

## *Thanks and Advice at the Conclusion of Retreat*

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*The following is taken from Rinpoche's video call during the concluding ceremony of the Chimed Sok Tig longevity practice that followed this year's Vajrasattva retreat at Tashi Choling.*

Wonderful, thank you! Everything looks wonderful. The temple looks wonderful. The style, everything—wonderful!

In the future, for as long as America exists, you guys maintain this!

Keep this—Tashi Choling and Orgyen Dorje Den and Portland Yeshe Nyingpo. And not only that, but spread the dharma more and more!

Not only that, but everyone please keep harmony and pure discipline always. Okay? Everybody keep harmony. It looks like right now you are.

What is Buddhism? What is dharma? Everybody, all of us, have the five poisons. Do we know that? Do we know our own poisons? Everybody has the five poisons. Therefore, we have the dharma! This is a religion. This is the dharma. This is your temple. Everyone is saving merit and cleansing their obscurations. Whose obscurations? Our obscurations. We are not the only ones with obscurations, all sentient beings have obscurations. Do they know how to see or accept their obscurations? Do they know how to accept their problem, which is their five poisons? NO! They don't. But we can. We need to see and recognize our own problem, our own five poisons, because we have no excuse. We have everything—Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana; outer, inner, and secret.

Right now everyone is very harmonious. Without harmony do you think you can cleanse your obscurations? Without harmony do you think you can do confession effectively? No, that never happens! Therefore, we need to watch our trip.

Our five poisons or millions of poisons or whatever, we need to see and recognize them. Once we recognize them, we need to not keep them in the bank. We need to do confession, and slowly give them up. Give up our five poisons, and practice stage by stage.

You have a temple—what is the reason? Why do you have a temple?

For learning!

Learning for what?

Learning so that you can practice.

Why are you practicing?

You are practicing to clear your obscurations, your five poisons. Don't pretend that you don't have them. Don't pretend that you don't know it. Too late! Recognize them instead! We are sort of guilty, therefore we confess. We do know our negativity. We need to do confession. Recognizing our poisons, recognizing that all beings have poisons, we need to have compassion for sentient beings and for ourselves. Seeing that, have compassion and then do confession. Do Vajrasattva.

That is why you have a temple. You have statues. You have thangkas. You have stupas. You have books. You have monks. You have nuns. You have everything!

Everybody can practice. In the future, everybody practice that way. Don't blame somebody else: "Oh, he did it!" or "She did it!" "I didn't do it!" No. Please, everybody, recognize your own guiltiness. Therefore, we do confession, we do Vajrasattva, we do have these things. Don't say, "Oh, I don't know what that is!" Blah blah blah... Why do you say you don't know how to do confession, how to do Vajrasattva, but you do know how to do all the gossip and slander? How come you don't know how to do OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG?

We have an opportunity right now. You have everything together — dharma brothers and sisters, everything. Lingtrul Rinpoche is here, too.

We should at least know how to sit! Even if we don't want to practice, at least we should know how to sit properly. Look at how others sit. Look at yourself. Watch your own shortness. This is our opportunity to fix! To fix ourselves up, to fix it up. This is our opportunity. In our next life, we need to be liberated, not stuck in samsara. Please! I think that is the way.

These days you guys have been working, making offerings for my long life. Thank you. But if you need my life to be long, that depends on how disciplined you are, and how you practice. Practice is most important for me, and for you, and for everybody. Practice, everybody!

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

These days my body is good, everything is good, I am eating like a horse, and complaining here. I have a pumpkin head partner in complaining, too! Anyway, try everybody, good. So wonderful, your temple. I also saw O.D.D. on the computer and it also looked so wonderful. So now what do we need? We have these temples, the temples are so good. All the hangings, the parasols, all the decorations, everything is good. The drums are good. Everything is good, and according to tradition. Don't be lazy, for instance not playing the trumpets or not playing the gyalings. All of those things, they are part of the music offerings, so don't be lazy with them. If you don't know how to play them, then learn. These are the offerings. Don't be MY WAY, "I am American!" "I don't need that!" No, no, no! Americans in general, maybe they don't need those things, but you need them, we need them. We need to have everything be complete, according to what you are practicing, according to what you learned. Top to bottom, we need to learn it all, and practice it, stage by stage.

Don't say, "Oh, I don't need to learn the drum!" or "I don't like it!" Oh, no. The real thing you don't like is what you haven't liked your whole life and for a billion lifetimes—your own negativity. We do have plenty of those things—what we don't like, the real things that we don't like, all those lifetimes. That real thing we don't like, that is what we need to drop. All our poisons. Just as billions and billions of Buddhas have been liberated, we should follow them. Do that. This is not just something that somebody said yesterday.

Here we are very good. The land is good, the place to stay is good, there are lots of flowers—everything!

You guys, up there, you have a wonderful temple, I see that. I saw O.D.D. too, and the temple there is also really nice. I am really happy. That is buddhadharma! That is only through the kindness and blessing of all our root lamas. Who are they? The Dalai Lama; the Karmapa from the Kagyu lineage; Dudjom Rinpodhe and others from the Nyingma lineage; the two Holinesses from the Sakya lineage, and others. We have lamas from all the lineages! Therefore, in the future don't pop up, saying you are only Kagyu or only Geluk or only this or that. Don't be foolish, don't talk foolishly like that. Buddhism is Buddhism. If you follow the Kagyu, so what? Practice! Don't just hold that name like you were holding a knife. If you follow the Nyingma, so what? Practice! If you follow the Nyingma but you don't practice and you don't know anything, that doesn't work. You need to know what it means to belong to the Nyingma lineage, or the Kagyu, or the Sakya, or the Geluk. Not in terms of one being the right one and one being the wrong one. No! Kagyu is right. Nyingma, right. Sakya, right. Geluk, right. Jonang, right. All of them are Buddhism. They are all right.

What is the thing that is not right? Our five poisons. What is the problem? Our five poisons. First, recognize them and then slowly, slowly, you can get rid of them. You have skills. You have lots of books! What is in the books? They tell what Hinayana is, what Mahayana is, what Vajrayana is. We are all of us guilty. Everybody is guilty, therefore we need to learn! How to practice, the reason for practicing, why—these are the things we need to learn. Why, when, how, how many, the numbers, everything about practice we need to learn. All of that belongs where? To only one thing: your brain.

Stage by stage, everybody learn, please. Everybody learn, and then what you have learned, don't keep it in the garbage can! Practice it nicely! However much you practice, however much you have learned, your five poisons will get less and less. You will get more and more peaceful, more successful, and you will benefit yourself and serve other sentient beings. All the lamas say this. I am not the only one saying it! I am not saying that this is the situation that you need, and blah blah blah, because I say so. I am saying this because the lamas have said this.

How many empowerments have we received, from Yangthang Rinpoche, Penor Rinpoche, Dudjom Rinpoche, and others? Everybody think about this. You guys got everything. Now it is time to practice, time to learn. Without learning, you don't know how to practice. Without practice, you don't get any result. You don't get any benefit for yourself or for others. Nothing.

Don't think, "Oh, I don't have a zen, I don't have a skirt, I am not a monk, therefore I can't practice!" No, no, no. If you don't have anything, still that is fine, just practice. Don't be naked—that is maybe important! Otherwise just practice, slowly, slowly, everybody.

Anyway, nice to see you guys! Thank you! Thank you for praying for my long life. Everything is wonderful here. What will really make my life long is if you guys keep your discipline. You do know how to keep your discipline. Take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. From there, keep your discipline and practice. If you have discipline, then you can practice. If you have discipline but no practice? Then you never get anywhere. Therefore, everybody practice. Everybody keep pure discipline. Everybody keep harmony. Look at your temple! If we don't have discipline, then we are bringing shame on that temple. And bringing shame on ourselves!

Anyway, thank you, everything looks wonderful! This is so good!

Thank you, everybody! Good night! See you after later!

Tashi Delek!

*-Gyatral*