

Heart Sutra Study

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...And then there's dharma with a small "d." Dharma is to be distinguished from Dharma with a capital "D." This dharma simply means things, or events, happenings, or facts. And then there's six sense organs: Eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, mind. There's six sense organs, and then, the six sense organs, they take objects, the six sense objects. That's form, sound, smell, taste, touch, or objects of mind. And then there are the six corresponding kinds of consciousness. That's, for instance, olfactory consciousness, auditory consciousness, visual consciousness, and tactile consciousness, and so forth. So, and these three six make up eighteen elements. That's the data of our whole range of experience. Five skandhas.

And then there are twelve links, the conditioned arising, twelve links of the chain of conditioned arising, that's samsara. You hear that samsara is nirvana, that's *Pratītyasamutpāda* twelve links of the chain, of the conditioned arising, of the conditioned arising or causation, or dependent arising. It's interdependence.

The first one is called *avidya*, ignorance. Usually in the Buddhist context it means ignorance of the Four Holy Truths, Four Noble Truths. That's ignorance, and number two is, it's impulses, or tendencies, or dispositions. And so, each one instigates the other, so gives rise to the other. So that's how they are linked. And number three is consciousness, so, up to here it's previous life, past, so consciousness re-enters a womb after the death of an individual. Okay, so consciousness. And number four is, it's called *namarupa*, means five skandhas, nama-rupa. And then six bases is six sense organs is six objects, and then number six is *sparsa*, contact. And number seven is sensation, *vedana*. And number eight is *trsna*, craving. And number nine is *upadana*, clinging, attachment. That's the present. And then goes into the future life, that's, and then new being comes out, and then the whole process repeats for all the birth, and duration, and change, and old age, and death. That's *samsara*. That's Twelve Links of the Chain of the Conditioned Arising. It all is here, so that's why I'm telling you in advance, [unclear].

Okay now finally, Prajnaparamita. If you can juxtapose that's West, in the West, philosophy, philosophy, philo and sophia, like love of wisdom versus perfection of wisdom. Now, in Western philosophy, I mean, originally I think it's, as love of wisdom means they use reason and argument in search for truth. But now I think a lot of wisdom philosophers, they are preoccupied with analysis of knowledge. But here, Prajnaparamita, perfection of wisdom, it's more correctly, it's wisdom that has gone beyond. It's paramita, gone beyond. Wisdom that has gone beyond. So that means transcendental. It's transcendental reality or transcendental wisdom. Sometimes

simply called perfect wisdom. So you notice the difference between philosophy and Prajnaparamita.

Now here, the protagonist of this sutra or the master who is expounding this sutra is Kwan Seum Bosal, Avalokitesvara, or Bodhisattva of Great Compassion. This bodhisattva is known for her quality of compassion or great compassion, but here her compassion is coupled with wisdom. So it's basically, this is wisdom text. That's why Sariputra is addressed, Sariputra who is known, who is noted for his wisdom among Buddha's disciples.

So now, the compassionate side of Kwan Seum Bosal, Avalokitesvara, there is this very wonderful and famous text. It's called, it's sometimes simply called Avalokitesvara Sutra, or [Kāraṇḍa or Karandavyuha]. And now it has been, this sutra has been incorporated into the sutra of the lotus of wonderful law, it's called Lotus Sutra. So it forms the twenty fourth chapter of this Lotus Sutra. But sometimes, Buddhists, they just use it independently, just use this chapter as Avalokitesvara Sutra independently of the Lotus Sutra. And this sutra is noted for the saving grace. How Kwan Seum Bosal manifests herself in 33 different forms in order to aid all suffering creatures. To take them to the other shore. But anyway, so it's this [unclear] and [unclear], they complement each other. It shows the two qualities of this bodhisattva. The compassionate quality and wisdom quality, but here we mainly talk about wisdom.

So here, you can have, to have a visual picture, so it's this circle, so this is universe, or it's emptiness, it's *sunyata*, so here, or it's a stage, so here, I'm not good at drawing but here, Kwan Seum Bosal is sitting here, in the emptiness. Now, so the perfection of wisdom and the running theme in this text, in this Heart Sutra, is *sunyata*, emptiness. Emptiness.

Now, this emptiness, for your sake, could have three meanings. One is etymological meaning, like the root. Like, that's *sunya*. Like Buddha is the one who is awakened, like *buddh*, to wake up, to awake. It's, Dharma is [unclear], to hold, so it's, there's always root, *sunya*. The word *sunya* means something inflated, or bloated, or swelling. It conveys the idea that something that looks like something, it's really nothing. It's something, what do you call it, the, on festival occasions, the children and people they, what's that called, that's, balloon, balloon, yeah balloon. Something like balloon. As it's inflated, it's swelled, it's bloated, so it's, from outside there appears to be a lot, but really there is really nothing behind. So that's the word, the etymological meaning. Something like, you must have seen TV commercial, like for gas pain, right? And, you know, bloated, it's like, so finally it's like, Alka-Seltzer. And it's like a pain reliever and pain killer. So in this case, delusion slayer, you see. So that's one way to look at emptiness. So Alka-Seltzer.

Now second, as a spiritual term, emptiness, the word *sunyata*, implies a complete, complete denial, the complete denial of the world around us in all its aspects. Now, the complete denial of the world all around us with all its aspects and intricacies means also total liberation from it. Denial or renunciation means total liberation. So that's sometimes implied. And, but as a technical term, it denotes the absence of any kind of self. That's, first it says, "All dharmas

empty,” we’ll see that, all dharmas empty, in the text. All dharmas are empty in the sense that, in their reality, no self can be found. Nothing that owns, nothing that belongs. Okay?

Now secondly, all dharmas in the sense that each one depends so much upon others. That, so that it is nothing by or in itself. Like interrelatedness, interdependence. So there is no separate existence. In the ultimate sense, well, dharmas therefore do not exist as separate entities if taken quite by itself as unconditioned, a dharma means its void and its own being is emptiness. I’ll go back to this later on.

These two sides of emptiness, that is all dharmas are empty in the sense that in their reality, no self can be found. Okay? Nothing that owns and nothing that belongs. And then all dharmas are empty in the sense that each depends so much upon others that it is nothing by or in itself. And these two sides of emptiness have been the subject of debate for long time between Theravadans and Mahayanins.

Now, Avalokitesvara who sits here expounding *sunyata*, which is actually not other than Prajnaparamita, is here, is a bodhisattva. Now what is bodhisattva? Bodhisattva means being and *bodhi* means enlightened or awakening, so it’s enlightened being, also literally enlightenment being, is bodhisattva. So this bodhisattva has two qualities. One is this bodhisattva is, she is, her mind is set on attaining enlightenment. So she strives for enlightenment. She cares for nothing but enlightenment. She cares for nothing but enlightenment. So this is one side. But also, there is other side. So this side is like emptiness side, because enlightenment is empty. Here enlightenment is suchness. This is, the positive side of *sunyata* is suchness, true suchness. So, now this other side of a bodhisattva, the other quality is, she cannot abandon suffering creatures to their fate. So she made a vow, the bodhisattvas make vow, that I would not enter final nirvana unless I can take with me the whole of suffering creature. That means, how can I enter the bridge of emancipation while there are so many beings suffering out in the world. Like, can they be **blessed** when all **that** lives must suffer?

So here, in this bodhisattva there is this fusion, there’s this merging, of the world and nirvana, or emptiness, takes place. So the bodhisattva embodies both the constant inspiration, constant striving for enlightenment, and the pain the bodhisattva feels with all sentient beings in their suffering. So it’s a living embodiment of these two qualities, that’s wisdom and compassion.

Now here, please take a look at the text here. “The Bodhisattva of Great Compassion,” that’s Kwan Seum Bosal, Avalokitesvara, “The Bodhisattva of Great Compassion from the deep practice of Prajnaparamita perceived the emptiness of all five skandhas and delivered all beings from their suffering.” Now, in the Sanskrit original the last line, “delivered all beings from their suffering,” it’s not there, this is not in the original Sanskrit. It’s like, a Chinese translation, the **Xuanzang**, he added on. And it fits nicely, in a sense.

Now, so this is a prologue. You know, it’s like this is a stage, you know, Kwan Seum Bosal sits there, so this, you know, that’s, he opens his, her performance through this prologue. So here, it’s

first, this bodhisattva, Kwan Seum Bosal, is engaged or in the midst of her practice, in the midst of her **practising** the practice of Prajnaparamita. Okay? So deeply engaged in her practice of Prajnaparamita she saw, she perceived the emptiness of five skandhas. So in other words, she's sitting there, in the space there all by herself, contemplating emptiness, *sunyata*, you see? It's nice, that. And now here, five skandhas. So five skandhas are people, you know. Five skandhas constitute personality and living beings.

So now, ignorance imagines people, self, soul, and all these things. Or ego. But wisdom beholds five skandhas, just five skandhas. They are just form, they are just forms, and feelings, perceptions, impulses, and consciousnesses. Not beings. So in other words, this Buddha does not see any living being. Does not see any personalities. All she sees is forms, material or physical factors, and feelings, perceptions, impulses, and consciousness. In other words, they're rising and falling, their appearance and disappearance. Appearance and disappearance of feelings, and appearance and disappearance of impulses, and so forth. But she does not see any beings.

So, here, well, delivered all beings from their suffering, here means, so since she cannot see any beings, any attachments. These five skandhas means there are, the emptiness of five skandhas, and then when she sees these feelings, the five skandhas, and they are really empty. Empty of their true nature. Empty of any substantial entities.

So, and it's three, Buddhists like the number three, three poisons or three chief villains, they say, and three chief defilements. And they are number one, greed. And number two, anger or violence, or resentment, just aggressiveness. And number three, delusion, ignorance. So these chief villains. So since, and five skandhas bring that, that's *upadana*, five skandhas. So since she saw emptiness of five skandhas, devoid any reality, that means there are no three poisons. The three poisons are empty, three chief villains are gone. The three chief defilements are empty. So there is no suffering. That's why the Chinese translation has it, she delivered all beings from their suffering. With, what is it, with *sunyata*, with the pain killer. Delusion slayer. So that's the prologue. That's the opening remarks, opening statement.

So, and then Sariputra is invited. Now this, the real persona is not here. I mean, this sutra was composed in the 4th century. And the real persona, the people who were starting new Buddhist movements, Mahayana Buddhist movements, they are behind the stage. So they have this Kwan Seum Bosal, Avalokitesvara, represent them. So Avalokitesvara here representing them. So, and then Sariputra, Sariputra is a respectful listener, you know, here. As a kind of, supposed to be discussion, but he does not say anything. But Sariputra is invited to play the role of a respectful, respected listener. Now, of course, the reason why Sariputra is invited here is Sariputra is among ten great Buddha's disciples or among eighty chief disciples, he was number one, for his wisdom. He was number one expounder on Buddha's wisdom. So you can see why, I mean, these people who are starting new Buddhist movement, I mean, of course, this text was composed long after Sariputra was gone. So it's, the ghost is here. But anyways it's, because he was known, he was representative of Buddhist wisdom in early Buddhism, so he's invited. But what's saying it,

Sariputra understood the doctrine of emptiness, but his understanding was inferior, you see. So that's what this text is about.

So in a sense, like, a Buddhist teacher starting a new Buddhist movement in the West or in America, you know, well he or she can take the place of Avalokitesvara here. So there, "O Sariputra, form is no other than emptiness, emptiness no other than form. Form is emptiness, emptiness form." This is very famous, you see. Called, sometimes, "The True Lion's Roar" coming from these people or new bodhisattvas starting new Buddhist movement in ancient India.

Now, here "form is no other than emptiness, emptiness no other than form. Form is emptiness, emptiness form." Now, of course, "form is no other than emptiness, emptiness no other than form" is, simply, there is any absence of any kind of difference between form and emptiness, that's stressed, right? And then, "form is emptiness, emptiness form" is, that's absolute, complete, reciprocal identity is stressed over here. Now of course, obviously this statement violates the principle logic of contradiction, in the Western logic, anyway.

Here it's, now "form is emptiness" means form is the same as the denial of form. And "emptiness form" is the denial of form is form. And, in other words, it's something like what "A is not is A, and A is A, what A is not." So it's, the identity of yes and no is the secret of emptiness.

This is from Edward **Conze** who spent, what, 30, or 40, or almost 50 years on studying this Maha Prajnaparamita literature, the whole range of literature. So this is the dialectics of emptiness, first stage. It's, if I can, you can say also this way, like, samsara is no other than nirvana, nirvana no other than samsara. Or phenomenon is no other than noumenon, noumenon no other than phenomenon. And, of course, form is the first of the five skandhas. The rest of the five skandhas is the same thing. The second of five skandhas is sensation or feelings. So you can say feelings, feelings are no other than emptiness and emptiness are no other than feelings. And feelings are emptiness, emptiness are feelings, and so forth. So you can, that's why I said the same is true of feeling, thought, impulse, and consciousness.

Okay. Now, second stage, the dialectics of emptiness second stage, O Sariputra, all dharmas are empty. Now here, five skandhas and dharmas, and then, dharmas I said is things. So it's like saying people and things. Like all beings. That means also samsara, so all sentient beings. We are sentient and insentient beings. Dharmas also refer to events, happenings.

Now, first, after the prologue, well actually in the prologue, the five skandhas are exposed. So five skandhas exposed and selfhood is denied. Because five skandhas constitute personality. And the three poisons, the three chief defilements, they cannot operate alone. They operate always in relation to selfhood. In other words, to see events in their own being is the same as to see them as they really are in themselves. But their real nature is normally overcrowded by the appearance they present to us under influence of greed, aggressiveness, and delusion. So now, the dharmas here, the dharmas are exposed. Five skandhas are empty, but now dharmas are empty.

The, in the Theravada traditions, in the Hinayana, they only recognize the emptiness of five skandhas, but they thought the dharmas [or Dharmas?] are real. Dharmas exist independently. But now, here the, in this movement they extended emptiness to dharmas. So all are, everything is emptiness.

So, the emptiness of, in emptiness of all five skandhas, that, the self-extinction is accomplished. So when self-extinction is complete then, of course, emptiness can prevail. In other words, wisdom can prevail. You can gain a Wisdom Eye. There is this, one of the wisdom is great perfect mirror wisdom, or great perfect mirror-like wisdom.

Now here, now all these dharmas are also empty. So that means it's, here you can see, "they are not born nor annihilated. And they are not defiled nor immaculate. They do not increase nor decrease." In Sanskrit, this is translation from the Chinese, but the translation from the original Sanskrit, they are slightly different. You can refer to that as well, but here, what it really means is the conditioned are empty, but also the unconditioned are empty as well. So both the conditioned and the unconditioned, they are empty. Because previously the people in the Hinayana Buddhist movement, they believed that the unconditioned are real. But here, both are denied. They are empty.

So here, for instance, "they are not born" is, in Buddhism there are three signs of, three signs of being. The first one is impermanence. Everything is subject to change. Everything is in great flux. Nothing remains the same. So impermanence. And then there is suffering. And then the doctrine of not-self. So here, "they are not born," if they are born then you become subject to impermanence, of what is impermanent. Now here, "annihilated," it's a *nirodha*, it's the same as nirvana. So in other words, suffering can be annihilated, suffering can be stopped, in other words it's a way out of suffering. But here, impermanence and non-impermanence, the conditioned and the unconditioned, both are denied here. So that's what it means, "not born nor annihilated." So being born is impermanent, being annihilated is *nirodha*, the unconditioned, both are denied. But that's implied meaning, it's not always obvious if you just read it. And here, "they are not defiled nor immaculate." Like, defilement, that's impurities. I mean, they are suffering. Whether it's, you know, physical, mental, or psychological. Impurities, wrongdoings, so that's, causes pain and suffering. But immaculate, purities, so both are denied here. The conditioned and unconditioned.

And finally, "they do not increase, nor decrease." Here, you can go back to the Sanskrit. So it is, "O Sariputra," that's what, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven. So the eleventh line from the bottom, that's "O Sariputra, all dharmas are empty of own being, of their own being, are without marks. They are neither produced nor stopped, neither defiled nor immaculate, here, neither deficient nor complete." So that's the second stage of the dialectics of emptiness. In other words, it says both samsara and nirvana empty.

Now, and then, "so in emptiness no form, no feeling, no thoughts, no impulse, no consciousness." So in emptiness, it means there are no five skandhas, right? And then "no eye,

ear, nose, tongue, body, mind,” there’s no six sense organs. And “no form, sound, smell, taste, touch, or objects of mind,” so there are no six sense objects. And” no realm of sight, no realm of consciousness,” they just, you know, summarize, abbreviate that. That means there are no six corresponding kinds of consciousness. In other words, there are no eighteen elements. Eighteen elements are gone, in emptiness.

Now it’s, and then here, “no ignorance no extinction,” that’s also abbreviation of Twelve Links of the Chain of Causation, or...

[side A ends, side B begins]

...conditioned arising. So that’s the first one, ignorance. Arising of ignorance and extinction of ignorance, and then there is, there’s samsara and nirvana, the process of samsara and the process of nirvana, both are denied. That’s, again, the conditioned and unconditioned are denied. They just list here the first and the last, the first and then the twelfth, “no old age and death, no extinction of them.” And then finally, here, “no suffering, no cause of suffering, no cease from suffering, no path to lead out of suffering,” that’s Four Holy Truths, Four Noble Truths. And then “no knowledge, no attainment, no realization, for there is nothing to attain.”

Now, there is negative side of *sunyata* and positive side of *sunyata*. Negative side is, like, nothing. Now, but the positive side is, like, suchness, Buddha-nature, that’s what we talk about all along, or *tathata*, the true nature of everything. Now, the relationship between sunyata and Prajnaparamita, now the rest of the text I’ll do it next week, that’s why I stopped over there. So first that any kind of, any sign of a self is gone, done with, that’s the five skandhas, and also dharmas are done with, and then all these eighteen elements are done with. So, and then it brings right down to Prajnaparamita. So it means you have to be liberated from five skandhas. That’s by self-extinction. Because self is in the way, one’s selfhood and all that. Then finally that’s, you come to Prajnaparamita. So it’s, it’s the beyond, which is sunyata, the beyond is transcendent reality. So *sunyata* is Prajnaparamita, Prajnaparamita is *sunyata*. In other words, *sunyata* is the content of Prajnaparamita. That’s true suchness. Here, in other words, emptiness is the same the word for the beyond. And perfection and transcendental reality.

There is this famous *hwadu*, it’s when Master Chao-chou, to his temple, a monk came by for visit. He was on a pilgrimage in search for liberation. So, but his, his probing question was a peculiar, like, “Does a dog have Buddha-nature?” Does a dog have a Buddha-nature. Now, and then the Chao-chou said, well in Chinese “Wu,” you know, “mu,” which means emptiness, or nothingness, or it could mean “no,” you know. And this monk was completely confused. Now, a dog, a dog and Buddha-nature, now dog is a, it’s five skandhas, so it’s conditioned, and subject to change, so it’s all impermanence, not-self, suffering, and all that. There is no permanent entity. But Buddha-nature is the opposite. Buddha-nature is, that’s unconditioned, the same as emptiness, it’s transcendental reality, it’s true suchness. So does a dog have that? So, what Chao-chou said, what did he really mean by saying no, or empty, or whatever? But here, the monks,

they are, they are not supposed to work on this through, you know, reasoning and, you know, arguing and, you know, all that. So they concentrate, you know, they meditate on this.

So one night, one monk, this is famous *hwadu*, one monk was meditating on this, you know. “Why did Chao-chou say no?” And then, so in the midst of one of his samadhis on this koan, *hwadu*, a dog appeared. And this dog was very fearsome, you know. And was coming right at him, you know. And he got so scared. So he got up and started running. Was, dog was going to attack him, you know. So like, you know, this is monastery, there are about fifty some monks are sitting seriously, you know. And then, you know, they have all single mind, and, single mind and pure heart prevail. Just like emptiness, you know. So this monk, all of a sudden he got up and started going, running out, and all monks got up and running after him, you know. A single mind. Single mind action. So he got so scared, so he ran, he really ran, quite a bit, you know. Then all of a sudden he said, “Well, okay,” well he said, maybe, you know, and he didn’t see any dog. So he turned around and he realized all these monks were running after him, running behind him. And then they said what happened? The monks said, “What happened?” And he didn’t know what to say.

And the master came out, he got upset, you know. Well these monks are gone, you know, they’re supposed to be meditating, you know, in the *zendo*, you know. So finally, anyway, so he had to go into the master’s room and, to explain himself. So he said, well, you know, I’m very sorry but I was meditating and then this dog, this ferocious dog appeared and was coming right at me. So I got so scared, I had to run away. And when the master heard that, okay well, if the dog appears again, you know, before the dog comes at you, you go after him first! And it’s single mind and pure heart, you know. It’s yes, yes, yes, you know. So, now he was concentrating, he was in his Samadhi, you know, just concentrating, and then in the middle of the night, and the dog was appearing again, and this time, there’s no chance. He threw himself up in the air, you know, going right after dog. And he landed in doghouse and smashed it. And there was nothing there, you know. And he attained enlightenment. He smashed everything. Dog was gone, doghouse was gone. Just, boom, he landed.

So it’s, this, in the prologue, this, the statement, the, perceiving the emptiness of all five skandhas aims no less than killing oneself, you know, self-extinction. It’s, it’s, a self-denial or self-extinction is the beginning of one’s spiritual journey. That’s freedom. And then, dharmas are gone, it’s the other hindrances. So simply, and then this, even Buddhist teachings are hindrances, all these things. No matter how good they are, it says in the Diamond Sutra, non-Dharmas should be forsaken, how much more so Dharmas?

It’s, this bodhisattva as embodiment of full emptiness, it’s full emptiness, that means as the basis of Buddha-hood, it goes on teaching Prajnaparamita. So here the, in Prajnaparamita teaching is using as *sunyata*, non-duality, and mutual identity to attain the perfection of wisdom.

Okay, so do you have any questions? Mhm? Yes.

(You said [unclear...], that this was the first in 4th century by the Mahayana, **incipient** Mahayana movement, and that they composed this. Do you mean that they, were they writing down an oral tradition or were they just making this up?)

It's, this text, this Heart Sutra is, the first Prajnaparamita or perfection of wisdom literature that got committed to writing was the Prajnaparamita in Eight Thousand Lines. That's a much bigger one. And then there are other Mahayana Prajnaparamita literature in Eight Thousand Lines and then in One Hundred and Twenty-Five Thousand Lines, something like that, much bigger one. And then they are coming down to reducing it to make it more available, like distillation has been going. And the first, and then enlarged, and then restatement, and then, you know, and then additions. And then it's kind of a condensed forms and distillations. So that's why the Diamond Sutra and Heart Sutra came out and then became most popular, because it's short enough, people can recite it, much more compact. So that's happened in 4th century. So it started much before that, it's around 1st century BCE. So it has been, so in other words, it took several centuries, you know. Usually they, the composition of the entire Prajnaparamita literature took about, something like seven centuries from the 1st century in BCE through 600s in the Common Era. So it's, the movement, you know, it's kind of collective wisdom. It's, the way they say it is it's like, it's unfoldment. What Shakyamuni Buddha, in his own time, what he did not express, what he did not give full expression to certain teachings, and then, you know, as descendants they were carrying that on. So that's the position they maintained. So Buddhist movement evolving, Buddhist teachings evolving. In other words it's, there's continuity, and change, and change signifies some kind of discontinuity, and then continuity. That's peculiar to wisdom tradition. It's not like monotheistic tradition, like, you know, bible, you know, kind of.

Yes.

(Is there a [unclear] in seeking enlightenment leading to suffering? The seeking of enlightenment being an attachment [unclear] suffering by seeking enlightenment.)

It's, obviously it's a pitfall. It has to be gotten rid of. Just a way of speech. It's, enlightenment is inherent. So enlightenment coexists with the person seeking. So it's, there is, it's bodhisattva means with a *bodhi* heart. Bodhisattva is already awakened being, even though figuratively, you know, he or she sets out in search for full enlightenment. That's why bodhisattva belongs to the enlightened world. It's enlightened realm. *Sravaka pratyekabuddha*, and bodhisattva, and Buddha. So it's, we have this word, like, it's poor women are, say, ignorant woman or ignorant man, it's called prince in the poor woman's womb. She's not aware that she has a prince carrying in her womb, you know. She may be ignorant, she may be unenlightened, she may not realize what potential she has, but regardless, she carries the prince, Buddha-nature. So **embryonic** Buddha, baby Buddha in her womb. It's the Buddha potential. So that's why the samsara, mutual identity, and non-duality. And also it's called, it's mud, jewel in the mud. Even though the jewel is buried in the mud, the quality is not diminished at all. Still jewel. Just in the mud. So it's not seeking it's discovering, discovering your Buddha-nature, and develop faith and trust in yourself. So that process is Dharma journey. So like building good habits, Dharma habits. Because it takes

something to, you know, it's, well saying these things is one thing, but when you look at yourself, most people, they despair because all you can see is your karmic side, your defilements, right? But the process begins, that's why what, you know, taking precepts and all this, there are a lot of Buddhist teachings about that. Maybe you can trust your feet, maybe just one foot, the rest you cannot trust, you see. But then, that's your **hope**, just one foot, you hold onto your foot and work with that. That's your light, that's your hope, that's your salvation. And that's, you know, but your faith in your foot is, you know, you cannot compare it with rest of your body. It's incomparable. So you develop a great faith in yourself. Could you believe that?

(The problem is I developed too much faith in too many illusions.)

Mhm. But illusions are nonexistent.

(But I trust them.)

Well that's illusion. It's called, you take what is not for what is, that's illusion. That's, according to emptiness. It says, "You take a thief for your son." That's illusion, that's delusion. There is this, I wrote this down, there's this, this comes from this song of believing in your mind. Here, emptiness, you can say here, it's, *sunyata* is your mind. Your mind is empty, your mind is full, empty, empty-full. Like, you know, my mind is ocean. Someone said my mind is dance, actually this comes from Flower Adornment Sutra. My mind is a dancer, or dance. So ocean is empty but full, full-empty. So *sunyata* has both sides. It's fullness, it's emptiness. So this, this is quotation from, well before that it's like, here, emptiness as nirvana, or simply say emptiness, emptiness is Buddha, emptiness is nirvana. "Emptiness is the unconditioned fullness of reality and complete unrestricted freedom. In the higher realm of true suchness, which is also emptiness, in the higher realms of true suchness there is neither self nor other. When direct identification is sought we can only say not two. One in all, all in one, if only this is realized no more worry about your being perfect." So you need not worry about your being perfect or imperfect. You just trust yourself and work with whatever you've got. Just your empty body, empty mind. Empty body empty mind means your body-mind free from attachments, that's, you know, sitting. So like, sitting is emptiness, sitting is form is emptiness.

So this is, you recite the sutra and then it's like, it's kind of reductionism, you know. All these eight thousand lines and so many teachings are reduced to this single page sutra. It's known for it's terseness. And then, sometimes it can be further reduced to this, just mantra, you know. "Gate, Gate, Paragate, Parasamgate, Bodhi Svaha." Six phrases, six, I don't know how many syllables. Sometimes it's called power syllables, power phrases. You recite that. And you just sit in meditation. And five skandhas disappearing, and six sense organs disappearing, and six sense objects disappearing. People usually contemplate on them first, before they let them go.

But anyway it's, so fewer thoughts, fewer attachments, fewer worries. Well, there is less rush and more emptiness, more liberation. Or more time for Dharma. That could be Prajnaparamita, but again, here, as I reminded you, Prajnaparamita is the sixth of six Prajnaparamitas, six, I mean, six

paramitas. That's, first, *dana* paramita,, "May I be generous and helpful." That's the *dana* paramita, first paramita. And then *silā* paramita. "May I be pure and virtuous." And then *ksanti* paramita, "May I be able to bear and forebear the wrongs of others." And then *virya* paramita, "May I be patient. May I be patient, energetic, and persevering." Sometimes it helps, you know, like when you're [unclear] about, like, may I be patient. Like slogan chant. It helps, you know. At office, you know, when you have, you know, altercation with your coworkers, may I be patient, may I be persevering. And then, the *dhyana* paramita, "May I practice meditation and attain concentration and oneness to serve all beings." And then finally the sixth paramita, *prajna* paramita, that's Prajnaparamita, the most important one. Like Alka-Seltzer. You become cool. So it's, it can work in both ways, you can be really obnoxious egghead or it can be the other way around, you see. You can be really modest and humble, but **pretensions** can work in both directions, you see.

Okay. Any other questions? Yes.

(Dharma with a capital D, that's the official discipline and teaching...)

Yeah, it's the Three Jewels, Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. So that's, yeah, discipline and the teachings of Buddha, and all that. It's a very inclusive term. Dharma and dharani, they have the same root. To hold. It's, dharani is a mnemonic device. It's called "Complete retention." You know. It's, Buddhism can be extremely complex because they work this way and that way, you know.

(So if we chant the Great Compassion Dharani and we chant the Heart Sutra, that's also those two sides that we're starting with but Kwan Seum Bosal showing.)

Yeah, you can say that, that it's like, Heart Sutra, which is a wisdom-based sutra, so it's, also protagonist is Kwan Seum Bosal, but here she's mainly expounding wisdom while the 24th chapter of Lotus Sutra or [**Kāraṇḍa or Karandavyuha**], the Avalokitesvara Sutra, is mainly stressing compassion strictly, you know. It's showing up in many different manifestations, you know, depending upon the people seeking help, you know. So, and sometimes you can manifest yourself as, sometimes as carpenter, as a sick person, you know, as a beggar, you know. Well, because, you know, sick person can understand a sick person much better, you know. So the bodhisattva manifests herself as a sick person. But again, all goes back to *sunyata*. So it can be enlarged, restated, condensed, and could be just simply circle, you know. And then Avalokitesvara is a simple circle. And then all of a sudden, you know, it's just empty circle there, and all of a sudden you see that the wheel of life is intricate and also this, you know, the Tibetan Wheel of Life, and mandala and, you know, it works both ways. But it's, you can see that there's this, like, philosophy and Prajnaparamita, but it's, here, I say conflict resolution in terms of seeking solutions. Here in the West we, we pray and resort to speeches, and argument, and reasoning, and all that. But in the East we had silence, and meditation, and talking about *sunyata*, non-duality, mutual identity. And they say words fail and logic fail. How you can transcend the situation. And also in Prajnaparamita, it's, in some form Mahayana Buddhism, it's personified,

personified as a female bodhisattva. It's, like all embracing bodhisattva. As mother of all the Buddhas. So, well it says that, in the Heart Sutra it says, you know, right down here it says, "All Buddhas of past, present, and future, through faith in Prajnaparamita attain to the highest perfect enlightenment." That's *anuttara-samyaksambodhi*. You know, Prajnaparamita is mother of all the Buddhas.

So like it's, kind of, it's *tathagatagarbha*. You know, *garbha* is womb. So some people may laugh if I, you know, ... There was this story, this guy, ... Well, bear with me if you heard this story before, you know, because I think last Sunday I mentioned this. In Canada there is this Buddhist teacher. I forgot his name, and in early 1960s he went to India and then he met this Burmese meditation master, so he got ordained as a Buddhist monk at Bodh Gaya, where Buddha attained enlightenment. And then, instead of returning to his country, he went to England. And first he stayed at London Buddhist Society, you know, Christmas Humphreys, he was passing through the Buddhist society there. It was like his, his lawyer, and then, you know, English lawyer and all that. So he learned meditation, so he was invited to give a meditation class. So he would conduct meditation class and one woman, she had great trouble meditating, concentrating, focusing her mind. So whenever she sits she thinks about sex, you know. So she, finally she, well it was, just, you know, she just wants to meditation, you know, but this...so she asked for advice. So she asked this Canadian teacher, "Well why don't you go and make love and then come back and meditate?" And then when Christmas Humphreys, when he heard that, he got so upset and kicked him out right away. So, and after that he got famous, he got a reputation for that. So he was invited to teach, well it was those days too, that was right time. So he was invited to Oxford and Cambridge, and, you know, students liked him, his straightforward talk, you know. I mean, it made sense, you know. Why just sit and suffer, you know. You just go and, you know...so, and he was popular. But anyway, the way I see it is, you see, you see, if you are so inclined, but think this way, I mean, you are sitting, you are sitting and the universe is female organ. So you are sitting right in the middle of a female organ. So what is there to worry about. You can have Samadhi all the time.

(Unclear)

Well it's, Om Mani Padme is lotus, you know, sitting in lotus. Lotus position. It's called lotus world. Well, in emptiness it's, it's unobstructed. Mutual interpenetration. Or boundless interpenetration. It's, someone like, we'll say, Matthew or Lin, well they can write a play, you see.

Okay. "All beings one body I vow to liberate. Endless blind passions I vow to uproot. Dharma gates without number I vow to penetrate. The great way of Buddha I vow to attain."

Thank you.