

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 28, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 1

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: October 25, 2024

Welcome, warm welcome, to summer retreat. Some of you are from US, Midwest, and New York, from Mexico, and, of course, in Toronto and Ontario. I welcome you all to the summer retreat.

This tradition of summer retreat goes all the way back, to the, right to the Buddha's time more than 2500 years ago. The Indian subcontinent and the Southeast Asia, they have this summertime season called monsoon, rainy season. So traveling becomes very difficult. So Buddha and his disciples, they start traveling and they stay there to [unclear] the [unclear], for three months or so. It's called varsha. So that's where the tradition comes from.

The monks, both in the Theravada and Mahayana tradition, they do summer retreat for three months. In East Asia, where I come from, the summer retreat runs from the 15th of the fourth month, according to lunar calendar, through 15th of seventh month. And that coincides with Ullambana Day service.

Now, we do only for 5 days. That's pretty short compared to the three months monks would do. But you are non-monastic. Most of you are holding full-time job or raising family, and plus many social obligations and duties. So it's difficult for you to take time out. We used to have a retreat, seven days. I cut it down to five so that more people would be able to participate.

Robert Aitken Roshi, he has now retired, but when he was active and he had this zendo, Zen Centre, in Honolulu, Hawaii. And when he had retreats for lay people, he would usually say this to them. Your three day, your five day, or your seven days of retreat would be tantamount to, like, three years, or five years, or seven years of monks doing retreat. So the monks, since they renounced the world, since they are renunciates, so they have lots of time for meditation or retreats. And so they can goof off. But you cannot. So your spending three days, five days on retreat is very precious. So you cannot waste time. You cannot goof off.

So he would point out that you should practice, and if you practice one day, or two days, or three days, or five days, you have to practice it as hard as you can, as diligently as you can. As if your two days would be like two years. So what would a monk do two years, or three years, or five years, you would be doing in two days, three days, and five days. So how can you waste [unclear] no time to waste?

At least, you know, that awakened feeling, awakened thoughts, if you cannot come up with these kinds of awakened thoughts, you should look at yourself very hard. What is this guy? No, I mean [unclear]. So you have to really wake up. Every moment, every day, every hour. Use the third eye, fourth eye, fifth eye, out of the seven eyes of meditation practice. The third eye is meditation light. Here, we don't close our eyes. But do you hear me? Do you hear me?

(Yes.)

Sometimes you hear, but you don't hear. Toan Sunim just gave instructions carefully. That means you hear, but you don't really hear. Well that's, in the Buddhist tradition, the sravakas who attain enlightenment through listening.

So it's meditation light, which is your awareness, concentration plus awareness. So keep your eyesight. Your, here your awareness comes in the form of your eyesight, which we call meditation light. Keep your meditation light. And then keep the tip of your tongue in place, which is the fourth eye. And then keeping and maintaining your practice. Well your practice is either counting your outgoing breath or hwadu practice. Keeping and maintaining your practice. So these three eyes. Third eye, fourth eye, and fifth eye, they work together. As we say during the intro course, so like driving at night on freeway. So you turn on the headlights first, that third eye. And then you focus your attention ahead on the highway, that's where you keep your attention. That's keeping the tip of your tongue in place. And then your hands are firmly at the wheel. That's keeping and maintaining your practice. Five...four...three...two...one...zero.

Traditionally it's called turning everything, even [unclear], they [unclear] smashing, smashing everything into a single piece. A single piece is your practice. Your hopes and despairs, and fear, or past, present, and future, everything. Your ego, your hopes, everything destroyed and turn it into this single piece. So you're just holding onto this single piece.

The sixth eye, constant practice, constant. Constant. I even give you formula. Over and over again, always fresh in this moment, you practice and you begin to shine. So that your practice would become without blame. Without blemish.

So always, always fresh in this moment, once again, you practice and you begin to shine. It's constant practice, moment to moment. Lasting throughout one thousand years, as they say. One thousand years contained in each moment of your pure practice, pure concentration, pure awareness. Such is the power of constant practice. Sitting, walking, standing, lying down. 24 hours. Constantly. Practice is present constantly.

And now, I see a few of you are already struggling with the postures. This is just, we just started, you know, this retreat. You have to really learn to be patient, to persevere. Energetic. Of course, if you cannot really, you know, if you are really new to retreat, then you can sit in chair. But if your mindset is such you're already trying to sit in more comfortable, after all, you're realizing nothing becomes comfortable. But at least after struggling a day or two on mat and cushion, then

you move over and sit in chair. Then you know what is really being comfortable, you appreciate that.

So anyway, while struggling with posture during the meditation, but I don't see you doing prostrations during the break. That's called lazy. Lazy means you don't exert yourself enough to help yourself. Or at least you go downstairs and do some stretching, have good exercise. Do you hear me?

(YES!)

And make vow. This is practice of waking up. I'll do my best, I'll do my utmost. If you experience discomfort, experience your discomfort, experience your pain, 100%. You learn something from that. Wake up from that too. Sometimes your whole body-mind would be burning with pain. Experience that 100%. Become one with it. If you are suffering from lack of waking up, it should be a spirit of waking up. You [unclear] your [unclear], not to [unclear]. If you are awake, if you are eager and diligent in helping yourself, and you are ordinary person but you are a true person, it has to be, you have got to be a true person. That's ethical awakening, the first of threefold training. True, ordinary person with awakened heart doing retreat. If you do that you are immediately elevated to the Bodhisattva realm. This is Bodhisattva work you are doing. And you're on the Dharma Realm. And you would come very close to realizing your body-mind, the way it is, is Dharmakaya. Manifestation and realization of Dharma. Buddha Dharma, the Way of Buddha.

If you are still struggling with your old habits, instability and all that, this is the best time. You reflect on that, hard. You wake up. What kind of life is that? Given to, you know, fears, and instability, and wishy-washy, and fears.

So please make vow. That you will do your utmost and keep waking up! Through the power of constant practice. Ready?

(YES!)

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 29, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 2 Morning

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: October 29, 2024

There is this saying that one good and strong Yongmaeng Jeongjin can help you become free from all your karmic obstacles and karmic residue, hindrances, since your previous lifetimes. In other words, one strong and powerful Yongmaeng Jeongjin is powerful enough to destroy and cancel all your karmic obstacles since your previous lifetime.

If you visit Korean monasteries, in major public monastery, you would get these hall with a plaque saying, “Pavilion for the selection of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.” And also, another one saying, “[unclear].” That’s, “The place where retreat comes.” Take a break from time to time from your vigorous training. And it has a name. This place where you can open your Wisdom Eye. To clarify the way of Buddha for the world.

So even from these words you can see the significance, the importance, of what you are doing, what you are involved in right now.

To retreat, Yongmaeng Jeongjin, serves as a test to see if each of you are capable of proving yourself, to rise and serve as Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, while going through these kind of training, practice. Training practice in this dimension is similar, very similar to awakening. You can see it’s physically demanding and emotionally powerful, depending on the person, emotionally powerful experience. And overall it’s all about spiritual awakening or opening your Wisdom Eye. So your body, mind, and feelings is all involved. It’s a total experience.

So faced with this, simply you have to come up with an awakened heart. Almost, you’re almost forced to become a true and sincere person. Dealing with this task.

When you sit, for each session, one after the other, truly pain does accumulate. Everybody has pain in your legs or sometimes in your back. And your mind constantly wanders in spite of your discriminations and constant practice. It’s pretty common. Like everything becomes grist for the mill. Without this pain, without discomfort, without your mind wandering all the time, you would not be doing practice, there’s no point of practice. It’s just like, without darkness light would not shine. Light is there but it is, it’s darkness, helps us, you know, appreciate the light. Defines light, purpose of light.

So it’s, what happens is, faced with pain, or discomfort, or mind wander, which is common occurrence, everybody has that, usually your recourse is to complain. You don’t like it. So sometimes you end up struggling or engaging in a battle with your own karma. And sometimes you spend the whole time battling your karma. That’s, I think, what Buddha said, that’s ignoble. It’s wasting your time. If you like to struggle, you struggle with Dharma. Not with karma. That, struggling with Dharma means, that’s constant practice. Over and over again, always right here. Everything’s right here. Right now. This timeless moment. As long as you always practice in this moment, one more time with a fresh mind, practice goes on. Nothing’s wrong with your practice.

I mean, pain is, it’s understandable. Your mind wandering, it’s okay. But you can improve, through constant practice. And first sitting, when you first sit, actually, you see there’s this

Dharma verse. In the morning, with the sunrise, I vow to stay awake. And Dharma verse goes like that. And it ends with, pray all beings are happy and all beings peaceful. Find virtue of my, you know, commitment to Dharma practice. It's like that.

But even, you know, in Yongmaeng Jeongjin we even dispense with that. We just stay with, you know, single focus. That's why it's saying single practice lasting ten thousand years in each and every moment. And single thought, that's even, this is, of course, Pure Land Buddhists would, their wish is, at the moment of my death and dying, at death that, that I have no other thoughts. No other feelings. And right away, I'll go to the Pure Land.

Sometimes I say, you know, there's, that's like free therapy. And whatever you are worried about, I think, you know, a couple of people said this during the interview. And, well that's another distraction, they are talking about distraction. They are supposed to just stay with the course of their practice. And sometimes I don't really have much patience with that. But it's also, I mean, there are a lot of people waiting. So you have to really find out what is helpful, what is not helpful. And what is Dharma, what is karma. You have to make that abundantly clear. What the practice you are doing is, it's, it has something to do with a boundless heart. It's called infinite and boundless, like, it's like sky. There will be always clouds in the sky, just like your stray thoughts. But you stay with your Buddha-mind. This practicing mind is Buddha-mind. It's clear and unfettered. Free from any obstructions. That's what you do, unlimited practice with a boundless heart.

So over and over again, you go after your practice relentlessly. And just remember that that's the fourth Paramita. May I be strenuous, energetic, and persevering.

So don't get distracted. But you have to go straightforward for ten thousand years with a single practice, single mind, single thought, single feeling. There is no room for any other things. In classical Zen literature, there's, make yourself, you know, turn yourself to this position. You have fallen into one hundred feet deep pit. It's p-i-t. So if you're the person who has fallen to this one hundred feet deep pit, all you can think about is how can I get out of it. There's no other thoughts. Nothing else appears. No Ben and Jerry for me. Only thoughts, only feeling, is getting out of that place. So such is the power of concentration, and sincere and honest feeling.

The other thing is saying, sometimes you say, it's a favourite subject in Korean Zen painting, painting tigers. When they have cubs, young cubs, I think something like three months after they were born, they would take them to the cliff and throw them down there. And then the tiger mother and tiger father are standing on top of cliff and watch them. So these young tiger cubs, they start jumping. To climb back up where their parents are watching. So if they fell, they die. They cannot make it. Their parents, this guy cannot make it as king of animal kingdom. So that's, they learn to strengthen their legs and power of jumping.

So this, this task is, it's not like, you know, if I do this, I get this. It's not that. It's transcending. Transcending power.

Of course, you don't have that, you know, pie in the sky like that, you see. But all you're doing is just keeping single practice, one moment after another. And then, well, you know, they say like, they say sudden, sometimes it's like quantum leap happens.

This is your first full day. And soon you'll be going down for lunch, and rest, and work practice. And if you're not careful, you can lose one day less, your practice, while having lunch, while resting. Particularly during the work practice period. You have to guard yourself. And, constant practice.

You know, I keep waking up, you know. If your mind is gone, soon you'll wake up. As soon as you wake up, your mind is back, your practice is back. Such is the power of constant practice. If you fail to do that, then you get distracted, more and more, further and further. I mean, you can see that, right?

So have to be really, you have to be, you know, your whole body-mind, muscles and sinews, turn into, you know, faculty of attention. And awakens. When it's close to awakening.

Do you hear me?

(YES!)

One more time!

(YES!)

It's that Dharma energy, you know. That's awakening energy.

One more time!

(YES!)

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 29, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 2 Evening

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: October 31, 2024

[poem in Korean]

As your Dharma practice takes flight, so does your karmic obstacles.

In other words, as you step up with your meditation practice, your karmic obstacles, they don't like to sit around, they don't like to be defeated. So they rise to challenge your Dharma practice. So it happens, sometimes pandemonium breaks loose. Some of you feel that. Things that you thought had been put to rest and resolved, all of a sudden they come up.

One year, I found out from this guy who came for interview, he was reviewing his whole sex life. And another guy, he brought his pet question, you know. "What is your karma – what is karma?" So sometimes you can, there's this, Mara's, you know, before the Buddha attained enlightenment, Mara, that's the, you know, usually translated as Devil but it's a personification of, you know, desire, craving, and, you know, all of you have. And Mara has beautiful daughters too, you know. He has his own army of, you know, they are sometimes called temptresses, to disrupt Buddha's meditation. So you can see that, all army going.

Now, it's called [unclear]. It's, the 400 passions erupt to disturb, to interrupt, your meditation practice. And some people who are still not completely set on their minds, on practice, I guess I will say this for the third time, or for the fourth time, you know, going straight, going straight with your hwadu, with your practice, for ten thousand years in each and every moment, such is the power of constant practice. So with a single thought, with a single practice, you go straight. You don't go astray. You may stumble, but you go straight. For ten thousand years, in each and every moment. You get that.

Traditionally, we give three essentials. It's also called three pillars of Zen. I think it's made famous in Philip Kapleau's book. Three essentials to gain gate to enlightenment and complete liberation. In other words, these serve as gateway to your awakening to your true nature, Buddha-nature, and complete liberation.

The first one is great faith. Great empty faith. Untainted by anything, supernatural beliefs or superstitions. That is, faith in yourself. As a living embodiment of Buddha-nature, Buddha-hood. And the second one is great resolve. That's, I said, you know, going straight forward with this resolve. Single practice for ten thousand years, in each and every moment. It's constant practice. And the third one is great doubt. It has nothing to do with skepticism, great doubt. Self-questioning. Probing inquiry. You relentlessly go after that. You are doing either, you know, [unclear] hwadu or tathagatha hwadu, or counting outgoing breath. But those of you who are doing hwadu practice, it's a growing self-questioning. With a growing doubt. So that's, with that you go ten thousand years, in each and every single moment. If you keep chewing it, over and over again, okay it's for those of you counting your outgoing breath, whether it's hāna or whether it's five, the five, either the sound or the feeling of five or hāna, they would turn into luminous, they emit light. That's why, you know, the third quality of your meditation practice is illuminating. But the second one is penetrating and pervading. If it is penetrating and pervading throughout your entire body-mind, muscles and sinus and all that, that, that's [unclear], that

keeps away all these, you know, Maras, obstacles. Well, your two major obstacles is pain and daydreaming, lethargy.

And now, I repeat, it's great faith. Well, you are here, trusting yourself, doing this work. There's no alternative, so you've got to do it. It can be hard, but that's the way. Well, even out in the world, people work hard and then you rest. You know, resolve. You come up with great resolve. Wow. In the morning, with the sunrise, I vow to stay awake. And help all beings. There's, each gata, we call it. And then, great doubt. Probing, penetrating, questioning. Relentless questioning going on.

If you are still struggling with some problem, you put all your problems into this question. So it's like grist for mill, you have to put it together. Don't have them lying around, you know, distracting you. And put them all under your bum and sit on it. Like kimchi making, you just throw them, everything into it, so that they would ferment. You may have a few gases but... (laughter).

So it's, the path is very clear. You are here to do only one thing. It's a single practice. It's a pure practice. It's true practice, and it's authentic. What more do you need? That's the work. That's the path to enlightenment, peace, and happiness.

So moment to moment, you have to stay with your practice. And by practice, you know, you have your hwadu and your counting, your breath. Over and over again, always fresh in this moment. I'd like you to be sun. I'd like you to be sun, breaking through the clouds in order to shine again, in order to shine again, in order to shine again. Not the clouds, going all over the place.

Sun is illuminating, it's emitting light. Your practice will emit light. And if your body aches, you just help yourself. Do prostrations. Stand up or sit in chair. Or you go downstairs and lie down if you have to, but practice. Keep practice. That's the only thing you do. Stay with the practice. All day long, even while eating, even while resting, at work. If there is any problems, any hindrances, that's the medicine, that's the only medicine you have. To deal with your problems. But don't get distracted, you see. I know it's, you know, you can so easily get distracted. But get right back, wake up. Get right back. Bounce back. Right away, with a true and sincere heart. Is that clear enough?

(YES!!)

Okay, use that energy. Use that, you know this Paramita, may I be strenuous, energetic, and persevering. Don't let yourself down. If you feel lethargic, you can help yourself. Stand on your head. Or take a cold shower.

You can see, it's every moment it's, the schedule goes like that, you know. Meditation, standing up, you know, jukpi. This is a culture of silence, so you follow jukbi and moktak.

So please help yourself. Do your utmost, and do great work with your meditation practice, for the sake of the world.

Okay?

(YES!!)

One more time!

(YES!!)

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: June 30, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 3 Evening

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: November 04, 2024

Three strikes and chanting to open.

Please sit comfortably.

[poem in Korean]

Buddhas and sentient beings are one, but willy-nilly we divide them into sacred and profane.

[reciting in Korean]

He does not revere the saints, she does not care about the soul.

These are wonderful words pointing to the way. When we do Yongmaeng Jeongjin like this, dragons and snakes co-mingle. People of superior capacity, practitioners of the Way who are of superior capacity, or inferior capacity, or medium capacity, they all mingle each other. Helping each other. Elevating each other.

So, there are ways people of superior capacity can attain Buddha-hood, also there are ways people of medium capacities and inferior capacities can attain Buddha-hood. We all get wet with Dharma rain. Lots of Dharma rain, the banks are flooded, so the boundaries are gone. No barriers. All the boundaries and barriers are removed. So just a great body of muddy water, flowing rapidly. We all become a great flow. Now at some point, the flow slows down, and all the impurities, all of our karmic obstacles, drop down, drop at the bottom as silt.

So each of you, given your predicament, given your plight, simply you have to do your best. There's enough Dharma energy going around you can take advantage of. So this is no time to indulge in your worldly thoughts, worldly feelings.

Is this all clear?

(YES!!)

So what remains is gratitude. If you still have any complaints, any niggling feelings hanging around, that's lacking gratitude. You better develop grateful hearts, just being here doing this. This is hope for every one of us. Very strong message here. Just look at how we live every day. It's called right livelihood. How we conserve energy, and live frugally, and do more, much more, with less.

And more than that, it's Dharma work we are doing. It's, everybody, somewhere, you represent a Bodhisattva in the making. But it takes just a little step further. A step further, it's called, traditionally it's called taking a step further on top of a hundred foot pole. A little extra practice. Like, after 10am, 10pm bell. During the work, even at the meal, even while going to the bathroom. Your little extra private practice will pull you out of all this melodrama that has been nagging at you.

When you are, when you neglect, when you incapable, incapable of doing that little extra practice, that space would be filled by your melodrama or worldly thoughts. That makes important difference. Can you relate to this?

(YES!!)

So this gratitude, grateful feeling, is very important. And then the rest is, you just surrender yourself to Dharma practice. In other words, you gratefully surrender whatever you are still holding onto. Your own views, your own feelings, you surrender to the Dharma. So in a sense, it's so overwhelming. Even about 30 people doing this together as one body. It's fulfilling the first vow of the four great vows, all beings one body I vow to liberate. How can you neglect it?

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 01, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 4 Morning

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: November 05, 2024

Do you feel better now?

(Yes.)

This is your third full day. You should be making progress with your practice. And all those obstacles and distractions, you have to put aside and really throw yourself whole-heartedly into the practice. And nothing, nothing will disturb a person who practices with a true and sincere heart, with awakened heart. And everything will inspire such a person for practice.

So please do not neglect. And keep your constant, ... See feelings are important. You have to moderate feelings, you know. Grateful is one, but feeling sad, sorrow, for you lacking your practice or getting distracted for this and that.

So please waste no time. And you make vow that for the rest of the day, single-mindedly you would go straight with your practice. Through lunch, through evening, right down, and practice until you fall asleep. And when you wake up, you practice right there. And through work practice period.

Okay?

(Yes!)

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 01, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 4 Evening

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: November 07, 2024

Three strikes and chanting to open.

[poem in Korean]

Mind and the surroundings are one. Self and things are not two.

You can feel that. Mind and the surroundings are one. Self and things are not two.

[reciting in Korean]

Things in their real aspect, what is there to grieve and what is there to hate? Body-mind dropping out, cast off body-mind.

So you have struggled enough now. So it's time to surrender everything. Most of the things are exposed. Exposed means cast out. Your sole things, you know, what remains is the practice. So you go all out, supported by your unknowing mind. It's time for your unknowing mind to prevail all over. You just do not know. So if you only do not know, without a shape, you can see, you can right away see into your true nature. Your limitless, the endless vast empty sky reveals great enlightenment.

So the words are different but it points to the same thing. Where would your great unknowing mind would prevail? It's vast emptiness with boundless heart. And practice alone prevails. Journeying, going forward, journeying in vast empty sky.

Here even, from now on, up until now, a little bit of special practice was really helping you. Like, do your work practice, or going downstairs, even lying down, or while doing prostrations. But now you're going all out. Even body-mind is gone. So unlimited practice. But since, would be nice if you leave behind all your anxiety baggage. But even when you come to interview, you shouldn't be worrying about your future or job security. Understand that, but it's your anxiety baggage. So I'd like to let that go too, you see, so that you could really do wonderful practice. Unlimited practice. For a couple days. You know, tomorrow would be the last full day. So we will be doing fire practice tonight. So you can bring out all your anxiety baggage, baggages, so you can let go, burn out, you see. It's called fire practice. So you can practice out loud, but you start slow, bringing up. And you can stand, or you can walk around, and uninhibited, you can do anything to let out whatever you...

So it's, you can be crazy, you can be, you know, mad person. Mad person is not afraid of anything that the whole world belong to. Like mad woman, mad man. So you can practice like mad.

Okay?

(OKAY!!)

Okay. You can [unclear] whatever fashion you prefer, you just get it out. You can cry or laugh, you know. All out. [unclear...]

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 02, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 5 Morning

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: November 08, 2024

Today is your last full day of Yongmaeng Jeongjin. In five day Yongmaeng Jeongjin you go through four seasons path. Like spring, summer, fall, winter, and spring.

So the first day, which is spring season, you get excited. Even expectations. And the second day, summer season, you flourish with your Dharma or karma, and everything comes out, they flourish and, you know, they struggle. And then the third day, which was yesterday, and, fall, autumn, you resign. Start resetting, you know, you stop. And then winter, which is where you are completely subdued with no escape.

So last night you did fire practice so that you would be able to shed all that is not necessary for good Yongmaeng Jeongjin. Like trees, they shed all the leaves and even small branches to go through winter, they prepare for winter. So today you are left with the bare minimum. And we say, good practitioner in winter season is, actually the, in meditation hall, the training hall for monks in Buddhist monastery is called T'ongdo-sa. It means hall for naked trees. Naked trees, they are all gone, you know, the bare minimum, it looks dead. So good practitioner looks almost invisible, that means hermit. He is there but not even there. He's not there, not dead, you see. So quiet, so unassuming, so absorbed in his or her own practice.

Last night, the Dharma verse says, Mind and the surroundings are one. That's, you feel that. Mind and the surroundings are one. And self and things are not two. So, [reciting in Korean], so things in their true aspect, where is there to hate, where is there to spare? So, hermit knows that. Everything comes together. Trees, rocks, the surroundings. Everything goes into practice. That's the only thing this hermit cares for. Cultivation. And wisdom heart.

Now, today I'd like you to throw yourself all heartedly into the practice. Constant practice, moment after moment. You know the power of constant practice. Sure here and there you would get distracted. It's, traditionally it's a mother hen in hatching. She has to provide constant warmth for the eggs she's sitting on in order to give birth to chicks. If she does not provide constant warmth, like our constant practice, when she needs water she comes down from her perch and then right away goes back, you know. Because other words the eggs may cool, may not hatch. Same thing, you know, you may get distracted but right away you wake up and go back to your practice. Such is the power of constant practice.

Do you hear me?

(YES!!)

And all day long, all day long you are going through winter period. With bare minimum. Just [unclear] practice, everything becomes practice. Cultivation. And that's when you're there, you're not there. Invisible. I vow to keep constant practice, each and every moment, all day long, all day long. You keep the vow. If you make vow, you have to keep it. And even though you get distracted here and there, you renew it, you renew it. That's the power of constant practice. So make vow. And keep the vow with a constant practice.

Did you get it?

(YES!!)

So even one day, and this is your last opportunity, one full day of constant practice, you make a difference. You make a difference [unclear...]. So please do not neglect. You know that this is the schedule going on. Morning wake up, and then rubdown. Have you done all good rubdowns this morning?

(YES!)

That's not true (laughter). [unclear], where is [unclear] from Chicago. Did you do your rubdown this morning.

(Yes.)

No, you didn't.

(Yes I did.)

No, you did not go down to the women's bathroom. You did it over here, right?

(But I took a shower and...)

Pardon?

(I took a shower there, and then I did the rubdown.)

Showering is not rubdown.

(But I did the rubdown after.)

Pardon?

(I did do the rubdown after.)

With the towels?

(Yes with the small one.)

Mhm. Where?

(In the upstairs bathroom.)

Pardon?

(In the upstairs bathroom.)

Which bathroom?

(The first floor.)

No, it has to be downstairs, in the basement. That's where you should go.

(Okay.)

And you, there were two other women also from Chicago, right? Who did not do rubdown. I know that.

(I did rubdown upstairs, I didn't do it downstairs.)

Okay, what about men? But anyway, please go down and do that. So downstairs, okay? So, it makes a difference.

Even until your last moment, you have to keep your practice, as hermit. It's, all, the schedule is there, all these things are there to help you do Yongmaeng Jeongjin. You can see that, you know? One after the other, you know. Rubdown, and then go out and stretching, you know. And then prostrations, to surrender yourself completely.

So, please pay attention and be alert. That's, the motto for the Yongmaeng is awakening. And Samadhi, Samadhi is concentration. Concentration. Concentration plus awareness. Your super Samadhi power. Your awareness, pure awareness.

So, can you promise me that you'll do your utmost keeping your constant practice in each and every moment?

(YES!!)

Then I'll be very grateful.

Dharma Talk

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 02, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 5 Evening

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: November 12, 2024

Three strikes and chanting to open.

[poem in Korean]

Without leaving the demon world, you enter the Buddha-land, you enter the Buddha-world.

That's where you are. Your distractions, your karmic world, is still around. So without leaving the demon world, here demon world alludes to, you know, your desires, hopes, and expectations. They are suppressed, but they are around. That's okay. You can still enter the Buddha-world. That's where you are. But now, hear this:

[reciting in Korean]

The seas, sea of the world, is vast. Your unknowing mind, vast emptiness of the world of myriad things. But a true intimate, true intimate is rare indeed.

Now, I give you this meditation formula. It's meditation is concentration, concentration is oneness. Oneness is no self, no other. No self, no other is no birth, no death. No birth, no death is true Suchness. Then, the four qualities of your everyday Zen experience. Zen is intimate, immediate, spontaneous, obvious. A true intimate is rare indeed.

So, your unknowing mind prevails, providing vast, endless space. Without distractions, free from anxiety, so that your Dharma moon, your practice, or your hwadu practice, would continue to go forward with no hindrance. So like moon journeying all alone, like luminous, emitting light, emitting its own light, means it's making its own path while traveling. Somewhere along the way, that intimate moment, that true intimate moment, you come upon. That's what it's talking about. In one Zen scripture it says adjusting pillow in the middle of the night. Very innocently, very innocent moment.

A true intimate is rare indeed. Here, rare means its precious. When it happens it's precious. It's called subtle, or rare, or unprecedented. If you don't worry about it. When it happens, it happens. But your practice with a true and awakened heart itself is awakened. Don't doubt that, once again, that this practice is authentic. It's all yours. When your body-mind sit in silence and in concentration, you dissolve, you dissolve in solidarity with all insentient beings. All insentient beings. Rocks, trees, mountain, rivers. When your mind sit, when your body-mind sit in silence and in concentration, and breathes, becomes aware of your breath, then you do so in solidarity with all sentient beings. Birds, mammals, and the fish.

Then, in stillness, and in awareness, remember this is concentration plus awareness, always there's awareness. If you lose awareness, you don't meditate. Then in stillness, in awareness, your body-mind come in contact with what is true, what is noble, what is pure, and what is infinite. At such a moment, your body-mind turns into Dharmakaya. It's body of Dharma. You know, Buddha has three bodies. It's Nirmanakaya, Dharmakaya, Sambhogakaya. Shakyamuni is called Nirmanakaya, but Sambhogakaya is enjoyment body. Something you have enjoyed, but sometimes you lack, [unclear]. You make such a crazy noise when you like it (laughter).

I'm not feeling very well tonight, and I have two more days to go. I'd like you to keep your practice very strong tonight until you retire, but when you retire you take your practice into your sleep. It's powerful. Sometimes you end up dreaming about your practice. And when you wake up your practice comes right up. So there, even there, is Dharma power. Every night you take your Buddha into your dream. And you wake up with it. It's right there. So it's intimate and immediate. Spontaneous, obvious. It's right there. What you thought is missing is right there, all this while.

Three strikes and chanting to close.

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 03, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 6 Morning

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: November 14, 2024

This is your last day, last morning. It's the last day of practice. When last day arrives you should be ready to bloom and flower. You feel the Dharma energy palpating. It is said if one pricks the budding, if you finger, you can feel the seed of enlightenment. Every part of your body-mind is ready to respond. So this is no time, there is no time to waste, to indulge in this and that. You have to double and triple your efforts. Keep your mind alert, sharp, and awakening. Until last minute.

Is this clear?

(YES!!)

Teacher: Samu Sunim

Date: July 03, 2009

Location: Toronto

Event: YMJJ Day 6 at closing

Transcriber: Zack, Toronto

Date of Transcription: November 15, 2024

Three strikes and chanting to open.

Please sit comfortably.

[poem in Korean]

Outside mind, there are no things, but the eyes are filled with blue mountains.

But here, you don't see blue mountains. So that's how sometimes feel when you come out of a good Yongmaeng Jeongjin. Outside mind, there are no things. Outside of practice, there are no things. But the eyes are filled with green mountains, or with open fields. With clouds in the sky. The ten directions are completely empty. Everything has vanished.

Have your, have all of your concerns and anxieties vanished?

(YES!!)

There's this Korean Seon Master, Seongcheol Sunim is 88 years old but he is still going strong. He entered the monastery when he was 19. So since then he has remained as a true Seon monk. Maybe he must be the only surviving Seon monk, Zen monk, in Korea now, still alive. And this happened about 50 years ago when he was still at Daewonsa monastery where I come from. A monk came, in those days there were a lot of monks and lay people going around. Can you hear me in the back? You have to come closer. I'm losing my voice a little bit. So in those days there were still a number of practitioners, meditation monks, and also lay people, going around probing teachers and asking questions, challenging them. So there came a monk and he asked the Seongcheol Sunim about the way of Buddha. And Seongcheol Sunim said, "What happened to the way of Buddha that belongs to you? How come you are going around asking the way of Buddha from other people?" Then he said, "If you neglect, if you fail to grasp the way of Buddha that already belongs to you, then even three thousand Buddhas would not be able to help you."

Do you get it?

(YES!!)

Now, by the time you come out of this kind of Yongmaeng Jeongjin, at least that much should be clear. Well, you know, today there are still, you know, if you open temple there are people around asking questions. Shopping, Dharma shopping or spiritual shopping. Well they do that for a while, but sometimes people go around a number of years doing that. And of course here, if I say something Seongcheol Sunim said, it will not help much because they don't know what that means unless you go through Yongmaeng Jeongjin like that. But happily we have a lot of people in healing profession, like psychoanalysts or psychologists or psychiatrists, who have been practicing Buddhism, very, very into Buddhism. And there are a lot of books, you can read a lot of books on that.

So they read a lot of books, and these people have become kind of Buddhist guru now, for quite a while as you may know. And some of them, like in New York City, there's a, he's actually Seongcheol Sunim's disciple, he's also a Zen teacher but also he has his own practice. He combines them, he's, I think sometimes psychoanalyst or something like that, his practice. So that's where he makes a living, he cannot make a living as teacher. I mean, if he does it full-time he should, but he has family to support. So he also has to keep up with living standard here, so you need a lot more money to support your family so he has this practice, you know, there at a clinic. And there are quite a few Buddhist teachers like that. You know that, right?

And, so, and they go there, and they read their books, and it helps. But by the time they finally come around and sense that I have to do something to help myself, then already too late because they find it too hard sitting, you know, several hours on mat and cushion. They are not willing to do that. Right? They like to eat, they like, is there some kind of Dharma candy, you know, that could help (laughter)? But these days, he came to the Sunim. "Is there something, could you

teach me something that would bring my mind right back when I go [unclear] (laughter)?" Right (laughs).

What did you say?

(I said, is there a mantra, yeah.)

(Laughs) Yeah, he was looking for a mantra.

Now, then there is a, actually, the last thing he said was if you still don't understand, look at the mountains. When spring comes, spring flowers bloom. When autumn comes, the leaves fall. We don't have mountains here. But you can look at trees. You can go outside and see open fields. Or look up to sky.

So there is two things. Whatever is missing, it's already available. With you. It comes as, if it comes, it's like a birthright, it's a natural right. Everybody has that. So discover that. And activate it, and use it. That's what Buddhist practice is all about. And then not neglecting it. It's even, it's this kind of seeking. People, many people specialize in seeking. Whether it is, you know, seeking material goods or, it's, the way of Buddha is the way of liberation. Past purification or the way of liberation. Or whether it is the way of liberation or salvation or delivery or whatever, they go around seeking. But seeking can become dukkha. Seeking is pain and suffering.

There are two kinds of delusions, you see. Lot of people do that without realizing it's self-induced pain and suffering, delusion. So not, now, whatever is missing, it's already available. You know, if you read Jinul's book it makes it abundantly clear. It says it has been tragic. People have been deluded for so long. People, while seeking Buddha-mind, they look far away neglecting their own, you see. So now discovering is one thing, non-neglecting is something else. Non-neglecting.

Was Yongmaeng Jeongjin good?

(YES!!)

Was getting up early in the morning, was it good?

(YES!!)

There was one morning that, the night before when we had fire practice, we woke up 5:30. Now, did you hear the birds singing? We have to be ahead of birds, that's why we wake up at 5:00 (laughter). [unclear] the birds come up. Those are special kinds of birds, those are early birds. Usually, you know, birds, particularly in summer, birds sing. And then, well if you live in the mountains you can tell, there's these kinds of birds, you know, they are the, they are really the

early birds. And then there's, another birds come up and, you know, they take, you know, go around. And then finally flowers open up, you know. And then bird flies, that's too late. That would've been something like 8 o'clock (laughter), when you begin to see flowers. And then dragonflies, butterflies.

And was rubdown good?

(YES!!)

And 108 prostrations were good?

(YES!!) (laughter)

Was your lunch good?

(YES!!)

Was evening snack was good?

(YES!!)

Then it's time to show our gratitude. You know, there are a lot of people who worked hard behind the scenes to make Yongmaeng Jeongjin safe and, you know, undisturbed and successful. Okay, first I think Haju Sunim and Toan Sunim, they were examples. They inspired you, sitting there quietly long, staying up long at night. And that's true heroes.

[cheering and applause]

They are real Bodhisattvas. They are so unassuming. I think I picked the right disciples because early on, well there were uncertain times when everybody was so eager to become monk overnight, and to become the teacher right away and [unclear]. But it's a risky business. So they are not in business at all. They're, these two are incapable of cheating people. And this is, it's, I mean, it's Buddhism. So you have to be pure at heart doing this.

But then, the trouble is I have to do everything (laughter). Of course, Toan Sunim has been very helpful. Here, he's artist so he works long hours to help, aside from sitting.

Now, and now there's [Kobul?] and who? [Suka?]. [Suka?], and [Sudo?]. Yeah. Now it's, this time, I think the, among all our Dharma families, the [Ko?] family has been very successful. It's [Kobul?], Dharma teacher already. There's [Kosu?], Dharma teacher. Now she already shaved herself, I never asked her to shave her head (laughter). And now, she has become resident teacher of this temple. And, so she became full time teacher. So Toronto people, you would see her around. I'll introduce her formally later on. And then two more people, like [Kosei?] and

[Kohei?], will be ordained tomorrow. So this is the most successful, [Ko?], you know, Dharma family. I think if you are any member of [Ko?] family, like [Koa?], where's [Koa?]?

(Here!)

[cheering and applause]

So, she has been coming to Yongmaeng Jeongjin pretty faithfully. Well, occasionally she gets lost, you know (laughter). So I told her that, you know, she has to do something, you know, to get some serious training before she gets too old, you know. And organize some meditation groups there, where she lives.

So anyways, so who is, you know there's, who belongs to [Ko?] family now? There's [Korim?] and, anyways so I think I'd like you to be proud of your being member of [Ko?] family.

Okay and then, kitchen crew, [Kobul?]. And she has, even you will see her, it's a, what's your car brand?

(Focus. Ford Focus.)

Uh huh. It's brand new?

(Mhm.)

That's why (laughs). She has this lightness [unclear] (laughter). You can see that, [Kobul?] is spirited.

(Focused!)

[cheering and applause]

She is a late bloomer. She, I mean before she came to Buddhism you spent 10 years as a Catholic nun, you know, right?

(Mhm.)

So she's a late bloomer (laughter).

And now, let me see. And after kitchen crew. There, of course, work directors. And now, this, who did security? [unclear]. And then someone else?

[cheering and applause]

And, security is very important. You know, if there's a small disturbance it can be very disturbing, you know, for Yongmaeng Jeongjin. So you keep eye on it and just, to prevent anything that might, you know.

And now, now of course Toan and [unclear] and [Kosu?] and the work directors [unclear], and [unclear], Sanha. And they do a number of works, more than, you know, one duty, and behind. So Sanha, [Kosu?], [unclear], [Komi?], and who else?

([Toji?])

[Toji?], yeah.

[cheering and applause]

We are very, very grateful to you for making the Yongmaeng Jeongjin so successful. Is there any, can you think of...

(No, just you.)

No, I went out (laughter).

(Wonderful [unclear].)

Anyone not mentioned, not recognized? Well then, we should give a, you know, special welcome to Mexicans who came all the way. Could you please stand up?

[cheering and applause]

(laughter)

And, I think that's all. Okay well, thank you very much.

[cheering and applause]

(laughter)

Well, I need a Ben and Jerry, right? (laughter)

([All the participants?])

Yeah?

[cheering and applause]