

Understanding Phenomena

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When you go for refuge, that's not just for your own sake. It's for the sake of yourself and all other sentient beings, both. When you cultivate bodhicitta, that is also to benefit both yourself and others. Now while you are alive and everything is good, take refuge. Practice. If you don't take refuge now, if you don't practice now, and then at the last minute you just screech and scream, "Aaaaaah! I'm dying!" so what? That's not enough. So what are you gonna do? Dying means your experience is that you are dying. That is your phenomena. That phenomena means you are confused—confused by your own concepts. Your seeing, outer and inner, is confused. Hearing is confused. Smelling is confused. Tasting is confused. Forms, sights, everything—nothing has changed, but we think it has.

You don't need to be a big deal somebody, His Holiness or something—bullshit!

I think you have wonderful lamas, like H.H. Dudjom Rinpoche, Penor Rinpoche, and many in the Kagyu tradition. We still have Dodrupchen Rinpoche and Tulku Theglo, too, and I don't think any are like His Holiness the Dalai Lama. These are our real gurus.

Then who are your dharma brothers and sisters? You can see each other now with your own eyes—this damn one and that damn one, dammit! Actually, nothing is dammit.

If you can understand any tiny phenomena, even one hair's worth, then nothing is particularly a buddha and nothing is particularly a demon. Nothing's heaven, nothing's hell. Just phenomena. Then in the future, slowly, slowly you will recognize pure phenomena more and more. What does pure phenomena or pure vision mean? It means you are recognizing it! Recognizing your own phenomena. Then what? Then it is no big deal—not some special big deal, not some horrible big deal. Then that's the pure vast expanse.

Also, rather than always saying, "Mine! This! Your way! My way!" respect each other. All the "This!" is just phenomena. If you recognize that phenomena, then it is pure phenomena. If not, then it is impure. Everyone can understand that.

Pure phenomena, *dagpa rabjam* or the pure vast expanse, is primordially pure. It was pure before everything. Nobody needs to clean it up, and there is nothing for anyone to wash or anything. Right now it is like that.

It is like that, but, failing to understand that, people complain and whine and scream—"Oh, this is no good!" "Oh, I'm dying!" "Oh, someone is trying to cheat me!" "Oh, he took this from me!"

My goodness!

Many so-called lamas I don't trust. Some, like His Holiness the Dalai Lama, yes. But some lamas think they are higher than everyone, and are surrounded by demons who say they are so great,

and we follow them and then that way we also start saying, “Oh, yes, this one is bad! This one is good!” We love to follow these kinds of teeter-totters, saying yes, yes, no, no, or whatever comes to mind, and that way we create obstacles for ourselves.

Therefore, you guys need to help each other, step by step. Some really do help, and make it possible for the teachers to come, for students to learn. That is how we should be supporting each other.

Guru Rinpoche is your root guru. Vajrasattva is your root guru. Shakyamuni is your root guru. Enlightened body, speech, mind, and qualities are your root guru. You are Buddhists, that is what that means! So try, okay?

We say delusion is symbolized by the pig. That’s an example. Who has delusion? Who makes mistakes? Who makes us screw up? Even high lamas on diamond thrones make mistakes — that’s delusion, too. Nothing big deal.

You guys, if you don’t practice and learn nicely, then like me you will just eat and sleep — that’s delusion. I’m delusion, like a pig chowing down. I’m desire, like a snake moving a thousand miles an hour. No, actually it’s just your own mind. I have my own mind — I’m not gonna share!

Anyway, look at the deer here. They are so peaceful. Just be like that. Your own mind, more and more peaceful. You don’t need to be a scholar or great practitioner. Just let your own mind be more and more peaceful, like you can see in the example of the deer here. Try like that, okay?

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral