

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 [Mitrās](#). 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

The Dhammapada. Chapters 14 & 20
Vinehall 1981

verse:		seminar page;
	Introduction to seminar	1
	Ch.14: Buddhavaga. The Enlightened One.	
179	The complete conquest of craving	1-7
	The function of dhyana in developing insight	3-7
	'Vipassana' teachings	
	Samadhi and cetovimutti	6-7
	"whose sphere is endless"; "pathless"	7
	Realization of stream entry	8
180		11-17
	Craving and desire and passion	
181		17-24
	sati and recollection	20-
182	The difficulties of attaining to the human state	24-
	Making contact with the Dharma	28-30
	The difference between Buddhas and Arhants	31-35
183	Sasana -Ordinance and governance	36-
	Communication with beings with different form	39-
184	Tapas -psychic heat and asceticism	41-
	Forbearance	43-
	The Buddha's sense of humour	44-47
	Practising ksanti	48-50
	"Nirvana is supreme " a sense of priorities	50-58
	Using culture as a means to an end	51-58
	The recluse	59-
	Bhikkhus functioning in secular life and	61-
	legitimate use of power with children, games,	
	being a judge and taking life	77
	Educating children	77-79
	Brahmanas, Sramanas -Sravakas	80-82
185	Pratimoksa -Sanvaro -Restraint, guarding the gates	82-
	Observing the rules	90-
	"To be moderate in eating"	95-100
	Living on the edge, in seclusion	100-103
	Being yoked to higher states	103
	Bhante chants verses 183-185	104
	Limited pleasures and enjoyment	105-111
	Alienation	109-111
	Destruction of craving	111
	Pain	112
	Alienation from feelings	114
	Experiencing the Truth of Suffering	116
	Dhyanic experience of non-Buddhists	117
	Necessity of insight to break conditioning	118
188	Nature-worship, animism	121-125
	Distinction between refuge and worship -	
	Unenlightened teachers	124-132

	Fear, negative and positive	125-126
	"Duality" of Conditioned and Unconditioned	128
	Unenlightened teachers	128
190	Difference between Conditioned and Unconditioned	
	refuge Bhikkhus and going for refuge	135-137
	Pseudo-psychoanalytical jargon	138
	'false' hierarchy	139
	Newcomers and first impressions	142-145
	Sutamaypanna and chintamayapanna and insight	145
	The Four Noble Truths and contemplation	146-149
	Stream entry and the arising of the Bodhicitta	149-151
	The cause of suffering -Karma and rebirth	151-
	The Buddha's current existence	152-155
	Compatibility of different traditions, answering questions	156-158
	Transcending suffering -Dukkha nirodha and Nirvana	159-161
	Noble Eightfold Path and correlation with Noble Truths	161-163
	Aryan and Aryan Truths	163
	Suffering and the Truth of suffering	164
	Mass conversion and degrees of going for refuge	165-168
193	Individuality	170-178
	Happiness from hearing Dhamma	171
	Happiness from unity of Sangha	172
	Schism -Ceylonese Sanghabedha	173-
	The importance of mitras belonging to whole movement	175-
195		178
196	Transcendental element of Faith/worship	178
	Visualization, going for refuge	
	Merit-making	180
	"Those worthy of reverence"-commitment and hierarchy	183-193

Ch.20 Maggavagga

273	How is Buddhism the best religion? The Archetypal Path to enlightenment	194-198
	Proving the existence of God	197
	Buddhism can only show the way	198-200
	The Man of Vision -perfectionism	202-205
274	The Archetypal Path	205-
	False claims of similarity between Buddhism and other religions	206-210
	Bewildering Mara	211
	Insight and Stream entry	211-
	meditating	212
	Regular steps	214
	Intelligence and Reason	214

275	Talking from a basis of experience	219-223
	Neurosis	220
	The misuse of language	223-
276	Indulging in negativity	231
277	The nature of insight-transience	237-241
	-dukkha, insubstantiality	241
	Absolutizing Nirvana	244-247
281	Guarding speech	281
	White lies -in business, death	286-
	-right to information	292-294
	Restraining one's thoughts	295-299
	Walter Mitty complex and fantasy	296-299
	Ethical activity in business	300-306
	Rule of Law and Order	306-312
	FWBO and demonstrations	308-312
282	Wisdom and knowledge	312-318
	Irregular steps	313
	giving talks and lamas giving talks	317
	Reincarnate Bodhisattvas	321