

On Dharma Classes

Venerable Gyatrul Rinpoche

April 2nd, 2017

I saw a video on the computer of you guys at O.D.D. having class with Ila. I should hope so! But not so many people. How come everybody complains that we don't have teachers, we don't have teachings, and then when there is the opportunity to learn, nobody comes? Is that because you don't need to learn? Don't need to practice?

You do need to practice.

How are you going to practice? You need to learn how. Why would you do practice at all? You need to learn why. Why do you need to learn? Why do you need to practice? Then, how are you going to do it? How can you learn? How can you practice? You need your why and your how.

First is that: understanding. Stage by stage, understanding. That is why we have teachers, we have teachings, we have books, we have students explaining to each other, helping each other. Helping each other with understanding. That is our first stage. We need understanding. With faith, those two together.

We have a problem, which is our faith. What is our faith in, really? Our faith should not be in chasing guys or chasing ladies. Animals do that, like in Tibet with the yaks, the female and male chasing each other. Cows, goats, sheep, horses, they all do the same thing, too! See! Chasing guys and ladies is nothing special, nothing big deal! I feel, anyway. I don't know why everyone makes such a big deal. I don't think we need to make THAT big a deal about it. It is just for samsara. We are already in samsara! We don't need to try to find some skillful way to stay in samsara. We don't need to focus on samsara. We are already in the middle of samsara! We don't need help with our samsara. We need help with the antidote, with our dharma.

Therefore, everybody try and help each other when somebody needs something. When somebody doesn't understand, help them!

When someone is teaching or explaining, listen carefully: "What is she saying? What is he saying?"

Right now people are like spies, listening to what the person says and then afterwards repeating it to others as a joke. If you make that your joke, you are playing with Shakyamuni Buddha, Kuntuzangpo, Guru Rinpoche, the Twenty-Five Disciples, the Thousand Buddhas of this eon, not to mention millions of other buddhas, too! Those are

not a joke. They are everybody's refuge. They are not for our play, not for us to make fun of. They are for us to take refuge in.

That is our focus: take refuge and practice.

For what? For your own liberation. For the liberation of all other beings.

If you want to bring an end to your suffering, you need to practice. If you want to bring an end to your ignorance, you need to practice. If you want to bring an end to all your wrong things, all your nasty ones holding you in the prison of samsara, you need to practice. But practice what? Showing your butt? No. You are already professional at that! It doesn't work for liberation. You need to practice the kind of practice that makes the cause of liberation. What is that? That is real buddhadharma. All the buddhas, their dharma is that, showing us that, so many ways. That one, we need.

That one, we are not professional. Don't pretend you already know—if you did know, you wouldn't be stuck in samsara, still. Still you are a prisoner. That means still you don't know. That means don't be proud. No matter how pretty or handsome or rich or intelligent you are, still you are a samsara prisoner like everybody. The prettiest, richest queen or king of a billion million worlds, when they die they are still only a samsaric being. Still under the thumb of their karma. The highest king and queen or scholar or richest one or most handsome or greatest hero—that kind of person looks so high, so far above the low, dirty, ugly, stupid beggar. Actually, they are the same! High one nothing different—still samsara prisoner, too. Low one, same thing. How come we make such a big deal?

Anyway, what we need is to practice, honestly and sincerely, the path to liberation. How are we going to practice? We need to learn how to practice. Therefore, I say again, again, again: hear, contemplate, and meditate on the dharma. Actually, it's not me saying it. All the great masters say it. This is how they all achieved liberation, and if we are going to be liberated, this is how we are going to do it, too. You can't be liberated by going your own way, I guarantee it. So that is why we learn the dharma.

Therefore, if these ladies, Sangye Khandro, or Shashi, or Ila, for example, come to teach or explain or show you, then everybody should come! And don't just come because they are ladies, that means nothing! One is dried up, one is too naughty, one has a giant butt! Useless! No, no, no, nothing to do with that. If they are pretty or ugly doesn't mean one hair. What is important? They do know the dharma, they can help you guys. I tell them, again and again, teach! Help the sangha! They do know, they can explain many things, and they speak your own language so they don't need a translator. What is everybody waiting for?

This time when Ila went to O.D.D. to teach, it looks like a few people came. Thank you! You guys understand that is precious, you understand its value, so you are standing up, trying to learn, trying to understand more correctly, trying to practice more correctly, it looks like. Thank you! I don't know where others are, maybe chasing somebody's butt or busy for other important reasons. I do know everybody has so many important things. When you die, are you going to be too busy for that, too? Tough luck! Are you too busy for your liberation? If you are always busy, your liberation time never comes.

You do have O.D.D., a wonderful, beautiful center, so you have a place to come and learn. Now you have teachers, people who can explain many things, and you can ask them questions, too. Why does everybody run away? Is there a bad smell? Maybe your own smell, actually! Maybe the smell means you need to clean your own butt!

We do, actually. We are all of us like babies with dirty diapers. You need to clean your own diaper, your own butt. How? By taking another shower? You Americans love to take showers! Twenty-four hours a day, you are in the shower. And not just the ladies, either! Rather than twenty-four hours in the shower, please spend a few minutes practicing and learning the dharma, sincerely and with faith. That is the real shower. That is the best shower, and better than any bathtub. Try, like that, if you want your shit smell to go away, okay? Other things don't benefit. Perfume and smelly things, they don't work. Painting your face, still it never looks clean. Just dirtier and dirtier. If you want the real clean, the real pretty, the real handsome or beautiful, then you need real practice. Please, everybody, try sincerely like that, okay? With the mind, brain, focus, heart, everything—not just the mouth!

Try sincerely. Learn sincerely. Contemplate sincerely. Practice sincerely. It doesn't have to be big things, just tiny, tiny ones. Learn a tiny one, practice a tiny one. That's fine! A tiny one is plenty, like just saying OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG. But with faith, with right motivation, with compassion, not forgetting sentient beings. That way tiny things are not tiny.

When you are sincerely doing dharma, that is real respect. You are respecting yourself and respecting others. You don't need to puff up or pop up like a mushroom. The real respect is to be really honest, sincere, humble. That way you respect each other and respect yourself. That way you benefit, too.

Try that way. Don't waste your opportunities. Don't waste your beautiful dharma center that everybody has worked so hard for so many years to build and to keep. It is not there for you to be a go-go lady or a playboy. You can do that anyplace. It is here for you to study the dharma and learn the dharma. Everybody needs that. Nobody doesn't

need it. If you need liberation, you need dharma. If you don't want suffering, you need dharma.

If these ladies come and teach, they are coming for you. To benefit you. That is why I tell them to come, to teach, again and again. For you! To benefit you, your understanding, your practice.

Nobody should have to ask you to come to their teaching. Why does someone need to ask you to benefit yourself? Does someone need to pay you money so you'll benefit yourself? Does someone need to do prostrations and bring an offering envelope and a kata to you to request you, please, to benefit yourself? Give me a break!

Nobody asks you to eat food, do they? Not their job! Your own job, to eat your food. If somebody puts it on the table in front of you, nobody has to ask you to eat! You chow down, no hesitation! Even animals know how to eat, nobody has to tell them. Same thing with the dharma. If somebody puts it on the table in front of you, and you don't eat, that's really stupid, isn't it? Worse than an animal? If you put food in front of an animal, instantly they gobble it up! You are supposed to be a human being – what are you waiting for?

Try, okay, everybody?

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatral