

AFTER DINNER TEACHING PART 1:

CLEANING YOURSELF UP BY RECOGNIZING YOURSELF

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The following is an excerpt from spontaneous teachings Rinpoche gave one evening while sitting around the table after dinner.

Don't make a big deal when you meet someone new.

When you meet a new person, sometimes you make a big deal, thinking they can change you. You think they can clean you up? They can wash away your negativity? They can improve you by trimming a little bit here or there?

No, no. Nobody can do that for you. The only way to clean yourself up is to recognize yourself.

Only you can do it. Therefore, *you* need to practice. *You* need to learn.

At first you don't understand. Then you learn, and slowly you do understand. First you recognize your own negativity. When you recognize it, then you have the chance to wash. Then you practice more.

Then—again slowly—after a while, you recognize your nature that is never touched by negativity. That is the real washing. Slowly, slowly.

As you practice more and more, you recognize yourself more and more—that way you become really clean. That is the real benefit to yourself. That is the real “clean.”

It is not just wishy-washy, either—when you are clean in that way, you don't go up and down, or say “Yes, yes!” and then “No, no!”

I think real lamas are not wishy-washy. But myself, I just did wishy-washy practice and wishy-washy learning.

That's a shame, a real shame, because the buddha is there, your own nature, but you just don't want to look and see for yourself.

You are just waiting, open-mouthed, for someone to come and do it for you.

