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Arrogance Destroys Our Three Vehicles of Liberation

A spontaneous teaching from July 2013, given primarily in Rinpoche's own English.

Everyone loves to be special.

Then they pop up, getting arrogant, really embarrassing themselves. They think they are showing their qualities with their boasting, but really it is like something worse than showing their butt.

If someone is really special, in terms of genuine enlightened qualities and realization, actually they don't boast at all. They stay in their own place, very simple, very respectful.

If you are that kind of person, you don't jump "up there," trying to be so high. Then you don't break samaya or any of the other vows—Foundational Vehicle, Great Vehicle, or Vajra Vehicle, any level. Actually, with the Vajra Vehicle, if you even entertain the notion of boasting, then you have already broken some of the vows. With the Foundational Vehicle, if you go slightly to the left or right, you break them. With the Great Vehicle, if you go up there to arrogant places, then you lose your compassion and loving kindness and you're finished.

I watched, and many things I saw. We grab everything. But what we need to grab, what we should grab—Great Vehicle stuff, for example, such as compassion—we don't know how to hold it. So, we need to scratch it again and again because we are always losing it.

If your name is becoming big, proud, then your Great Vehicle is gone, not just into the toilet but under the toilet. That means the Vajra Vehicle is lost, so of course the Foundational Vehicle is absolutely gone.

Stay humble, in low places. Then you are not cheating. That way, you don't lose your Vajra Vehicle, and you have your Foundational Vehicle and Great Vehicle protected a little bit.

If you lose one small vow, one branch something, that's okay. Don't lose the root, the meaning, the essence.

Especially with the Vajra Vehicle, if you pretend you are high, then uh-uh! That is how you lose your Foundational Vehicle and Great Vehicle, then you have nothing for your Vajra Vehicle foundation.

We say we need to respect ourselves. Respect is okay, yes, but you need to have compassion for yourself. That means be a little bit careful not to have ego. That is the best compassion. If you have pride and ego, then if you are getting good in 1%, your ego goes up 5%. Then you've lost the whole thing. You have no structure left for your qualities.

These days, people need a high chair or a throne. But really, if you don't lose faith in the Foundational and Great Vehicles, then that faith is your high chair. And if you don't lose it, that is your protector, too. Tibetans take snuff to protect themselves from getting sick. You do need to protect your health, protect yourself from disease the real way. How? Stay humble! Regarding the Foundational Vehicle, for example, if you don't have the official vows but you just stay like that, humble, then you can see easily what is happening. If obstacles come up, you can just slow down. That protects you. If you don't watch carefully, if you don't stay low, humble, instead pretending to have the compassion of the Great Vehicle while all the time indulging your self-importance, no no—eat shit. If you pop up you will never be a practitioner of the Great Vehicle.

And the Vajra Vehicle? Absolutely, same thing.

