravati and others.

quite a healthy raising of standards at the moment and I think we should be really be, well get the Middle way somewhere between hardships that continue hardships after...

S: Right well it all depends on whether you can keep up the joyful acceptance. And also whether the hardships that you are having, objectively, a detrimental effect upon you physically or mentally. Whether they're necessary.

Sanghadevi: It's a question of, say, if you need a new Centre and the only premises you can get is something which is gutted, well you put yourself into that. If you actually could get another property, the same size which fitted your needs which was in better condition, well it would be a bit crazy in other respects to just go into the worse one. But to be prepared to do that

S: Right. Yes. All right lets go on into the third type of patience. Would someone like to read C.

C. The third (iii) type of patience, which is ready to investigate the nature of the whole of reality, is according to the 'Byan.sa' ('Bodhisattvabhūmu') (82b)

To be interested in the eight topics beginning with the qualities of the Three Jewels.

It is further the acceptance of ultimate reality as by nature devoid of the two types of individuality."

S: We'll look at the footnotes in a minute. There's one of importance. No 17. So the third type of patience which is ready to investigate the nature of the whole of reality. You might wonder how it comes to be spoken of as readiness to investigate the nature of the whole of reality. It's more like a receptivity, an openness to the nature of the whole of reality and non-resistance; and it's explained first of all, in terms of being interested "in the eight topics, beginning with the qualities of the three Jewels" and then further it's "the acceptance of ultimate reality as by nature devoid of the two types of individuality" In the second instance

it's, one could say acceptance of, openness to Sunyata, ultimate reality but short of that, it's to be interested in the eight topics beginning with the qualities of the Three Jewels. It sort of suggests that to be interested in the spiritual things is a half way house to being totally receptive to them. Do you see what I mean? Do you see the distinction. Because to even have interest there must be a certain openness, a certain receptivity, but as you get more and more interested you become more and more deeply, and more and more profoundly, receptive. So let's see what these eight topics are (this is of course a Mahayana list) First of all the Three Jewels. You all know what the Three Jewels are? Well clearly you have to be interested in the Three Jewels. It's a type of patience you're patient with regard to, receptive with regard to; you're open with regard to the Three Jewels themselves. Perhaps one doesn't need to say very much about the Three Jewels because they have been gone through on so many occasions in so many different contexts. And then two: the Power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Now what does one mean by that? I think this is a rather careless phraseology a~

Generators' part. Can one really speak of the power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas? It depends of course on how one uses the word 'power'.

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But in what sense can you not speak of the power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas?

Parami: Authority.

S: In a sense of authority, in the sense of force, in the sense of coercion. In what sense can you speak of the power of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas?

Sanghadevi: Higher forces influencing.

S: Yes, one has to use ambiguous terminology. One has to use the word 'forces'. Maybe one should use the word 'influence'. It's 'anupa' perhaps. This is a Pali and Sanskrit word, which means, yes, something like influence. The waves of influence that emanate from something. So there is a sort of influence that emanates from the Buddha, from the Bodhisattva. In some of the translations from Tibetan texts, I think it's the Evans-Wertz translations, Evans-Wertz translates the corresponding Tibetan term as 'grace-waves'. It's something like radio-waves. Every-thing is sending out waves, which influence other things. So the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, they're also sending out waves. These waves are perhaps symbolized by their auras, their halos. So if you are receptive you can pick up on these waves. If you are open to them. So one practices patience with regards to the 'grace waves' if you like, the influence, the power, in inverted commas, of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Especially of course when one does the visualization practices. We mustn't say visualization exercises because they are much more than exercises; They are visualization practices when one not only visualizes the figure of a Bodhisattva, or the Buddha but tries to feel, tries to experience what that represents, and what that is, and is patient with regards to that, open with regard to that. The use of the word 'patient' is perhaps significant here, but it is a form of patience to be open to the meaning of reality because after all the meaning of reality goes against all one's cherished ideas, doesn't it? All one's presuppositions, all one's preconceptions, all one's assumptions. Not that some of one's ideas about the meaning of reality are right, others are wrong~ it goes against the wrong ones. No! They're all wrong! Just because they're ideas, just because they're concepts. They're all wrong. And you realize this more and more, but one must

Z~9

be open to this realization, accept that the meaning of reality goes beyond anything that one is able to conceive. If you have got an idea about it, well~it's the wrong idea for sure. Any idea about it is the wrong idea. You mustn't haven't any ideas about it. In that way you can be open to, receptive to, patient with regard to the meaning of reality.

Sanghadevi: It reminds me of in your series of talks on the Vimalakirti Nidesa. In one of the lectures you said we don't know anything, anything about anything. It seems that you really meant it.

S: (laughing) Well one does not: Well there are certain assumptions which one makes, which seem to work when one acts upon these assumptions but knowledge is another thing. And then the same with regard to "the Teaching of the Causal Law~(presumably the pratita Samutpada Conditioned Co-production) and "the Teaching of the Results of Causal laws, the Goal striven after~(The Goal of Enlightenment, the Goal of Nirvana)"~(the necessary prerequisites for Goal-see Th~ and that which has been well said ie: the Texts which are authoritative for the Bodhisattva ideal~)~one is interested in all these things as a preparation to being truly open to, and truly receptive to them. I think it is a sign of spiritual development when you become really interested in things like this. You know some people are interested in politics, some in economics, some in personal things, some in domestic things, some people can spend a whole afternoon discussing lace curtains or buttons. One has heard them sometimes; they are fascinated; they just go on talking and talking; they're really into it, absorbed in it. They enjoy it. So when you have that sort of interest in topics like "the Three Jewels~the Power of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and the meaning of Reality" well then you are beginning to make some spiritual progress. It's quite interesting to try to note the sort of things that one is really interested in. What really sparks off one's interest? Is it the Dharma? Is it money? Is it ~oks? What really sparks off your interest? What would make you really sit up and take notice? It's quite an interesting point. Perhaps one doesn't know. Perhaps one hasn't asked oneself that question yet. Perhaps one ought to think about it quite a lot. But what really sparks off your interest? I mean the answer to that question could tell one quite a lot about oneself. It isn't always what one thinks it is, or

would like to think that it is.

Parami: It also changes ~ometimes. Things that you've been sparked off by. You think you are still, and then you get left a bit dry by them.

S: Yes it change . Even with regard to favourite authors, favourite compose , favourite records. Sometimes they arouse your interest, they spark you off, other times they don't. Your mood, your requirements, your needs, your mental states, these things change. But usually there are certain things which are constant. There are certain things which can be relied on to spark you off, which can be relied on to arouse your interest. A favourite composer, whose works you always like to hear regardless of your mood, if you like any composer at all. The interest is very important, interest helps you to establish the emotional connection. It is not enough to say 'I ought to be interested'. The thing is 'are you interested'? You have got to find a point of interest and develop from that. So when you start taking an interest in this or that aspect of the Dharmas, a real interest, and wanting to follow it up, pursue it, understand it thoroughly, properly, well, that is quite important, quite significant,- if you become absolutely ~scinated by the Pratitya Samutpada, Conditioned Co-production. I was about twenty five years ago. I was really fascinated and I thought about it quite alot.

Sanghdevi: It seems in the Movement at the moment alot of interest in Western Culture and that cultural heritage. I have found in myself, I am interested to a degree, but I'm aware of an unclarity about how necessary that interest is, in terms of pursuing it. Some people seem to be really interested.

S: I think it's useful, helpful to the extent that it enables one to refine one's emotions and awaken one's imagination. It's useful to the extent that ~ feeds the whole refined emotional side of one's nature, which only too often is starved and that side of one's nature has to be developed, has to be integrated if you are to be a full individual, a true human being. Otherwise one is in danger of becoming a dull, dry, intellectual schoolmistress sort of person, if you see what I mean.

260 Marg Tisch: I've found that sutras are quite interesting. I find it harder to get into something more analytical. But the sutras are of quite a different world.

?: Could you see one's interests in a sort of Mandala where at the

-centre-is going for the sense of existence or a

Buddha as the centre, but around it you've got all interests

S: Yes indeed, and it's very important what's put at the centre of the Mandala. You should put at the centre of the Mandala that which is the intrinsically most important thing. I think usually what happens is we haven't got a Mandala~ we've got a pile of bits and pieces, and sometimes we take up this piece, and sometimes we take up that piece and occupy ourselves

\_\_\_\_\_ Like a pile of dust or sand, and when you get a vibration, it  
all kind of \_\_\_\_\_, even if you get a perfect vibration, you get a pattern.

S: Right, Yes. So one has got to take all this' bits and pieces; It isn't as though one has got to discard one's interests, one has got to assign to them their proper place in the Mandala. And not put right in the centre of your personal mandala something which is of peripheral interest. I mean at the centre of the mandala there has to be the Buddha in some form or other. You don't want to put lace-curtains in the centre (Laughter) but some people do, or the three-piece suite, or the double-bed, whatever it may be. So I think some people create different kinds of Mandala. Some people's Mandalas will be very simple, even severe, with very few things, maybe with the right things in the right places. They're people with relatively simple uncomplicated natures. They've just got a few items to arrange within their Mandala. But other people have got hundreds of different things. It takes them along time to find a place in the Mandala, the correct place for all their different items, all their different interests, all their different possessions, especially if they are interested in music, and painting and biology and maybe mathematics and all sorts of things, gardening. Well they determine maybe to find for all these things a place in their personal mandala. That's fair enough. But it takes longer to do. It's more difficult, but provided you put the right things in the right places especially put the thing of greatest importance in

the middle, you can build up, can create a much more elaborate, a much more complex than some other people. In another way, no less beautiful, in some ways more beautiful.

- Some people seem to have a multi-dimensional and others two dimensional, others lots of bright colour--~

S: Right. Yes. So it also involves, in a sort of three dimensional way or at least two dimensional way, -introduces a hierarchy- if you put nearer the centre of the mandala that which is more important. And ~is is what one learns to do. In a way one has got a mandala all the time, you're got a mandala when you come along to the EWBO. But it's a wrong sort of Mandala, it's a distorted mandala, 'you've got something silly and insignificant in the middle of it maybe, perhaps it's your- self (laughter) and you've got to reorganize your mandala and start puttin~he more important things near the centre of the mandala. The most important thing of all right in the middle and rearranging every- thing around that in a beautiful mandala like pattern. It's not a question of throwing away, not a question of excluding. You may just have to leave things on the pile for the time being- perhaps you can't quite see where in the Mandala they're going to fit- what the proper place for them is4 ~ell maybe there are some things you've got to throw out because they're unskillful things, they cannot possibly find a place in the mandala, but I think one should be quite careful about what one thr~ws out. It's not so much in many cases a question of discarding things or giving them up, but just giving them, assigning to them their right place, their fit place, their appropriate place within the total mandala.

\_\_\_\_\_ It feels to me like the different between say the Tantric approach and the Hir~ana approach. Like the Hi~ana feels, what I've felt in my contact with it, like chucking out

certain things because they're not skilful, but like what I feel from the Tantra...

S: Well you could say that the Hinayana approach is to throw out from the Mandala everything except the one central thing, that of the Buddha. And you can even say sometimes it isn't even the figure of the Buddha; It's the figure of an arahant, in a rather limited sort of way but the Mahayana and the Vajrayana way is to put the Buddha firmly in the centre of the Mandala and then to fill the rest of the mandala

with everything else, all the other interests in your life in a proper order at a certain distance from the Central figure, and arranged in a certain beautiful harmonious way. All the different bits are also not external bits, they are parts of you, the reorganization of the mandala is your reorganisation of yourself around your own highest potential as actually actualized, as actually realized. In a sense you do have to put yourself at the centre of the Mandala, but the 'real' you. So an individual is one who has more and more organized, or reorganized or created, his or her own mandala.

Parami: What you're saying about not discarding things, but assigning them to their proper place, is that what you meant when you said recently about 'Beware of the premature synthesis'.

S: Yes, one would say that too. Oh yes indeed. Very much so. Otherwise if you try to make a premature synthesis, you try to achieve a synthesis prematurely when you're so desperate for the synthesis, you throw away nearly all the things you're trying to synthesize. And so you can do that sort of thing with the mandala. What about anger? Sometimes you try to extirpate anger, but no, anger has its place in the mandala, in the form of these wrathful deities that stand at the four corners, - but they have their place. Your anger has its place. So interest in these eight topics and then a third type of patience is the acceptance of ultimate reality as by nature devoid of the two types of 'I

individuality. What are these two types of individuality? This is a bit technical. The non-individuality of an individual and the

constituents of reality. (idgala-nairatmya and dharma-nairatmya) Are you familiar with that distinction? You're familiar with the fact that the Hinayana breaks down the so-called individual - the pudgala, into constituent psycho-physical phenomena, called dharmas but then the Mahayana breaks down these dharmas, or resolves those dharmas to something still more fundamental which it calls 'sunyata.' So there is the Nairatmya of the pudgala, and the Nairatmya of self-lessness of the dharmas. So this is the two-fold egolessness of the individual. The individual considered as a static unit of course, and of dharmas as considered as the static unit that make up that static unit which is the individual. In other words what the Mahayana especially is trying to do is just to loosen the hold of fixed concepts and so called unchanged reality, and everything is flux, everything is

flow, there's nothing fixed, nothing static it's all resolved back into the undifferentiated continuum, which is sunyata. Or you could say that what the Mahayana is trying to do is to get us to give up ideas about reality, concepts about reality and to come into contact with reality itself. To substitute knowledge in the more, sort of, alienated sense, or to substitute for knowledge in the more alienated sense - actual experience on ever higher and higher levels.



So this sort of acceptance of ultimate reality has by nature-is devoid of the two types of individuality~means the acceptance of reality as it is, not as we think it; getting rid of or putting aside all our concepts of reality in order to be in contact with reality itself. So we need that sort of openness, that sort of receptivity, that is patience indeed in the fullest and deepest sense.

Sanghadevi: I was thinking about that and I could remember when I first came to the Friends and I had a really clear kind of vision or idea about enlightenment and goal and where I was going and so therefore I got involved and committed myself, but like now at the moment I'm experiencing....I'm not in touch with that clearness. In a sense it's as if, well ,it was quite a simplistic kind of view which served its purpose, but now it's like reshifting layers I've got to re-get in touch where I'm going I It's sort of changing.

S: It's like when you're travelling on a journey; at the beginning of the journey, perhaps, you do see the Goal which you're aiming at, but as you travel further along the road, you see it in a somewhat different way from what you saw it to begin with, but it's still in the sense, the same goal and you're still moving towards it.

\_\_\_\_\_ difficult just keeping because I've  
found

S: Well it's a question of not settling down at any stage of development but being open to what comes next, to further possibilities. Right let's go onto 5.

'5) Patience is increased by 1) transcending and 11) discriminative awareness born from wisdom and 12) transmutation. I

S: Hm there's a note here which refers us to chapter twelve. Let's

just look at that, p159. "To increase transcending awareness" - the subject matter here is liberality-dana) with the three elements involved to be perfectly pure. That is to say the donor, the object of the gift and the recipient are like phantoms.' So too transcending patience is that patience in which one is not in fact consciously with regard to which one is being patient, nor of oneself, as being patient nor of the so to speak-relationship of patience between the two at all. In other words an unselfconscious patience a natural patience, a spontaneous patience. Someone might come along and say 'How patient you are' but you may not be conscious of being patient in that particular situation at all because you take it so naturally and spontaneously. So this is transcending transcending patience. Then

'to attain discriminative awareness born from wisdom' in order to accomplish merit means the object of the gift is to establish all sentient beings on the spiritual level of Buddhahood". So here it means that you practice patience as a means for helping all beings attain Buddhahood. You don't practice it for the sake of your own individual enlightenment. Transmutation# This is also sometimes translated as 'transference "'To make it infinite by transmutation' means that the gift cannot be

measured when it is transmuted into unsurpassable enlightenment for the benefit of all

sentient beings. '~ This is a little bit like the precepts

even. Whatever merits you gain, so to speak, by practicing patience in this way you don't even keep that for yourself, you turn it over, you dedicate it, transmute it so it may rebound to the progress, enlightenment of all living beings.

END OF SIDE A

I suppose it's in a unself-conscious way.

S: Yes. It's not unself-conscious in the sense of unself-conscious(~~~~ that precedes the development of self-consciousness that we were talking about. So patience is increased by the realization that there is nobody who is practicing patience, no-one with whom in regard(~o~ it is practiced and no practice of patience and it's increased by the realization that it is 'I practiced' in inverted commas for all living beings and that even the merit gained by practicing for the sake of

all sentient beings is turned over to the advancement ~~ Lc%~~St., of all living beings. In other words patience becomes something quite spontaneous, quite natural, sort of, in a way impersonal, natural, rather with more spiritual transcendental force energy. It's not you that's practicing patience. It's just 'patience is being practiced, or not even that. You don't even think of it as patience; it's something natural, spontaneous, that you just do, but not You doing it so to speak. It's become such a part of "your", inverted commas, nature, you don't even have to think about it. You could say by way of analogy, ft~ like the mother ~~~ng patient with the baby. The mother is not conscious of being patient with the baby. It's her baby; well, of course she's patient. If you asked her she'd would express surprise at the question, that it was asked at all. It's just a natural way in which she naturally behaves with the baby; putting up with it's little tantrums, and so on. She doesn't think of it particularly as being an exercise in patience. So the Bodhisattva is like that with all living beings. He doesn't Think of himself as practicing patience. It's just natural for him to behave in the way that he does. He's quite unself-conscious about it. Other people might come along and say, 'oh what a great Bodhisattva, putting up with all these hardships, being so patient with other people; look at them tormenting him, chopping his head off.' But he doesn't take any notice (laughter). Well it's rather like that. This is what the Diamond Sutra says. But to a very profound level. Anyway

"VI The purification is to be supported by Sunyata and Compassion.20,,

S: The purification of patience. Sunyata refers more to what one could say is the wisdom (break) and compassion refers to the emotional aspect. One could take it further than that but perhaps there is really no need to. The purification, the practice of patience, in the highest sense is supported by Sunyata; that is to say - Sunyata represents the Wisdom aspect, one's realization of Buddhahood, and the compassion aspect representing one's care for all sentient beings. One's practice of patience is supported by that two poled realization; the fact that you have wisdom, does not mean you don't have compassion, the fact that you have compassion doesn't mean that you don't have wisdom. The fact that you are fully orientated in the direction of enlightenment doesn't mean that you forget sentient beings. The fact that you are involved with sentient beings doesn't mean that you're not fully orientated in the direction of

enlightenment. In the ultimate analysis there's no contradiction between the two, so far as you are concerned.

Wisdom and compassion co-incide, you are supported by both in your practice, your purified practice of patience. If your patience was only supported by compassion it would be onesided. But because you are a Bodhisattva, it's supported by both. A Bodhisattva being a sort of living embodiment of wisdom and compassion, Nirvana and Samsara, Buddhahood and all sentient beings. But they~ of course, are quite rarefied heights.

(break in tape) Sanghadevi: It seems that the way we practice is, we're trying to do,

we haven't sorted out how we are with people in terms of patience, yet at the same time trying to become more receptive to patience in this highest sense. We're working on both levels.

S: Yes. Well you can even be more receptive with regard to people on a higher and higher level. One could say that. I mean in that way also one works on it on both levels. To try to see more and more in people. To try to be more and more communicative. In that way you can practice receptivity and even patience in the higher sense. Especially if you see the person that you are dealing with, person you are talking to, as a sort of potential Buddha, or at least a potential Bodhisattva. You're not sort of being patient with an ordinary maybe stupid human being, in the ordinary sort of way. Your patience has got a different dimension to it. It can~ because in that sort of situation, or with that sort of understanding the practice of

patience even in this higher sense.

Parami: Does one sort of patience grow from the other? If you practice the first kind of patience.

S: I think if one goes in accordance with the path of regular steps one practices the first kind of patience first; But one isn't obliged as it were to practice in that sort of consecutive way. You can work on both at the same time~,

Sanghadevi: Because in terms of the third type of patience, which was the eight qualities of the Three Jewels, that's meant to be going off into the mundane. But we are beginning to cultivate that sort of patience.

S: Yes. Well perhaps it would help if one thinks of patience in terms of receptivity. There is no limit to the degree of receptivity that you can exercise with regard to any living being, you don't have to say,~ell,I can only practice my patience so far because I'm practicing it with regard to a particular human being~' One shouldn't say,~'Well ,I can only practice this patience in this deeper sense towards Ultimate Reality.' Well in a sense that's true, but in a sense it isn't, because you can, as it were,see Ultimate Reality in the person with whom you are dealing and be receptive to the Ultimate Reality in, or of that person with whom you are dealing. In other words, be open with regard to them, in as much as you see them as a potential Bodhisattva, or Buddha.

Sanghadevi: It's a bit like saying 'Your work is your meditation and your meditation, your work'.

S: Right. Your practice of patience in the more ordinary level is or can be at the same time your practice of patience in the higher sense. I mean you can be sort of patient with regard to say someone abusing you. And that's patience in the ordinary sense, but at the same time that you are not retaliating, not answering back, sort of reflect and feel 'twell, after all it's a potential Bodhisattva or Buddha abusing you". You can have that sort of realization, that sort

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of patience at the same time as the first. The one can reinforce the other even. So even though things are enumerated separately, classified separately, one must be careful not to actually separate them in practice too much or to assume that the one excludes the other or that you always literally have to practice first this and then that. Sometimes you can practice them together, sometimes even you should practice them together if you can.

Jayaprabha: I think it seems something more to do with metta, if you're looking for that element in someone. You're looking for the positive in them.

S: Right. You should be open to the possibility that the very person who is quarrelling with you or even hurting you is fundamentally a good person. You should be open to that and see that even, not just see the way in which they are affecting you at this particular moment. Just take a wider view, adopt a wider perspective.

\_\_\_\_\_ : It's never shutting off, never giving up.

S: Right yes. There's a difference between saying of someone he is a bad person. That's one thing. There's a difference between saying that and saying he behaved badly towards me on one particular occasion. But usually what happens is~ because someone behaves badly towards us on one particular occasion, we say "he's a bad person", or "she's a bad person!" But the more Bodhisattva type person would say "Well, this person happens to be quarrelling with me at the moment. He happens to be beating me, he happens to be hurting me, but actually on the whole they're a quite good person". You don't lose your sense of perspective. Well, you do that very often with your own friends. However unpleasant even the present encounter may be you don't lose sight of the wider context of the friendship, or at least you try not to.

~arami: I know this is anticipating a bit but just the more we talk about patience, the more we see how it's related to strenuousness. It really seems to come through.

Si Ah, well I was hoping to get onto strenuousness today, but we've had quite a lot to talk about in connection with patience. But we really will get onto it tomorrow. And perhaps we shall see that the two

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really do hang together, and bala' ~ each other, or reinforce each other. Someone like to read ?). The last section.

"yII. The result 9jf~~at,~1,9nce, is (i)fulfAment and

(ii)effectiveness in our situation in life. (i) ,y~ulf iment means the attainment of unsurpassable a Bodhisattva awakens to unsurpassable enlightenment. As is said in the 'Pyan.sa' (B9~hisattvabhumi):

Ry~elYing on great immeasurable patience maturing into unsurpassable enlightenment. Bodhisattva awakens to unsurpassable enlightenment.

(ii) Effectiveness in our situation in life means that, though, we do not look for it, we attain the beautiful, healthy, amiable and long-lived, and attain the position of a universal monarch in all our lives. As is stated in the 15th chapter of the Bodhisattva-avatara VI, 134):

During his stay in 'Samsara, by patience he finds amiability, Health, and fame, Long life and the happiness of a universal monarch." S: Patience is after all a paramita; so, by practicing patience among other things one obtains or attains fulfillment'; that is to

say enlightenment itself, as well as effectiveness in our situation. Now this represents as it were the punya side as result of practicing patience, as result of leading the spiritual life, of the Bodhisattva ~ don't only attain enlightenment ~ there's a sort of bonus in the form of certain positive worldly acquisitions, which are mentioned here as health, beauty, long life, high position and so on. You see what I mean? This is a sort of deeply-rooted conviction of Indian thought in general, or Buddhist thought also, that when there is a high development of the spiritual that there is also a quite ample development of the positive mundane. Do you see

what I mean? In the West, due to our perhaps Christian heritage, we tend to think of the spiritual as going along with loss and deprivation on the mundane level; but this is not the way that Indian religions think maybe especially Buddhism. They think, they tend to think of the spiritual in the sense of the Transcendental going along with all that is positive and happy and prominent in the mundane. So it's

as though if you aim at spiritual life, then as a bonus you also get success in worldly life. Though the Indian spirituality, that

is the natural order of things and that's the natural arrangement as it were, so as a result also of his practice of patience, the Bodhisattva doesn't only gain Full Enlightenment, for the benefit of

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himself and others he also attains beauty, health, fame, length of life, and so on; this is a sort of bonus if you like. It's as though there's a certain affinity between the spiritual and that which is positive, even a merely mundane sense. So it's as though on another level, in a sort of "collective", inverted commas sense, there's a sort of affinity between the Spiritual Community and the positive group. On the individual level that is affinity between high spiritual development and certain positive mundane qualities. It's as though Indian spirituality, Buddhist spirituality could hardly imagine someone who was spiritually highly developed and who was not endowed with positive mundane qualities at the same time, even in abundance. Or even positive mundane good fortune, which is rather a different approach.

Sanghadevi: I hadn't realized that was the general attitude in Indian thought. I'd thought Hinduism had, in terms of asceticism, a quite negative attitude towards.

S: In a way, but the ascetic existence is part of the effort to attain the goal, but once the goal is reached, you become endowed with not only spiritual riches, but with in a sense even material riches too. Indian thought tends to regard the two as going along together, in that sense.

\_\_\_\_\_ : Just thinking in Christian religion, the beauty of spiritual attainment you only ever see it if people are martyred or they are dead or see them in heaven, but in the story of the Buddha, or Hindu stories people who've got spiritual attainments

S: Well there is an early Christian tradition for instance that Christ was ugly and even a dwarf. But all the Buddhist traditions with regard to the Buddha stress even the nobility of his physical appearance and so on. Whether that was so historically, perhaps it is difficult now to say but that was thought to be appropriate. It's as though the Indian mind thinks of perfection as manifesting upon all different levels. And the Ideal person is one who is not

only enlightened but physically perfect, who is fortunate, is prosperous as well.

Bodhisattvas are always represented with jewels.

S: Well even represented sometimes with wives and families, and dozens of children. So there must have been some meaning in that. Lots of possessions.

I was watching a program 'Wicker in India' and he was asking this quite rich daughter of somebody, I cannot remember who; he was saying how he felt about poor people begrudging rich people and he was saying 'don't you feel guilty when you drive through the streets amongst all this poverty~and she said "No, she feels that they don't begrudge her at all, they sort of think she in her previous life had

S: There is some truth in that but I think that is beginning to break down and among the ex-untouchables Buddhists they quite definitely believe that that sort of teaching was just a propaganda by the higher castes to keep them satisfied with the lower lot. Just as I say in the West, the upper classes, the well-to-do classes used to teach, the clergy used to teach~that every man is put in his social position, particular social place by God. I mean there's the famous hymn "The rich man and his castle, the poor man at his gate, he made them high and lowly, and ordered their estate". This was the Christian view. And the clergy used to preach, this hymn was written at the present century, to the poor, the lower orders that God has assigned to you this place, to rebel against your social superiors is to rebel against God. This was preached up and down England for centuries. The principle of subordination, which is the main task of the local vicar, especially with country congregations, to preach this principle of subordination. That it was their duty, their religious duty as Christians to be humble and respectful towards their social superiors because God had put them there in that superior position, so in the past, in India, the same sort of purpose was achieved through a sort of misapplication of the teaching of karma. That if you are poor, if you're miserable in this life, well it's because you were wicked in a previous life. And if we are well-to-do it is because we were virtuous. So Buddhism does teach that, yes; certainly does teach that along with Enlightenment comes material

property too. But it doesn't teach that if you're materially prosperous, it's a sign that you're spiritually enlightened. You cannot argue that way. But this is how the well-to-do Hindu will look at it nowadays. But people are beginning to see through that. Though it is still quite strong in certain circles, "it's our lot, our fate, our karma, we've only got ourselves to blame". This attitude is still very strong in India.

\_\_\_\_\_ That sort of attitude seems to be keeping them down.

S: Indeed. But it keeps them quiet so far as the other castes are concerned, and well-to-do people, rich people don't usually feel, guilty about their wealth. They're guilty of terrible consumption and squandery, and even in the midst of poverty they throw away food, while people are starving all around. They think nothing of it.

\_\_\_\_\_ It seem~o be Just a fault of unclear thinking, That all spiritually developed people can be prosperous That doesn't ~an that all prosperous people are spiritually developed.

S: Or even that they have been spiritually developed in the past.

Sanghadevi: Abhaya made a point when he gave his talk on 'Keats'. Keat's lines "Truth is beauty; beauty is truth" Well we would agree with obviously Truth is Beauty, but not necessarily the line ?eauty is Truth. Not overeverything which is beautiful is necessarily spiritual.

S: One can think of Punya in terms of beauty.

Sanghdevi: It's a ~ifferent sort of beauty.

S: Well it's different from sensuous beauty, obviously. One could say its a moral beauty. A spiritual beauty. But the point which I think which is being made here, and by Buddhism generally, is that material wealth is not necessarily incompatible with spiritual life, or spiritual attainment. You don't come any

nearer to spiritual attainment simply by depriving yourself, much less still by tormenting yourself. At the same time, of course, you must be prepared to undergo hardship joyfully. You could look at it symbolically, and say "well you gained enlightenment, you feel as if you have got everything"; In every sense.

Sanghadevi: Two week~o at Tyn-y-ddol, I did a Shakyamuni vizualization practice, and I led some mitras through it and I described the Buddha sitting under the Bodhi tree as being beautiful and radiant and one mitra afterwards saidi~'~as that correct I have done it like Thatr~ because she always got this image of the Buddha which was that he'd just been through all his asceticism, and then he'd just stopped that. But ~e always imagines him quite thin, haggard, well, enlightened at the sai~e~~~~evelled.

S : Well there are images which represent him as very haggard with his skin clinging to his bones, but such representations depict him during the period well before he gained enlightenment. But the enlightened Buddha is always represented as the Beautiful Buddha, He is a well-built Buddha, the healthy looking Buddha. All the descriptions of the Buddha which come down to us in the Pali Canon, confirm this sort of impression. But it's interesting that she thought of him in that way. Maybe he's thinking of the emaciated Jesus being taken down from the Cross?



Jayaprabha: Well, Milarepa was quite like that in a way?

S: Yes, at one stage. Green (laughter) But again perhaps we mustn't be too literal. Maybe the ideal would be for an enlightened person to be a sort of Apollo , Venus of Milo at the same time. But apart from that sort of Greek ideal as it were, no doubt even if the Enlightened person wasn't handsome or beautiful as regards features, there'd be certain attractiveness about them due to their great emotional and spiritual positivity. Maybe it's in those terms that one should think. I mean some people say that Order Members when they sit out in front of the class leading it, look very attractive, even in a very human sort of way, because of the energy, the emotional positivity. This is what one has heard. One hopes it's true.

Parami: Does that go back to what we were talking about earlier, mental consciousness?

S: Yes, it 's as though mental consciousness really gets through~ shines through. Anyway it does look as if we have come to the end of our Patience. But I think the keynote of it all ~s that patience is not so much putting up with things, patience is openness and tolerance and receptivity, those qualities seem much more important. Those qualities seem to constitute the essence of patience. Just openness and receptivity.

Is the practice of 'ahimsa' a further' development of patience?

S Yes indeed. A more practical application of it.

End of session

END OF TAPE.

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J. O. L. CH. 15 The Perfection of Strenuousness

Day 5 Tape 1

S: Would someone like to read that first paragraph and the first quotation?

"The perfection of strenuousness is summarized under seven heads: The consideration of its defects and qualities, It s essence1 it s classification, The primary characteristics of each

class, It s increase, purification, and result.

1. Whoever is not strenuous is lazy even though he be liberal and possess all other other qualities. He can neither realise the good and wholesome, work for others, nor attain enlightenment. This is confirmed in the Sagaramatipariprcchasutra: A lazy person is neither liberal nor knowledgeable. He does not work for others and is far from enlightenment."

S: Hmm. Alright, let's look at that then. Before we start though, lets just note the fact that strenuousness here in this translation renders the original Sanskrit 'Virya' which is sometimes rendered as energy, sometimes as vigour. You'll find these different terms in different translations, sowhoever is not strenuous or whoever is not vigourous, whoever is not energetic, is lazy, even though he be liberal and possesses all other qualities. So you are lazy even though you are practising liberality and possess all other qualities, if you are not strenuous. What does this mean? What does this imply? What does it tell you about virya, about strenuousness?

Gay: It can't be static.

S: It can't be static. Yes. Or it suggests that if you are not actually making an effort to move forward, you are lazy, however well you may be doing. If things are going easily and smoothly for you, even going well, even going positively, but if you are not making any effort, then you are lazy. You must be conscious of an effort in a sense. An~ you may be observing the precepts, you may be meditating, every day, maybe studying the Dharma, but if you are not actually making an effort, you are lazy.

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S: (Cont.) It's as though you must not only strive to grow, strive to develop, but feel that you are striving too. That doesn't mean in a strained sort of way, but actually conscious that you are making an effort. In other words you mustn't ever rest on your laurels, however green those laurels may be. Usually of course, our laurels are a bit withered (laughter) but we mustn't rest on them, anyway. This is quite important to remember. It's only too easy to coast along, to keep things ticking over, even spiritually speaking, and very often, what carries you along, without perhaps any effort on your part, is the community, or the co-op or the Centre to which you belong. You just share in the general positivity, you just allow yourself to be kept going, virtually, by other people's energy. They are perhaps just carrying you. You are not making an effort.

So one must be quite careful to see that this situation does not arise, that you are making your own individual effort and contributing your energy to the situation, as well as or, in the same way as others are contributing their energy to the situation. Otherwise you'll be like the fly on the wheel of the chariot saying, "Oh what a dust I'm kicking up". (laughter) Well I think sometimes one may not notice that it is others in the situation who are making the effort and who are carrying you as well as themselves. So, one must be careful that one is also contributing to the situation, that one is making an effort oneself, that one is practising strenuousness, otherwise you are lazy.

So Whoever is not strenuous is lazy, even though he be liberal and possesses all other

qualities . He can neither realise the good and wholesome, work for others, nor attain enlightenment.

So, strenuousness is necessary to generate skillful mental states within oneself~ to perform skillful actions and speak skillful words. It is also necessary in working for other people, helping other people and above all, for attaining enlightenment. Without strenuousness, without vigour, without energy, without virya, you can really do nothing worthwhile in the world. So this is why, perhaps, in other people, especially people who are coming into the Movement, People who are making their first contact, what one should look for, above every- thing else, is energy. It doesn't matter if it is a bit mis-directed for the time being, it doesn't matter if it is a bit all over the place, the important thing is that the energy should be there. If energy is there, then all things are possible. Or if energy is not there, well the first problem is to find out what has happened to the energy, to liberate it, to help break through, whatever is holding it in, holding it back, holding it down. One could almost say one's first duty is to

S: (Cont.) liberate energy, because without that you can do nothing, you're no good to anybody, least of all to yourself.

Sarah: I think that having to move about a lot, and getting a bit of distance between you and your involvement, moving away, say going on retreat, or having to move house seems very helpful. The monk's state of homelessness was a bit like that. You could get into a rut.

S: Yes, you should never allow yourself to get into a rut, obviously.

Sarah: Is that what it's talking about, being lazy?

S: Hmm. It includes that. I mean, if you are lazy, I suppose you can get into a rut, even if you haven't got a rut, or that source of being in a rut. If you are habituated to not being in a rut, or not having a rut. Yes, it suggests a general situation of stagnation, nothing happening, not doing anything. Lethargy. Torpor, you know, and all the rest of it. I mean, yes you're in a rut, you're in the middle of a swamp. Yes, I mean one can use all these metaphors to throw light on the different aspects of the situation. And sometimes you do become lazy because you've become over familiar with the situation, and perhaps going away from it for a while does help because you return to it relatively fresh or you see it freshly and that perhaps can galvanise you a bit, energise you. But merely going away and merely coming back I think won't help very much. I've seen people go away and come back but they've come back as lazy as ever. They might have gone off on a holiday somewhere, they might have had a good time, but it hasn't exactly galvanized their energy.

So~a lazy person is neither liberal or knowledgeable~ There's a bit of a contradiction in a sense because it starts off by saying "Whoever is not strenuous is lazy, even though he be liberal" but it then says th~ 'a lazy person is neither liberal or knowledgeable.' ~t's as though if you are lazy, you are not truly liberal, you may seem like that, it's because you are just too lazy not to be liberal. Someone asks you for something, asks you maybe for some money. You're too lazy to put up much resistance, you just let the money go. It's not that you actually give it, it's more that you sort of can't be bothered to hang on to it.

S: (Cont.) So that may appear to be liberality, but it is not real liberality. Real liberality is a much more active virtue. He does not work for others and is far from enlightenment." So that says much the same thing. These sections point out the importance of strenuousness. We'll carry on with the next section and the next quotation.

On the other hand, when we are strenuous all positive qualities increase in splendour. As is said in the Prajnaparamitasamcayagatha: By strenuousness the positive qualities do not get obscured; the royal treasure of infinite transcending awareness born from wisdom is obtained.

S: So it's as if without strenuousness you can do nothing. With strenuousness you can do anything. This point is explicitly made in connection with the six Paramitas, that it (unclear) with virya or strenuousness as enumerated as one of the six paramitas .... (unclear) is the fourth but that doesn't mean that first of all you practice dana, generosity, then you practice sila - morality, then you practice patience, then you come on to the practice of virya, strenuousness - having never practiced it before, and practice it, and the,, leaving it behind you, go on to samadi and meditation and pranja or wisdom. It is not that. You need virya all the time. You need virya, you need strenuousness to practise dana. You need strenuousness to practice morality. You need strenuousness to practice kshanti. You certainly need strenuousness to practice meditation and to develop wisdom. So in the case of the fourth paramita it represents a sort of concentration on the development of virya, in a sense to the exclusion for the time being of all other qualities. But the thread of virya runs through the whole of the Bodhisattva path. You cannot dispense with virya at any stage. It's like mindfulness, it's always necessary, always helpful. (pause)

It's sometimes said that Pranja, wisdom is the sole paramita but you could say that leaving behind pranja, virya is the sole paramita, so that leaves you with two paramitas, virya or energy let us say, and wisdom. Virya representing the mundane side and wisdom representing the transcendental side. So if you have virya, and if you have wisdom, then you have got the whole of the Bodhisattva path. I mean directed energy illumined by wisdom. This is what the path is. Or perhaps one could say that one's turbulent, confused, mis-directed energy, scattered energy is gradually refined, clarified, purified, integrated as a result of the increasing influence of wisdom on your life, on that energy.

Sanghadevi: Who is it that talks about gross laziness as being procurement of wealth and secure (unclear)?

S: This is Milarepa. I think it's Milarepa. Yes.

Sanghadevi: Because it is important for people to recognise virya is energy in pursuit of the good.

S: Yes, right, yes. But it's also important to recognise, perhaps that before you can have energy in pursuit of the good, you've got to have energy. So perhaps the immediate problem maybe for you, not directing your energy to the good, or in the direction of the good, but simply harnessing your energy, getting your energy together. Doesn't one sometimes feel this, that people are very energy-less, very listless and dull, lethargic and apathetic and all the rest of it? One finds it, or feels it a bit more perhaps when you come from maybe some other country or even some other part of this country where there does seem to be more energy around where people do seem .... (unclear) ....

Sarah: It does seem to manifest in different ways in different countries. They look apparently to an Englishman, lazy.

S: They look pretty pure sitting around in the sun, smoking cigars. Well, sounds pretty lazy to me.' Well, you're not necessarily being strenuous when you are frantically dashing around.

Sarah: The African has developed a slow approach. You often see this in England too.

S: Well, it depends what you get done in the end, obviously.

Liz: I sometimes find that my energy gets quite scattered. I suddenly realise that I'm sort of, seem to be full of energy, but it's very scattered.

S: You find this in the case of children, don't you? That they have a lot energy, but it's a very scattered energy. (laughter)

So by strenuousness the positive qualities do not get obscured. The positive qualities get obscured when you don't have strenuousness, don't have energy.

Sanghadevi: Yes, sort of weighed down by yourself, you feel like you're

Sanghadevi: (Cont.) getting into sloth and torpor. In meditation I've certainly experienced that sort of clouding over.

S: They lose their spark~e, hmm.

Anoma: If you're not actually expressing, then you're obscuring

(unclear) .. not actually coming out, and nobody knows about the (unclear)

S: Yes, it's as though they go rusty. When you haven't polished some- thing for a certain length of time it loses its shine, it loses its glitter, it goes rusty. So one's positive qualities are like that, without energy they lose their shine, they lose their glitter, they go rusty, dull.

Marg: I'm a little bit sort of confused about what exactly virya is. Because well, like I lately people have made the comment to me that I don't have any energy and I know that like, emotionX!¼, I've had quite a lot going on, but I don't know if there's a lack of energy in other areas, you know like not being bouncy and sort of happy.

S: Well, I think one can take it as an axiom that everybody has energy, otherwise you wouldn't be alive, you wouldn't be able to function at all'. You are, in fact, an embodiment of energy. But, in the case of some people, the energy is blocked. In the case of others it's divided against itself. In the case of others it's just scattered over so many things that he's not able to produce much of an effect in any direction. So, I think it is a question of asking yourself what is one's condition in this respect, except assuming, yes, one does have energy if one is a healthy person, especially if one is young. So, what has happened to the energy, what is one doing, in fact, with the energy? Try to find that out. A person is not necessarily low in energy because there is little in the way of outward expression. You know, when you're meditating, you are directing energy. Perhaps you are producing energy, general energy or at least manifesting

energy (unclear) the person, you know, observing you, you're sitting perfectly still, you're not doing anything at all, but energy is there, energy is being manifested. So one has to be careful not to be misled by outward appearances. The person who is bouncing around all over the place is not necessarily the person with more energy. But what is

S: (Cont.) important obviously is to tap one's own energies, to feel them, to experience them, to unify them, to harmonise them and direct them in accordance with one's higher ideals, and this may take some time. You may be working on things within yourself, straightening out things. It may seem from the outside as though you are not doing very much, but actually, as you said, quite a lot may be happening inside. People have to understand that. I mean you are the only one who can really know whether you are sorting out your energies, or whether you are just drifting. If people accuse you of not having much energy, if in fact it is an

accusation well, perhaps you just have to take the trouble to explain to them, you know, what is really happening. You don't have to be the life and soul of the party in order to have energy, or to be seen as having energy, but I think as a matter or sort of skill, skilful approach, one shouldn't ever tell anybody that they don't have any energy. Do you see what I mean? Because they do have energy, as I said. If they didn't have energy they wouldn't be alive. But you should sort of phrase the question more skilfully and ask something more like "What are you doing with your energy?" "Where is your energy?", not question the fact or doubt the fact that the person has energy. That can be very discouraging, besides being more likely than not quite untrue.

Srimala:        Could you say more about energy being divided against itself?

S: Well this happens when you are in conflict. I talked the other day, I'm not sure in this group or the other group, about sometimes using part of that energy to keep the other half down. So this is the case of energy being divided against itself. Say as when you know, you cannot make up your mind as to what to do, or maybe you want to do something so there's a certain amount of energy invested in that. On the other hand, either you don't want to do it or you think you ought not to do it, or you think that other people might not like you to do it. So there's a certain amount of energy invested there and the two are in conflict, the one cancelling the other out. So you get nowhere. So you have to resolve that conflict in one way or the other and sometimes it's quite difficult because it means that you are divided. So the more you are integrated, the more your energy is integrated, the more you are integrated the more effective a person you become. (pause)

Voice: It is almost better to make a decision if at all possible, like if you are in doubt.

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S:        Yes, but yes, almost because better than remaining definitely in that state of indecision, internal conflict and so on. But even that may not be easy if the energies are fairly evenly divided. (laughter) We can change our mind. In the morning you can think this is what I'll do - in the afternoon you think well, that's what I should do, yes? It sways back and forth. But, I've remarked repeatedly that people seem to utilize and to have at their disposal only a fraction of their total energy. If they were to mobilize their energies, they could achieve incredible things, no doubt.

Alright, carry on then.

"Another virtue is according to the Mahayanasutralankara that: By strenuousness one crosses the perishable and becomes free."

S: ° Rystrenuousness one crosses the perishable' that is to say, leaves behind the conditioned and becomes free, enters upon the unconditioned. Do you think there is any particular sort of connection between energy and freedom? (pause)

Voice: You can't achieve one without the other.

S: You can't achieve one without the other. You need energy to burst through the bonds, the limitations, the conditions. So it's as though if energy is in operation you are in the process of becoming free. Energy is freedom you could almost say.

Sanghadevi: I think you can go through, you know, phases when you are afraid to, well, express your energy, it may be parts of your energy you haven't experienced before, in a way it is going to lead to changes, it is, in a way part of you isn't sure

S: You're afraid of freedom. It's what Fromm calls the fear of freedom~ (chuckle)  
Freedom is a responsibility. Freedom is free.

But this brings me to something I've been thinking about quite recently, this word free. In the, in the Pali texts, the Buddha in fact quite often speaks in terms of freedom, or the Pali for which is Vimutti or mutti. For instance in one passage, the Buddha says 'O monks, just as the great ocean from whatsoever part of it you take water has but one taste, the taste of salt so in the same way, my teaching, my Dharma, what soever part of it you examine, has only one taste, the taste of freedom.

So; taste of salt is Lona Rusa, taste of freedom is Vimutti Rusa. Rusa is taste. It suggests a personal experience. Aesthetics, for instance (in ?) are called Rusika, the aesthete, the critique, the rusika, so this word taste, perhaps has a stronger connotation than the word - taste has in English, though even in English, we get 'good taste', don't we? But it's got a rather confined sort of a meaning. So the taste of freedom, hmrn? or freedom, the experience of freedom has quite an important place, actually in the Buddhist teaching, rather, this mode of expression. But it occurs to me, that in the FWBO, we don't have recourse to that sort of phraseology very much, hmm? We speak in terms of growing, we speak in terms of developing, we speak in terms of attaining enlightenment, don't we?

Sanghadevi: I've used it quite often in beginner's classes.

S.: Ah, that's interesting. So what made you do this?

Sanghadevi: Well, maybe particularly because (unclear) experience of being a woman



(unclear) things like liberation and freedom. It just sort of sparks off that train of thought in terms of conveying that generally, that that's, we are moving towards freedom. We spend our lives trying to become freer, you know, we sort of think that money~ it (unclear) but in fact, you know only through meditation, (unclear) we can achieve. ...

S.: Do you (think) the emphasis on freedom in the say, modern Western context, ties up with freedom in the political sense? Do you think it has a significance for that sort of reason?

Sanghadevi: I think it's a useful sort of

S.: A useful starting point.

Sanghadevi: Yes, a lot of people do experience those sort of cramped and entangled, they can't do anything about the situation, it's so vague and it's quite, well it can be quite liberating to realize that you, sitting in a room. meditating. is a step towards becoming free.

S.: Right, yes. hmm. Well, in that case, you know, you'll be happy to learn that that way of looking at things or speaking of things, is in accordance with the Pali texts, because yes, the Buddha, does, as I've said, speak in those sort of terms. Clearly, I mean, using

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the word freedom in a rather special sense. Ah, but still there is a connection, hmm? One can speak in terms of well, first of all, maybe economic freedom, personal freedom, political freedom. But the freedom to be an individual, the freedom from all that limits one, as an individual. The freedom from all that holds you back from gaining enlightenment, the freedom from oneself. It's not so much for oneself, or of oneself, but freedom from oneself, in a way; freedom from the old self, allowing the new self so to speak, to emerge.

Of course, most people who talk in terms of freedom don't really want freedom in the Buddhist sense, hmm? But still, if they like the sound of the word freedom, and if you used the word freedom, too, albeit in a profounder sense, well, it is a point of contact.

Sanghadevi: In fact, Prynanda(?) gave a talk at the beginners' class about three weeks ago on the meaning of freedom.

S.: Oh good, yes.

Sanghadevi: It was something he said he had been thinking of quite a lot.

S.: Good, oh well, goes to show, doesn't it? (laughter) Because I hadn't spoken about this to anybody, but I was thinking about it, during the last few weeks, perhaps. I forget what put it into my head, but it did occur to me that we don't usually speak in very much, these terms, but it's quite a useful, as well as a quite traditional thing to do.

AnnE M. (Parami): One of the first tapes I ever heard at Heruka, was of a talk Dhammadina gave about three years ago about that. She actually started with that quote "Just as the ocean has a taste of salt".

S.: Ah, yes, was that her talk on getting out of prison?

Anne: (Parami): It was really good. It really had quite an

S.: Yes, right, yes, breaking through, yes. Well, it does appeal to the more adventurous side of people's character, doesn't it?

Gay?: I think it is heavily over (unclear)...political connotations, freedom fighters... maybe it (stems) back from the French Revolution, fighting.

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S.: Well, actually no, the Buddha uses the same phraseology. I mean the Buddha says in one passage in the Pali scriptures: "Oh Bhikkus, we are Kshatriyas". That is to say "We are warriors

"And for what are we fighting? We are fighting for Sila, we are fighting for Samadhi, we are fighting for Prajna and we are fighting for Vimutti".

The 4 fold classification, you see, so the Bhikkus were freedom fighters. (Laughter) But the thing is, to be a freedom fighter, in that sort of sense, you have to fight with yourself, you know, not with others. I mean, freedom is not something that others can give you or can be made to give you. It's something that you create for yourself.

Ann M: That makes nonsense of the crucifixion, actually (chuckles)

S.: Well, there's quite a lot of things make nonsense of the crucifixion. (laughter)

Anne M: Well that was something he sacrificed for everybody else's freedom.

S.: Well yes. I'm glad you reminded me. You'll be interested in hearing that in my post this morning was something, -I meant to ask you about this because - this is just a little diversion- I'll bring you back to the point in a minute: Have you heard of a band, presumably it's a rock group, called 'Crass'? I haven't.

Voices: Yes.

S.: Well, you are well posted, then anyway (laughter). Let me read you something. You may find it of interest, and may wish to follow it up. "The anarchist band Crass have made two albums, "Station of the Crass" (laughter) and "The Feeding of the Five Thousand". described by the band as "Totally Anti-Christ in a responsible sort of way" - (more laughter). Police have visited shops in Birmingham and London, warning that the records were obscene and blasphemous .

So if you want to have a bit of fun (laughter), especially if you are fans or followers of Crass, you might like to get those two albums. I won't suggest you play them on retreats (laughter) but you might, well, you might like to do the stations of the Cross, those of you who are still suffering from you, you know, your Catholic, Christian

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upbringing. It might help to liberate you a bit. That item was taken from the Free-Thinker, by the way. Are they a well-known Anarchist band? I didn't know there was such a thing as an Anarchist band.

Anoma: I think they are quite a reasonably well-known band of that kind.

S.: Hmm. You've actually heard them?

Anoma: No. I remeber reading about them. (inaudible)

S.: Hmm. Hmm. Ah. (laughter)

Voice: I think there was another band who've made blasphemous records. I can't remember who they are.

S.: Well no doubt there are quite a few records which would be considered blasphemous.

Ann m. (Parami): Maybe we should make them in the Movement.

S.: Well, you might go to the top of the charts (laughter), and make a lot of money for a new Amaravati (laughter).

Alright - carry on the next section or next quote - which more or less covers the same ground. But have we finished with freedom? This is quite an important point, isn't it?, to be free, hmm?

Liz Pankhurst (Jayaprabha): The only thing that I think about when I think about freedom is like stepping out into the unknown. It seems like a sort of matter of sort of going out into some new land.

S.: Yes, hmm. Right, carry on then.

Eve: "But above all we attain unsurpassable enlightenment. This is also stated in the (Mahayanasutralankara). With strenuousness one awakens to enlightenment."

S.: Yes. If you've got energy, if it's rightly directed, then you've got everything. (choking laughter!)

Ann M.: It seems a bit simplistic.

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S.: Well, one can elaborate a little. If you've got energy, that is to say if it is not blocked, not scattered, and not misdirected, well, there you are, that's all you really need. Alright, there's more to the same effect - just carry on.

Gay Bullen: "In the (Sagaramatipariprcchasutra): Unsurpassable perfect enlightenment is not difficult for those who make efforts because, Sagaramati, w~e there is strenuousness there is enlightenment."

S.: Hmm. Makes much the same statement but in a more, ina way, a (pragmatic?) way. "Where there is strenuousness, there is enlight- enment", hmm? If there is virya, if there is this rightly directed energy, you can be sure of enlightenment sooner or later.

Alright, last quotation in that section.

Mrnm-r.T.: "And in the (Purnapariprcchasutra) Enlightenment is easy for the hard-working."

S.: Hard-working. Do you think this is a very happy expression.

A Voice: No.

S.: What does 'hard-working' suggest to you? It suggests a sort of char-woman down on her knees you know, scrubbing the floor, hmm? How would you rather phrase it? Or would you re-phrase it?

A Voice: Diligent.

S.: Diligent? That sounds a bit dull. When you are a typist, you are not just diligently tapping away.

A VOICE: Determination.

S.: Determination, yes.

A Voice: Energetic.

S.: Energetic?, yes. Enlightenment is easy for the energetic. But 'hard-workin~.' This is

quite a strong word.

Ann M (Parami): Is it by sustained effort?

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S.: Yes, it's by sustained effort, hmm.

Sanghadevi: It seems to link up with what we talked about yesterday in terms of hardhips. You know, there are (inaudible) so you do have to work quite hard.

S.: That reminds me of something else I've been talking about, especially in the context of ordination. And that is what I call 'stamina'. hmm? Do you see what I mean? It's not only a question of committing oneself.. .but having the stamina to keep up the commitment... and give expression to the commitment. I mean, there may be people who have as it were, who are committed, as it were in principle, but they don't seem to have the stamina to give regular, continuous effect to the commitment, hmm? So stamina is also quite important. I think I would say, though this isn't mentioned in so many words, that stamina is an essential ingredient of Virya, hmm? and this is physical as well as mental- cum-emotional, hmm? You've not only got~to be able to make an effor~ you've got to be able to keep up the effort. You've got to be able to sustain the effort. Perhaps over a long period of time and in the fact of great difficulties. But a spasmodic effort, an occasional effort is not enough.

Anoma: Is that the same sort of thing as the Virya that doesn't lose heart?

S.: Not quite. It's in a way more basic than that. The Virya that doesn't lose heart is the Virya that doesn't get discouraged. That's more emotional. But stamina suggests a certain kind of, even a cert- ain kind of energy, er but a certain solidity. It's more like solidity in action, hmm? It that doesn't sound too bizarre, hmm? Stamina is what you've got when your solidity gets moving. Do you appreciate what I mean by this (?) . of stamina, hmm? You can see what stamina is in physical terms quite easily, but imagine the same sort of thing transposed tot~he mental-cum-emotional level. You've got to be able to keep it up.

Sarah: You make sure you're healthy.

S.: Yes, I mean physical health is an important part of it.

A Voice: And mental health.

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S.: And mental health, hmm. Even strength, even physical strength up to a point is an important part, a necessary part of it. I mean people do sometimes have their own mental and emotional stamina, who don't have physical stamina, but somehow the mental level manages to keep the physical level going. Sometimes very frail looking people have got tremendous stamina, tremendous vigour, hmm? But no doubt it helps, it makes things perhaps even easier if you've got physical stamina too. You may have to stay up night after night working in one way or another. It helps, then to have physical stamina, too.

Ann M.: I rather like that phrase "solidity in action".

S.: Hmm, like a great FAT thunderbolt. (laughter). Well, look at a thunderbolt. It's substantial, you know. Nothing thin and wispy ... because it is sort of small waisted, so to speak (laughter) but... There's a sort of massiveness about it. I mean you get that impression with some people, there's a certain massive quality about their energy, - almost like a mountain in motion. I mean that's what you need, yeah?

Anoma: You could give somebody that name (looking at Ann) - FAT thunderbolt! (laughter)

S.: Well, I'll think about that when the time comes (more laughter). But you know, very often people think of the spiritual life as something sort of very fine and delicate and a bit wispy and ethereal, and you in a sense it is, but they oddly forget that other aspect of solidity and strength and stability, and you know what I call stamina. That is equally important. You know the two are not incompatible - not contradictable, hmm?

A Voice: (inaudible in parts) stamina....to know one's limitations, and what sort of strain, overstraining

S.: Well, if you have to think about your own limitations, and worry about not straining yourself, you haven't got stamina. Do you see what I mean? Stamina is that quality which enables you to carry on without thinking in those sort of terms, huh?

A Voice: But physically you have limits.

S.: You do have limits, but you don't think in those terms, you don't

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bother. You know, when people get by with very little sleep, they just snatch sleep when they can, they manage, they survive, they function, they don't do themselves any harm.

Like Churchill during the War, keeping himself going on brandy and cigars, snatching ten minutes sleep whenever he could. I mean, he seemed to thrive on it, - he had stamina. I think very often people in politics need stamina.

Unfortunately, you know, the use to which they put it isn't very skilful very often to say the least. But if you think, you know, of the American presidential candidates and the sort of tours they have to make, the number of speeches that they have to give, the number of hands that they have to shake, running into tens of thousands at a time. Well, you can't be a politician, you know, of that sort, in that sort of way, without, well, without tremendous stamina. But people who are

into spiritual life need that sort of stamina too, not only for their personal development, but in the course of their work for others,

otherwise you know, in the spiritual (inaudible) make a bit of an effort for a couple of days, and then "Oh, I've got a headache, I've got to rest now" or "I'm a bit delicate, I'm going through things. I think I'll go and go away on holiday to Greece for a few months

This is the sort of thing you get, hmm? You see what I mean? Well (laughter)..Of course, you don't get it in India, to come back to Lokamitra. Lokamitra has got stamina and so has Puma. Otherwise they couldn't survive out there, you know, the things that they have to do, the strains to which they are subjected.

But you know, we are so effete - more often than not in the spiritual life. We can't stand any sort of strain or a bit of extra effort. You have to go away and rest, sit down for a while or have a little holiday - take things easy or play a little record. ... after any sort of extra bit of effort. It's pathetic, you know.. (Laughter)

I mean here you are, you know, aspiring to gain enlightenment, which is after all the most difficult thing that you can possibly propose to yourself, but look how easily one usually takes it, - what an easy time one gives oneself. And here are people, you know, aiming at other very inferior, trivial, you know easily attained things, you know - the Presidency this year of the United States. Well look at the massive effort they are putting in. It puts us to shame! (Laughter) At least we should be able to rush around like Jimmy Carter. (laughter).

Sanghadevi: It seems to tie up with your emotional involvement. Like if you're not emotionally committed to what you're doing, then you find the energy. If you're really not sort of really behind it then



S.: So in this area, I mean, as we were talking, you know, in relation to the co-ops, there's no carrot and there's no stick. All that can keep you going is sheer vision, hmm?

Ann M.: It's interesting - like quoting politics and things 'cause that's in the Asura realm quite a lot... an ever heroic quality, isn't it?

S.: Yes. It was transposed, you know that Asura quality through the spiritual (inaudible) and this is what the Bodhisattva does. The Bodhisattva has no less energy than the Asura. If anything, he's got more. But the Bodhisattva in the Mahayana literature is not depicted as, you~:know, a weak, feeble sort of creature by any means. There's nothing effete about the Bodhisattva. Oh yes, of course, in art they may depict the Bodhisattva as you and you know, slim and delicate and willowy looking, but don't be deceived, you know. Just read the literature. If you can't be like Jimmy Carter, at least be like Roslyn Carter. At least she's got the steel Magnolia. At least you can be a steel Lotus flower, or something like that. (laughter) It is Asura-like but transposed from the Asura mode to the Bodhisattva mode. people who don't know anything about enlightenment or Bodhisattva, I mean, they should feel that you are a steel lotus- blossom. We want more steel lotus-blossoms, otherwise we won't really get moving, eh?

Sarah: There's this sort of element of humour in .... (great laughter)

S.: That's the energy unblocking. I think some of you would like to be steel lotus-blossoms!

Sarah: But to develop it into (inaudible) .. it's my experience-.. dose of children.. which is .... is available to me, and I find that this.. I've sort of arrived and there's lots of children at this evening and I usually feel just like sitting down and taking refuge on the sofa, but we have to go into a room and play and as soon as we...

S.: What is this, I mean, what part do you....?

Sarah: It's an evening of therapy.

S.: Ah, right. Yes.

Sarah: Kind~f with a group but there are children involved and part

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of it is to join in playing with them and sort of sessions of games and this immediately makes you feel very energetic and in a good mood and you lose all your tiredness and you really need to force yourself to... (inaudible)...

S.: Well, sometimes people find this, you know, in the evening and they feel quite tired, and a friend invites them for a game of tennis, and the energy there as soon as they start playing. And you can get your second wind, as it were, there's more energy there than you think. It's just - it hasn't been aroused. Maybe your interest hasn't been aroused.

Liz Pankhurst (Jayaprabha): I find that energy seems to come with enjoyment.

S.: Mmm. Yes indeed.

Liz P.: And if I can sort of only let go and enjoy myself, then the energy just flows.

S.: Yes. Yes. Well, some people have almost to teach themselves to enjoy themselves, hmm? They don't regard enjoyment as a natural sort of thing, or even as you know, something skilful. They don't even regard it as right, regard it as a sort of unnatural state, to enjoy yourself and this is perhaps you know, partly due to our sort of puritanical upbringing, in some cases. I remember reading something by Andre Gide, the French writer some years ago, and he made a great point of this, that he'd been brought up in such a way that he had to learn to enjoy things. In fact, learning to enjoy things was as difficult for him as it was for other people to give them up and not enjoy them, because he'd been brought up in such a Puritanical way. He had to discipline himself into enjoying things, enjoying life, you know, enjoying nature, enjoying, you know, the sun and the air and the sea. It was quite an effort on his part to enjoy, even when he was grown up.

Gay: Is that one of the keys to liberating energy?

S.: Hmm yes. I think one has to establish contact with interest and joy and vision. I think vision is the most important of all from the spiritual point of view. I mean vision in the more imaginative sort of sense. Sort of concrete vision, let us say - a colourful

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vision, not just an abstract idea of enlightenment ; not just a concept of enlightenment, but a very rich sort of vivid glowing image of it as you get in a beautiful tanka for instance, or a beautiful image, hmm? Something that really sparks you off, something that really fires you and this is really important,- then your energies are really galvanized and you're capable of this sustained effort. You're capable of this - what do you call it?- you know, stamina, hmm?

Ann M.: I was going to say this calls to mind the energy of the Bodhisattva at play. If I remember it - the thing about the elephant jumping about in the lakes or w~~tever.

S.: Hmm right. Yes. Yes. Enjoying the lotuses in one pond after another, in that way the Bodhisattva goes joyfully from one labour to another. There's a really quite different attitude, isn't it? Our usual attitude is if we've done a certain amount of work, we're entitled to rest, we're entitled to take time off, hmm? We've earned it.

Liz P.: I suppose, in a way, you would have done if you were really hating your work, but if you could find work that you enjoy, then it wouldn't be like that.

S.: Yes. Then you don't think in terms of work and play, you don't think in terms of working hours and hours of leisure. You probably feel a bit like that, say in connection with craft work, the cafe and so on - even if it does run over time. You know, people are still there even after you have officially closed. Well, you don't mind. Maybe you do feel tired, but you know, it doesn't bother you that you have to carry on another half an hour. You don't say "Ah, well, closing time, shutters up, that's that!" This is something that I noticed, I mean, I don't often have contact with the outside working world, but I remember on the occasion~of my first visit to New Zealand- it's perhaps interesting that this should have happened in New Zealand, but I was in Christchurch and I was being interviewed for the local T.V. and I was being interviewed by some kind of reverend gentleman and we were, you know, sitting on a little sort of platform. I was going to say surrounded by television cameras but that would<sup>287</sup> have~' been an exaggeration. I might have been surrounded by tele~ieion cameras, had it been in London, but being New Zealand, I think there were only two television cameras, in Christchurch, only two television

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cameras but there were quite a lot of young T.V. cameramen around, and they were following the proceedings with some interest. But, you know, we were really into it, you know, the interview was going along; we just came to the end and looked and saw it was 5 O'clock, the clock struck five and all those young T.V. men, there must have been about a dozen of them,

literally disappeared just like rabbits, you know? One instant they were there, the next instant... they just dropped everything, dropped it literally, grabbed their hats and coats of the hooks, and they were out -:-wish, and gone through the door. It was astonishing! I thought "Well, maybe this is maybe how it is in the world, yeah?" There was no thought of just, well, just finishing what you were doing, the instant, the second the clock struck, they were out. It couldn't have taken them more than 10 seconds to get out of that studio and you know, the gentleman who was interviewing me and myself, we didn't even have time to get down off the platform!

A Voice: I was trained to do that at the end of school, as soon as the bell went

S.: But this is what happens when your heart isn't in your work; it only too often isn't. But you know, that sort of attitude within the spiritual context, context of spiritual work, context of a community or context of a co-op is quite out of place. It suggests that something is quite seriously wrong.

Sanghadevi: Again this seems to me anyway, to tie up with the fact that it's very hard to be committed to the centre, the co-op and the community. If you spread yourself over too many areas, you can't actually do any one thing properly

S.: Well, as I said, you know, don't know if it was in this group or the other one, you have to organize your own priorities and make it clear to all concerned where your priorities lie. If you know that you can do justice, full justice only to a certain situation, well decide which one that's going to be. Let everybody know that other things take second place as far as you're concerned. It is quite frustrating not to be able to put oneself into anything, totally; when you are getting really into it, interested, just having to stop<sup>287</sup> and turn your attention to something else that needs doing, hmm? That can be very frustrating indeed, hmm? I think if you are able

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to, you know, get deeply into something, anything, you know, where you feel all your energies are required, you're much happier to do other things as well, hmm? Because if you haven't even finished doing, say at present, you feel a certain resentment in having to change over to something else before you even got into the first thing, hmm? Do you see what I mean? But if you have been able to get into the first thing and if you've done fully and satisfactorily, whatever needs doing for the time being, then you are happy to turn to other things, hmm?

I mean, I find that for instance in connection with writing, supposing you spent the whole morning writing or maybe the greater part of the day, writing, - you know you've been able to get really into it, and you've done what you've wanted to do, you've expressed yourself satisfactorily - you think "Oh, well, that's enough for today!" - you're satisfied and then you can quite happily turn to something else. Hmm? But if in the middle of what you are doing,

right while you are in the midst of it, you have to put it down and attend to something else, you don't do it with the same willingness - because it's then an interruption, hmm? So one needs to be able to organize one's energies in one's work in such a way that, you know, these sorts of interruptions aren't necessary, are avoided. It isn't always possible but, you know, as far as possible, one should try to do that. It's not good to have to interrupt or disturb your energy flow in full career, as it were. (short pause)

Yet sometimes emergencies arise and, yes, one must be adaptable, but broadly speaking, you should be able to get into whatever you are doing to a satisfying extent and sort of come out of it naturally having completed a certain phase of it before having to take up or turn your attention to some other work, hmm? I mean, just think how frustrating it would be, supposing you have to cook a meal. Alright in the middle of the meal, when you are halfway through, you have to put down everything and go and talk very seriously with someone, and supposing in the middle of that serious talk, the phone rings, yeah? and you've got to attend to something else on the phone and before you have a chance to even finish that, somebody else interrupts you and you have to attend to another thing. I mean, this is the sort of situation, this is the sort of life that one has got to avoid to some extent.

Vida Browning: It sounds like having children actually.

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S.: It sounds like having children; it sounds like every housewife's experience, doesn't it? to some degree? But the frustrating element is not being able to get fully and deeply into something in a satisfying way - until you have finished it, at least, finished with it for the time being, and then turn to something else in a natural way. I mean, that's where the frustration comes in, I think for many people, hmm?

Gay Bullen: I find this quite (inaudible) my energies being quite I found that I was starting to be able to centre them through meditation, and then came the frustration that I couldn't sort of do that.

S.: I think this is one of the most satisfying features of retreats: that on retreat, you are doing one thing at a time and it is not interrupted, yeah? I mean, interruptions are really the bane of life! I mean, just do absolutely one thing at a time, huh? I've said in "peace is a Fire", one little aphorism, "The whole art of life is to be able to do one thing at a time". If you can just do one thing at a time, if you are free to do just one thing at a time, you are really lucky - you are really fortunate. But you do have that experience on retreat. I mean, we had it on the convention. It was really wonderful on the convention, I think for everybody, because many of the Order Members, were normally busy people with lots of things to do. You didn't even have to think about this; it just came along on the programme. You just sort of drifted along! Well, (laughter), flowed, sorry, flowed along to it, yes, hmm? And there were no interruptions. If you were cooking that day, you were cooking, you wouldn't be interrupted. If you were listening to a talk, or giving a talk, that would be the situation - there would be no interruptions. Well, some people wanted to carry on studying a bit more, so in a sense there was a little interruption there, but anyway, in the end, they did carry on, you

know, studying... (inaudible)...

Sarah Childs: I think I got used to doing that sort of thing at school, feeling a bit solitary and was used to that kind of thing... (inaudible) and lately I've been trying to lose enough of it ... to develop being a bit more open, because I find it quite easy to just sink into some activity which is my own interest and to loosen up is perhaps the opposite of it... (inaudible) ....

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S.: Well, loosen up in the sense of, you know, being more open to the possibility of being interrupted, just because, well that was the situation. You know if someone is knocked down by a bus, well, obviously you have to interrupt whatever you are doing and attend to that situation.

Sarah: Have blinkers, if someone came and knocked my door, I might not answer (inaudible) ....

S.: But you see, when you go away of solitary retreat, I mean, that is an opportunity of getting in~things and staying in them for as long as you naturally feel like it without being interrupted or without even interrupting yourself, you know, with the next item on your programme, hmm? It's almost a sort of luxury to be able to, carry on doing som~ething, I mean, something skilful, for as long as you want to do it. I mean, some people look at it as a luxury to be able to carry on meditating for as long as they feel like meditating, not having to get up for breakfast, you know, having to leave the meditation, because it's breakfast time.. and after breakfast you have to start work. Some people feel it's a real luxury if they can just sit on and meditate as long as they please. You don't even always have that possibility.

Paula Turner: This is where the balance comes in, surely with patience and strenuousness because you've also got to develop tolerance at times when you will be interrupted.

S.: Yes, indeed. Well, it depends on your general life situation, hmm? It does seem even for people in the FWBO, living in communities and especially working in co-ops, that too many interruptions and interruptions and interruptions, and if that happens much, you know, your energy gets, so to speak, discouraged. It won't flow into things because it knows it's not going to be allowed to flow into them very long; it's going to be checked and switched onto something else. So the energy gets, as I said, sort of discouraged.

Anoma: Do you think that's because there aren't enough people covering things?

S: Well, sometimes it's not enough people, sometimes it's, you know, bad planning, let us say, on one's own part or in one's own part in

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collaboration with other people. One should bear things like that in mind. I know sometimes it has been bad planning on someone's part that people have had to be switched very rapidly and without proper notice from one thing to another, you know, - taking them off something when they're in the middle of doing it. I think this is very undesirable. One should be very careful if one is in that sort of position to avoid doing it to other people. I mean, you get a sort of feeling of helplessness if someone gives you a job to do and then after an hour he says: "No, no stop doing that now. I want you to do this now", and you just get into it and says: "Oh, no sorry, I made a mistake. I think you'd better do so and so". That is just bad management and I think there's a bit of this~till around the co-ops. But it's the fault so to speak, of the whole co-op because it is a co-op, yeah?. So everybody needs to think, you know, of these sorts of things. So, you need that sort of combination, you know, - space to get into things to a satisfying extent, a satisfying depth, although at the same time flexibility so that when change is really necessary unavoidably, you are able to adapt without any undue friction. Alright, let's go on then to two. Would someone like to read the whole of that section? down to (I).

Norma McAully: "The essence of strenuousness is to strive for the good and wholesome. As is laid down in the (Abhidharmasamuccaya): 'It is the remedy against laziness. It is directing one's mind to the good and wholesome.' And in the commentary to the (Mahayanasutra- lankara): 'Its essence is striving for the good and wholesome. It is the one remedy against laziness which is on the side of what is detrimental to enlightenment.'"

S.: Yes, right. So the essence of strenuousness is to strive for the good and wholesome. So this suggests that there is in energy as a paramita - as one of the perfections, there's a quality of, what shall I call it?, a quality of illumination, almost. It's not just energy. It's energy rightly directed, yeah? It's energy which has become, well, perhaps self-conscious in a higher sense. It's energy illumined, however fitfully by wisdom, hmm? Or energy irradiated by wisdom.

Ann M. Could you say it's discriminating?

S.: One could say that, but that would, you know, suggest the same thing that there was in the energy a quality which enabled it to

d discriminate, to discriminate you know, a wholesome, a skilful, genuinely good object. In other words, there needs to be a certain clarity in the energy for it to qualify as a paramita. It can't be just blind, turbulent energy, however partial. So Virya isn't just energy. It's this clarified energy. Because it's clarified, it sees its true goal, hmm? and it is directed towards that goal. It's illumined by at least a spark of wisdom, hmm? (pause) Though its essence i~striving for the good and wholesome.

Sanghadevi: Why is it good AND wholesome rather than just good?

S.: I'm not sure. Good could be Punya - wholesome could be Kusala. There is a slight shade of difference. It could be just the trans- lator ; translating perhaps Kusala as good and wholesome. It's difficult to tell. "It is the one remedy against laziness". If you want to counteract laziness, well, you've just got to do one thing,- you've got to develop Virya, hmm?

Eve Gill: But when you're lazy, it's the last thing you want to do. (laughter)

S.: Right. Exactly. So what does that suggest? What do you need then?

Ann M.: Spiritual friendship.

S.: Spiritual friendship, yes. You need people banging on your door in the early morning, if you won't get up; even ringing a little bell just inside it. (Laughter)

Sarah Childs: What you are saying is you can do it if you have the proper friends.

S.: You can do it. You don't have to go on lying in bed.

Sarah:"You got up yesterday'."

S.: Yes, yes. "I don't have to go and bring a crane. You can move yourself." (Laughter) Yes. Good friends, I mean, especisly when one feels, feels probably quite wrongly, low in energy. Well, yes, good friends, spiritual friends can have a very energizing, galvanizing effect, Hmm? They might arouse your interest and enthusia287sm in all

301 sorts of ways. They might, just if necessary, play around with you, or you know, make you laugh and you know in this way, mobilize your energies a bit,sometimes that is necessary. I mean, they don't have to necessarily read you a lecture on Virya. (Laughter) There are other ways of doing it, of course. I mean, you mustn't make people feel guilty about being lazy.



That would only make matters worse. Enthuse them, encourage them!

Also sometimes one must make sure that others and oneself also, - that it isn't a case of genuine tiredness. I've sometimes had to say to people, fairly recently that "Look" - I mean sometimes, people have felt they didn't have enough energy or that weren't doing enough and so on and so forth or couldn't do this or couldn't do that; could not get up early in the morning. I've had to say, "Well, look, I think you are just physically tired. I think you are just physically worn out. You need rest. You need two or three good nights' sleep". And very often that's worked, hmm? So one has to take note of that also. I mean, this is, you know, being mindful of one's limitations in a healthy objective sort of way.

Sarah: In a way, if you work very hard, you kind of destroy the important kind of energy, when you decide to rest or something. It might be seen as actually preserving a different kind of energy or preparing yourself in (inaudible) ...

S.: I think a healthy organism knows, as it were, instinctively, when it needs rest. I think the danger is when your intelligence or your mind, let's say, becomes alienated from the organism and your mind keeps you going. It's a sort of willed decision to go on even though your body is crying out for rest and really needs it. I mean, this is what one has got to - be aware of. This is a different thing from stamina, you know, which is a consolidated sort of effort of the whole integrated organism. What I'm talking about is just a willed effort by the alienated intellect, hmm? at the expense of the rest of the organism. So one should be careful of that sort of situation.

Voice: (inaudible) in terms of caring for yourself in that way?

S.: Stamina is not a sort of willed thing. (Tea Break)

Alright. Let's go on then. Would someone like to read that section, the quotation:

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#fIL-larSwain: "It is the one remedy against laziness which is on the side of what is detrimental to enlightenment.

There are three varieties of laziness: 1) lassitude, 2) idleness and 3) gross laziness.

1) The first is addiction to the pleasures of mental inertia such as sleepiness, restfulness and dreaminess. These have to be given up because in this life, there is no time for them. In a sutra we read:

'Bhiksus, consciousness diminishes, life runs down, the life forces give way, and even the Teacher's Doctrine disappears. Why is this so? Because one cannot realize ultimate reality without strenuousness and hard exercises.'

S.: Hm, alright." Mental inertia such as sleepiness" In what way is sleepiness a form of laziness?

Sanghadevi: Is this when the mind drifts from one thing to another with no continuity?

S.: I think this is covered more by dreaminess. But maybe there is an adequate word here. It's indulgence in sleepiness, as when, well, I think everybody knows, sometimes it happens, you've had your full night's sleep, but you want just to go on indulging in sleep and very often, if you do that, you wake up a second time, you may feel a little bit tired, whereas when you first woke up, you felt fresh and rested, huh? So why does one indulge in sleepiness in that sort of way? I mean, there are various reasons, but can you think of some of them, at least?

A Voice: You don't want to face the day.

S.: You don't want to face the day. I think that's quite an important one, yeah? I mean, if you remember, as soon as you get up, if it occurs to you that there's something to be done, which you are really looking forward to doing, well, you get up much more readily. But if there's something that you're not looking forward to, that you shrink from or dread, you are reluctant to get up, hmm? So there is something to be tackled in that case. Either you must change your way of life or you must change your attitude.

Sanghadevi: I've really noticed how that does destroy any positive (qualities?) if you do just sleep in and not get up. I invariably

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feel worse, actually when I get up.

S.: ~ut why does one feel worse? What happens?

Eve: It takes the edge off your energy, in a way.

S.: Hmm, yeah. It's as if energy just sort of swirls around for a bit. You may have dreams,

yeah? You may sleep quite lightly and have sort of heavy dreams, and they may use up energy quite unnecessarily.

Anoma: I've also found (inaudible)...sleeps a lot, and I mean, I'm much better than I used to be, but I still find that every few weeks, that I have sort of a couple of days (inaudible) .... I tend to sleep for long hours for a couple of days and, but actually, at the end of it, I feel better like somehow I've sort of....

S.: Well, this is perhaps a different thing, when you know, periodically, you sleep longer, - not that you wake up refreshed but, as it were, deliberately, you know, drift off to sleep again, but that you just have a longer sleep and it would seem in those cases that you need it. So perhaps one should make allowance for that.

Sarah: I feel good if I've done it and felt in control. I've sort of woken up and felt 'I really do feel tired' and thought "well, I'll just rest," and then I've felt quite free and easy

S.: But any other reasons why one indulges in sleepiness?

Vida: To block off?

S.: To block. In what way? Block off from what?

Vida: From sorting things out and using your energies.

S.: Well, in a way, the day again, isn't it? yeah?

Anoma: I think it's called sort of consciousness, actually - sometimes I think this sort of struggle - there's something just wants to remain unconscious.

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S.: Yes, right. It's sort of, it's just mental inertia. You know, consciousness doesn't want to emerge from the unconscious. It's like the child not wanting to be born.

Sarah: Sometimes I feel just like a big still muscle (laughter) ... (inaudible) .. Meditating and sleep and I can't do much about it because it seems to be a feeling dead.

Anoma: Do you think there's - I know Doris Lessing wrote somewhere that she actually went to sleep in the afternoon sometimes because she had very sort of rich dreams, and that a lot of her writing came from that and that at night-time, she couldn't remember her dreams; so she purposefully went to sleep in the afternoons and sometimes, I mean, it's not always the case, but sometimes I sort of feel there's a sort of richness in my unconscious sort of dream state isn't there? You know, in my waking state, sometimes I want to. 'it doesn't always feel like retreat in.. .sort of hide away. It's almost like to discover some depths that don't always come up in

S.: Well, this brings us on to another thing, because, yes, dream- iness is mentioned. It says "mental inertia such as sleepiness, restfulness". I'm not quite sure what restfulness means. It's not a very negative word really, or not a word with a negative connotation in English, huh? But, 'dreaminess~ huh? I was thinking that one can look at dreaminess in a positive way as well as in a negative way. I think one can think of dreaminess in a negative way, first of all, in a sense of indulging in daydreams as a substit~, even as an escape from action, hmm? As a sort of deliberate wish fulfillment, instead of, you know, in actual fact, in real life, getting on with something and actually doing it. Fantasi~t<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>9- building castles in the air, you know in a Walter Mitty sort of way. Do you know what I mean? I think indulging in dreaming in this sort of way is certainly negative

- is certainly a form of laziness and is inimical to one's individual development. It's a sign of weakness, one could say (unclear) the antithesis of Virya. You know the sort of thing I mean? I mean people indulge in it quite a lot. Sometimes you know, in times of stress, they indulge in it more, don't they?

But there's also, you know, dreaminess, more in the sort of sense that Anoma was speaking of - as when you make almost a sort of deliberate attempt to contact - well, for want of a better word, the unconscious, and the riches of the unconscious, as manifested, for instance, in dreams. but you try to do it during a waking state.

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You have, sort of waking dreams. You have reveries. I think ~his cai} have a positive effect 287 or can be positive when perhaps your life is over-organised and you're having to use your rational mind quite a lot and have perhaps, got a bit out of contact with the deeper imaginative sources of oneself. And you can engage in a sort of, it's not exactly, it's not dreaminess because it can have a great vividness and clarity at the same time. But you engage in a sort of reverie which is sort of, what shall I say - not very directed thinking. Maybe if your thinking has had to be very willed because you are dealing with certain practical situations you certainly are not using a whole part of yourself. So when you indulge in dreaminess and maybe, well, let's say, reverie, you can sometimes contact that. This is in a way the more~oetic side of oneself also. Do you know what I mean?

Hilary Swain: Would it be true to say~hat when you're in that state you can be more in touch with your intuitive self?

S.: Well, yes. I think the word 'intuition' is so vague, I perhaps would prefer to avoid it. But yes, one could say that. In a sense, does that add anything to what one says if one speaks in terms of the imagination, or the riches of the unconscious?

Lois Paull: Is it like getting back in touch with your character? Your personality?

S.: you could look at it that way too. But it's as though it's getting more in contact with the non-rational functioning of the mind. The non-rational level. Not so much the level of the emotion even but of images. Even of Archetypes. You could say even of intuitions.

Anoma: I feel that's where my energy comes from. So that's where when I'm sort of, when everything seems, the contradictions, I feel sort of sleepy in a certain way, but sort of re-contact a source of energy.

Sarah Child: I find it defeatist to call it, like, the unconscious because then it almost serves you right that it's unconscious but I suppose that comes from Jung. . .

S.: Well, unconscious means you are not conscious of it.

Sarah: But you can be, can't you? You can become, almost through the whole day, you can become aware of the unconscious and

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S.: It sort of also involves proceeding by way of free association of ideas rather than a way of strict logical thought. I think one needs to do that sometimes.

Anne McMillan: Anais Nin talks quite a bit about that. She calls it the 'subterranean

Liz Pankhurst: I'm quite interested in dreams because my dreams... I don't seem to be able to dream very much during the day, well, I used to but I don't do it so much. But my

dreams during the night are very vivid but sometimes they effect me during the day. They come - but I was thinking what you said about - that dreams can take a lot of energy so it would be preferable, in a way, to try and bring that into one's life.

S.: Yes, because I mean, this is an aspect of integration of one's energies. It's as though on a certain level you are pre-occupied with certain themes of which you never actually become conscious. And that is not a good thing

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S.: I mean sometimes, this becomes almost, sort of, pathological as with the Walter Mitty sort of mentality when, well, yes, you lead a sort of fantasy life as a real life, so to speak - there is no point of contact between the two. So the aim should be

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the aim should be to feed the dreams freely from the fantasies into the waking mind. The waking consciousness and enable them or allow them to influence that. Not to keep them in a completely different dimension, on a completely different level which merely runs parallel to your waking life.

Liz Pankhurst: I suppose one way of doing it would be, what Anais Nin seems to do, is to bring them into her writing.

S. : Yes. Or one's painting.

Sarah Child: Or perhaps relate them to the people, into action. Action relating to people.

Sanghadevi: There are one or two people I know who say they don't ever remember their dreams. Often go through phases quite concerned when they hear other people remember

dreams. I mean, I don't think it's necessarily a disadvantage if you don't remember your dreams. I mean, in my experience sometimes it feels like my dreams are sort of, well, it's more the energies that is holding you back sort of thing, rather than it's moving we'll forward (inaudible) . . . . Mainly you've got the energy haven't you?

S.: Yes, indeed. Well, sometimes the dreams may seem to be a sort of re-percussion from trivial things that have happened during the day. You don't need to remember all that. But if you have an important, a sort of archetypal dream, more often than not you definitely do remember it. Perhaps you wake up in the middle of it. Then it's useful to reflect on it and try to understand, so to speak, the meaning of it and integrate it more into one conscious waking attitude. (Pause.) So I think reprehensible as laziness and lassitude may be, I think we have to be careful when we use such words as sleepiness, restfulness, dreaminess to distinguish a sort of positive as well as a negative side. I mean Guenther is using in his translation words which are really neutral. The texts purports to describe negative forms of these things because we are dealing with laziness. The antithesis of virya or actually the words which he uses can bear positive meaning too, so we shouldn't be misled by that. And not think that all dreaminess, all reverie

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is necessarily unskilful,

Lois Paul: I remember as a child I was very dreamy. A very dreamy child in fact. I used to sort of play out fantasies in real life. I think in children you can encourage the imagination to work.

S.: Well it is said that children try out certain situations in the imagination before trying them out in real life. It's a sort of rehearsal for real life. So in that way not be discouraged. I mean, do any of you find this, who have children or have had children?

Srimala: They certainly try out games of being mummies and daddys. (Laughter.)

Sarah Child: When they are playing they are really living in the world of fantasy - they really are there.

Paula Turner: Actually, not just on their own but with other children as well. Sometimes I might come along and interrupt something and I mean I'm not there at all. I mean they are really into . . .

S.: They are in another world so to speak. I did, by the way, read an article some months ago that some experiments have been conducted in the United States which had suggested the conclusion that people like Scientists and Mathematicians need or, at least, take, very little sleep. Not more than

four or five hours a night but that people who were involved in any kind of creative work, writers and artists, needed very

much more - eight or nine or even ten hours. So it's as though they need time to get in touch with that deeper creative level which manifests perhaps more in dreams. It's as though in their case there is a lot more going on beneath the surface of consciousness. More is being worked out there. It's not being worked out on the level of the rational mind in the full light of consciousness, so to speak.

Sanghadevi: I think perhaps in that light, although in the long run, if you meditate perhaps you're going to need less

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sleep. At any given time you may be going through phases of, well, of sleeping quite a lot. Of needing quite a bit of sleep.

S. : Well this sometimes does happen when there is a lot happening, as it were, beneath the surface of consciousness as I call it. In the~subterranean as Anais Nin calls it. And you just need to allow that process to get on with itself so to speak. Not interfere with it. So just go to sleep is the best thing you can do in a way. Not interfere. Give that process the opportunity to work itself out. Give it scope.

Anne McMillan: When I was on solitary I actually slept much more than I ever did. I slept some nights eight or nine hours which is really amazing.

S Well, you could have been catching up also. I don't mean just on physical sleep but perhaps in dream life. Things that had got excluded from the busy sort of life that one was leading living in the city. Sometimes you don't have time to dream.

Anoma: I think I've actually, on solitary, on several occasions, sort of felt I must go to sleep and I mean I've had a dream that seemed really important. It's almost like I had to, I've had to have that dream . . . (Bhante interrupts) ..



S. : Maybe the dream was pressing for attention, so to speak.

Faith Johnston: Doesn't Jung say that all dreams are our subconscious telling us something, so you ought to be very aware.

S,: But I mean, certainly all those dreams other than those which are quite obviously just reflections of ordinary things which are happening during the day, yes.

Anoma: Imagination and this sort of thing we are talking about - I mean, I see it connected to visions, certainly in my case. I feel if I'm in contact with that then I'm in contact with visions.

S. : I mean, we, I mean, sometimes our terminology, our phraseology is quite misleading. We speak of the super-conscious. We speak

of the unconscious. In a way it's much the same thing. It's another level which is at present screened from us. We speak of

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the unconscious but it's not, so to speak, unconscious in itself. It is simply that we are not, that is our, well, let us say, conscious mind, well, let's say our ordinary - work-a-day waking mind is not conscious of it - is concealed from it. I mean this is why the expression 'subterranean' is quite expressive because you can have a subterranean chamber, a subterranean tunnel, or a subterranean gallery which is all lit up inside but you don't see that. You only see it from the outside. To you it looks dark. But within itself it's all lit up and full of light and you can, sort of, pierce through into that and the light can emerge or you can find yourself in the midst of that chamber. In the midst of that tunnel, or that gallery. It's more like that. And whether you speak in terms of the depths of the unconscious, the illuminaous depths of the unconscious or the heights of the super-conscious it really comes to much the same thing. Whether you go deeper

and deeper or higher and higher. These are only spacial metaphors. Some people like the idea of the depths (laughter)

other people like the idea of the heights. Some people like the idea of striving and aspiring and climbing up the sides of mountains, Others like the idea of sinking down to the depths of things. (Laughter.) Just depends on your general outlook.

Liz. Is there any difference like if dreams that seem to go down to the depths and dreams that seem very light? I mean a sort of, that different sort of energy, whether it might be flying

dreams - some dreams where you might go right down under. I mean, is there a sort of . . .

S.: Perhaps there is initially, yes. I mean perhaps, one could say well, very roughly and very broadly that, at least, to begin with dreams which have a suggestion of sort of tapping the depths are perhaps more psychological - that those that have a feeling of scaling the heights are more spiritual but whether the two did not ultimately co-incide, that the deepest depths were one with the highest heights then it would be difficult perhaps to question. (Long pause.)

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S. : So lassitude. "The first is addiction to the pleasures of mental inertia such as sleepiness , restfulness and dreaminess Yes, there's also this term 'the pleasures'. You know, you are addicted. This is also a significant word. I don't know how literally we are to take this bearing in mind that this is a translation but you've all heard about 'Love and Addi~\()oni haven't you? Yes. So 'addiction to the pleasures of mental inertia such as sleepiness, restfulness and dreaminess.' There's a sort of element of comfort love. You're addicted (which is some sort of, perhaps, strong term ?) to the pleasures of these things. To the pleasure of sleepiness. To the pleasure of restfulness and the pleasure of dreaminess. When you give attention to your dreams in the sort of way we've just been discussing you're not concerned so much with th-e pleas~ntness of the dreamy state but of the significance, the meaning of the dreams themselves, for you as an individual, which is something rather different. (Pause.)

Sanghadevi: There seems to be a fine line between, between being relaxed and being, yes, torpid.

S.: Yes. I mean restless, restlessness is clearly negative but I mean, restfulness can be both positive and negative as though we don't have a separate term for that negative enjoyment for the restful state. But maybe taking it easy. Taking things easy. It's more like that.

Lois Paul: Is it ennui?

S.: Mmm?

Lois: Is it ennui?

S.: Well yes. That's perhaps rather a stronger term because that s nearer boredom isn't it.

Lois: But it's got a sort of pleasurable . . .

S.: But ennui is not so pleasurable necessarily.

Lois: I think it is. (Lau~hter.)

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S.: Well perhaps people disagree about that. (Long pause.) So these have to be given up because in this life there is no time for them.' That is to say they have to be given up in their negative forms.

'In a Sutra we read: "Bhiksus, consciousness diminishes, life runs down the life forces give way, and even the Teachers' Doctrine disappears. Why is this so? Because one cannot realise ultimate reality without strenuousness and hard exercise~' What's the connection? (Pause.) Well, does consciousness diminish due to laziness? Does life run down due to laziness? What is the connection?

Anne McMillan: Is it the connection between energy and  
(relief ?) itself?

S. : Could be.

A Voice: . . . (inaudible) ,.

Eve Gill: It brings to mind just impermanence.

S.: It brings to mind impermanence but what's the connection between lack of virya and impermanence in this sort of way?

Anoma: Well, if- you're not making an effort say, to meditate, well your consciousness

will 'jinish,

S. : Well, if, yes, but your life wouldn't run down all the more necessarily. It's as though life is short anyway and by your laziness you make it, so to speak, even shorter. Perhaps it's more like that. But what about 'the Teachers Doctrine disappears'? That is to say the Buddha's Dharma disappears.

Sarah CY'ild: You lose clarity.

S. : But why is that mentioned in this context? In the con- text of laziness.

Liz Pankhurst: You're not making an effort to put yourself in touch with it.

~. : Ah, but no, it's more than that because it says it disappears.

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Sarah: It's not an object separate from you.

S. : It's not an object separate from yo-J, Yes. The Dharma is sustained in existance only if people go on practicing it. Which they don't do, of course, if- they're lazy and have no virya. So if Buddhists cease to practice the Dharma and cease to experience higher states of consciousness - there's no Dharma. It's just there in the books or it's just a historical memory but in a real living sense there's no Dharina. Tt disappears. I mean, this is why, in some texts the Buddha is represented as saying that there are three stages in the dis- appearance of the Dharma. First of all the higher spiritual attainments disappear but people are still observing the rules.

The monks and nuns are still observing the rules, ;They're still wearing yellow robes and shaving their heads but there

is no actual experience by anyone of the higher spiritual, especially higher transcendental states, And the relics of the Buddha are still preserved. Then in the next stage of the disappearance of the Dharma even the forms are no lenger kept up. All you have are the relics of the Buddha, The body relics. And in the last stage you've got the body relics themselves disappear, So the Dharma is maintained in existQnce from generation to generation by peoples' actual experJence of those higher spiritual states. This is why you can go to a Buddhist country and you can see it dotted, not to say littered, with all sorts of beautiful ancient stupas. You see people 'Atearing beautiful exotic colourful robes, performing beautiful exotic colourful ceremonies; even giving lectu-res on the flharna; -ven

writing books on the Dharma; publishing books on the Dharma. But you feel there's no Dharma because there's no genuine commitment to the Three Jewels. There is no real practice of meditation perhaps. No higher spiritual attainments. Buddhism just exists as a cultural tradition in some areas. But the Dharma has, the Dharma in the highest sense, the deepest sense, the truest sense, has disappeared. And sometimes one can be misled by all the robes and the ceremonies and rituals and the institutions, or practices in the sense of customs and think that the Dharma is there, but it isn't. It's all hollow. But it can be revived as soon as anybody actually

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starts practicing and experiencing again, (Pause.)

Anoma: I think I've felt sometimes that it's almost like that we're entrusted with the Dharma - that if you are practicing it and to what extent you are in touch with it - it is a responsibility.

S.: Yes. It's a bit like being entrusted with a baby. If you neglect it, it will die but if you look after it properly, well, it'll gradually grow up and develop. So that you're entrusted with this little sort of seed of the Dharma, Ah yes, a seed you could say is like being given an acorn or any other kind of seed which you can plant and water. That's the Dharma. And, of course, it's also you. It's also your own spiritual development and growth.

Anoma: If I'm sort of thinking about somebody, whether I feel they're ready for ordination or something, it comes up in that kind of way - whether I sort of feel they can be entrusted with the Dharma,

S.: Yes. Whether they will care enough for the Dharma and care enough for themselves to grow. To make the Dharma a living thing, a living experience, so far as they are concerned. (Long pause.) So it's due to people's laziness that the Buddha's Dharma even eventually disappears. The Dharma in the true sense. (Pause.) So you are responsible, as it were, it's up to you, up to those who profess to be Buddhists and who profess to go for Refuge. It's up to all of them either to keep the Dharma alive or let it die. (Pause.) I mean, sometimes the question has been raised in the past, how long will the Buddha's Dharma continue? There's no fixed limit, It will continue as long as people practice it.

Sanghadevi: I think I got a bit misled when I read somewhere that, I mean this idea of the (word unclear) and the idea that the Dharma will die out and I said, "Oh no! A whole load of Friends will be pissed off!" (Laughter.) Working, sort of, yet over all expectations . . . . (inaudible )

S.: Yes, well this sort of (Kali idea is a Hindu idea rather than a Buddhist idea. And the sort of converse heresy,

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So to speak, is that this, this is the Aquarian Age and we're all going to get Enlightened anyway, whether we make any effort or not.

Anoma: Isn't it true in some places people say that you can't actually get Enlightened now?

S.: Indeed I'm afraid the Theravadans very often say this, especially in Ceylon, but that makes non sense of Buddhism and actually contradicts the Buddha's teaching. It seems to me a rationalization of their own laziness. (Pause.) That's there's no point in trying to gain Enlightenment. It's too late. All that you can do is to make offerings to the monks and pray to be reborn as a direct disciple of the future Buddha, Maitreya Buddha, when he gains Enlightenment.

Anne: I remember when I first heard the concept of Maitreya in a study group I felt quite distressed because it seemed that if there was the necessity for a Buddha in the future well then it made nonsense of .

S.: Yes but what does that really mean? I mean one shouldn't take it quite in a mechanical sort of way, (when we used it for centuries ?). It means that, even supposing, I mean, that everybody ceases to practice the Dharma so that as an effective living experience the Dharma disappears, there's always the possibility of it being revived because an individual can always himself, despite the fact that there are no other Enlightened individuals around at that time, gain Enlightenment and in that sense bring the Dharma back to life. And the person who is enough of an individual should be able to do that at a time, well, by himself, by his own efforts, at a time when there is no Buddha and therefore no Dharma left, as a living experience. He is called a Buddha in that technical pioneering sort of sense. It doesn't mean there is a Maitreya coming, down from heaven. It means that even when nobody has gained Enlightenment, when there is no Dharma, there is always the possibility of an individual re-discovering that path.

Sanghadevi: I think that is what I was thinking of. I mean I had taken that to mean somewhere that it inevitably, definitely, was going to die out. And I found that a bit sort of incongruous.

S.: Well it's not inevitable. It, I mean, it's very likely just as on account of the sheer inertia of the mass of human beings, historical circumstances and

so on. It isn't inevitable that/the Dharma will die out. But it is highly

likely. And if the Dharma does die out or when the Dharma does die out, none- the-less,

there is always the possibility of it being re-discovered and re-proclaimed, re-taught, re-communicated because human beings do have that capacity. Of course, it will take a very gifted individual to re-discover the Dharma, when the Dharma is no longer known, perhaps, or remembered. But it can

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be done. So the Dharma can be revived indefinitely because it's something that gives expression to the spiritual potential of human beings. Of the individual.

Lois: I think this reminds me of last Friday when I met a Christian minister because he asked me what my relationship with God was and I said, "Well there isn't one." And he said "Well how are you going to get to Heaven?" And I said "I was going to get to Enlightenment by my own efforts" and he said, "But, but you can't do that. People can't do that. They need the help that "

S.: Well in a sense it's true. You need help. I mean, it's true that we gain Enlightenment by our own efforts but we need help even to make that own effort. And we get help from our spiritual friends and above all we get help from the Buddha. But even though we need help, I mean, what sort of help? The help of another human being who has done what we are trying to do. Just as if you want to learn carpentry - alright, it's helpful to go and learn with an experienced carpenter rather than try to find it all out by yourself. It's rather like that. So we agree that even, well, even though we have to do it ourselves, we agree that we need help - but whose help? The help of someone who has actually done it. I mean, how can Jesus help us? He's the son of God. He was born pure. He was born sin-less. And we're not born sin-less. Or at least we were pure, we don't stay sin-less very long. (Laughter.) And we are certainly not the son of God in that sense. So how can he be a guide to us? He's got an unfair start. (Laughter.) Well, isn't it so? (More laughter.) I mean, how can the Virgin Mary be a guide to you? (Laughter.) You're never going to be in that position. You're never going to be an immaculate mother as far as I know. (Laughter.) Some may be immaculate. Some of you may be mothers, but (laughter) .... (inaudible)... So how can these sort of people, these sort of beings be models or guides for us? Well, let's say that Christ was born as a human being and he knew human life and he was tempted as we are tempted but was he? He was sinless. I mean, could, really, the son of God have sinned? Adam was created sinless and sinned. So presumably there was the possibility that even the son of God, though created sinless would sin. But then the son of God is God. He's one of the, the persons of the Trinity. Can God then sin? Well it's getting onto very dangerous ground. (Laughter.)

Anne: Well that's a gnostic theory.

S,: But one could say the practical point is, that even though you need help, you need the help of another human being. You as an unenlightened human being need the help of an enlightened human being, or at least, of a more enlightened human being. An incarnate deity can not render you much help, not in that sort of way, because his position is so utterly remote from yours. You might say, "Well he knows everything and he can enter into all your thoughts" but is it

the same kind of thing~? Can he really stand by your side and show you the way as one who has had to go over it himself?

Lois: I think this minister was saying that it was, at one point in the conversation he said that well, it's Gods' system anyway. He's set it up and so therefore you ....

S.: You ought to have said "Well you mean God's framed us." (Laughter) Yes, God's ~t it up.

Lois: And that was why you had no choice but sort of, abject yourself and open yourself to God. You're powerless ....

S.: Well as I've said in my pamphlet, well often it sounds like, well, God says "love me or else". (Laughter.) This is how it sounds sometimes. But it does sound intelligible. It does sound reasonable that you can be helped by another human being who has gone through it all before. Who is more experienced and~more skilled than you and who has reached the goal. So we don't say that all, some Buddhists do almost say this but it's not really correct, we don't really say, well, I can do it all myself. I can go it alone. I don't need any help. That's the Buddhist attitude. Well some Buddhists do tend to say that. -Not inside the F.W.B.O. but outside. I used to meet some of them. They~ come along, even to a lecture, very grudgingly because they didn't really think they could learn anything from anybody el~r~. They usually thoug} 1~all they had to do was to read the books and they could do it all themselves. And they don't think in terms of Sangha. Don't think in terms o~ Going for Refuge. They are going to do it all themselves. So even though you have to do it yourself, certainly, it doesn't n~cessarily follota that you have to do it or can even do it, by yourself. You need the help of other human beings. You need the ~elp of ~lyana Mitras, they need your help. Perhaps you do it to- gether. You help one another. You keep one another up to scratch. I mean, an ordinary human being who is a bit more advanced than you can help you much more than any incarnate son of God, because he's in a situation so utterly different. You can even go so far as to say God can't understand man. Even if there is a God, well, he'd have to just leave you alone. He wouldn't be any use to you whatever because he's such an utterly different being. He lives in another world. It's like the multi-millionaire trying to understand the poor man~ problems. He can't. It's like Marie Antoinette saying "~~[hy don't they eat cake." So God's a bit like that. He can't understand our problems, and let him get onwith his own business. (Laughter.) He's enough to do looking after the Universe. (Laughter.) .... (inaudible) .... what's it got to do with him? He shouldn't get in the way. Trying to help us. It's nonsense. It's impertinent. (laughter.) As for the Virgin Mary (laughter)well at all



you might be but with her blue robe, with her white under~gafments, well, (laughter.) she can't~~? you either. She's no model.

Eve Gill: Thank goodness.

S.: Probably rather glad that she isn't anyway.

A Voice: That's not say that she hasn't been.

S.:

A Voice: That's not saying that she hasn't been made to be a model. Couldn't be?

S.: Well she's been presented as a model, just as Jesus has been presented as a model. But, I mean, to the extent that they are, as it were, Super- natural ~igures, they can't be models for human beings. It's impossible. It's like presenting a marble figure and expecting us to be like that. We're not marble, we're made of flesh and blood. So how can a marble figure be a model for us? How can we live like that? Marble figures don't need to eat and drink - we do. (Laughter.) God is sinless, Jesus is sinless, Mary is sinless. We're not. So in what way can they act as models for us? How can they help us? They've not been through it as we have been. Look at Mary. She was a good girl all her life, apparently. It's no model for the likes of you. (Laughter.) So when people say, whether Ministers or others, say things like, "Well you need help. You can't do it by yourself." Well, don't deny that because that sounds and perhaps is, sort of pseudo-individualistic. Say, "Well, yes, we admit that we need help. We need encouragement but we need it from other human beings who are more developed and more experienced than ourselves. And the chain, so to speak, goes right back to, or right u~tv, the Dtid~a, who is the Enlightened human being. And we can say, well, in the course of Thuddhist tradition, there have been other figures like that. There have been people like Milarepa, people like Tsongkhapa, people like Dogin (?) people like Hui Neng, who have been Enlightened Masters, Enlightened Teachers and it is they who help us. And their disciples who help us. And the records of their lives and their teachings that help us, because they were all Enlightened human beings and this is what we are trying to become. That does give us great help and encouragement and inspiration and vision. But a mythical saviour who was perfect and exempt from sin, he doesn't help us very much. Not in that, real living human way. I mean, the minister might go on to say, "Well yes, Jesus helped me. I can testify to that. He helps me in my life." You can say, 1,Well, perhaps-he does. But I can also testify that the Buddha and my Spiritual Friends have helped me in my life too. So at least I can say that even if you have been helped by Jesus I've been helped by them. And if it

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comes down to actual practice, if it comes down to actual experience, well perhaps I'm as happy as you. I'm as a~tr~stic11 One can argue in that way, or discuss in that kind of way. I mean, such a person might go on to say, "Well you might have been helped but not enough.

'And you might have been saved but not really saved. Only Jesus can really save you." But then, of course, you have to point out that is a truly dogmatic statement. Say, "Well the Muslim believes the same. Only Allah and the Prophet. So what will you say to that? They are also Theists, but they don't accept Christ as the son of God. They accept Mohammed as the greatest of the Prophets. So we don't accept any form of theism. We are non-theists, so to speak. We are atheists if you like. A sort of transcendental humanists." (Laughter.) (Pause.)

And also you can say things like, "Well even the historical existence of Jesus isn't proved. It's open to doubt. It's open to question." You could even say that the historical existence of the Buddha isn't proved but you can say "No one can disprove the historical existence of those Valyana Mitras with whom actually I am in contact and they are helping me." Yes' (Pause.) Alright, let's go on.

Text: And in the Bodhicaryavatara:

Since death comes quickly accumulate the prerequisites while there is time. If you think that it will be sufficient to accumulate them just before you die, you should remember that when death comes there is no time to do so.

As has been said:

Even if you were then to abjure laziness, what can you do since there is no time.

S.: We are still apparently concerned with laziness in the form of lassitude but the quotations don't always quite fit exactly. They're just approximate, approximately relevant. I mean, reflections like this 'Even if you were then to abjure laziness what can you do since there is no time.' 'Since death comes quickly accumulate the prerequisites while there is time.' They are just meant to counteract laziness in the form or the sense of lassitude. To get you up early in the morning, so to speak. Don't waste time. There is very little time left. Don't dream your life away in a sluggish, self-indulgent, addictive kind of way. If you have that sense of urgency, you won't fall a victim to lassitude.

Sanghadevi: I actually found it quite helpful when I was at Tyn-y-Nol, experiencing sloth in my meditations - remember Shantideva saying "You should throw off sloth like a snake." It just popped up.

S.: Yes, right. We are going to get that one in a minute. (Laughter.)

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Side B

Sanghadevi: Oh, are we. (Laughter.) (Long pause.)

S.: Airight - like to carry on then?

Text: 'It is no sign of intelligence to think that you will not die until you have taken possession of the good and wholesome. As has been stated:

The Lord of Death who is not to be trust does not wait for  
whether or not something has been done;

Whether one be ill or healthy life is accidental and not to be trusted.'

S.: One envisages the situation in which, yes, one has taken up the spiritual life. Yes, you are trying to take possession of the good and wholesome. Yes, you are trying to attain Enlightenment. But if you are not very intelligent you will think that because you've set yourself on the right path, because you've made up your mind to gain Enlightenment, therefore you, as it were, will be given time to do that. After all, you've decided to do such a good thing. It seems only right, only fair, that you should be allowed the time to do it. But not necessarily so. 'The Lord of Death who is not to be trusted' He doesn't, as it were, allow you extra time just because you've decided to do something good. 'The Lord of Death who is not to be trusted does not wait for whether or not something has been done. Whether one be ill or healthy' And one could say whether one is leading a skilful life or an unskilful life - 'Life is accidental and not to be trusted.' The fact that you've set yourself on the spiritual path doesn't guarantee you any longer time in which to follow that path, or to achieve the goal. (Pause.) Do you think people ever actually think this? Because they're doing the right thing therefore they will, as it were, be allowed whatever time they need to do it.

Sarah: It's like wanting a reward for your good behaviour.

S.: It's like wanting a reward, yes. Here am I leading a good life. Why should this happen to me? Here am I just wanting to attain Enlightenment, why shouldn't I have the time?

A Voice: It's like a false sense of security, as well.

S.: Yes. Yes.

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Sarah: It's like a materialistic version of Enlightenment.

S.: ~nm.

Eve: But it's very difficult not to feel like that, because I feel like that. I mean, I just take it for granted that my life is going to be long and I'm going to make progress, you know.

S.: Well this maybe ties up with something else that I've been talking about or mentioned, at least, that when one is young, I mean, make it under thirty- five, it's very difficult really to think, really to believe, really to imagine, that you are going to die one day. And, perhaps, if one also is not only young, but has set oneself on the right path, well, it's all the more difficult to realise that you may not have sufficient time. So this realisation should generate a sense of greater urgency. One shouldn't waste any time. 'Life is accidental and not to be trusted.' You can't trust conditioned existence. It may let you down at any moment. Your physical body may let you down. Your house may let you down. Circumstances may let you down. People may let you down. Life, itself, may let you down. (Pause.) Alright, let's go on then.

Text: 'How then is laziness as lassitude to be rejected? It must be thrown off like a snake or a firebrand. This is stated in the Bodhicaryavatara:

Just like a serpent which has crept on one's lap has to be quickly thrown away. so also, when dreaminess and lassitude have come they must at once be discarded.

And in the Suhrillekha:

When one's hair or clothes have suddenly caught fire one extinguishes it and throws everything away. So one must strive to avoid the world, though there is no harder task than this.'

S.: ~o 'How then is laziness as lassitude to be rejected? It must be thrown off like a snake or a firebrand. Just like a serpent which has crept on one's lap has to be quickly thrown away.' In a sense it isn't quite correct. It isn't a question of a serpent which has crept on one's lap having to be quickly thrown away. It's your instinctive reaction to throw it away. That's the real point of the comparison. So it's as though, when you become conscious that you are lazy, or you have become a bit sort of lassitude, it must be, as it were, your instinctive, almost unconscious reaction, is to throw off the laziness. (Pause.)

Sanghadevi: Which is linked to ....

S.: Mmm?

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Sa~i: I've just seen that that is linked to the previous statement about death which, in a sense, the more you realise that impermanence, I think the more you're going to see that you've got to make the effort. The more you'll

S.: Yes, right. Well this instinctive reaction to laziness when it does happen to occur can only be born of a genuine insight into the urgency of the whole situation. In fact, the nature of the whole situation. I mean, just as if your hair and clothes have suddenly caught fire, one just automatically throws off the blazing head gear, or the clothes. It's not that one ought to do it. You jolly well do it. That's your instinctive reaction. So I mean, when you become conscious that you become lazy and have fallen a victim to lassitude your reaction should be as quick, as instantaneous, as prompt as that, when you throw, or fling off the snake or the burning garment. You should train yourself in that sort of way. It's a very strong statement, isn't it? And it underlines the fact that energy, that strenuousness, that virya is so important. The instant that you detect yourself not practicing virya you must put the situation right because everything depends upon strenuousness. Everything depends upon virya. The whole spiritual life depends upon it. You achieve nothing without energy.

Faith: It's a real sense of urgency just to .... (inaudible)

Sarah: It seems like a link to the Tantric first precept. You know, respecting the energy of .... (Tape stop) ....

Eve: What would a practical application to this when you are sitting in meditation? And you just sort of, you know, sloth sort of descends ~n you? What would be a practical application, sort of, throwing off, because I've tried but like it's really

S.: Well, it depends on circumstances. I mean, you must do something. Some- times you can engage in a train of reflections, that "Look here, I'm just wasting my time. Time is short. I may not even live to sit and meditate again." So-etimes this works. Sometimes it doesn't. And if you're feeling really dull, really overcome by lassitude, you may be better just to get up and go out for a short walk in the garden, just for five or ten minutes. Just clear your head, freshen yourself up a bit, or just wash your face in cold water, and then come back. And then try again. Or to, if you are on your own, to do some chanting before you meditate again. One has to have a recourse to all these sorts of aids. Perhaps even read something inspiring for a few minutes. (Pause.) Or, perhaps, do something different. It may not, so to speak, be the time for meditation. I mean, subjectively speaking, so alright, go and do some other kind of practice. Say do some prostrations. Do a lot of

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chanting. Maybe do a walking meditation. Or a walking and chanting meditation. You don't necessarily have to persist in what you are actually doing provided you maintain the continuity of some kind of spiritual practice. Some kind of effort. (Pause.)

Sanghadevi: Going back to this thing about death. I mean, I know, like, when I'm not totally open to the idea of ... (inaudible) ... (laughs) but at the same time seems to be an incongruity about, like, life is accidental compared to what we were talking about in the chapter on patience, in terms of karma and patterns, and in a sense, you get what you, you know, what your previous actions have sort of ....

S.: I don't know how accurate or how rigid the translation is, but perhaps better than accidental should be unexpected. Well, very likely there is a very precise reason or cause for your death but you don't know it. So as far as you're concerned it can come at any time. To that extent it is accidental. (Pause - long) I mean, according to general Buddhist teaching there is no such thing as accident in the sense of pure chance. I mean, there are all sorts of series of causes and effects at work, in operation. But they add up to a very complex network indeed which one may not always be able to trace. You are certain that that death will come. But how or when or in what manner, by whom, by what circumstance, you just don't know. (Pause.)

Sarah: I think probably if you were meditating very deeply near the time of death you would probably be aware of it coming because .... (inaudible)

S.: Yes, because it isn't exactly death coming as a sort of entity. It's your energy, your strength ebbing away and surely you'll be conscious of that. Yes. And even be able to predict. ...

Sarah: But even if it were a car accident.

S.: Some people do seem to have these intimations even when it is, so to ~peak, an accident. And this suggests that in a deeper sense it isn't or can't be altogether an accident. If it was a pure accident then how could they be aware of it in that sort of way. It's as though it's in the fitness of things that they should die in that sort of manner after a certain length of time and they become aware of that. They become conscious of that, which is quite strange, in a way.

Sarah: Well in our western way of thinking we don't have the association right. Perhaps Witch Doctors use that kind of way of Thinking. They associate

an illness with something completely irrelevant. (Pause.) It might happen like that. (Lon~ Pause.)

S.: Alright, let's go on to (ii).

Text: Idleness is faintheartedness from thinking how can dejected people like myself ever attain Enlightenment even if we try to do so. We must take heart and give up idleness. This applies to:

Even he who has become a fly, a wasp, a bee, or even a worm, attains enlightenment so difficult to reach and so insurmountable when he develops the power of strenuousness.

When one has become a man such as I know what is useful and what is harmful, and Does not forsake a life devoted to enlightenment, Why should I not attain it?

S.: So this is here idleness is used in a rather loose sort of way. Idleness is faintheartedness. Or rather, idleness as perhaps the result of faintheartedness. You're idle because you are fainthearted. You don't make any sort of effort because you think, well, how can people like me gain Enlightenment. In a way this is directly opposed to the Christian way of thinking because that minister whom you met, he probably was the sort of person who would say, "How could human beings help themselves, we're just poor ignorant sinner. We've got to be helped by some superior supernatural power outside ourselves." So, on the whole, Christianity has quite a low opinion of human and human capacity. Well, Buddhism says, no - human beings are capable of this sort of attainment. You must rouse yourself. You can do it.

So 'Idleness is faintheartedness from thinking how can dejected people like myself ever attain enlightenment even if we try to do so.' Sometimes there's a sort of rationalisation of a sort of pseudo-humility. "I'm a very humble person. I wouldn't dream of thinking of gaining enlightenment. I'm not as presumptuous as that." To you see what I mean? The Christian very often adopts this attitude of mock humility.

Vida: The meek and mild.

S.: Mmm?

Vida: The meek and mild.

S.: I mean, I think I mentioned on the last study group that I had a little, for some reason or other thought of a little rhyme about this meek and mild business. 'Gentle Jesus meek and

mild, sends to hell the unbaptised child.'

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(Lau~hter.) This meek and mildness of Christianity in the Christian is some- times not as meek and mild as it seems. This sort of sneaking humility isn't quite what it seem sometimes. Sometimes people try to do you down to make out that they are so humble, and you're being just presumptuous and arrogant in thinking of gaining enlightenment. Actually saving yourself. You're lacking in humility. You might have been told this at some time or other. If you didn't accept the Christian teaching, that you were lacking in humility. So, 'Even he who has become a fly~ a wasp. a bee, or even a wo~'well, even a worm will turn. (Lau~hter.) 'Attains enlightenment. so difficult to reach and so unsurpassable when he develops the power of strenuousness. When one Las~become a man such as I' - a human being that is - 'knowin~ what is useful and what is harmful and does not forsake a life devoted to enlightenment why should I not attain it?'

I mean this sort of tremendous confidence, this tremendous self-confidence in Buddhism, which is not the arrogant individualistic, self consciousness, or self confidence of the individualist. It represents the self confidence of the human being as such. After all, you have developed so far, if you look back, think where humanity has come from. So surely it can go further. Surely there can be a further advance. Even to become a human being, an ordinary human being was a tremendous achievement. Why should not an ordinary human being become an enlightened human being, which is a further achievement. So don't underestimate, don't undervalue the human potential, the human being. You are a human being. You can achieve great things. I mean there's, one needs to steer a middle way between false self-confidence and arrogance on tho. one hand and unnecessary humbling of oneself on the other. (Pause.)

Sarah: I suppose I find it quite difficult to carry on developing self- confidence which seems to come quite easily, but turns into something else and .... (inaudible)... and I suppose it's sensitivity to other people who have also got to be strong which balances it and makes it realistic.

S.: I remember this sort of teaching really inspired the ex-untouchables because they'd always been told that they were so low and dirty and ignorant and worthless but the idea that they could develop, that they had a potential appealed to them tremendously and liberated a tremendous amount of energy. I remember this very very vividly.

Anne: I suppose in their case it was very overt, their conditioning.

S.: Yes indeed. It was right out in the open and they encountered it everyday in a very practical way.

Anne: Whereas with us it seems it's much more subtle .... (inaudible)....



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S.: And also I think this whole question of one's inability, one~ weakness, is sort of emphasised and exaggerated by the very conditions under which we live. That the individual as such is very often powerless because society is so highly organised, so centralised. It's a sort of corporate entity that very often you do feel, in fact you are, weak and powerless. And that reinforces the feeling of psychological and even spiritual weakness and powerlessness.

Sanghadevi: And I think that can also tend to the opposite extreme of being over confident and assertive ....

S.: Yes or over-assertion, over-assertiveness in a compensatory sort of way. You know, you feel weak, you feel powerless, so perhaps you indulge in vandalism. What else can you do in a way it sometimes seems. You must indulge in a bit of football hooliganism.

Sanghadevi: It seems to me that, I mean, having recognised in myself those two extremes, in a way you just have to act and purify your action by awareness.

I mean, you've just got to do things at the beginning to try

S.: Yes, sometimes the important thing is to do something. In a way almost to assert yourself. Thought not to be passive. To experience your own energy. To experience yourself in action. I think a lot of people, not only women, but men also, grow up feeling passive, and acted upon rather than active. And I think one has to change this. Only too often you feel you are the victim of circumstances. Things are done to you. You have no choice. You cannot say anything. Even your education you may have experienced as a process of just things being done to you. So I think there's no real spiritual progress possible, or spiritual life possible until you start experiencing yourself as active. Or as acting. Rather than acted upon. Or rather than as simply acted upon. Of course you'll be acted upon to a great extent but you must also act. You must also have the effect on others. On your environment. On your surroundings. If you don't experience yourself acting, don't experience yourself in action, you don't really feel alive. So one must not just be passive. Passivity is quite different from receptivity, as we have seen. But don't you think that too many people nowadays, say in a country like England, just experience themselves in a purely passive sort of way, in all sorts of contexts?

Liz: It's like a society has to make out that you need it at every stage of the way.

S.: Yes, yes. Yes, well even the welfare state can take on that sort of aspect. We know, that those who are genuinely weak and genuinely in need,

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have to be succoured. But on the other hand there is a tendency I think, for the Welfare State set-up to encourage people to be dependent and passive, in some cases.

Eve: It does come back to how organised it is, because everything fits and works in a slot so you don't have to assert yourself.

S.: Yes, you're just, if not looked after, you're sort of provided for, your case is provided for.

Anoma: That must be so different in India. I mean, like, people say in India if you haven't got a job you starve. You know, you beg, I mean we just don't have that.

S.: So in India you'll make an effort if you possibly can. Sometimes your effort may be unavailing. Well, very often it is unavailing but we're not in even that sort of situation. (Pause.)

A Voice: You don't really live to survive any more. Life isn't survival.

S.: Well, in a sense, also, we shouldn't have to struggle for survival but we should have to struggle. We should have to struggle for goals which we have posited for ourselves. Not goals which are imposed upon us from without. Well, if you like, goals which are imposed, in a sense, by virtue of the fact, simple that we are human beings and have a potential to realise, a potential which we can realise. I think most people in quite ordinary terms under- estimate themselves. They can do far more. They are capable of far more than they usually think. Very often they only discover what they really can do when they are put into a situation of some urgency. Or even emergency where their energies just simply have to be galvanised to meet the situation.

Faith: I think that's why some people quite enjoyed the war because it brings out that sort of energy. I can remember people saying that they were the best years of their lives, was during the war. All their potent~1 .... (inaudible)....

S.: They had something to live for.

Faith: Well, they had an ideal to .... (inaudible)....

Anne: It makes me think of the play 'The Admirable Crichton'.

S.: Mmm?

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Anne: 'The Admirable Crichton'. It's this play where there's an English family where they've got really everything. And they go on this ship which gets stranded in a desert i~land. And what happens there is that they sort of fabric falls apart and the butler ends up being the leader. You can see what happens to people and how the scare was necessary. But as soon as they get back to England it all just falls back into its original pattern where the butler is subordinated. It's quite interesting. (Pause.)

S.: It sounds as though the butler was rather like Bertie Woosters butler. (A\_laugh.)

Anne: Yes, that type of thing.

Anoma: But the thing you said about effectiveness, like to do with me, before I got into the Friends I did a couple of years of psycho-analysis and I think that was mainly, though I didn't see it like that then, but it was a complete feeling of lack of effectiveness and just being acted upon rather than actually being able to act. And I know the first, it sort of got less useful, but the initial months were really sort of, it was a sort of revelation to discover that I could actually change my life. I mean I was absolutely amazed. I just thought that everything had to happen the way everybody made life happen for me. Didn't really experience having a choice. To actually act, to be effective.

S.: Yes. Yes. I mean so you can only start changing, or realise that you can start changing when you realise that it's possible to change from being passive to being active. I mean at least in certain important respects. (Pause.) But do you think, I mean, is it, say, your experience predominately? Or has it been your experience predominately that you're passive, so to speak, in relation to life in general, rather than active? That you're acted upon rather than acting? Has that been your experience would you say, so far? Or, at least until you came into the Friends? Or not?

Voices: Yes. Yes - less and less.

Faith: I think I always used to think that I was in control but really I wasn't. (General acknowledgement.)

S.: Ah, yes, that's true. You think that you are in control but you are only just reacting to the stimulus. And the stimuli are determined and therefore the pattern of your reaction is determined, really. There can be that illusion that you're active.

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Eve:.... seems to be tied up with responsibility as well.

S.: Yes indeed.

Eve: Because like when I was taking classes and felt quite responsible for a centre I felt like I was being very active. But then like being in England and not having anything, well being supportive but not actually taking that sort of role, I felt, sort of really passive and in a way things have been happening that I haven't really known what's been going on. Sort of on a deeper level almost. (Lon~~ pause.)

S.: Well I also have mentioned again, I don't know whether it's within this group or the other, that happiness is an active state not a passive state. We usually think of ourselves as lying back and enjoying happiness but it

isn't like that. You experience true happiness when you are active. When

you are acting. And, of course, you're acting when you meditate, when you meditate successfully that is. You are powerfully generating, powerfully producing skilful mental states. And what can be more active than that? What can be more creative than that? So happiness is an active state, not a passive state. Pleasure is a passive state, but happiness is an active state. (Pause.)

Sanghadevi: It seems to take people, well some people, quite a long time to realise as they get into the Friends, that the Friends isn't something out there, but that they can actually well, be active .... contribute and

S.: Yes, and if one is already within the Friends, especially if one is an Order Member, one has to be careful not to give the impression that, well, you're the ones to do everything and others are just the consumers so to speak. One has to give the impression from the very beginning, or at least as early on as one skilfully can, that there is a place for others to participate, that others help etc., is welcome. I say skilfully do this because some people at the very beginning, they definitely don't want to do anything. They want, as it were, to be a spiritual consumer, you know, contradic\*y in terms. (Laughter.) They come to enjoy the 'spiritual Buddhists'. But sooner or later one hopes their attitude will change. (Pause.) But I think, perhaps, people need to be involved in an active sort of way at as early a stage as possible. Because unless they are actively inv~lved they are not involved at all. You can't

really be passively involved. That makes you just a customer, or just a consumer.

Sanghadevi I don't know whether it's the size of the L.E.C. but I can

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remember when I got involved through Pundarika, at Festivals or even on other nights, when there are pujas, sometimes, well, I'd see people come along with flowers and something to give. Whereas, well, you never see that at the L.B.C. until we started actually saying at festivals, well bring along flowers

S.: I think very often people just don't know and they're so afraid, very often, of doing the wrong thing. I think they have to be told it is not only allowed but is encouraged. I think it has to be spelled out.

Sarighaden.: I mean, I don't remember that happening at Punkarika.

S.: Well maybe by the time you came along some people at least were in the habit of doing that and you picked up on it. But in the case of the L.B.C. there's a virtual new start which has had to be made.

Sanghadevi: It seems almost, well it seems to me, as if, because it's a big situation it looks really together, laid out and people think they can't actually add anything.

S.: It could be. But anyway, it isn't a bit situation. It's a very small centre, really. In India say, you have situations where there are tens of thousands coming. Well, hundreds of people may bring offerings. They won't think, well, there is a limited quantity of offerings and those are already provided therefore we don't need to bring any. They bring because they feel. Perhaps it's the feeling that needs to be stimulated, not the consciousness that the centre needs offerings. But that you need to make offerings.

Sanghadevi: Well that's what I was getting at. Whether people were in touch with that.

S.: Expression of devotional feelings, so to speak. But that might be difficult for some people. I mean, difficult for ex-Catholics say, for one reason and difficult for ex-agnostics for another~sort of reason. (Long pause.) Well, I think also it is very important to communicate

to new people not just that they can take an active part, but that they can participate, as it were, organisationally, but that quite literally their fate is in their own hands. They can grow if they decide to do that. The potential is there and the means are also there. Because this is not the sort of impression that one is given by Christianity. It's down on your knees, you sinner. Just grovel and you'll be saved.

Anne: I think we have to be quite careful that people realise that they can

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grow whatever their circumstances are and that they don't have to go through this system whereby they have to join a community, work in a co-op. I think sometimes people do feel that to get more involved in the F.W.3.O. they have to go through a certain routine which is a bit (inaudible)....

Sarah: Even giving offerings. I came when, on a festival day, there were people crowding around to get flowers and asking other people "Should I give this bunch or this bunch" and I could recognise that they felt that they were being asked to do some ritual or other which they should do. I felt there was just no feeling of what offerings were. It seemed that it was just something...

S.: Well perhaps it is that people have been so accustomed to being passive that it is like grass that has been rolled by a heavy roller 4 number of times that it just takes them time to sort of stand up and be active. For quite a while that is their attitude. Well, please tell me what to do? What is the right thing to do? A passive rather than an active attitude. (Pause.)

Sarah: We can communicate to them what the meaning of different things, what we're actually saying, bring the flowers ...

S.: I mean different people's feelings can take different forms. Some people will feel genuine devotion but think it's rather silly to express it by offering flowers. They can understand expressing their devotion by helping to clean the centre but offering flowers it seems a bit pointless to some people. You have to make allowances for that difference of approach too.

~iz: I think my, I've just began to realise that I've been quite, well, I haven't really thought that I could change situations either, especially in the community and thinking that's how it's always been done and so that's how it always will be done.

S.: Yes, you've just got to put up with it, so to speak.

Liz: Yes, or just not even considering that, that I could actually say that it would be better if this was done this way for me. What do people think about it?

S.: Or sometimes people just have a quiet grumble and leave it at that. (pause.)

Liz: But making it more of a growing situation is sort of ...

S.: Yes, well that means asserting yourself more. Again which means being more

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active. Asserting yourself within the situation. You may be wrong in what you say or the changes that you want to make but nevermind, that will all be sorted out in the course of discussion and you'll also realise, perhaps, that your suggestion wasn't quite on. But nevermind, because you actively participated in the situation. (Long pause.) Anyway, let's leave it there for today. Tomorrow we have to go on to Gross laziness. (Laughter.)

End of Tape.

(POOR QUALITY RECORDING - THIS TAPE SIDE)

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S.: Airight then, this morning we're concerned with gross laziness, aren't we? (laughter) (Long Pause) Would someone like to read the description of gross laziness (iii) Middle of the page.

Anoma: iii. Gross laziness is addiction to such evil and unwhole- some practices as subduing enemies and hoarding money. They have to be abjured because they are the cause of real misery.

S.: Mmm. This is, perhaps, a rather unusual definition of laziness. Or rather gross laziness, isn't it? You can be lazy even though, in a sense, you are very active. You notice

the, sort of, balance or antithesis of "subduing enemies and hoarding money". I mean, which particular mental states do they embody? Subduing enemies?

Sanghadevi: Hatred.

S.: Hatred. And hoarding money?

Voices: Greed.

S.: And which particular spheres?

Voices: The Asuras.

S.: The Asuras and ?

Voices: The Pretas.

S.: Pretas. Or you could say even just the Asuras because the Asuras are concerned to win things? (inaudible) But, yes, the Pretas too, perhaps. (Inaudible voice. ...Long Pause)

S.: So this definition suggests that you can be essentially lazy, grossly lazy, or lazy in the true sense, lazy from the spiritual point of view, even despite the appearance of a great deal of, a great deal of activity. Because Virya, strenuousness is energy in pursuit of the good. So you are not in pursuit of the good in these instances. When you are trying to subdue enemies and hoard money. ...so because you are not in pursuit of the good, you are not really exercising Virya. Not in a Buddhist sense. You are not making any

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progress. You are not engaged in a creative activity. You are only engaged in a reactive kind of activity. Repeating the pattern of going round and round in the same old circle. So where is the Virya? Where is the strenuousness in that?



A Voice: It seems like those two things that you are trying to maintain - a sort of state of security.... so not sort of, pushing on through there. (Long Pause)

S.: So it means that one can quite easily be misled. One might think that someone is manifesting Virya when really they are just going round and round in circles. They're busy but they are not really doing anything. Not in any genuine sort of way. On the other hand, someone may seem to be not doing very much but actually they may be doing quite a lot. They may be just quietly working on them- selves. That may well be an expression of Virya. Though they may not be making much fuss and bother about it. (Pause)

Anoma: It seems a pity when I see people who've obviously got energy and done like you were saying about them, Presidents of countries and so forth, with those sort of qualities and yet they are doing something not very worth-while. (Pause)

S.: But then this is one of the reasons why it is quite important that within the FWBO, we should try to establish or to keep up contact with people of this sort, who are present out in the world. At least some of them have energy. It may not be energy in pursuit of the good, but if it is energy and it can be turned to the pursuit of the good, eventually, one hopes. But, I mean, you may get people, say, coming along to a centre who admittedly may be drawn to it but if they are blocked and have got very little energy, well in a sense, they are much less promising material, than those whose energy, whose outward energy is relatively free, relatively liberated, but just needs to be redirected and guided. (Long Pause)

Lois: Is that also to do with being a happy, healthy human being?

S.: To some extent I'm sure it is, Yes. Unfortunately, the happy healthy human being does get caught up in the machinery of ordinary living and is applying, very often, his energies, his effort to keep- ing that going; not with the best results for himself. But at least

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it gives him, you know, an outlet for his energies, so to speak. One doesn't usually think of religion, to use that term, as supplying one with an outlet for one's energies. The current sort of image of religion and religious life is usually something rather dull and lack lustre, lifeless and uninspiring. You think of, you know (?shraided in flagellent? sic) Tea parties of elderly spinsters (laughter) delivering little sermons on Sunday mornings to the visiting congregations. And this is what one thinks in terms of, rightly or wrongly. Perhaps it wasn't so, you know, in the Middle Ages when if you were someone with lots of energy and ambition, and wanted to get on in the world, well, you went into the Church. But it isn't like that anymore, is it? (long pause) In the last century you could be a missionary, you know,

and go out to strange foreign lands and convert the heathen. Well, the heathen has become a bit more sophisticated these days. In fact, the heathen has been coming to your country and converting (laughter) some members of the flock to heathenism. We've got home-grown Brit-ish heathens now. (Laughter) (Long Pause)

A Voice: It's interesting, the word addiction ~~ used (can't understand)

S.: Yes, yes. "evil and unwholesome practices as subduing enemies and hoarding money". Ordinarily in the world it's considered a perfectly right and proper things to do.... to subdue one's enemies and to hoard money. But what do you think is meant by subduing enemies? In what way does one ? to subdue enemies? Is it necessary just subduing them in battles?

A Voice: Does it imply that you pacify them?

S.: Mmm.

A Voice: Does it imply that you pacify them? You don't have to actually openly fight.  
(Voices: Talking together - laughter)

S.: That you defeat them.

Sarah: A bit like being impatient and indifferent to them.

S.: (can't understand)..in competition. It's the competitive approach, in a negative sort of sense, when competitors are having a fight, (inaudible)...that one could say that, subduing enemies (unclear) is the negative aspect of competitiveness. Competitiveness, of course,

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being a very Asura-like quality. Well, before one can be thinking of subduing enemies, you have to speak of enemies. You see others as enemies. You see others as people to be overcome, to be subjugated, to be suppressed. So what causes you, what leads you to regard others as enemies?

Voice: When they threaten our world.

Voice: Fear. (Pause)

S.: I mean, why does that fear arise? What is threatened?

A Voice: Your ego.

S.: Your ego, for want of a better term. I mean, most people do see life in terms of a competition, in terms of getting the better of somebody else. I survive by force or fall. And that's completely inimical to any attitude of Metta or Karuna. It's reliance on the power principle rather than on the love principle... And hoarding wealth; what does that suggest?

Sanghadevi: Security.

S.: Security, therefore insecurity. You hoard because you feel insecure. Because you feel impoverished within yourself. Hoarding is a quite strong word. Or you could apply, you know, the term to various things which we can consider rational - like insurance. I suppose it's a form of hoarding, keeping things, storing up things, accumulating things... gathering things around you money. (Pause) Any material thing which provides you with a sense of security... a false sense of security.

Anne: Or people.

S.; Or people. Some people collect people. Collect friends and Acquaintances. Someone who has always got somebody around. ... are never left on their own; never have to be on their own. (Pause) Some people's idea of a tragedy or a disaster is to have to spend an evening left by themselves in their own room. (Long Pause)

Anoma: I remember somebody telling methat (inaudible...)...They would go to their own room and see how long they could sit there before they had to ring somebody up because they couldn't stand it on their own.

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About thirty minutes. (Laughter) (Pause)

S.: Well the text says, well "they have to be abjured" that is to say, "evil and unwholesome practices as subduing enemies and hoarding money. They have to be abjured because they are the cause of real misery".

Well usually one would say that in this life itself. You don't have to wait for a future life to come along. So this is gross laziness. This particular section seems to, you know, warn us that it's easy to be misled. It's easy to be misled by this appearance of worldly activity. We're not just concerned with energy. We're not just concerned with security. We're concerned with energy in pursuit of the good. That is Virya. We're not just concerned with any old energy. Some forms of energy, some expressions of energy are extremely, well, evil and unwholesome. But even one could say, if one looks at people's activities, they are mainly directed to getting the better of somebody else or of ensuring security.

Faith: I think it's particularly relevant to the twentieth century...

S.: Yes. If one reads the newspaper. If one reads the latest... (inaudible) The government is engaged in these. Subduing enemies and hoarding money, so to speak. Trying to get the better of certain other political forces and to maintain their own security.

Sanghadevi: There's a book written by an ex-nuclear-physicist and he's (unclear)...it's nuclear physics in the late 1960's.... he was given up to nuclear war and he feels that the competition that each country are putting more and more money into research to find... (unclear) nuclear bomb. Then he thought that whoever actually discovered a bomb that could guarantee the wiping out of the other countries, wouldn't just, sort of, stop at that. They would probably actually act on it, you know, because they couldn't afford to wait and then the other countries catch up and

S. :Well. this has actually happened once. Because you know, America had the majority of nuclear weapons over Russia but now because Russia has caught up, and perhaps (unclear)...the United States which is what essentially is affecting the political situation in the world at the moment. Some people say that America should (unclear)

I mean they had that superior nuclear physicist, but in the meantime, I mean, Russia has caught up. But this may mean that some country or

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other, discovered, you know, an apparently superior weapon and decide to use it. You know, that is a possibility. There are all sorts of reasons. ...

Sanghadevi: I mean, he also said that he felt (unclear) people who were involved with that meeting (unclear) there was a following to what they were doing, but they were trapped in this sort of thing of security that they, well, they couldn't afford to lose their jobs. There's almost that (unclear) desire to that they thought that was more important than, you know what it meant to them in the end.

S.: Yes, yes, indeed.

Sanghadevi:? It wasn't true that they didn't know what they were doing.

A Voice: Such a limited attitude, though, isn't it?

S.: Because, I was reading reports the other day, and it said that 75% of scientists in the world, I think it means, you know, say, above a certain level, work for the ministries of (defense?) (unclear) 75% of them. So if they were out of a job, well they would really be out of a job. So they've got a sort of vested interest in maintaining that sort of pursuit.

Sarah: But that seems to be like gross laziness. Difference between ignorance and delusion. They know full well that if they sat down and meditated (laughs)

S.: Well, I think that they'd know even without sitting down and meditating. It's just common sense (pause). If all the scientists, you know, of the world, got together and withdrew their labour, well, they could destroy all these nuclear research centres, you know, at a stroke. But they, they wouldn't do that. They're protecting their careers.... Their careers are protected, their wives and families, their standard of living, etc. etc. So this is really the wheel. This is really the wheel, isn't it? You're caught in the wheel. It's like in the newsclip - the famous one of Charlie Chaplin caught in the wheel, it's just like that. (Pause) Because, you know, governments are still the best pay masters. (Pause) So, I mean, this also goes to underline the fact that for most people, the most important thing is just to keep your own little life and your own little world going. (Long Pause)

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Well, one could say that this just giving way to gross laziness. (long pause).. Alright, let's go on to the classification of strenuousness. First, we'll do the parts and then we'll go on to the explanation of the first of these classifications. Anyone like to read?

Lois: iii. "The classification is threefold: (A) Armour, (B) applied work and (C) insatiableness.

(A) The first is most excellent motivation.

(B) The second is similar application; and

(C) The third means that the two preceding types are brought to highest perfection."

S.: Mmm. Then go on to IV (A) and read that. The first (unclear)..

Lois: IV The primary characteristics:

(A) The first means to put on this armour of strenuousness for the good and wholesome with the intention of wearing it until all sentient beings turn towards enlightenment. As it stated in the

Bodhisattvapitaka: "Sariputra, put on the armour of unfathomable benevolence, do not relax in strenuousness so that the most insignificant in Samsara may come to enlightenment."

S.: "The first is the most excellent motivation,' is described in terms of armour. "The first means to put on this armour of strenuousness for the good and wholesome with the intention of wearing it until all sentient beings turn towards enlightenment. As is stated in the Bodhisattvapitaka.

"Sariputra, put on the armour of unfathomable benevolence, do not relax in strenuousness so that the most insignificant in Samsara may come to enlightenment.""

What do you think this imagery of armour conveys or suggests?

A Voice: A hero.

S.: A hero, yes. Mmm½

Anne: A freedom fighter.

S.: A freedom fighter. Not trying to subdue enemies but fighting for freedom, so to speak. The text speaks of "the armour of unfathomable benevolence."

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The armour in the classification is described as the armour as the first is most excellent motivation. It's as though your motive is your protection. Do you see what I mean? Your motivation is to work for the benefit of all. And that is, as it were, your protection. That is your armour. (long pause)

And you put it on "with the intention of wearing it until all sentient beings turn towards enlightenment." You're not meant to take it off in the evenings and have a nice rest. You're going to wear it all the time. You're going to sleep in it even. (long pause)

And it says, "put on the armour of unfathomable benevolence" - the benevolence and Metta, the desire for the happiness and well-being and genuine progress of others is the motivation. That is the armour. And you notice that it says, "unfathomable benevolence". Benevolence is of course, metta, maitri, maha mitri. Usually one speaks of limitless benevolence. But here it speaks of unfathomable benevolence.

Do you think that conveys a slightly different suggestion? Unfathomable rather than limitless.

Sarah: Almost inconceivable.

S.: Almost inconceivable, yes. (Pause) (unclear).. I mean metta isn't easy to understand. Why isn't metta easy to understand? (Pause) (Inaudible voice) Mmm. Yes. Well there are lots of things that are just feeling as well as metta. But one could say that, you know, for instance to use the word 'love'... (unclear)... in the power mode and the love mode. We are so accustomed to the power mode. We're so accustomed to competitiveness, of trying to subdue enemies and to get the better of other people. It is very difficult for us even to think of the love mode. Or the Metta mode and to understand how it operates. When we see anybody acting in accordance with that mode especially to an unusual degree, it seems very strange to us. We can't quite understand it. So in that sort of way metta is unfathomable. The Bodhi-sattva's metta is unfathomable.. because he relies upon the love mode so completely in everything that he does. Not on the power mode.

That is something one finds really difficult to understand. (pause) (inaudible voice) ... Well, to say we ? means that he had it once upon a time but so far as we remember in this life at least we haven't had it...so we can't (unclear)....We've never developed it. (long pause)

Voice: Is strenuousness benevolence then?

341 S.: Well the suggested view is that (people?) are connected, because Virya, by definition is energy in pursuit of the good. What good? Enlightenment for the benefit of all living beings. It would mean that Metta is an aspect of Virya. Or Virya is an aspect of Metta. (pause) It isn't so to speak, a sort of cold energy, impersonal energy. Do you see what I mean~ (Anne: inaudible) Yes, because the Prajna as the higher energies is at one with Karuna. So to be illumined by wisdom is at the same time to be illumined by compassion. (long pause) So one has these three faculties or attributes. One has energy or will. One has

wisdom. One has compassion. So one could say you know, that these represent the three principle faculties of the particular lineage. The will and understanding and there is emotion. In the Bodhisattva these become Virya, Prajna and Karuna. One could put it in that sort of way (Long Pause).

A Voice: What does compassion mean?

S.: Compassion corresponds to emotion. In the individual human being, one has got these three principle faculties, of will, of understanding and of emotion. So transposed through the Bodhisattva, especially (?) to the Bodhisattva's life these are Virya, Prajna and Karuna. But as one takes up, as one tries to embody the Bodhisattva ideal, one's will becomes transformed into Virya, and understanding becomes transformed into wisdom and emotion becomes transformed into compassion. (Long Pause)

So "the first means to put on this armour of strenuousness for the good and wholesome with the intention of wearing it until all sentient beings turn toward enlightenment. As is stated in the

Bodhisattvapitaka: Sariputra, put on the armour of unfathomable benevolence, do not relax in strenuousness." This is an important thing. Do not relax. Well, again, you know, the word for (relax?) has got a double meaning, hasn't it? Well, in a sense, you should relax. Again in a sense you shouldn't. So in what sense should you not relax? (pause)

Voice: Stamina (?)

S.: Well you shouldn't relax out of laziness. Just relax in the sense of allowing yourself a breather so you can carry on more effectively.

Eve: Surely it's in keeping with the motivation.

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S.: Yes. Yes. I mean if you keep in touch with the motivation well, it doesn't matter if you have a rest if you need a rest. (pause) (inaudible voice: )...Yes. You haven't given up just because you've come to a stop for the time being. You're just gathering your energies together again for another attempt. "So that the most insignificant in Samsara may come to enlightenment" What do you think is the significance of that? "So that the most insignificant in Samsara may come to enlightenment".

A Voice: The most undeveloped so far...



S.: Mmm, yes. (Anne: inaudible statement) . . . I mean, as it were, you don't regard any class of people, however unpromising as completely hopeless. I think this is quite important. And also it isn't easy to sort of, strike a balance. If your own resources are limited, well it may be the sensible thing to do, you know, to spend more time and more energy helping those who only require a little help because with that little help they too can become helpers later on. But nonetheless, you mustn't forget even those who require a lot of help, you know, could also get better in the end. And, I mean, within the context of... (unclear) that you think that an Order Member might might not have the energy but who are you going to spend it on, who are you going to spend it with. Presumably, you know someone who is going to, so to speak, repay that (unclear) rather quickly because once they've reached a certain point, well they can help you and you're also helping others. For instance, sometimes, I use the analogy of say the doctor. Supposing in a certain situation with a lot of sick people you've only one doctor. Well he could either spend all his time looking after sick people, or he can spend his time training up more doctors. So, sometimes, you have to strike a balance. You may spend most of your time training up, you know, doctors but a little bit of your time you are actually dealing with patients. So you are, you know, you are training up doctors with a view to being able, all of you, to help more people in the long run. Mm, yes? But if there is just you, just one doctor, you will spend all your life, you know, helping patients but when you die, well what's going to happen to all the patients? You've got to spend some time training up other doctors. But while you're training up other doctors some patients may have to be neglected. You have to strike, you know, some sort of balance. This is why I say in "Peace is a Fire" that one should not waste time helping the weak, - nowadays it's the strong who need help. Well, you mustn't take that "waste time" too literally. It's not wasting time if you are helping the weak but under certain

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circumstances it can be a rather unskilful use of your time. (long pause) But even if for the time being, you are concentrating on working with those who seem to be more positive you personally will be looked down upon, or despised (by?) some people. Don't forget that you've got a limited amount of time and energy and you want to use it in the best and most productive way, you know, for the benefit of all. (Pause)

Lois: I find a bit of personal difficulty working in the shop Brighton because (one or two people come in asking for money)....

S.: Oh dear. The shop must be the Emporium.

Lois: The Emporium yes. And I find that quite a (conflict) really because I'm aware that I want to help him. But I know that if I'd given him money it's not going to help him at all. So I had to put a barrier up a bit in dealing with him. And I know (inaudible)

S.: You know, I hadn't heard of this happening as regards to the Emporium before. Maybe (laughter) (unclear) ... a pathetic looking lady to tell you a hard luck story. Or perhaps it was an (unclear) looking lady (laughter - inaudible)....

Sarah: (unclear) the most down and out (unclear) have something to give, even though, (laughter - inaudible) (Long Pause)

S.: Sometimes one can get carried away by one's own over-sensitive-ness. I mean this (sort of thing?) very easily happens in Central India. You see so much poverty, so much misery. You can, in a sense dissipate your energies. The only way in which you can really help is by concentrating on a particular project. ... if you are going to survive.. .with a definite number of people - who are definitely easy to, sort of support themselves. if you are going to have a tangible effect. Well, you could go to even thousands, tens of thousands even millions of beggars. ... you could give each one of them, a penny. It wouldn't help them very much. But you could keep that money and perhaps with it set up a project, which would really help, in a very tangible way and make a big difference in the lives of, say, several hundred families. But, you know, in order to do that, you have to control your purely sentimental reactions and not you know, (inaudible sentence) (long pause).. ...Like to read the next section:

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A Voice:      In the Varmavyuhanirdesa - Sutra

A Bodhisattva puts on armour

In order to gather all beings around him. Since beings are infinite

So is his armour.

S.: This is quite interesting in a way. The armour is of course, the motivation. So: "A Bodhisattva puts on armour" He develops that motivation to gain enlightenment for the benefit of all, "In order to gather all beings around him". What do you think that means? What do you think is the significance of that?

Paula: (inaudible)

S.: Yes, one can certainly say that. Because, after all, you haven't got the power mode (unclear). You've only got the love mode      Yes you attract all beings - but it says "around him" - to gather all around him. What does that suggest? (inaudible) .... (Inaudible exchange)

Anne: A mandala.

S.: A mandala yes; it's as though the Bodhisattva is at the centre of the mandala, potentially. And another aspect of this, you know, leading all sentient beings to enlightenment, is sort of gathering them all around him, not, you know, in a group as it were, but in what we can only call a Mandala. A Mandala is also a Sangha. A Mandala is a Spiritual Community. A Spiritual Community is a Mandala. (So) we talked about your individual Mandala (unclear) about organizing, you know, all the elements of your own being in a harmonious way around the central piece. around your basic aspirations. . your basic ideal; and giving every part of your being its due place.

But one can also think the spiritual community in terms of a Mandala - with the Buddha, or the Bodhisattva at the centre, the arahant, the goddesses, the ordinary human beings arranged all around the Buddha or the Bodhisattva (at?) a different place(?) in the Mandala. Well, it's as if the, sort of, you know, harmonious creative effect that the Bodhisattva has

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SIDE B

S.: He~is all this, sort of, mass of human beings all fighting and quarrelling... all trying to subdue one another; trying to amass, store up wealth. So the Bodhisattva comes along amongst them, and he sort of, gradually transforms this ch~~s into a, sort of, cosmos... this confusion into a beautiful mandala; or an ordinary society into a Spiritual Community. So this is quite a nice way of putting it:

"A Bodhisattva puts on armour, in order to gather all beings  
around him".

It's not gathering them all around him in a group-like sort of way, in a little sort of, huddle. That's the impression you get, you know, from conventional religious groups. (tape stops) ... .but the Bodhisattva is trying to create a Mandala of beings. One could, as it were, ask oneself, well, what is my place in the Mandala? I mean this gives rise to all sorts of quite important considerations. I mean, perhaps it's better to think in terms of your place in the Mandala rather than your place in the hierarchy. Do you see what I mean? Just sort of ask yourself, well what is my place in the Mandala. There are all sorts of places, all sorts of positions, or all sorts of functions in the mandala.

You may be a guardian of the gates. You may be an offering goddess (laughter) or whatever. So what is my place in the Mandala? I mean you are~n the mandala to the extent that you are in the spir- itual community. to the extent that you are making a spiritual effort. So... (tape stops)

Anne: It suddenly brings to mind Indra's Net. Because all the, everybody in the place of the

Mandala has their own Mandala (S.: Yes. Quite)...in everybody else's mandala.

S.: Yes, the whole mandala is reflected in your mandala and your Mandala is reflected in the whole Mandala, and in all the other Mandala. (Pause). So, I mean, there are all these things to be suggested by this line: "A Bodhisattva puts on armour; in order to gather all beings around him

It's as though the suggestion is as soon as you decide that you are aiming at enlighten-ment for the benefit of others, at once a sort of vibration is set up and you start, as it were, quite spontan- eously, as it were, organizing the people in your immediate environ-ment into a sort of Mandala. This is the sort of harmonizing creat- ive effect that you have on all of them. Nobody, sort of, gives you an example, you know. Supposing a Retreat has been organized and

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supposing on this Retreat or turning up for this Retreat, you get just new people. . people who have not been around to any centre before, haven't practiced meditation before, got all sorts of different ideas but they've turned up for this Retreat. In other words, it's a sort of chs~s. And then supposing you are the sole person turning up to lead that Retreat, without any assistance; just to lead these ten or twenty, or forty or fifty people.

So what is your effect? What effect do you have on them? in the course of, you know, leading a Retreat? Organizing a Retreat? You are the sort of, unifying and integrating and harmonizing factor. You, as it were, organized them around you because this is what you have to do in order to have the Retreat at all. And where there was chaos, you create for that partizular week, a sort of little cosmos. You create a Mandala. So this illustrates the sort of effect that the Bodhi- sattva has - the sort of effect that you, as a person aiming at Enlightenment should have in your particular environment, you know, on your particular surroundings, wherever you go. The Bodhisattva does it on a grand scale, but, you know, you can do it on a smaller scale, too.

Of course, there are all sorts of other factors and forces at work that are very often counteracting you, so you may have only a very partial success but nonetheless you do have an influence of that sort. And you know, ideally also, you at the same time, have your place in a genuine Mandala which seen and experienced as a Mandala so that when you step outside that Mandala, you still have the memory, the lingering influence of that Mandala, to help you create another little Mandala wherever you happen to be. Yes, whether it's you know, at your office, or at home or away on holiday. Wherever it happens to be. You know, you have that harmonizing influence, that Mandala-creating influence on your surroundings by virtue of the fact that you are dedicated to the attainment of enlightenment. So you tend to gather beings around you to that extent. (Pause)

Anoma: It's interesting that you should say the chaos, because now and again, when I've gone home and I've been able to stay quite positive, I mean, that that's the first thing I notice about when I go home, is the chaos. I mean, there's only my mum and my dad and yet (laughter). Even living at Amaravati with ten or eleven or twelve people, you know, you assume it should be much more chaotic with the numbers, you know. I mean I would go home and it would be really, sort of, jarring and chaotic and sometimes I sort of, you know, feel that it would be- come more, sort of harmonized by my being there.

S.: If you stayed long enough.

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Anoma: Even so, you know, coming back even with all those people, I'd realized how much of the quieter and in a sort of sense, anyway just sort of relaxed in a certain way, I mean

S.: Again, you sometimes find that even within the community, it differs doesn't it even from day to day? That sometimes you can have the same ten or twelve people there and they seem to blend very harmoniously but~~~~other occasions it's as though there's this quite sort of, jarring element, you know - they don't seem to harmonize.

This could be sometimes due to scattered energies or because some of them have, sort of for the moment, just lost sight of the ideal which is the unifying and harmonizing factor.

Anoma: Yes, if I came back and I'd got really sunk into the home atmosphere, I'd actually feel that I was, sort of, contaminating the community when I came in. I just realized that I'd just take myself off to my room and get myself together a bit before appearing again.

S.: I think this raises an important question or so. You know, what is it that one brings into the community? What is one bringing, say into the Mandala from outside? You should not bring anything that doesn't belong to the Mandala; shouldn't bring anything unskilful. And sometimes I think we forget this. You know what effect we're having, you know, on our community, on the Mandala. And you know, that we sometimes bring in, you know, all sorts of incompatible things.

Supposing you go and see, you know, a film which puts you in a quite unskilful mental state. You bring that back into the community. It isn't just that it effects you - through you it effects everybody. (Long Pause) Well, I think just to come back to the quotation. This is a very important principle: that by virtue of the fact that you aim at enlightenment, by virtue of the fact that you are trying to lead a spiritual life, you have a harmonizing effect, what I've called a "mandala-creating" effect on your surroundings. You tend to set up a Mandala wherever you may happen to be. Wherever you may happen to go. You are like a, you know, note of music, you know, sounding above a tray of sand... a beautiful harmonious note; a harmonious note is a contradiction of terms. A harmonious chord perhaps I should say - or perhaps that's tortological.

Sarah: I don't know how much you can bring something back, and always expect people to help you harmonize it. I think there must be quite a lot of things you have to internalize and sort out yourself creat-

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ively before, you ~nd of

S.: I was speaking of bringing back into the community or bringing back into the Mandala, something that could not be harmonized.

Sarah: Yes, you've tried....

S.: Something definitely unskilful that you should not have brought back at all. But even an element that is compatible, sometimes you have to be careful how you introduce it, because when another element is brought in, even though it's a positive element, it requires an adjustment on the part of all the other elements in the Mandala, because you know, when you introduce a new factor, orta new feature, into the mandala, you don't just put it anywhere, you know, ~here there's a sort of space (laughter)...because after all, it has to be part of the Mandala. So you have to shift everything else, also, you know, so all those elements harmonize together.. make a beautiful pattern.

Lois: I think in musical terms, it's more like having a deep fundamental note and all the harmonics.... (inaudible)

S.: Ah, thank you. (Laughter) Right. Yes it sounds rather like that. (laughter) Pity we haven't got a piano you can show us on. (Laughter) But you notice this, most of all, undoubtedly, when you introduce new community members, because you know, when a new community member, joins the community, it isn't that the existing members continue to relate exactly as before, but simply add another person. No. One usually finds, I think, that the introduction of a new person, subtly mod- ifies the relations among the people who are ~\_ready there and this is as it should be.

Anne: It's the same when somebody leaves the community....

S.: Yes indeed. You have to sort of, reform your ranks, as it were.

Anne: Definitely a hole, somewhere.

S.: Sometimes it may involve taking over functions that the other person has been discharging, or just, readjusting your personal re- lations. I mean, the mere fact, say, that there are fewer of you, may well, in a sense, bring you closer together or intensify your

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relations. If too many people come into the community suddenly, it may disrupt or dilute your relations, sometimes the relations of the existing members of the community.

Anne: It's like, in this picture of a snowflake and if it stays the same until it crystalizes (inaudible) its life. It cannot re-form.

S.: Of course, the mandala in the highest sense is of course, the Pure Land, isn't it? So, you know, by virtue of the fact that we are involved in the spiritual life we cannot but be trying to create a Pure Land. Maybe you should write that down (laughter) Write it down (Laughter).

Sanghadevi: I was thinking about co-operatives and like introducing new things into co-operatives. I mean that I think it can be quite a slow process because there is often quite a lot of people involved in a co-operative and so everything's there for everybody to see the point or something and not feel, well, there's an alienation there.

S.: Yes, they have to see it for themselves. They have to see it as individuals. It can't be just, sort of, imposed upon them.

Liz: I think it was really good having a co-op seminar because that would really help. It helped me because it was the first time that I actually sat down and thought I was creating something. I mean on a grand scale - the whole co-op together.

S.: Well one should think of the whole movement in these sort of terms. That, you know, the movement seeks to actualize certain principles. I mean, not only in the life of the individual, but in the life of the group, and this means that one is trying to set up a Mandala in place of the existing, you know, social institutions. So that, you know, as the principles are extended to more and more different areas of life, those areas are taken over, are transformed and brought within the Mandala. So, so far, we're almost taking, say organizationally speaking, in organizational terms, taking the centre as the "centre", it sort of reaches out into the surrounding world- it takes over and transforms the work situation and makes that part of the Mandala, you've got your co-op - it takes over the family, lets say, or whatever, transforms that and you've got a community. And there at once where we are thinking of extending into other areas and producing our own Buddhist school.

In this way, you take over more and more areas of chaos, actually. (laughter) And you know, you transform them and you bring them within the Mandala. Your own Mandala becomes bigger and richer and more complex, more harmonious.

But there's another aspect to that which is that, you know, one speaks in terms of chaos and producing a cosmos, a mandala out of chaos.

But sometimes, you know, what you have to deal with is not chaos - pure and simple, but, what shall I say?, well pseudo-mandala that have to be broken down.

Voices:           Organized chaos. (Laughter)

S.: Yes, organized chaos. So the organized chaos has to be broken down into the un-organized chaos or disorganized chaos. So existing structure both in you as an individual and in society have to be broken down and this is an important aspect of the whole process.

So before the Bodhisattva can gather all beings around him, he has to wean them away from the different figures and different principles that have gathered around already, in organized chaos.

Sarah: That's a bit like character armour.

S.: Yes, that's true.

Sarah.:           It has to be replaced by Metta armour.

S.: Yes, indeed, "character armour" in the Reichian sense. And it says here: "Since beings are infinite, so is his armour"

Well, so is the Mandala too, you know, the Mandala can keep on growing. There's no limit. It can cover the whole earth - the whole universe.

Anne: The question of autonomy?

S.: Autonomy?

Anne: Yes. No question of that... I just sort of think a mandala, suppose it's like each center and everything has their own Mandala but they have to be aware of the place of that Mandala in....



S.: Well, yes. Well, in Tibetan Art, you see Mandalas within Mandalas,  
don't you? Yes. Maybe the Mandala of the North, or the Mandala of

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the South.

Anne: I suppose sometimes I think there's a bit of people thinking their Mandala's the....

S.: Yes, ifl~t½~d. One has to be very careful.

Anne: The mandala.. it's united. It's as if there's a sort of line round it or something.

S.: ~Well, all mandala have doors. One mustn't forget that (laughter). I mean every mandala is open in the four directions because open doors to take in fresh material. . which means an adjustment of the existing content of the mandala. A re-arrangement. The doors of all communities are open, so to speak. Limitations of physical space permitting, but , you know what I mean. It's like Vimalakirti's house. It's definitely expanding (laughter). That's how the mandala should be.

Voice: The Tardas - Dr. Who.

S.: Mmm? Oh, sorry (lots of laughter). You have to explain these esoteric references. (laughter). I'm not familiar with the Sutras, I'm afraid. (lots of laughter) I'm just an old-fashioned Buddhist. (laughter) I wondered what you were muttering about when I was giving my lectures last year. (laughter)

Anne: Well, you did say it was like Science Fiction.

S.: I did, indeed. Super...

Sarah: I rather see it as a time machine... (unclear)

S.: But I mean, again this is very important. This aspect or fact of having openings to the Mandalas. One must be, well, one is a mandala, yes and as a mandala one has organizing principle, but nonetheless, one is open to, I won't say, to outside influences, but to things coming in and joining the Mandala... and participating in the life of the Mandala. There has to be these two things: the organizing principle has to be very strong but, you know, there must be a continual influx of fresh material... say fresh people, you know.

Not that they just sort of come in passively. They join the Man-

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dala, they want to be part of the Mandala and you must be open to them. Now, it's just for instance, I see sometimes in the community, there may be five or six of you. You may be getting on very well. There may be room for more. But when someone wants to join, your reaction might be, "Oh, we're alright as we are, we get on very well with one another. We don't want to disturb things". Even though you've got room for a couple more people; that may be the reaction. You've become a bit cozy, a bit settled and you don't want anything to be disturbed. It's all very nice and tidy. (Pause)

You get the same sort of thing in a family when a new baby arrives. You know, well it means a sort of reorganization in the whole family, doesn't it? Sometimes there's a bit of resistance to that. So even in community. So the community has to be not just open-ended, but open-sided, you know, welcoming everybody from North, South, East and West. But on the other hand, you know, you don't want such a sudden influx that the Mandala is actually disrupted. That's the other point. You know (you) have to follow a middle way again~, you know - take in only as much as you can actually transform and harmoniously organize. That applies to the individual as well as to the group. The Spiritual Community... (Pause)

Anne: Um. Slightly off Mandalas but just reading that passage again about "A Bodhisattva puts on armour, in order to gather all beings around him." Strikes me that usually people put on armour to keep things away (S: Yes), whereas this armour seems to have a magnetic...

S.: Yes. Quite. Well, it's the armour of Metta. It does have, it protects you but at the same time it attracts people.

A Voice: Grace~waves that you....

S.: Yes, one that is perhaps, a more developed form of the same thing. Yes, indeed. Because you can develop Metta, you know, even as an ordinary unenlightened human being, but grace waves, so to speak, are more appropriate to the Bodhisattva... certainly the more highly developed or highly advanced Bodhisattva, who actually has developed, you know, a degree of Wisdom. Yes. But I find the image of the note of music very appealing, you know, the note

of music played over the tray of sand. so that all the particles arrange themselves in a pattern, depending of course, on the notes. Has anyone ever conducted this experiment? I haven't conducted it myself, but I've seen illustrations of it, you know, being done. It is what happens apparently.

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Sarah: It's in a book by Hans Genet. The OM produces a (?).

Lois: I have seen it sometimes in an oscilloscope. You see the wave forms passing across the screen and pure tones give slight variations. And when they do, when there s a perfect vibration

S.: So you must be like that note of music, you know, causing all the little grains of sand in your environment just to move into a harmon- ious beautiful pattern. But the point is also that when the analogy breaks down because basically you are trying to affect human beings so you don't make them do this or make them do that. You influence them in such a way that~hey want to do that. They respond. They don't really give way to superior force. I mean something is awakened in them , and what they do is their own spontaneous creative act. Also, another point is, you know, talking about mandalas, all analogies are limited, we mustn't think of the mandala as a static thing. Not that there are all the pieces beautifully arraigned-then a new piece is introduced. You shift all the existing pieces around, find a place for the new piece and then it's all beautifully static again. No. It's also all in movement; it's also all dynamic, it's like a dance. It's like a dance in which first of all you get two or three people dancing and then others join in. The dance goes on but it's expanding.

Lois: Or a fugue.

S.: Or a fugue. Yes. It's expanding, more and more people are joining in and therefore it's becoming more and more complex. So it's like that. That's what the PureLand is like. It's not really, you know, despite Buddhist Art, it's not really everybody sitting sort of quietly on their thrones just listening to the Dharma. Well, yes. They are listening to the Dharma but they're not necessarily sitting quietly on their thrones. They are, sort of, dancing in accordance with the music of the Dharma, you could say, also. It's all in movement.

Sarah: I remember, I think it was "Building the Buddha Land" lecture - you said how do Bodhisattvas teach or organize things? and I thought it was very striking because I kind of felt that people didn't know and then you just said "well, just by domonstrating, by acting"<sup>4</sup> and this seems to me a different principle of organizing than what we, in the West kind of feel and you tend to think you can't change things except by being very wilful.

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S. Yes. It's sort of getting people to join in; getting them to want to join in.

Sarah: Influence.

S.: Influence.

Anne: Devamitra gave a talk called the "Dance of the Dakinis".

S.: Well, that's right, Yes.

Anne: Which has a different aspect but... (unclear). That was about bringing up the Dakini in more and more people so that they can join in....

S.: Yes. Yes.

A Voice: Subversive.

S.: Mmm. Well, it's ~bit like the Pied Piper, isn't it? You know, playing his pipe and charming all the children away. Except that they don't you know, just disappear underground (Laughter) , you know, they all join in the dance.

Liz: I often wondered who the Pied Piper is supposed to represent.

S.: Oh well, there was supposed to have been an actual person who did that once in a Medieval German town. But to what extent, it's historical, to what extent it's legendary.. If it's legendary, how the legend arose and what significance it has, you know, that's another matter. No doubt some Jungian analyst has written a big thick book about it (Laughter) He's probably a symbol of the androgyne because he wore party-coloured dress, you know: part red and part blue or something like that. So, you know, there probably can be read all sorts of meanings into it. Well, children are obviously infantile tendencies.. (laughter)

A Voice: And the rats?

S.: And the rats, yes. There must be a whole chapter on the rats. (Laughter) I'm sure some German Jungian scholar must have written a book about it - "The Pied Piper of Hamlyn".

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Anoma: There is a book, I think, called "Shadow and (Evil in Fairy Tales)".

S.: Ah, yes. Well, this isn't just a fairy-tale, I think, It's something we read as solid history. (pause)

Sanghadevi: Do you think animals come into his Mandala?

S.: Mmm. That's an interesting point. I suppose in the strict

sense, no. If one thinks of the Mandala in terms of a spiritual community which would suggest a voluntary co-operation or understanding on the part of everybody involved. But on the other hand, there's no reason why, you know, the Mandala shouldn't have its, so to speak, accessories. And you know, you, as part of the Mandala, as a member of the spiritual community could take in with you and give within the Mandala, their proper place to things, you know, belonging to nature~e~ things which are a part of nature.

For instance, well, nature, itself in the broader sense of the rest of organic life on this planet - I mean this has a place in the Mandala in the sense that there should be a proper relationship between, first of all the spiritual community and the group; the group and the rest of organic life. One could, you know, think of a mandala in those sort of much broader terms - that within that broader Mandala, you would try to bring about a right relationship between yourself and nature. Which means that you will be giving nature its proper place within the Mandala.

Faith: I was going to say, you could hardly exclude or divorce that, could you?

S.: Well, if you is thinking in terms of spiritual life in the strict sense, yes you could. But if you're thinking of, you know, existence as a whole, then you can't.

Faith: I was thinking more of the aesthetic aspect of nature, in a sense which you can't, enhances your....

S.: Sometimes, I mean, it would be difficult to include nature within your Mandala, perhaps in the literal sense, because it would be difficult to control nature. Supposing there was a terrible storm, or a flood. That would be nature. What could you do? That would disrupt your Mandala in a sense, if you defined your Mandala in that sort of way.

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Whereas a purely spiritual mandala could never be disrupted by nature because it exists on a different level, than nature, in that sense.

Sanghadevi: I asked that because there's a young girl, who's, she was coming to the LBC quite regularly and then she stopped coming and I met her and she said she'd come against a conflict between Buddhism and, she's into like 'Save the Whale', and against foxhunting, and she sort of felt there shouldn't be a conflict in terms of, like, Buddhist ideal of compassion and yet she felt there didn't seem any place in what she doing, in a sense, in the Mandala.

S.: Well, I think that's a question of explaining there there is a place for activities of this sort but the Movement, at the moment, is limited. There's a limited number of people but if it became large and you know, if there were more people interested in that sort of things there's no reason why a number of them shouldn't get together within the context of the FWBO and set up a centre run by Order Members and Mitras devoted to those particular objectives.

Sanghadevi: That's what I said.

S.: Yes, I mean, it's simply that we're not big enough yet to accommodate all these different kinds of activities - not big enough in the sense we don't have enough people, sharing, you know, all of these different kinds of interests. I mean, there is this incident which occurred in New Zealand in fact, in Christchurch, which I've been repeating, you know, to illustrate this point: that a Friend, I think he might even have been a Mitra, came to see me in Christchurch in the course of my recent visit and apparently (I forget how long he'd been around, maybe a couple of years), and he said he liked quite a lot of things about the FWBO. He liked in fact almost everything but there was one thing that troubled him and made him wonder whether his place was in the FWBO. So I asked him what it was and he said, "Well the one thing I'm not happy about as regards the FWBO is it's against poetry." (laughter) So I said, "Well what gave you that impression?" So he said, "Well, I've talked to Order Members so and so, and Order Member such and such. They don't seem at all interested in poetry. You know they seem quite against it even. (Laughter) So I had to point out that well, they were just two Order Members. In fact he hadn't had contact with any others and that there were other Order Members, well, at least in England if not in New Zealand who were very interested in

poetry and who wrote it even and who gave poetry readings. And of course, this was quite new to him.

So, you know, this is the sort of thing that can happen if we're not careful. I mean people may happen to meet those Order Members who don't share those particular interests or at present, there may not be any Order Members who share particular interests but one has to point out that it isn't that we are, in principle, against those interests. It is simply that our numbers are limited and so far we don't have anybody who is interested in that particular thing. But there is no reason why we shouldn't have - at least, not in certain cases. If someone came along and said, "Well, you know, there aren't any Order Members interested in going off for weekends fishing" (Laughter). Well, we just have to say, "Well, you~know, that is definitely unskilful. There is no place for that in the Mandala, that is something to be given up. You'll never be able to find Order Members interested in going off for a weekend's fishing.

Eve: You might if they didn't put a hook on the end.

S.: Well, that probably wouldn't be enough. (laughter) (Pause) So again, beware of tti~~ premature synthesis. Keep the doors open. It's just that, I mean, at one stage, don't forget we didn't have com- munities. We couldn't offer people a community to stay in. We couldn't offer them the co-op; well, I was going to say within living memory but that (laughter) was four years ago, or less than four years ago, the~was (laughter) no co-op.

Sarah: We were sort of struggling to get together on a psychological level.

S.: Yes. So still there are lots of things that we are going to have. I mean, we are going to have a school, but we haven't got one yet. But we will have one sooner or later, perhaps, sooner rather than later, and other things too. Maybe a Buddhist theatre group, you know. There's all sorts of possibilities. all these different areas of life being brought within the Mandala. We can have a Buddhist Laundrette~ being practical. Well, you know, who knows if there is a lot of people in Bethnal Green, well, it's very profitable, a Laundrette and lots of people want to use one. Well, how much of an asset. . you going along and do your laundry (lots of laughter) and sit and wait there and you chat about the Dharma or you have a little study group while you're

waiting (laughter) or there will be a little sort of meditation annex attached (laughter) and put your things in whatever you do put them, and you just go and have a short meditation and come back and the laundry's done (laughter) and you've had your meditation too. Well, you see it might sound a bit ridiculous but why not? If you wanted to do it you could.

Anoma: Or you could watch the dance of your underwear(laughter)...

S.: Or there could be a taped lecture, sort of booming out of... (loud laughter) You could get through many a series in that way couldn't you? But, you know, why should you have to sit in a laundrette like a lot of Pretas as (laughter made it inaudible)...just sort of twiddling their thumbs until the wretched things are done (laughter).

Anne: Deva-loka Laundry Ltd. (laughter)

S.: I~stead of Preta-loka laundrette. (laughter). So bring every- thing within the Mandala. The clothes have to be washed.

Sanghadevi: I must say, I find, I think practically every week I have a conversation with somebody about this sort of. well, the things the Friends isn't particularly into expanding....

S.: Well, what sort of thing? I mean you've mentioned this girl who is into save the Whale'and all that, but what other sort of areas are people asking to be brought within the Mandala, so to speak?

Sanghadevi: Well, children, still within the Mandala - like creches and realizin~ that that can develop.

Liz: There seems to be an awful lot more people beginning to think that the Friends are obsessed with food. It would be quite nice if we got out of that sort of business of food; extending out to differ- ent businesses, more creative.

S.: Alright, what other businesses?

Liz: I don't know - I suppose it's people that really want a car- eer or something that they can really get their teeth into in a different way. (laughter)



Sarah: Computers....

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S.: Has anyone mentioned a Friends Orchestra?

Voices: (all together and inaudible) - A Voice: Dance.

S.: Well, theatre I think and film. These things are very much in the minds of some people. I think we should, you know, be careful that we don't just provide people with an outlet just for the, well, even if not unskilful, not particularly skilful things that they want to go on doing in the same old way but feel at the same time that they are within the Mandala. I think this is what we really have to be careful of.

Sanghadevi: And also a feeling that we have got to provide it. Often people say, you know, you haven't got this yet, you know, as if we should have got it all set out.

S.: Right, yes. A sort of facility to be laid out. Yes. This again may be the Welfare State, is responsible for this attitude. Alright. Let's call it a day.

Sanghadevi: Well, a collection of Order Members may get together and perhaps get involved in well, something to do with animals for instance. That we've set up something ourselves. Even if there is something in existing structures that might have positive elements to actually try and work within that, you are going to get pulled down.

S.: I think that is quite difficult because, you know, one reads about these different bodies, these different organizations, no doubt their ideals are excellent in many cases, but one does see that the people who are working within these bodies seem to find it very difficult to work together harmoniously. One reads, or one hears reports of all sorts of differences and quarrels, and splits and sometimes, you know, the fights are really bitter. So clearly, that simply the particular ideal that they've got, say Save the Whale, isn't enough to keep them together and really just working for that objective. So it's as though even if one works, wants to work for comparatively limited objective like that, one can only work harmoniously together if one has an ideal which even transcends that.

Anne: I think that is true of the co-ops as well. Like there is a lot of co-ops (unclear) .... instructions that don't work... (unclear)

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said at the co-op meeting that we should always be aware that our co-ops~ren't co-ops. They are spiritual communities in action.

S.: Right. Yes. It is more correct to think of them as another kind of spiritual community. They are n~t residential spiritual communities, that's only one kind of Spiritual Community. They are Right Livelihood Spiritual Communities. So I think one must be a little bit careful about using expressions like, well, I don't live in a spiritual community. I mean the fact that you belong to the Movement at all means that to some extent you are part of the Spir- itual Community. A residential Spiritual Community is only one parti- cular form that the Spiritual Community takes. No doubt it's a rather intensive form but then so is the co-op. (pause)

Anoma: Do you think there is any point in making contact with any of these sort of (groups)?

S.: I think there is. At least maybe to contact people. find out what they are doing and maybe, you know, perhaps in some cases con- vince them that we are able to do things in a better way. I mean it - you think how many communities have been set up. There must have been thousands of communities set up all around the country. How long did they last? Usually not more than a few months, at the most, a year or two. But our communities, even though they may shift their premises and form and reform, they are, on the whole, very stable. You know, I'm speaking of residential communities. Because they've got the Spiritual Community

END OF TAPE

(N.B. Anne McMillan is now Parami)

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S.: --the Spiritual Community in the wider sense to back them. To support them. To underg~rd them if you like.

Anne.: I think Anjali is thinking of giving some talks to some groups. I'm not sure.

A Voice.; Guides.

S.; The Guides. Start with the Brownies (laughter ). Schools, yes, get out into schools as much as possible. Have as much contact as possible.

Sanghadevi.: We found at the L.B.C. in terms of setting up a housing co-op that at the moment, I mean we're benefit~ng quite a lot from having contact with the existing housing co-ops. I mean we're... it's like our,sort of, foot-hold, our first foothold into, you know, getting recognition by the council but, I mean, Nagabodhi is saying noW, at the last meeting we have had, we need to start , the sooner that we can get away from them the better. I mean, just because, you know, there's so much confusion. I mean, they know sort of the basj~that we can benefit from them, but in the long run it's like they are so unclear ~..~....

S.: Yes, well we have to set up our own housing co-operatives or whatever, housing societies and deal directly with the local authorities and get properties directly ourselves.

Sarah.: I think the sooner the better is what he means by otherwise we develop those structures that have to be broken down.

S.: Mmm. Right, yes, indeed.

Sarah.: Like the co-op I'm in, an associated co-op and we kind of have a dreadfully chaotic meeting which ends up half drunk because it's always held in a pub.

S.: Oh dear, very unpleasant(laughter ).

Sarah.; And that's part of the structure, very much so. It's quite amusing.

Sanghadevi.: Liz and I went to a co-op meeting for the housing co-op Beulah is associated

with and, I mean it was like stepping into another world. It was more like devastating, sort of, I mean, you know, it suited --we've been so lucky to have a house in that co-op, but in the long term, you know, if it's ever going to function as a co-op, we don't even, you you know, it's not going to be us

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S.: No possibility of you taking it over, so to speak?

Liz.: Only one house in about twenty so it's not likely.

Sanghadevi.: Oh, not unless we put a lot of effort in, converted... (laughter).

Sarah.: There's a lot of jealousy within housing. People grabbing houses for themselves, and getting into a position of responsibility in order to have power over the house and space.

S.: Well one can see people operating under the, or in accordance with, the power mode. Altruistically...

Sarah.: They manipulate burglaries I think.

S.: Oh.

Liz.: These people also set themselves up into quite a group. They sort of set themselves at the end of the co-op. They all eat and smoke and, you know, sort of, in a way they have a nucleus which sort of, they think protects them from the outside world, like an, almost like an alternative society. I mean some aren't quite as involved in it as others. And they also have people who, who aren't paying, who aren't even responsible at all. They aren't paying their subs and they're not contributing at all except that they have got in with the group through knowing people and they didn't know what to do with them. Even how to get rid of them or I mean they were stuck with half the people not paying their subs.

S.: Well presumably if you don't pay your subscriptions you're not a member (the tape stops)

Sanghadevi.: The difficulties in the co-op we're trying to deal with weren't any different from the ones we have to deal with in our co-ops because it's basically human nature but it's more than that, well we've got more vision of how to actually deal with it.

S.: Well, we've got a principle of integration. They don't have that. You've got a principle or idea around which to organise things. I mean that will create a mandala.

Anne.: I think that's one of the really hopeful things in a way. I think in the Friends already we've set up a few structures that are going to prove to be not the appropriate ones, so they will have to be broken down and be reformed. Somehow it's just really hopeful because the structures themselves aren't that important. They're only really an outlet for

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Anne cont. something that's more important and it will just stay through. I find that really, sort of, encouraging. (long pause)

S.: Well, Su))~t& and others have been examining even the whole charity structure. There's something quite important in today's paper, the Times. There's a report of the judgement that has at last been given in accordance, or, you know, in connection the South Place Ethical Society. It's really quite terrible. I won't well not so much the judgement itself which is in a way in favour. The judgement is basically by Lord Dylan, that the South Place Ethical Society is not a religious body and does not qualify as a charity on the grounds of being a religious body but it is education for the public benefit and therefore can be recognised as a charity on that basis. Lord Dylan also makes a point that it is now accepted that a religion does not have to be theistic.

Voices.: Really.

S.: That's quite important. He does quote the dictionary definition of religion to the effect that religion means belief in God but he says that references made to Buddhism as a religion that does not believe in God and he says, that even though, broadly speaking, religion means believing in God, Buddhism is accepted as an exception to that. (laughter). But, he also says that an affidavit has been submitted to him by Mr. Christmas Humph r.Qys, the English Buddhist (lots of laughter) that he, that is to say Christmas Humph~r~~ls, does not accept the suggestion that Buddhism denies a Supreme Being.

Anne.: Oh no.

S.; Oh yes. (laughter ) So the society, that is to say, the Ethical Society,had failed to make out it's case on the basis of the advancement of religion. So I'm afraid we're going to have to take that up with Mr.

Humph rays (laughter ) . It's terrible isn't it ?

A Voice.: He must believe in God then.

S.: So it's as though he has submitted an affidavit which has presumably been used by those who are opposing the South Place Ethical Society's application to be considered as a charity on religious grounds.

Anne.: So they've reinstated the charity status but not of a religious charity ?

S.: Yes, that seems to be the case because the whole question has arisen

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S. cont. because the tax commissioners, you know, wanted to be oblige the South Place Ethical Society to pay tax. You know they apparently organised their campaign and raised funds for it very carefully over the last ten years. And now they have, you know, launched their case. And it, well I don~t know what is going to happen but if there is going to mean an appeal or anything but it seems as though Lord Dyllan has granted them or has recogn'ised them as having charity status but on grounds of, of their being an educational organisation of benefit to the public.

Anne: That is interesting.

S.: Yes, but not as a religion and partly because of what flumphries has said but how he comes to be giving an affidavit and you know to be intervening in that sort of way, well one rather wonders.

Anne: It's because he's the English Buddhist (laughter).

~.: Yes. but anyway that's what we have to sort of take that up and point out that there other English Buddhists (laughter). (Pause) I'm keeping that for Subhuti and he'll deal with it as soon as he comes back (a laugh). (Pause) But you see this is again an example of, you know, extending the Mandala, or not extending the Mand ala, because, you know, one will come up against the existing bodies, existing structures, you know, existing, you know, fragment or the organised chaos and they will try to fit you into their catgories, you know rather than create a new catYgory in accordance with your nature. (Long pause) Anyway, let's carry on.

A Voice: In the Aksayamatipariprcchasutra:

One must not calculate in seeking enlightenment by thinking that for so many aeons I shall, and so many more shall not, put on the armour of the Bodhisattva, but one should buckle it on without thought for thought cannot encompass it.

S.: Mm. One shouldn't think in terms of time. This is what it means. I mean this is quite important. If you're really deeply committed to something. If you're really involved in something, you don't think how long it will take. You aren't thinking, in a sense, of working to an end. You're not, again, looking forward to the end of it. I mean this is the Bodhisattva, that's the

One must not calculate in seeking enlightenment by thinking that

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for so many aeons I shall, and so many more I shall not, put on the

armour of the Bodhisattva, but one should buckle it on without thought, for thought cannot encompass it.

It means that the Bodhisattva's armour which is the intention, the aspiration to gain enlightenment for the benefit of all living beings, or Metta, one could say, is of such a nature that it cannot limit itself. Do you see? It's rather like, well, just to give a rather simple analogy, it's rather like the mother's attitude towards the child. The mother doesn't say, "well I shall do so much for the child and, you know, for such a time, after that I'm not going to do anything more. I mean the mother doesn't think like that. Because the commitment to the child, in a sense, is an absolute commitment, without limitations. The mother doesn't say, "well I'm going to attend to it up to 10 O'clock, but after that 10 O'clock well, my day's work is over": (laughter), you know, the mother doesn't think like that. So in the same way the Bodhisattva, you know, doesn't limit himself in any way, with regard to what he is going to do for sentient beings. He doesn't place any time limit. He doesn't say I am going to do it for so many aeons and then I'm going to stop. In his very nature there can be no limits of that sort imposed. I mean it's just like commitment to the Three Jewels. You don't say I'm going to commit myself, you know, for the next five years. I mean, commitment is of such a nature that you cannot limit it in that way. If you could limit it in that way it wouldn't be commitment. You could say, well I'm going to work for the Three Jewels for five years. Yes, you could say that, perhaps, but you couldn't say, "well, I am going to commit myself to the Three Jewels for five years and then I'm going to, you know, take time off. How could you say that because the whole idea of commitment is completely incompatible with any kind of limitation. So how much more so is it in the case of the Bodhisattva and the Bodhisattva's vow and the Bodhisattva's way of life. So if there's any question of limitation it is not the Bodhisattva vow, or the Bodhisattva attitude. If there is any question of limitation you are not committed. And if you say, well I'll commit myself to the Three Jewels but only for so long or only under certain circumstances. But I'm only going to be prepared to do such and such things. I'm not going to be prepared to do those other things if, you know, commitment involves doing such and such well I don't want to do it. Well that is not commitment. Or if you say, well, I want to commit myself but --mm I want to commit myself but it'll be on the understanding I never have to work in a co-op. Or I'll commit myself but it must be on the understanding I never have to give up my

relationships. Well that is not commitment. Commitment is unconditional. You're prepared for anything. I mean, if the commitment requires you, you're prepared to give up anything, you know, if it gets in the way of the commitment. You're prepared to do anything if it's a necessary expression of the commitment. If there's any limitation imposed in advance you're not committed. (Pause.)

Sarah: Is it of the nature of breathing, in a way? When you're born...

S.: You could say, you could I suppose, it's like saying well I'm willing to go on living but provided I don't have to breathe (laughter). You know it's incompatible.

A Voice: Will it (inaudible) that you  
can't commit yourself to something that you know.

S.: Yes, because whatever is limited is known. Whatever is known is limited. In a way commitment is commitment to the unknown, in the sense that you cannot envisage all the circumstances under which you might have to operate. You cannot sort of say, well I'm going to commit myself to the Three Jewels and therefore I'm prepared to do this and that and the other. You can't draw up a completely exhaustive list in advance. So therefore, you know, you commit yourself to the unknown. I mean you may find yourself doing as a direct expression of your commitment things that you couldn't have imagined at the time when you committed yourself. You committed yourself, in that sense, to the unknown. If for instance, I mean, just to take a concrete example, let's say those Order Members - who have gone out to India, that's an expression of their commitment. When they became order Members the idea of going to India and working among the ex-untouchables just hadn't arisen. I mean in the back of my mind (laughter) there was a thought that some day we might be able to do something for those people just because I had had contact with them at some time, but I'm sure no Order Member, I mean when he was ordained thought that he might be committing himself, you know, to working among the ex-untouchables as a consequence or expression of his commitment to the Three Jewels. I'm sure nobody thought of that. So in that sense, they were committing themselves to the unknown. And those who are being ordained now might be committing themselves to the unknown because they at present, you can't think say, of going and establishing a centre on the moon. (laughter) If you say, if you do become ordained you don't say well I'm committing myself to the Three Jewels and committing myself, therefore, to this and that and

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perhaps to establishing a centre on the moon because (laughter), you know, scientific developments haven't reached that point, but who knows in twenty years time there maybe, you know, colonies of earthlings on the moon and it may be, you know, a quite feasible thing to extend FWBO activities there (laughter) and to send people on the, you know, the moon shuttle to open up a centre. But you won't be saying, well, when I was ordained twenty years ago I didn't commit myself to this (laughter), you know, because you couldn't have thought of it then. But you can think of it now, perhaps, that is to say in twenty years time. So you see



that was included even though you had not explicitly committed yourself (laughter) or had explicitly thought of that as involved in your commitment, possibly. So, you, in that sense, you do always commit yourself to the unknown-. The principle is known, perhaps, or at least to a degree, though even that is not known fully. To understand it more deeply the more experience of it that you get but, you know, you cannot possibly know all the different applications and manifestations and expressions of that commitment as (persons). So in a sort of double sense you do, you know, you commit yourself to the unknown, because you don't fully understand even the principles to which you are committing yourself. Nor do you know the full range of expressions, expressions of that. you know, principle of that commitment. (Pause) You just have a sense of the general direction.

Sarah: I jotted down something which must be then completely inadequate because I put~to the unknown or to the positive forces of energy, something which would always be creative.'

S.: Yes, right, yes. Though how they might be creative, perhaps you can't always thinTh at that stage.

Sarah: But it seems though I made it a positive term because I thought that sounds so, kind of....

S.: For instance, to take an extreme example, you know, when you commit yourself. I mean you might have children and you might not be thinking even of giving those children up or leaving them, or you leaving them, but a time might come when you might see, well the expression of your commitment d~mands that. On the other hand, you might never have thought of having children, but you might think, you know, later on, well, maybe thats, you know, an appropriate expression of my commitment. To have children and to bring them up but you might never have had that idea in fact might have dismissed it out of hand, at the time that you originally

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committed yourself. You just don't know. But you know, when you commit yourself you commit yourself to doing whatever is necessary, yes, as an expression of your commitment to the Three Jewels. Whatever it uiay turn out to be. However much it m~~, you know, conflict with, or contradict your present ideas about yourself and your development. You just don't know where it will carry you to. It might carry you in quite unfo~een directions. You might think of yourself as a meek, qui~t, uncommunicative person, who couldn't s~yfl~oo to a goose but in ten years time, five years time, you might find yourself, you know, rampaging all over the country giving fiery lectures. Who knows. (laughter) Because, you know, one of the consequences of committing yourself is that you °~~ start to understand who you really are. What you're really like. You find that your personality isn't you. You get more in contact with your character. That changes your whole conception of what you can do and what you can't do. What is good for you to do and what it isn't good for you to do. And, I notice, it takes most people, after they commit themselves, after they've become ordained, it takes them two or three years usually, to sort this out. It isn't obvious all at once by any means. Because people have you know, strayed into so. many cul-de-sacs, and, you know, been given all sorts

of wrong impressions about themselves. Or might have all sorts of wrong ideas about themselves. Might completely mis-understand themselves. They usually do. And therefore, not know what is the best thing to do, for them to do. What is the best expression of their commitment. It's not easy to find this out. Sometimes people experiment for several years; you know, after ordinations. Before they find out, you know, what is really a specific concrete path for them, you know, within the context of the Mandala.

Hilary: I somehow imagined that you had to be quite clear about that before you did commit yourself, somehow.

S,: Well, you usually think you are. (laughter) Yes. But, you know, the commitment is to the principles, not to the any articulated expression of the principle. Do you see what I mean? That is the distinction. Yes. You need to have a clear idea of the principle but you don't, you know, to be ordained have to have a clear idea of the particular way in which you are going to express that principle. Because, you know, that's, you can only be clear about that if you're really clear about yourself. And understand yourself. And that usually you don't do. I mean, you understand yourself to the extent that you know that you want to commit yourself but you don't understand yourself well enough to know what particular form the commitment will take. Maybe you're ignorant of, you know, what the possibilities are. Maybe you think of yourself as able

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to do this but not able to do that. But as a result of committing yourself, you know, as a result of actually growing and developing, you get much more in contact with your real self and your real abilities, real capacities. Realise maybe that things you thought were good for you and that you were good at, were not good for you and you weren't so good at them and you turned to something else as a more genuine expression of your commitment. And it seems that it takes, you know, two or three years for people to work this out, or sort this out, after ordination. Even though they may be perfectly clear and definite about the commitment itself. It may be also that in the case of some Order Members, the Movement itself hasn't expanded sufficiently to enable them, as yet to do the thing that they really ought to do as an expression of their commitment. They may have to wait, you know, for a few more people to come along, of that kind, with that sort-of interest, of that sort-of mood. I think, and I've mentioned this I think on the Convention that it's not easy to know oneself. It's easy enough to talk in terms of self-knowledge. And I said on the convention that self-knowledge wasn't just a matter of realising that you had, perhaps, a bit of a temper, or that you are repressed in one way or another. Self-knowledge is, you know, self-knowledge goes much deeper than that. It's a much more comprehensive, rather more difficult sort of thing to achieve. So until you really know yourself, you know, you can't know what really is the best thing for you to do, you know, for the sake of your own development and as your contribution to the Movement as a whole. You don't really know your place within the Mandala for quite a while. Even though you know that you're in the Mandala, you want to be in the Mandala, you are orientated in a certain direction. You're quite clear about that in certain terms. You're quite clear about the importance of meditation and Right Livelihood but that's still isn't definite and concrete enough, should you as an expression of your commitment within the Mandala of the FWBO go into film making. Should you spend most of your time in meditation? Should you go and help Lokamitra in India? Should you work in the press? Should you help running classes? Well these are all specific expressions. Which one is best for you? That's not so easy to discover. You could do, maybe, so many of them. There are so

many of them. There are so many possibilities but which one is the one that is really best for you. Or in some cases perhaps, it doesn't matter. You're a balanced healthy sort of person, you could do so many things and they all help you, maybe equally. Some people are in that sort of position.

Sanghadevi: Seems like you, you know, you need the clear ideal principle in a way, just open, just be open. You do whatever needs to

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be done for a while. Just whatever turns up.

S.: Yes, indeed yes. And then gradually you feel your way into the sort of situation which is much more specifically oriented for your particular needs, as well as to the needs; the objective needs of the situation.

Anor~: There's a, I was going to say, the way you were talking just now sort of seemed to have more that you, sort of, I know you didn't mean this because I sort of had this feeling of sitting, and sort of, deciding what shall I do. So shall I do that, but it doesn't sort of, occur like that does it?

S.: Oh no, it mustn't be like that. No. I did hear some time ago you know, an Order Member writing around to all the different centres asking each centre what they could offer him (laughter), so that he could take up the best offer I think. That is not like that, no, not at all. Because, you know, you, it's very difficult to separate the two. That is to say, your needs and the needs of the group, or the needs of the movement. You have to bear both in mind and happily there can be a, sort of, coincident between them.

Sarah: Like selling your needs at the market. Like Naghabodhi's talk on Dharma. He sold everyone the idea that they needed Dharma.

S.: And what is really good for you as an individual cannot be bad for the rest of the Movement. And if you do something that is really good for the Movement it cannot be bad for you. If you really do it. I mean when I say do it, I mean wholeheartedly and with involvement and commitment. (long pause)

Anoma: Sometimes when you can sort of see how many things are needed

to be done, you know, and maybe how many things you could do potentially, on

I sort of, find it quite difficult to °. (pause). Talking earlier about

time limits and then if you do anything wholeheartedly and then it could take a long time in the end in the back of your mind you think of all these other things as well. And yet, obviously you've got to , sort of, really get stuck into something otherwise you're limiting yourself.

S.: Largely you're not finding out, you know, as a result of experience, what you really can do. What is good for you to do, and so on. You can't work it out, I think, theoretically and then take up something. I think you have to throw yourself in, and, you know, try your hand at a number

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of things and find out that way.

Anoma: But that, even that can really take years, so you say two or three years, but I mean

S.: In some cases it takes more. I mean there are some Order Members who haven't really found out yet what they're best at and what would be best for them. I mean even after four and five years.

Sanghadevi: I mean do you? I mean you seem to be suggesting that after say a few years one does broadly speaking, sort of know, well, knowing where one is going to function.

S.: Yes, I think that is so. In the case of those people who are not, as it were, all-rounders. There are some people, who, as it were, specialis~ in not be(ng specialists. (laughs) I mean they are also very useful people. Maybe chairmen need to be a bit of this sort. They need to be able to turn their hand to quite a number of things, keep a number of different things going at the same time. But you may have a particular talent, you know, which it would be a pity hot to place completely at the disposal of the Movement. I mean, for instance, someone like Chintamani. It would be pity if he did not produce, you know, art for the benefit of the movement. Because it's not something that everybody could do. (Long Pause) I think few people will discover that they are all- rounders by nature and will not find, you know, any particular thing or any particular small number of things that they ought to get more and more deeply involved in. But others will and you will find that that is in accordance with the bent of their nature. That it will help them to pursue that line intensively and, you know, also be a contribution to the Movement. For instance someone who is very much into meditation and wants as it were to concentrate on meditation. And spend a greater part of the time meditating. Maybe being involved in the Meditation Centre. Well it's good for them'.- It's the way perhaps in which they can develop most rapidly and would also certainly fulfil a need in the movement. That there should be, you know, that sort of inspiration and that sort of,

you know, guidance available, you know, from that person for others wanting to practice meditation, even if not to that extent. (pause) Again it's a question, you know, ascertaining your right place in the Mandala. (long pause) It~s, in a way, one could say, you know, it~ a question of disposability. Just allowing oneself to be disposed of in which ever way is best for oneself, you know, and for others. I mean people do place all sorts of limitations on themselves. Not only that they can't do this and can't do that but I don't want to do this and don't want to do that.

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There ' s all sorts of petty preferences.

Anne: It seems to me it brings in trust and faith again because maybe until you really do know yourself in a true sense, you have to trust your ~piritual Friends to help you.

S.: Right yes. Unless someone's aptitude or talent or needs manifests itself in a very definite manner, I think, after Ordination, say for two or three years, one should just tr~ to have a general experience of things. You know, helping with classes, studying, meditating. Maybe in a, sort of, well evenly balanced sort of way. Working in the Co-op and then just see, you know, whether one would be better advised to specialise more. Both for one's own sake and for the sake of the Movement.

Anne: I think sometimes the lack (of people comes in again that people are a bit loathe to specialise prematurely.

S.: That's true yes. Because there are certain areas where you need specialist knowledge and where someone would have to spend, I mean maybe the greater part of their time working on that particular matter so, you know, if they've got a natural aptitude, fair enough and there still is a need in the movement, you know, fair enough. ~ mean we will all be needing accountants for instance, more people like that. Even lawyers. So it could be that someone, you know, who comes into the Friends say with a knowledge of accountancy, Law, you know, could specialise, and it would be good for that person and certainly good for the Movement. But if it's bad for that particular person even though good for the Movement, then obviously a choice has to be made. And there's still need to work out one~ priorities. I mean sometimes one might feel the needs of the Movement as such that one should do a certain thing, even though it isn't, p~rhaps, the best thing for one to do, for one's own development. And vice versa. If your own need is very great then maybe the need of the Movement has to be put aside for a bit. It's not always easy to decide, you know, even with the help of one's Spiritual Friends. That's where the all-rounders are useful, you know, because, they can, you know, turn their hands to a number of different things. But again there are certain things which do require a specialist. You know, where the all-rounder, however sort of talented and versatile, isn't enough. (Pause) There are certain things, you know, where specialist knowledge is required and that specialist knowledge may take quite a few years to accumulate. (Pause) So, commitment is unconditional. Going for Refuge is unconditional. The Bodhisattva's vow is

unconditional.

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It's very important to remember this. One doesn't place any limitations. One is prepared for anything, which means that one is committing oneself to the unknown. Right lets carry on with that next quotation.

Hilary: And in the Bodhisattvabhumi

I shall rejoice at staying in hell for thousands of aeons if only to save one single being from misery, to say nothing of still lon~ ~-io~s and of still greater miseries. Such is a Bodhisattva's armour of strenuousness.

S.: Now how literally can one take this? How seriously? I think probably you have to water it down and dilute -it considerably. (laughter) for it to make sense at all. It links up with something that we were talking about, I'm not sure in this group or the other group, about sense consciousness and mind consciousness. That mind-consciousness can rise superior to sense-consciousness. So it's only within that sort of context, that sort of framework, that a statement of this sort makes any kind of sense. In the light of, you know on the strength of your enthusiasm, you know, for the vision that you've seen you can ignore and even not~feel minor difficulties and discomforts and even pain. But, you know, here it is expressed in a very extreme way indeed, isn't it? In a way that completely eclipses out imagination. You know what does

rejoicing at staying in hell for thousands of aeons of ~nly to save one single being from misery... It's very difficult to have to put up with a bit of trouble and discomfort, you know, just for a few hours, for the sake of some other person. I mean people find that when they have to nurse the sick don't they? Or look after children. It's not easy.

But, you know, that is, or should be the Bodhisattva's or would-be Bodhisattva~ attitude. Or the attitude of the , you know, the spiritually committed individual. I mean, your wish to help~others is so intense that you don't mind difficulties and discomforts, you know, for yourself. It's very important that one should have this attitude, otherwise, you know, you will, maybe you'll do things for other people and undergo trouble for them but you may feel a bit of resentment at the same time. You can't really do anything with 6r for other people without at least, a touch of the Bodhisattva Ideal to keep you going. (pause)

Liz: I feel with my~elf that I'm just learning to put myself into situations that are stronger than myself. Like having to stay away from the hells quite a bit because well~its a realisation I suppose, that I'm, of my weakness.

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S.: Yes, if one gets irritated too much or, you know, gets too depressed well one has to stay away from those sorts of situations and strel\$?j£¼~)~ ones own positivity. Otherwise you are no use to yourself or to other people in fact in those situations.

Anne: It's a bit like-- the Movement. In a way it consolidates itself before it can really do very much in 'the world'.

S.: Yes, right. I mean initially we have to think in terms of survival and you know, remaining unobtrusive until we were, you know, a bit strong enough to start standing up for ours yes.

Anne: I mean that happens in individual cases as well. (very long pause)

S.: I mean very often you find that the Mahayana Sutras are written in what would seem to us, perhaps, an exaggerated sort~of style, as here. But as I say, one has to sort of, water it down a bit to ~k~ it a'c~eptable and practicable, you know, for oneself. One mi~isn't, you know allow oneself to be discouraged by, you know, the

of the Bodhisattva operating on this sort of scale And perhaps bear in mind that the Bodhisattva-, by thetime he's able to do this sort of thing, you know, has ceased to be an individual in our sense of the term. He has gone way beyond individuality as, you know, we can con ceive it. It's not just one individual, you know, bearing all this tr~mendous burden. It's like a, you know, an enormous, you knowkb~r~t~P&}4) inverted commas, cosmic force.

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Side B

S.: ... The individual has been transcended and has gone way beyond the level of ordinary individuality so we shouldn't think that this, in a way, really applies to us. Or even if we think of applying it is quite impossible. We've got our work cut out just putting up with little difficulties, inconveniences and we may even have to retreat from those for a while to consolidate our own positivity.

A Voice: Or just having the vision.

S.: Yes, sustaining the vision. Yes. (Pause.) So it's not easy to don the Bodhisattva armour of strenuousness. You just have to, to begin with, just protect yourself just a little bit here and there. Not put on the whole armour. Just concentrate on protecting your weak spots. (Pause.)

Sarah: And yet it's also able to see aspects of Bodhisattva in everyday life.

S.: In what way do you mean?

Sarah: In order to understand the vision, in the great Bodhisattva, you feel it in human beings.

S.: Do you mean to say that you see Bodhisattva-like qualities in human beings?

Sarah: Yes.

S.: Yes, sometimes you do. Yes. (Long pause.) Alright let's go on. Somebody read the next sub-division - 'Strenuousness as applied to work' or 'as applied work'.

Text: Strenuousness as applied work is of three types: to make efforts (i) to reject conflicting emotions (ii) to realise the good and wholesome and (iii) to work for the benefit of all sentient beings.

S.: Right, the first one. Would you like to read the whole of that section.

Text: (i) The first means that since conflicting emotions such as passions and the activity aroused by them is the root of misery, we do not allow them to rise for ever. This is expressed in the Bodhicaryavatara.

When one is in the midst of conflicting emotions One must be firm in a thousandfold way  
And not allow oneself to be assailed by them Just as a lion will not allow jackals to attack him.

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Or again:



When one carries a pot full of oil And there is a sword over one's head Just as one is afraid of being killed, So must one grasp the pot tightly.

S.: Yes. So strenuousness as applied work. And this is efforts to reject conflicting emotions. I'm not sure how literal this translation is 'conflicting emotions'. I think it probably translates klesa which is more like defiled emotion in general but, perhaps, that's defiled emotion is by its very nature conflicting. So 'the first means that since conflicting emotions such as passions and the activity aroused by them is the root of misery, we do not allow them to rise for ever. When one is in the midst of conflicting emotions one must be firm in a thousandfold way, and not allow oneself to be assailed by them, ;just as a lion will not allow jackals to attack him~' The context is, of course, virya. The context is, energy in pursuit of the good. Energy in pursuit of the wholesome. So the suggestion is that the conflicting emotions, the passions, can take you away from this and have, so to speak, a disintegrating effect. And this is, of course, what we actually find. (pause.) So one should be just like a lion, mobilising ones energy in pursuit of the good and not allowing the jackals, the passions or the conflicting emotions, to attack one. (Pause.) So, I mean here this aspect of strenuousness or virya is the aspect of not allowing ones energies as directed towards the good, as directed towards Enlightenment, to be turned away, or to be dissipated or to be put into a situation of conflict by the arousing of the, by the arising of the passions which drain energy away. In other words one must remain emotionally integrated. 'When one is in the midst of conflicting emotions one must be firm in a thousandfold way'. Just because of thousands of emotions it's not clear whether the emotions of those, of other people by whom you are surrounded, and by which you may be carried away or those which arise just within you or both. Very likely it's both. You're in the midst of conflicting emotions. You're being pulled in this direction and that. And if you're not careful this will be inimical to your virya. (pause.)

Sanghadevi: Would you say something about experiences you've been having in meditation that, in 'Dhyana for Beginners' it talks, the grand Master talks about false experiences, you experience things which you think are, you're getting somewhere and they seem to me to be quite similar to what priti and yet I'm not very clear on what are the experiences, on the positive side and also ones that things basically you just need to let them go.

S.: Well in a sense you need to let all these experiences go. In the sense that you don't settle ... (tape cut out) ... you can dwell on it in the sense

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of cultivating it and developing it and not losing it. But not dwell on it in the sense of appropriating it and thinking of it as something that is yours or something that you can pride yourself on. You have to let it go in that sort of sense. And not try to prolong it for yourself.

Sanghadevi: I sort of detected there was a different sort of thing which had come up in conversation, and in Dhammadinna's notes which she made from the seminar - he says something about, like, energies that can come up in the way it's no more than in a way, rubbish or something, you need to get rid of. People can lock on to it, get in to like power and say something spiritual ....

S.: Yes, perhaps somebody's perhaps thinking in terms of ordinary energies that get unblocked in the course of meditation and you can rise on the crest of that wave and become a bit inflated. Perhaps I was thinking of that sort of thing, and because of that energy that now fills you, you can attract a lot of other people and think of yourself as somebody.

Sanghadevi: You mentioned like hysteria and I wonder, I mean, that confused me, the difference between that and, I mean, well you can be and that can be positive.

S.: Yes, indeed. Well, what is hysteria? What does one understand by that?

A Voice: Loosing control.

S.: Loosing control.

A Voice: Group consciousness.

S.: Yes. When people get hysterical what is actually happening?

Eve: You get overwhelmed by the energy. It just sort of comes up and takes over.

S.: Yes, it's a lack of control, in a way. Lack of integration.

Sanghadevi: I mean would it be like the, sort of, well emotions that can come up and actually throw you off your direction?

S.: Well to the extent that your mindfulness is disturbed, I mean, to that extent you've been thrown off your direction, you could say. (Pause.) You've become unbalanced. You see this on retreats sometimes. Maybe when people have been doing a bit extra meditation and they don't have the usual outlets for their energies, they become mildly hysterical. A lot of silly laughing

and giggling and all the rest of it. And that is a sort of mild hysteria and it means they are not able to control or to integrate the energies that arise, that are being unblocked. It's not that there's anything wrong with the energies or it's not necessarily the evil energies or anything like that but just that, well it's as though you're own individuality in a positive sense is not strongly enough developed to be able to incorporate those energies. You've got rather a weak centre to your mandala. Do you see what I mean?

Anne: Seems sometimes a bit in those kind of situations when it just goes over the top that it can be sometimes you can feel somethings being released and then people maybe laugh and that sort of seems alright but then somehow you can feel that it goes a bit over the top.

S.: But also there is the point that in some cases a new level of control needs to be established, you see. The upsurge of that energy has broken the old level of control as I call it but there has to be re-adjustment, an establishment of the level of control in a different sort of way, on, as it were, a different level so as to accommodate that energy. Do you see what I mean? I mean, that energy is a new factor. The existing structure cannot accommodate it. Can not contain it. The structure has to be broadened. The individuality has to be enriched so as to accommodate that new energy. It's only hysterical perhaps in relation to the rather narrow basis from which it has been contributed to.

Sarah: As much as when you get energy and then you become closer to someone through that expression.

S.: Well no, you become closer to yourself say through that. I mean, for instance, you become angry and maybe formerly you had thought of yourself as a person who never got angry. In other words that was a very narrow basis, a very narrow level, so to speak. But then there is an explosion, well, you become angry. Well that energy is liberated but also you have to revise your idea about yourself. You have to broaden your idea about yourself so you admit and you accept, well, yes, I am an angry person. I can get angry and that makes room for the anger, or for the energy which formerly was blocked in that way. The basis of individuality has been broadened. So the energy was disrupted only in relation to your rather narrow and limited self definition. But if you broaden your self-definition then it will cease to be disruptive. And the same applies to the energy which is expressed in the form of hysteria. The base isn't broad enough. The level isn't such as to contain it. You have to enlarge your mandala, to change the metaphor.

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Anoma: I once heard that you'd said you'd thought that somebody could, I forget how you put it, but could be prone to hysteria. Would that be because they were quite a controlled person?

S.: I think it would be because they were a sort-of over-controlled person in certain respects and there was the vent, as it were, through which the energy escaped was too narrow. Also, there is the point that one's ego organisation can just be weak so that, it's as though the mandala is very sloppy. It can't incorporate energy, can't organise it. It hasn't itself a strong enough

definition. A strong enough outline. A clear enough outline. It's too

undeveloped. Sometimes hysteria is due to the fact that the individuality is not just too narrowly defined - it's just undeveloped. It's just sort of formless. It can't accommodate. It hasn't the firmness to accommodate the energy. Not that it's too narrow necessarily. It has to be relatively or reasonably firm structure of individuality. Of course these are all sorts of, what shall I say, well, engineering models of personality. One mustn't take them too literally but I think they do enable one to understand the situation to a certain extent.

Liz: Is conflicting then, here, sort of anything that's un-integrated?

S.: Yes. I think one shouldn't take this word conflicting in the translation too seriously. I don't think it literally translates the original. It's a disturbing emotion. And a negative emotion of passion and defilement, a klesa is by its very nature disturbing and disintegrating. (Long pause.)

Sanghadevi: Just to get back to meditation. I'm still not entirely clear about like in the second dhyana. I thought that was the stage when you may have, like, experiences, of well, crying or .... (inaudible) .... etc., etc., I mean that would ....

S.: Well it's like, I would say that is an experience that obliges you to broaden the basis of your individuality. It has to be broadened and you as a mandala, or the mandala of you, has to expand to make way for and accommodate and give due place to those energies which are now surging up. So, therefore they bring about an enhancement and enrichment of your character, let us say.

Sanghadevi: I suppose I just got confused in 'Dhyana for Beginners', under the section that's called 'The Visible Manifestations of Dhyana' which seemed to be describing similar experiences which I thought were signs of dhyanic states. I mean, you don't latch on to them but I mean, they were signs of dhyanic states ....

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S.: Well, perhaps it's, I mean, I don't remember the passage but perhaps what it's about is a distinction between, well to discriminating, the near enemy. I mean, if you just get a bit hysterical it doesn't mean you are filled up with

energy. Do you see what I mean? You just got a bit out of control. (long

~.) But in any case one shouldn't sort of latch on to any passing experience in the sense of wanting to make it permanent and enjoy it for yourself as a sort of spiritual possession. (Pause.) It could be that when we studied Dhyana for Beginners the Movement as a whole was a bit more problem oriented than it is now; (Pause.) I mean we might have gone into that aspect of things a bit more than we'd need to now, perhaps.

Sanghadevi: Well it came up in our Mitra Study Group the other week, because there are a couple of mitras there who have had quite strong meditations. Or they seem to have had the capacity in the past anyway, to tune in to a certain level where they were getting a lot of colours and sounds or things like that and they weren't that clear whether, well, how positive it was to pursue it. I mean ....

S.: Well now, those sort of manifestations need not be pursued in the sense that you shouldn't try to see pretty colours and things. Yes it is a sign that something is happening. You could say even a sign of progress. But that doesn't mean that you should make an effort actually to cultivate those experiences. Just note them and just let them go, in the case of such manifestations. (Pause.) Well what about this analogy? 'When one carries a pot full of oil and there is a sword over one's head, just as one is afraid of being killed so must one grasp the pot tightly.' I mean, this I assume refers to a little story where somebody had to carry a pot brim full of oil round a room and he was threatened that if he spill even a drop he will be executed. A sword was hanging over his head. So under those circumstances you'd be very mindful and hold the pot very carefully, even tightly, wouldn't you? So you have to safeguard your virya and prevent it being affected by conflicting emotions just in that sort of way.

Norma: It's suggesting that you need virya in order not to get distracted - like the oil is almost like samsara - that you have to have that undistractedness.

S.: Yes, well, in the summary virya is energy directed to the good. If it is deflected well that's the passions. There's not a different sort of energy. (Long pause.) It's as though energy leaks away in the passions. Or virya leaks away. It's energy that's been deflected from the good.

Anoma: I could feel that on my last solitary, that I was sitting there one day

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and could just feel this sort of tremendous force of energy in me. It didn't really act - it seemed in a way a bit impersonal. It was just this sort of force, very strong. And that it could be anything. It felt like it could be anything. It's almost in the way that it was going to go. I mean it could be really heavy craving (laughs) or it could be something more positive. I found the image of Padmasambhava very helpful there because of chanting that mantra

because it seem to then direct it in the right sort of direction .... (inaudible)

Paula: It's like the energy is there and you have to refine it.

S.: Yes. That's another way of putting it. One can speak in terms of refining it or redirecting it, or integrating it.

A Voice: Channelling it.

S.: Channelling it.-- It all adds up to the same thing.

Paula: Yesterday I had this experience because I sort of, I seemed to be getting happier and happier as the day went on and I almost got to explos~~ point, and during the evening meditation, doing the Metta Bhavana, I found that I was able to channel the energy into that.

Liz: It seems to me that you have to be very much in contact with the vision not to let virya get distracted, get reflected.

S.: Yes indeed. You can't do it by sort of psychological methods or techniquesj I mean, the vision basically, ultimately, is the unifying factor. Yes, without that you can really do very little. You can't do it, you can't do very much on the basis just of an intellectual conviction, or on the basis just of the advice of your good friends. There has to be some vision. And the good fri~ods when they want to get your energies moving in the right direction. It's not enough just to exhort you, they have to kindle or re-inspire you with the vision that you have forgotten for the time being. So therefore the capacity to inspire people and envision them, or re-envision them, is very, very important.

Anoma: I remember somebody, an Order Member, going to visit another Order Member some time back now, who was living on their own and feeling a bit sort of lethargic and when they left they sl~ed a little 'Om VaJrapani Hum' on the shrine.

S.: There's also quite a difference between the lion and the jackals. This s0~ggests that virya is like the lion, the conflicting emotions are like the

Jackals. The Jackals live on dead bodies don't they?

Sanghadevi: Edith Sitwell uses the lion a lot in her poetry.

S.: Does she?

Sanghadevi: It is quite a strong symbol.

Liz: How would, how would that analogy follow that Jackals living on dead bodies emotions which are ....?

S.: Yes, well, conflicting emotions, klesas, they sort of live in all situations don't they? put it in that way, even dead situations. What's dead and gone. They cling on to, they feed on it.

Anne: A bit sneaky as well, aren't they.

S.: A bit sneaky. Yes. And come out when it is getting dark. (Laughter.) The lion is only one because virva is integrated energy. Integrated in the highest sense. But the Jackals are many - they, the energy which is dis-integrated in to the conflicting emotions because the Jackals also quarrel among themselves.

anne: They travel in packs.

S.: They travel in packs.

A Voice: It's made a point, somehow.

Sarah: I feel it's not enough though.

S.: What isn't enough. (Laughter.)

Sarah: Well it's interesting that it makes a point but

S.: You mean the comparison of lion and Jackal?

Sarah: Yes.

S.: Well you could say a further point is that the Jackals all have to be converted into lions. Or a lion. It's not enough Just to keep them at bay and keep them outside the charmed circle, outside the mandala. They all have to be merged and transformed in to a lion.

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Sarah: Yes, that's a bit nearer. (laughs.)

S.: But still on the level that jackals are jackals, well, jackals are jackals. (Laughter.) One mustn't permit any rationalisation. You mustn't permit a jackal to sneak in having been sort of just painted yellow. (Laughter.) And trying to look like a lion. (Laughter.) This is all a rationalisation. It must be a genuine transformation. One can find many of these jackals sort of transforming themselves in this pseudo sort of way and pretending to be lions and just sneaking in, trying to get into the mandala. (Laughter.) For their own nefarious purposes. (Laughter.)

Sarah: I think we can re-interpret the story of the three little pigs.

S.: Well I have noticed recently, well, the last couple of years, two or three years, that people have learned the language. That people have said, "I want to do this" or "I want to do that. I think it will be good for my spiritual development. " (Laughter.) I have even heard people say "Well, I'm thinking very seriously of starting up a relationship. I think it would be good for my spiritual development." So here they bring along their old Jackal and they try to spray it with yellow paint and make it into a lion and pass it off onto you as a lion. But of course it's quite easy, you just take a close look at this (laughter.) st~nge creature. Well, that's not a lion it's not nearly big enough and it's the wro~ sort of yellow. (Laughter.) It's got a different sort of tail. You are not deceived at all. You can see it's only a ~ackal masquerading as a lion. There's been no transformation at all. But people have learned the jargon. They know that if anything is to be made acceptable it's got to be put in ~erms of well, this would be good for my spiritual development, so they are still trying to do just what they want to do in the old unskilful way but they know the excuses, this, at least in the long run would be good for my spiritual development. So one might say, well, people have said on occasions, well I think it's good for my spiritual develop- ment that I just let myself fet drunk occasionally - all that sort of thing. Well, in that way you can justify anything. No change takes place. Well one just has to be honest with oneself and just see a jackal as a jackal and a lion as a lion, and a genuine transformation as a genuine transformation. And an impersonation as an



impersonation.

Anoma: But supposing you mean half one and half the other.

S.: Yes, because the transformation takes time. You might genuinely have a lions head but look (laughter) the tail of the old jackal still. (Long pause.)

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Well I think we'll leave it there for this morning. We've got a few minutes left but I think we'll just deal with the complete section tomorrow which is quite an important one. And ~"o~o~ will be our last session I'm afraid, anyway, isn't it?

(Sighs)

S.: I begin to get the feeling that people have taken in quite a bit of material (laughter.) An~ maybe assimilation is beginning to be, not exactly a problem, but not quite so easy on the sixth day as it was on the first day, perhaps. We noticed this the last time, that the first five days were a bit different in this respect from the last two. Do you remember?

Sanghadevi: No but I can feel it.

S.: Yes, the sixth and seventh days assimilation was more difficult for us. For both groups, I remember. It looks a little bit like that. (Laughter.) But it's understandable because one is taking in very, very relevant and forceful material. And of course one is taking it seriously so it begin~ to bite. It begins to effect one. When one is assimilating something one can't assimilate too qu~kly. It may take some time, maybe weeks, months, after the retreat before th~~J are even assimilated on the mental level, not to ~~ of other levels. But in a way this is what one expects.

~: Be patient.

S.: Be actively patient.

Anoma: The image of the mandala seems quite helpful. Not sort of to try and get it all sorted out but let things find their place.

S.: Right. Yes. Let there be a natural re-adjustment.

Anne: It's like .... (inaudible) .... of the anxiety.

S.: OK then. I'll leave you with the image of the lion and the jackal. (Laughter.)

End of tape.

Jewel Ornament of liberation Chapter 15

Perfection of Strenuousness

Day ? Tape 1 Side 1

S.. All right, we're going to finish the Perfection of Strenuousness, but before we do that I'm just going to read you a couple of little bits from a little magazine I got this morning called 'Zen Notes'. We get it every couple of months I think. It's quite amusing, it's a very unpreten~ious little journal as you can see, it comes from the States. It's edited by a lady called Mary Farbus, or Fawkus, I'm not sure, but anyway she was an old disciple of Zensabi(?) I don't know if you've ever heard of him, a Japanese monk who went to the States in the twenties and thirties. She's one of his old disciples, she now edits this journal and she writes most of it, but there's some quite interesting little bits, I'll just read you two of these little bits. It might sort of brighten you up if you need brightening up a bit.

"When Paula Sullivan's husband came home at midnight, petulant and drunk for the third time in as many weeks and hovered menacingly over her. The five foot six, sixty seven year old woman got out of bed, picked up the 200lb man and threw him out of their second stor y bay window. (laughter). Two hours later when I talked with her at the hospital where her sober husband was being put back together again I asked her why she'd done it, and how on earth she had managed the incredible feat. She sat there in a cotton housedress, her hands folded in her lap, and smiled gently at me. "That's easy," she said, "I got angry" (laughter)

And then follows the editors comment, she said. "Anger has fallen into disfavour with many psychologists. We

are taught to channel our aggressive tendencies more productively, told that anger is corrosive and futile, that it needs to be sublimated or syphoned off through rigorous exercise.

I'm not so sure. Anger shakes the complacent, anger

gets things done". (laughter).

Well, don't take it too literally. (laughter). Don't go throwing husbands out of second stor y windows. Please. (laughter). Otherwise I might have a lot to answer for. (laughter). I don't want any bru~ed and battered husbands turning up at Padmaloka for refuge (laughter). But there's another little bit, also by the same lady. A bit auto- biographical, she says:

"When I had just turned 35, my father died. I went to for the funeral and planned to return to New York that night. It was late, perhaps shortly before midnight and I was waiting in the train station for the last train. The station looked a lot like toilets(?) on 14th Street. I was there alone for a while until a burly Irish policeman arrived as part of his beat. He saw me reading, and with a strong look came over. "What are you doing?" he said. "I'm waiting for the train" I replied. "Where are you going?" "New York City." He pressed further, "Where in New York?" "I don't think that is any of your business but why do you ask?" Taking in my sex, appearance and society of the time with a glare he said "Are you sure you're not running away from home?" (laughter).

She's 35 and her father's just died "Are you sure you're not running away from home!" (laughter). Well maybe that's something to think about too. (laughter). Anyway (pause) we've got to the bottom of Page 184. Would someone like to read that paragraph which gives the five-fold classification and then after that a).

Page 184: (ii) To make efforts to realize the good and wholesome,

means (85a) to strive for the six perfections re ardless of health or life. And how have we to strive? In five ways: by strenuousness which is (a) ever active, (b) devotod, (c) unshakable, (d) does not turn back and (e) is indefatigable.

(a) The first is uninterrupted. \_\_As is said in the 'dKon.mchog.sprin' ('Ratnameghasutra'):

When a Bodhisattva is strenuous in all walks of life, he must make efforts without getting weary in body or mind. This is called a Bodhisattva's ever active strenuousness.

S: His strenuousness is ever active, he doesn't let up, he never gets weary. This is called a Bodhisattva's ever active strenuousness. Now the question arises, how literally is one to take this, how literally can one take it, Can you literally be active all the time.

Voice: (not clear)

S: Yes. Does it mean that you should never rest, that you should never relax.

Voices: No.

S: Well, yes and no. It depends what you mean by rest, it depends what you mean by relax, If you are resting and relaxing can be part of your striving or it can be not. If It's due to laziness pure and simple, well it's not part of your striving but if you rest, if you relax to keep yourself in trim, to prepare yourself for a further more active effort then the resting itself, the relaxation itself, the holiday itself, the afternoon off itself can be part of your striving, Even

your sabbatical year can be part of your striving - One Order Member told me a few months ago he thought he was going to have a sabbatical, you know what a sabbatical is don't you? You work for six years and take one year off. So I said, 'how long have you been an Order Member?' Oh' he said 'I've been an Order Member two years, it's time I had a Sabbatical' (laughter). It shouldn't be

quite like that (laughter). But one knows how easy it is to slacken off, not just to take as it were a rest, or to have a relaxation, which is part of your Striving but just to slacken off, to get tired, to get a bit bored, to want a bit of distraction, all this very easily happens.

Voice: More like switching off.

S: Like switching off, yes. So it's very important to keep up this uninterrupted flow of effort, of virya.

Sangadevi: At the same time it's quite important not to feel that you've always got to be seen to be doing things in a certain sort of way.

S: Yes, yes you mustn't feel that you've got to be seen to be doing things. I'd suggest you were doing them for other people in the wrong sort of way. That you only feel that you are doing them if they recognise that you are doing them, It's a sort of act in that case. As if to say your own approval, your own knowledge that you are doing it, your own experience of yourself in action is not enough for you, You don't really in a way experience yourself unless other people see you. There are people like this. I don't know if it was in this group or the other one, we talked about acting. Must have been in the other group then, but you notice that there are some people, actors often being prominent among them, who don't really experience themselves unless everybody is looking at them. Such people tend to act they tend to show-off. You find it with children, sometimes they show-off, Probably with children in a way it's natural because they don't yet experience themselves fully, they experience themselves through other people experiencing them, But an adult, a mature person, should be able to experience himself or herself on their own. You shouldn't require other people to see what you are doing in order to give you the sense of doing it, But sometimes it is as though what other people don't see you doing doesn't count, which is quite pit~able. (Pause).

5¼'

Sarah: (Indistinct few words) bring people out      relax

S: There needs to be also I think a variety in the striving. I think if you are doing the same thing for too long at a time you can get a bit dull, a bit bored, a bit dispirited. So I think there needs to be a variety, a sufficient variety in your striving. Not that you're constantly having to interrupt one thing in order to take up another but when you feel that you have been doing one thing for long enough, when you feel that your striving has taken one particular form for long enough you should be able to switch quite smoothly and easily and naturally into some other form of striving. Do you see what I mean? Just as in the course of a retreat you have now meditation, now discussion, now study, now a walk - they are all parts

of one and the same single striving but you're striving in different ways, at different times. So by giving yourself sufficient variety you guard against boredom and you are able to keep up the continuity of striving through the changes of activity.

Sangadevi: How does that tie up with the idea of Order Members finding their particular way as it were after a few years

S: Well, one says way but if one looks at it more closely one finds that that way very often has a number of different aspects. Supposing you do decide that writing is your way, well, that writing can involve you in study, in research, and then there's the actual typing of your manuscript. I mean these are all different things. Or you might feel the need to reflect and even meditate on what you are writing about, to clarify your ideas, and you might go for a little walk to do that. Do you see what I mean? So even within the so-called one activity there are a number of different aspects, but they are closely and harmoniously related.

Lois: And consciously related.

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S: And consciously related, yes. But if in the midst of the writing you have to switch over to packing beans that might be a bit too much of a break.

Anne MeM: So there's continuity although there's change,

S: Yes. There must be continuity, a continuity of the striving, but the mind is such that it requires a little bit of variety. If you're very deeply concentrated and very, very interested indeed you can just keep up a particular line of activity, even a particular aspect of that line of activity for quite a long time. But not indefinitely, not without strain perhaps. So variety within the unity of the striving is usually required. Some people require quite a few changes in the course of a day, maybe their power of concentration so to speak is quite limited, they get tired or they get bored quite easily and need to switch from one thing to another a number of times in the course of a day. Some people are able to stick, literally at the same thing all day, whether it's meditation or accounts or writing or study.

I was talking with someone not so long ago who really wanted to study and improve his knowledge of the Dharma but he said he found it impossible to read for more than half an hour at a time. At the end of half an hour he experienced very strong resistance to such an extent that it was quite painful and he just had to stop. So some people are like that. Other people can go on reading happily absorbed in reading the whole day, day after day - the real genuine bookworm. So one certainly must have this uninterrupted striving but, so to speak, but make it easy for yourself by, to the extent necessary, varying the particular thing that you are doing if that is at all possible. I mean just think what a retreat would be like for some of you at least, if it was either all meditation or all study, or even if you had to go for walks the whole time. (laughter). It's the variety which gives a number of different expressions to the same striving, which makes it so valuable and also so interesting and so attractive. I think one needs to bear this in mind with beginners. When you are on or when

when you organise a beginners retreat, remember that the beginner will not be able to get into

anything as deeply perhaps as you, will not be able to spend two or three hours in study, will not be able to do a double or treble meditation, will require quite a bit of variety and change in the course of the day and not too long spent on any one particular activity. Just as in the case of children, at school, I mean, usually how long do you have children studying one particular subject, how long does a class, a session last, 40 minutes, yes. That seems to be the natural attention span of the average child but supposing you were to keep the child for three hours all morning on Arithmetic, well, what do you think would happen after an hour, Adults are very much like that too. It's very difficult to sustain attention for more than about forty minutes, I mean even in the course of the forty minutes there are some children who get bored and restless long before the session ends. Those of you who have got children probably notice this, that children don't stay absorbed in any one thing for very long, they are always changing. So a few adults are also like that so it's the same principle that holds true even in spiritual life, Don't bore yourself stiff just with one particular aspect of spiritual life. Change, keep up the continuity of interest but with different related things.

Hilary: It seems quite hard to get a balance between variety and what we talked about the other day, getting dispersed over lots of different things

S: Yes, that's why I think that eventually you have to settle for a sort of family of interests let's say. As I mentioned even in the, within the context of the one thing that you decide to take up, or to devote yourself to there are a number of related aspects but they are much more closely related than would be the case with different subjects so to speak.

Liz: I was just thinking about children and thinking about school - it's a very, very long day and perhaps if school wasn't so long people

would generate more interest and learn more.

S: This is why I say with regard to beginners, if they're finding meditation difficult or not very agreeable cut down the length of the session, cut it down to ten minutes. It's important that you learn to enjoy it because if you enjoy it and it isn't a strain and a struggle always then the time will come when spontaneously you sit longer and again longer. So provided you keep up regularity and really try, don't be afraid of just having a short meditation session rather than be trying to sit for a whole hour and just getting really fed up with it to such an extent that you start dreading the approach of the meditation. For the average beginner if you can keep up twenty minutes even, in the morning or evening and enjoy it that is quite enough. It is quite certain that you will increase the period quite spontaneously sooner or later. You might not even realise that you have lengthened it, or sat longer, you just look at the clock and say, 'Well it's forty minutes.' That shows that you are making progress then because you are getting into it naturally. But I think it's dangerous not to sit unless you actually feel like it, at least sit for a short time, even if it's only for ten minutes, sit, Because even if you aren't feeling like it you'll think, 'ah never mind, it's only ten minutes', and it's not much. But if you're not feeling like it, 'Oh good heavens, I've got to sit for an hour', well, meditation can be associated with feelings of boredom, and dread and so on. That isn't good. At all costs you have got to associate meditation with feelings of interest and joy. (Pause). Go on to E then - 'He is the devoted

Text: b) The second means to act joyfully, eagerly and quickly. As is said:

In order to complete his work He has to add to it Like an elephant entering a lake When struck by the midday heat.

~Qd~

S: You must sort of fling yourself in to the work to be done just as an elephant when he gets really hot just flings himself into the lake to cool off. So this is how you should fling yourself into the next thing to be done. It's not enough just to do something, you should do it joyfully, do it eagerly, do it quickly, promptly, perhaps prompt is better than quick. You should be glad of the opportunity. This is very important isn't it? There should be nothing reluctant about your effort, you shouldn't drag your feet so to speak. You should really look forward to everything that you have to do, in

this particular way. In other words in the effort to realise the

good and wholesome. It's not enough to do what is good and wholesome, not enough to make an effort to realise the good and wholesome; there must be joy and eagerness and prompt in it too,

S'devi: The thing about promptitude which has been striking me quite a lot recently is in terms of communicating with people that moments pass.

S: Yes indeed.

Sanghavdevi: and if you don't act and you don't say something it's often not appropriate later on.

S: Yes right. I think it's very important to take advantage of your feeling. Do you see what I mean? Suppose you get a letter from someone, suppose you're really pleased to receive the letter, your natural response is to write, to reply, but if you are not careful that will pass and it will be swamped by other things that you have to do, and other feelings. So if at all possible when you have the feeling to do something, do it there and then. That will mean that you will get into the habit so to speak of naturally following your feelings, I don't mean that you should just be impulsive or reckless, but when you have a natural feeling to do something, and it is a quite straightforward skillful thing to do, well don't allow it to be stifled. This can very easily happen, or be

--s

allowed to happen. So promptitude. LVu~d,

S:d In a sense it is but only in a sense. Perhaps it isn't real spontaneity, you're responding to something, but modern life is so

complicated that we can lose our way, we can be sidetracked. I mean there you are standing there with the letter in your hand, you feel so pleased, and you really feel like replying but you've got to go shopping, or you've got to do something for the children, maybe you've got to

tidy up the Shrine or whatever and by the time you've done all that and thought about the letter that spontaneous feeling that you had and in accordance with which you could have written a really good reply, has gone. So one should not allow that sort of thing to happen. Or you feel like phoning someone, or maybe you feel like sitting and meditating. I think it is important that there should be this clear way through from the feeling to The action and that is very often not possible in our modern life unfortunately.

Lois: That's different from acting on whim?

S: Oh yes. Though I would go so far as to say that if it's a harmless whim there might be something to be said for acting on it. I mean just because there is so very little scope for this sort of thing very often. It's not even a bad thing even to act on a whim sometimes if it's a harmless, ethically neutral whim (laughs). Well, when is a whim not a whim (laughter). You could just have a whim to wander down to the river to look at the water. Would that be a whim? Well, what is a whim? (laughs).

Hilary: Seems almost like the same thing to me.

S: Perhaps one calls this sort of feeling a whim when there's no rational explanation and one wants maybe to dismiss it. Women are supposed to have all sorts of whims aren't they but maybe that's just the rational way of dismissing them.

S'devi: Is it something where you can't see the conscious connection?

S: You might be seized by the sudden urge to go out and buy a new hat (laughs). Well, that's supposed to be a whim isn't it. And your husband, if you have one, might say 'what's the point, you've got dozens of hats, 'or, 'why go and buy it this afternoon. Why not leave it to tomorrow when you do the week's shopping.' You might say, "Well no, I feel like buying a hat now. I don't know why but I want to go and buy a hat." Well, alright, if you can afford it, why not, because there is so little that we can do just when we feel like doing it. So even though maybe it does seem a bit silly to follow one's whims but sometimes the overall context of one's life which is so controlled and so programmed, well maybe it isn't a bad thing to go along with harmless whims.

Srimala: (indistinct) Is there if one doesn't go along

with whims. Is that where the conflicting energies come in?

S: I think if you never, so to speak, follow a whim or do what you feel like doing when you feel like it, I think your feelings eventually get blocked because they get no encouragement. It's like if you ask someone 'Can I do this' and they always say 'No' in the end you stop wanting to do it, in the end the feeling just gets blocked. It gives up, it becomes hopeless. So one mustn't allow oneself to get into this sort of state that life is so controlled, so organised that when you feel like doing something it isn't possible to do it. If, of course, your feeling is already into your work, what you are doing, well, then there's no problem. I'm envisaging a situation which is the situation of that of the average person, in which you have to do or you are doing quite a lot of things in which you are not altogether involved emotionally. And sometimes you get a strong feeling to do something quite different, or just to do something, it is good if you can follow that,

Vida: It's in a way trusting your feelings.

S: Yes, trusting your feelings. Some people don't trust their feelings.



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But if predominately your whole life, or all your activities are an expression of what you really want to do and feel like doing, well, the question hardly arises then. Perhaps you'd be unlikely to have whims.

Voice: I think when you do give in to your whims you do get a good feeling of release and spontaneity (unclear few words).

S: It's sometimes good to make up your mind to do something very quickly (murmurs of agreement). Sort of, right off the cuff. Otherwise we think and plan so much, we don't realise to what extent we do it and people expect you to do that,

Eve: Expect you to do what?

S: To think and plan, and to be very predictable. I noticed when, the other week, in the community, just before supper I just happened to look at the film programme on the notice board, we have a list of films up there so community members are kept informed, and I saw that there was a film that I wanted to see. So I said, 'Oh, I'd like to see that film'. Just beside me there was another community member, 'Oh yes, I wanted to see that too'. So we then, in an instant said 'Alright, let's go'. So we decided like that, but some of the community members were quite surprised that we'd decided so quickly, that it hadn't been discussed or thought about (laughs) and in a way planned. It took us about three seconds to make our minds up, but it was quite good to do that because so often things are planned, or have to be planned so far in advance. Sometimes it happens I even feel that I'd like to take a study this weekend, but of course it's impossible, you've got to warn people weeks, if not months in advance, they've got to get time off from their Chairmen, the Treasurer has got to give his consent to them spending the money sometimes. So this is sometimes a bit frustrating, sometimes one feels, I'd like to take a study ~eekend this weekend but you can't get the people.

Voice: You could try!

Voices: Yes (laughs) You never know.

S: It would be a bit more difficult getting the ladies because then I'd have to move the community out (laughs) and then they'd say 'What! this short notice, but we haven't had time to arrange anything' (laughs)

AnneMe: You're always welcome to (unclear because of laughter)

S: But do you see what I'm getting at? In order to be able to act say joyfully, eagerly and quickly one must not have got into the habit of not acting, ever perhaps, immediately in accordance with the feeling that one has. If there's too great a gap; between your feeling to do something and your actually doing it you can get quite blocked. You can be in the unfortunate position of never doing something when you actually feel like doing it, I mean, supposing you feel hungry and for some reason or other a meal is not available, after an hour or so the hunger just goes. And then supposing somebody offers you a meal, it's not the same, even on that ordinary level. So I think we need to sort of cultivate, and give scope to our impulses much more than we usually do, I'm not of course talking about unskillful impulses but there are quite a lot of impulses which are neither skillful or unskillful. It doesn't really matter if you just give expression to them. Don't try to always work it all out or

have a reason for it, Sometimes people expect you to have a reason, you say 'Oh, I feel like going for a walk this afternoon'. They say 'Why?' (laughs). Well sometimes you don't know, You could say, 'Well, because it's such a nice day'. That isn't really the reason it might be part of it, but you just feel like going for a walk - but you're expected to give a rational account of yourself, a rational justification, You can't always do that, you shouldn't do it. Just say, 'That's what I feel like doing.'

Anne NeM: Sometimes the things you do with the least plans actually work out much better.

S: Yes, that's true.

Anne MeM sometimes when you make great elaborate plans there's more likelihood of them falling apart, that quite often happens.

S: Yes, because very often there is that discrepancy between the feeling and the act. When you started planning it all you might have felt like doing that particular thing but by the time you've completed all the plans and made all the arrangements which might have involved you in all sorts of frustrations and so on you've lost the feeling - and without the feeling you've got to go through with that particular activity. If you suddenly get the urge, well, let's go, let's do it. There you've got the feeling and you're doing it, with the feeling, and that is much more satisfying.

S'devi: Ehante, I don't think I've really realised that there is something other than just skillful or unskillful. I'm sure I've acted a lot of the time neutrally but I've never

S: Well, this is according to traditional Buddhist teaching at least, don't take it as gospel so to speak. (laughs). There are mental states according to the Abidharma, which cannot be classified either as skillful or unskillful. I was going to say it's almost a matter of the situation, it isn't quite that but I mean there are certain areas where one need not bother too much whether it's skillful or unskillful. Like going for a walk. If you feel like going for a walk, it isn't a very skillful thing to do but you could hardly say it was unskillful even if it wasn't particularly necessary. So you don't really need to ask yourself is it a skillful thing to do, to go for a walk, or unskillful. You could~say, 'Well, I could be meditating' and in

comparison to that walking is an unskillful activity. Or you could say 'it keeps me fit. By keeping me fit it enables me to follow the spiritual path more effectively. But I think there is quite a

wide area of activities which are neither particularly skillful nor particularly unskillful.

S'devi: Could this tie up with the idea of play?

S: Yes, because at a higher level still, transcendental activities, and say in the case of Buddhas, they are like play. In the case of the Arahants there's special term, killera, for his karmically neutral activities. Activities which are neither skillful nor unskillful within as much as they have no karmic results at all. But that's all, of course, on a quite different level, this is not ethically neutral in the sense of the ordinary actions - Some ordinary actions being ethically neutral,

Hilary: I can really relate to what you're saying but there seems to be this kill-joy in

me that's (indistinct few words).

S: Well, one might even go so far as to say that sometimes you need to be irresponsible, you need to be a bit light. You don't always have to be weighed down with responsibility, and do things for definite, significant, very serious reasons, because you are a living being, there is a certain spontaneity, yes?. I mean I remember Subhuti telling me sometime ago that, some months ago he was looking out of his office window at Suvatī and he saw a particular sight. I was interested to hear this because I'd seen the same sight from my study window and I'd had much the same sort of reflections in a way. Subhuti looked out of his window at that sort of grassy square, you know the one, and he saw three dogs playing. And he said he was watching them and they were playing so happily with one another and were so friendly and were having such a good time racing around and playing games to one another. He didn't say so but it was almost as though he thought that here was he sitting in his office, and it's almost as though he felt that there was something the dogs were in touch with within himself. And I noticed this when I watched those dogs. It

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was more than animal in a way, they were definitely relating to one another. They were definitely having a good time, they were definitely friendly in a really quite human way, and very playful, all three of them. So there is that aspect in oneself which needs perhaps to be able to express itself. You're not just a solemn, serious, purposeful, responsible human being. There's another side to you, you're playful, you're spontaneous, irresponsible, throwing responsibilities to the wind sometimes - kicking over the traces, kicking up your heels. (laughs). So that side of you also needs some scope for expression. Of course, you can go to extremes, of course you can become silly and frivolous but you have to take that risk because the other opposite risk is that you become ponderous and heavy and solemn and puritanical and over responsible which is if anything, even worse. (laughs) So if you feel a bit 'catty' sometimes well never mind (laughs) or a bit kittenish (laughs) as the case may be, well never mind, gambol around like a little kitten.

Voice: I've even noticed it with people playing frisbee on the lawn out there.

S: Yes, yes. So it also suggests a playful sort of attitude towards your spiritual life itself, Do you see what I mean? It's not that you don't take it seriously, you take it very seriously but that is not incompatible with a sort of playful energy. ~ot, ~don't want a Calvinistic solemnity and seriousness in your Buddhist Spiritual life.

Voice: Would that also tie up with a sense of humour? I often think that people just don't seem to have enough sense of humour, they don't seem to see the funny side.

S: Well, perhaps they don't (chuckles) I think it ties up more with a sense of fun rather than a sense of humour if you see what I mean. I mean I'm not saying anything against sense of humour but think it's more of fun. Humour in a way is more intellectual, fun is as it were closer to energy, spontaneous energy, free energy.

Anne MeM: I feel a bit like that at the moment towards the businesses in the Friends. I think in some ways it's very very serious actually but in other ways it's really a gas.

S: Yes, you shouldn't be slogging away, it should be fun, I think for many people it is fun. Jolly well should be! (laughs).

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Side 2 Tape 1 Day?

S: There's a poem by D.H. Lawrence, he says something like 'Work if you don't enjoy it, don't do it!' You should enjoy it like an absorbing game. Something like that, Devamitra will give you the correct quotation. (laughs). So, "In order to complete his work he has to attend to it like an elephant entering a lake when struck by the mid-ay heat". Enjoy it, just plunge into it with the same sort of abandon, with the same sort of joie- de-vivre.

Paula: (indistinct few words) don't be childish and yet from children (indistinct) might be a bit (indistinct) When my children are doing something that they are really enjoying they're doing it well too,

S: Well, one might even go to the oth~cextreme and say well, be childish (laughs) - because you are childish, a greater part of you is childish so d~~~hy not in a way be childish, bring it out into the open. Of course you are not completely mature, not really, not emotionally, not psychologically, so why not be frank about it, act a bit childish sometimes if that's the way you are, have it out in the open.

Lois: I mean it doesn't mean being infantile does it?

S: Well (laughs) well, some people have an infantile streak. If you're infanti~e, well be a bit infantile, at least when it seems a suitable occasion. Some people have to go back before they can go forward.

Anoma: That happened at Amaravati. I remember a phase when people were feeling four or

S: Yes indeed, right, one has seen people. I remember seeing people go through this sort of thing in the community. I mean

the community that I was in at St. James' Lane. It was very interesting to see people literally regressing and going forward again and being al most infants again. I mean that's rather different, that's rather exceptional, but one can have flashes of it, Alright, let's go on to 'C'.

Text (C) 'It is unshakable when unmoved by interpretations, conflicting emotions and misery'.

There's a note here: 5 is sanskrit vikalpa. Vikalpa is more like, Guenther says inter-pretations. It's more like faults, reservations and even doubts. Because sometimes your pure energy is just inhibited by too much thinking about what you are doing. Do you see what I mean? And conflicting emotions and misery.

Anne MeN: That's a bit like when we were saying about following things through, Sometimes if you stop to think about it you don't do it anymore.

S: Yes, the more you think about it the more doubts you start having and that slows you down. Having once made up one's mind one should go ahead in a sense without thinking. So one's effort to realise the good and wholesome should be unshakable, not moved by any subsequent reflections, or reservations or doubts. Go ahead despite any emotional difficulties you may have or even any suffering that you may encounter. It should be unshakable. Not moved by any outside influences, any outside forces,

Srimala: Is there anything more practical in a way to get oneself to be more spontaneous (laughs).

S: It goes back to what I said, that when one does have a feeling to do something well, allow oneself to do it, whenever practically possible. Not allow that hesitation to occur between feeling like doing something and actually getting around to doing it, With many people there is the tendency to hang back. They have the feeling but they sort of hesitate, they don't just go and do the thing so

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I think one has to accustom oneself to just getting up and doing something when you feel like it, First of all in connection with quite trivial matters. I mean for instance you might feel like having a cup of tea, for no rational reason, you say, alright and for no rational reason you put it off and think 'oh I'll have it in a minutes, in ten minutes time'. But if you feel like having it now, go and have it now. If you feel like making a phone call now; go and make it now. If you are in the habit of allowing this hesitation between feeling and putting the feeling into operation then you'll get into the sort of habit and do that even when it isn't necessary. Because if you feel like having a cup of tea, why shouldn't you have it now? But for no earthly reason you sort of, out of sheer habit postpone doing it. And then in fifteen minutes time you think 'Oh I felt like having a cup of tea so I'd better go and have one' (laughs). You see? And also I think this comes up very strongly in the sphere of human relations. Because, for instance, you may feel like talking to someone, you might just have the impulse to go and talk to them, but you check it for obvious social reasons, psychological conditionings. You might feel like giving someone a hug but then you think 'No, what would they think, what would people think' so you don't. Perhaps you never got around to it. Or perhaps you raise the question rather differently later on. You say, 'I had a sort of feeling, what do you think I felt? I felt like hugging you.' And someone says 'Oh yes did you' and you don't know really what to do. You don't know if that means you should go ahead and hug them or whether telling them about it is enough (laughs). But meanwhile the result is that you've had a feeling but you've not carried it through into practice. I think there is so much of that sort going on I think we have to accustom ourselves in quite trivial matters first, just to act upon our feelings and impulses. And very often the reasons

why we don't do that are quite ridiculous. Why, to go back to the cup of tea, alright, supposing you feel like having a cup of tea but instead of having it you look at the clock and say, 'Oh well, it's not time for tea yet' (laughs) and this is what happens. It's all a sort of mechanism preventing your feeling from being followed by the appropriate action.

Lois: But sometimes it's just an escape from whatever you're doing to go a~get a cup of tea. It's better that you discipline yourself, and say that I will do what I'm doing now for so long ....

S: Fair enough but you may also have to learn this. If you, you could adaP~ yourself ~Why am I being distracted, why do I want to be distracted?, Well, maybe you've had enough of that particular activity for the time being. And if it's a quite trivial sort of thing like going and having a cup of tea, well go a~have your cup of tea and then come back to your work.

Lois: In a way it sounds just one step away from behaving quite selfishly.

S: Well, I think you have to be selfish to begin with. If being selfish means being in touch with and acting upon your feelings I think you have to be selfish, I think it is so important to be in contact with you~wn feelings and act from your own feelings. That is as important as having skil~ul feelings and acting from skil~ful feelings. If you are not acting from your feelings at all usually then how can you act from your skill~ful feelings. The first thing you've got to do is to be in touch with your feelings and act from your feelings. I think it is so important to make this connection with ones' feelings. Otherwise the whole of one's spiritual life becomes a sort of willed implementation of just an abstract idea about things. You really can't make much progress that way. Sooner or l~ter you have to re-establish contact with your feelings however negative they may be, however unskillful, however gross they may be. You have to re-establish contact.

Otherwise in the long run there's no progress. You come to a dead stop. You slow down and then just stop. So even if it means indulging in a bit of distraction, a bit of foolishness or childishness well never mind - the thing is to get in contact with your feelings and accustom yourself to acting in accordance with those feelings and then you can think in terms of making the feelings more and more skil ful, or selecting amongst your feelings or refining them, Of course, this applies more to some people than others, there are a few people who are impulsive and acting on their feelings. Perhaps more women th~n men though, maybe that isn't true any longer but I think there's more danger of one acting without being in contact with ones feelings than otherwise. Anne McM: Reminds me, some time ago I was thinking about direct communi- cation and I talked to Devamitra about it. I was saying that quite often I didn't follow through my impulses to say something to someone because I didn't feel I had enough metta in a way towards that person and he saidj~On't worry about it. Follow it through and metta will come. If you don't follow it through there's never the channel,

S: I think there's some truth in that, yes.

Liz: Often if you don't follow things through you never really experience yourself positively. I feel that quite a lot of my confusion about myself is because I don't follow impulses and then I start feeling that I'm not, I just start feeling really bad about myself somewhere.

S: You feel sort of stifled. I think one experiences oneself more in action. You do not experience yourself when you are passive so much as you experience yourself when you are active. I don't exclude receptivity from action. I clearly distinguish between passivity and receptivity.

Marg: Sometimes its harder to do what you really want to do then to do what you think you should do.

S:I think it is, yes.

Marg: In a way that could develop strength - (indistinct few words)

S: It develops self-confidence, that's quite important. But it's not

very easy to strike that balance between doing what you want to do and doing what you ought to do. You can't simply do what you want to do, this is not possible, this is not skillful, it would not be skillful. On the other hand you shouldn't always just do what you ought to do. 'Ought to do' in a quite abstract sort of way. You have to establish a sort of connection between the want and the ought so that there is an area where the 'want' and the 'ought' overlap. That is the area on which one should concentrate. If you are just doing the Things that you ought to do without wanting to do any of them well, life can become very dull, very dreary and very bleak and very often you just give up. So the spiritual life shouldn't be like that so therefore I emphasise that at all costs you should enjoy the spiritual life, and then you can make real progress. Your positive feelings have to be involved.

S'devi' When you say 'ought' to do it is that what you've intellectually built up as being the idea of the skillful thing to do.

S: Yes and I'm assuming, say in this case, that it actually is skillful, yes you 'ought' to do it. But that has no value as it were, and you can't really implement it unless your feelings coincide with it at least to some extent. Unless you also genuinely want to do what you ought to do.

Anne McM: That's when vision can start to be transformation.

S: Yes indeed. If you have a glimpse of the vision, if your imagination is involved, well then you can want to do what you ought to do. It mustn't be a dry, abstract, intellectual sort of 'ought'.

S'devi: Sometimes what you think you ought to do, you may even have got the wrong end of the stick.

S' Yes, of course. (laughs) Yes, I assume that the 'ought' is a genuine 'ought'. But there are cases when it isn't. You could even be paradoxical and say sometimes you ought to do what you want to do.

S'devi: It might actually be what you need.

S: What you want to do might actually be what you ought to do. (laughs) What a relief it is when you discover that (laughs).

Sarah: I was thinking of the present moment, I was thinking I have quite an impulse to go and get a blanket or something to keep warm but I know I do not really feel like doing that (laughs) and I realised that what I really want to do is what I ought to do. I really feel like staying here and not missing anything (laughs).

S: Yes.

Sarah: So I got to the point where I can quite enjoy the inhibition the cold puts on me and that's what I really want to do (laughs).

S: Well sometimes one has a mixture, not to say conflict of impulses but as you've

indicated they do sort themselves out (laughter). And anyway shortly they'll be a nice hot cup of tea (laughs) and an opportunity to go and get your blanket (laughs).

S'devi: I've often wasted quite a lot of time trying to decide if something is going to be skillful or not because I've got conflicting emotions and part of me thinks it could be skillful.

S: Well, sometimes you can't work it out in theory you have to work it out in practise.

S'devi: Try and be as aware as possible.

S: Well no, to do the thing and find out then. Sometimes you can't know in advance, theoretically sometimes it isn't worth all the trouble. If you feel like going for a walk, then you say is it skillful, is it unskillful, should I go, should I not go, by the time you've sorted it out you could have had the walk (laughs) and come back.

Lois: It's crazy isn't it (laughs)

S: People do this sort of thing. Or you see someone and you feel like speaking, 'shall I speak, shall I not speak, no I don't think I will, but perhaps I should' by the time you've made up your mind they've gone away (laughter). Sometimes you have to act really quickly (laughs). But you can see yourself doing it sometimes. Maybe someone passing in the street you know and you wanted just to say something to them.

There's that sort of conflict 'shall I speak now or shall I leave it till later' and you know you've just losing the opportunity but at the

same time you can't make up your mind quick enough, one way or the other.

Hilary: (unclear) Someone taking a resolution to take a risk everyday (unclear).

S: Yes, I think I recommended this to someone~ Yes, it was some years ago. Perhaps it caught on a little bit. I suggested that they made a resolution to take a risk everyday. And they said it might not be possible, that life was such that it didn't provide enough risks so they asked me to suggest the sort of risks they could take. So I said you could take the risk of speaking to someone you didn't know.

Anoma: (unclear) resolution to take a risk every day and it turned out that that was the risk they had taken for the day, just telling

someone about (laughter)

Liz: Something I realised the other week, I was playing tennis with S'devi and I just realised how you have to act on impulses. It's no good just watching the ball (laughter).

S: Yes, right. Maybe some games are quite instructive in this sort of way. You've no time to think, you've got to act.

Liz: And I was so aware that part of me just wasn't there.

S: You can't say 'well just wait a minute (laughter) while I work it out'. Anyway, this is



what we try to do with life isn't it. We just ask life to stop while we work it all out (laughter) But there's no time, life passes on. This is where I think things like karate and maybe Jujitso, judo are quite helpful because they teach you just to act without thinking. In a way, in a sense it doesn't matter what you do, you just have to do it. You mustn't always stop and think.

Marg: Some activities you can't think intellectually about what you're actually doing. One time I can remember having a go at doing some wood turning and I was so in the flow of what I was doing and then I started thinking about what I was doing and all of a sudden it just

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went all wrong.

S: Yes.

Anne MeN: Pa\$mapani says you have to do somethings with the back of your brain (unclear words due to laughter) it was actually cutting vegetables with a big knife.

Lois: I find that also - playing a piece of music from memory. It's like the moment I try and think about it, it's gone, I just go blank.

S: Yes.

Sarah: You learn this sort of thing through several yoga exercises (unclear) where - to reach a balance or to feel the right pose you have to almost defocus, allow your eyes to go very soft, think in the back of your brain sort of thing, otherwise if you're trying balancing. I'm sure it's the same with gymnastics, you're lost - you're very stiff.

If you're dancing and you think (unclear).

S: Anyway, it's interesting that we've gone from c) back to b) again.

Perhaps it's significant heh? Anyway, perhaps we've said enough about

c) and can move on to d).

S'devi: Actually, could you just clarify what the conflicting emotions are?

S: Well, that's Gunther's special translation for ? Klesa - which literally means defilement, is any unskillful emotion - as we would say, any negative emotion - greed, hatred, envy, jealousy, conceit, these are all what he calls conflicting emotions.

Voice: Would doubt .

S: Yes doubt and indecision. Yes, these rob your virya of its energy, deflect or side-track its energy. So you should be able to develop your virya unmoved by these things.

Sarah: The state of embarrassment involves all sorts of different emotions at different

S: Embarrassment. Can you give me an example?

All

Sarah: You're frightened of what other people think, if you say something to them on impulse.

S: Do you think this is embarrassment? or is it more complex than that?

Paula: Isn't it a bit like taking a risk that doesn't come (?)

S: Yes (laughter) If you have an impulse to go up to someone and speak to them, and you do that and they say 'Oh I don't think I've met you before' (laughs) Well, you need not be embarrassed you can say 'Well no, I know we ha~t met before, I just felt like speaking to you' (laughter) I think you get embarrassed because of a lack of sufficient confidence to carry something through (murm rs of agreement).

Lois: I get embarrassed if somebody says something good to me. I don't know how to take it.

S' Well, we know what the reason for that is don't we? Poor self-image. There are lots of people like that. They find it very difficult to take a compliment, they can't believe that it~ true, they can't believe that it~ sincerely meant. Someone says 'Oh, you're looking very nice today' and you go a bit sort of embarrassed (laughter) and you don't really believe it or you can't accept it. You should be able to accept gracefully. Say 'Yes, thank you. I'm glad you noticed' (lots of laughs) But lots of people find it very difficult to accept praise, even if i~ very sincerely meant, or a compliment which is genuinely meant. I think usually this is because one has a poor self-image.

Voice: Does lack of trust come into that too.

S: Trust too. Or maybe, perhaps you are aware also sometimes, on some occ~--ions that the compliment is not sincerely meant. There's a double message - the words are words of pr~Lse but you don't feel that you're really being genuinely praised, so you don't know how to react. You can't react to the p~~se because you don't feel it's praise, but on the other hand you can't very well say 'Well look what a lot of non sense, you don't really feel like that.' So you're left if not a bit embarrassed a bit sort of tongue tied, you don't know quite what to say. You don't know which signals to respond to because you're getting

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contradictory signals. I mean there is quite a bit of that in social life, isn't there. Especially perhaps between the sexes, sort of meaningless compliments and all that sort of thing.

Paula' I seem to get quite a strong reaction if I'm being teased.

S' Mm. That's interesting.

Paula: And my children have this p~blem.

S: What is teasing?

Paula: I feel it coming up I feel different if I feel people are being playful, but if I feel they're really not taking me seriously.

S: I think teasing, I've studied this quite a bit because I've seen it quite a bit in some communities between some people. I think that teasing is quite often mildly sadistic. I don't think it is as friendly as it sometimes looks. And I think what one is reacting against when one does react is the mild sad'~"n in the teasing.

Faith: You certainly see that in schools amongst children.

S: Ah, yes, yes.

Liz: It seems to be more a laughing at rather than with.

S: Yes, yes. You can't in a way, you feel inhibit&3 - from resenting it because it is supposed to be playful or friendly or just in fun but on the other hand you feel the negativity underneath it. Again you are getting double signals. So I think teasing is something to be watched. I think men do it more than women actually, partly perhaps because they're more aggressive. I see quite a lot of it among men sometimes, a sort of jockula teasing, which is at bottom quite sadistic.

Voice: Isn't it a group thing too?

S: Yes, I don't think you do it if you do it when there are just two people together it's likely to be much more friendly and playful. But when there's a whole group and especially when four or five teasing one I think it can even be overtly sadistic sometimes. I certainly notice this a lot among men, but I believe that women don't do it so much, ~~-among themselves. I may be wrong but this is my

suspicion. Perhaps because they aren't so aggressive.

Liz' I certainly experienced a lot of it at school.

S' Among girls you mean.

Sarah: I think that's worse when several people get pulled into this sort of thing but I think that teasing where it starts, expresses a need of that person to have attention - trying to say something but it gets twisted.

S: I think it is very often disguised aggression. You ~on't dare to, you're afraid of being, you don't want to for one reason or another be openly aggressive so you disguise it with a sort of friendliness and playfulness, and it comes out as teasing or ragging. I think at bottom this sort of teasing is negative, quite strongly negative.

Sarah: Especially when people are just doing it for the sake of it.

S: Well they're doing it for the sake of the injury they inflict, for the sake of causing pain, it is meant to cause pain and you can't object to it because it's all supposed to be in a friendly spirit but actually it isn't.

Anne Mc: I find I come in for teasing quite a lot actually, and it usually feels quite affectionate

S: Well, that's different, yes, that's the playful kind of teasing.

Lois: There was a time recently when I felt like I was being teased a lot but then someone else said to me, well, "If we thought you couldn't take it, we wouldn't do it". It is actually quite an affectionate way of being with people.

S: I think one does need to distinguish between the friendly teasing and what I call the teasing which is basically sadistic. I think one also has to be careful and observe that the one can on occasions quite easily pass over into the other - especially in a group, say one or two people in the group may start teasing in a friendly way but someone else in the group can take it up and give it a quite negative sort of twist.

~It

Paula: I suppose if someone in the group was feeling something towards that person they could get their bit in do you mean?

S: Yes, right, that's true.

Lois: But I think if it's done in a playful friendly way it can be quite a means of communication.

S: Yes, yes, but I think that tends to take place either within a smaller group of people or between two people who maybe know each other very well, and it's well understood that it is a playful teasing, a friendly teasing.

Voice: I think it can be quite good to tease someone who is taking themselves too seriously.

Liz: Well, I don't know. If someone is particularly like I've noticed this recently, if someone says 'I'm feeling depressed today' and they are feeling depressed and everyone says 'Ah, never mind' and doesn't take them seriously it sort of blocks off that communication.

Voice: I wouldn't mean it in that sense, I mean just taking themselves and their activities too seriously. If they're being rigid and serious it's quite good to tease them out of it.

S: If they've got a sense of humour, you have to make quite sure of that first (laughter).

Voice: Sometimes they haven't.

S: Alright then, shall we go on to the next:

"Strenuousness which does not turn back means that, whatever

others think, we must not turn away by knowing how much we can be hurt, mocked or upset by others. This is clearly shown in The "PhsarDo . rje rgyal. mtsan. gyi mdo".

S: It's not very clear is it. 'Strenuousness which does not turn back' - that's clear. 'Means that whatever others think we must not turn away by knowing how much we can be hurt or upset by others. I suppose it means that the 'strenuousness which does not turn back' means that the strenuousness which is so sure of itself that it knows that it is not

going to turn back even if others hurt or mock or try to upset one. It seems to mean something like that though it isn't all together clear. Anne Mc: I don't find it particularly qualified by .... (inaud) (laughter)

S: Well, maybe the key is 'whatever others think' even if they disagree with our strenuousness and try to move us from it by hurting us, mocking us or upsetting us, it doesn't work. We can't be deflected by those. Well, you can understand people sometimes mocking you, 'Oh fancy spending all your time meditating and helping others. That's no good' - they can mock at your efforts.

Sarah: Is it like being centered?

S: Yes, it's very much like that. Yes. I think some people experience this when they go home and try to tell their parents what they're doing and what they're into. In some cases the parents may just mock at what you're doing, and not choose to take it seriously, try to undermine you in that sort of way.

Srimala: Does it tie up to with, yesterday we were talking about armour, putting on bits to protect the weak spots.

S: Yes, right. You are basically in such an emotionally positive mood that you can't be disturbed by people trying to hurt you or mocking at you or doing their best to upset you. So you continue with your efforts to realise the good and wholesome.

Liz: Again having contact with vision.

S: Yes indeed.

Anne Mc: Is it a bit like in ordination, when one has the private ordination, it's almost like it doesn't matter if nobody else

S: Yes, and not only that - it doesn't matter if everybody is opposed to you even, if everybody mocks at you, if everybody thinks you're being thoroughly foolish you don't care,, you've made up your mind, you're quite firm yourself, or quite firm in yourself. In some ways we have it very easy because now we've got so many Order Members around us, so many Mitras around us, so many Friends around us, we get lots of moral support. Supposing we were to live in a country where maybe Buddhism

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was prescribed or banned or prohibited and you could have contact with others only at great risk. You might be much less ready to declare yourself as a Buddhist.

Srimala: I was woken up the other morning in the middle of a dream where I was arguing with my mother. She was talking about Lokamitra, saying; what a shame it was he hadn't taken up some degree or whatever.~ And I was saying', he's doing the most worthwhile thing he could be doing.~ Something like when she talks to him she feels as though she's wasting her time just communicating - (laughter) and I was standing up saying what better thing is there to do!

S: Have you ever had these sort of arguments with your mother?

Srimala: Not like that no.

L But perhaps there is a little undercurrent to that effect. It's as though sometimes people refuse to take you seriously. I think

parents can sometimes be guilty of this, not realising that their children have actually grown up, perhaps have overtaken them, are perhaps even more mature than they are. One's parents are not necessarily more mature than one is oneself just because they are 25 - 35 years older.

Anoma: My mother always used to say 'You~ life seems so aimless'

(laughter).

Faith: I think a lot of parents have the idea that you're just going

through a phase, that will pass.

S: Yes, this is a way of devaluing what you're trying to do. 'Oh it's just a phase you'll get through it'.

Voice: You'll grow out of it.

S: Yes, you'll grow out of it.

Voice: Mine say 'I can see you're happier but I wish it wasn't because of Buddhism'  
(laughter).

S: Well, what does she think is the right way to be happy.

Voice: Married and children!

Sarah: I get told, 'Well, perhaps when you get a job then you'll start getting involved with people' (laughter)

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S: This word 'involved' seems quite a loaded word. (laughter) Norma. It's really interesting what happened with my father. He couldn't bear to think that Brian and I knew something about Buddhism and he didn't so he started arming himself with all these books about Buddhism so that he could argue with us about it, eventually he came to the realisation that it was something really valuable (laughter).

S: Is he coming along to the Centre now?

Norma: No, he's not actually but he's come at it from a negative point of view, he wanted to beat us and like now he's got a real respect for us.

S: Are you the only two?

Norma: Yes.

S: It hasn't been unknown for children to bring their parents into the movement. So this is the strenuousness which does not turn back. You're not induced to turn back even though people try to hurt you or mock you or do their best to upset you. This sometimes may happen.

Sanghadevi: You know when you~fe talked about the DaK~'ni and the Dharmapala - within the spiritual community we can communicate as Dakinis to 'Dakin~ but outside the spiritual community you have to use, you're Dharmapalas so you have to use St Yes, be more forceful.

S'devi: yes, and I've realised it's been quite painful, and I've tried, without thinking really, I've expressed things to friends outside the Movement and they've just not, it's as if it's abused somewhere. They can't be open to it so they just sort of mock it.

S: That's why I say that very often one has to take the offensive.

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The Jewel Ornament of Liberation

Chapter 15 The Perfection of Strenuousness

Day 7 Tape 2

S. It's really quite absurd. In a way it's quite disgusting. One might even use the fashionable modern words and say it's quite

obscene, you know, when people accuse Buddhism of being escapist, and Buddhists of being escapist, and meditation as being escapist. When their own life is one long escape from reality. So I think, very often one has to defend oneself by taking the offensive. And say, 'Well you know, look at your life' especially when they say that Buddhists are very selfish, as if everybody was a model of unselfishness except these wretched Buddhists (laughter). As though they were the only unselfish people in the world. But this is the sort of you know, accusation people make, 'Well Buddhism is escapist. It's very, you know, selfish. You don't think about other people.' As though they were thinking about nothing but other people. So I think one has to assume one's Dharmapala aspect and really challenge them. Not just be, you know, sort of apologetic about Buddhism and be trying to justify oneself. One must really, sort of, carry the fight into the enemy camp. And have a real clash, rather than, you know end up being all apologetic and trying to excuse oneself and justify oneself, and convince them of the value of what you're doing. You can't hope to do that but at least you can expose the senselessness of what they are doing.

(long pause)

Dusting, you know, the three-piece suite once a week. Is that an aim for a human being? Do you think that is a life with an aim? Is it worth doing? Presuming your mother does that sort

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S. of thing. She may be a different sort of mother. But there are lots of mothers who do spend their time when their children are grown up, doing just those sort of things. Well just return to the attack for a bit of a ding-dong battle with her. Don't let her get away with it. It might be easier said than done (laughter) with you mother.

Eve It gets more difficult with professional people like, people who have got into careers and things.

S. One would have thought it was easier in some ways (laughter) well you could sort of challenge the basis of their career. You know, they are not really in it out altruistic motives. If they are, for instance a doctor, say well, 'You are not really concerned with the health of other living beings. You don't have genuine feeling. You're just in it for the money. You know, you're just into it for secure professional life.' This is certainly how it is in India, for instance maybe a bit less so in this country. But not all that much less.

Sangha devi But in a way one shouldn't be afraid of making enemies.

S. In a way, yes. I think people will respect you more as a Buddhist if you really stand up to them in this sort of way. (pause) I mean let them be a bit afraid of crossing your path again (laughter) There's no harm in it at all. I mean it's really abominable this, sort of, contemptuous, dismissive mocking attitude that worldly people have towards those who are trying to develop. The sneering sort of attitude it is quite disgusting. And one shouldn't put up with it. One should be,

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S. you know, insist on being treated with respect as an individual. And one's opinions and way of life respected.

Liz I mean very weak. ? ?

and if you bark back then they do give more respect.

S. Yes. And when they make this ridiculous accusation of your having been brain-washed as though they haven't been brain-washed, you know, twenty times a day.

Sarah I think very often what people, other people's criticism is worth listening to from the point of view that they're expressing their own frustration .

S. Well one should expose that.

Sarah And very often can be upset, say, 'cause, are quite useful, because well I find my parents have got a certain amount of insight into me, which I haven't got and they might be not going my way but they're actually sincerely asking for, even though they've got funny ways of doing it, a kind of explanation of what my way is.

S. I think that's comparatively rare. I think usually people are just reacting. They just feel threatened. Or they are just so conditioned by their own particular way of life they just can't, don't want to imagine anything different. Or they just try to do you down. And expect, expect you to accept, sort of their valuation of your way of life.

Sarah And in order to express your difference you have to be quiet in a

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Sarah way.

S. Yes. I think the first thing you have to do is just to force them to respect you. Because, much of the time the way they talk to you, or the attitude they adopt, they are just virtually looking down on you. They are just dismissing you. They are just treating you as a fool. As a child. As a person who doesn't know his or her mind.

Sarah I think my parents are quite rare because I'm sure they do respect what I'm doing.

S. Well, one does occasionally have the understanding parents. I mean it isn't only parents. It's just as likely to be old friends, or people you just happened to meet. But, you know what I am saying is you shouldn't be apologetic. Don't put up with their sort of supercilious treatment. Just come back at them very strongly.

Paula I do find my self still reating to my mother. I feel sad really. She's so sort of, caught up in

S. Well if it's like that one has to do one's best to sort them out. if one possibly can. At least get them to respect your way of life, and get them to see you are not in such a mess as they are, thank heavens. One shouldn't be hesitant to say so. But say, 'Oh well I don't want to lead the sort of life you've led for the last forty years, look where it's got you? Say it quite bluntly sometimes.

Liz But you can't force people to respect you.

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S. Yes you can actually. (laughter). At least say look, you know, as I said, realising that they can't cross your path with impunity. They respect you when you stand up to them. People respect force. I'm not saying respect you as an individual. How can they if they've no understanding of individuality, but at least, respect you as a person who is able to stand up for themselves ? ? that they can't just walk over you. Then you won't be liable to pity them. (pause) I mean if your mother says with a shake of the head, 'Well its just a phase that you're going through, my dear' If you just turn on her and say, 'Well don't be so damn-well patronising'. I mean this is what you should say. Flare back at her. (laughter) Put her in her place, firmly.

Voice I think it is actually what I meant

S. Well this is what she's being. She's being patronising. She's treating you as a child. She's refusing to recognise you as an adult. Don't let her get away with it.

Anoma Once I remember having a scene with my mother, some years ago sort of, and I really sort of told her to stop, I think it was sort of emotional blackmail, I just told her she was to stop doing it and I wasn't going to put up with it any more and I was quite shocked while I was saying it and she was in tears, I mean, she was in quite a state, but actually since then there is something definitely changed, I mean, and I mean I don't think it's sort of

S. Yes, because by asserting yourself in that way you put yourself on the footing as equality. You refuse to be treated as a child

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S. any longer. You refuse to regard her as mother in that sort of way any longer. This is what you are saying, 'That we're two adults now so lets treat each other as adults. I'm not your little bonny baby any more.'

Hilary There is a question in my mind that article by Chintamani on ? I think he was talking about men S

relations with mothers. I was wondering if you felt if there was any basic difference between ? ?

S. I think between the son and mother there's a whole big erotic scene going on very often, which I think you don't get probably, I say this with some diffidence, between mother and daughter. Maybe you get something else. But I think, sometimes the relationship between the mother and the growing boy can be sort of, quite erotic in the most unhealthy and sort of, unacknowledged sort of way. Yes indeed. (laughter) I'll give you an example, this is a little bit off the record but, I'll give you an example. A very recent one. A few weeks ago the 'phone rang here at Padmaloka.

Anne Shall I turn it off?

S. No it's O.K. you can keep it on. (laughter) off the record but on the tape. (laughter). And I heard a voice, a female voice say, 'Hello darling'. So I thought, that's odd, I don't usually get (laughter) ? saying, 'hello darling' (laughter continues) So the voice replied, 'Oh Hello'

I didn't recognise the voice. Then I thought that maybe, you know, sometimes it happens the lines get crossed, maybe i~s in the village, so I sort of paused just to make sure before

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S. putting the phone down that in case it was for the community (laughter) But to cut a long story short I eventually

realised it was the mother of a community member ringing him up. I just heard a little bit of the exchange and as soon as I realised it was a community member and his mother I put the phone down. But it was really like his girl friend ringing him up. And I was really

surprised, I mean the way that the mother was speaking was, sort of, flirtatious and coquettish and you do get this between mother and son, I'm afraid quite often. So there is that complicating factor. There's something further something I think that the son has to disentangle himself from that the mother doesn't, that the daughter doesn't. But at the same time I do know that between mother and daughter there can be such a strong symbiotic relationship on the emotional level it's almost quite terrifying. That mother and daughter can get stuck together despite maybe the fact that the daughter

is married, or been married, there's such a strong symbiotic relationship which is very difficult to get away from.

Sarah What does symbiotic mean?

S. Well when they really are mutually parasitic of each other. When mother and daughter (laughter) ? ? sometimes you get mothers and daughters living together for decades. They can't sort of unglue themselves.

Liz I've noticed something else that's come in, well I've realised my relationship with my mother is competition. And I haven't quite realised that for a long time, that in a way I'd go home and I'd be, come and sort of impose my views on everything and in

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Liz a way win my father round and my mother would be left totally, totally on her own with sort of

S. Yes, well sometimes this sort of, somewhat erotic sort of thing starts between father and daughter. But I think it's not usually so, so strong as between mother and son. Just because the father, you know, hasn't had the same intimate relationship with the daughter as a baby that the mother, by the very virtue of the fact that she -- mother has had with the son.

Faith I think that one of the difficulties with parents and children is that somehow the parents just can never see the children as adults. They are always, somehow, in their minds, whatever age they are forty or something, they're still the child. There doesn't seem to come any time when they just see their children as adults.

S. Mm. I think it's partly because they're, to put the best possible construction on it, that they are just together all the time and don't see the change because it's so gradual therefore I think it's quite important for the child, the son or the daughter, to leave home, and not be with the parents especially mother for a year or two.

Faith It's very important that they do.

S. And then put the, and when they do see them again put the relationship on a completely new footing.

Sarah I feel as if there was time when the family was very healthy in society when, perhaps, there was a more of a formal initiation

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Sarah like, in the friends, in a way, there's certain things you can go through to give you a sort of in~tiation into life and that helps, but nowadays, ordinarily, people are stuck. They can't get out of the family - they go straight into one.

S. Yes, what usually would be called 'ri~eS of passage: The passage from one phase of life to another. One day you are definitely, well like, for instance, the Jewish boy has, his barmitzvah. Well he has announced that he is definitely an adult. He's an adult member of the Jewish community.

Sarah And the 21st used to be coming out but it was so formalised between aristocrat~ and (inaudible).

S. Well in India, of course, in the case of women, it's marriage.

Sarah The dowry

S. When you are married well then you are grown up.

Sarah They marry very .

S. They marry very young.

Sarah Seventeen

S. Seventeen! Thirteen or fourteen more likely in many cases.

Faith Aren't they still under the dominance of the mother?

S. Oh yes, oh yes. But then so is the husband under the dominance,

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S. so to speak, of his father and mother, and all the others. They don't think of adulthood as emancipated altogether from the control of the larger family group. It's your source of security still.

Anne It seems in a more psychological level though, if you're accepted in that way you~ adulthood is accepted. Then it seems to make things more clear cut, just in your own psychological framework.

(long pause)

S. Well, I do think, as I've said before that the question of relationships between parents and children is quite important. I don't I mean , I'm speaking also within the context of the Friends, I don't think you can just discard or cut off contact with your parents. I think you have to make a definite effort to sort things out because, at least from your side because if you have negative emotions towards your parents in as much as they do play a quite important part in your life, you will to some extent be held back. Even if you aren't able to establish a new mutual relationship with them at least you must get over your own negative feelings towards them. If you can establish a new positive relationship with~hem, so much the better.  
(pause)

But I don't think you can simply cut off your connection with difficult parents and just leave it at that. I don't think that's enough. At the very least you must develop from your side positive emotions towards them, whatever their attitude towards you may be.

Pause

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S. If you have negative emotions towards them you are still bound- you're still tied to them and that will hold you back. But if you've positive feelings towards them that will never hold you back, however they may feel about you and what you are at the present moment.

(pause)



I think it is worth an effort to be on positive, friendly terms with one's parents and for them to acknowledge you as a grown-up person~~~ mind of your own. (laughter - pause) If they're dead well all you can do is just sort out yourself and sort of wish them well.

San ha evi It struck me when we were talking about, in the Perfection

of Patience, about clearing up actions you've done and you are going to, sort of, be able to clear them up and that seems quite positive in terms of people dying, often people, their parents die, their husband dies or something, they're left with a feeling of regret that they have either said something or didn't do something, or didn't clear up something; it can be quite positive to actually realise they will be able to clear that up if not with them, with somebody else.

S. Well sometimes you can't, sort of, clear things up directly with your parents, either because it is not objectively possible or, you know, they may be dead, or too difficult, but you may enter into a sort of parental relationship with somebody older than yourself and, sort of, project onto them the sort of feelings that you, had towards your parents and work it out in that way. That sometimes happens.

Sarah In what way is that skilful?

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S. Mm.

Sarah In what way is that skilful?

S. Well, it's always skilful to work those sort of things out. Whether you do it with the

original person or with a sort of surrogate.

Sarah It means you'd have to kind of make it very open with yourself.

S. You may not realise, of course, at first you'd probably wouldn't realise what in fact you were doing. You know, you'd discover that in the process of working it out, whatever it was. I mean, we know that there sre people who have quite a thing about authority because, well this is usually connected with you know, their relationship with their parents. So if they get over, you know, this whole business of authority with somebody other than their parents well it can mean that a lot of difficulties with their parents also are resolved at the sametime.

(Pause)

I mean in the case of so many of the men within the movement, I can usually tell what sort of relationship that they have with their fathers, just from their attitude towards me. It's usually pretty obvious almost from the beginning.

Voice Do you find that with the women as well?

S. I must say that it doesn't seem nearly as noticeable. No it doesn't. It seems, as far as I know, much more likely that a

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S. man within a movement will see me as an authority figure. Much more likely that he will do that than that a woman within the movement will do it. I mean there's been quite a bit of, I wouldn't say not trouble, but quite a few obstacles of that sort you know, to be cleared with regard to the men order members and friends and mitras but it seems hardly to arise in the case of the women. I don't know why that should be, but it seems not. It could be partly because as I said men are more aggressive and competitive and can see that the father or the so called authority figure as someone, you know, in that sort of way threatening but women don't seem to experience things in that way nearly so much. They don't seem to be so competitive.

Sarah I was thinking it could be that the way I've experienced my father is that his attitude to the two girls in the family as opposed to the two boys is that, when we were young, he would play with us more than the boys. His attitude to girls was that was playing and with the boys he was more serious.

S. Well very often fathers are more indulgent towards daughters than they are towards sons. Especially as they grow older, perhaps. Girls can get away with more with father than boys can. So they have less fear, less fear of the father, than the boys might have.

Voice Little girls flirt too.

S. Little girls flirt too. Yes that's true. Well bigger girls flirt. (laughter). But it does seem as though the whole question of power is more important for men than for women, and therefore, I think, men are more prone to see the older, say more

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S. experienced men, in terms of power and therefore in terms of authority figures than are women.

Anne I think women see them more oppressive figures rather than direct competition figures actually.

S. Yes, yes.

Anne Which is slightly different but, may be worse. (laughter)

Liz It's because they've been too passive in the past.

S. Yes.

Hilary Perhaps it's got some r~lation to the ? as well.

S. Well that's a rather murky area (laughter) Alright let's go to 'e'.

Sarah ?el 'When it is indefatigable, a man who makes efforts does not have too high an opinion of himself.'

S. Well how is this? Why is this? I mean he doesn't have too high an opinion of himself because he always says 'Well, there's so much more to be done. I haven't done very much.'

And this keeps him indefatigable. He doesn't give up because he knows there is so much more to be acc~mplished. And because he knows that there is so much more to be accomplished he doesn't feel he's done very much and therefore he doesn't have too high an opinion of himself. It seems quite logical, doesn't it? Clearer than the last one.

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Sarah Not resting on your laurels.

S. Yes, not resting on your laurels. Not even thinking that they are laurels particularly. Or at least only very provisionally.

Sarah So developing confidence is something different from developing sort of self satisfaction.

S. Oh yes, indeed because the self satisfaction will be, sort of, complacency. (long pause)

Sarah What's the opposite of confidence.

San ha evi Doubt.

S. Self-doubt. Lack of confidence.

Sarah But confidence here is satisfaction.

S. Mm. Where?

Sarah Well I feel

San ha

evi Not feeling you've done enough.

Sarah Is the same as confidence really.

S. No really not feeling you've done enough is just lack of  
complacency - keeping up the indefatigable effort. (pause)

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S. LeCs go on to the third type.

Faith (iii) 'The third type, working for the benefit of others, is to strive for eleven virtues such as aiding those who are helpless.

S. Mm. This is fairly straight forward, isn't it.

San ha evi It doesn't mention the other ten. (laughter).

S. Well I think one can gather those, you know, from the general nature of the

Bodhisattva Ideal.

(Pause)

It's positive striving for the benefit of others. Doing what one can to help others (inaudible pause) I think one needs this as a sort of counter balance to thinking too exclusively and being too one sided in a way, in terms of one's own development. People can be a bit precious about this. 'Well what effect will it have on me?' 'How would it effect my development I mean there's something to be done, perhaps. There's someone who needs help. Instead of just spontaneously helping you think, 'Well what effect will it have on me?' 'Is this a good thing for r.~e to do?' 'Dffould it help me in my development?' Well this is giving too much emphasis, you know, to the subject as distinct from the object. As I was saying, I don't know if it was in this group or the other one, get the object introduced, see the other person forhis or for her own, as it

were intrinsic worth. The subject is not the only thing in the world, there's also the object. There s also the other

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S. person. So one can't think exclusively in terms of one's own development. One has to think in terms of what is good for others. But, personally also, if you do also think in terms of what is good for others, for their sake, not for the sake of it s contributing to your development then paradoxically it will contribute to your development. Mm? But it is as it were, a condition of its contributing to your development that you help them for their own sake and not forthe sake of your development.

(pause)

You can't for instance say, 'Well I think it would be a help to me if I was to do a bit of work for others, No, you must feel their need, as their need. Quite irrespective of, you know, the effect that helping them would have on you. This is a bit like the remark I overheard some years ago of a female friend say with regard to relationships, I heard her say one day, I don't know if she said it to me she said, ' I think it would be good for me to get into a relationship.' So ~hat does that mean? I mean she didn't even have anyone in particular in mind. (laughter) It's as though the other person is used entirely for you. Whereas the essence of a relationship that has any sort of positive meaning at all is that you are aware of another person. Another person is involved. Not just you. But it seems from what she said that when you think of helping others because helping others might help you. No it means you are ignoring them as others. You are not seeing them as others. You are not acknowledging them as others. Your attitude is sort of just solipsistic. You're just peeling your own subjective self. So you have to acknowledge others as others and help them because they need help. And that will in fact help you but you mustn't do it because it helps you.

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San ha evi I mean I find in, it's a difficulty, in these terms, in meditation

I start off feeling, well I need to put more effort into meditation in order that 1%, more effective with other people for their benefit, but then putting the effort into the meditation it's sort of, then can turn into I'm getting too hung up about getting somewhere, so it's me getting, getting somewhere. And then that seems to block getting anywhere. (laughter). It seems at first alright but then the balance tips and then it becomes almost, it's too important to get into Dhyanic states or whatever. Sort of losing sight of why you are doing it.

S. It has the original element of self-forgetfulness.

Pause

But I do sometimes get the feeling that people are, as I've said a bit precious about their personal development, inverted commas., that they need to be in more contact with people, more aware of people and respond much more to their needs, other people's needs, than they usually do and this would be good for them actually except that they mustn't do it just for that reason.

Pause But I think one finds as one practices the Metta Bhavana and starts directing it towards certain specific individuals, you may start off doing the Metta Bhavana because you want to develop positivity as part of your personal development but as you get those other people, those other beings into view and you know, you start genuinely feeling metta towards them, this is another sort of dimension comes into being. Do you see what I mean?

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S. And that is the genuine Metta. You know when you're not doing it just for your own sake, just so that you can develop greater emotional positivity. You really do develop Metta towards them because you care for them. It's for their, the Metta is for their sake not for your sake but it does you good too. Again there is a paradox. You can't do yourself good in this sort of way, unless you forget about doing yourself good, and are concerned with the well-being of the other person.

Pause

So the Metta isn't sort of a narcissistic, you know, giving yourself - a sort of massage to make you feel good. It isn't that. It's really caring about them. Genuinely wishing them well. Not because, you know, that will help you but because you wish them well. You attribute worth to them. You value them, you care for them. You can't do even Metta really just as an exercise in a very subjective personal psychological sort of sense.

Long pause

Alright, go on now to 'c'



Hilary 'We now turn to 'C' insatiable strenuousness. It means that we so strive for the good and wholesome until enlightenment is attained. Thus we read:

If one is unsatisfied with sensual desires

Which are like the teeth of a saw (cutting you to pieces) What can be said about the merits

Of happiness and peace, which result from strenuousness (giving you boundless bliss)?

S. Mm. Do you see the point of the comparison? It means you are not

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S. satisfied with any limited gain. Any limited attainment. You're insatiable. You're not going to be really satisfied until you reach Enlightenment itself.

Pause

I mean this is the nature of creativity, you know, it carries

you forward to fresh levels, to fresh heights of creativity.

You never want to stop anywhere. You always have to go on and

on, multiplying and multiplying.

Pause.

Liz It seems almost like evolution but in an absolute spiritual sense.

S. Yes. Yes. (long pause)

It suggests that, it's not~ust that you've got a certain quantity of strenuousness continuing all the time. It's as though you become more and more strenuous. It's an expanding strenuousness. There's a whole series of explosions of strenuousness. It's like a sort of nuclear chain reaction. This is what the spiral path is like. It's not that you, you know, an unchanging person, a fixed quantity of energy is just steadily moving, in a certain direction.

It's as though the quantity of energy itself is continually increasing. This is what is meant by creativity.

Pause It's not, I think I've got it right, it's not an arithmetical but a geometrical progression. Is that right? Yes. (laughter) Will someone explain?

Sangha devi Isn't arithmetical going from like, 2 to 4 to 6. Whereas

tA~ PS7

San ha evi Geometrically it's 2 to 4 to 8 to 16

S. 2 to 4 to 8 to 16 to 32. Yes right. Is that what is called exponential growth? (laughter) Because somebody did write once in Shabdha years ago, that the Order was growing exponentially. Perhaps he meant that, something like that anyway but it wasn't just

Anne It isn't linear. Its

S. Yes. Yes. (laughter) it's Vajra-like (laughter). There is such a thing, I believe, as an exponential curve.

Voices Yes.

S. I'll sort it all out when I have to edit it. (laughter) Get it right. You get the general idea. There's not only a movement forward there's an actual expansion at the same time. Alright onto to 'v' which is the same sort of formula as we had for patience.

Eve 'V' Strenuousness is increased by: (i) transcending and (ii) discriminating awareness born from wisdom and (iii) transmutation.

S. So what was meant by transcending? Do you remember? (Pause) What did you transcend, do you know, in the case of patience?

Voice Giving.

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S. No that was just in the case of giving. But you transcend the distinction between you know, you transcend the notions of your- self as being strenuous, in this case. The notion of a particular object towards which you strive and even the act of striving itself. You just become a sort of, pure spontaneous unself-conscious flow of energy. You're heading in a certain direction, in which you don't, sort of, think, discursively that that is the direction in which you're heading.

(pause)

And then 'discriminating awareness born from wisdom'

How does that work?

Anoma Your. its energy in pursuit of the good, you re not just, your energy is being used skilfully.

S. It is, transposing, you know, from what was said under Dana. It means that the object of your effort, your strenuousness is just to lead all living beings without distinction to Enlightenment.

Pause And transmutation. That whatever merits you gain from your strenuousness you dedicate those also to the cause of universal Enlightenment. In that way you increase you strenuousness. Long pause I mean your strenuousness increases, your Virya increases the

more you liberate it from fixed ideas. You know, the more you allow it to operate independently of any fixed framework of ideas of self and other, you know as so on and then (VI) would someone like to read that?

pS7

Voice The purification is to be supported by Sunyata and Compassion.

S. We talked about this in relation to patience, didn't we? We've got this sort of impersonal stream of energy, sort of, clarified by the wisdom and wisdom being really consisting of the realisation of Sunyata, and as it were warmed by compassion. So you have energy, you have will, you have understanding and you have emotion, in their highest forms.

Pause

Well, read VII and we'll have something quite practical to talk about. (laughter) Read the whole of VII.

Liz The result of strenuousness is (i) fulfilment and (ii) effectiveness in our situation in life.

(i) Fulfilment is unsurpassable enlightenment. As is stated in

'Byan.sa' (Bodhisattvabhumi):

A Bodhisattva must complete the perfection of strenuousness and

he will awaken to unsurpassable perfect enlightenment.

(ii) Effectiveness in our situation in life means obtaining supreme worldly happiness while still in Samsara. As is stated in the 'mDo.sde.rgyan' (Mahayana-sutralankara' XVI, 66) Through strenuousness one wins the pleasures of worldly life.

S. So what is the results of strenuousness, of Virya? Well first of all, obviously you gain enlightenment. That's pretty clear and

straight forward but (laughter) secondly 'effectiveness in our

situation in life' and that means 'obtaining supreme worldly happiness while still in Samsara

This links perhaps with what is usually called efficiency and this is the sort of thing I want to talk about. The practical

441 S. thing. Because there is a sort of miccha-ditthi, perhaps still lingering in some circles, was certainly very widespread in the early days of the Friends that the spiritual person was the inefficient person. That you showed how spiritual you were by being quite inefficient in the ordinary everyday affairs of life. Do you know the sort of attitude I mean? This used to be quite common, you know, when most of our friends and members had a sort of hippy background. But this makes it clear that this is certainly not the Mahayana point of view. As part of your Mahayana life, your spiritual life, your life as a Bodhisattva or would be Bodhisattva, you're cultivating Virya all the

time and that will not only help you to gain enlightenment, enable you to gain enlightenment, it'll make you more effective, more efficient in your ordinary worldly life as well. So, you know, the spiritual person should also be the more emotionally together, why should you not be more efficient than someone who is driven by neurotic greed, or competitiveness and so on. So efficiency of this sort, in this way, is a sign of, or compatible with relative spiritual maturity. If you're really cultivating Virya, in the Buddhist sense, you'll be more successful, more efficient, more effective in your everyday life.

San ha evi It seems to, inefficiency seems to link up with like forced spontaneity and ?

S. Sloth and Torpor. Very often and a sort of preciousness about ? a bit fragile. This is supposed to

indicate tremendous spirituality. You know, sensitivity, fragility and so on. Occasionally it can genuinely happen like that, but one must be a bit careful.

PS7

Anne It seems to have fit, from what you were saying the other day, with professionalism.

S. Yes, indeed.

Anne There's much more room in a way for professionalism.

S. Well just adequacy to the situation. Competence. When you do a thing, do it properly. It's as simple as that. If you're a together sort of person that's what you ought to do anyway. You'll enjoy doing it properly. (pause)

Lois Yes, I think attention to detail. One of the things that I have become most aware of is the way that my work has grown in the last few years. Because of more awareness you become, you can see things differently....

S. You can see in all sorts of areas how or whether people do pay attention to detail or not. I mean, for instance, suppose you go into a restaurant there are vases of flowers on the tables, well then you notice the flowers are all half dead. No one has bothered to change them. Someone has not been paying attention to detail. Well it tells you quite a lot about the whole set-up doesn't it? Or if there were stains on the table cloth, and that they haven't been washed and they should have been washed etc., etc.

Sarah I think doing things properly, even as far as paying attention to detail, I sort of see it very much context bound, such as dead flowers in a restaurant, I could have imagined its appropriate to have fresh flowers, but, say in a private room, I've noticed some

PS7

Sarah people purposefully keep dead flowers to remind them perhaps of...

S. Fair enough.

Sarah Or because some (Bhante interrupts) aesthetic

S. Well that is attention to detail. It is not that you are not attending to detail. It's not that you have just forgotten to change the flowers, or couldn't be bothered. You are keeping dead flowers there for a purpose. So this is attention to detail.

Sarah But in the idea of professional, making certain guide lines, for professionalism, people get sidetracked into saying something like paying attention to detail or I'm particularly thinking of graphics, for instance, they get, they associate professionalism with the actual look of something which has come out of the process of a commercial way of doing things, and you can't extrapolate it from the context for them for a whole

S. You mean a sort of glossy look.

Sarah Yes.

Voice I don't understand what you are saying.

S. I think what is important is that the product as though care, even love you know, has been bestowed upon it. For instance, a few issues ago a Mitrata arrived and I was really annoyed

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S. about it, because of the way in which it had been cut. This just indicated just carelessness and lack of attention. So I got at once on the 'phone to Naghabhodi and really sort of, well he wasn't personally responsible, but he was chairman of publications, and I told him off. He told somebody else off. Then there was an improvement. I got a letter from whoever actually was responsible saying it wouldn't happen again. But this is the sort of thing I mean, I mean it doesn't have to look glossy or anything like that', well you could see that someone just hadn't bothered, and that's the sort of impression we don't want to communicate. It S as though I wel~you don't care. You don't care about the impression you create. You don't care about what the reader thinks or how he feels. You don't care about the product. T.~;ell you don't have any love for it. And this is what I mean about professionalism or the professional approach maybe professionalism isn't a very happy word. It's the Buddhist approach. The Bodhisattva-like approach.

Anoma I think I can see what you're getting at. It's like in some professions there's certain sort of standards but they might not necessarily be as though somebody, sort of , cared. It's that that's what the standard is, and if you don't get that standard you can't compete on the market, sort of thing. I think that's, I mean not what really what we are trying to do.

S. No. Though, of course, we have got to compete on the market.

Anoma Yes, (laughter) I can see that, but if we're not doing it from the right motivation then we might as well be doing it the same as them.

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Anne I think that brings up a lot of questions about what fields we want to work in. What fields, because if you went to work in a field you have to be prepared to come up to acceptable commercial standards in that field.

Anoma But at the same time you've got to be doing it for the right reasons, otherwise you might as well be them.



S. So you also decide whether the field is one into which you can enter with the right reasons. I mean could you run a disco with the right reasons? Would you open a pub, for the right reasons? I mean, those are extreme examples.

Sarah I think that once you have decided that then you can be inventive and perhaps change the style of doing things. And I suppose that's a revolution

S. Well there's nothing quite like Mitrata on the market, I hope.

Sarah You evolve a new way of doing it.

S. Well I mean, I mean, what I'm getting at is that in the name of spirituality one shouldn't be able to get away with sloppy work.

San ha evi I think the same goes for in communities. It always seems to be a bug bear - communal areas being cared for. It seems to require - take quite a lot of time before people start being interested in doing it.

PS7

S. I think they've solved that in the Padmaloka Community by having Andy in charge of that. And he just gives people work to do. That's accepted, that, you know, he sees or makes a list of all the things that are to be done and he just assigns different areas to different people. People just do it. He just puts a notice up once a week. A list up once a week. That's that. In a way that itself is a bit of a compromise because maybe people should see what needs to be done and just do it but then everybody is very busy and if the list doesn't go up well things tend not to be done.

Sarah In our community we have whims or we develop a passion for a particular area. Sometimes it gets really neglected but it seems to work on impulse. (laughter)

S. Fair enough. So long as there s enough impulses. (laughter)

Paula Actually we've got a list in the shop which everybody adds to communally and (laughter) ?

Voice People actually do do the work?

Paula It works actually. I mean as they've done it, it gets crossed off the list.

S. Yes, it's the same like that with shopping. You have a sort of shopping list up on the board and if people are aware that something has run out well you just put the reminder up there and whoever does the shopping includes that item on his list. Pause.

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S. But if we are going to compete in the open market well we have to compete. That means to say we have to be up to commercial standards. Once we've decided to enter into that particular field.

Anne In a way I think because our motivation is so different, that's why we could be an

incredible success in certain fields.

S. Yes, right.

Anne You know because we, just because we have got a really strong spiritual direction.

S. Well, just, I sometimes said if we are doing something as an expression of our commitment which is very important to us, we~ould be able to do it much better than somebody does it who is doing it just for money. But very often it isn't like that. Which means that your commitment is not as strong as their desire for money.

Anoma Well it seems to me that is the area that one s got to attack rather than sometimes I can feel when we talk about professionalism if I follow it back to what, you know what we're talking about then I can agree wholeheartedly but somehow when I just hear that I can maybe it's because I have worked outside in the world for quite a number of years that I, something clicks the wrong way. ?

S. Though one doesn't want to do something better merely so that one can compete better and merely so that one can make more money.

¾->?) PS7

S. Mm. One wants to do it better because, you know, well one wants to well in as much as one has a commitment, an expression of a commitment should be strong.

(pause)

To somebody who meditates you might as well meditate but there has ~een around, quite a lot this idea if you're inefficient and unpractical you know, in a worldly sense it shows how sort of other worldly, or how spiritual you are because you just can't function in this world, you belong to another world like a sort of visitor, some sort of angel. You have strayed. You just don't know what it's all about. (laughter) You're so terribly spiritual.

Eve But there just, the impression that Rajneesh gives me, that they, like I feel that there are quite a few sort of spiritual

S. Of course you can have, there is the odd very occasional person who is genuinely other worldly, and just doesn't know his or her way around. But it's very rare I can assure you. Pause.

Anoma I think people are going to think, 'ah it must be me laughter.

S. Well if you think it might be you ~ust come and ask me, (laughter) We'll soon find out. (laughter) Because the genuinely spiritual person, they don't care about food, you know, they can just sit in a room and meditate for days. (laughter) They don't care about clothes or money. They are indifferent to those things - the genuinely spiritual person.

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Sarah Of course we all have an element of that. (laughter)

S. We've even got the element of Buddhahood, I mean not to speak of the angelic. (laughter)

Anne I remember the phrase the New Society got quite a sort of bashing from some people because it was a bit too sort of solidly rooted in this world somehow I think. ? Oh there were other reasons for it getting a bit ? I think that was the main one. It was a bit, very hard

and sort of practical in a way.

S. Mm. Good (laughter) Where did they want a New Society? Up in the clouds.

Anne Sukhavati.

S. Well there is that New Society too. But for the present we are down here and if we're to have a New Society at all, you know, we have to have it here.

Anne Well it's trying to be spiritual without being human isn't it?

S. Yes. Indeed.

Anoma I think it was. Just, I know I didn't like the term, it was the phrase that I didn't like. I mean once I had connected with what it actually meant then I could accept the phrase.

S. After all there is a magazine call the New Society. You won't

PS7

S. read anything about Bodhisattvas in that. Well we'll just have to inject our own meaning into those terms.

Pause.

Anoma I suppose if we went around talking about the Pure Land or the Buddha Realms or something we wouldn't really, people outside of - wouldn't know what it meant anyway.

S. Yes, exactly. It would just sound bizarre. (Pause) Anyway any more general points about anything we have done this week. (laughter) Patience, Strenuousness, Ksanti, Virya. You should be able to go back to your respective centres, communities and co-ops and work in a really balanced sort of way.

Anne You haven't really said much about the relationship between them.

S. I dealt with that in the lecture, in the Bodhisattva series, haven't I? I think one can see the way in which they do balance each other out. One could speak of one as feminine and the other as masculine but in a sense they transcend that sort of distinction. Though, even though, there is a distinction between them there seems to be a distinction of a different kind. One has to put the feminine and masculine very much within inverted commas, you know, because those terms are not applicable at this sort of thing.

Pause.

You can really feel how they are, sort of, two wings lifting the Bodhisattva up. You know, the wing of patience and the wing of strenuousness. You can't fly unless your wings balance. If

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S. one is big and top heavy, then well, you can't fly. You need both equally well-developed, equally strong.

Anoma It's not quite the same, though I remember a dream I had once, that I was on

roller skates and I think I was trying to get to that puja on time (laughter) and one side of the one wheel on each thing had worn right down so I was (laughter)

S. So you were going round and round in circles.

Anoma No, I was just, sort of, not going along, I think. I'd ground to a halt.

Lois Reminds me of Mr. Pie.

S. Ah right, yes, yes, (laughter) I think you'd better explain (laughter)

Lois It's a story by Mervyn Peake. But it was more of a push-me pull-you effect because he started, he was so good that he started to grow wings and the only way he ~~iould get them, he had increasing difficulty withthem, was to, he started to do rather naughty things. He started to grow- horns (Laughter)

S. But his wings were out of balance with his horns rather than with each other. It's a different sort of balance.

-Lois Yes.

S. I mean you don't grow horns when you're, sort of, out of touch with

PSY

S. your basic energies. You need not only wings but horns it seems. Well Christians will really quite approve o~that, not to speak of a tail. (laughter) From a Buddhist point of view we can see the relevance of horns too, can't we? Not enough just to be equipped with wings. We need these rather attractive horns as well. (laughter)

Lois I recommended that book to someone to read and they said they found it very Christian. But it didn't effect me like that at all actually.

S. Well the symbolism of wings and horns does seem a bit Christian doesn't it?

Lois I suppose so. But the essence of the story. It had tremendous

S. It is dangerous to be too good.

Lois But he had tremendous potential to do good as well. A good character.

S. Well that was George Bernard Shaw's famous remark on the death of Mahatma Gandhi., who was of course, assassinated, in case you have forgotten. George Bernard Shaw remarked that it only went to show that it was dangerous to be too good. Don't take this too literally. (laughter). I think also perhaps, it is good to try and forget the English translations sometimes and think in terms of Ksanti and Virya. Forget about energy and strenuousness and patience and all the rest of it but, just try to think in terms of Ksanti and Virya. Get away from the



PSY

S. connotations of those English words.

San ha evi Could you say a little bit about Grace Waves. Because sometimes

it is quite hard to explain to somebody the idea of Bodhisattvas and in a sense they are there and in a sense they are not there.

S. I think it is very difficult to explain to people about dis-carnate Bodhisattvas so to speak. One can perhaps speak in terms of th&scarchetypes and of those archetypes being contained not just within one s ordinary personal consciousness on transcending that, you know, going into some other deeper level. But it'll be quite difficult, I think, to put this across to a lot of people. One doesn't want to give the impression that the Bodhisattvas are sort of gods or goddesses out there. Perhaps it's better or safer to begin with just to speak in terms of archetypes. Or not even get onto Bodhisattvas at all. One needs to build up a whole framework of communication first.

Sangha devi But when people do pujas and start naturally saying, you know

start finding out about them. Some of them seem to take to it - they don't really think about it - they just do it. And other people

S. Well one can explain the Bodhisattvas quite correctly as personifying different aspects of the Enlightenment experience. And in that way they are within you potentially just as the Enlightenment experience itself is within you potentially.

So when you repeat the mantras you are sort of calling up your own inner forces and trying to get in touch with them. (pause)

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S. You know, when you repeat the Mantra of Manjughosha you are invoking your own innate undeveloped wisdom. And when you repeat the mantra of Avalokitesvara you're invoking, you are calling upon, you are calling out, you are trying to get in touch with your own innate compassion. You know, positive emotion. I think one has to explain in some such terms. pause.

And you know, the Grace Waves, you know in that sort of way, in that sort of context are the response you have set up within yourself from those particular dormant aspects of your personality by what you do on the level of the conscious mind, by repeating those mantras. A sort of response as it were from deep down in you.

pause

I think you have to manage to avoid speaking in terms of an objective entity conveying or bestowing these Grace Waves upon you. This is obviously much too theistic. But in more general terms one can speak of everything especially every person, every individual influencing others. You know, everybody is sending out waves of one sort or another. Sometimes grace waves, sometimes waves of a very different nature. But everybody is sending out waves. Everybody is sending out their vibes, so to speak (laughter) You can feel it. (pause)

Voice Does it have anything to do with subtle bodies?

S. One could say that because physically you're sending out vibes. Because tiny particles of your body, you know, are flying in all

directions. Those are responsible more for the sort of moods

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S. you can pick up.

pause

I mean we know that just on the ordinary physical sense from your skin all the time, tiny particles are being rubbed off. Millions ~cattering in the atmosphere. So it's just like that with your subtle body. Tiny particles are being gradually rubbed off radiated out, scattered. And are picked up on by others. Animals can pick up on them. - you know, sometimes more acutely than human beings can pick up emotions. Fear.

Faith Why is this, in fact? Say spiritual development of beings.

S. Well this isn't a spiritual level it's a sort of subtle physical and it does seem that primitive man had this faculty, that's been lost in modern living. You'd find, for instance, the Aborigines in Australia have these sort of faculties, still. But we've lost them.

Liz Do you think we've actually lost them or lost the ability to recognise them?

S. I think in many cases we've actually lost them. Though we can in some cases develop them again. Some people do seem to have them quite naturally. But I spoke a bit about this in one of the Vimala-irti lectures about, you know, the sense of smell. I mean dogs have such a highly developed sense of smell. But so do many primitive people. But we don't. One smell is much like another to us. But whereas a dog when he just puts his nose out of doors, he must register thousands of different smells

pouring in from all directions. He gets very excited. But they mean different things to him. They convey all sorts of

PS7

S. messages.

(pause)

Paula It does seem if one needs to develop a particular like if you're getting deaf

S. Yes, if you're stranded in the jungle and your survival depended upon it, on your ability to distinguish the smell of different plants, you'd soon develop it I think. Or those

who did develop it would survive and those who didn't wouldn't.

Lois What about more subtle senses like clairaudience or clairvoyance.

S. I think there is a greater incidence of such experiences than people very often think. Very often people dismiss these theories. You know, in a Christian environment they are often associated with the devil or something occult or evil so people tend, you know, to not dwell upon them, or even try to forget them. Think it's something a bit uncanny. But there used to be, you know, many experiences, apparently of the second sight in the Highlands. The second sight being a sort of clair-audience.

Anne I think you do still find it more in those kind of areas.

S. Mm., Mm., Or where people are more isolated. Where these sort of senses, perhaps, have more scope for their development. pause.

Sarah I think there are energies in nature, in trees and things like

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Sarah that which if you are alone you soon begin to sense them, and they teach you quite a lot.

S. Well they mean something so to speak. I mean you can learn the meaning.  
pause.

Liz With our - like colour auras... I have heard that you omit different colours when you are feeling different things. Is that something, some people. ... Would you say that was a natural thing?

S. Well a lot of people seem to pick up on this but they attribute different colours to different emotions so I think, you know, the colours are used, as it were, symbolically and the symbolism differs from culture to culture. For instance, in some cultures green means love. And in others green means jealousy.

In others green means life. So I don't think that you literally see a colour. You get a sort of impression and you describe it in terms of colour according to what the colour means in your culture. If you see a person, sort of, if you see a person, sort of, or you feel a person, or pick up on a person radiating say jealousy, you can ~ealousy, you know, jealousy in your culture is associated with green so you say, you know, or you might even see them sending out a green aura. Pause

And you can often sense you know, or feel, you know, how somebody else is feeling, if you pick up on it. You're sensitive to their aura, you could say and you may, you know, try to communicate what you pick up in terms of colours. But I don't

PS7

S. I think that it is literally that you see that actual colour. Well, yes, you might actually see it but in a sense you wouldn't be seeing it. They wouldn't be sending out that colour. You'd be seeing it. That is to say, you'd be experiencing what they were experiencing on your terms, as it were.

And there's a heavy element of interpretation in what we 'experience' all the time. It's as though the interpretation begins as soon as the experience begins. So your seeing of green, say, is interpretation to the extent that it is a seeing of green. It is interpretation rather than experience. Especially in view of the significance that you attach to that particular colour.

Sangha devi You see like in children's paintings, they often, the colours

they use aren't well the colours, like they paint trees with red tops and blue trunks or something and I think it's, quite often they get told, 'well you shouldn't, that isn't how a tree is' but it seems it could be quite damaging because it is probably like their emotional response to the tree or something.

S. Yes, right.

Eve It probably is the colour crayon they picked up. (laughter)

Sarah I think seeing is quite an interesting word because reading especially Carlos Castaneda where they talk about 'seeing' and the author keeps saying he can see things and the Indian is trying to teach him that, in fact, he's not seeing and I think this means a lot to me because in Buddhism we are kind of

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Sarah learning to go to the depths of seeing and children perhaps are in contact with seeing things in their way with just, in which communicates to you if you see it at, you know, a more non-conceptual, you are just receptive to something rather than think you are seeing something like Castaneda did.

S. Well very often we don't actually see but we think that we see. In other words there is more interpretation than experience.

Sarah Intellectual interpretation. It's what I got from that book was what predominates in our culture.

S. Yes. You see what you expect to see, very often. I mean this comes out in court cases, very often, when witnesses are cross-examined.

pause

Liz Sort of, I remember reading a book like that, one of his books and something that stuck with me from it was if you see a stick and you think it's an animal, you don't have to go up and find out it's a stick, you could, something about, in a way allowing your imagination to, sort of, see it as ~n ~nimal because it is an animal if you see it as an animal. I mean I know logically that's not right but I've often seen things in the grass or in the dark and allowed my imagination to go...

S. To go a bit hay-wire

Liz Yes. (laughter)

PS7

Voice ? Find out it's a stick.

Liz Well it usually does but then it becomes quite a disappointment because you can see it's a stick.

S. It's much more fun to see it as a snake.

(laughter)

Sarah It's like in a dream. You don't go round when you're in a dream and you're working through things you don't go round pinching people, and pinching yourself because your dream will, sort of disappear. You allow the dream to go on. Getting through. (Pause)

S. Well that's about it, I think.

Voices Thank you Bliante.

S. I hope you fly back to your centres imprinted with your wings Don't forget the tail.  
(laughter)

San ha evi hat's the tail meant to symbolise?

S. The tail is the balance. Wisdom. No, I suppose Wisdom would be the head not the balance.

Voices Mindfulness.

S. Mm. Mindfulness. Yes. Mindfulness. Except that mindfulness isn't one of the Paramitas. So one could say, perhaps,

461 S. meditation. Dhyana is the tail.

Anne Where would Dana come in?

S. Mm

Anne Where would Dana come in?



S. Dana is the feathers you scatter from your beautiful wings (laughter) or the little olive branch you bear in your beak (laughter) or the jewel that you bear in your beak.