

Osel: Hello everybody

Jenny (Land of Joy Director): Can I just quickly welcome you all, I think this is the most we have ever had in the gompa in here. I'm amazed at how many people we can get in! Then to welcome especially Osel for his second time here. We are delighted to have you back and also Sara and Jacki who are here for the first, It's lovely to see you.

I think it's going to be quite an exciting afternoon because we gave Osel four topics to choose from and he's taken on the challenge of talking about all of them, so we will be here for a good two hours if not three hours. So thank you Osel.

Osel: Can I have the topics by the way?

People discuss getting the topics for Osel...

Osel: I kind of remember them but just having them is easier. Okay, thank you so much for coming. It's really wonderful to see so many beautiful, radiant faces. It's wonderful, thank you.

So I thought also we could have a couple more subjects that maybe you can suggest. Not too many more but just a couple to get an idea of what we can talk about today. So any suggestions? Anything you would like me to talk about?

Student: I'm interested how in Buddhist philosophy we often talk about Buddha nature and how the path is about developing this but how can we talk about it in a more secular way to people who may not want to label themselves as Buddhist.

Osel: Okay what else?

Student: Inner guru

Osel: I think we have that, something different, something else?

Student: How to trust is you're not going crazy or not.

Osel: We are all crazy! Look at the world, look at our lifestyle. You compare it to the animals, I think we are totally crazy. I'm joking. So what is the question? Are we crazy?

Student: We're crazy now but when you go to the other side a bit more you might feel like you're going crazy because we don't think like other people.

Osel: I think we will need to define crazy.

Student: Okay, let's define crazy and I can be that

Osel: Okay, I like that, the definition of crazy. From inside or from outside?

Osel: Okay, what else?

Student: How to make our meditation alive and not something when you fall asleep.

Osel: Alive meditation. More suggestions or are we good?

Student: Our mindset and thoughts on climate change

Osel: We talked about that in Jamyang (London) so it is good actually, yes, climate change. One or two more if you like.

Student: Staying hopeful in a world of climate change

Student: How to use the mind when the outer guru is doing and saying things that conflict with ethics

Osel: That's a tricky one because I'm not very traditional but I am a traditional within. Okay so let me give an introduction. So I grew up in a monastery so I have a very traditional background. My upbringing was super, duper, mega traditional, so I have that background.

So I am, kind of, I come from a traditional background basically, but I have a hard time following the traditional kind of concept because I think we have to find an, like, kind of an adaptation to the western kind of mind. So that's one of the reasons also why I left the monastery because I found it hard to be able to relate to people if I didn't understand their lifestyle or where they came from. Because living in a monastery is a little bit of a bubble sometimes.

So that is one of the reasons, of course it isn't an excuse, but that is one of the reasons. So, yeah it is a very tricky question but I will try, I will try, I will try my best to give an update of my point of view, together with the traditional point of view.

Student: Just to give background, after forty-five years of traditional Tibetan buddhism it is very interesting coping with the mind as one begins to re-connect with one's roots.

Osel: It is a tricky subject. It is a very tricky subject to tackle actually, because it has many different perspectives and of course, I mean, we do have to think about that in life everybody has a different perspective, no matter what, you know. We relate to each other but we all have different backgrounds and life and childhoods and mentalities and information, all these different factors come together so we do have to be able to, you know, understand that everybody has a different perspective of life and in life, so that is something that also we have to be aware of.

Okay, so that's good. Are we happy with those subjects also or anything else? Good?

Okay, so let's start with the motivation. I think motivation is sooo important, so important, because motivation is the key, right? I mean all the actions and the thoughts, they call it the three doors, right? So the mind, the body, the speech, all of that originates with the motivation so motivation karmically speaking, if you want to talk about the traditional point of view, non-secular, you think like that. Like the way karma works, the main active ingredient would be motivation. So if the motivation is correct, the karma goes in that direction.

So for example, there are many examples, but that's why everything starts with the motivation, why. So, for example, even if you don't think in a traditional way, if you think in a normal, everyday lifestyle way, motivation is a huge factor because just think about it. If your motivation is a self-cherishing, self-motivated motivation, I want to be happy and you do something the result is going to be very hard, isn't going to be something that satisfies you or makes you happy because that is not the correct motivation, right?

How are you going to be happy even just thinking about me, it is always going to be unsatisfied because that is the way the mind works right? But instead if your motivation instead is, like I want to know be able to know what happens if we reach a certain level of happiness in order to be able to offer that to others, to share that. So automatically that is going to bring a different result and it's not a traditional point of view, it's a very practical point of view that you can actually see in everyday. Would you agree? It makes sense right?

So that is also another reason why motivation is so important. So in everyday life you can think about one day is little bit like a lifetime. We are born in the morning, we die at night. In the morning we are fresh and in the afternoon, slowly slowly we get tired and then eventually we have to go to sleep, right?

So we are almost training for death [laughs] and training to be reborn again so it is just a metaphor but life is a cycle right? We are going through many different cycles which at many times repeat themselves and until we learn and we are able to adapt and then we move onto the next cycle.

So that's why motivation in the morning when you wake up it's so important to have correct motivation, good motivation, so you can remember and to dedicate, okay today, the time I'm going to spend, the space I'm going to share, the energy I'm going to share may be of benefit. So may I help myself in order to be of benefit for others.

So just having that motivation is really going to change your day and you're going to be more happy because you are dedicating your time and energy to others, yeah? That that is automatic, automatic.

Of course I think together with motivation there should be gratitude, because many times one of the reasons we are unsatisfied is because we are not really present and we're not grateful enough. We are unsatisfied and want something else. This is not enough, right?

Society does bombard us with that concept of consumerism and always searching outside materialism because that supposedly will make us happy. So that's why I think if we have a good motivation and we are grateful for what we have, that is a key point, a stepping stone towards having a more fulfilling and at least not unhappy life.

So let's start with that, okay. So because I'm very traditional actually within, inside [laughs] so I'm just going to do Tibetan style and you can join with your motivation and gratitude

[Recites Refuge and Bodhchitta prayer x3]

So let's start with Buddha Nature, I think that's a great way to start. I just have to check some notes [laughs]. Okay, so basically, the dharma talks about buddha nature. We have two types of buddha nature, one is the buddha nature by nature and the buddha nature by development. So it's a little bit like saying we have the seed but we have to create the circumstances and the cause for that seed to grow. So the water, the earth, the air, the sun, the caring, all of those aspects of the tree.

You can say the tree is inside the seed in a way, but actually it's just a potential, the tree is not really there, right? So it is a little bit like that, that is the buddha nature that's already there, that's like the seed, but if we don't create the cause for that seed to grow properly it's very difficult for that seed to actually become that potential.

So that's why I think the important aspect of buddha nature is the development. So if we don't work, if we don't put effort, then we just are kind of like losing an opportunity, we are missing out on something really good. It's almost like the example they say in the text of, for example if we somehow end up in this completely isolated island that nobody knows about, somewhere super secret, somewhere in the middle of the oceans that you get there and it's full of gems and diamonds and gold and all these precious jewels that we value so much. I don't know why, but we value it a lot.

So we get to an island like that and then we leave and get back to wherever we came from and we don't even have one little gem with us. It's little bit weird right? I mean most of us would probably want to grab and fill our pockets up with gems, right? So it's a little bit like that, so if you have such an amazing opportunity to practice dharma and to understand the nature of your mind and to know your potential and you have all this information that's been passed through generations by people who've actually reached realisations and have that experience and the technique which is a universal technique, it is a mechanism that works for everybody. It's not like oh, for some people it works and for others not, it's a universal thing.

So if we don't take anything it's a little but strange, no? So that's why in Dharma it talks a lot about oh, we are suffering, we have a problem, we are far away from reaching a goal, which is mainly to scare us to thinking oh, you know, I don't have much time, they talk about impermanence, anytime suddenly everything finishes. So you have to be aware that's mainly to scare you in order to be more motivated, to put the effort, but actually if you think about it the mind doesn't have a beginning. So our minds don't have a beginning and I don't know if they

have an end or not, probably not, but the end is basically to reach enlightenment right? So that's our aim.

So it's good to have an objective, to say okay I want to go in that direction, but sometimes if it is too far away it can be quite hard to really have them, you know, how to get there. So that's why it is good to have an objective, but we have to take baby steps and so slowly, slowly, slowly.

So first you have the aim, you know where you want to go, but then you start here, you have to be realistic, right. So I think with His Holiness Dalai Lama, you know, we are so lucky to be on this planet at the time of His Holiness and the teachings of His Holiness Dalai Lama to be available and also Lama Zopa Rinpoche and many other great teachers. I think it is so lucky for us to be able to be here and we have to be able to value that.

His Holiness talks about a warm heart and I think that is a very practical way of understanding the concept of Bodhichitta, or at least the beginning of it, the start. You have to, you know, bodhichitta is way out there, it's like far away, so how do you start, you start with a warm heart.

How do you start with a warm heart? I think it is very difficult to love others if you don't love yourself. It is very hard to have patience with others if you don't have patience with yourself. It's hard to be humble if you are not humble with yourself. All these concepts, it starts within, right? Everything starts within.

So if you don't practice that with yourself it's very difficult, very easy to blame others. Oh, I lost patience with such and such a person, no you didn't lose patience with that person, you lost patience with yourself and it's easy to blame others. So we can get into that afterwards.

But right now I think Buddha Nature, we have to focus on that right now or otherwise I go all over the place, like my mind. So Buddha Nature is like the gift that we have and we have always had that, but in this lifetime we have the opportunity to create the cause for that seed to grow.

So that is why we are here today and that is, I think in a way what we are searching also during our life because everybody is searching for something, right, everyone is looking. What are we searching for, we're searching for happiness, right? For fulfilment, to feel good, to feel happy and not just temporary happiness and we want to solve our temporary suffering also.

So that is the reason why we are searching, we want to understand and I think the most basic concept is that, that happiness does not come from being selfish or self-cherishing. Happiness comes from having a genuine feeling and desire to be of benefit and of service, and that is really where the satisfaction comes from, you know, you feel kind of a, what do you call it? Accomplishment kind of aspect, you know, because I think when you accomplish something out of great effort then you really feel good, right. So that is what we're trying to get to.

So how to start, I think first motivation, gratitude, that is basic and of course you know, warm heart, love. I mean love is a word that is hard, it can be confusing sometimes because you say love is not good, love makes me suffer or something like that. It's not really love that makes you suffer, it's attachment. So you confuse attachment for love and that is also one of the mistakes, we blame love, oh love is bad, you know. It's not, it's attachment that is not a high frequency vibration. Attachment is like based on a self-centred attitude, mine, me, I want, I want to, you know, scared of losing, scared of, you know, it creates kind of an unbalance mind, you know, because you are worried, there is fear, a fear of losing, fear of, I don't know.

I think fear is a, it's important to be aware that if you make a decision you don't make a decision based on fear. I think that important, you know. Anyways, so, any questions about Buddha Nature?

Student: How would you define Buddha Nature without using the word Buddha Nature? The question was about the secular approach to Buddha Nature. What you've said is really helpful but it didn't answer the question that was asked.

Osel: Okay. So for me it is very hard to really understand the concept of a Buddha so I try to talk about the best version of a human being, so that for me is His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The most advanced version of a human being, because he has worked really hard on his inner kind of development and you can see it. I mean I feel it. I see His Holiness far away and I nearly start crying because I am just, I get so emotional because I really feel his compassion. It's so strong, just his presence.

Student: But for someone who hasn't got a connection is there some way you can explain that?

Osel: Then you forget about Buddhas, forget about buddhas. You have to think more about how to improve. So you forget about others, you forget about Buddhas and you think about, okay, do I want to compare with others, no, you can't really compare with others because everyone is different, so you compare with yourself obviously and say okay I want to be better than who I was yesterday and if I'm going to compare I'm going to compare with me yesterday and every day I'm improving and sometimes, even if we make mistakes, and I think if you don't make mistakes you're not doing anything. That's how it is. You know that's what going to the gym is all about for example. It's just an example. When you go to the gym, you go and you fail every day, it's true. Then everyday you improve a little bit, a little bit more, a little more, a little bit more, until you start to see the result, but if you don't fail you're not doing anything because that's what it's about, you have to fail.

Some people think if I fail, it is not good, no, it's awesome, failing is really important. That's how you learn. You learn by making mistakes and understanding. Of course you can't say okay, I'm going to keep making the same mistake all the time, that's a different kind of example but you make a mistake, you learn from the mistake, you move on, right?

If you keep repeating the mistake you try as best you can to improve and change that but I'm talking more about failing, and failing is not a mistake because failing means you're trying, you're trying and sometimes, failing is just a metaphor to understand that concept and that is why it is about improvement. So where we're trying to get to, we're trying to get to a fulfilling life where we can share that happiness with others, that presence basically, you know.

So I think for me, ok let me try and explain my concept of Buddha. Buddha is a representation of what we are, or what we can be. So when you visualise a Buddha, for example Buddhas represent different aspects of ourselves. The most advanced version of ourselves. So for example compassion, you know, so you visualise Chenresig and then you visualise that and that is the embodiment of compassion.

So basically buddhas are representing what we can reach, what we can be and that is the beauty about it. It's not about, oh there are Buddhas out there, and this and that. I mean for different people can believe different things but it's more about a technique that helps to change yourself from within because we are creatures of habit and we do work a lot with habit, so like for example praying, you could call it habit alignment, for example, because you are making the wish, you are visualising, you know, you are actually thinking and trying to create a new pattern in your mind.

So for example if you pray every day I want to be of benefit to others, eventually that's what you are going to be, right? So I think it's a bit like that, you know. The more you wish for something, the more you really desire something for the benefit of others, the closer you get there and Buddha Nature is just an example of how powerful we are and what a huge potential we have.

There is this saying that I like very much which says 'be proud because you are', right, 'be proud because you are' because you exists, because of who you are, because you have Buddha Nature, Buddha potential, but be humble because you belong. You belong because you are a part of something much bigger than yourself, right. We belong to that collective and that is why we have to be humble. So it is a balance between one side and another.

It's really important, the balance is so really important you know. We need motivation, we need balance in life because that is really the best way you know, when you actually find a middle way. Extremes, I mean it's okay to go to extremes in order to to know what it's like but in the end the balance is the best, so just keep the middle way.

I think that makes sense to everybody, I don't really have to explain that very much, but yeah you have to actually put that into practice in everyday life to try and keep the balance. There are so many things to talk about actually, wow! [laughs].

The mind, you know the mind goes like a crazy monkey, a wild animal. It's like a panther, you know, jumping all over the place, scratching on all the tress or the furniture right, if it's inside your house. Imagine having a wild panther inside your house. Good bye furniture, right. So that's, so we have to tame the mind. It is like a muscle, if you don't train, if you don't train and tame then you can't, you know [says something in Spanish], you know how to say this in English?

Student: develop

Osel: Develop, we can't develop. It's not like oh I want big muscles, I'm going to do five push ups and oh why don't I have big muscles yet? Then you get all frustrated. It's a little bit like that, you know. It happens like that, I meditate and nothing is happening! [laughs]. It doesn't happen like that. You need dedication. It's like a muscle, the mind, you have to train the mind, you have to work the mind and it's not just the mind, it's complimentary, you know. You have to also take care of your body, the nutrition. You have to be very aware of what you eat because we are what we eat. So the food is very important.

The mind, the thoughts that we have. You may think, oh, you know, the thoughts are not very important, nobody know about what I am thinking, right. But if you actually think carefully, actually everything in this room was transformed by thought, originally, it started with a thought. Not just everything in this room but everything that has been manipulated by humans started with a thought. It has to start with a thought, right.

So even the way the flowers have been arranged started with a thought, right? So that's how powerful thoughts are, that is the effect they have. There is a huge effect so you can't think oh nobody knows what I am thinking, it's doesn't really matter, it does. It has a huge effect not only on your mind itself, because you create a habit pattern, but also has a huge effect on your body because our bodies are composed of billions of cells and amoebas and sentient beings, if you think about it.

We have a universe of sentient beings within us that are our responsibility and they are effected by our thoughts and it's not just spiritualism or religion or philosophy that talks about it. It's also science and that's also why we are entering a golden age because science and spirituality is coming together. They are actually agreeing. They are crossing the roads together so that is amazing, so we can actually have different perspectives from different cultures that talk about the same aspect of reality.

They both say that the universe is a hologram. That it is 99.99999.... percent empty. Is that correct? It's a concept though right? It's just a concept, who knows! I don't know, that's for sure, it looks solid to me [knocks on the table with his hand] but, you know, many people who have been training their minds throughout thousands of years, they say that and many people who have actually been working in science and really going and splitting the atom and this and that, they also talk about the same thing. So there must be some kind of truth within that.

And I think that is soooo interesting, so interesting and it's true, you know, thoughts are so powerful, thoughts are so powerful. So that's why we must tame our mind. That I think is a very important step. How to train your mind is of course, we are used to being bombarded by the five sense, you know, society also, we are very distracted and entertained all the time, you know, because in a way, society does talk a little bit like, oh, you know, happiness is outside so we have to search outside and that's why many times we are all like out, out, out, outside.

So that's why it's important to sometimes just shut off all the five senses and that is where you really find the peace, right? You find the peace when you shut off the senses. That is called peace of mind. When you can actually turn off the mind, right and just breathe. It's possible. Some people say it is impossible to turn off the mind, it's possible. You start with one second and then

you do two seconds and then three seconds until you get to ten seconds. If you can stop thinking for ten seconds that's already a realisation. You know.

So it's not complicated. We make it complicated. Life is simple, dharma is simple but we make it very complicated because we like complicated things, we enjoy that, we like it somehow. It's true because we want a challenge, right and the more we complicate it, the more of a challenge it becomes.

So anyway, so I think it's really important to keep things simple. So yeah, I think the first step, always focus on the first step. You can't expect to build a roof if you don't have the foundation or the blueprints for what you want to build. So you start with the blueprint which is to tame the mind. The mind will trick you. The mind is like the clouds in the sky, it comes and goes. It's very ephemeral. You can't really, when you go to grab it there is nothing there.

So it's good sometimes to just observe the thoughts coming and going and let's say for example between one thought and another there is very much clarity. There is a lot of clarity. It's just a split second but it's there, just like when you sneeze. When you sneeze also a small aspect is related to for example emptiness. Or when you yawn there is a split second that's there and it's good that's why also there is another time in meditation, analytical mediation, you know, you just, between one thought and another you try to understand what is between and that is the clarity we are looking for right?

The thought is just a secretion, a kind of survival instinct, it's like a tool almost. It's like a tool, you know. It's like saying oh I am the screw driver. A screw driver is a tool that helps you to be able to accomplish things, but you are not the screw driver. Of course, I mean, I don't want to create confusion but in dharma it does talk about the clear light nature, right. So that's what we want to achieve, we want to get there. We want to understand what the clear light nature of mind is. So that's like the purity, like the pure aspects of who we are and it's there, for everybody.

So that you can also call Buddha Nature if you want to change the name, clear light nature. I don't know, I don't want to contradict myself and create conflict. Clear light nature, buddha nature.

Student: Can I ask a question?

Osel: Yes, please

Student: We all have an internal part of us that goes from reincarnation to reincarnation and wouldn't Buddha nature be a part of that internal part of us?

Osel: Yes of course, it's always there, it's always there it's just many times we are not aware of it. We make ourselves very small, you know. We limit ourselves. We are scared of our potential so that's why it's so beautiful, you know, the way dharma offers all these techniques, you know because it's a very, I could even say even a romantic way of seeing life. It's beautiful. It's a beautiful technique I think.

It's just amazing you know, what's available. I don't think we are aware of how precious this time is for everybody. We are entering a very important time and of course yes we are going to talk about climate I guess.

I don't really know much about climate change but it is true that we are reaching a point of no going back, right? At least that is what the scientists are saying and I mean, they may be wrong, but most likely they are not. Hopefully, I mean, the planet is fine, it's the humans that are not fine. The earth may just get a fever and sneeze and that's it, goodbye humanity, right? The earth has been here for millions of years and she's been through so much, different transformations, so I think that's one of the things is that we are not very aware of.

I mean we live as if we are immortal. Our attitude in life is as if we are immortal. So that is why in dharma it talks a lot about impermanence, you know, we have to be aware of impermanence. It's not like oh I'm going to die, I'm going to die and you project that and you are creating that reality, it's not about that. It's more about being aware that everything can change any moment so that

you have to be on top of things. You have to be on top of things. You have to work a little bit at least, you know, minimum. In order to actually use this opportunity that we have. An opportunity is like an arrow, once you throw it, that's it. Once you shoot it, or a word that you say without thinking, you can't take it back, right?

An opportunity is like that. So when the opportunities arise it's important to take it. At least you tried, you tried, right? Many people sometimes you say what do you regret, it's not that they regret doing stuff, they regret not doing things, most of the time. So that is one aspect of life that we have the opportunity and every day we can do it.

Even if it's just two minutes we can do a two minute meditation and then you add up the two minutes and you can have ten two minute meditations a day and that's already twenty minutes and that's going to change your life, that's going to transform it and then you are going to be able to share that with others, as an example, because they are going to see you have peace of mind, you're calm, you're aware, you're really empathic and compassionate, you know? Then people are going to be inspired by that and you can help people like that. So that is a great motivation for example.

So outer guru, inner guru. Guru, what is Guru? Can I have, what is Guru for you, for example? Can I get some input. What's Guru? What is the Guru?

Student: Guide, teacher, someone who helps us come out of the darkness of ignorance like a light

Osel: A light, like the sun for example. What else?

Student: Protection, inspiring, shows you yourself

Osel: Yes, very good, reflection, what else?

Student: One who has reached the goal at the end of the path. Buddha Nature.

Osel: Buddha Nature, yes I like that, we are back to the beginning again. Yeah, the Guru. I think, so for example, I love examples because an example really simplifies things a lot. So the Guru is for example lets think about it, a lighthouse, right. A lighthouse.

So you are in the dark ocean at night and you're travelling by boat. Of course firstly you need to think about the boat. Are we the captains of our boats or not and are we letting the wind push us around everywhere or are we actually using the wind to choose where we want to go and where do we want to go? We want to go to a safe haven right? We want to get the boat somewhere so we can move on land, we want to get somewhere, that is what we are doing in life, we are trying to get somewhere.

So most of us, we just let the wind blow us everywhere and we go in one direction and then another direction and in the end the boat might crash or it deteriorated and we are lost and don't really know what we are doing or where we are going.

So that is why it's very important to know and have a direction, an aim, or an objective so we can say it's enlightenment or we can say it's not unhappiness. For me, for example, my purpose is to be of service, that is my direction and then how do I do that is by working on myself, a lot, you know. Training myself to improve every day and competing with myself from yesterday, right, and deciding that tomorrow I'm going to be better, tomorrow I'm going to accomplish more, tomorrow I'm going to try harder. If I fall, I get up again, if I fall again, I get up again, like that. So not to give up, I think that's also a very important aspect, not to give up.

So that is what we are trying to do. We are trying to get somewhere. So the boat, that's the boat and being the captain of the boat means taking the reins of our life. We are the boss of our life. We don't to let other people push us around, we don't want to live other people's lives. That's one of the reasons I left the monastery, I couldn't live other people's lives anymore. I wanted to live my own life and understand my truth. It wasn't enough for just people to tell me what my truth was and tell me this is what you need to be, you have to live this life. That wasn't enough for me. That

just didn't make sense because I wanted to live my life, right. I wanted to have my own experience, not just believe this spoon fed basically, anyways, that's another story.

So the guru is like a lighthouse in the middle of a dark ocean and we are not going towards the Guru are we? Are we going towards the lighthouse? What happens if the boat goes to the lighthouse? We crash, right, because the lighthouse most likely is surrounded by cliffs. It's actually warning us saying don't come close, there are rocks in this area, but what do we do, we all go to the Guru. So, if boats acted like we act with Gurus all the lighthouses would have all these crashed boats around then.

So I think that's something we have to really clarify. We are not going towards the Guru, the Guru is helping us, is directing us, saying hey, here are rocks, it's that way, or this way, that's where the safe haven is. So it's a guide, but we are not going to the guru. It's like, yeah, anyways. It's like if we are in a dark forest without any light and then suddenly the full moon comes up. It helps us to see better so we can choose which direction to go but we are not going to the moon, right.

It's just examples but it's a little bit like that, you know. So I think that's a very important aspect of the outer Guru that we confuse a lot because people get, you know, it's like, I mean I'm not talking about taking refuge from a dharma point of view, but taking refuge as a spiritual by-passing kind of refuge aspect.

You know, we cling, we get so attached and the same mistake we are making before maybe, with the materialism, oh the new car or the new computer or I want to have a beautiful wife or a beautiful husband and I want to have a beautiful family and a beautiful this and beautiful that and it's never ending and we just idealise and we are setting ourselves up to disappointment or for disappointment, right? We are setting ourselves up and we even know it.

Idealisation, that is what it does. We create this fantasy. It's good sometimes to idealise a concept but we can't just grasp, but that is what we do. We grasp, we cling, we just get so attached and then what happens? We are disappointed. So it is not about that. It's not about that because we are trying to get out of that, right. We are trying to understand our mind. We are trying to recognise these aspects.

So we can't get attached to the guru. I mean of course it's very important to, that's why it is very important to be able to be aware of the difference between attachment and love. Unconditional love has nothing to do with attachment, it's something completely different.

So I think also that is one of the reasons why sometimes, you know, we can get lost because we are just taking refuge in something in order to avoid confronting ourselves and I think that is the first step. Before you go anywhere you have to confront yourself. You have to understand, you have to check yourself, you have to look at yourself, you have to recognise, you know, I don't have a word for it, well I do have a word for it but I don't want to use it. You have to recognise your bullshit. I'm sorry. I'll just say it once so you get the picture.

Student: When you do that the experience can be incredibly painful

Osel: oh, yeah, of course

Student: what is the process, what are the reasons for encouraging to keep returning to that space?

Osel: You mean the safe haven inside?

Student: Towards the recognition of your own deception

Osel: I like that word, that's better, I'll start using that word from now on [laughs]. Your own deception, yes we have to be aware of our own deception, yes, correct.

So I think first of all we have to be our own best friend, that's very important. We have to really be able to love ourselves, truly love ourselves, you know, and that is the first step and then at the same time when things come up, observe, check. Don't try to avoid by taking refuge somewhere.

Many times when we have issues or we have problems we think oh it's ok, you know, we have the guru, or we have the dharma, we have this, or like for example we have a problem and we think buying a new car will solve it or if I get this new job it is going to solve it so you create this idealisation right, you create this concept.

So the same happens with spirituality, we bypass. We use spirituality in order to avoid that, to not confront that deception. So that's why it's so important to be your best friend and for example if you, if you are lonely alone you are going to be lonely with anybody. People say I am so lonely I need someone in my life because I feel so lonely. Well until you don't solve that, whoever you are with you are going to be lonely.

If you are happy, oh I am so unhappy, I need to change places, I need to go and live in another country, I have to change house or I have to change this or that. If you're unhappy with yourself, wherever you go or whatever circumstances, you are going to be unhappy. Why? Because happiness does not come from outside, it comes from the inside. It starts from within. So if you are happy with yourself, if you are not lonely with yourself, then you can be with anybody and will be happy and won't be lonely, so that's also what dharma is talking about anyway.

So that's why it is very important to be aware of the spiritual bypassing you know because that's, that's very dangerous because otherwise you are like, you use it as a means to avoid confronting yourself and then twenty years pass by and you're like, oh, what happened, why am I still having the same issues. Right?

So this technique is a tool, but ultimately we have to walk our own path. Nobody is going to walk it for you, right. We have to find our own truth. Nobody can give you the truth because everybody has their own truth, their own experience.

There is a universal truth, there is something that we share, that we can relate to, but we are the ones who are in charge of our boat and we have to make sure that we take charge and that's why I think habit is so important, you know to create new habits, to change the old habits that are not beneficial and to create new habits that are beneficial.

Slowly, slowly, slowly, you can't change from one day to the another, you know, but you can create the space for that change to occur and you can motivate yourself and push yourself in that direction, slowly, you know, and if it's challenging then just look back and say hey, look how far I came from, I got up to here. Even though there is a long way to go, at least I have accomplished this much. That will really help to motivate you.

So I just thought it was very important to clarify that aspect, that concept of the outer guru. Some people are like, oh you know, the guru smiled at me, oh I'm so happy today and then the next day oh, the guru didn't even look at me, I'm so depressed. It's like poor guru right? I am mean come on, they have the responsibility of giving that.

They have the responsibility of having to smile at everyone, hug everyone or whatever. It's just an example but it happens. People are really like, ah you know when the guru comes and people get so stressed and just, you know, it should be the opposite. When the guru comes people should be much more harmonious, much more loving, much more kind, much more humble, much more patient.

Why do people get so nervous like that, maybe fear, I don't know. It could be fear. What do you think it is actually? Why do you think we get so nervous sometimes? Not always, but I've seen it sometimes. People get really stressed and I think those kinds of moments are the best situation to put in practice what we are learning.

Meditation is not about sitting in a cave and thinking I am so special, I am so important, I am meditating, look at me. It's not about that. It's about putting in practice in everyday life, whatever

you do and however you are doing it to be aware, to be conscious, you know, of who we are and what we are doing. Because I have seen people who have been practicing dharma for twenty years but then they talk really rudely to the waiter or to somebody they don't know or even somebody they do know and gossip or criticism happens so often you know. People love to criticise but you know why, because they don't want to confront their own mistakes, they don't want to check themselves and that is also an issue, because why would you criticise your brothers and sisters, why would you do that?

A real friend is someone who criticises you with constructive criticism in your face, right, with the intention of helping. Not too much of course because it can effect them but just enough that you understand that aspect of yourself which many times we are not able to see by ourselves and a real friend will talk good about you behind your back. So that is a true virtuous friend who helps you to do true virtuous actions a virtual person, not a virtual person sorry, a virtuous person. We are kind of a virtual person though aren't we? [laughs]. If we are living in a hologram are we a hologram too? We are? So the clear light is a hologram?

Student: It makes one

Osel: It makes one? Oh we will debate about that tonight, oh no, you are leaving, next time then.

So the inner guru, what is the inner guru. The inner guru is complimentary with the outer guru, you know, because we have that potential you know, so it's, we, okay, so the inner guru, what does it really mean?

If you think about it like a baby, you can't teach a baby how to crawl or how to walk, you can't. You can be the example for him to learn, right? So, I mean you can have all the teachers in the world but if you don't want to learn they can't teach you anything. So that is what the inner guru, that is what the inner guru means.

You are your inner guru because you are the only one who can choose to learn, what to learn, or to teach yourself, you could also call it like that. You know, you can have all the information but if you don't want to learn or teach yourself or try to understand or have the intention to want to understand then it's completely useless. You can have all the gurus in the world, all the information in the universe and you can't do anything with it. So that is what it's talking about, the inner guru is that. In the end it is about the inner guru, right?

So that's a little bit kind of like my concept of that and of course we are all changing, you know, so we are all learning and I'm learning everyday and I'll be learning, even the day I die I'll be learning about the process of death so please correct me if I make a mistake and I'm really sorry if I create any confusion. That's why I like constructive criticism and I like questions also.

Any questions? [laughs]

So the definition of crazy, ah! So I want to know what is crazy, what do you think? What's crazy?

Student: Believing what you think

Osel: Oh yeah, that is more a buddhist point of view of crazy [laughs]. Crazy would be a little bit like outside of what society expects of us or thinks like going outside of society's habit maybe or outside of society's way of thinking maybe, what else?

Student: There are two types of crazy. One when they think differently to others, that's the good crazy and the bad crazy with people going out shooting people in wars and stuff. It's like the two sides of the same coin and knowing what the intention is behind it. If it's good.. [the rest is inaudible]

Osel: Good point, that's a very good point, thank you for clarifying that. Yes, good. That's a good definition of crazy right?

Student: I think also when you are lost in your own thoughts that can be scary, like can you trust your thoughts

Osel: Can you trust your thoughts? No you can't [laughs]

Student: What about what you see... If things feel more special... then is that going crazy

Osel: It's more about intuition and having experience. I mean this is the thing, sometimes we become so proud we think we know, you know and sometimes we are just so humble that we think we don't know. So that is why it's important to balance, to have the middle way a little bit. We can't follow our mind, wherever our mind goes if we follow it, that's crazy to follow your mind wherever it takes you.

I think it's, I mean of course if you think about it what are thoughts? Thoughts are just a hallucination almost, there's not, I mean where, it's almost like, he's laughing, he's like oh I'm getting into trouble now. It's like a delusion almost, you know, because it's almost, we believe them to be solid, we believe them to be real but where are the thoughts, where, you know.

I mean, okay, let me give you an example. Let's say we make a group photo today, right, together, group photo. When we see the photo what are we going to look at, the first thing we are going to look at, me, right, and what are we going to check, do I look good, right?

So that is the first thing we are going to be aware of, oh, do I look good or not, Me, right. So we have this preconceived perception of what looks good or not and most likely we are going to say oh, I don't look good or whatever because we tend to do that, we tend to put ourselves down because we compare. It's just a little bit how we have been wired up.

We have this preconception of a beautiful model somewhere in your photo and you're like, oh, I want to be like that and if I buy this product of baby cream I'm going to look like that or something like that and then honestly that model doesn't even exist because the actual model who's model they took probably also thinks the same, oh, I wish actually I really looked like that. It's true, it's been photoshopped twenty times or thirty times right? So that is already an idealisation that's not real, it's completely, it's not real but that is what society makes us believe.

So that is, when we look at the photo, that's, we do, we are worried that way and are very critical of ourselves and then of course, that's what happens to me, I think oh I don't look very good in the photo, that's my first thought.

Then maybe ten years pass by and you come into contact with the same photo again, the same photo, the same photo. What do you do again? You look for yourself, oh where am I, where's me, ooo here, oh, wow, I really looked good then [laughs], oh I really looked good back then, I wish I looked like that now. But the photo is exactly the same. So what changed? Our mind changed. So that is a perfect example of how we can't really trust our mind.

You see our mind is changing constantly, you know. So that is why if you train your mind not to be a crazy wild monkey that's jumping from branch to branch, then we can start trusting a little bit more because then the thoughts are little more coherent. It's not this chaotic stream and even sometimes thoughts that maybe don't even belong to us come in, that is called mental pollution but that is another story. That's why it is so important to be able to protect our mind to really train our mind, very important. That's the first step, with the correct motivation.

So in dharma it talks about [Tibetan], [Tibetan] is method, Sherab is wisdom and [Tibetan] is renunciation. So the method is bodhichitta which starts off with compassion of course and the wisdom is the understanding, right, the information to be able to put into practice, to empower that compassion and then the renunciation is so important because it is to understand the reality of samsara. Do you believe in samsara? Do we all believe in samsara, yah?

Some people say we are here, we die and that is it, ciao. So let's make the best of it, let's go and have fun, anyway, I have friends who think like that. They say oh it's destiny, you know, the stars

have already chosen the destiny for me, I don't have a choice but that's a little bit like trying not to take responsibility, a little bit like a lazy point of view I think.

Student: That's crazy

Osel: That's crazy, yeah, that's crazy. So yah, we have to take responsibility. We have a very important responsibility this life. So that's why we have to train. Anyways, I got lost in all these words and talking about. Anyway, you get the picture right, yah?

So if you are aware of samsara you can create the renunciation. Renunciation is not like oh, I love doing this and this and this and this and now suddenly I'm not going to do it because I want to be a better person and then you are suffering like nooooo, that's not renunciation.

Then you are like flogging yourself, ahhhh, I have to purify, that's not renunciation, okay, don't get me wrong. Maybe for some people it works, I don't know. It doesn't work for me, I've tried it, trust me. I've been really tough with myself. I have been really hard on myself most of my life and I understood that that is not the path, it is not constructive or productive. It's actually the opposite so we have to be very kind with ourselves because that's how we train to learn to be kind with others.

So realisation basically is like an analytical mediation to understand where or how we are and what are we doing here, what is this hologram? It's hard to believe it's a hologram right? So that's why you need to take baby steps.

So in dharma it talks about, I mean if you think about it, everything we perceive comes through these nerves, right? It's electrical transmission that we receive in the brain and the neurons somehow package it in a way for us to get this idea of concept but there are so many different moderators or different, like doorways or pathways or what do you call it like interpretations you could say? Interpretations? So there are so many different interpretations until it reaches our brain and then our mind or whatever you want to call it.

So just with that logic you can see that what we perceive has absolutely nothing to do with what's out there, you know. If there is no perceiver it doesn't really have a colour or shape or taste or smell right? We are the ones who kind of give it that. We are the ones who actually give it the colour. I mean the colour is there kind of, I don't know, I mean is it? It's not inherently existent, right, it doesn't exist from it's own side, it is just words but it is to understand the concept, you know, that we cling to and expect, a concept so strongly because we understand it to be true but moment we understand it is just an interpretation of an interpretation, it's just these electrical impulses that reach our brains and then we perceive it in a certain way and then we perceive it and then we reject or we want, or we don't care, basically, so we react to that perception and that's when we are creating the habit, right.

So how to change the habit is to be equanimous towards what we perceive, you know, instead of wanting, not wanting or not caring, you know, just be equanimous. So any sensation that arises, that we perceive, be equanimous and that's a huge meditation because that's training our mind to be much more peaceful, much more at peace. So in very difficult situations, we can deal them in a different way, you know, we don't have to react badly or you know, we don't get this emotional hijack or this uninvited guest arrives and we give him full power.

So it's like the guest who arrives at four am in your house, knock, knock, knocking and you open the door and it's your family member and you're super suspicious, why are you here, what's going on and you're not sure if you want to let them in or not. Even if it's a family member. But then somehow when the anger comes what do you do? Oh, come in, come here have a cup of tea, have some biscuits, take total control of me and obviously we always regret that. We always regret because when you do things with that kind of emotion, low frequency destructive emotions it's not, it's not constructive, it's not beneficial, and most of the times that you hurt yourself you hurt others.

But why do we let those emotions in, because we feel we have the right, we are proud, or you know this person did this, that person did that so I have a right, you know, I'm right, they're wrong

or whatever. So then in the end what happens? We regret it, or not, some people don't regret it. They think oh, I'm right, who cares, you know, they deserved that.

So anyway, that is a very important aspect to be aware of, you know, because it's like the energetic ball that I talk about sometimes. It's just an idea, but it happens many times you know, people, if you have that empathy and that compassion towards that person then even if they say harsh words and they are really aggressive at you, you can see the reality behind that.

If you are a little bit ignorant and a little bit self centred and are like, oh me, he said this to me and you get so angry and all this spit starts flying all over the place. You know blah blah blah, oh no, me blah blah blah, and that is the energetic ball, they gave you black energetic ball and you made it even bigger and threw it back at them.

So that's being completely unrealistic because if you actually observe, that person is acting like that because they are actually sending you a message. The message is I am suffering, I am unhappy, I want to be recognised, I exist, you know?

So once you see that you can never react in a bad way, you can only react with compassion and then what happens then to the energetic ball, the black energetic ball gets neutralised and then you give back a beautiful shining light ball back and then, what happens? And then does it continue? Do you continue living like that, no you transform, you purify, you help them to understand, you know, to neutralise that and most of the time it really can neutralise the situation.

Some people can be so toxic that you just need to give them space and time for them to work on their mind. If you are there all the time, then they feel the right to put you down and shout at you and this and that so you have to have that balance again. You have to have that balance. You know, you can try but if it gets too overwhelming you can just walk away, give them the space for them to just observe their mind, you know, for them to confront their demons basically, because these demons are not outside, these demons are inside, just like the angels or whatever you want to call it, everything is inside.

So if you want to be scared of something be scared of yourself, that's what dharma is saying is training you how to save yourself from yourself. Is that correct [laughs]? That is what we are doing here, we're trying to save ourselves from ourselves because we can be our worst enemy, just like we can be our best friend.

Student: Can I ask a question

Osel: Please

Student: Phobia of heights. It's not something I need consciously need to reflect on but if I'm in a certain situation then wham, that fear, it's right there. So sometimes I put myself in these difficult situation and still can't control it and like you were saying before we can make a conscious decision that when we are arguing with people we throw things back at them but phobias come up so quickly that it's almost an avalanche.

Osel: Yes, yes, that's why it's a challenge. It's a big challenge but the bigger the challenge the better the result right? But for example that is a perfect examine of a past life, reincarnation, because why doesn't everybody have that? Why do only some people have it? Maybe it's because in a past life you died you like, you fell from a great height and then you have that trauma still. Maybe, so maybe through meditation you can remember that past life and neutralise it. For example, I don't know, or meditate upon that, where has it comes from, where does it come, the mechanism, observe.

Observing the mind is a really good meditation. Not giving it importance and clinging to it but actually letting it come and go and observing it and then most importantly looking between each thought, what is there, because that is the real aspect of the mind, between the thoughts there is a split second of clarity.

Student: I'll try again

Osel: It's a process. That's why I don't like to use the word problems, it's not a problem, it's a process, because sometimes we use the word problem it can be so overwhelming and it's difficult to kind of get out of that oh I have a problem and it's like this weight that pushing down. So think about it as a process, I'm just going through this process in order to reach another aspect of myself, to understand better myself, to be able to help others. Then transform that problem, it's not a problem anymore, it's just a process.

So that's another about Dharma also is how to be a happier person, change your perspective, change your life, right? And the attitude, the attitude is sooo important. Because you can have a good body, you can have a lot of knowledge, you can have lots of friends, you can have good circumstances, you can be all these different aspects, they are just some, like plus, plus, plus but attitude multiplies. Attitude multiplies. That's why the attitude is super important. The attitude is like most important actually and not just the attitude with yourself but attitude to do with others, you know.

So if you actually have the good attitude then you're already practicing dharma so it's not about mediation or doing prostrations or going to initiations or how many teachings or gurus or this or that, no, it is about an attitude, it's about the attitude you have with yourself and the attitude you have with others. And that multiplies, so that is the biggest impact it's going to have is attitude and many times our attitude is based on our state of mind. And I'll say the mind many times gets triggered by many aspects of how we choose to react, right?

So that's number three actually, I'm talking about number three, alive meditation, did I write that correctly? Yeah, so meditation, you can do meditation anywhere, anytime you know? For me, you know, when I am in the toilet it's very good for me to meditate in the toilet. It's like nobody disturbs me, I'm in my space, it's a good opportunity. It's not like oh, you know, like of course it's good to meditate in front of the altar, you know, like the professional way you could say.

Oh yeah, I have my altar, I have my little table, I have my statues, you know, it's great, that is a great aspect of meditation. But you can meditate anywhere, anytime, if you choose. And by doing things also, you know, you can do walking meditation, you can do cooking meditation, right Ray?

I mean you are what you eat you know, so it's amazing really, that is compassion in action. You are making this delicious food full of love that people can eat so they can continue with their life and practice and use it as an energy to put into good use.

And there are many aspects like that in life, so all of that can be a meditation. You just have to be able to define meditation and I think meditation can be a way to be conscious or aware, right? What is that word that's really really used a lot?

Student: Inaudible

Osel: No, there is a word that's really used

Student: Basic mindfulness

Osel: No, aware or something. There is a word that's used but it will come

Student: Conscientiousness?

Osel: No. Yeah, it's very commercial. It's become very commercial now

Students: Mindfulness

Osel: Mindfulness, yes, mindfulness. Anyway, something like that but I think that's really good, you know, I think it's really good, the fact that mindfulness has been really commercialised I think it's good because at least we are going in the right direction, but we have to add more information to that to understand what really mindfulness is. It's not just to be aware, I mean of just your mind

and your actions and people surrounding you, but it's also how you relate, how you relate to yourself, how you relate to others. To be mindful of that.

And it's a constant, you know, to be present, to be present, because everything is happening in the present, right? Two thousand five hundred years ago when the Buddha was giving teachings it was now. Just like now is now, right? So the present is the present is a gift. That's why they call it the present, so it's a gift, yeah. It's so important to be present. How are we going for time?

Student: Good

Osel: Does anyone want a pee pee break or something like that?

Student: I need to go and meditate

Osel: Oh good, I like that, okay lets do a fifteen minute minute pee pee break. What time is it 15:20?

Student: Yes, 15:20

Osel: how about a 15:35ish we meet, is that good? Okay, thank you so much

So yeah, we want a solution to our temporary suffering, right? But it seems so big and so overwhelming so that's why know sometimes, sometimes it is good to think we are bigger than our problems in that sense. It's good.

Because we are looking for temporary happiness and we are trying to run away from temporary suffering but in the end it is just temporary you know, so it's not ultimate, it's not the real thing, it's not the real deal. You know, I mean you can eat all the chocolate you want but you will never really get satisfied, you know. I mean you can eat a lot in one sitting and then you will just feel really sick. But the next day you will want more chocolate, right, so, it's temporary satisfaction, it's temporary happiness, just temporary.

So that's samsara, you know, we are going around in circles again and again and again so the point is to get out of samsara so we can help others to get out of samsara too, so we have to create a platform in order for that to happen.

So anyway, so that's, for me I feel my purpose is more like to give an introduction, kind of like to be able to help people relate to dharma, to identify and then of course there are so many amazing teachers who can actually teach dharma. I'm not a teacher at all, I am a student and actually I am learning from you and that's for me how I see it.

That's a little bit my purpose, to try to give an introduction, despite the little bit of interest of oh, maybe there is something else, maybe I can investigate more, you know, because satisfaction lies with, happiness lies within, right? And of course, if you have moderation then it is much more healthy. My father used to say everything in moderation is good but without moderation it's bad, you know, even water can kill you.

Talking about water, I think water is a great example of love because water is always there, it's giving, you know, and it doesn't expect anything in return, it gives life. So water for me is a great example of what love is like, it's a little bit like.

Okay, how to keep joyful enthusiasm in a complex world, that's complex. Joyful enthusiasm. I think it is of course it's, in the morning, every morning motivate yourself, you know, and at night you dedicate. At night think okay what am I happy with, what do I feel that I can improve on, you know and then work on that and dedicate the time, the energy, the space you have been giving today, you know, I'm going to dedicate it to the benefit of all mother sentient beings.

And it's very interesting in dharma it talks about mother sentient beings, you know, because we've been dying, reborn and dying and reborn through so many lives for so long, I mean through infinite time that we have all been each other's mother at a certain point so that is why it says

mother sentient beings, so that we can relate to the unconditional love, the love the mother has for her children. That's a, in order to create a certain type of compassion, to be aware, you know. If you can relate to every sentient being like the unconditional love a mother has for their son or daughter, then that is already one huge step.

And I feel, I mean of course joyful enthusiasm, I mean it's difficult sometimes because we are wired in a way to kind of over value negativity much more than positiveness. Right? But if you think about it, negativity, there is only maybe one percent of negative things going on, what did you call negativity aspect? If it was more than one percent we couldn't really walk out the door, we would be eaten by monsters. We would open the door and that would be it, we'd be gone.

Some people live in that kind of situation. Like in a war zone or a famine or a mass, what do you call it? Anyway, these situations, you know, where it is very difficult to live, you know you are in constant fear. I mean, of course, you think about the animal realm, it's a little bit like that. Animals are always alert, always fearful of losing their lives, looking for food, looking for shelter, scared, in fear. That's why it is very hard to practice dharma as an animal, right?

And if you are a god, you have total ecstasy all the time, total bliss, blissed out until the time of their death because Gods, they have limited time also because it's based on their merits. Then at that time of their death they really suffer so much, you know, because they are aware of where they are going, they do have some kind of clairvoyance.

And then of course they say they are going to be reborn as, you know, in a family of pig and then it's so hard to get out of there. I mean we do create the cause, like if you want to see the past, look at the present, if you want to see the future, look at the present. So we are creating the cause for the future and we are here because we created the cause in the past and like for example, for me, it's a little bit like evolution and de-evolution, right? The good and the evil?

So are you going moving forward or you're moving backwards? The more you go in one direction the easier it is to go in that direction every time. Because we are creatures of habit right? We are creating that habit all the time. So the more good you do the easier it is to do it and the easier we just fall into that and the more bad things we do the easier it is to do that and like for example if you think about like that we can be reincarnated as a tiger for example, right and a tiger in order to survive it has to kill and create suffering, you know to survive, and it doesn't do it with a bad intention, it's just the way nature is, you know, that is the instinct it has and the metabolism and body it has is designed so it has to kill and to eat alive animals so it create suffering and in order to survive, how many animals does a tiger kill in one life time? It's a lot.

So then as example you're reborn in the (flagbella?) somewhere in some really hard neighbourhood where you have to be part of some gang and to be accepted by the gang you have to kill someone to show your worth, like that, you know, you're just stuck in this situation where you keep devolving and it's so hard to get out of that.

So right now we have that opportunity. You think about it. We're not in a war zone, probably less than one percent negative things are happening in our life but somehow we make it so big because if we are self-centred, me, then our problems are huge, right?

Why are other people's problems not as big as ours? Why are other peoples problems not are important as ours? You know. Why? Of course we are in our body and apparently it seems like we are stuck in our body. Right? So we relate to the world through our body, from within, towards the outside, so we do have this concept of separation which is incorrect according to the texts but it is hard to fathom, it is hard to understand, right?

But actually everything is of the same nature. So we can really relate to everything and I think it is so important, you know, to be aware of those aspects and really make an effort to use this precious human rebirth, this opportunity to keep evolving. We've got up to here so let's keep moving on that way, you know, and try to improve slowly, slowly, slowly.

So I think one of the things to have joyful enthusiasm is to actually turn it around and instead of giving so much to negativity, over-value positivity, over value that and when negative things

happen don't give them so much importance unless you want to learn from it, you want to use it as a tool to improve or to help, to create compassion and things like that. Okay, if it's in a constructive way, but don't just get overwhelmed by it and just focus on that because that will be your life, your life will be negative if you're only thinking about negative things and you're just observing that and overvaluing that and in the end that's all you're going to have, right?

So if it's the over way around so overvalue positiveness and make it the most important pattern that is going to be positive, right? So it's not like everything is black and white, you know. You can't just go from one extreme to another.

It is difficult for many people and that's why we have a huge opportunity to be able to help others to improve their lives because you can't change the world, you have to change yourself and then you have to be the change you want to see in the world. Right? Does that makes sense?

So you have to start with yourself and that's also, you can come into climate change if you want now. I think climate change of course, is something that's we maybe created the karma as a collective, right? But we are entering interesting times where we don't really know what's going to happen. I mean who knows, who knows. How many years do we have until?

Student: 2030 they say

Osel: so ten years and maybe we won't be able to grow much stuff anymore because the temperature will change so if we can't grow crops how are we going to eat, what are we going to eat? Anyway, so it's an issue, right now scientifically we have about ten years.

But you know that's the thing, we don't want to base our decisions on fear. Fear is not a high frequency vibration, you know, so I have the moto prepare for the worst but expect the best. So I mean who knows, maybe we adapt, maybe the planet adapts, I don't know.

But I think we do have responsibility individually and I think it's important to be aware of our lifestyle. We are consuming, we are creating rubbish, what is our carbon footprint we are creating. So all these aspects to try and make it a minimum, try to be aware in everyday life. Try kind of like put our grain of sand or grain of rice to try to stop that.

And that I think, as a collective we can achieve it. I mean we can actually change things slowly. It is already happening, okay, so there is a lot of really positive things happening. I think that's what we really need to focus on, the positive aspects of life and of course we used the negative aspect to value the positiveness and really be aware of that but not let the negative aspect overwhelm us and then we just become useless. We just become overwhelmed and just.

So anyway that is a little bit, I can't really talk much about climate change because I don't really know much about it.

Student: Can I ask you a question. Because the feeling from those involved in it seems to be that it is too late. It's not a negative thing if you don't see it as such because all the things you've said are talking about attachment so is it an attachment to us as human beings to survive that is a problem. A lot of people are thinking beyond that, like maybe that's not how we should be thinking but they don't know where to look or how the collective consciousness is prepared to think in a different way like okay, we are becoming extinct, that's okay, the planet survives, things change and we continue on another level.

Osel: Maybe, who knows. But what do you mean by attachment?

Student: Well because if people want to survive they are attached to the life they have

Osel: I'm talking also about the next generation. I have a son and for me it's really important to have an idea that he is going to have a beautiful life and so for me that is something that worries me. Maybe it's attachment. Maybe it could be, yeah. I mean I'm sure it is mixed with attachment somehow because I have a deluded mind so yeah, but...

Student: The message that needs to come out to the people and I suppose the mindfulness movement is something that's non secular so easier to grasp whereas Buddhism is too specific but to me science and Buddhism have it, they have the answers. How do we project that message? How do people see it and where do people see it?

Osel: How do they see what? A better future?

Student: How to see their mindset and if it changes it changes and we have to go towards it. Where you're talking about hope, again hope is attachment. If you have hope you have attachment.

Student 2: I think there is a difference between hope and being hopeful. Hope can be either with expectation that something will happen but hope that is active is like leaving room for a possibility

Osel: Hope because you are doing something. Not just hoping and letting it be

Student 2: It talks about active hope and I found that is a sense we can be active and it's not dependent on certain outcomes because it is looking very serious and still remain actively hopeful and I find that really helpful for how to remain actively hopeful...

Osel: That is why we put the grain of rice, right?

Student 2: Nothing is too small. Greta Thunberg says everything counts, no action is too small and it's so true.

Osel: Exactly, that's why to be aware of our carbon footprint, of the rubbish we accumulate, what we consume, how we live...

Student: and plant trees?

Osel: Oh, plants trees! That is definitely. I have a project of planting trees, as many trees all over the globe, so planting as many trees and then eventually to offer that to His Holiness Dalai Lama as what do you call it?

Jacki: For the long life of His Holiness and the planet

Osel: For the long life of His Holiness Dalai Lama and the planet. So that is my active hope if you can call it like that. I think if each of us can plant at least one tree that will be wonderful.

Student: I'm not sure if this is the same as what you've been talking about but hope based on emotion maybe isn't particularly helpful but hope based on wisdom maybe more. Does that sort of cross into what you were talking about or not? I mean the way that hope is engendered.

Student 2: I get's it's about motivation right, that's where motivation comes in. If we don't want climate change to happen because we don't want things to change from how to know them that is unrealistic.

Student: More of wisdom based is how I just interpreted what you said rather than just hoping.

Osel: Well attachment I think is also an instinct of survival, the attachment for not loosing your life. I mean if we were not attached to our life we probably wouldn't have survived as a species. So I don't know. There are so many aspects and perspectives to everything and that's why philosophy is so good because you can debate and you can reach conclusions and there is always more than one conclusion.

But anyway that's why it's a process, a learning process to slowly slowly be more ware of what we are doing here and how can we improve ourselves. For me that's my purpose at least, so I can share that. That's why I'm making a point of studying dharma now because I feel that it's important for me to understand the teachings of Buddha so I can also be of more benefit, not just out of experience but also to understand the concepts more.

So I am really happy, to get feedback for me is great and I think it's also because if we have doubts, if we have things like that it's good to speak out because we can clarify between all of us because we are a collective, we are a community, we are a family. The whole planet is a family. The whole universe is a family and yeah, so, anyway, I'm sorry I can't really talk much about climate change but I think yes, active hope, hopefulness, active hope is good so we have to do something but we have to take responsibility, not just despair and that's it or be fearful and that's it, you know, that's what I'm saying.

We need to put our grain of sand, grain of rice. I think a grain of rice is more useful than a grain of sand but the grain of sand comes out because that is a metaphor that gets used all the time. You know, countless grains of sand from the Ganga.

So it's also good to pray. I think the power of prayer is really powerful and of course together, complimentary you have to do something about it, obviously. That is pretty obvious.

Student: The power of prayer in what way?

Osel: The power of prayer, so for example, so that's the motivation in the morning, you know, may I, so me, even though it doesn't exist from its own side, so that is one meditation already, you observe, check, where is the I, so search. Then, so this I or whatever it is, may it be of benefit and my motivation is I want to dedicate this time and space and energy that I'm going to have today to learn to improve and to be able to help others have a better life. Something like that. And that is already a prayer and that habit helps you to have more compassion, to be more aware of others, you know. It's all complimentary. It all comes down to the same thing which is bodhichitta.

If you're not grateful it's difficult to have bodhichitta also, you know, because you have to be grateful, you have to be aware of what you have in order to know what you can offer also.

So what does it mean to be a practical engaged buddhist in our modern day and age? I think that's basically it, it sums it up, you know, I mean to be a person who is active in your life, for example just like your work space. People are stressed sometimes, people are unhappy, people are tired and you yourself can many times be tired and overwhelmed so that is also how to put into practice that. The more difficult the situation, the better the opportunity to put into practice dharma, right?

That's how you train your mind. You don't train your mind just by chilling. You train your mind when you are challenged by life in difficult situations you know. So then you have to be able to be aware, observe your mind. That is the training, you know. So when somebody talks to you harshly that is a great opportunity there to see them as your teacher because they are helping you to see those demons have come out from within.

So I think that's engage, practical, engaged buddhist is that, you know, starting to be a better person. Every day starting to be a better person. I can't stop repeating it because I think it's really important to make the point. I don't know, maybe I'm repeating it too much, I don't know, but for me it's really important, that that is the basis, that is the basis. You know, if you don't get that, then forget about everything else, it doesn't really, it's not so helpful.

We can take all these initiations, all these teachings, all these things you want, if we don't get that right, if you're not a compassionate person starting with yourself and you're actually making effort to be aware of your own demons then it doesn't really make any difference at the end of the day.

And yeah, so, is it helpful, am I covering everything, kind of, no confusion, good, okay? Are you happy? Everyone is happy? Okay, good. Keep that happiness. So yeah, so the last part is about the guru, right? Who asked me about the guru?

Student: Advice on how my mind can work with aspects of the guru that manifest in a way that contradicts my own reality.

Osel: The conventional aspects or the ultimate aspects?

Student: I'm not at the ultimate so it will be the conventional

Osel: Conventionally we are all in samsara, we are all in the same boat

Student: Is that an excuse?

Osel: No, it's not an excuse, it's an explanation. That the guru has a human aspect. You know for us to be able to relate to that guru as an example. I mean, I don't know, it depends. I mean I don't really know if I'm the right person to talk about this because I am not a guru first of all, and I would never accept for anyone to call me a guru. I'm not a teacher, I don't feel that I am qualified as a teacher. I don't know if I ever will be, I'm more of a student and I think we will learn from each other.

Student: I hope you will be. I pray that you will be

Osel: So I am in a box? Sorry. I feel a little bit like that, it's like putting someone in a box. I know that traditionally speaking saying you are a guru is so special, I know that, it's great but I don't want to be a guru. I just don't feel qualified, I don't want to be put in a box. I want to be myself and I want to be able to learn.

I think we all learn from each other, you know, and actually if you think about it there is, I don't know if I'm allowed to talk about it but, at the tantric level, at higher tantric level you actually visualise that you are guru and the guru is you. I know it's super secret but I'm saying it now. But I think it's important to make a point about it because that is how it works, you know. So it's not something separate, it's not something far away. In the end that is who you are, that is what we're talking about. We started talking about buddha nature, buddha potential, right?

So there is many explanations that that say the guru manifests this, they manifest that in order to transform your mind, in order to accept that I don't know. For me it's difficult to fathom or tackle that, you know. I can't really deal with something like that.

Student: Do you have that relationship with His Holiness?

Osel: Yeah. I mean for me, whatever His Holiness does it's always going to be perfect. No matter what. Maybe, I don't know, I think it's also about many times we see what we are, right? I don't know, I am putting myself in a difficult situation? I tend to do that, I dig a hole and then I jump into it, but it's very tricky. It's important to tackle these questions. It's so important and for me it's a challenge and I like to, I want to but it's difficult you know because I don't want to create confusion and I can't speak for others, I can only speak for myself.

So anyways, I just really hope that people who are put in that position as a guru have a good that do you call it? A good attitude, a good, anyways, I don't want to get into that. I don't know, I just can't answer that. I don't know, some people say it is karma, some people say it's our merits. Some people say it's a manifestation of the guru, that they are manifesting for us to learn an aspect of ourself because they are a reflection of a certain aspect we need to work on. There are different ways to see it.

I mean conventionally, many times, I don't know, it's very difficult you know but I can tell you that I will always be on the side of the victim. I will never protect or defend an institution or the abuser whoever it is. I will always be on the side of the victim. That's who I am and that's what I can say very clearly, that's who I am.

So I hope that helps in a way but I mean we are living in crazy times and humans are crazy, you look at the human history but we are entering a really amazing page of information and we are just so lucky to be here at the time when we can actually watch on the computer, we just press play and we just watch the teachings, you know. So precious.

Back in the times of the Buddha you would have to travel for months walking, you know, and you could get sick, you could get killed by robbers and it was so hard to get there you had to follow these merchant pathways. What do you call it? The trade routes. And then the languages would

change, you probably didn't understand the languages and then finally you would get to where the Buddha is teaching and maybe the Buddha is teaching way far away and you can't even hear what he is saying so maybe you can only understand an interpretation of an interpretation of an interpretation of such and such a person who heard it was explains to that person who explains to that person in that way, you know.

So right now we lives like Kings actually if you think about it. Only Kings back then, could have the enjoyment we have, you know, the samsaric enjoyment. Which is like to have our five senses bombarded at the same time, together. How amazing is that. Only kings had that kind of experience where they could listen to music.

Lots of people would be playing music for them, lots of people bring food and then entertainment, then perfumes, massage, all at the same time. The king, five senses bombarded. That is like the ultimate, the maximum, right? We have that these days, we can have that, right? We can watch TV, listen to music, press play eat the food at the same time we are watching a movie, being entertained. Order new clothes, click, click, click, click, I want this I want that click, click, click, click, all from your home to bring to your house. You don't even need to go out to get what you want. Food, everything, they bring it to your house.

So actually we are really lucky, but that's the thing, you know, many times we have gold in front but we don't, we don't, see it because it is in front and we're looking here, here and everywhere and that is one of the aspects of our mind, dissatisfaction.

If you think about it life it magical, so magical but we just forget about it because it is normal. The sun is amazing. The wind that makes the trees dance is amazing. The fact that somebody can talk and you can hear and you can understand these words and vibrations or whatever is it that's travelling invisibly which reaches your ear and your ear can transform information so you can understand, you can communicate. There are so many different ways of communicating, it's amazing. That is magical and we forget about it because it is something normal. We don't give it that much importance and then it's here, there, I need more, that's not enough, that's for me, blah, blah. blah.

So that's why isn't very simple at the end of the day, you know, it's very simple. You just have to be aware of everything. It's a beautiful hologram, it's really magical. Sometimes I think, oh maybe this is just a simulation and then, you know, the more merits we create, when we wake up, when we die and they say hey congratulations you won the first prize. Or maybe if you did a really bad job you wake up and they say okay, now you are going to jail. You will be punished now. I don't know, it's funny.

But, anyways. So just try to do your best, you know, and that's good enough. You know, don't think that you can't do, you know. Be proud of yourself but be humble also. Be as we belong and yeah, active hope. Put it into practice. Anything else? Can I talk about anything else or would you like to say something, or? It's all good, is it a good package today? Okay, thank you so much.

Student: In the context you've just given of all these sense experiences that we can have do you think Tibetan Buddhism is going to survive?

Osel: Tibetan Buddhism is going to survive? Well everything is changing constantly.

Student: So Tibetan Buddhism is going to change?

Osel: Well everything is changing all the time. The only thing that doesn't change is space, everything else is changing. Or the absence of the elephant in the room also doesn't change but that is philosophy. You see, I am very, sorry.

Of course it is going to change, it is always changing. It was changed from two thousand five hundred years ago at the time of the Buddha it has changed completely and of course we need a new adaptation, we need an update for western minds, for western lifestyle and culture so of course it is, yeah, definitely.

Student: So is somebody like you isn't a part of that process, how is that process going to happen?

Osel: Well, I mean we are all part of the same collective so we are all part of the same process. I mean I don't know, what do you mean, like, are you saying I'm not a Buddhist or?

Student: That's what you heard. I think what I'm saying is I think a lot of the aspects of FPMT has sometimes focused very much on the external tradition and I'm just requesting that you with all your western understanding become part of that process of helping western buddhism.

Osel: Okay, can I tell you a secret? A big secret. I don't know if I am a Buddhist or not. I'm learning about Buddhism and maybe I will be learning about Buddhism all my life. I'm striving to be a better person everyday, so I guess that kind of makes me a Buddhist, I don't know. It's just a label at the end of the day. It's more about an attitude and a lifestyle and how you relate to people and how you relate to yourself and all sentient beings obviously.

I think that is the important aspect, you know. Whether you call it one thing or another doesn't really matter you know but dharma helps you to be a better person whatever you are doing, you know. Dharma helps you to be a better person and whatever religion or whatever job you have dharma is helping you to be a better person. So you can't really put it in a box.

I know we like to put things in a box because we like to feel we are in control because we are fearful of the unknown but sometimes it's good to get out of the box because we are travelling in boxes, we are living in boxes and when we die this thing goes in a box. So I think sometimes it's good to get some fresh air and get out of the box.

So yeah, anyways, but thank you for the question and I will try my best to be part of a maybe new model but I don't want to change anything. I just want to help create a new model to reach more people, you know, to be able to relate to another aspect of themselves. Basically so we can live in a more happy world and be more happy, you know, that's it. You know, I think His Holiness the Dalai Lama he says, the future is education, you know. So we need to educate, we need to learn and the next generation of course. We need more Gretas, many more Gretas. Greta Thunberg.

Thank you so much and please keep up the good work, keep up the good work, keep it up. Thank you so much, thank you so much and I'm sorry if I make any mistakes. Thank you.

Jenny, Land of Joy's Director: On behalf of Land of Joy and on behalf of everyone here can I just offer our thanks to you for being here, for sharing your processes and thoughts and passions for this and we very much hope that you are going to be coming back again regularly, to teach us and help us discuss becoming better people and maybe help with the cooking, planting some trees would be very good and we would like to offer a long life prayer.

Osel: Can we do a long life prayer for His Holiness and Lama Zopa, it's better. So we dedicate to His Holiness and to Lama Zopa Rinpoche and all our virtuous friends, for their long life. Thank you, thank you, and you too.

[group recite prayers]

Osel: Yeah, so instead of going so much on Facebook we have to face our book and instead of going on the internet all the time we have to get our inner net. Get our inner net going, just joking, So let's dedicate the traditional way, also, Tibetan style. So let's dedicate, please, everybody.

[group recite prayers]

Osel: Thank you so much, thank you.