

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 29, 2017

Location: Chicago

Event: YMJJ Day 1 Morning

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: February 03, 2025

Your mind is Buddha. Meditation is enlightenment.

You may have heard this before. But when you hear it, during meditation, during retreat, it can become bombshell. Your mind is Buddha. Meditation is enlightenment.

Anything else could be excreta. But some people like more excreta. So it can become a story. Vital energy from your sitting still, vital energy from sitting still, gives life to body. Vital spirit from concentration gives life to the body, to the mind.

If your resolution is strong, then your practice becomes strong. If your training is deep, then your awakening deepens.

So this much is very clear. Do you feel that and can you bite it?

(Yes!)

If you read Yongmaeng Jeongjin schedule, I think which Sanha prepared. Every Yongmaeng prepare the schedule, the schedule is very similar to the previous one. But there's three mottos: Deep humility, profound gratitude, and hwadu study.

Now, this is a lay community, and you are lay practitioners. You are not monastics, so sometimes you can be very confused. There are rules for lay people, there are a lot of rules for monastics. But we have the same breath. They breathe and we breathe too.

So same breath, arise, but if you follow your feelings and thoughts and dwell on them, eventually your feelings and thoughts would bring sorry and anxiety. If you follow your breath, exhalation in particular, your breath eventually will bring you peace and happiness.

The problem with lay people practicing is still, particularly, I have been living in New York City, Manhattan, in Upper East Side. It's, you can see there's competition, fearless, throat to throat, and they all go after success, whatever they pursue. So happiness, happiness sometimes brings success. But success would be difficult to bring peace of mind and success. So you keep that in mind. So happiness to success, and success not to happiness.

Now, so it's, as you know already, Buddhist practice, meditation practice, always begins breathing, breathing mindfully is good. Anapanasati. Breathing in and breathing out. So I teach breath, breathing, a lot. And don't forget breathing. And in Mahayana Buddhism, it's called [unclear]. Not just breathing, you breathing-counting.

So some fellow came to his teacher and asked, "Can you tell me a little good Dharma?"

He said, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. And he was disappointed now, he said, "Oh." And then his teacher said, "Seven, six, five, four, two, one, zero." Well, he got, so zero is okay. Zero is good, you know. Emptiness. Negative and positives are, they are come from zero.

So the Indians invented zero, and Buddhists developed enormous literature on emptiness. So they have to realize emptiness also emptiness. And then emptiness, emptiness, and also emptiness. And then you can become stupid (laughter).

And, so anyways, counting. So you can, it's, counting breath, it's very significant. And so, our people here, say Dharma students, when they start, they learn to count breath. It's first deep breath, abdominal breaths, using abdominal muscles to breathe out, not chest breathing. And then exhalation. Inhalation is less important. Exhalation, exhaling, and count.

I had to go to dentist the other day for root canal. So, it's really grinding here. So I was counting. So counting is very useful. Which you can apply for time to time in your life situations.

Now, hwadu. By now you have become, if you have been a member of this temple or Ann Arbor, you have become familiar with unknowing mind. If you recite song of meditation it says that a lot. It says that non, no self... What is it?

(Non-self, boundless heart, first mind.)

Pardon? It says three ingredients of unknowing mind. Yeah. And then it says, "Be a little dumb, pure, and innocent to enter this world." So you can get hwadu, which always ends up in this tradition, "What is it?" But there's no real answer, but you can end up with this, your unknowing mind. But you have to keep your hwadu until your unknowing mind is strong enough and crush it. Crush your hwadu.

That takes work, because, when I say work it means, the guys up in the mountain, monastics, they can goof off, you know. They have lots of time. They can climb, and they can sit if they want. Plenty of time. But you people here, you don't have much time. You even split time, you have to learn to seize the time, each and every moment. So it's, it's almost impossible task for you to cultivate, which takes time, you know. In other words, you know, you have to make your entire practice as a spiritual journey.

So it's, in New York City, in Manhattan, we have Sunday morning meditation service. And each Sunday morning, each service, it attracts a few new people. And then they are, some of them have been never exposed to meditation or they heard about it and something good. And, so they come and just watch, you know. So we do a little bit of everything. A little bit of sitting, it's, where is [Unclear]? [Unclear], [Unclear] always comes twice a week. Wednesday evening sitting and Sunday morning. Sunday morning she used to come, we start Sunday morning 10:30. And, initially we started at 9, and that was too (laughs). So after that 10 and 10:30, so you have to get to temple by 10:30 in the morning. And [Unclear] comes about an hour and half earlier. To do prostration, and to do sitting, and then to prepare downstairs, the bathrooms. And then she got additional work, you know, to prepare tea before people show up.

So they watch, I mean, these guys, we do a little bit of sitting. That's if they arrive at 10:30. And then we ring the bell with a gata, bell gata. And then they join, and then we do a little bit of ritual service. And so, they sit, you know, these guys, they do a little bit ritual, ring the bell, and a little bit sitting, and then a little Dharma talk.

So they sit that way, but I point out to them if they ask, it's integrated. So say you are here for meditation, then listening to the sound of bell is also meditation. Or listening to Dharma talk is also meditation. It's all integrated. And also these days, for long time when you hear the bell chant, you sit down on your mat and cushion over here facing the altar, but these guys, they are not used to sit on mat on cushion. So standing up. So that's another way of stretching.

So they stand up, and then they follow me after, in English. Then, they don't like to make bow to the Buddha, you know. So if you don't like it, don't do it. But then when we switch into English, then I have them standing face to face so they don't hapjang to each other, make bow to each other, they like that.

So little bit of like this can go a long way, you see. So, but I always somehow manage to mention, oh it's, depending upon how early, you know, if they come early and if they never really practice meditation, we have them sitting in the reception area, you see. Until 10:30. But even then, they come and they spend about 10 minutes or so actually sitting in meditation. And I personally help them so that, I say it's playing mountain, means you have to hold your back straight, and then put pelvis just a little bit forward and then give a little bit, we have support cushion which, which we made. I think it was last year. [Unclear], under the direction of [Unclear]. So sometimes, you know, [unclear...].

And, so, and then breathe freely. And it's, we never close our eyes, because we have to be always visual. It's, this thing is, inevitably, your mind wanders. Inevitably you're daydreaming or fantasize. So it happens all the time, so you don't have to worry about it. It happens to everyone.

But then your mind would always come back. Awareness always returns. Then you seize upon that. That's very important. That's constant wake up. That's very important. You can also apply that in your everyday life.

So, as I say, say if you live in this room with no windows. So it's dark. And it does not matter how long you have been living in this darkness. Three days, or three years, or three hundred years. But if there's a little crack in the wall, the flood, the light, sunlight, would flood in. Dispelling darkness. But have you ever seen darkness dispelling light?

So this means, then you may ask, what happened to the darkness you are so used to? Try to get back darkness. So, but then you learn why suddenly darkness is gone, it's light? But the thing is, where does the light come from? But light does not come from anywhere. Not from God, not from Buddha, not from Buddhas, Bodhisattvas. It's, when you were in the darkness, the light potential was right there in the middle of darkness. That's you. That's, your mind is Buddha.

So your mind is real. Darkness not real. Delusive passions is not real. So don't struggle with darkness and delusive passion, you see. But as I said, that your awareness, your Mind-Buddha, that's, you have to go after that. That would lead to awareness and awakening.

So then back to hwadu study. There's no answer. So it says, it's, when your attachment habit, when your attachment habit, that's, we, we all have that, comes to an end, then there's nothing really in particular.

So this worldly life is not all that bad. It's exciting. Even the, when people hurl you, you know, bad language or even when you usually feel bad, it's okay. Dig up unknowing mind.

It's always listening. Go back to your mind is Buddha, meditation is enlightenment.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 29, 2017

Location: Chicago

Event: YMJJ Day 1 Evening

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: February 04, 2025

This is story of intrinsic, intrinsic enlightenment. Or, what comes through your gate is not your own treasure.

Solbong, well this is not my teacher, Solbong. There are a number of homonyms, Solbong, you see, so, popular name. Solbong entered the monastery early in his life, and with gratitude and humility, he honoured his teachers. There are so many of them since he was young. So he honoured all the teachers and served the community, monastic community, faithfully.

He, he was quick to learn and always ready with helping hand. When he completed his basic training and monastic studies, he was allowed to travel and visit teachers. So some teachers recognized him and, so word spread for this young, new, kind of Dharma star. So some monastic communities extended their invitation and offered living quarters.

So eventually he accepted a little sub-temple with meditation hut, and it came with a substantial vegetable garden. So he lived alone, but once in a while a stray monk would drop by out of curiosity or for an opportunity of Dharma combat. Then, first he would invite him to work with him to grow food. Vegetables and seasonal fruits. And after that they would sit together. So they alternate.

And, so once they come, they usually stay. So in ten years, he got 12 of them who came and stayed. So out of 12, he took five of them as his disciples.

Now, in the meantime, the villagers down the mountain, somehow they felt something suspicious going on up there, you know. Because there is, occasionally, who would go, monks traveling, climbing up, up there it's very isolated, but they never saw anyone coming down (laughter). So it's, they become very suspicious and then they talk to each other and they have to really find out what happened to all these monks traveling up, climbing up over there. Where did they go?

And also they noticed, recently, usually one monk a year or something like that, recently the number of monks visiting increased. And again, they saw nobody coming down. But on the contrary, to the concern of the villagers, to spiritual seekers, it's a good sign. Someone goes up

there, never came down, means there's something that attract them, you see. Something going on, something good going on. And the number has been increasing.

So the villagers, they decided to wait since they saw the number increased. So some other people, when they see them come they would join them and then find out themselves what's going on.

And Solbong was well aware of this. So he was definitely expecting the number would increase. So he sat down with his disciples and warned them, you know. And also how to deal with them when they come.

And indeed, in six months or so, this time a large group of them, and some of them are villagers, came up. And as soon as they saw them coming in the distance, climbing up, they charged against them, you know, shouting, you thieves! I would not let you steal our treasures, you thieves!

So these monks coming, they were completely confused, you know. We're just coming for visit.

No! You are, while neglecting your own treasure you are coming to steal someone else's treasure!

So they have been going back and forth and eventually, okay, well then you have to prove that you are not here to steal our treasure while neglecting your own.

So, while attending the vegetable garden, they grew watermelon. Melon and watermelon, 샌디아 saendia. So, and then his disciples brought out big saendia and then asked, "Is this form or emptiness? And you cannot tell me that," he said. "Is this form or emptiness?"

Then he turned to his disciples, you know, they come right away with a, cut it, and start eating! "So you saw that?"

So, they showed the Heart Sutra hwadu, you see. So in the deep practice of Prajna Paramita, the Bodhisattva of Great Compassion saw five skandhas are empty. Five skandhas, not just four.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 30, 2017

Location: Chicago

Event: YMJJ Day 2 Morning

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

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For centuries, Buddhas, and Bodhisattvas, and teachers, they tried to help people see beyond their own thoughts, feelings, concepts, and even conceptualizations. And they used different skill and means to help them see and go beyond their own thoughts, and feelings, and concepts.

So, for instance, Unknowing mind is one. And the hwadu inquiry is one. And some teachers would bluntly say, “Idiots.” [Seungsahn] Sunim was one to say that. Congenital or non-congenital idiots (laughter). But also there are poetical descriptions about that. It’s, without cutting off, without cutting off your, ... What’s the word? Your delusive passions. “Without cutting off your delusive passions, passions, you enter Nirvana.” Then you are lucky. And then, “What is the way of Buddha?” Say, “The sound of mountain stream that does not get wet.” That’s a poetic one. And also, there’s always keynote there, you know. “The sound of a mountain stream that does not get wet, that’s the way of Buddha.”

Or the, there are quite a number of ones but you ... So, helped with these instructions, they all point the same thing, you know, so sometimes people can be confused. And stumbling along, you start the journey, you know. So I say Dharma journey, I started using that. That’s how you view the whole thing instead of getting stuck with ouch, you know. Because ouch is certainly, you know, I have a good story about ouch.

So then, of course there is always risk. And some people, well this is called, “Finger pointing to moon.” And instead of to see and go forward stumbling along then they become more ego-centred person, you see. And even come up their own ideas, you see. So that can be dangerous. You always need teacher and student, you know, cooperate along, you know, to go forward.

And it’s, back to hwadu story, it’s, there is of course breathing and healing. Breathing and healing, these things are talked a lot in the West right now. And hwadu is, is, first you can get stuck with this question, “What is it?” What? But later one, as you know, what this inquiry is all about, then you feel much more comfortable, you know. How to deal with that. And then the real key thing is not knowing, unknowing. Well that’s, I think it was Jinul or someone said, “If only you do not know, then you know.”

So not knowing, unknowing, as I pointed out yesterday in our song of meditation, it clearly says that. How to enter this world, you know. That's, you have to be a little bit dumb, dumb dumb. And then a little pure and innocent like a child to enter this world.

So it's, you really have to, you know, as you can see here, it's really your body, breath, and mind. That's all there is, that's all you've got actually, for your life. And, so, and you struggle with that. And somehow you learn to manage, and stumbling along you go forward.

And then that mutual appreciation prevails. Teacher appreciate your struggle and then you also learn to appreciate the teacher, what he is trying to point out to you. He does not give you answer, by the way. There's no answers.

It's, says, for instance, "How can you maintain your thought?" For Asaṅkya, Asaṅkya is like this. In the old, in the ancient times, the Indians were, they were pretty good with numbers. And Asaṅkya is, like, innumerable. So, also here, kind of, Buddhist view of multiple worlds, multiple personalities, and multiple timeline too, you see.

So you get into that. You have a, it's vast and infinite, you know. And then sometimes you'll be ashamed how you struggle small, you know, [evil thing?] or getting doubts. So if you come out of that it's, it's just wonderful, you know. It does not mean your melodrama is disappeared overnight, it's still there, but that's like, without cutting off, without cutting off your delusive passions, you enter Nirvana. And the suffering and Nirvana are already, they are here together, you see.

So that's, another poetic thing is this. I may have mentioned this. Without, without, without birds singing, the mountains are mysteriously more still. But, so you get tired and you get hurt. But, and sometimes you are, your body-mind is miraculously serene. Somehow the things you attached to so much, you know, without your struggling to let go, they are gone sometimes. It's no big deal.

And then, the moon. The solitary moon shines all alone. Rivers and mountains flow still, you know. Without wobbling.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 30, 2017

Location: Chicago

Event: YMJJ Day 2 Evening

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: February 05, 2025

In 1592, Japanese warrior, Hideyoshi, who unified Japan after 20 years of constant wars, sent his chief commanders to invade Korea.

Korea in those days was run by king and his government and local neo-Confucian scholarly class. There was a military class, but the military class was ignored and neglected, so their morale was very low.

Now, the invading Japanese army, not only well-seasoned, battle-seasoned from fighting constantly for 20 years, but the head of firearms, which Portuguese Jesuit missionaries provided. It's called muskets, muskets. And Japanese copied it very fast, so each Japanese soldier had firearms. So the superiority of muskets to bow is beyond what you imagine.

And, so the country was very ill prepared for such an invasion. So, soon, before long, the king was in flight. When the king eventually reached out to Hyujeong. Hyujeong is, he's better known in Korea as Seosan Daesa, which means Great Teacher of Western Mountain. And his, some of his works have been translated into English, including primer for Seon Buddhism in two different versions.

And, so the king, Seonjo, reached out to him for help. So he contacted his main disciples to help out in this crisis of, national crisis. So, for instance, Yujeong and some other main disciples tried to mobilize all able-bodied monks, like monk soldiers. And one of them, Yujeong, had 800 monk soldiers under his guidance. And then he joined Uibyong, that's another, they called it Righteous Army, but it's like a militia, and he had 12 so they joined and about, so together they counted at 2000.

So they went in all-out war. But they knew painfully clear they would not be a match for invading Japanese. So actually all of them, the 800 monks and the 1200 militia, they all died. And after that, and they turned to guerrilla strategy, guerrilla warfare.

And one of the poems, which Seosan Daesa, Hyujeong, wrote sums up the situation. It goes like that: "After sundown, wild refugees roam around lost, completely lost. Across the river, the

enemies are approaching. Our commander on horseback, too old to fight”. And the title of this poem is called *Lamentation*.

When the Japanese army approached this famous Diamond Mountain in mysterious land, one of the large monastery in the Diamond Mountain called Heungguksa was completely empty except Seosan Daesa Hyujeong. So Hyujeong alone was there when the Japanese army arrived. So, he was sitting in meditation in front of his Buddha Hall.

So wherever the Japanese army goes, went, plunder, carnage, and destruction was there. And, so commander standing right in front of Hyujeong Seosan Daesa and ordered him to move out. So Hyujeong Seosan Daesa looked up. “I belong to this temple, this monastery, you are invader.”

Then the commander said, “Are you not afraid?” And Seosan Daesa said, “I’m not afraid of a bloodthirsty fellow.” And then, so full of anger, this commander pulled out his, ... What is it called?

(Sword?)

No. It’s Samurai. Samurai is sword. Then Seosan Daesa told him, “You killing innocent people, happy cowards. 카우어드!” So he drew up his deep breath and entered concentration with no thoughts.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 01, 2017

Location: Chicago

Event: YMJJ Day 3

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: February 06, 2025

Please sit comfortably.

I always say that, right? That means, if your mind is comfortable, then your physical body is also comfortable.

In 1962, [Unclear] Sunim entered Haeinsa Monastery and became monk. He, he wanted to become a monk, stay as monk, lifetime after lifetime so that he would be able to go beyond his own thoughts and finally gain release from the Wheel of Life, Samsara. So he made such a vow. And then, over the years, he has been cultivating under Chunseong Sunim in Sinheungsa, and also Seongcheol Sunim in Haeinsa. Under two giant masters.

Seongcheol Sunim asked him to recite and memorize Song of Faith-Mind by the third ancestor, Sēngcàn. The first line of the Song of Faith-Mind goes like this. “The great Way is not difficult. Stop picking and choosing.” So that means if you stop picking and choosing, the great Way is not difficult.

And Seongcheol Sunim would not tolerate when he saw meditation monks going asleep. And usually we struggle with two obstacles. One is drowsiness and the other one is daydreaming. You alternate (laughter). So when he saw some monk going asleep, he flogged him so severely, mercilessly.

So, all the other monks, they start to learn, they just stay alert. And, but over there in Korea, in South Korea, it's, the weather pattern is, it's hot and humid. And on top of that, to be worse, they have to put on big jangsam which is bulky and, you know, all that. So, of course everybody tries to stay awake, but somehow you lose control.

And, so so much so for [Unclear], you know, he fought mightily to stay awake, not falling asleep. But in a moment, you see, you doze, like that. And, so since Seongcheol Sunim dealt with dozing monks so severely, so he found himself watching the footsteps of Seongcheol Sunim rather than concentrating on his hwadu study (laughter). But finally, and then even that, sometimes would not stop him in a moment, you know, going asleep.

So he was in despair. He felt he was a total failure in this lifetime. So, but one day, he got up courage and then went to see Seongcheol Sunim. And then boldly asked him, well Seongcheol Sunim is known, he spent 10 years not lying down. And other things, he, like almost a Superman. And, but of course, in order to do that, to stay up at night, he goes out for walks. So all of the lands at monastery, the mountain, Haeinsa monastery located, it is that, not a place he has not gone through. So he said, “You deal with your students so severely when they go asleep. And how about you? Have you really never gone to sleep in your so many years of cultivation and practice?”

And then Seongcheol Sunim said, “You rascal (laughter)! Do you think I'm a piece of stick or stone, not dozing?”

When he heard that he was so relieved. He felt almost immediately his despair was transformed into hope. And after that he was not afraid of going asleep or being flogged or whatever.

And there was another monk whom I met at [Unclear]. You have been there, [Unclear]? It's a beautiful temple on an island, but not island is linked to [unclear] bridge. And while visiting [Unclear] I saw this monk doing kido. Kido means, usually the Dharma students have kido practice but usually when you do kido practice in Korea you do it standing, playing with moktak.

So when I saw him doing kido, I felt he was not just a kido monk. He's more than that. So after kido goes, he, ... People go for kido, like retreat. Three days is minimum, but usually seven days, or 45 days, or 100 days, or three years, or something like that. So their daily schedule is, usually two hours at a time or it could be three hours at a time. Whatever they can sustain it. So, and then either two hours of kido or three hours of kido, and then they take break.

So during the break time, he invited me in and then served me tea. And then he told me initially he was training at Haeinsa under Seongcheol Sunim's guidance but he was caught on three occasions going asleep. So he felt so ashamed. So Seongcheol Sunim did not flog him but it really, severely scolded him. Sometimes scolding can be more, you know, painful than, you know, physically, you know, being flogged.

So he left, and then he made vow. So that's, he's doing his meditation through kido, you see. So, you know, while standing and playing moktak, you cannot go asleep, you know (laughter).

So back to your situation (laughter). And, you are here just, we say Yongmaeng Jeongjin. Usually there's a Jeongjin. Jeongjin is, just normal kind. Jeongjin, is making effort with your vital energy. That's usually like two hours and three hours, as I said, and that three days, or five days, or seven days. That's usually Jeongjin, you know. They call it [Unclear] Jeongjin. That's four times a day Jeongjin. And then after that you can step up, you know. It's called [Unclear] Jeongjin, that's more like advanced Jeongjin. Jeongjin means cultivation or practice. And then Yongmaeng Jeongjin means you don't lie down. You don't sleep.

So our Yongmaeng Jeongjin could be just, [Unclear] Jeongjin is the correct word. But since you are not monastics, so since you are lay people, that's, you know, just like other monks, Yongmaeng Jeongjin, you feel better, you see (laughter). That's what's the word. So then hopefully you can come up with, that, it's Dharma guts, you know, and do it, you know. Just like monks do Yongmaeng Jeongjin, you know. They're all out.

And even then it's, you start, it hurts. And then, first your feet, and your legs, and your knees, and then going up, you know (laughter). And then also, each time you struggle, and sometimes it feels your whole body aches, you see, but you have will, and you must have will to go through this.

And there's this beautiful line in a poem. It's, in the Buddhist literature, often, you know, there's moon, you know. Moon is compared to mind. Mind-moon. So the moon reflected in the water. So when there are ten thousand rivers, there is ten thousand moons, we say. So we say the flowing water carries moon past bridge and flowing on and on, heading toward ocean. And then once these streams from different mountains all head toward ocean. And when you reach ocean,

you lose all your identities, and that's called Ocean Samadhi. The word 해양 [haeyang] means Ocean Samadhi.

So all these small struggle or big struggle, or you don't know you are struggling, but you sit down and it hurts, you stand up and it hurts. And, first, you know, when you stand up, you tip-toe it. That makes you alert, you know. Awake, awake. And then you just stand with hapjang, and even holding this better, you see. It's, this first or second year Dharma toy, you know. It helps because, you know, this is empty hands. When you come to temple, when you stumble into temple and come for retreat like this, it's, your bare body and bare mind, and your bank account, your relationship, or whatever you care is back somewhere there. So all you struggle with is your body, mind, and breath.

So that, usually your life takes out there, attached to all these things. And all of a sudden they are gone and you are left alone to struggle with your body, mind, and breath, you see. So a little empty, you see. So then, if you hold like this, it's like a security blanket. You feel better, you know.

So that's, so one way this, and then you do prostrations, do walking meditation. All these efforts go through, carried by flowing water, into Ocean Samadhi. So that's the last picture. All this struggle about. Only if you stop, like, picking or choosing, or stop complaining.

So anyway, so I said deep humility and profound gratitude. Well, it's not big words, small words like, for instance, gratitude. Some people say, "Well, gratitude to whom?" But it's the seen and the unseen kindness of others over the years, you are all indebted to them, you see.

So if you struggle, and Dharma effort can go long way. And it builds up, you know. It's unnoticed, you cannot notice it, but if you keep up, it builds up. It's flowing water carrying your mind-moon. And becomes river or lake, eventually end up in ocean.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 02, 2017

Location: Chicago

Event: YMJJ Day 4 Morning

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: February 07, 2025

Today is your last full day of Yongmaeng Jeongjin. Do your utmost to keep your practice. Constantly, moment to moment.

Do you hear me?

(YES!)

You still have a lot of Dharma energy.

Can you hear me?

(YES!)

One more time.

(YES!)

One last time.

(YES!)

It's, daydreaming. Your aching body will always be there. Remember how to help yourself. It's, I gave you how it works with this kind of practice. One is self-help. No matter what happens, you always help yourself. And then self-empowerment. You have to learn to empower yourself to do this kind of practice. And then self-awakening. You have to do it. Nobody else can do it for you.

And the power of constant practice. In a moment you lose your practice, in a moment you regain. Constant. Standing up, sitting down, doing prostrations, at work, constant. Constant waking up!

Don't worry about your daydreaming and butt aching. As I say, they will be always there. You cannot do anything about it. So that means you don't have to worry about it. And just stay with constant waking up, constant practice of constant waking up.

And when you wake up from daydream. From waking up, to help yourself, gently bite your molar teeth, that helps. Not too much, just gently, to help wake you up.

You will see that, how easily you can lose your practice. But then you know how to go back to your practice. Over, and over, and over again. Always fresh in this moment.

So if you keep doing that then something else happens. That you have to find out, what this is all about.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 02, 2017

Location: Chicago

Event: YMJJ Day 4 Evening

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: February 07, 2025

For the rest of the evening, I'd like you to practice out loud. You don't have to practice and really out loud but if it's too quiet, you may lose your practice for the rest of the evening. So at least moving lips and make your practice audible to you. If you use the sound of your own voice for practice, at the same time, also, you allow your body-mind to listen to the sound of your practice and that's pretty effective.

And also, the other thing I'd like you to do along with practicing out loud, you have to moderate, we all have defiled or unresolved feelings. So there are powerful emotions around there. So I'd like you to use them to support your practice so allow them to come, whatever feelings you have been holding on, holding, or it's nearby, either frustrations, and anger, or rage, you bring them and then put it right into your practice.

Okay? Do you understand?

(YES!)

Teacher: Samu Sunim

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Now, soon you'll go home. Also, eventually you'll go back to work. So at home, with family and working for the community, two things which you have taken from your five day Yongmaeng Jeongjin.

First, you have to learn to reduce pain and suffering and violence. And the second thing is, you have to learn and exert yourself utmost to advance peace and happiness and joy in the mind of, in the heart of people you come in contact with. Okay, so now, that means you have to become a good Buddhist and good Bodhisattva.

Now, I'd like to entertain a few questions. If you have questions, this is time to ask. Please feel free, and complaints are welcome.

No questions?

And, in one way or another, directly, indirectly, when people come for interview, they convey to me about their body aches. And they did that so much I mentioned about daydreaming and fantasy. And these two are the main unwelcome guests when you do meditation or retreat. And, also true that I dwelt much more on daydreaming and fantasizing and all that, how to deal with that, with your practice. And not so much with your body ache. But aching body is much more urgent, right?

So that's why I encouraged you to stand up. Well actually, this worked when I did a retreat in Mexico. Some of them are quite new, never did a retreat before, so what I did was, for that one, to somehow force them to sit 30 minutes is just too much, you see. So well I said, but then people who are experienced, then they love to have one good solid sitting for 30 minutes, and they are proud of themselves (laughter).

So I said, okay, it's, we'll sit for 20 minutes. So when people think 20 minutes are enough, you know, so we ring the gong twice, that means those of you who, this is, that's 20 minutes, we sat 20 minutes, and that means you can stretch if you want and you can stand up, but not necessarily going to bathroom, like stay here but you learn to help yourself. And the people who can handle

30 minute sittings, and then just stay through. So when the 30 minute comes, then we ring the gong three times. Then everybody either go running or go to bathroom.

So it worked. So it's accommodation. And here, I mean, there are, you are teachers or Dharma students and, you know, I mean, you are experienced or seasoned. And, so when they somehow subtly, unsubtly, you know, convey to me the body aches, well it's true, if you are, your mind is occupied with that, you see, and then you're not practicing. Soon that becomes a priority, you see, taking care of your body aching.

So they say you have to, even though it's unwelcome guest, you cannot completely ignore it because if you do that there will be consequences, right? You know what that means (laughter). Right, you have to deal with the consequences now, on top of, you know.

Anyway, I'm saying these things to encourage you to ask questions.

(When are you going to Toronto temple?)

Next year. Some of you may know Ilch'o. What's Ilch'o's...

(Ed Keenan?)

Yeah. And, he's originally from U.S. He was in U.S. Marine Corps. You know, U.S. Marine Corps is, but he deserted it. So, and it's the punishment [unclear], so he would, he's permanently barred from entering this country. So, but their parents, and brothers, and cousins, they are all live in U.S. So when they go for family reunion, then they have to choose, well either they come to Canada, they think Canada is too far in the North. Some Americans think that way. Like, Canada is a big land, you know. And, so they meet somewhere, I forgot. What, what...?

(Bahamas. Bahamas.)

Bahamas (laughter). So, but then I was fishing through some papers, you know, about the history of this temple, you know, has, there are many interesting things. Fred Derby and all that. And then there, I saw Ilch'o, Ilch'o could not come, have come to Chicago today. He's always, he's, what is it called that, man of all skills, you know. What's the word?

(Handyman?)

(Jack of all trades?)

Jack of all...

(Jack of all trades.)

Jack of all trades. But, so he has been very helpful, you know. And also he did Dharma Student training quite a few times. And he just does not, he's not good, used to keeping journals, you see. Some people like that. And, but anyway he, I think he has been one of the longest member, and also always very, very faithful to Toronto temple.

So, okay, well I said well this time, he, since he is such a senior person and also always around the temple, fixing things and helping out, you know, and, so he, I had him restart [unclear] on the shelves. So I would pull it down and help him restart Dharma Student training. And so, he has, if everything goes alright, he'll be scheduled to be ordained next year.

So there are some people like that, and also vice versa. Some, [Unclear] told him, there was a couple of people with [Unclear] was traveling to Canada for a retreat or something like, to our temple. But they got caught, I think two of them, you heard about that? They had drugs or some kind of a sensitive technology, you know. And then, so they were not able to cross the border.

(Should we go to Bahamas, Sunim? Should we go to Bahamas next year?)

(Laughter)

(Just kidding, just kidding.)

If I can multiply. Okay, questions please. Yes.

(If our companion of falling asleep is so irritating, why don't we all get eight hours of sleep? It should...instead of six?)

(He said if drowsiness is so common why don't we sleep eight hours instead of six hours during retreat?)

Well, I accidentally saw him sleeping while other people are working here and in that corner over there, you know. Amazing space he found, you know, so yeah (laughter).

(It was rest period.)

And, well I say that he's not ashamed, you know.

(No, he's not.)

So, I mean, well you don't have to ask me, you already take, you know, what you want. (laughter).

([Unclear...])

Okay. Any question?

(Sunim, can you tell us a little about the Dharma ancestor portraits that are out there?)

What?

(Now there are portraits in the lobby of all our Dharma ancestors?)

Oh, oh, oh yeah, the pictures. What about it?

(Who are they? They're asking who are they?)

Well, this has been in my mind for a long time but [unclear], like [Unclear], Jinul, and [Unclear] Sunim, that's, well it's Carol Becker, she is, her Buddhist name is [Unclear], and then when she saw me hanging up said, "Sunim, put a woman here too." So I took trouble to go to [Unclear] and [unclear] [Unclear] Sunim. I think Haju saw him, saw her, you know, lying down, you know, [unclear]. So anyway, I really picture her [unclear].

So yeah, I, in New York City we have [unclear...] there, like captioned with a short description, like, you know. Thank you, for your patience (laughter).

(I have a question. So today on the last, since the retreat's over and we cultivated all this energy and have a clear mind, what do you recommend we do today and the next few days when the thoughts start flooding back in and the energy starts leeching out?)

Yeah, it happens (laughter). So it's, we have a saying. "Without cutting off your delusive passions, you enter Nirvana." So, in a sense, one of the things I'm saying is, to empower you, you know, empowerment practice, like, it's, ... Most of you are, you are staying with counting your outgoing breath or "What is it?" No, that's don't know. But don't know is, actually, the answer. And then the unknowing mind steps in.

But the best [unclear] is someone came in and then sit herself and then stole my bell, and then rang the bell. That's the answer I got for you. What is it? Because even having given you the guidelines, right now, right here, what's happening? So she was brave doing that. And then also intimate, immediate, spontaneous.

If you fail this then thoughts arise. So you have to go beyond the thoughts, right away. And it's powerful. It's, this is [Unclear] Sunim, well, "The Buddha saw morning star when he became enlightened." Then, so another master asked him, "Where's morning star?" And then immediately, even before the words fall, he [unclear...!] There's, no other answer can be [unclear].