

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 VENERABLE SANGHARAKSHITA IN SEMINAR
PRECEPTS OF THE GURUS: III
Sections VI-IX (1979)**

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Section VI

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4	Concluding that Insight has been attained - Images of purity and the rainbow as symbols of reality
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6	Clear consciousness on waking up in the morning
7	Phenomena as mental objects The Will/impulsion
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10	"The ten things that one must know"
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13	Separating the personal from the impersonal in one's experience
13/14	The purity of perception, ... alienated awareness of the unreal, ... disillusion
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15	Alienated awareness and dissipated awareness
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26	Next precept (4) - body and speech are transitory
27	Care with the usage of the words 'impermanent' and 'transient'
28	On to the next precept (5). Wrongly viewing karma as a closed system from which there is no escape. Weighty karmas. karmas which lose their force.
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51/53	The difficulty of combining happiness/joy and mindfulness (especially when with other people)
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60	Art and "aesthetic parasites"
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66	Mrs Rhys Davids and her misfortune leading her in a certain direction
67	Can an Enlightened being suffer misfortune?
68	Hakuin and the unmarried woman's child ... reputation The next two precepts (9 & 10)
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71	Does an Enlightened being have an effect after Parinirvana?
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95	The insularity of the English, Nationalities keeping together even when abroad
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Please note that the text from which this seminar is taken can be found in "Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines" edited by W.Y. Evans-Wentz in the section entitled "Precepts of the Gurus" (published by Oxford University Press.)

and

also in "A Buddhist Bible" by Dwight Goddard in the section entitled "The Supreme Path, The Rosary of Precious Gems" (published by Beacon Press, Boston, USA.)