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Life and Spirituality

365

TEACHINGS BY HIS HOLINESS JIGME PHUNTSOK RINPOCHE

EDITED BY KHENPO SODARGYE
IN 2019

Life and Spirituality

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His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche

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Contents

Preface 000

January 001

February 032

March 060

April 092

May 122

June 153

July 183

August 215

September 246

October 276

November 307

December 337



Preface

From the time His Holiness Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche left us over 15 years ago, there has not been a day when I have not missed him.

His only wish when he was with us was to illuminate the innate wisdom in all beings to allow all of us to escape from our afflictions and suffering.

In order to show my gratitude to His Holiness and to share his wisdom with more of you, starting next year, I plan to post a teaching and a picture from His Holiness on my Weibo and Facebook every day. I hope that this would benefit all those who will see my posts, bringing happiness and peace, and helping everyone gain liberation.

Lama Khyen!

SODARGYE
December 22, 2018





001

January 1, 2019

Do not lose your own path; do not disturb others' minds.





002

January 2, 2019

Respect and intelligence are critical for the study of the Buddhadharma.

Without respect, we would not take the Vajra teachings of the Buddhas and great masters seriously. As such, we would not derive any benefit from even the most supreme Buddhadharma.

If we pursue the Buddhadharma without intelligence, we would not be able to reflect on and analyze it with attentiveness and patience, thus failing to grasp the profound meaning of the Buddhadharma.



003

January 3, 2019

The mara of the sons of the gods is of the four types of maras often mentioned in the Buddha's teachings. Most people understand this to be the Mara King Papiyas. However, the real Mara King is in fact our own ignorance and delusion.





004

January 4, 2019

It does not matter if one practices in the Sutrayana or Tantrayana tradition, the key is to realize the nature of one's mind. In this way, one can stop all the demons from appearing and cause them to naturally vanish without a trace.





005

January 5, 2019

We should not covet or let ourselves be attached to any person, issue, or object. Why? Because if we carefully scrutinize the essence of these matters that are triggering our attachment, we will see that they are as insubstantial as water bubbles. Why then should we be attached to them?





006

January 6, 2019

Every thought that appears in our minds may seem vivid and real to us, but upon further examination, we would find that it is momentary, arising and ceasing at the same moment. Its essence is unattainable, like empty space.



007

January 7, 2019

Ordinary people are obscured by ignorance, and consider the non-existent as real and substantial, thus generating unending attachment, afflictions, and suffering... Truthfully speaking, this is utterly a trap of one's own making, creating one's own suffering.





008

January 8, 2019

Just knowing that attachment is emptiness is far from sufficient, we still have to attain our personal realization. This is akin to someone having read all about how to drive a car but has never gotten behind the wheel. He really still does not know how to drive.



009

January 9, 2019

In Buddhism, there are many ways for one to achieve the realization of emptiness. With the arguments of the Middle Way, one can reason and observe this true reality of all phenomena. Through the pith instructions of Mahamudra or Dzogchen and relying on the guru's blessing, one can also realize the empty nature of the mind.

No matter which method one chooses, it is essential to bear in mind that although all phenomena are empty, one should not form any attachment to emptiness itself!





010

January 10, 2019

It does not matter what the basis of the blame and enmity is or what injuries we have received, we should not allow hatred to rise against anyone. Instead, we should regard the person as if he is our mother and cultivate our compassion towards him.

Instead of hate and revenge, we need to genuinely pray to our gurus and the Three Jewels to bless this person so that he will soon obtain peace and bliss, and forever be freed from the ocean of suffering.





011

January 11, 2019

Some people can be filled with incredible jealousy. When they see others gaining fame and fortune, they experience unbearable sadness as if someone has robbed them of their very own fortunes.

The fact is none of what others possess has anything to do with you. Regardless of how much you desire and covet their wealth, power, accomplishments, and fame, you would not partake in any of it.





012

January 12, 2019

Today, some feel that when others enjoy great successes like the midday sun then this would diminish their own prestige. Similarly, they believe that if others fall into disrepute then their reputation would rise like the calls of a magpie. This is most certainly wishful thinking.

The fact of the matter is that even if every single person in this world were to be perfect, it would not cause a shred of damage to your reputation; conversely, even if all others in this world were destitute, your prestige would not increase in the slightest. Therefore, when others gain fortunes through their merits, we should not become incessantly jealous, but instead, we should heartily rejoice and be thankful from the bottom of our hearts.



013

January 13, 2019

Many don't realize that all their wealth, social status, and talents are just the result of their virtuous deeds in previous lifetimes. If they insist on clinging to these and foolishly think that they are accomplished, they would dismantle their virtuous root and their hearts would no longer give rise to any merit.





014

January 14, 2019

People with a heart filled with arrogance always feel that they are wiser than others and that their talents are superior. But if we observe carefully, we would find that these are not at all worthy of consideration.

Perhaps temporarily, or in a limited way, your talents

and appearance may supersede those of others. However, do not forget that there are still innumerable others who may surpass you a hundred or a thousand times over.

Even if your merits are unmatched by ordinary beings, it is certain that within noble beings there will be others who are superior to you. Moreover, your so-called good qualities will not last forever. They are just the products of specific causes and effects. They are absolutely impermanent.





015

January 15, 2019

I remember when I was at the side of my guru, the Wish-fulfilling Jewel Thupga Rinpoche (Khenchen Thubten Chopel), practitioners with extraordinary wisdom and pure precepts were as numerous as the stars in the heaven. However, quite a few of them have since fallen into a disgraceful state. On the contrary, those who had impure precepts and simpler intellect have since become great and meritorious masters.

As I reflect on these changes over time, it became apparent that even if we possess wisdom and merits in the present, they are not permanent and we should not feel a sense of superiority and dismiss others because of our achievements.



016

January 16, 2019

Before we attain the super-cognition of knowing the minds of others, it is not possible for us to fully perceive the hidden merits of others. Some who appear to us to be unrefined in words and actions could actually have merits as vast as the oceans. Therefore, we should never be arrogant and dismiss anybody lightly.





017

January 17, 2019

As an ordinary being burdened with grave karmic obscurations, no matter who we are, our afflictions are always mingled with our merits, just like sources of wonderful medicines could be found mingled with feces. Why should we then feel so smug about our own accomplishments? If we can become so arrogant as a result of the bit of merit we have accumulated, then why shouldn't we be even more ashamed because of the burning afflictive emotions in our minds?



018

January 18, 2019

The venerable Dromtönpa once said, “In this entire world, I am the least accomplished of all.” The venerable Atisha also said, “Anyone who is truly learned would treat others with humility.” When even those who are free from imperfections and have achieved great accomplishments and supreme merits treat all sentient beings equally with humility, what reasons do us ordinary beings, with flaws as numerous as dust, possess that would allow us such excessive arrogance and pride?





019

January 19, 2019

Those arrogant and self-centered people have often been struck by the flower-tipped arrow of the Mara King. Therefore, we should never consider ourselves to be above others. Instead, we should learn to be humble and modest, just like a fully-tamed speed horse, ready to be ridden by anyone and dutifully working for others.





020

January 20, 2019

At the ultimate level, all phenomena are like empty space, devoid of any inherent existence and free from any afflictive emotion, greed or hatred. However, at the conventional level, illusory and dream-like manifestations are also never-ending.





021

January 21, 2019

If we tame our minds with the pith instructions of the Great Perfection, we will understand that all phenomena lack inherent existence and all we see or hear are empty. Meanwhile, at the conventional level, samsara may still be fully evident and as such, we should treat everything with the eight similes of illusion.

This is the key concept in the Great Middle Way and the Great Perfection. It is also the “Wisdom Sword” of Bodhisattva Manjushri manifested out of his great compassion.





022

January 22, 2019

If we can fully eliminate ignorance and foolishness, just as a tripod missing one leg cannot stand on the remaining two legs, the entire palace of the Maras will completely collapse and they will never be able to harm us.





023

January 23, 2019

In this world, conceptual thoughts have brought us infinite sufferings.

Take lust as an example. When a man falls in love with a woman and marries her, he may feel that the woman is unsurpassably beautiful. But after a while, his interest in his wife may wane and he may even start feeling that this woman is not at all deserving of his affection and begin to court other women.

In fact, the woman he fell in love with at the beginning and the wife he later hated are the same person. His completely opposite attitudes at the beginning and the end are nothing but the mischief of his own conceptual thoughts.



024

January 24, 2019

Once possessed by conceptual thoughts, a person could drift aimlessly like the fluff of cotton in the wind, chasing someone today and courting another tomorrow..., and still eventually feeling that the beautiful new person he had wooed would again be ordinary at the end.

Imagine, if beauty truly is stable and unchanging, this man would not have had such dramatic changes in attitude and he would reserve his affection and love to the same person throughout. In fact, everyone should have the same view of this person's beauty. But this is not the case. While one man may be mesmerized by the beauty of a particular person, another may not feel the same way and may even feel that there's nothing special. These are the different manifestations of conceptual thoughts.





025

January 25, 2019

None of us enjoy being exposed to filthy wastes and we are often sickened when we see them. For pigs and dogs, however, these materials may actually be considered a treat. Our views on beauty and ugliness, good and evil, rely completely on our respective conceptual thoughts. The fact is that absolute good and absolute evil do not actually exist in the material world.



026

January 26, 2019

In this world, everything is impermanent and empty by nature, nothing can be relied upon. However, deluded by conceptual thoughts, many mistake material objects for truly existent substances, impurity for purity, suffering for happiness, and impermanence for permanence. Thus, they have encumbered their minds and act in all sorts of ways that are in conflict with the true reality.





027

January 27, 2019

Deluded conceptual thoughts are all like knives made out of paper. Once we recognize their nature, these fake knives will not be able to harm us. Otherwise, if we are perpetually driven by conceptual thoughts, no matter how materially rich we are, we would never possess happiness.





028

January 28, 2019

As long as a person harbors hatred, he will never be at ease and will never experience the least bit of joy. They will also never gain the respect of others.





029

January 29, 2019

Hatred is a raging fire that will consume a person's mind and can utterly destroy all the roots of virtue in an instant. In this world, no fault is graver than hatred.



030

January 30, 2019

If we wish to eliminate hatred, we should seek to understand and accept the fact that sentient beings are all equal. As we seek happiness, so do others; and as we seek to avoid suffering, so do others. If we put ourselves in the shoes of others, we would realize that the actions that others may have taken to harm us are involuntary and are rooted in their afflictive emotions. Therefore, let us not worry about trying to get even, instead, we should wish them to succeed in their quest for happiness.





031

January 31, 2019

If we are filled with ignorance and foolishness, immediate and future happiness will elude us. Why? Because afflictive emotions have their origins in ignorance; from afflictive emotions, negative karma emerges; and negative karma is the cause of all suffering. This means that ignorance is only the source of afflictive emotions and sufferings, and it is the root of all faults.



032

February 1, 2019

It is foolish for one not to choose between good and evil karma and not to learn, reflect on, and practice the Dharma;

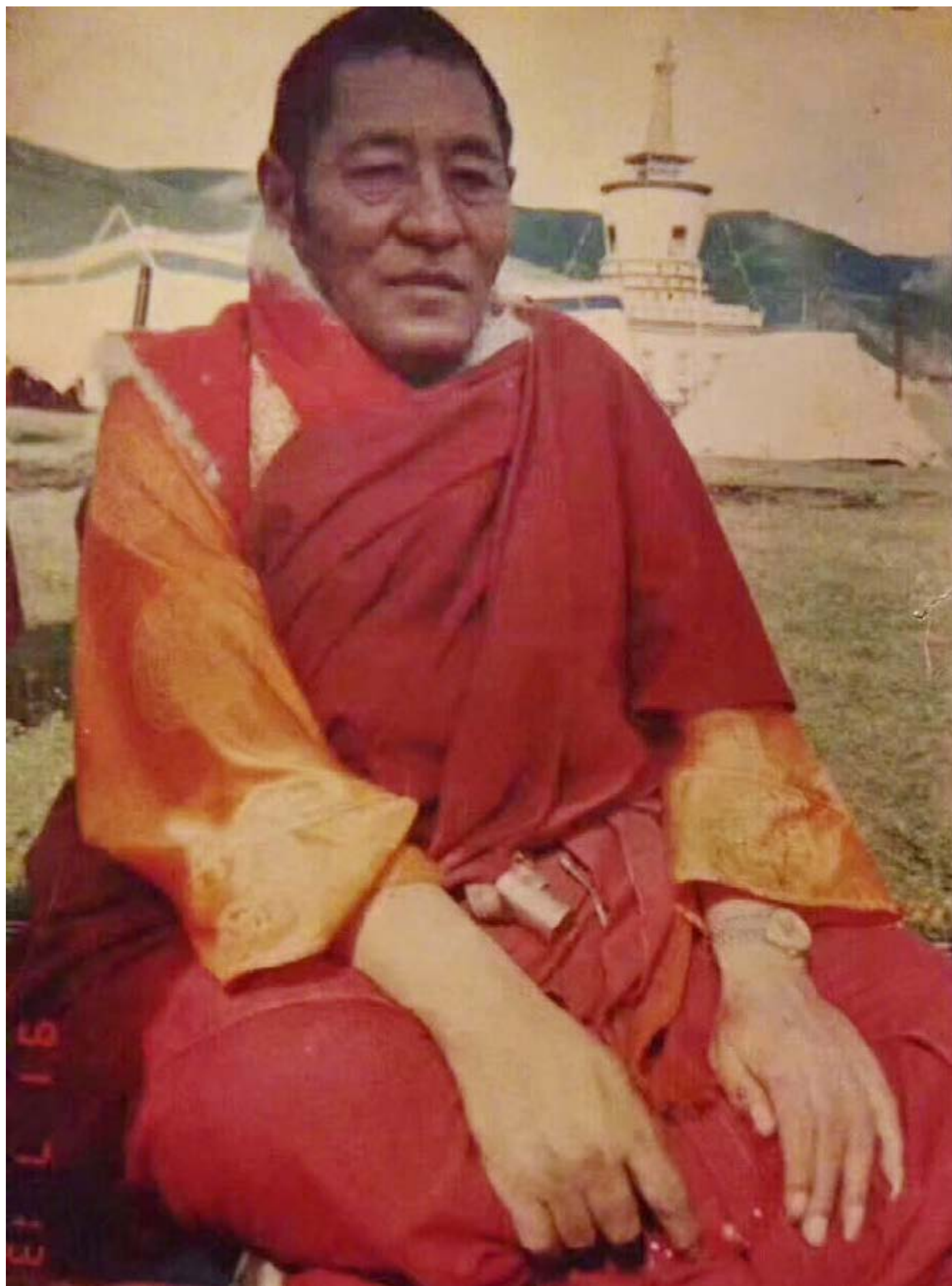


Complete ignorance about emptiness that is beyond elaboration and fabrication is also a form of foolishness;

Failing to comprehend the dependent origination of the inerrant cause and effect is yet another form of foolishness.

Therefore, we should immediately terminate the foolishness that causes us to be unable to choose between good and evil; and in the end, uproot the ignorance that obscures us to see the nature of all phenomena.





033

February 2, 2019

Since many malevolent and cultish doctrines have emerged nowadays, I hope that when you share the Buddhadharma with others you would not stray from the teachings of the Buddha. More importantly, do not allow your own conceptual thoughts to influence its interpretation. Otherwise, it does not matter whether you are writing a book or teaching a lesson, you would only be echoing the foolishness and ignorance instead of eradicating them.





034

February 3, 2019

I hope that your lifestyle is consistent with your role as a member of the sangha!

What is a conflicting lifestyle? For instance, neglect of your listening, reflection, and meditation; frequently violation of the precepts and your vows; unwilling to study the Dharma and instead raise funds from everywhere for one's own benefit; or your return home to help your family pursue worldly goals. These are all conflicting lifestyles.



035

February 4, 2019

All of our suffering and happiness result from our own karma. In fact, the root of suffering is the three poisons — desire, hatred, and ignorance. Bodhisattva Nagarjuna also said, “Desire, hatred, ignorance and the karma arising from them are non-virtuous; free from desire, hatred, ignorance, as well as the karma arising from them, are virtuous.”





036

February 5, 2019

If desire, hatred, and ignorance contaminate our daily words, deeds, and motivations, then they could all be non-virtuous. Only when we can eliminate desire, hatred, and ignorance can they become virtuous. Therefore, finding a way to uproot desire, hatred and ignorance is most important for all of us.

Only when we are free from these three poisons can we really obtain both immediate and ultimate peace and happiness.



037

February 6, 2019

The venerable messages of the Buddhadharma are like ambrosia from gods which heals all ills. Once you have learned, accepted, and practiced the supreme Buddhadharma, you can cleanse yourselves of all afflictive emotions such as desire, hatred, and ignorance.





038

February 7, 2019

Due to different karmic effects, each person may experience illusory suffering and happiness that are different from others. Even members of the same family, living together and eating the same food, may have very different lives — one person would experience auspicious dreams at night and good health, while another could have endless nightmares, bad health and terrible mood. Therefore, whoever you are and however intimate you are with another person, you may not be able to share the same feeling.





039

February 8, 2019

What's the source of the plethora of suffering and joy we experience? They are not caused by anything external. Instead, they originate from our own minds.





040

February 9, 2019

If our mind is full of faith and compassion, our lives will be filled with peace and joy. If it is also imbued with transcendent wisdom, a perfect and ultimate liberation will be within our reach. However, if our mind is filled with non-virtuous thoughts and we commit frequent misdeeds, then the brutal lower realms and unbearable suffering will undoubtedly await.



041

February 10, 2019

In the sutra, Buddha Shakyamuni said, “The mind is the root of all phenomena, it is thus the originator of everything.” Why is our mind the originator of everything? It’s because our mind can not only manifest nirvana that is pure, but it can also manifest samsara that is impure. That is to say, samsara is the projection of an impure mind, while nirvana and wisdom arise from a pure mind.





042

February 11, 2019

If we observe closely the external realm, we would discover that nothing is real and substantially existing. Therefore, the root of purity and impurity lies solely in one's mind.



043

February 12, 2019

Since it is the mind that manifests all phenomena in both samsara and nirvana, if we instill it with virtue, peace and happiness would undoubtedly arrive. However, if we don't tame our mind and let our emotions drive us to commit misdeeds, we will most certainly suffer the consequences.

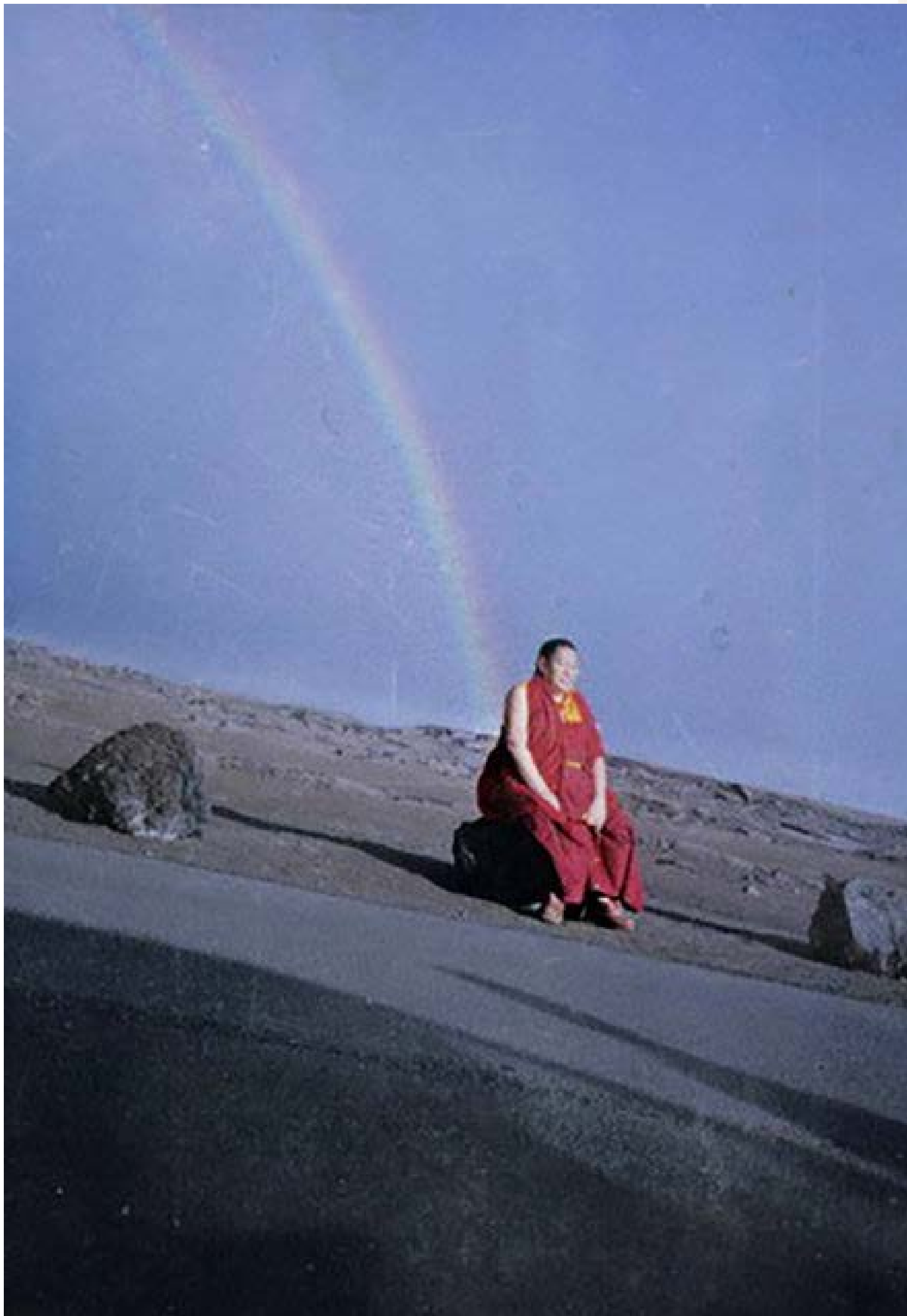




044

February 13, 2019

Regardless of whether you're a man or woman, without leaving greedy desires behind, you'll be shackled with pain and suffering, and a peaceful life would always escape you.



045

February 14, 2019

The desire of sentient beings is insatiable. The more it is satisfied, the stronger it grows.

Although people who have had no sexual experience still have desire, their desire won't become uncontrollable. However, once a person has experienced





it, the desire would only grow and grow and become insatiable.

Some naively believe that enjoying sex just once would satisfy them. But it is a fantasy if one believes that this would dilute his or her desire. Just like drinking sea water, the more one consumes, the thirstier one gets. Greed and lust grow as they are enjoyed and practiced. They will never voluntarily depart from you.



046

February 15, 2019

If greed and lust could be reduced once after they were satisfied, then why are so many still desiring more and more after they've obtained what they wanted? Why does this desire continue to grow, undiminished with the passage of time?





047

February 16, 2019

The pleasures derived from satisfying our greed and lust will be insignificant and transient while the sufferings that result will torture us for lifetimes to come.



048

February 17, 2019

Just as a beast of burden would be punished incessantly with lashes if it strayed from the path to eat merely bites of grasses off the side of the road, those who are possessed with greed and lust would also suffer much physical and mental pain for insignificant gain.





049

February 18, 2019

Since simply satisfying one's desires cannot mitigate the ill effects of greed and lust, one must rely on the essential instructions in Buddhism to counteract them.



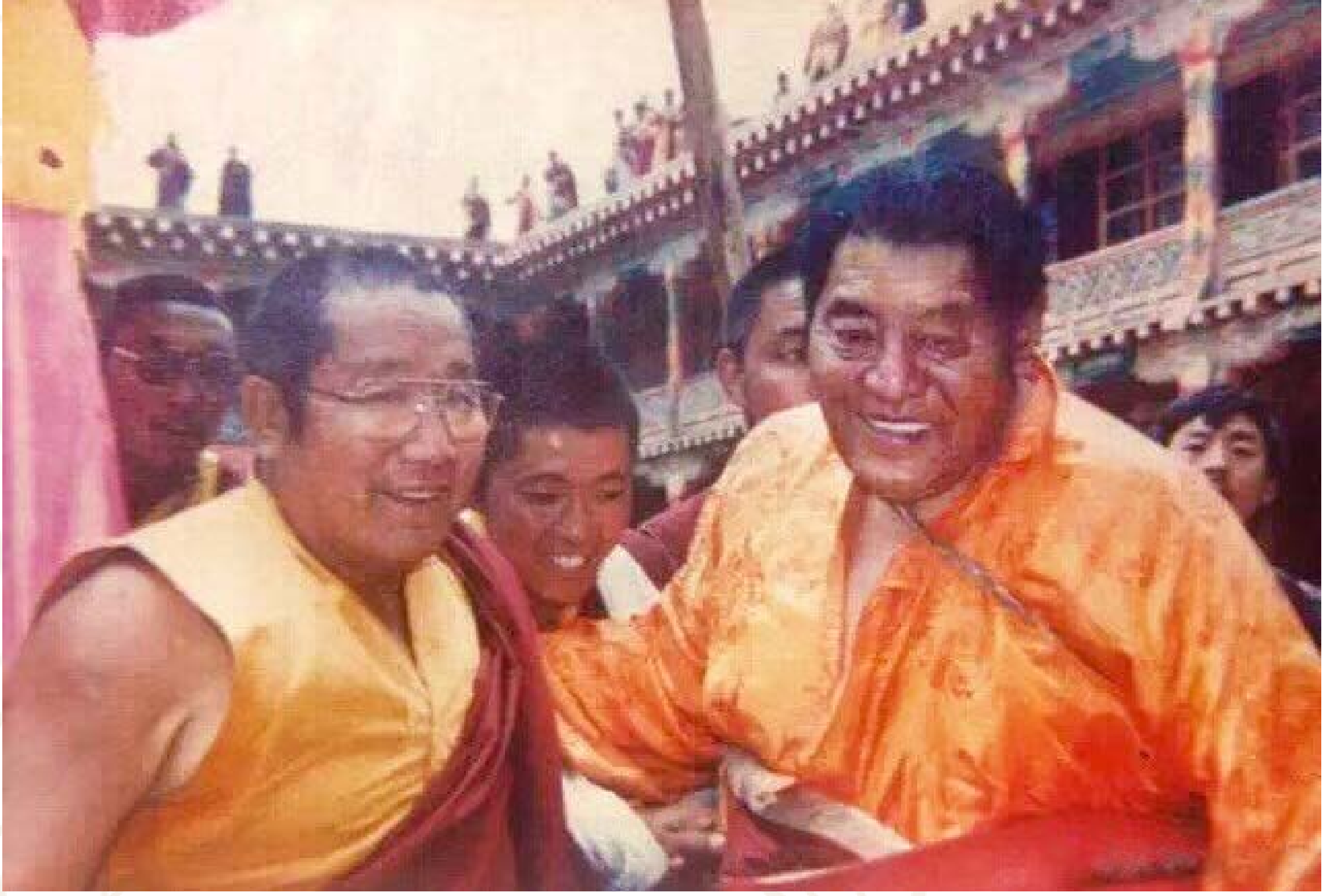
050

February 19, 2019

Even though people who possess extreme wealth and power live in splendor and comfort and are often surrounded by many who sing their praises, they still must face the same inescapable death meted out by the Lord of Death just like everyone else. For those who exhaust their karmic rewards, they could become destitute and experience the full impact of the force of impermanence.

Therefore, our happiness and pain are uncertain. Just as a grain of rice rises and falls in the water as it is cooked, happiness may result from positive karma and suffering from negative karma. They are intertwined, like a shadow that is inseparable from its form.





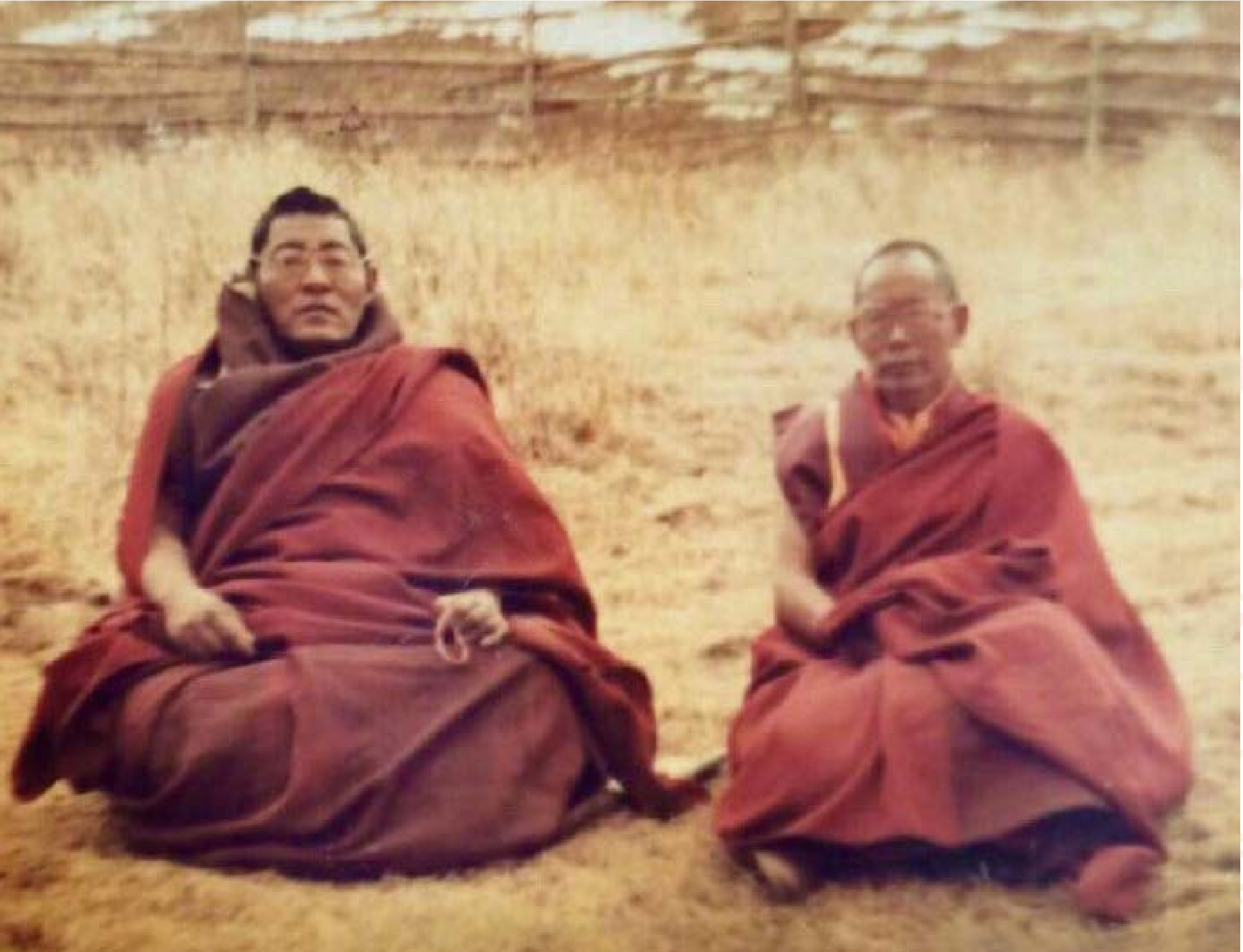
051

February 20, 2019

Mipham Rinpoche once said, “Peace and pleasure in samsara are as fleeting as lightning, utterly unreliable.”

Within this precious existence of ours and having been made aware of the supreme Dharma, regardless of who we are, as human beings, we should seize the opportunity to practice what we’ve learned. Only in this way can we gain more certainty when this existence ends.

Just as Patrul Rinpoche said, “Forever forsaking the top of the skull!” It means that through diligent practice and having left behind this human body that we have in this present life, we will never have to be born in samsara as a result of karma and afflictive emotions, but rather be freed once and for all from the ocean of suffering.



052

February 21, 2019

It is unfortunate that so many believe death is a distant phenomenon and therefore not worthy of consideration. They spend their whole lives seeking fame and fortune while spiritual liberation is the furthest thing from their minds. Little do they know that as they live their lives of excess, impermanence would descend upon them and utterly defeat them with the enormous horror of death.



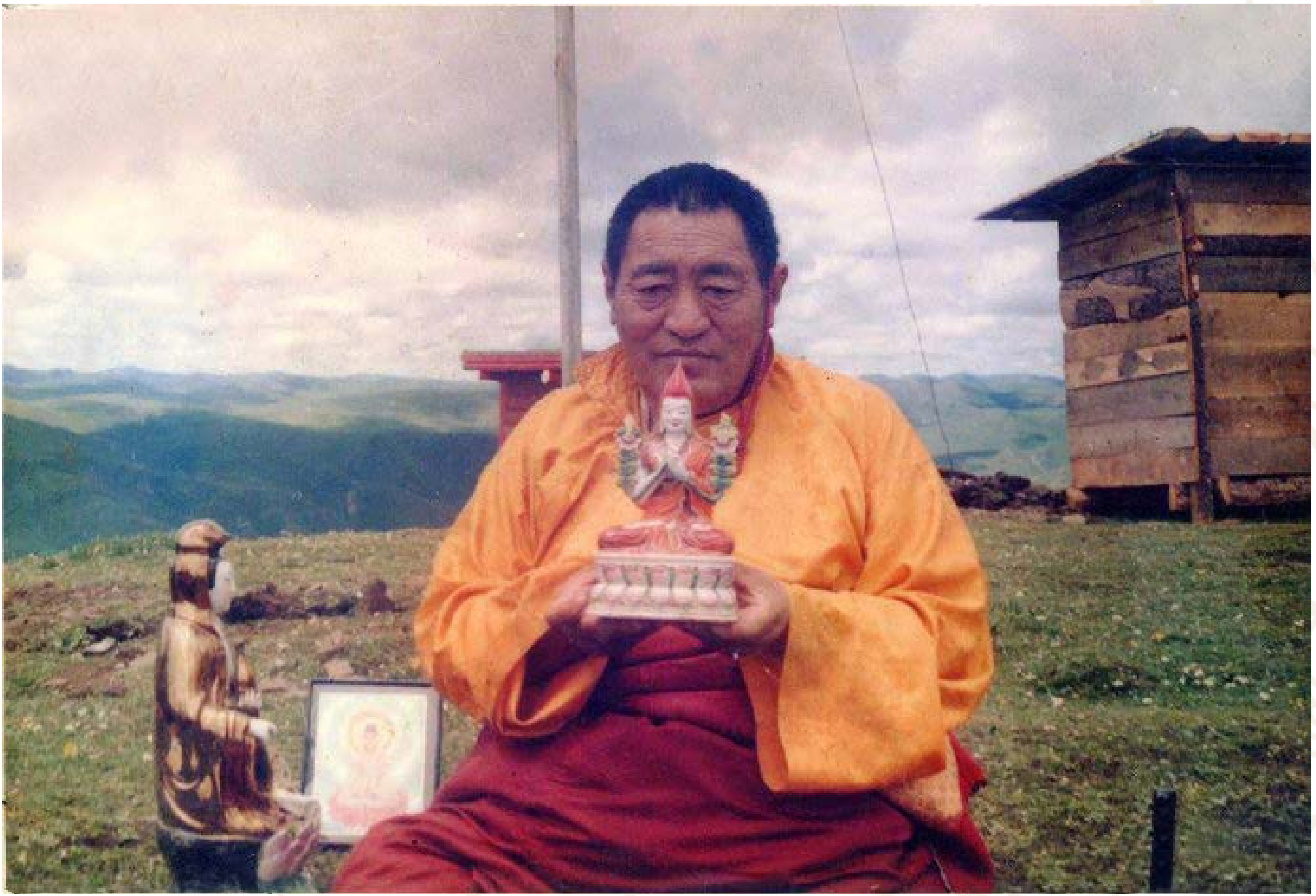


053

February 22, 2019

No one can predict when and where the Lord of Death would appear. However, when that day comes, even if you are surrounded by loved ones and friends who call your name hoarsely and exhaustedly, cry their hearts out, or even faint with enormous grief, the Lord of Death would still ruthlessly take you away. As we attempt to cling to this existence, we will be compelled to leave this world and start our lonely journey in the bardo (an intermediate state between this and next life).





054

February 23, 2019

In the not too distant future, all of us will embark on our own journeys to the bardo, leaving behind this impermanent illusion of the human world and all the people we love. Therefore, there is no need to try to hold on to anything in this present life; instead, we should cherish every moment to practice the sublime Dharma in order to attain ultimate peace and happiness, and to make full preparation for the inevitable arrival of our deaths.



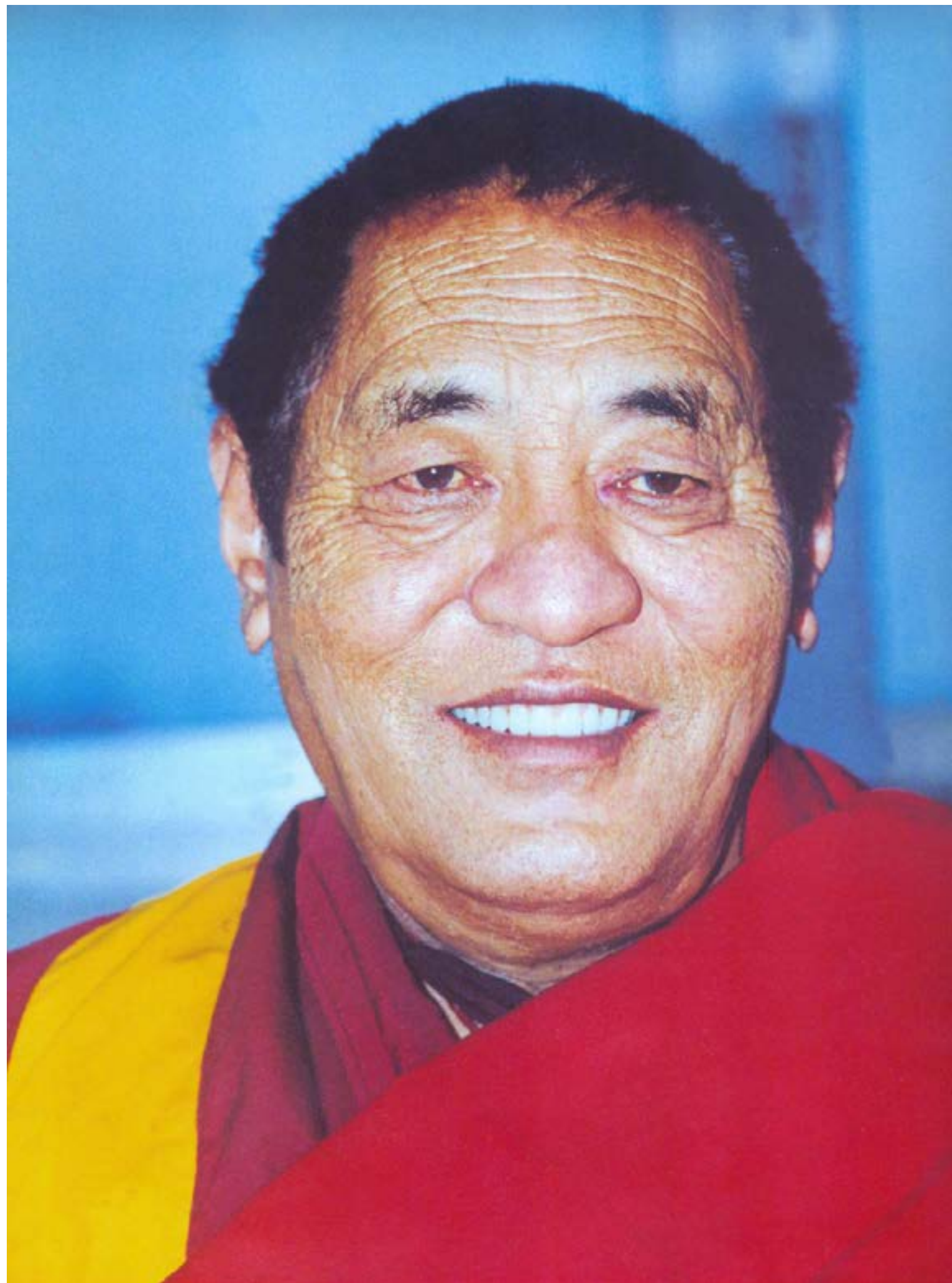


055

February 24, 2019

Indeed, impermanence pervades everything in this world. Take our bodies for instance, our youthful complexion is like that of the lovely and beautiful blush of a lotus flower. However, even if one has the beauty of a goddess, as we age, our appearance will become more like that of an old, barren, wilting tree. Some may be even tired of looking at themselves and seek only to reminisce about their never-to-return youth.

How many people would desire to become old and feeble? Many younger persons would even try to avoid aged people like me. Little do they know that soon their youthful, straight bodies will be just like the old, bent ones we have.



056

February 25, 2019

Not only are our bodies impermanent, there's also indeed nothing in the external world that is permanent, from the beautiful mountains to plains, from cities to villages, and even the desolate and inhospitable Gobi Desert. Regardless of wherever you find yourselves, whether it be pleasant or treacherous, impermanence will inevitably pervade all. Nothing will remain unchanged, just like the sea can even one day become a field.





057

February 26, 2019

Since nothing in our own being and the world is either unchangeable or permanent, what value is there to cling to what we possess and not let go?





058

February 27, 2019

Although each person's joy and suffering are different, they have one thing in common. They are like a bolt of lightning in the sky, temporary and impermanent. But many fail to recognize this basic truth. They insist on holding onto their illusory bodies and material wealth, committing all manner of misdeeds. Only when they reach the end would they suddenly realize that they would not be able to take even a hair from all they've pursued in their whole lives. The only things that will always accompany them like a shadow are their good and evil karma.





059

February 28, 2019

Those in their youth who possess beauty, talent, and wealth should not be so arrogant. Although many may think that they are better than others in their circles, it is almost certain that there would be people in this world who could dwarf them in beauty, talent, and wealth.



060

March 1, 2019

I urge you to always maintain humility in your hearts, even when you are young, and be always prepared for the consequences of impermanence. Do not assume that matters are going to remain the same.

In this life, I have seen many fall from their positions of great power to a state deserving of pity, from great wealth to poverty, and those with no means to great prosperity. The changes that can occur in this world of ours can be monumental.





061

March 2, 2019

Wealth is as impermanent as a cloud in the sky, status is as illusory as the mist on the mountain top, and beauty is as temporary as an echo in the valley.

When others commend you for your appearance, talent, and intelligence, keep in mind that these are but praises that happen in a dream and have nothing in substance. Irrespective of the perceived importance of these attributes by many, none of these could be retained when your existence in this lifetime ends. All will have to be left behind in this material world. Therefore, we should not carry unreasonable desires for worldly reputation, wealth, and status lest we are burdened with constant suffering.



062

March 3, 2019

All the sufferings we experience in our present lives are the result of our own actions and misdeeds in the past. However, this fact is still not fully understood and appreciated by many. When they encounter even the smallest difficulties, they would complain about their fate and blame others. This is foolish indeed.





063

March 4, 2019

It has become common nowadays that when someone encounters difficulties, he would complain that it's all because his friends and relatives did not have the ability to help him, or that it's simply because the world has not presented him with the right opportunities. Little does he know that all joys and disappointments have their origin in himself.

Imagine for example if our face is perfectly clean, then when we look into a mirror we would naturally see a clean face in our reflections. Similarly, if we have never committed any misdeeds in the past, we would not without reasons experience pain and suffering in this life.



064

March 5, 2019

The suffering of sentient beings is inextricably linked to their karma. Often it may appear that external reality has a direct influence on the joy and suffering we experience, but in fact, it is the manifestation of karma. Those who hurt you are also involuntarily controlled by their own karma.





065

March 6, 2019

When the karma matures, wealth and power will not dispel the bitter outcomes of our misdeeds. Even divine changes of celestial beings are powerless against karma. In order to rid ourselves of karma, sincerely confessing is the only way.





066

March 7, 2019

Regardless of the time and place, when we can naturally treat everyone with compassion, even enemies who may have originally intended to do us harm would gradually grow fond of us.





067

March 8, 2019

If we hope to have the assistance of others in times of need, then we will need to offer the same to others. When we are truly accepted by more and more people, there will be less and less opposition. Even though some may initially oppose us, with our kindness and compassion, they may even utter words of praise.

However, if we make foes everywhere, causing ill will and complaints, it would be impossible for us to accomplish anything. Therefore, the most effective way to gain the acceptance of others is to express the compassionate heart to others.



068

March 9, 2019

In order to gain the respect of others, one must first become a person of good characters and merits, be compassionate to everyone, and treat all with respect.





069

March 10, 2019

In life, whether it's words or deeds, intentional or otherwise, some people often are less than honest. Once this becomes a habit, everything they do would be viewed by others as devious and untrustworthy. They may seem to be successful for the moment but it's inevitable that they will ultimately fail.

These individuals are like the water at the mountain top, descending ever so gradually from the highlands with no hope of ever returning to the same heights. Therefore, building a career based on dishonesty is both hypocritical and unsustainable. Ultimately the benefits would not be long-lasting.



070

March 11, 2019

Those who are shrewd and devious may seem clever and smart but they are indeed fools. Focusing only on immediate and insignificant gains, they often fail to understand how their actions and deeds would actually have the opposite effects in the long run. In contrast, those who have true wisdom and abilities would use their deep insights to build a sustainable future that will bring them perpetual peace and happiness from life to life.





071

March 12, 2019 (1)

For some, their insatiable and unrealistic desires make them always wanting for more. They spend their days and nights worrying, leaving them with little peace and happiness. Although nobody knows how long one would live, these people keep scheming to leave their marks in this lifetime. This constant delusion, once you stop to consider, is truly deserving of pity because it not only does not bring these people any true benefits, they will actually live their short lives in vain.



072

March 12, 2019 (2)

Whether one is a lama or a senior official, as a successful leader, one must possess both worldly and transcendental wisdom, a vision for the future, an adept understanding of the principle of karma, treating others fairly and equitably, and in particular, be ethical and honest when dealing with money and materials to avoid any corruption.





073

March 13, 2019

If someone helps me in times of need and pain, I should never forget him when I have means and power. Otherwise, no matter how famous or powerful I become, I would still be a small and despicable person. Unfortunately, nowadays there are many who when they have gained the smallest of status would completely forget those who have helped them. Abandoning their old benefactors and attaching themselves to people who are more powerful, these people can be counted on to repeat this process. Therefore, it is pointless to make friends with them.



074

March 14, 2019

Character and integrity are the foundation of friendship. Someone of good character who may not be that close to you or even hold a less than favorable opinion of you would not harm you. But if a person is willing to abandon his old friends just to have a relationship with you, you can be sure that this would not be a reliable friendship as he would most certainly abandon you someday.

We even see many treat their own gurus in the same manner. When they encounter a more famous master,



they would abandon their old gurus to follow the new person. Those who would abandon people who have benefited them in their lives cannot be relied upon.

Long time ago, three lamas came from great distances to seek guidance from Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje. Do Khyentse Rinpoche tested them by saying, “If you abandon all the gurus you’ve had in the past, I will become your guru.”

Two of the lamas thought that since Do Khyentse Rinpoche was a much more well-known guru than their masters, so they consented. The remaining lama, however, responded saying, “Although you, Do Khyentse Rinpoche, are indeed a remarkable guru with deep insights and great merits, my guru has been my true guide and given me enormous benefits. Therefore, I would rather give up the opportunity to receive your guidance than to abandon my guru.”

Do Khyentse Rinpoche then answered, “The way that you two are willing to just abandon your gurus is bound to repeat itself. This shows that you are not ready to receive the Dharma from me. The third lama can stay.”

Afterwards, the remaining lama received precious Dharma insights from the Rinpoche and attained supreme realization. His name was Akhu Oser.



075

March 15, 2019

As one's station in life rises, one should be even kinder and more compassionate to those less fortunate. At the same time, one should not just be a sycophant to those more powerful. Instead, life should be lived without having to feel inferior or being overbearing.





076

March 16, 2019

Someone who lives in peace with others, shows compassion, respects the elders, cares for the young and needy, yet does not seek his own fame and fortune can be a good leader.





077

March 17, 2019

Taking advantage of others is antithetical to the laws of karma. Even if you are otherwise an upright and compassionate person, if you ignore the law of cause and effect, you would eventually find your life in ruins.





078

March 18, 2019

A loss of wealth may bring about temporary distress and a loss of status may bring pain to this life. However, violation of the karmic law would bring endless suffering for numerous lifetimes. Therefore, it is not important whether you are wealthy or poor, famous or unknown, you should never lose your focus on the true principle of cause and effect.

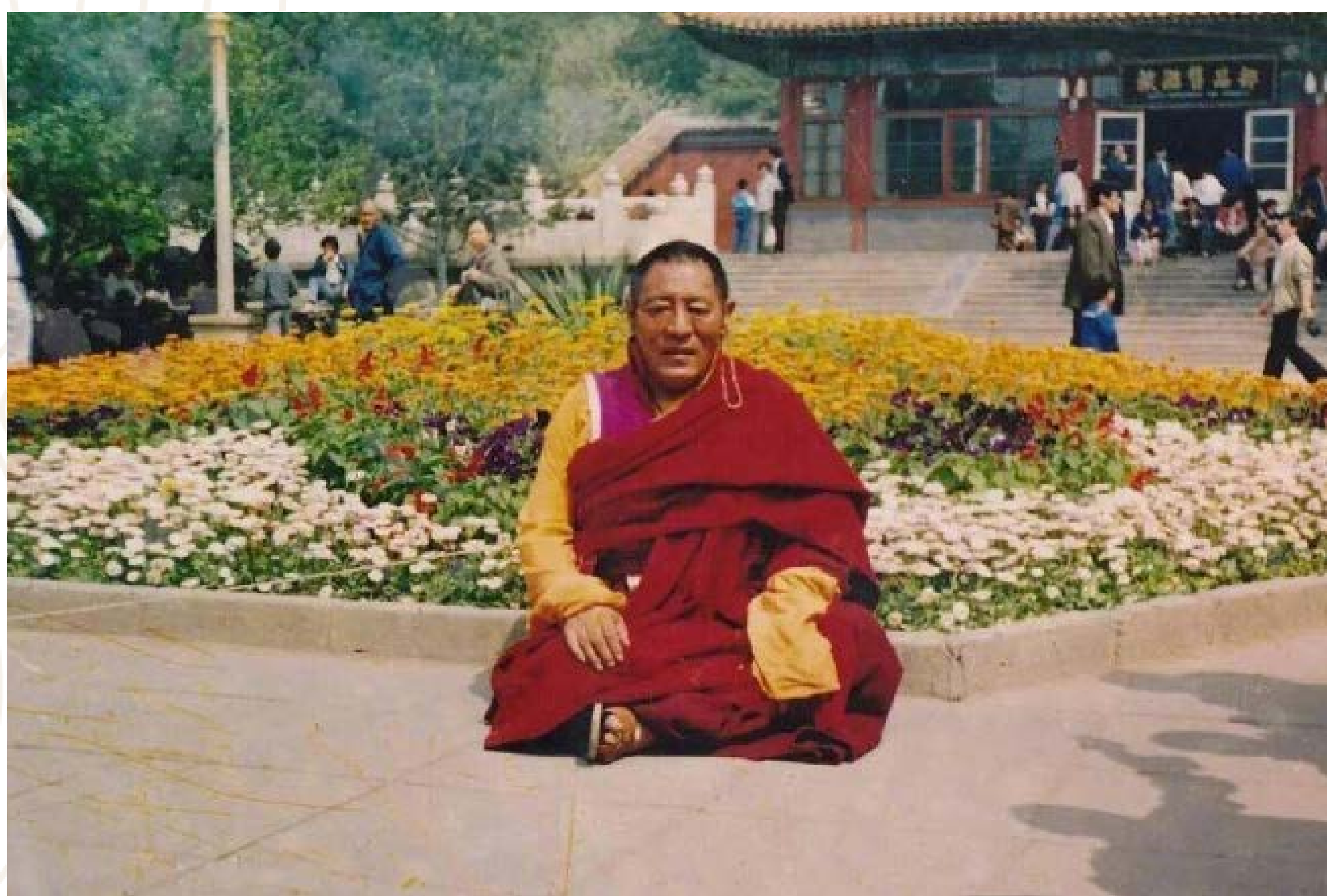


079

March 19, 2019

Fools covet small near-term gains while the wise plan for the long-term. Indeed, the willingness to seek self-improvement and perfection of all virtues will lead one to true happiness.





080

March 20, 2019

No matter who you are, it is best not to covet wealth and property. Instead, we should always contemplate the meaning of impermanence, carefully considering the impact of causes and effects in every decision we make. In so doing, we would feel more and more at peace and happy!



081

March 21, 2019

There are many who boast to have had grand visions of their lama, the Buddha, and other deities. We need to be particularly vigilant with these individuals, recognize their true nature and don't give them your trust lightly. At the same time, I urge those who make these false claims to be cognizant of their actions and the ultimate consequences of karma.





082

March 22, 2019

When Dudjom Lingpa was at Larung Gar, there was a practitioner called Ache Seng-gé who would sometimes wear a hat on his head claiming that he had an ushnisha. He also claimed that he could levitate. Trying to prove this ability, he leaped from the roof of a building but of course he was seriously injured from the fall.

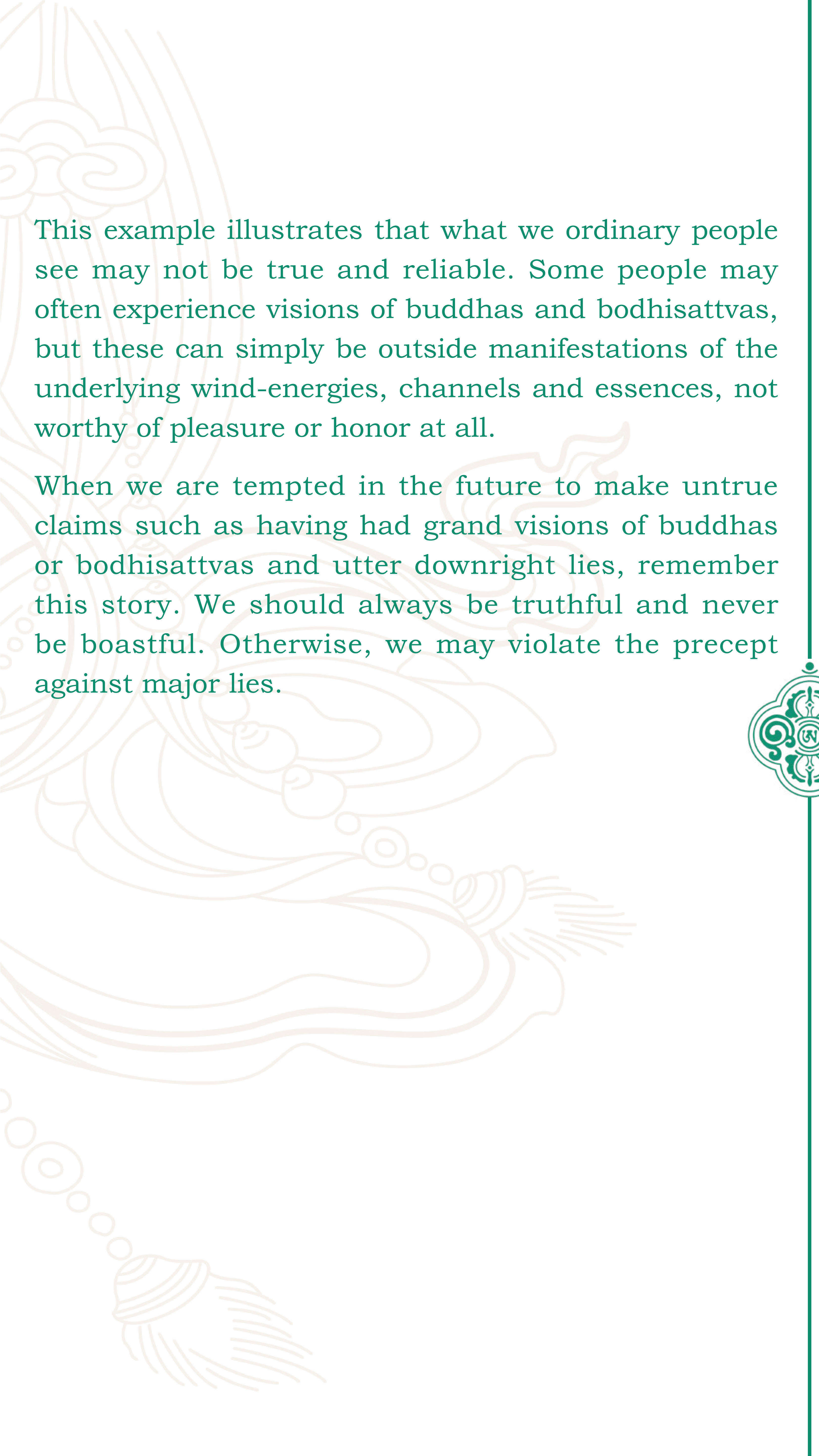
Once Ache Seng-gé said that he possessed many precious termas (hidden treasures) and asked Dudjom

Lingpa to appraise them. After examining these items, Dudjom Lingpa declared, “These are not real termas, I think you may be deluded by demon.” However, Ache Seng-gé was not satisfied and did not want to believe Dudjom Lingpa’s conclusion. He not only insisted that his “termas” were genuine, but also accused Dudjom Lingpa was jealous of his possessions and that was why he didn’t confirm their true providence. He later sought out another great accomplisher to validate his “termas” but was similarly rebuffed.

He remained obstinate and came before Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and requested his appraisal. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo put his signature on these “termas” out of kindness, but asked Ache Seng-gé to recite the mantra of Padmasambhava 10 million times, saying that would be necessary to reveal the true result of the appraisal.

As he was finishing his recitation of the Padmasambhava mantra, Ache Seng-gé had a vision and saw a monk fell to the ground at the sound of the mantra. Immediately, the demon of arrogance left his consciousness and Ache Seng-gé realized that he needed to change and become a true Dharma practitioner. Ache Seng-gé’s mind had been indeed confused and his delusion and misdeeds were overcome only through the power of the Padmasambhava mantra and the supreme blessing of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo.





This example illustrates that what we ordinary people see may not be true and reliable. Some people may often experience visions of buddhas and bodhisattvas, but these can simply be outside manifestations of the underlying wind-energies, channels and essences, not worthy of pleasure or honor at all.

When we are tempted in the future to make untrue claims such as having had grand visions of buddhas or bodhisattvas and utter downright lies, remember this story. We should always be truthful and never be boastful. Otherwise, we may violate the precept against major lies.





083

March 23, 2019

Throughout history, most people preferred not to be alone, instead they took delight in wandering around and enjoyed their time socializing with others. When something happens in their lives, they would often gather together and excitedly argue about the issue even if it is insignificant. When a minor dispute arises and the parties are agitated, those who are not so offensive would observe in a distance with indifference



while those who love to meddle would cause even more unrest.

In *Letter to a Friend*, Nagarjuna described the loss that can result from participating in large social events. Patrul Rinpoche's *Advice to Myself* explained why we should seek stability in our lives and stay in one place. He urged people to “keep their bodies in their houses and calm the hearts in their bodies.”





084

March 24, 2019

People nowadays seem to raise their voices whenever they are talking to each other, seldom are they looking to live a quiet, stable life or to stay away from crowded gatherings. The truth is that no matter who you are, we should try to calm our hearts, lower our voices, moderate the pace of our speech, and avoid uncontrolled and loud exclamations.





085

March 25, 2019

It has been said that many eminent monks and masters, fearing the burden of fame, would choose to live an ascetic life, forgoing personal wealth and possessions so that they may better guide living beings. But there have also been highly accomplished

masters who, in order to benefit more beings, have chosen to be “tainted” by worldly fame and gain.

Patrul Rinpoche and Kongtrul Yönten Gyatso were both renowned accomplished monks of their time. They were also close friends. Kongtrul Rinpoche had many disciples in Sershul, and in his daily life, he was like the moon surrounded by a constellation of stars. His horses and possessions were too numerous to count.

One time when the two were together, Patrul Rinpoche grew wearied of Kongtrul Rinpoche’s fame and accumulated wealth, so he said to those beside him, “Kongtrul Yönten Gyatso now enjoys widespread renown and abundant wealth. I fear that for an ascetic monk like me, remaining here would not be a good fit. It is better that I leave.”

When Kongtrul Rinpoche heard this, he begged him to stay. Patrul Rinpoche said lightheartedly, “Back when we were learning the Buddhadharma at the feet of Gyurme Thutob Namgyal in Shechen, not only were our clothes threadbare, our houses were also simple and crude. For these, we were frequently ridiculed and bullied by others. In order to fill our stomachs, we also often went together to beg for alms. Do you remember that? Now that you have become a famous senior monk and no longer need



me to do anything for you, what point is there for me to remain?”

Upon hearing this, Kongtrul Rinpoche shook his head and said, “Please do not think that way. Many of the things I do, I do out of necessity. I don’t covet personal gain. If it weren’t for the fact that my actions could benefit living beings...” Hearing his dear friend’s explanation, Patrul Rinpoche nodded his head in understanding.

Let’s consider these two great masters who surpassed many masters in times past and present. One lived as an ascetic monk guiding living beings to liberation, while the other assumed the appearance of an affluent monk to benefit people. Regardless of how they appeared, they were both selfless and served wholeheartedly to benefit living beings. In contrast, some only think of themselves deep down, using any means to gain fame and fortune. How is this worthy of reverence by anyone?



086

March 26, 2019

When hurt by adversaries, those who are less enlightened would often react with anger in their hearts, seeking revenge any way they can. We can all imagine the inevitable consequences of these actions.

Buddha Shakyamuni was very clear when he stated



that all suffering and happiness originate from one's own past karma. It would only result in boundless afflictions if, instead of diligently purifying karmic obscurations, we blame the external environment and other people for our own suffering. Imagine a person who insists on consuming a diet of greasy food when he has a gall stone that is blocking the flow of the bile needed to digest fats. Any afflictions that he may suffer as a consequence would be entirely of his own doing. It would be illogical for us to be angry at the food.





087

March 27, 2019

Anger against the external world will only devastate your present and future lives. For this reason, even when you are ill, do not become angry with the god of disease. Otherwise, you will only add to your own suffering.





088

March 28, 2019

The root of all suffering is our own mind, or the negative karma accumulated due to all the misdeeds that we have committed in the past. If we are able to understand and accept this truth, we will stop blaming the external world for our pain and afflictions and recognize them to be simply the result of our own past actions.





089

March 29, 2019

With further examination, you will find the origin of all suffering is actually self-clinging. Only after self-clinging is uprooted can suffering vanish without any trace.

As Shantideva said, “All the disasters, fear and suffering in this world arise from self-clinging. Since this is the case, what is the use to keep this demon king of self-clinging?”





090

March 30, 2019

The root of all afflictions in our existence is our uncontrolled mind. All the subjective thoughts that emerge from our minds are like a small monkey that is forever jumping up and down and never stays still. In order to control it, we need a rope of mindfulness. Otherwise, it would not rest even for one instant.

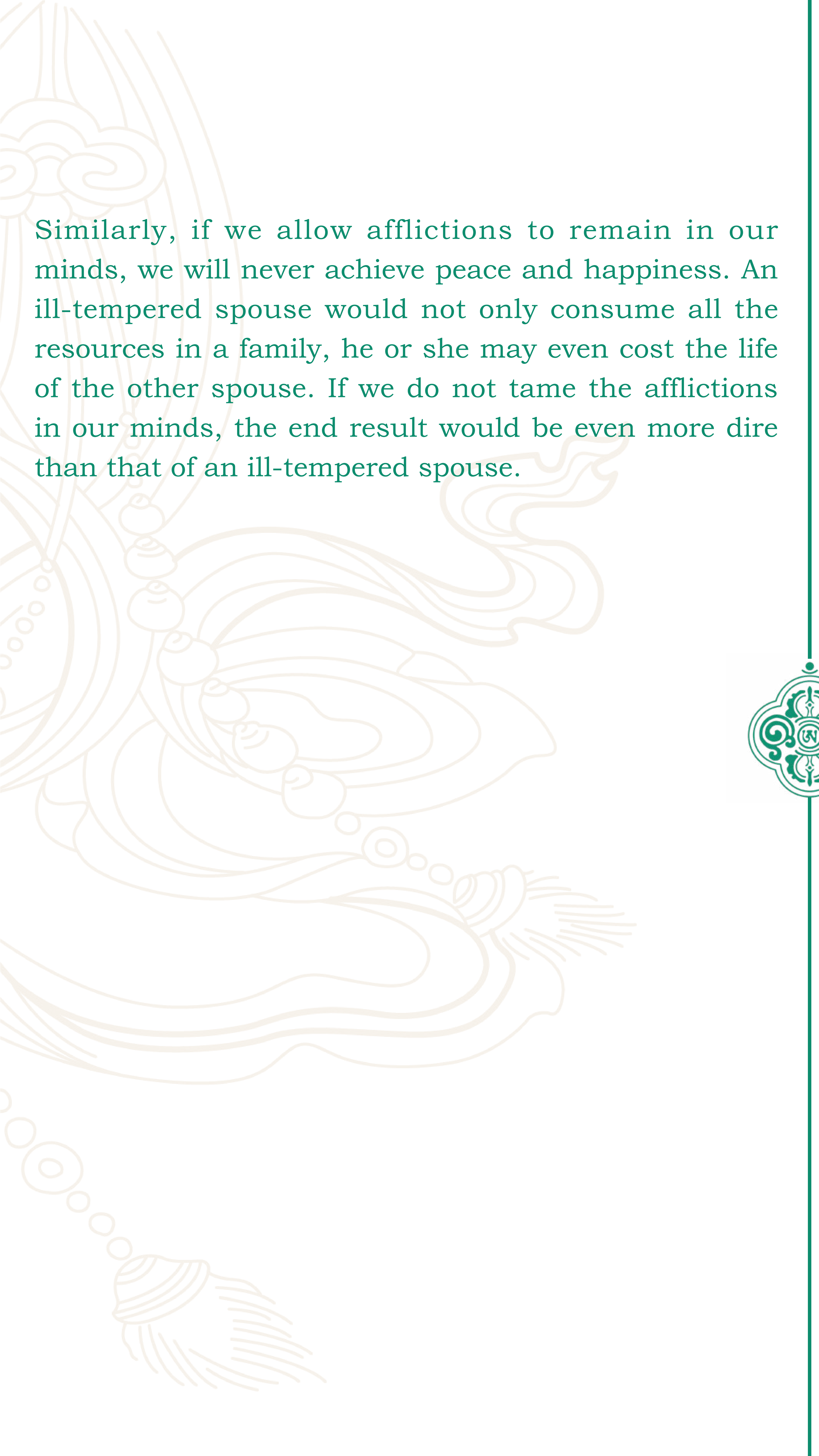


091

March 31, 2019

If one is unwilling to control one's subjective thoughts, their power can sometimes be overwhelming. They are akin to an ill-tempered spouse who is the cause for constant unrest in a family and makes life miserable for everyone in the household.





Similarly, if we allow afflictions to remain in our minds, we will never achieve peace and happiness. An ill-tempered spouse would not only consume all the resources in a family, he or she may even cost the life of the other spouse. If we do not tame the afflictions in our minds, the end result would be even more dire than that of an ill-tempered spouse.







092

April 1, 2019

Many people wish to be healthy and young forever, but this is not so meaningful. If you can tame your mind, its value far surpasses everything in the world.

Patrul Rinpoche also said, “Tame your mind, tame your mind, tame your mind with bodhichitta. This can benefit both yourself and sentient beings even if you have not yet practiced any virtue with your body and speech.”



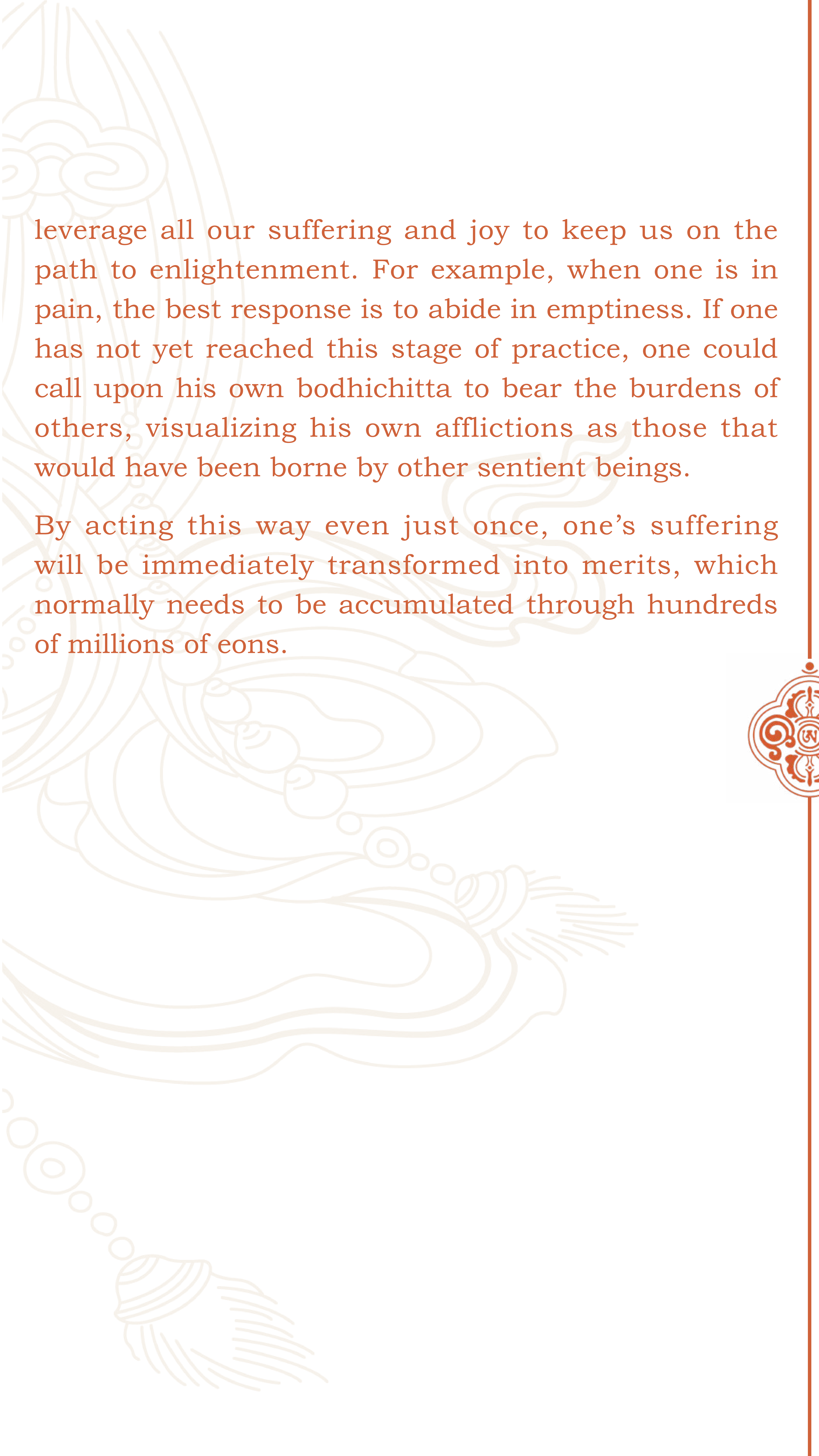
093

April 2, 2019

For an ordinary person, his subjective thought to avoid afflictions and to hold on to pleasure is a constant refrain.


As practitioners, we need to abandon this attitude and

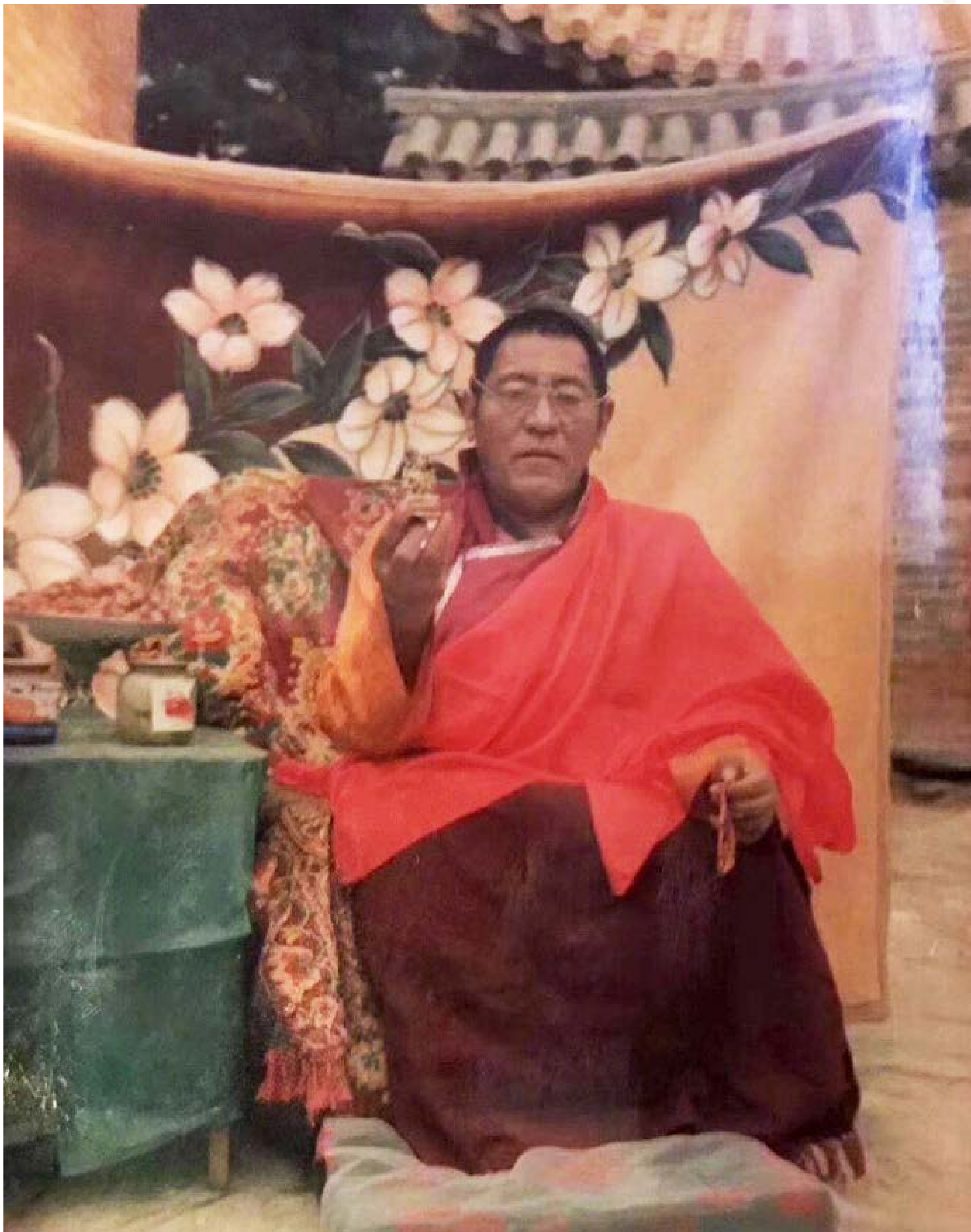




leverage all our suffering and joy to keep us on the path to enlightenment. For example, when one is in pain, the best response is to abide in emptiness. If one has not yet reached this stage of practice, one could call upon his own bodhichitta to bear the burdens of others, visualizing his own afflictions as those that would have been borne by other sentient beings.

By acting this way even just once, one's suffering will be immediately transformed into merits, which normally needs to be accumulated through hundreds of millions of eons.





094

April 3, 2019

Everyone has his or her own hopes and aspirations. However, as each person seeks to gain more and more comfort and happiness, once a wish is fulfilled, other goals would follow closely behind.

Our subjective thoughts are just like this. Once a wish



is realized, a new desire would rise immediately to take its place. It is as if a person who would first wish for a yard after he has gotten a house, and then would demand a garden after he gets the yard, and so on and so on... Unless we succeed in completely severing our own egos, these desires will never cease. The great master Gendün Chöphel said, “All sentient beings, including even tiny ants, seek incessantly to gain their own comfort and happiness.”





095

April 4, 2019

Regardless of whether we are seeking the virtuous Dharma or pursuing insignificant worldly affairs, it is essential that we recognize the nature of our mind, and thus sever the conceptual thoughts of hopes and doubts. Only when we have settled into a state free of any attachment will our afflictions quietly disappear.



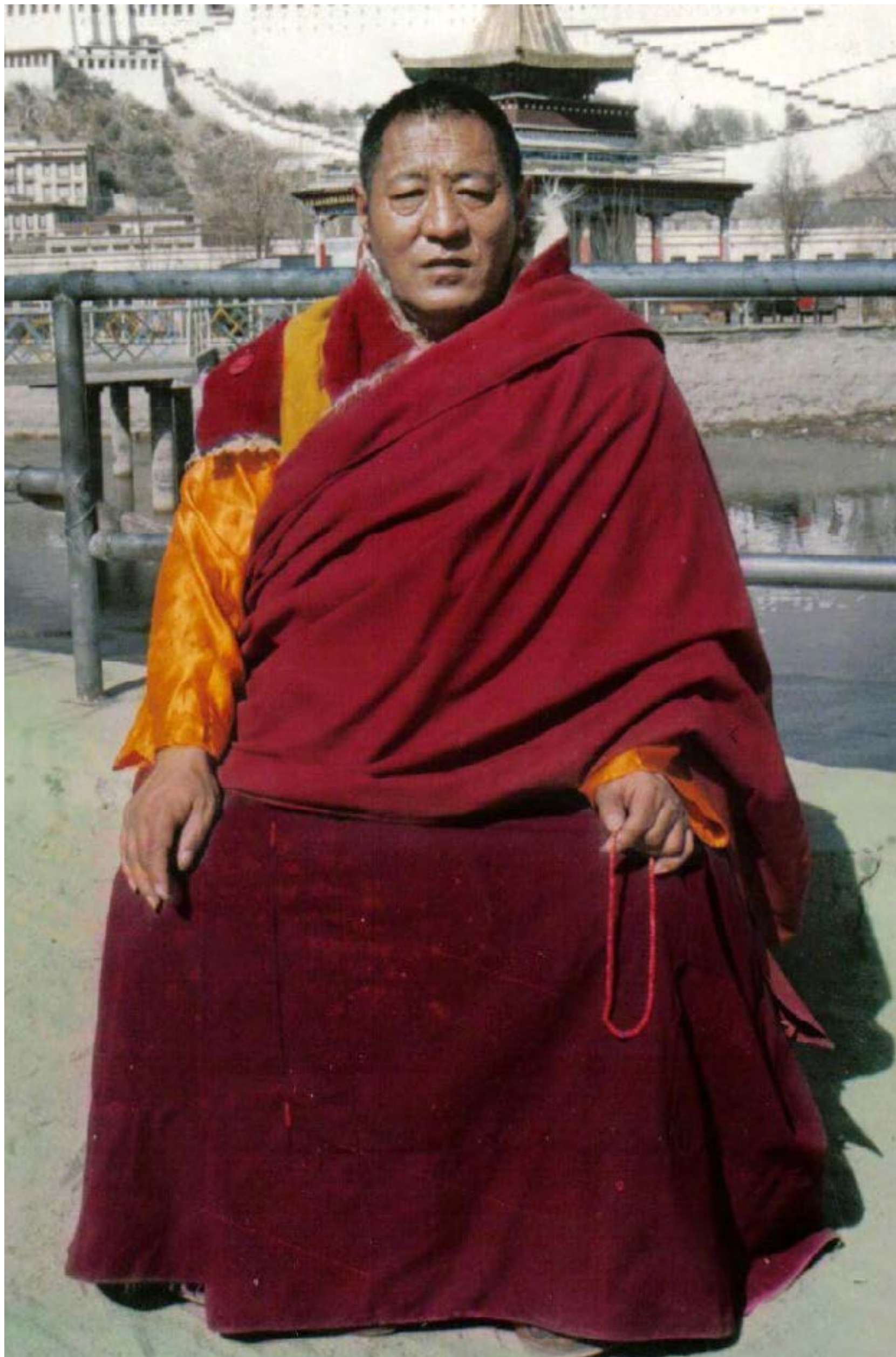


096

April 5, 2019

As a beginner, if you are not able to tame your mind, you can place a statue of Buddha Shakyamuni in front of you and focus at the heart of the statue. If you lose your attention and feel drowsy after a while, you may focus at the top of the Buddha's head.

Meditating this way can readily calm the restless mind and will help you eliminate the underlying conceptual thoughts.



097

April 6, 2019

When I was studying at Sershul, my teacher Thupga Rinpoche said to me one day, “If we fail to tame our mind, its power can be incredibly fierce and terrifying. But if we succeed in taming it, we will discover that it is but a paper tiger. Even with a mere seven days of praying fervently to our teacher and



diligently working to tame our minds, we will find that we would have drastically changed the state of our minds.”

I have absolutely no doubt in my master’s teaching. As long as we are willing to work diligently on our practice and rely on the sublime instructions, taming our minds will not be difficult. In fact, the main reason for our failures is because we have not adequately applied ourselves.





098

April 7, 2019

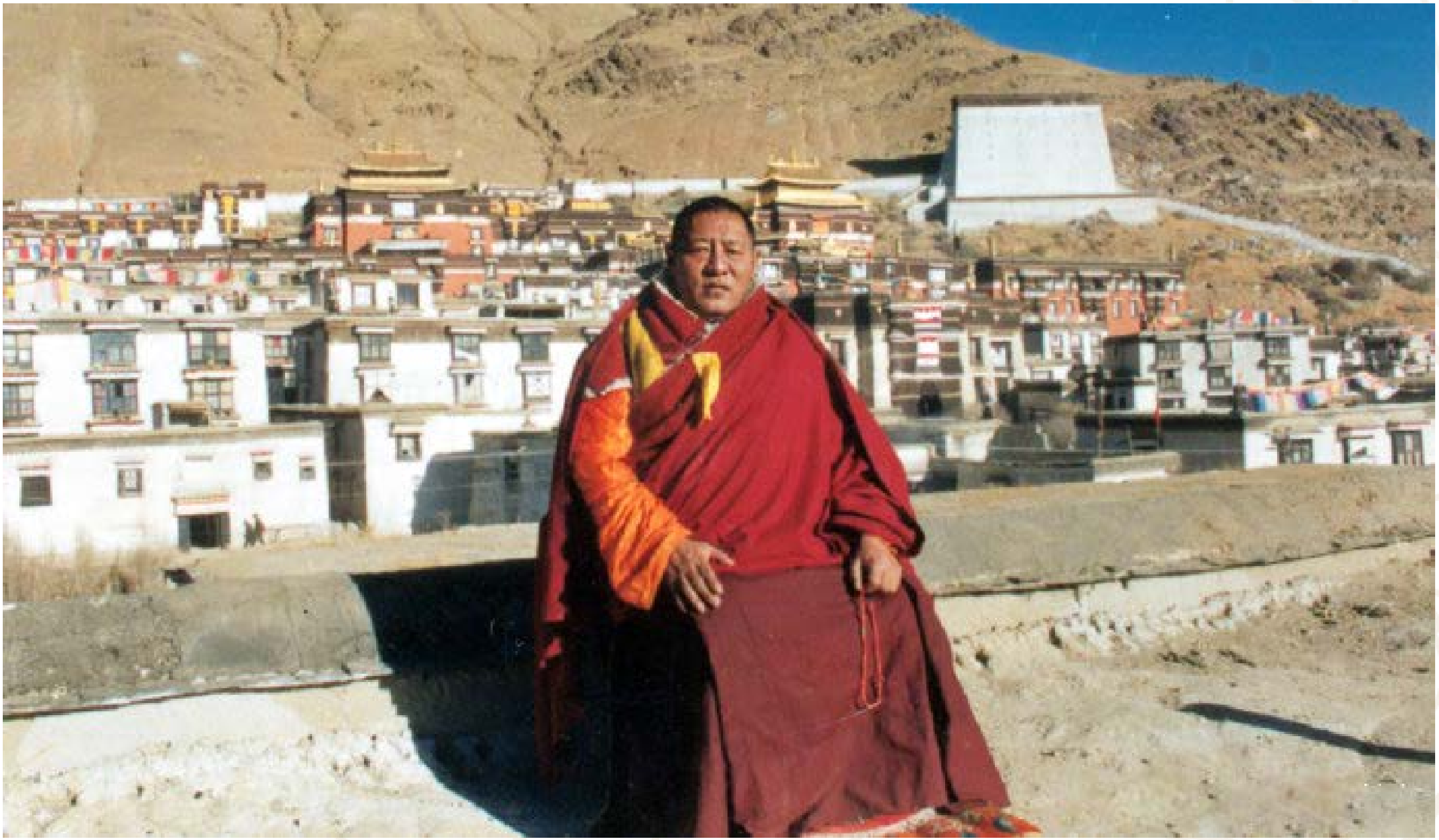
Buddha Shakyamuni once said, seeing the image of a buddha, even if only in passing, will someday help one overcome one's afflictions and achieve ultimate happiness. Even if a person observes a buddha's image with a heart filled with hate and thus falls into the lower realm for the moment, he could eventually



become enlightened and achieve buddhahood because he has now been introduced to the buddha.

The merit of a buddha's image is immense. Nagajuna said in his *Letter to a Friend* that no matter how an image of a buddha is represented, whether it has been molded with clay or sculpted in wood, whether it is exquisite or not, it is deserving of our deepest reverence and veneration.





099

April 8, 2019

When Buddha Shakyamuni was alive, he promised and said, “After I enter parinirvana, if people create images of me to keep me in their memories, and treat them with faith and a sense of gratitude, then it would be as if I am still in this world.”

Therefore, it is of great importance to both this and future lifetimes to see and contemplate the perfectly good image of the Buddha. (Of course, if this is combined with a diligent reflection and practice of the Buddha’s teachings and wisdom, it will create even more supreme merits.)





100

April 9, 2019

After meeting a beautiful woman, a lustful and greedy man would not easily forget her, constantly recalling her dimpled smile. If we have a similar “lust and greed” for buddhas and bodhisattvas, keeping them constantly in our minds, then they will always be with us, blessing us with great compassion, bringing us various siddhis (accomplishments) of benefit and happiness, and helping us achieve the full enlightenment of buddhahood.



101

April 10, 2019

Praying to any enlightened holy beings helps us gain wisdom. In particular, if you wish to receive blessings, pray to your guru. If you wish to attain siddhis (accomplishments), pray to your deity. If you wish to succeed in your activities, pray to the dakinis. If you wish to dispel unfavorable conditions, pray to the Dharma protectors.

Therefore, if anyone wants to progress in these different areas, I hope that he would be diligent in prayers.

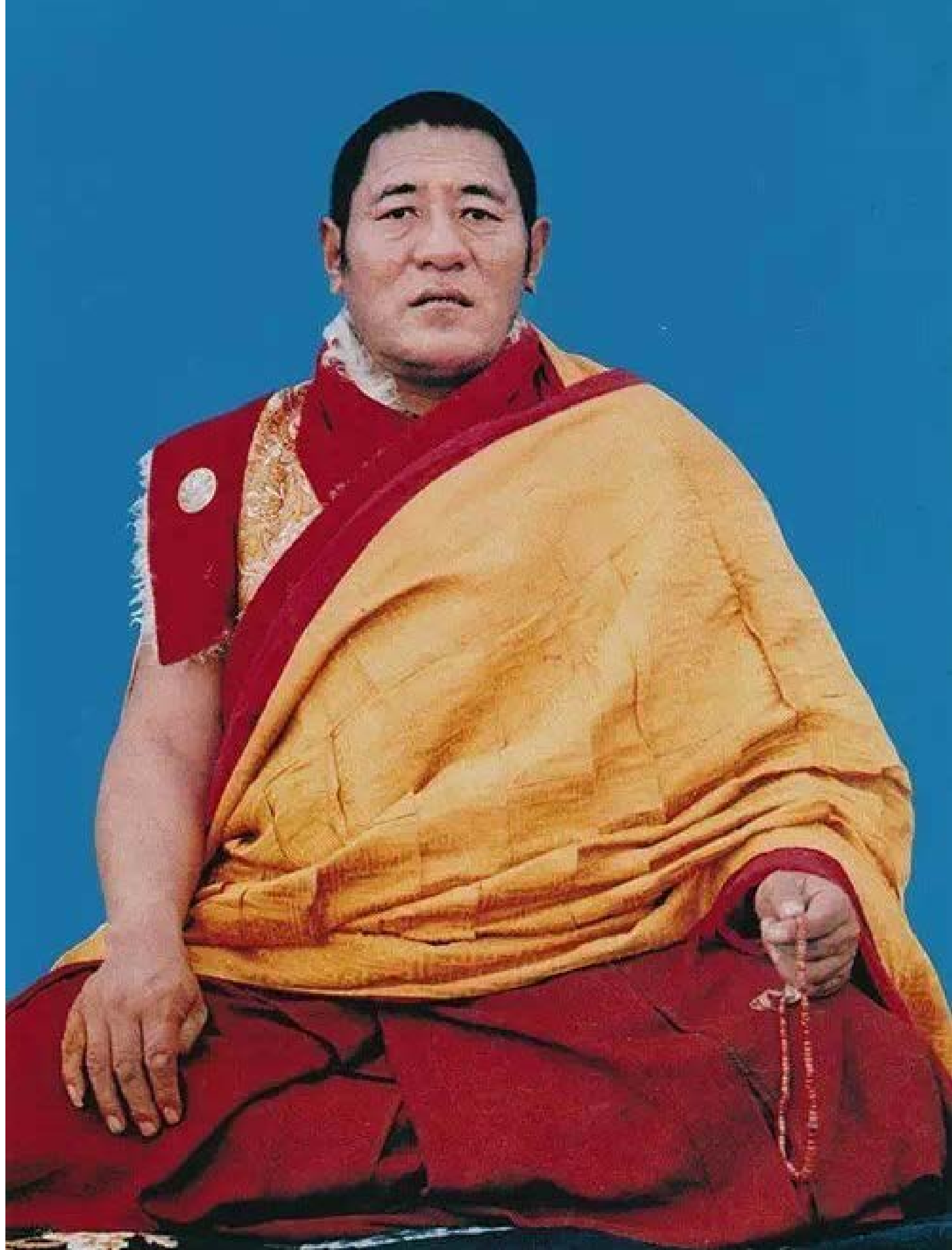




102

April 11, 2019

When you are not occupied with other matters, it would be a good opportunity to reflect on your life, “How many wrongs have I committed? How much suffering have I endured?” The fact is, even a cursory review would show that you have never distanced yourselves from sufferings. Therefore, if you really want to rid yourself of such unbearable sufferings, you must diligently practice the Dharma.



103

April 12, 2019

Dharma practice is not as unattainable as some would have you believed. In fact, we have seen examples of many individuals with minimal abilities reborn into the Pure Land of Bliss (Dewachen). Isn't that proof enough that it can be readily accomplished? For as long as we maintain an unshakable faith in Buddha Amitabha, make the sincere aspiration to be born in Dewachen, practice in accordance with the teachings, and refrain from committing the five heinous misdeeds and the misdeed of forsaking the Dharma, Buddha Shakyamuni and Amitabha assured us that we will be able to take rebirth in Dewachen.



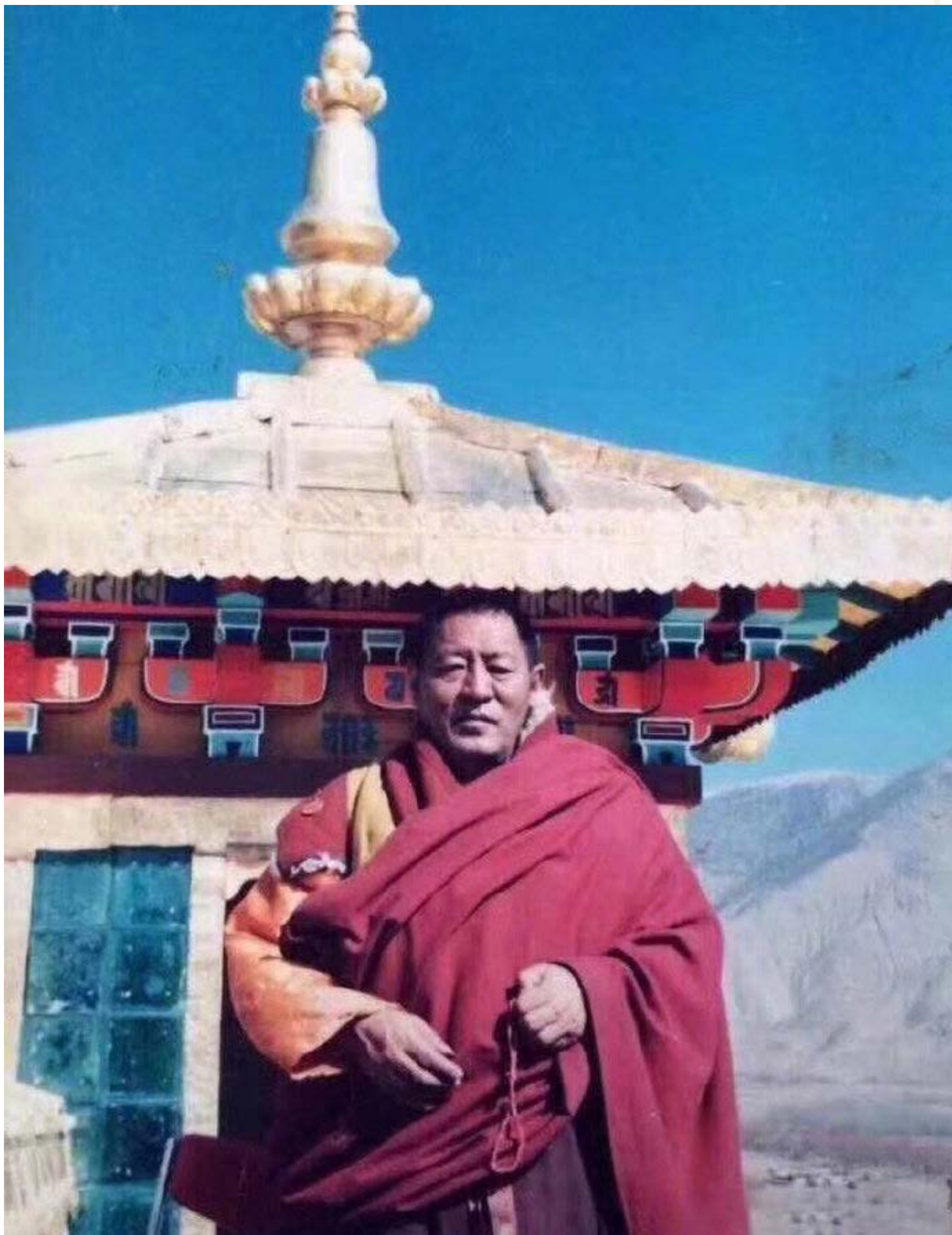


104

April 13, 2019

In this day and age, all who seek the Dharma will inevitably face obstacles, even noble beings who are about to attain the first bhumi of bodhisattvas would also experience hardships and setbacks.

However, if one confronts these difficulties with an unshakable faith, diligently praying to his guru and the Three Jewels while seeking to be unencumbered by external circumstances, he will be greatly blessed and protected, and will be on the path to promptly attain liberation.



105

April 14, 2019

When a practitioner has achieved a state of mindfulness (i.e., remembering what to abandon and what to adopt), nothing could ever harm him. Even the Demon King Papiyan himself conceded this to the Buddha.



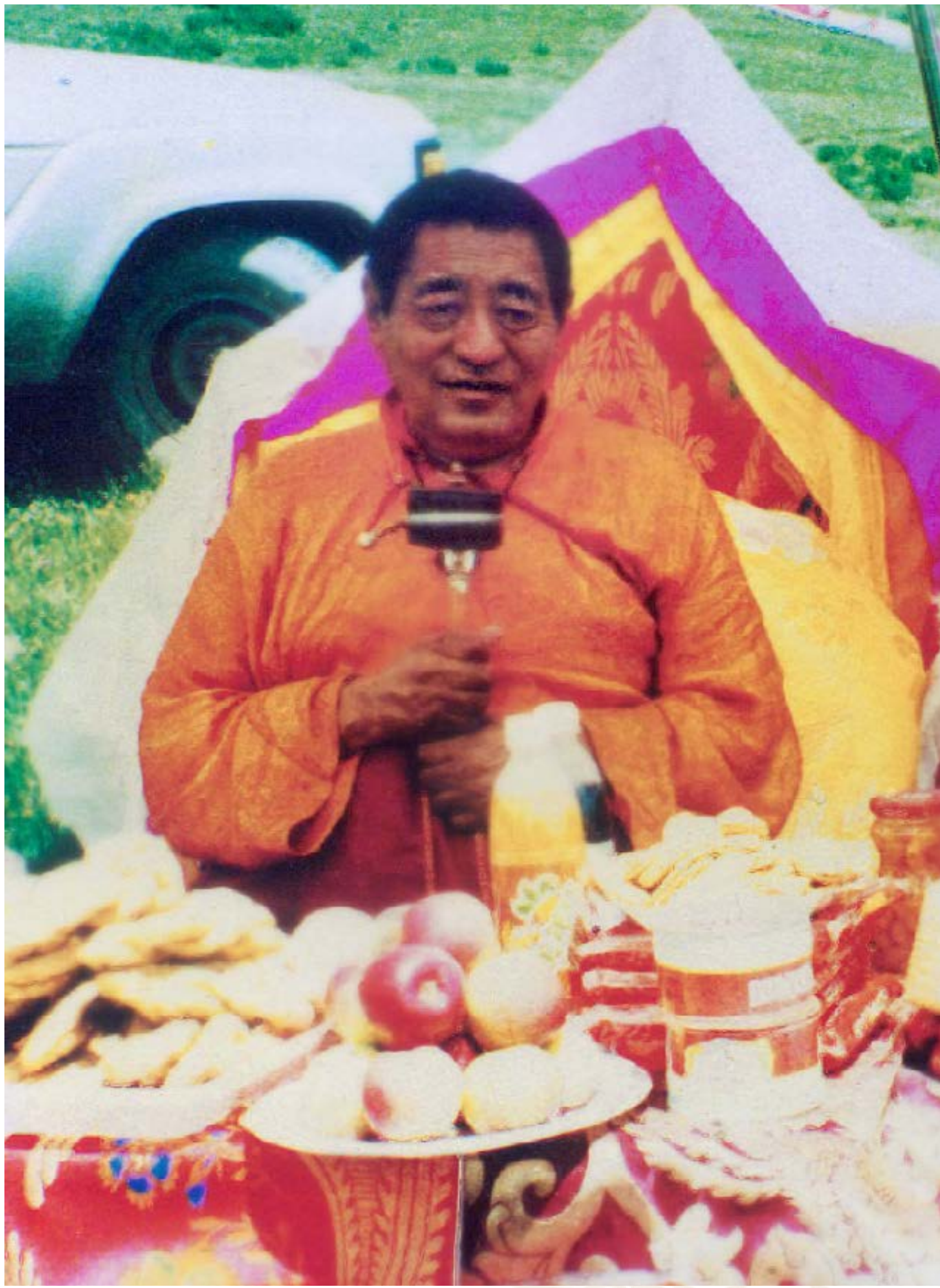


106

April 15, 2019

A lot of people like to give others nicknames, calling them “Big Nose”, “Small Eyes”, “Shorty”, “Fatty”,... and other names that may even be more offensive. As a matter of fact, if one ridicules another person as “Fatty”, then in his next five hundred lifetimes, he may be reborn as an obese person. Such a careless and cruel act could bring an outcome one would regret.

My root guru, Thupga Rinpoche, often discussed the karma of name-calling. He cited a story in Patrul Rinpoche’s *Words of My Perfect Teacher* which described a person who abused others by calling them the names of eighteen different animals. He was later reborn as a monster with eighteen heads of the eighteen animals.



107

April 16, 2019

The tendency to gossip is a common error. That's why the wise are always careful with their words. Using the teachings they have learned from noble sages, they would carefully weigh the timing, the circumstance, and the importance of a situation before saying what needs to be said.

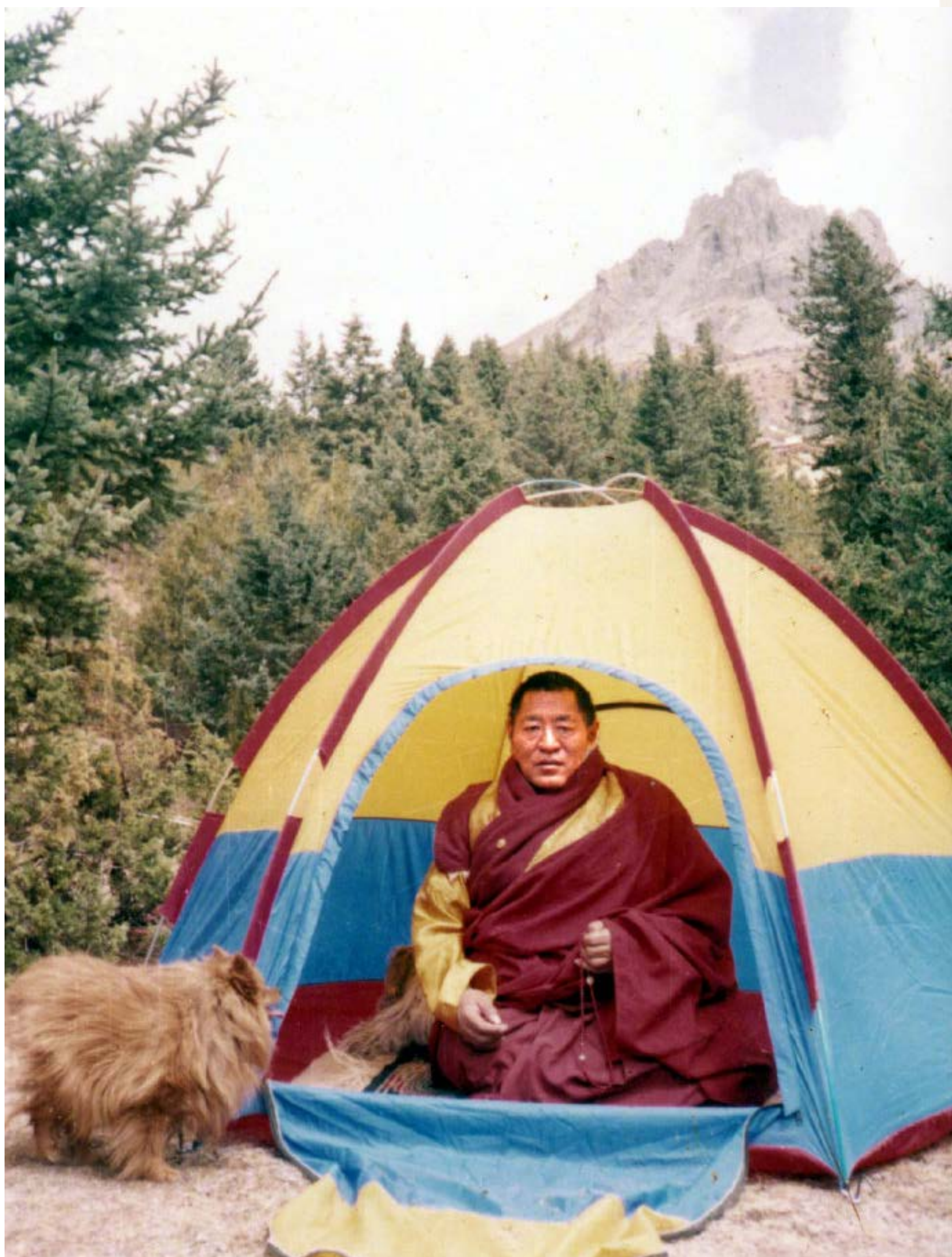




108

April 17, 2019

We must always be cautious and pay attention to our speech. We should never use harsh language with others. If because of the manifestation of your karma and your lack of self-control you have cursed at people, you should immediately recite “Om Vajrasattva Hum” at least 1000 times, better yet, 100,000 times. The incredible blessing of this mantra will cleanse all negative karmic obscurations.



109

April 18, 2019

Generating and upholding bodhichitta is the most profound spiritual path.





110

April 19, 2019

Since I was young, I have focused most of my time on studying and practicing the Dharma. I have had the great fortune to learn from over 130 great lamas and share the Buddhadharma with tens of thousands of our fellow human beings.

In my personal experience, among all the teachings in Buddhism, bodhichitta is one of the most profound. Putting aside the obvious benefits of practicing bodhichitta, just simply listening to this wonderful teaching could sow the seed for liberation.



111

April 20, 2019

If bodhichitta is used as the guiding principle of our lives and practice, we will receive unimaginable benefits. It will not only bring us health, longevity, and prosperity, but also help dispel all the negativities in our lives and even those of the whole society.





112

April 21, 2019

The pleasures that one gains from any worldly desires are minuscule while the afflictions that follow are many and endless. What's most unfortunate is that many do not realize the host of pitfalls from desires and pay them no heed, immersing themselves ever deeper with no hope of extrication.



113

April 22, 2019

Believing that they have ample time left in their lives, many spend a great deal of efforts to try to satisfy their desires when they are young. But as we get older, we begin to discover and appreciate how short and utterly transient our lives truly are.





114

April 23, 2019

From when we are a toddler to a teen, we consume ourselves with fun and games and the time passes quickly as if it's a dream. From then to our forties, one may say that we are in our most robust years, but they also seem to pass in the blink of an eye. We

would often neglect to practice the Dharma while we are distracted by numerous family and work issues. When we finally reach our middle-age and seek to correct our misdeeds and to practice virtues, we may regret that our bodies are no longer strong enough to be engaged in diligent practice.

Therefore, we must grasp the opportunity to use our time wisely and not squander our precious lives away. In particular, when we are tempted by desires, we need to diligently seek to recognize their nature and do not allow ourselves to become unwilling slaves to our desires.





115

April 24, 2019

In our daily lives, we should bear in mind at all times that all phenomena are as dreams and that there is no need to be particularly obsessed with anything. When greed or anger arises, we should realize that they are but the greed and anger in our dreams. Similarly, when we succeed or fail, we should know that they are also just the successes and failures in a dream...

If you detach yourselves from these obsessions this way, not only will you be free from your pain, you will eventually be able to recognize the true reality of all phenomena and achieve the fruition of the Tathagata.



116

April 25, 2019

As an individual, one must carefully consider one's path forward. In order to achieve a happy and perfect life now and in the future, each person should seize the time to do things that are meaningful to them.

In my view, nothing can be more beneficial for our present and future lives than the supreme Buddhadharma.





117

April 26, 2019

There are two essential requirements in order for us to be one with the Dharma.

First, we need to gain a right view, particularly a clear understanding, recognition, and acceptance of the principle of cause and effect, without which one would never be able to reach a state of true peace and joy.

Second, we need to cultivate an untainted and unshakable faith in the Three Jewels, the foundation from which we begin our quests for perfection in this and future lifetimes.



118

April 27, 2019

How important are our faith in the Three Jewels and our understanding and acceptance of the principle of cause and effect?

The Buddha told us that if we have developed sufficient faith and understanding, we will not be trapped in the lower realms, instead they will help us achieve all the merits we seek.





119

April 28, 2019

Our most reliable ally is our faith and right view. As we rush headlong towards the bardo, wealth, status, and reputation cannot be relied upon in our transition from this existence because none of them can be carried to our next lives.



120

April 29, 2019

Our lives are like the twinkling stars in a dawn sky, destined to disappear from view in the blink of an eye. This type of sentiment is common among older individuals like myself. For those who are younger, do not rely blindly on your self-confidence and believe that there would be plenty of time left still in your lives. I would advise each one of you to carefully consider your plans for the future.





121

April 30, 2019

Whether you are a king or a pauper, death is the ultimate equalizer. Karma will determine how every sentient being would transit from one lifetime to another. Therefore, it is rather unwise to commit all sorts of misdeeds just for the benefit of the present life.



122

May 1, 2019

Regardless of our identities in life, all of us would prefer to have happiness rather than be subjected to suffering. Therefore, in order to obtain lasting happiness, while we still have the ability to choose, we should seek and practice the Dharma in our short and transient lives.





123

May 2, 2019

Mipham Rinpoche said that the present life is the cause of the effects in any future lives. If this is indeed the case, shouldn't we aim to generate more positive karma at present? Just as a farmer who hopes to have a harvest from his crops in the Fall, he must sow and cultivate diligently in the Spring.



124

May 3, 2019

I have said repeatedly that even the smallest good deed today can lead to immeasurable peace and happiness in the future. Take chanting *The King of Aspiration Prayers* once a day as an example. Although the time spent is very short, but through this simple virtue, you



can most assuredly keep yourselves from entering the three lower realms and attain infinite, wondrous peace and happiness in the future.

It is also said in the sutras that even if one just hears the sound of the conch horn announcing the start of a Dharma lesson, one will not fall into the three lower realms, let alone for those who hear the actual Dharma lessons.

Therefore, let us not consider small virtuous acts as insignificant. If you greedily seek only the transient pleasures in this existence and make no preparation for the life to come, you will most certainly regret the lost opportunity as you become advanced in years.





125

May 4, 2019

Just as a little bird rests only temporarily on a big tree, our minds reside in our bodies for just a short time. Particularly for those of us who are older, as our hairs turn to frosty white and our backs are no longer as straight as they were in the past, it means that the little bird is about to leave the tree.

Therefore, we need to appreciate the rare opportunity that has brought the little bird that is our mind and the big tree that is our body together and use this opportunity to diligently practice the Dharma.





126

May 5, 2019

Having a clear understanding and faith in the principle of cause and effect is a prerequisite for any Buddhist. If one does not believe in the validity of the principle of cause and effect, no matter how in-depth Dharma practices one engages in, one can hardly achieve any accomplishment.



127

May 6, 2019

The primary principle that we must understand is that whatever one experiences now is the result of one's previous karma. The karma could either be virtuous or non-virtuous, and depending on the karma, the resulting effects could be certain or uncertain and could be revealed either in this lifetime, in the next lifetime, or many lifetimes after that. Therefore, the timing and the manner in which the karma is manifested for each sentient being may vary.





128

May 7, 2019

Some people today may think that “if I complete an act of positive karma I would immediately realize the virtuous effects, or if I commit an act of evil karma I would experience that retribution right away.”

This is due to many people’s misunderstanding of the principle of cause and effect. If they actually understand, they will know that an act (or cause) must be coupled with the required conditions before an outcome (or effect) will mature and be manifested.



129

May 8, 2019

Some may say, “I have engaged in numerous virtuous deeds and meditation, chanting buddha names, and have been generous my whole life. Why is my mind still encumbered with afflictions, my family in disharmony, and my business in trouble? Where is the



blessing promised by the Three Jewels? The karmic law of cause and effect must be just an illusion!”

This is a seriously mistaken view of karma. You need to know that even Buddha Shakyamuni had never claimed that the effects of karma will mature immediately after an action. Instead, the Buddha described the effect of an action or a cause as “persisting after even one hundred eons.” This means there are cases that, even after a time stretching a hundred eons, the effect of a cause will not be extinguished or disappear.





130

May 9, 2019

Some may question why during the Buddha's lifetime many followers of the Dharma seemed to be able to quickly attain the fruits of their practice and the consequences of non-virtuous and virtuous karma appeared to be immediately matured, and yet today,



sentient beings do not seem to be able to see the fruits of their practice easily and the effects of karma are not promptly manifested.

To put it simply, during the Buddha's lifetime, which is at the Age of the Right Dharma, followers had sharp capacities and were able to quickly realize the benefits of their practice, particularly the fruition of shravakas and pratyekabuddhas. However, we are now in the Age of Degeneration, the capacities of sentient beings are clearly not as sharp as that of those from the previous Age. As a result, the maturation of karma has also slowed down.

But even so, the very mechanism of karma remains unchanged. It was said that "even after hundreds and thousands of eons, one's karma will not disappear without any effect." As long as we persist in our diligent practice of the Dharma, we will most certainly receive our just rewards.





131

May 10, 2019

As one goes from one existence to the next through samsara, those who stick to pursuing secular activities in this impermanent world and refuse to seek ultimate liberation will forever remain trapped in the sea of afflictions, struggling to remain afloat like the bubbles that keep rising to the surface and yet bursting into nothingness.





132

May 11, 2019

Worldly things are as impermanent as lightning, the pursuit of which will never bring to a good end. Just as Venerable Longchenpa said: “If you desire trivial things in this existence, your pursuit will never end. It will cease only when you abandon your desire.”

From beginningless time, we have invested enormous efforts in the practice of worldly activities, yet none of our efforts can be successful. Therefore, we should instead give our minds an opportunity to rest and be at peace.



133

May 12, 2019

Some people like to hold on to everything they own in this world. Although they may be very wealthy, they would not even lend a hand to those who really need help. The fact is even those with inferior character or talent could sometimes become wealthy. Therefore, don't feel so smug and arrogant just because you're financially better off than others.





134

May 13, 2019

My root teacher Thupga Rinpoche once told a story about Vaishravana, one of the Four Heavenly Kings. One day, Vaishravana wore his best clothes to visit a god named Gongga but it turned out that this god's wealth far exceeded that of Vaishravana and this immediately helped Vaishravana overcome his pride and arrogance.

Since even the wealth of a Heavenly King is nothing of consequence, why should we feel that our wealth is something deserving of pride? Therefore, we should recognize the impermanence of all phenomena, treat them as magical illusions and dreams, and as images on a screen. Over time, as our strong attachments to people, issues, and materials gradually fade away, merits will arise naturally.



135

May 14, 2019

In order for us to make meaningful progress in our lives, we must stop constantly paying attention to the external environment. If our bodies are frequently engaged in worldly activities, our speech is nothing but gossips, and our minds are filled with various discriminative thoughts, then we will bring great obstacles upon ourselves.





136

May 15, 2019

From now on, we should abandon meaningless pursuits and instead practice the sublime Dharma endowed with infinite merits to tame our minds. If we rely on the instructions of an enlightened spiritual mentor and earnestly practice, even if it were only for a month, we will see obvious benefits.

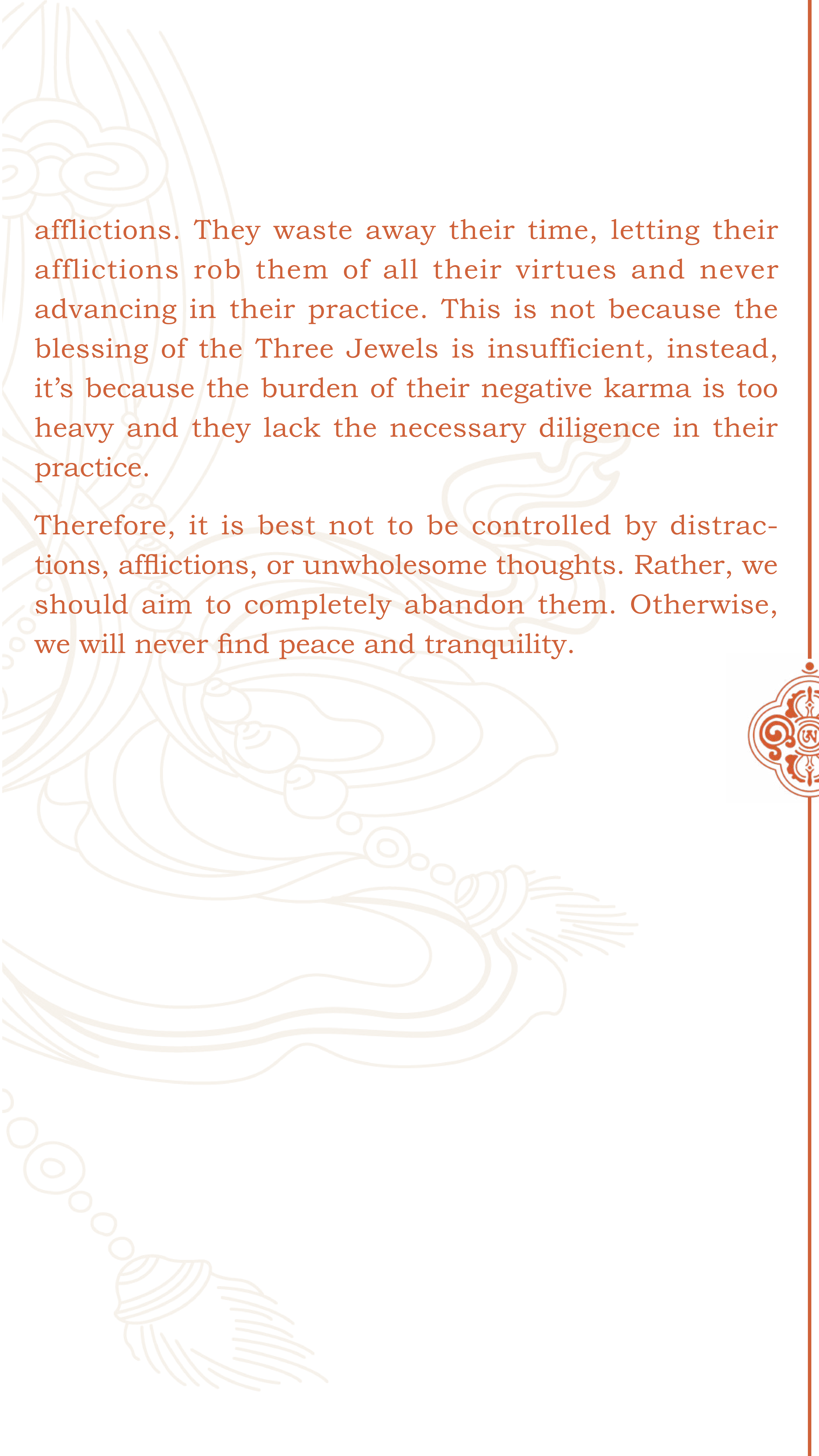


137

May 16, 2019

Some of us have many opportunities to practice the Dharma, however, we often find excuses to put off our practice, squandering the precious chances that we have. There are others who have practiced the Dharma for a long time yet their minds are still occupied with





afflictions. They waste away their time, letting their afflictions rob them of all their virtues and never advancing in their practice. This is not because the blessing of the Three Jewels is insufficient, instead, it's because the burden of their negative karma is too heavy and they lack the necessary diligence in their practice.

Therefore, it is best not to be controlled by distractions, afflictions, or unwholesome thoughts. Rather, we should aim to completely abandon them. Otherwise, we will never find peace and tranquility.





138

May 17, 2019

Of course, it is not fair to expect enlightenment within a short period of practice. But the truth of dependent origination (the interactions of cause, condition, and effect) will never deceive us. I believe that as long as we remain diligent in our practice, relying on the strength of the ever-prevailing dependent origination, we will receive the appropriate merit. This will assure us an auspicious present and future existence free of unfavorable conditions.





139

May 18, 2019

In this day and age, there are fewer and fewer people worthy of trust. Thus when we are pursuing important endeavors, we should try to be discreet about the action and avoid publicity. This way we would be less likely to encounter obstacles.

In addition, we must have the ability to be fierce and conciliatory at the same time, compassionate to our companions, courageous when faced with an enemy, and be able to discriminate between the good and bad in others' actions.



140

May 19, 2019

Historically, the evil actions of a few have often resulted in great tragedies and suffering for the masses. Hence, unless we cast out these individuals, especially those who are irredeemably evil, they could lead to the destruction of our countries and our societies.

Even within our Buddhist communities, if an ill-tempered and evil individual cannot be tamed through gentle means, then with compassion and loving-kindness, buddhas and bodhisattvas will properly apply fierce and mighty actions to subdue them. This also conforms to worldly rules.





141

May 20, 2019

Irrespective of whether they are a senior master or a junior teacher, or whether they are famous or unknown, as long as they have passed onto us the sublime Buddhadharma, they are our gurus and we should be eternally grateful to them.



142

May 21, 2019

When Buddha Shakyamuni was alive, a venerable bodhisattva generated the mind of renunciation under the guidance of Bhikshu Mahanaman, one of the Buddha's five earliest disciples. Later, when this bodhisattva met Bhikshu Mahanaman together with



the Buddha, he first prostrated before his teacher before prostrating before the Buddha. Upon seeing this, the Buddha commended him profusely and said, “Your action was most appropriate! One should always first pay homage to the teacher from whom he has first received the teaching of the Dharma.” Although Bhikshu Mahanaman’s wisdom and virtue certainly did not match those of the Buddha, the Buddha specifically said this to remind everyone to never forget the kindness of his or her guru.





143

May 22, 2019

When a wise person makes progress with his practice of the Dharma, he would realize that it is not solely the result of his own efforts. Instead, his success has its origin in the compassionate blessing of his guru, a blessing that is deserving of his unwavering expression of gratefulness.





144

May 23, 2019

There are those of inferior character who would only claim to be the followers of well-known and prosperous teachers even when they have received the Dharma from lesser-known teachers who have possessed all the qualities of a teacher but not sought the trapping of wealth and worldly possessions. Hiding the fact that they have been benefited from these gurus while boasting their following of the famous ones is indeed an absurd behavior.

While these people have received the sublime teaching, they refuse to acknowledge the blessing they have received from their teachers. Instead, they believe that it's the result of their own superior wisdom and merits and has nothing whatsoever to do with their teacher. They may have been reverent and respectful to their teachers in the beginning, but as soon as they have received the teaching, they would abandon their teachers. This is akin to patients who turn a cold shoulder to their doctors as soon as they have been healed.

This type of people cannot be qualified vessels of the Dharma. They foolishly boast about their own accomplishments, ignoring the sublime contributions of their teachers, and as a result, would completely forfeit their opportunities for enlightenment. No matter how perceptive and intelligent they are, they will never gain any spiritual attainment.





145

May 24, 2019

Respect for one's teacher is shown not by outer actions but by the heart. For instance, Mipham Rinpoche once had an attendant by the name of Lama Ösel. In the beginning, Lama Ösel was not an intelligent people, and had a fiery temper. Even in front of his teacher, he acted very rude, and his attitude was not gentle or reverent at all. Occasionally, Mipham Rinpoche gave personal permission for disciples to come see him. Yet Lama Ösel stopped them at the door and claimed

that Rinpoche was severely ill. No matter what, he refused to allow them in.

Mipham Rinpoche himself also seemed to be scared of this attendant. One time, Khenpo Yönga came to seek Rinpoche's advice, as Khenpo was composing teachings on the *Treasury of Precious Qualities*. Mipham Rinpoche was about to explain many profound teachings for him. But when Ösel came in, Rinpoche became very nervous and hurriedly said to Khenpo Yönga, "Quick, go home! Ösel is here, I do not dare to teach you now."

On the surface, Ösel seemed particularly disrespectful to his teacher. But in fact, he was deeply concerned for Rinpoche and worried that he toiled too hard as he carried on benefiting living beings while ill. Because of this devotion and faith, in the end, all of his teacher's wisdom was passed onto Ösel. Before Mipham Rinpoche died, he said to Ösel, "If you meet with difficulties in the future, go find Pelmo Khyentse." Rinpoche also said to the others, "If Ösel falls ill in the future, you must care for him!"

Thus, superficial flowery, clever words are not important. To see how disciples actually treat their teacher, the key is to see if they have true devotion, reverence, and fondness.





146

May 25, 2019

When a fool is deciding who to befriend, he often considers the other person's wealth, social status, and appearance. This seems to also apply to how some are selecting their teachers, basing their decision on whether the teachers' parents are distinguished, their appearances dignified, etc.

In the past, not all tulkus were elegant and dignified in their appearance. Take the famous tulku Master Butön, who founded the Zhalu lineage, for example. At birth, his mouth and nose were very large and not

attractive. His mother lamented saying, “I have but this one child yet his appearance is so unattractive, who would wish to see him?” Unexpectedly, the baby opened his mouth and said, “Butönpa (which literally means this child can be seen by anyone), I do not care about this at all!” In the end, he grew up to be one of the most eminent monks of his age. In the history of the Geluk tradition, there were also many other eminent monks and masters who were far from handsome.

If you were looking for a spouse, it might be understandable for you to consider appearance. But when it comes to selecting a teacher to follow, this is not the right approach. Judging someone by his or her appearance is a fool’s errand. As someone with intelligence, you should focus on what’s on the inside of a person rather than just external appearance. When making a decision on which teacher to follow, it’s essential to carefully examine a teacher’s compassion and wisdom before making a selection.





147

May 26, 2019

During his life, Venerable Atisha studied with many gurus. Some of these teachers were more virtuous than him, some were at a similar level, and still others were less advanced. Irrespective of their status, Atisha

deeply revered all of them and showed them all his heart-felt gratitude.

By contrast, Dromtönpa had only two teachers in his life, one was a lay Dharma teacher, and the other was Venerable Atisha. When Putowa later asked his teacher Dromtönpa, “Is it better to be like you and follow just a few teachers or to be like Venerable Atisha and follow many?” Dromtönpa told him, “If you have cultivated a pure mind, then it is helpful to study with more teachers. However, if your mind has not yet reached that stage and you are always looking for flaws in your teachers, then it would be better to have fewer teachers.”





148

May 27, 2019

It has become common nowadays for many to follow a guru immediately after they meet him but only to leave the teacher soon afterwards because they feel that there are issues with him. Not only that, sometimes these people even spread unfavorable rumors about their teacher. There are also other kinds of people who try to test their guru by intentionally misrepresenting their situations to him. For these people, it would not matter how many gurus they follow, they will never get true benefits of the Dharma.

Therefore, for most of you, it is more than sufficient to follow just a few teachers. Do not pursue the fashionable and abandon what you have just to seek the newest gurus!



149

May 28, 2019

Just as different disciplines and professions have their own individual traditions and philosophies, so it is with Buddhism. In Buddhism, both the Sutrayana and the Vajrayana place heavy emphasis on the transmission of their respective traditions and practices. This is not simply just a means to continue their concepts of the Dharma, it also in fact contains the invisible blessing of the Dharma.





150

May 29, 2019

The essence of Buddha Shakyamuni's eighty-four thousand methods of practice is the Great Perfection. This essence has been passed down from the Dharmakaya Buddha Samantabhadra to masters such as Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, all the way to our root teachers. Through transmitting teachings and bestowing empowerments generation after generation, these teachers have striven to ensure that the sublime Dharma is communicated to us as untainted as pure gold.



151

May 30, 2019

As a teacher of a lineage, apart from having received empowerments and oral teachings from his lineage master, one must also have a degree of direct realization of the profound instructions. A pure lineage is one where each succession wholeheartedly reveres the previous ones and has never broken the tantric vows of the lineage.





152

May 31, 2019

We should seek guidance and instructions on the Dharma from teachers who belong to pure lineages.

Some who do not value the traditions that have been passed down for generations may even claim that they have been enlightened through lessons learned outside of the traditional channels. But for those who truly understand, they will keep their distances from such “enlightened” individuals.



153

June 1, 2019

Although rare, as a result of their deep connection with the Great Perfection in their past lives, some people can quickly gain wisdom in this existence when they are exposed to the teaching. However, even if



one gains enlightenment through this process, it is still quite necessary for him or her to be guided by a teacher. A good example was Padmasambhava, who having already reached dharmakaya, still followed multiple teachers during his lifetime.

Therefore, no matter how famous or virtuous a person is, one should still seek the guidance of a teacher so that he or she can receive the pure heritage of their lineage.





154

June 2, 2019

Through their compassion and the strength of their aspiration, numerous enlightened beings have helped liberate sentient beings in this world. Although we would see them also experience joy and pain,



sickness, old age, and other afflictions, in reality these worldly phenomena do not exist within their realm of awareness.

The Mahayana Uttaratantra Shastra says, “The noble ones are free from all sufferings, birth, old age, illness, and death.”

The Adornment of Mahayana Sutras also says, “When a bodhisattva who has realized emptiness is helping to liberate sentient beings, it is as if he is strolling in a flower garden without any affliction.”

Sometimes, in order to help certain individuals, the noble ones may appear to be in a more undesirable manner than most people. We should not disparage these behaviors.





155

June 3, 2019

In Buddhism, teachings that came from Buddha Shakyamuni are called sutras whereas those written by eminent masters after the Buddha's parinirvana are referred to as shastras. While the sutras clearly have incredible merits and the shastras written by eminent masters are not the actual words uttered by the Buddha himself, as long as the shastras conform to the profound and hidden meanings expressed by the Buddha, we should treat them as if they are the words of the Buddha.

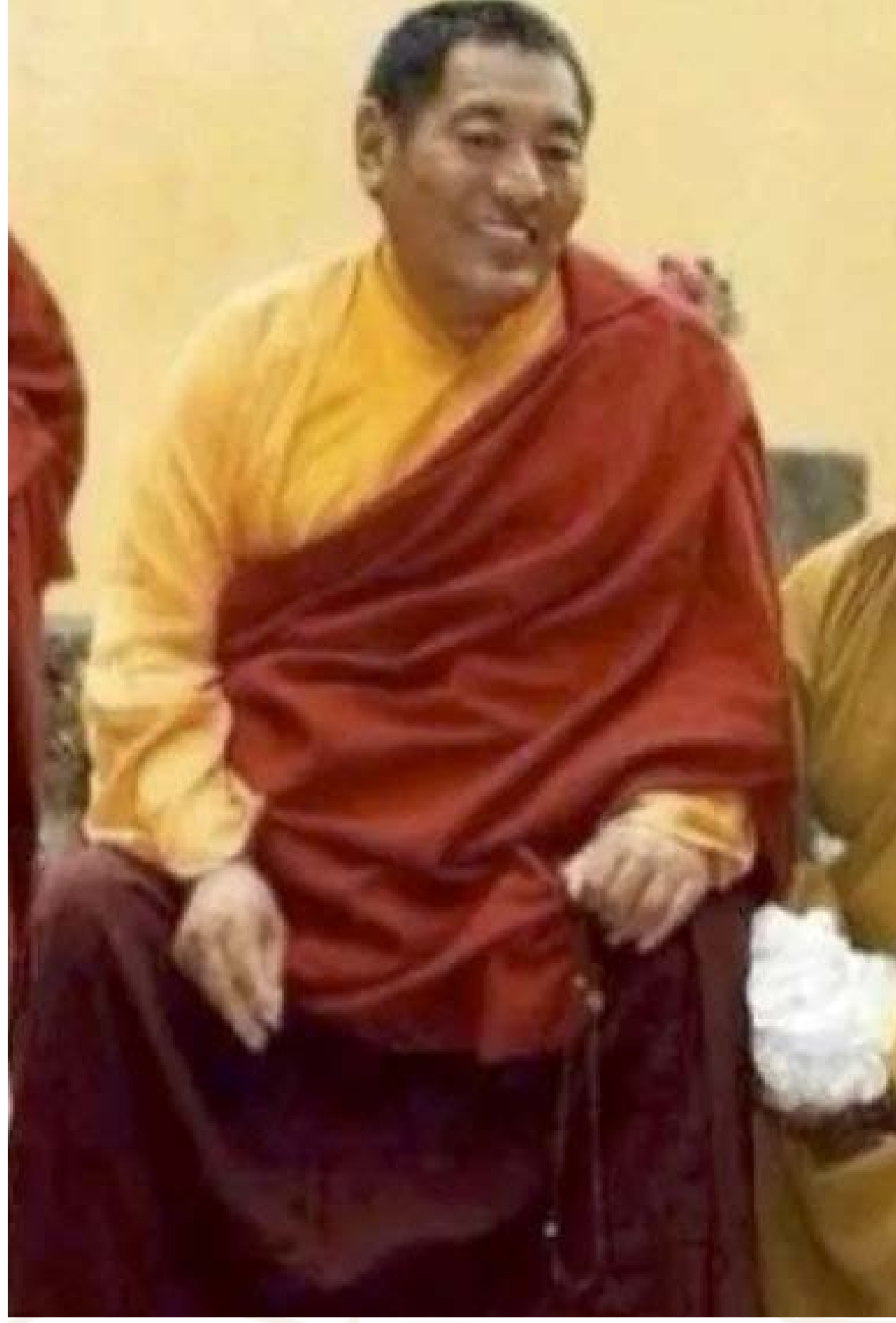




156

June 4, 2019

Perhaps some may ask, “Should we revere all shastras?” The answer is “it is not necessarily so!” If a person has not fully understood the meaning of the Buddhist scriptures, but insists on preaching and writing what he thinks is the Buddhadharma, this is not a good behavior that would benefit himself or others.



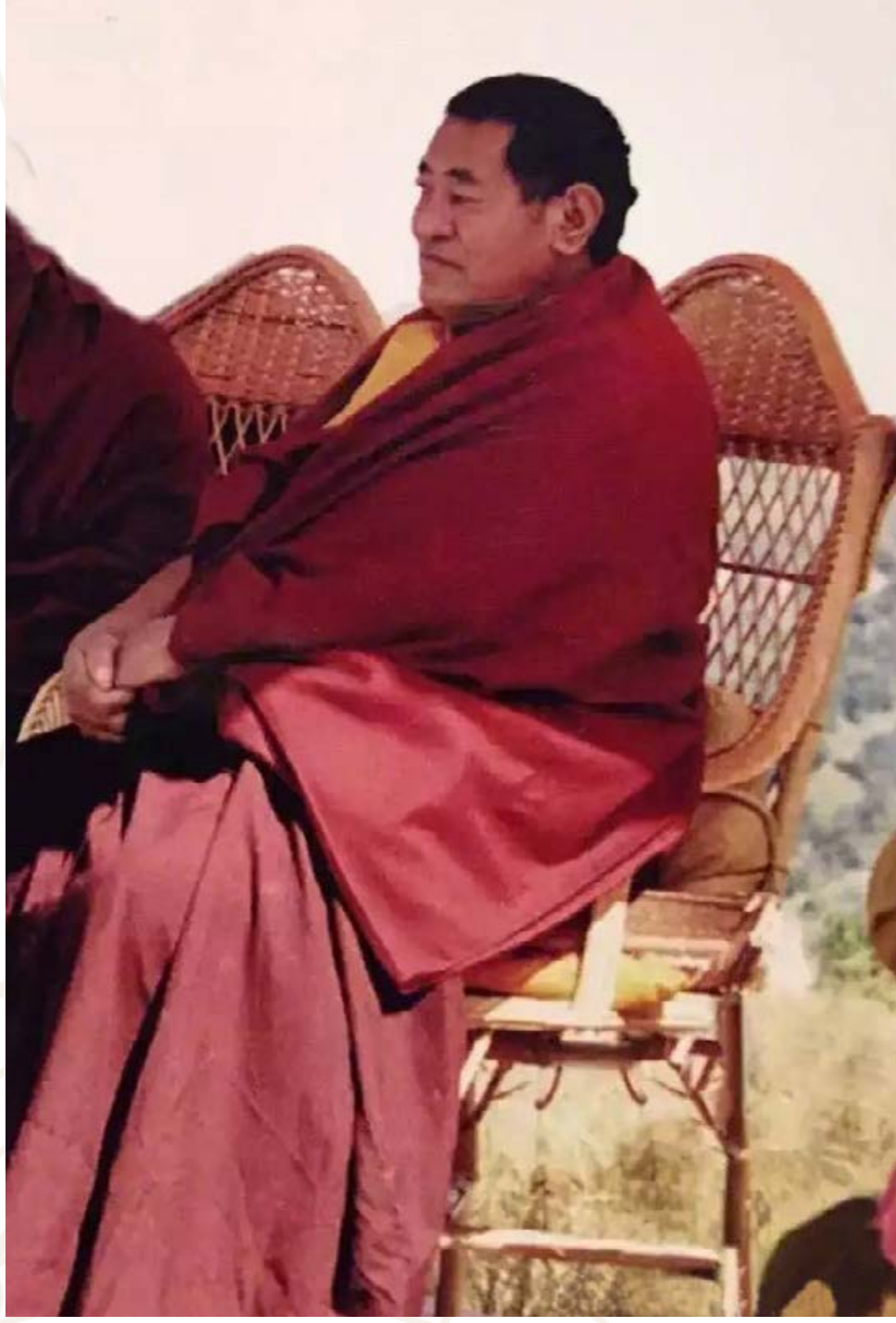
157

June 5, 2019

According to the Buddhist teaching, a shastra composer must meet one of three conditions. At the advanced level, a composer must be a bodhisattva of the first bhumi or above. For the middle level, the individual must have directly perceived the meditation deity in his or her pure vision. And at the primary level, one must be thoroughly versed in the five traditional sciences, i.e., inner science, logic, linguistics, medicine, and art.

Even if a shastra is elegantly and voluminously written and all-encompassing, unless at least one of these conditions is met, it would not help guide any sentient being to be free from suffering and achieve true happiness.





158

June 6, 2019

Is there any disagreement over the meaning of the advanced shastras written by bodhisattvas of the first bhumi or above? There is certainly no shortage of debates. For instance, regarding the shastras composed by Lama Tsongkhapa, Venerable Milarepa, as well as many other highly accomplished masters in the Jonang and Sakya traditions, even today there are still different opinions. In my view, most of us ordinary beings with our limited capacities should refrain from challenging the messages in these shastras because otherwise we are like crows pretending to be great garudas, with no hope of ever prevailing.



159

June 7, 2019

Anyone who wishes to compose a shastra must not harbor any selfish intention seeking fame and fortune. This is also true for those who want to teach, debate, study, and practice the Dharma. Without a pure and altruistic heart, virtuous deeds are but a charade and utterly meaningless. It is only when one severs his self-interest and begins to genuinely study or share the Buddhadharma with others then his merits would be like the nectar of the gods and dispel all his adversities.





160

June 8, 2019

There are individuals who are without any practical experience of the true reality but spout endless eloquence, beguiling those who do not know or bother to learn what is real. It is as if someone who has never been to Bodh Gaya attempts to describe the details of

this sacred site using only information gleaned from television or photographs. It would be impossible for this person to convey the true essence of Bodh Gaya nor should anyone rely on his words. On the other hand, even if a person is inarticulate, if he has been to Bodh Gaya, then every word he utters should be quite accurate.

The preaching of the Buddhadharma is the same. If a teacher has practical experience of the Dharma and achieved even the slightest realization through practice, he would not lead any sentient being down a wrong path. Teachers who only parrot what has been written in books cannot provide their audience with any real benefit. Patrul Rinpoche said, “If a person has no personal experience or realization of the Dharma, then it would be not so meaningful for him to teach the Dharma to others.”





161

June 9, 2019

Legend says that the beautiful rainbow in the sky is a bow of the gods. Not surprisingly, when we get to the rainbow, we would find there's nothing attainable. So is it with the beguiling words uttered by an unenlightened individual. Regardless of how well his words may match the views of others, how reasonable they may seem, or how attractive they may appear to be, because they have not been validated through practical experience or realization, they will not provide others with any real nourishment of Dharma practice.

It is only the teachings preached by those who have directly realized the nature of the mind that can lead sentient beings to their liberation.



162

June 10, 2019

When we provide support to the sangha, even if the donations are extremely meager, we should direct the gifts to those who are knowledgeable with and genuinely practice the Dharma. Do not blindly follow those whose hearts are full of unfathomable treachery and deceit.





163

June 11, 2019

Lakla Sonam Chodup Rinpoche once pointed out, “For those lacking in virtues and merits, even their offerings of money and possessions would not find a worthy recipient that would help them gain merits.” This is indeed a wise and precious advice.

Nowadays, many people have difficulties distinguishing what is genuine and what is not, making it a challenge for them to recognize a great, authentic spiritual mentor. Even when they encounter wise monks or nuns who uphold the pure precepts of Buddhism and live a simple life, they would treat them with disrespect and scorn. Instead, they would rather admire those who are boastful, pretending to have supernatural powers while filled with guile and treachery.



164

June 12, 2019

Jetsun Milarepa said to his disciple Rechungpa, “In today’s world, wise men are not respected yet fools are embraced. Teachings of definitive meaning are not taken seriously while those of provisional meaning are admired. Therefore, strive to follow authentic spiritual teachers for they will help you discover the essence of definitive teachings.” This advice is still extremely valid for all of us today.





165

June 13, 2019

In today's world, we see individuals claiming to be khenpos or Rinpoches, cloaking themselves in their honor while paying no regard to the Dharma. These phony "Meritorious Masters" pursue only worldly pleasures for themselves, scheme to deceive people to get their wealth and possessions, and all the while offer no compassion to any sentient being. Unfortunately, many are deceived into supporting these individuals because they have not bothered to examine these individuals carefully, even more disappointingly, they often praise these individuals for their "merits"...

This is indeed a tragedy for modern Buddhism, for the sangha, and for the believers! These despicable acts are moving us towards the degenerate age, eroding the respect for Buddhism in the eyes of the world.



166

June 14, 2019

In previous ages, people were generally of higher moral character and seldom resorted to deceptions. If they had erred, they would immediately feel a sense of remorse and confess their mistakes. They took great care to guard their credit and reputation, even defended their vows with their own lives. Sadly, in the present age, many would stop at nothing to satisfy their own selfish interests. Sometimes just for a trivial



benefit, they would even abandon their friends and families, and trample the law in the process.

In the past, people felt an ongoing sense of gratitude towards those who had shown them kindness and care. When the time was right, whether they were in a position of power and means, or they were just humble farmers in a village, they would repay the drop of favor they received with a wellspring of gratitude. In contrast, we often see people in this age who would repay a favor with harm.

People in the prior ages were willing to listen to different points of view and accept others' advice. People in this age can't bear to listen to honest critiques, and they can only accept words of praise. They become intoxicated with the elixir of flattery which further makes their awareness of themselves and surroundings distanced from reality.

People used to greet each with gentleness, humility, and courtesy. In today's society, relationships are often built on profits and self-interest. Even though there may not be any enmity, unease naturally arises for no reason culminating in hatred. The root cause is the conflict of competing self-interests.

This is occurring not just among individuals. Whereas in past ages tribes and nations were able to co-exist in

peace, the situation today is quite different. There are conflicts between nations and regions erupting everywhere with the winds of war blowing across the globe. Even the so called “peaceful” periods were not really peaceful. Interpersonal relationships parallel this phenomenon. People nowadays are constantly wary of each other, calculating and scheming to maximize their self-interests. Relationships are often filled with intrigue.

The chaos that we see in this age was predicted by Padmasambhava who said, “In the degenerate age, Mara will be in the hearts of every man, woman, and child. This is not a result of the changes in the world, rather it is driven by the evil behaviors of all beings.”





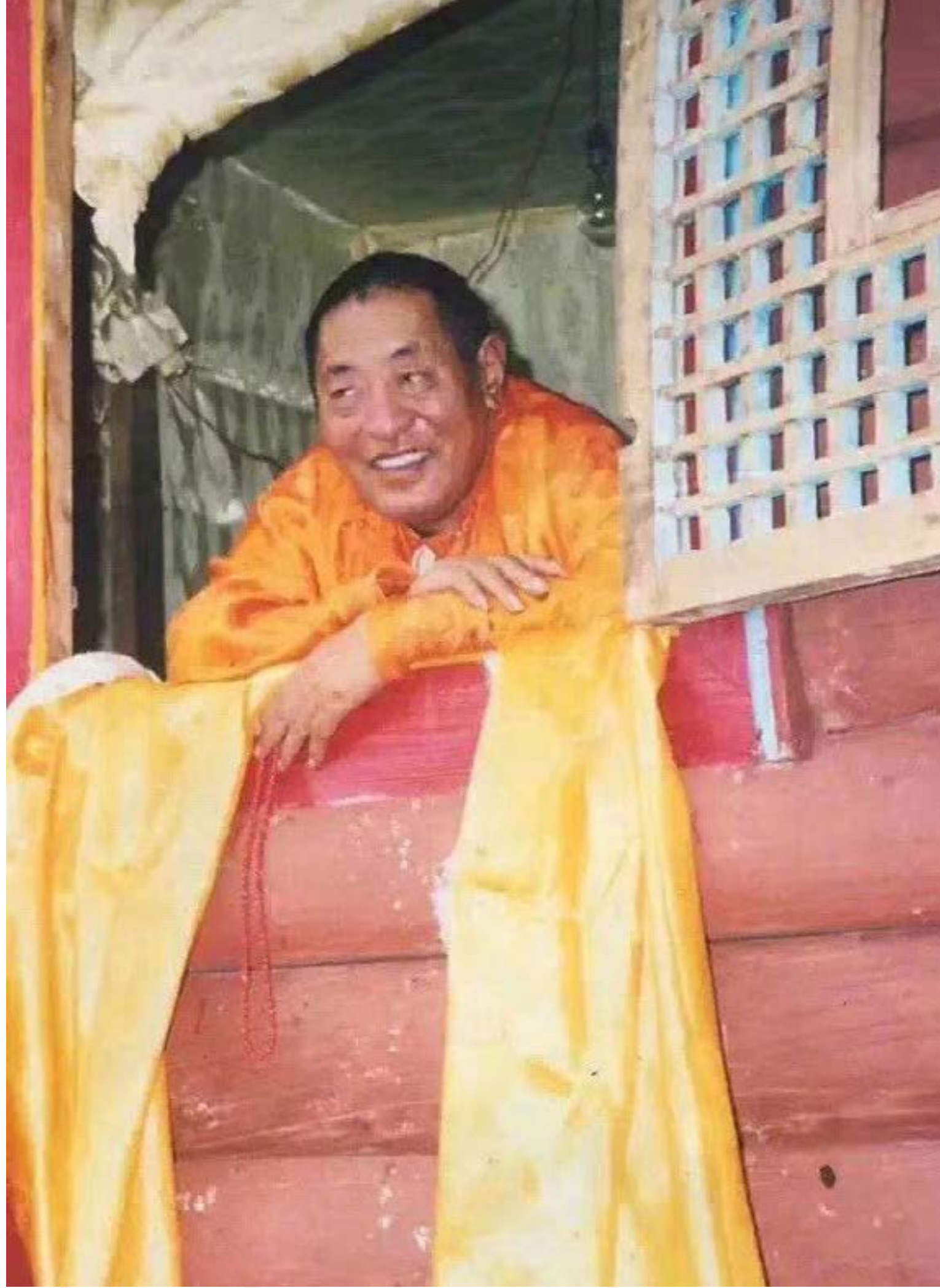
167

June 15, 2019

When we are trying to make a decision on an issue, we should do so with a clear mind. Our observations and judgements should be first guided by the Buddhadharma and then the rules and conventions of this world.

Unfortunately, many who are faced with a decision often blindly follow their own self-interests or the thoughts of others. They would just follow others' lead, holding no firm opinion or understanding of their own, and seldom do they turn to the Buddhadharma for guidance.





168

June 16, 2019

The omniscient Mipham Rinpoche had specifically stated, “We must choose wisely in all our decisions. If we are unsure of our ability to make the right choice, we should seek guidance from those who are knowledgeable and wise, then carefully weigh the pros and cons before making a decision.”

If as a practitioner, you hope to advance and accomplish something, you should seek the counsel of your guru and pray for the blessing of the Three Jewels. At the same time, you should carefully consider and analyze all the factors involved in order to make a wise decision that would not harm yourselves or others.

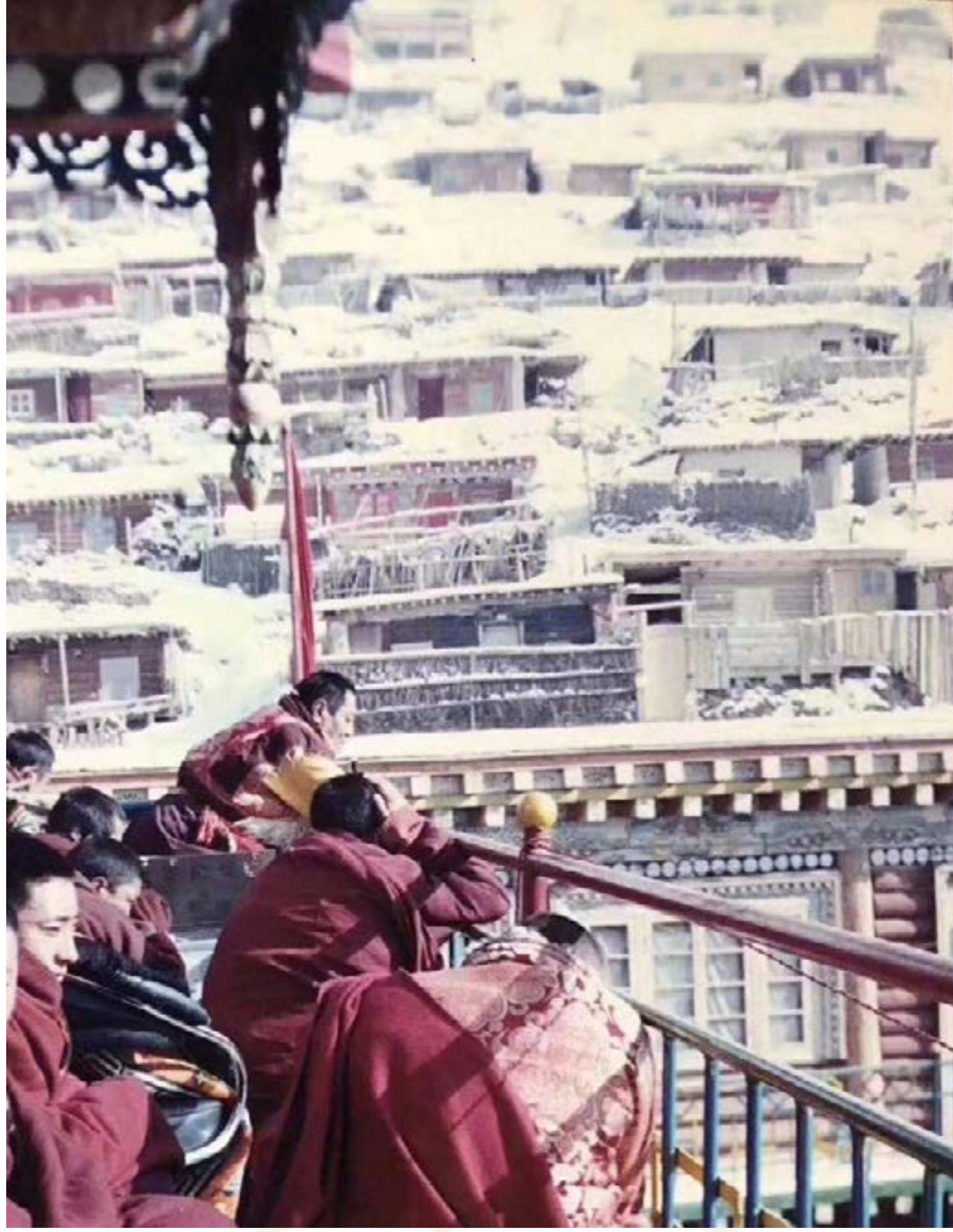




169

June 17, 2019

If you insist on acting arbitrarily, inconsiderate of others, and without thoughtful observation and analysis on matters large and small, then not only would it be difficult for you to accomplish anything, you will have brought yourselves endless problems that would lead you to the abyss of afflictions.



170

June 18, 2019

Many of the issues with the degenerate age are manifested among the monastic community. There are those who only profess to be ordained monks or nuns and believe that if only they can achieve a certain social status would they be recognized as an eminent and meritorious master. These individuals would never study, reflect, or practice the Dharma, and consequently they don't have any merit of spiritual practitioners. Some are even completely ignorant of the most basic Buddhist principles, making pathetic mistakes such as pretending to be the Buddhas of the five families with their poor and pitiful appearance. While these behaviors are laughable, we are dismayed by their impact on the progress of Buddhism.





171

June 19, 2019

In the Buddhist sutras, it was said that during the time of Buddha Kassapa, King Kriki had a dream about an elephant. The elephant's body was outside the window but its tail remained inside the house. What did this mean? It foretold what would happen towards the end of Buddha Shakyamuni's reign when the minds of even many ordained monks and nuns would still be enchanted by the eight worldly dharmas.



172

June 20, 2019

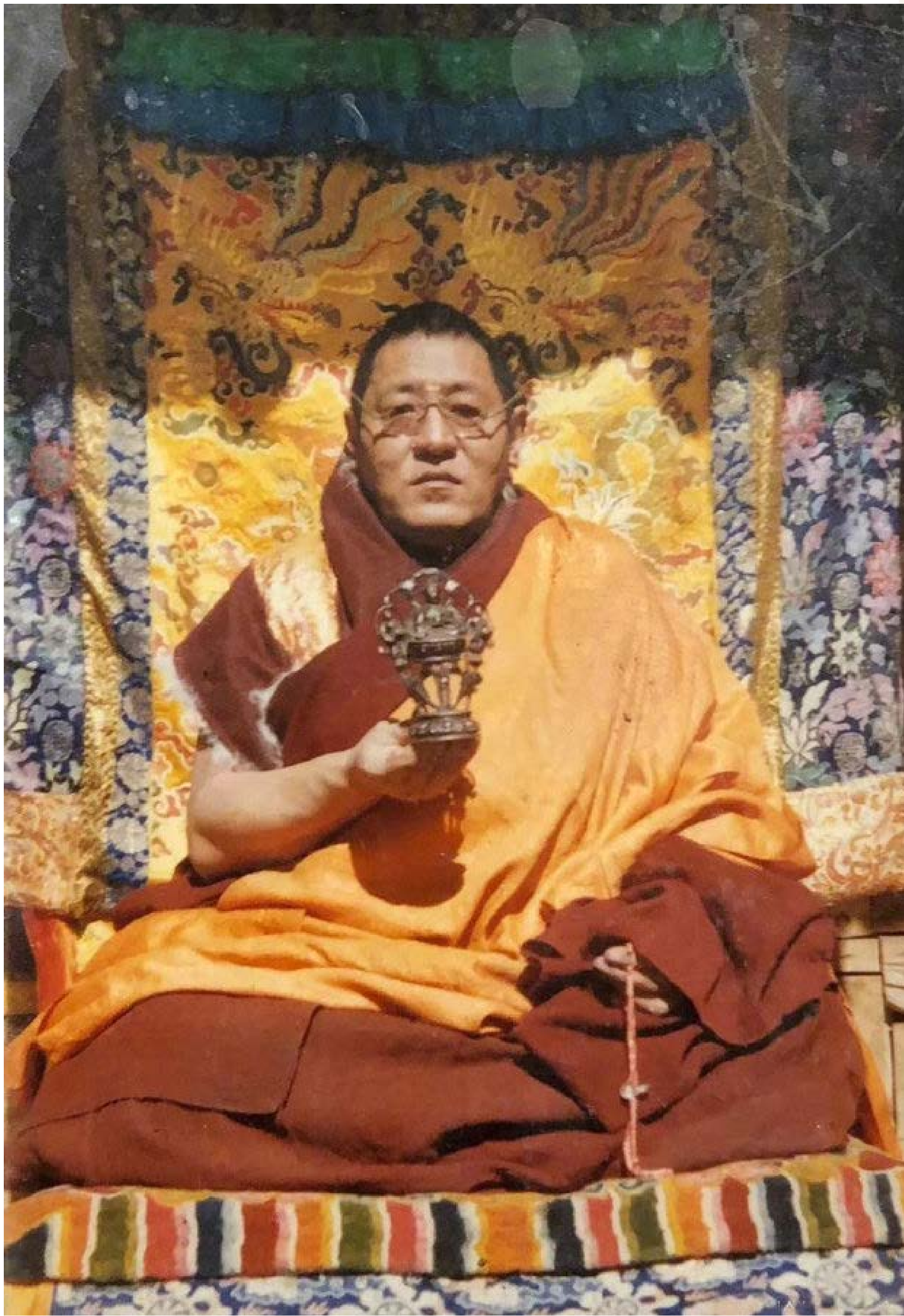
Some people's greed is insatiable. Cleverly and eloquently they would spin tales of lies to satisfy their desires. For instance, when they see a fine china bowl that they covet in someone's home, they would immediately start scheming to get it and would not stop until they succeed.

They may start by complimenting the owner with flowery language, praising the exquisite craftsmanship



and interesting history of the object, and so on. Then they would flatter the owner, saying how generous and noble he is. Further, they would claim in many aspects how close they are actually to the owner and that they are like a family. Finally, they would swear that if the object can be given to them, they would unconditionally come to the owner's aid whenever he needs it. The fact is if the owner were to trust them and give the object to them, they would forget whatever they said to the owner and none of the promises would be kept.

Conversely, when these people encounter someone in need, they would try to thwart any assistance that is offered to them by others. They would flatter and praise others when they have something they want. However, their hearts would be immediately filled with jealousy when they see others receiving anything they covet. They are cunning and deceitful in their actions and would use any means possible to get what they want. These behaviors are truly despicable!



173

June 21, 2019

There is a story about one such monk. On his alms round, he asked a family if their life was peaceful. When the master of the house said everyone was doing well, surprisingly, he was greatly disappointed. Why? It was because if there had been a death in the family,



he would have the opportunity to chant sutras and perform a ceremony of transference that would earn him monetary offerings.

This kind of practitioners have evil in their hearts and their behaviors will lead them further and further away from liberation.

It would seem that the more ignorant these people are, the more arrogant they become. Even when they get an opportunity to meet an authentic master, not only would they not offer him any respect, they would be rude and behave in an arrogant fashion.

On the surface, they may have shaved their heads and appear to have forsaken their earthly home to become monks and nuns. In reality, they are building and defending an even bigger goal, their house of “fame and fortune”.

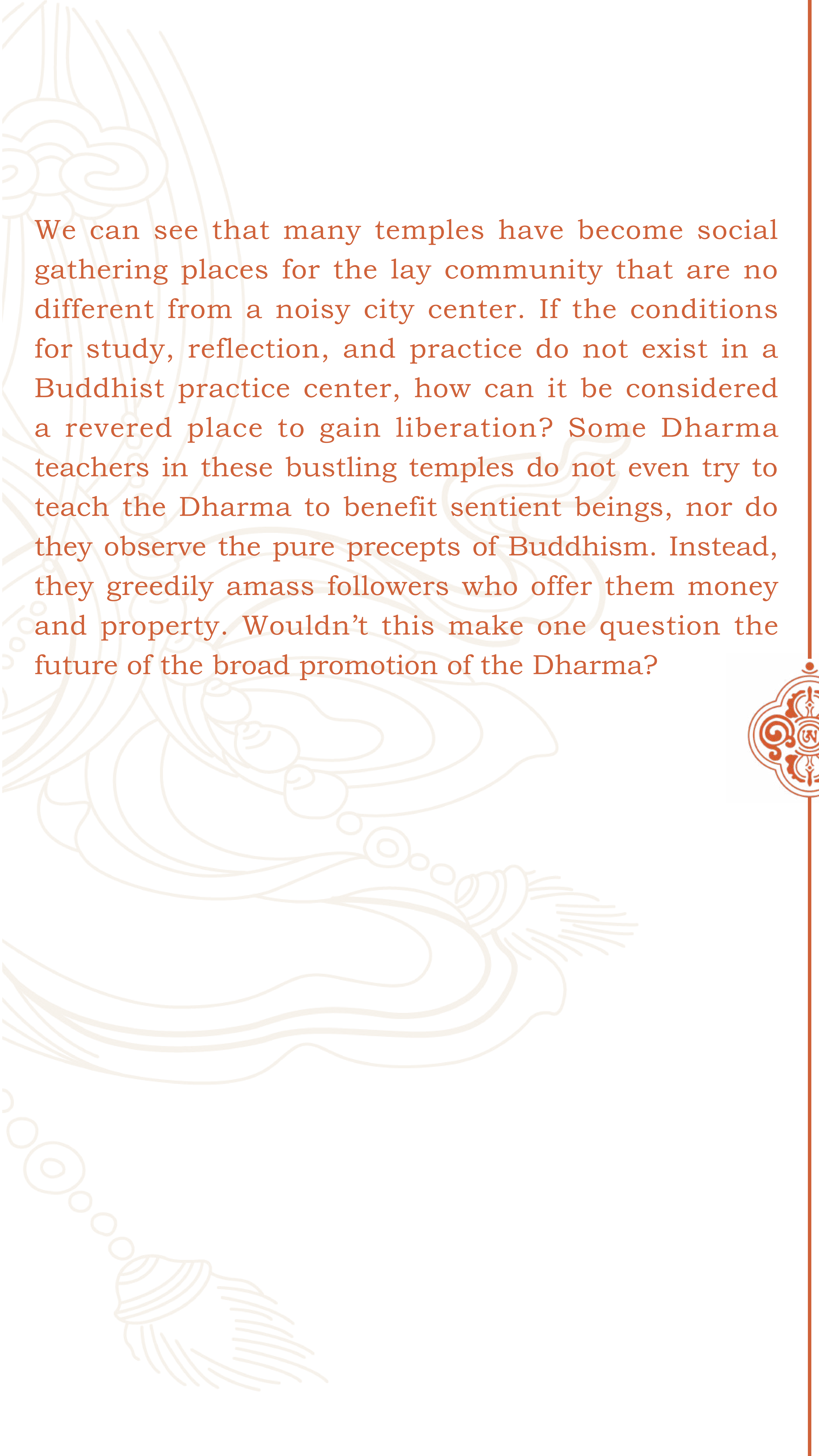


174

June 22, 2019

Today, there are very few authentic spiritual mentors who possess the characteristics of a true dharmic person. Proper conduct that accords with the Dharma has instead become a target for public ridicule.



The background features a faint, light-colored illustration of a Buddhist figure, likely a Buddha or Bodhisattva, seated in a meditative posture. The figure is surrounded by decorative, swirling patterns and floral motifs. A vertical line runs down the right side of the page, ending in a small, ornate circular emblem. The overall aesthetic is traditional and serene.

We can see that many temples have become social gathering places for the lay community that are no different from a noisy city center. If the conditions for study, reflection, and practice do not exist in a Buddhist practice center, how can it be considered a revered place to gain liberation? Some Dharma teachers in these bustling temples do not even try to teach the Dharma to benefit sentient beings, nor do they observe the pure precepts of Buddhism. Instead, they greedily amass followers who offer them money and property. Wouldn't this make one question the future of the broad promotion of the Dharma?



175

June 23, 2019

There are this kind of people: They have never learned from any guru nor have they engaged in any Dharma practice, but they openly promote their versions of the “Buddhist Dharma” to the masses. This is akin to a person who is just groping in the pitch blackness of



night with his eyes closed and yet telling others that he can lead them out of the darkness.

One of the main reasons this fraudulent sangha is now found everywhere, deceiving people and leading them onto a wrong path is that people in our modern society no longer value the true principles of Buddhism. They use their own biases to interpret the Dharma, ignoring the original teaching of the Buddha. This gives those not teaching the true Dharma the opportunity to trick people from all corners of our society.





176

June 24, 2019

There are those among the monastics, who after gaining a bit of fame, become extremely arrogant and self-centered. They feel that they can do no wrong and would not accept any criticism or advice. More often than not, these people are shallow and uninformed, and are undeserving of their fame. Unfortunately, they are often followed blindly by many.



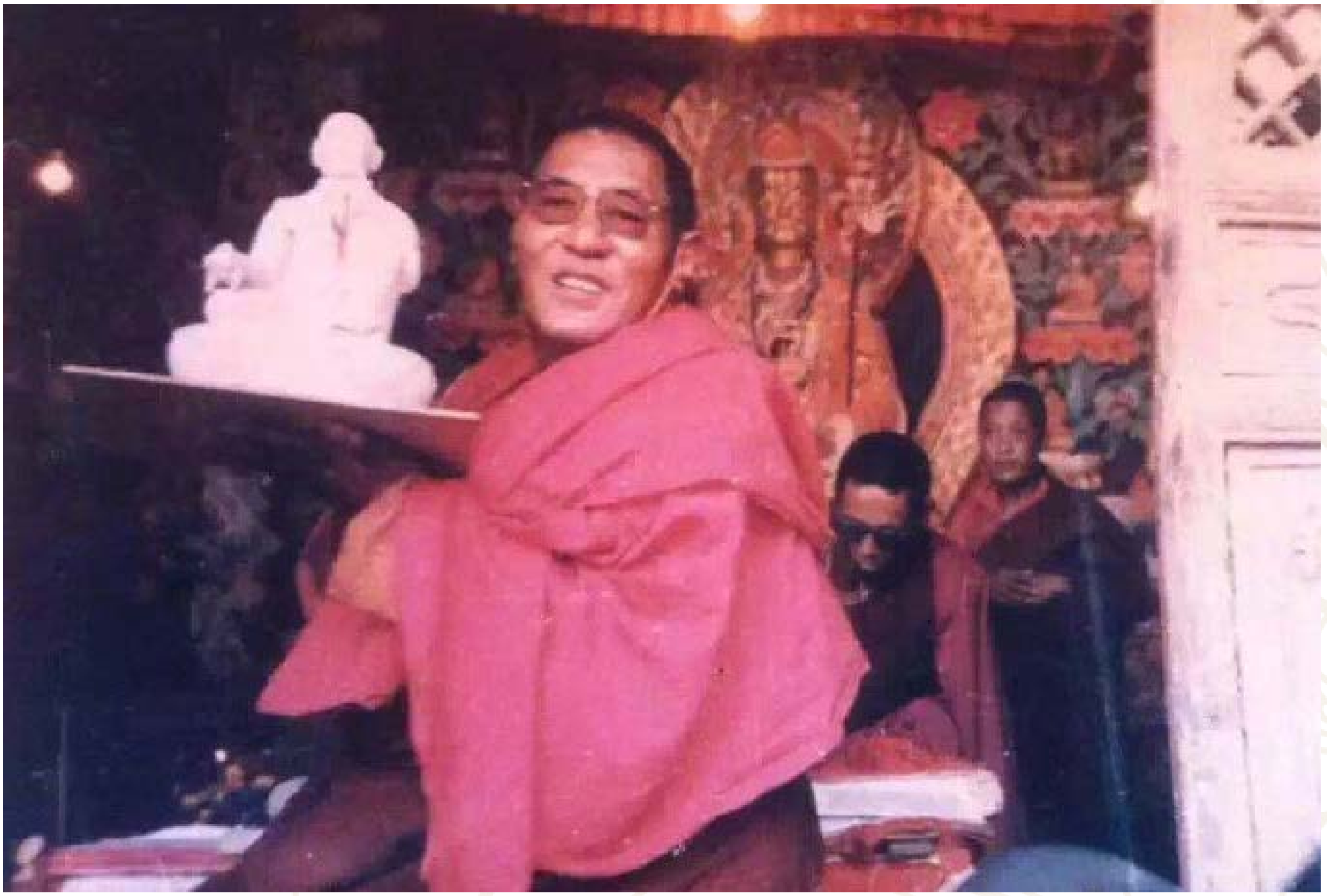


177

June 25, 2019

As I see it, most people today do not have the ability to discriminate between the wise and the foolish. Those who can recognize the true nature of a person are indeed few and far between. Why is this so? The reason is most people no longer value the inner realization of a Buddhist master. Instead, they care only about the outward appearance and reputation of a master.

This has now indeed become the norm. Those monastics who have strayed far from Buddhist precepts and behave in a manner that is immoral are instead often considered as enlightened ones who are living a free and unencumbered life. Their obvious violations of the Buddhist precepts are thought of as skillful means; their sinister lies are considered superior wisdom; their brutality is praised as a heroic spirit; and their malicious slanders are lauded as meaningful eloquence...



178

June 26, 2019

The only way to determine if someone is a qualified spiritual teacher is to look for evidence of his inner compassion and wisdom. Is he willing to sacrifice himself for all sentient beings? Does he have the wisdom of realizing the ultimate reality of dharmadhatu?

Unfortunately, intentionally or not, many abandon this principle in their lives and allow themselves to be led by foolish views.



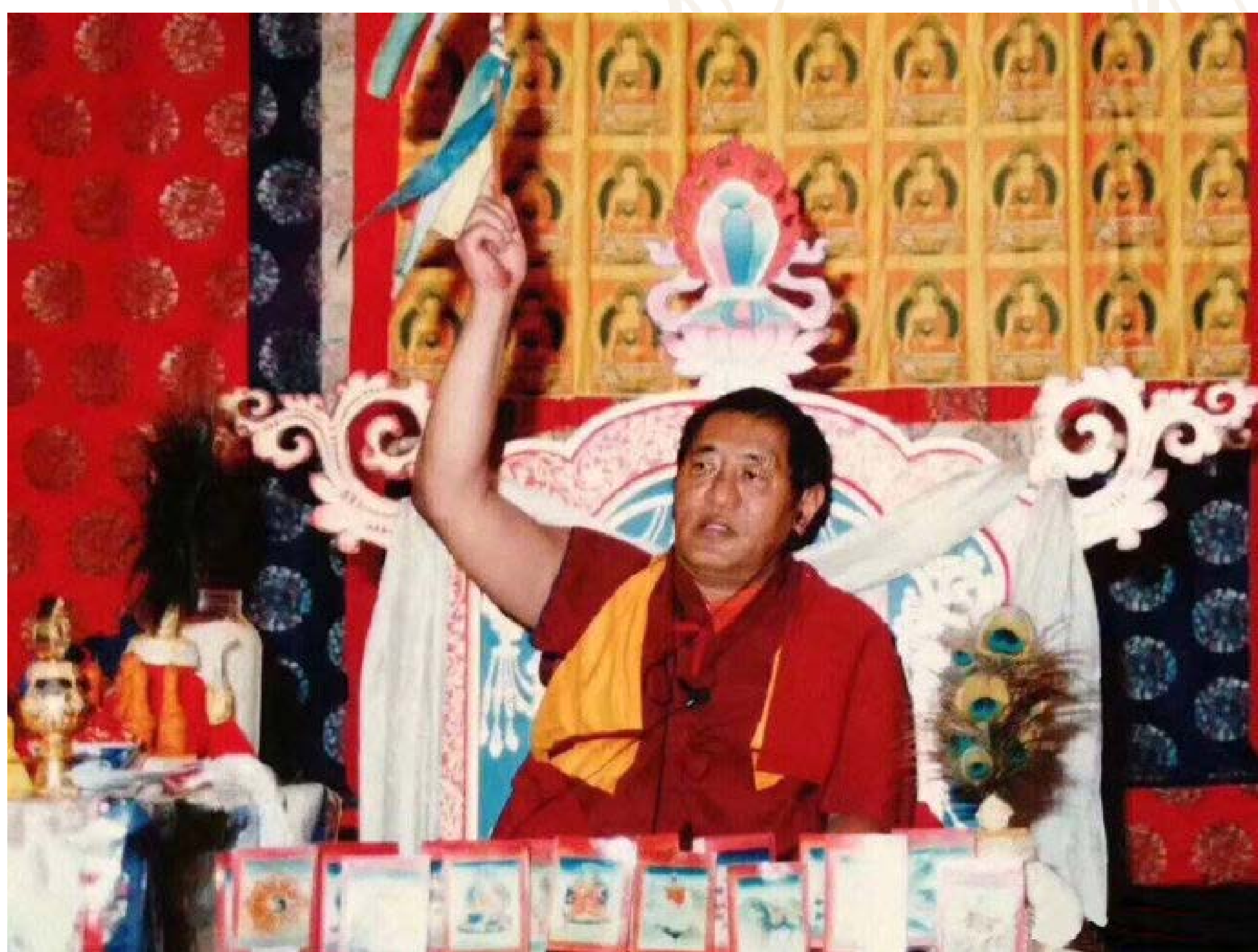


179

June 27, 2019

From beginningless time, the root causes of our boundless suffering are the five poisons in our mind, i.e., desire, anger, ignorance, pride and jealousy. These enemies threaten not just our present existence but also our future lifetimes. Therefore, the most important action we can take is to constantly observe our mind. Do not let these afflictions control us. More importantly, don't just focus on superficial actions and appearances.





180

June 28, 2019

There are those whose minds are still filled with the five poisons that have troubled them their whole lives, yet they attempt to maintain an appearance of peace in solitary places. Under this pretense and the mistaken belief in their own merits, they undertake to



teach the Dharma to others. Little do they know that this action is meaningless.

We also have many who take too simplistic a view today, assuming that just because someone is well-dressed and acting self-important that person must be an extraordinary one and deserving to be blindly followed without scrutiny. In contrast, those who possess remarkable wisdom, diligent in Dharma practice and acting in accordance with Buddhist precepts, are often not respected. This is indeed a sad development in this age.





181

June 29, 2019

The omniscient Longchenpa said, “When the wise and virtuous are not held in esteem yet the pretentious and uninformed are honored, this is the mark of the degenerate age.”

As these shallow, ignorant people gain respect, like pouring gasoline on a fire, they become even more arrogant. This will not bring them any benefit and will further harm their followers.





182

June 30, 2019

Even though others may not fully realize the state of our minds, we should be in the best position to know. Therefore, we ought not to be easily swayed by others' boasts. Instead, we should be ever mindful and reflective in our minds.





183

July 1, 2019

An eminent master once said, “If you are justifiably praised by others, you should not be too gleeful. If they had mistakenly praised you, you should not let these false honors make you complacent.” Thus, we need to observe our mind constantly to avoid being deceived by any praise.

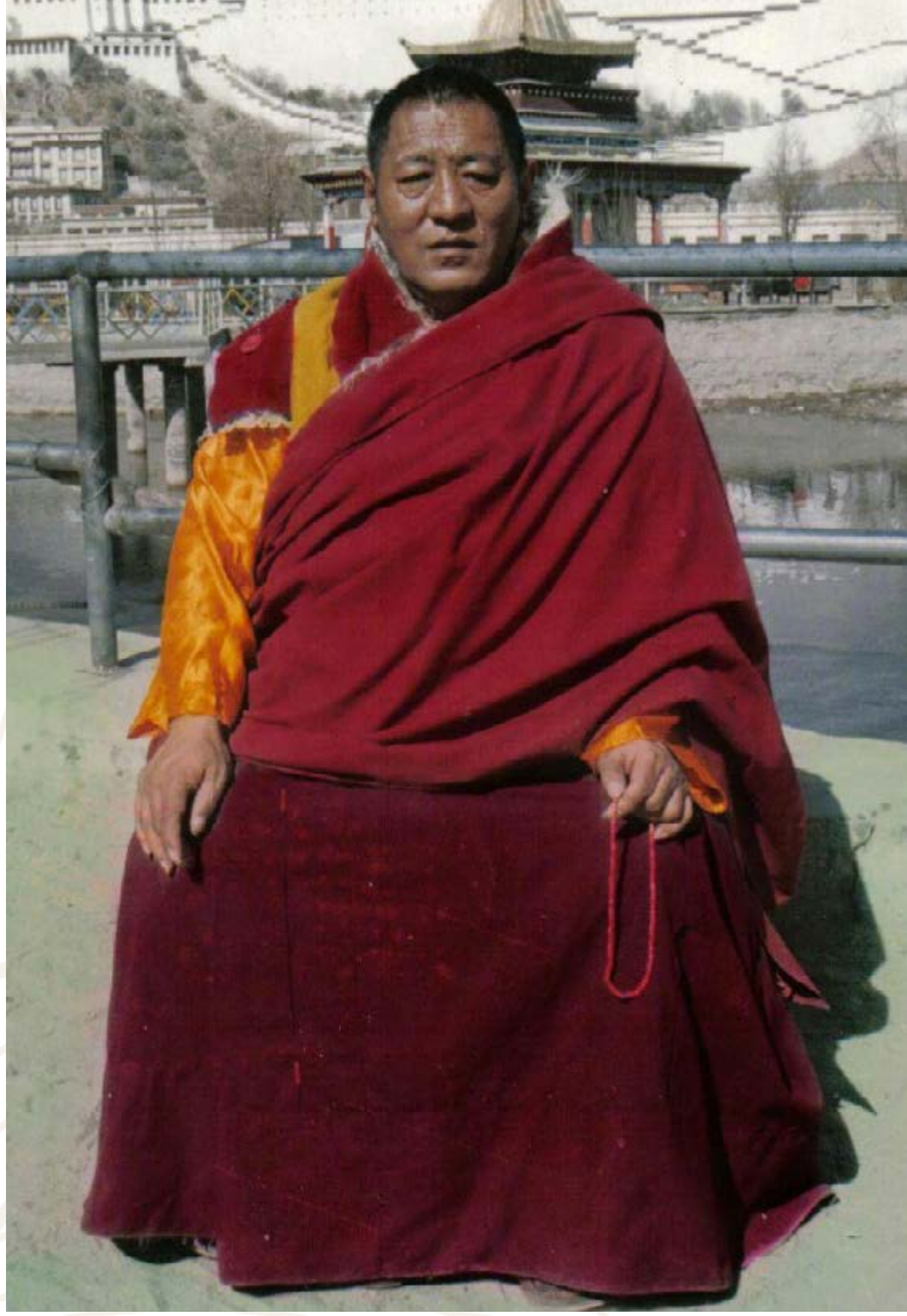


184

July 2, 2019

Our existence is a precious gift. It would be a great pity if we devoted our lives to the pursuit of fame and fortune instead of cultivating a heart of lovingkindness and compassion.





185

July 3, 2019

In this age, some seemingly ordinary people would claim to be great tulkus overnight. How could this happen? We may ask, “Are you really the reincarnation of a great master?” If indeed that is the case, then being recognized as a tulku is certainly reasonable. However, if that person knows deep down that he is not really the reincarnation of a great master and yet he still acts like a tulku to deceive sentient beings, this is a very serious violation of the precept against major lies. As in ancient India, if one has not achieved the realization of an Arhat, one is not qualified to sit on the yellow flower mat.



186

July 4, 2019

We now often hear declarations of this and that person being a tulku. Because there are now so many “tulkus”, it is not surprising then to find genuine ones and also false ones. Some of those who acknowledge a false tulku do so solely to exploit the connection for



their family and friends or to seek gains in their social status. Even monasteries might knowingly elevate false tulkus so that they can pursue the eight worldly dharmas and gain fame and profits.

These false tulkus often don't even bother to practice the Dharma. After getting declared a tulku, they would become arrogant and often even abandon the Dharma altogether. On the other hand, some very learned khenpos who are actually true reincarnations of great masters would refuse to be elevated to a tulku. They would diligently make good use of their time to humbly study the Dharma and improve themselves. Adopting a low profile in this way is very good.





187

July 5, 2019

In fact, tulkus may be classified in several ways:

1. Before his death, an eminent master may use his supernatural power to give prophecies or dream omens, so that a person who is not his real reincarnation is blessed to be his alias tulku. Certainly this



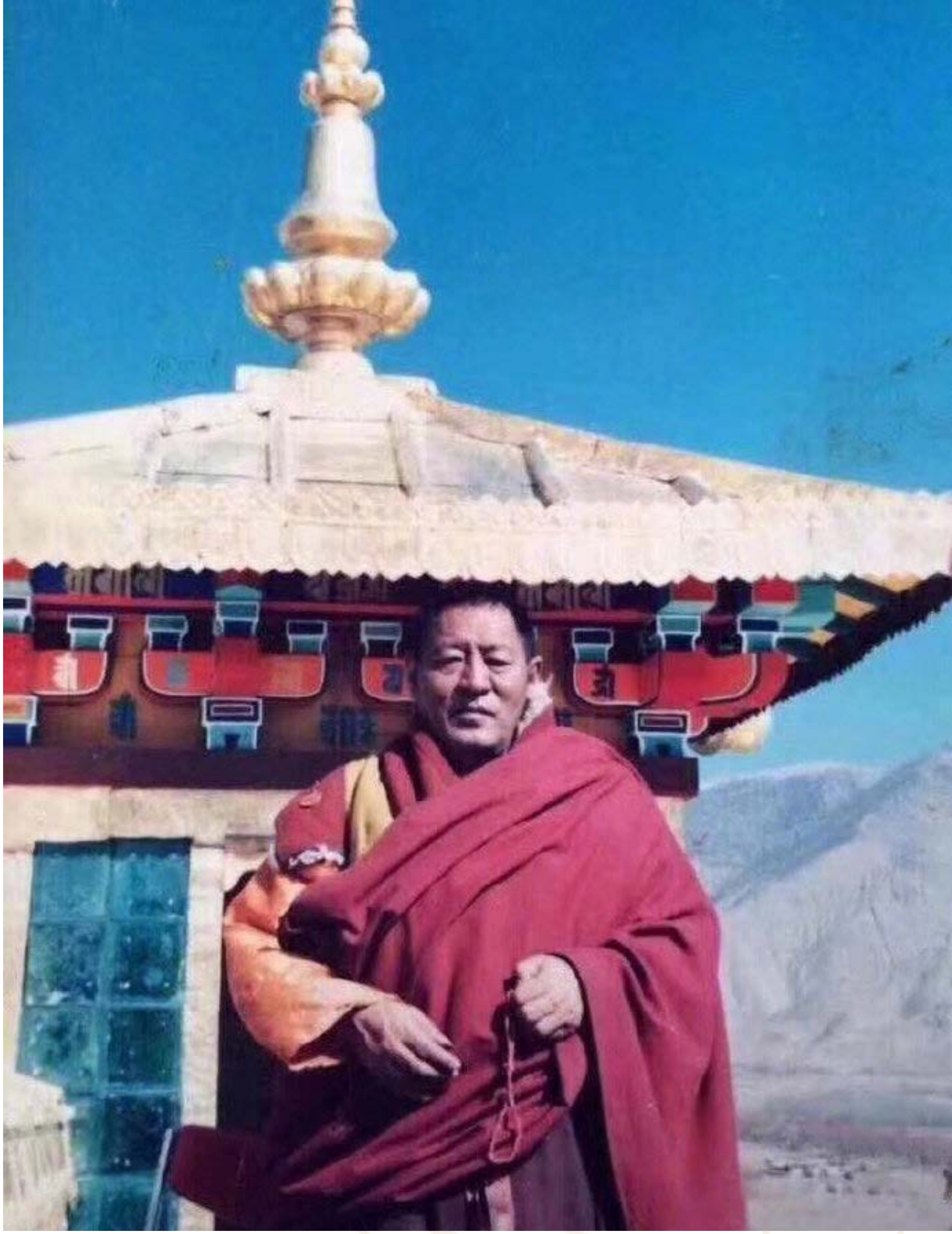
type of tulku is not a tulku in the strictest sense of the word.

2. Some who may have started out not as a tulku are later recognized as such for the benefit of sentient beings or other non-obvious reasons.

3. In the process of the bardo, some have successfully transformed the surrounding appearance into the spiritual realization and attained certain accomplishment and as a result, reincarnate into a tulku.

4. There are also tulkus who are under the influence of Mara. For example, a Mara has murdered a guru and then assumed his identity and pretended to be his reincarnation. He then manifests another person or blesses someone else to declare, “This person is the reincarnated tulku of that master.”

In short, it is best that those who are not tulkus do not masquerade as one. If you are truly virtuous, no one will despise you. But if you believe that just by closely mimicking the behavior of a tulku would turn you into a real one, you are mistaken.



188

July 6, 2019

It has become fashionable for people to seek to follow a tulku. Although this is an act that can result in merits, before you decide to rely on an individual and become dependent on his guidance, I urge you to carefully observe this person from all perspectives and be mindful of any overt promotion that has become common nowadays.





189

July 7, 2019

Some of you say that I am the reincarnation of Tulku Lerab Lingpa. But I would never dream of being someone that accomplished. I am just a simple person like many others, and there are more still who are even less fortunate. But the question I have is after being called a tulku, what it would mean to me. This is something we all need to carefully consider.



190

July 8, 2019

Although masters in the past had been recognized as tulkus, many of them did not become complacent and remained focused on maintaining their virtues and working to gain merits. There were also other masters who did not want to be recognized with the



title of tulku at all, and yet their activities of spreading the Dharma and benefiting beings flourished and still shine like the mid-day sun.

But there are individuals today who set themselves up as tulkus, feeling self-important and basking in the praise of their followers. Some even indulge in vices such as alcohol and tobacco; they lust after women and use the donations from their followers to satisfy their own desires. It is indeed heartbreaking to see these awful behaviors in this degenerate age.



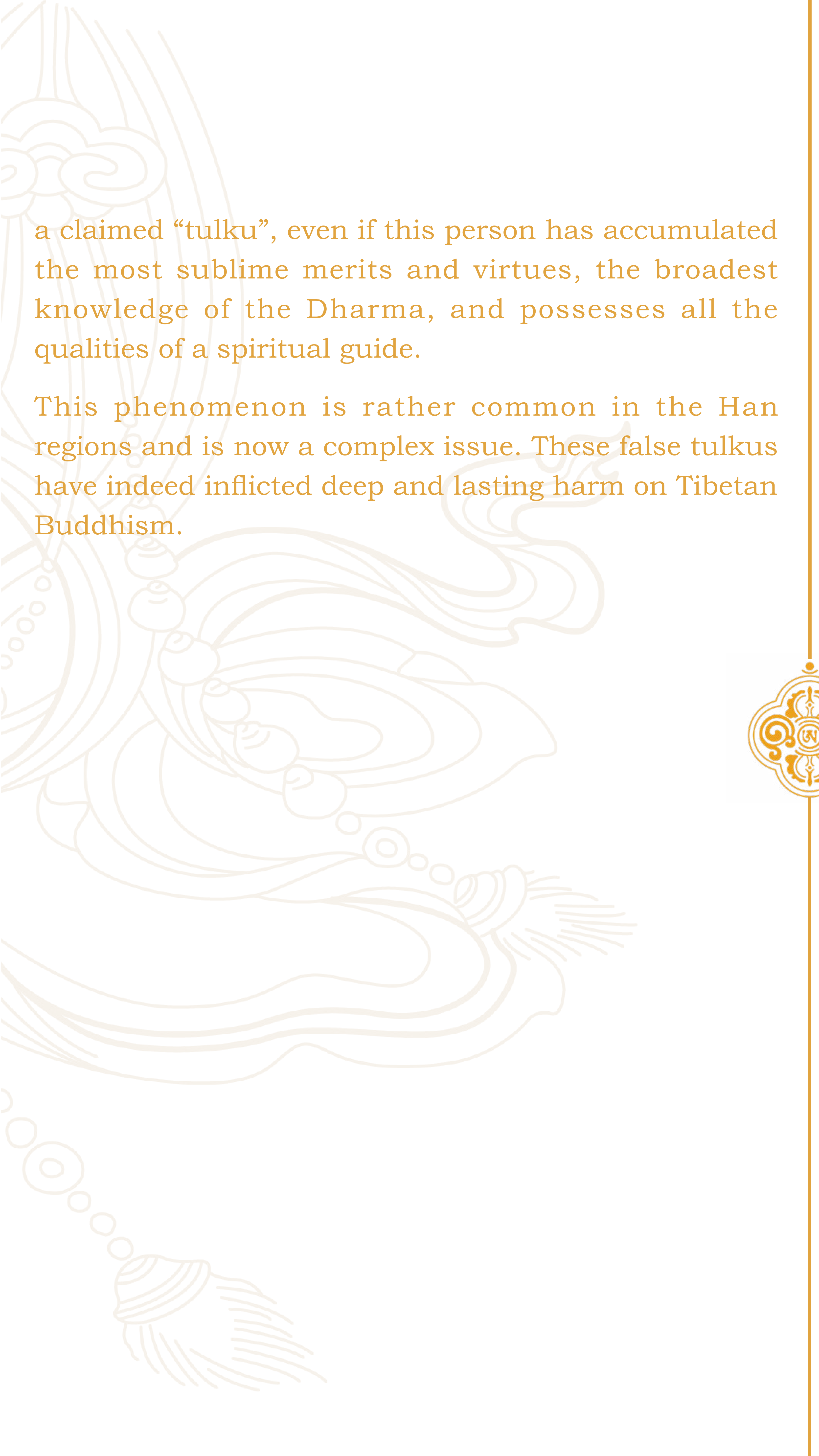


191

July 9, 2019

There are those without scruples who shamelessly claim that they are tulkus in order to obtain respect and material gains from their followers. They would say, “Tulkus are the most noble! A tulku’s status in Tibetan Buddhism is the highest!” Many people might be fooled by these claims and only follow “tulkus”, even those without any merit or virtue. These same individuals would have no respect for anyone who is not

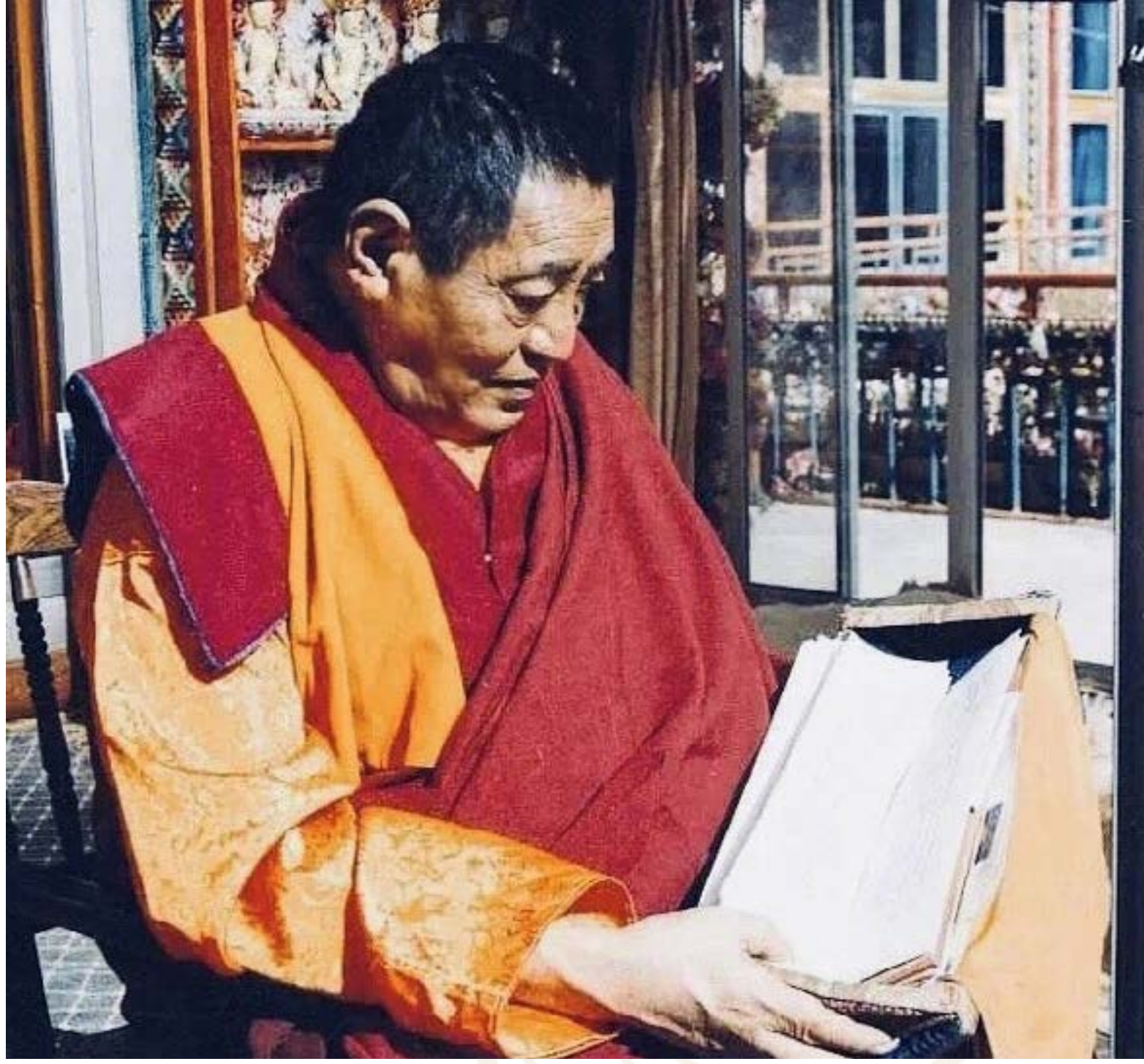




a claimed “tulku”, even if this person has accumulated the most sublime merits and virtues, the broadest knowledge of the Dharma, and possesses all the qualities of a spiritual guide.

This phenomenon is rather common in the Han regions and is now a complex issue. These false tulkus have indeed inflicted deep and lasting harm on Tibetan Buddhism.





192

July 10, 2019

In this age, often there are those who would casually comment saying, “There’s a spirit! There’s a demon! We must perform a ceremony of subjugation to subdue them.”

These people are either under the influence of Mara or are violating the Buddhist precepts. They are in a confused state of mind and tell outright lies everywhere, which have caused great harm to Buddhism. One needs to carefully consider how karma will impact each and every one of us and refrain from encouraging and supporting such actions that are contrary to the Dharma. Continuing your support of these people will only help evil proliferate to deceive and harm countless innocent people, including yourselves. This would be a terrible tragedy.





193

July 11, 2019

The purpose of practicing the Dharma is to develop the great compassion to benefit sentient beings and to spare them the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change, and the all-pervasive suffering of conditioning. It is not meant to provide one with the

means to subdue spirits or demons with wrath, or to allow one to pretend to have supernatural powers.

Some would shamelessly boast, “I saw this demon today!” or “I saw that spirit yesterday and I scared them immediately away by chanting the Mantra of Unfettering!” With their presumption of demons and spirits increasing, their sense of self-importance grows. These are actually signs that they are already under the influence of Mara.





194

July 12, 2019

If someone really possesses a compassionate heart and a true conviction in the Three Jewels, he will not be harmed even if the universe is filled with evil spirits and demons. When a person chants *The King of Aspiration Prayers*, he cannot be destroyed by evil spirits or heretics.

If one does encounter evil spirits and demons, one should not be hostile to them and aim to destroy them. Instead, one should treat them with compassion and love, visualize one's own body being transformed into amrita and offering this to them so they may obtain peace, happiness, and contentment. Only by eradicating attachment to the self in this way can we truly subdue demons.



195

July 13, 2019

The greatest demon in the three realms is our own ego. Our egos dominate all other evil demons and spirits. Like a shadow that follows us everywhere, so is our ego as we live with it day in and day out. Other than this demon, there is indeed no other demon. Milarepa said, “If your mind has not become a demon, then there is not a single demon outside.”



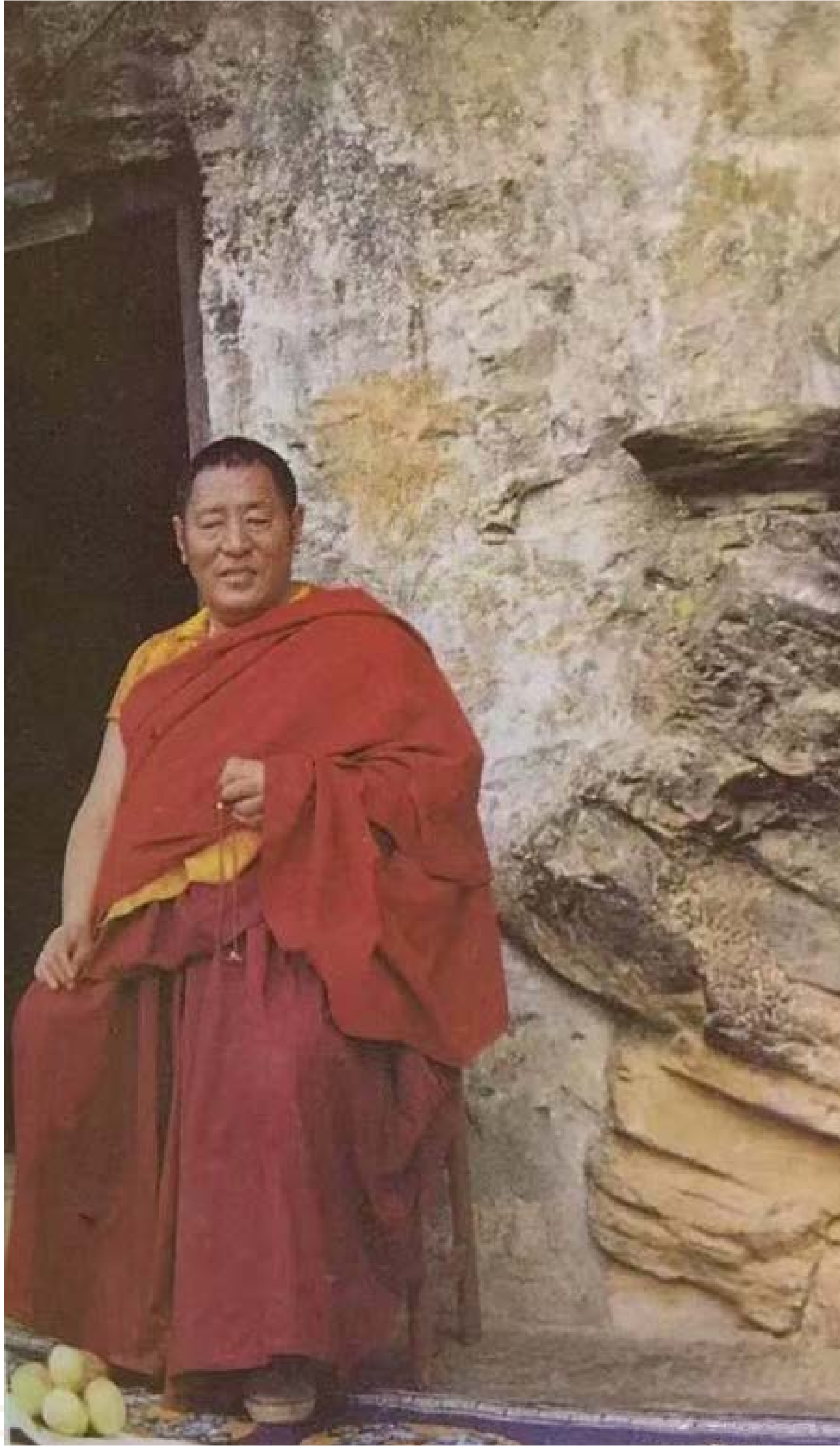


196

July 14, 2019

Some would advise people that it is no longer necessary to study sutras and shastras, insisting that studying is no longer relevant to one's practice. That's incorrect. Let's consider whether it is even possible for someone to properly practice if he has never studied and reflected on the Dharma?

If Buddha Shakyamuni were still alive, he would also ask us to study the Dharma and reflect on it before finally practicing it. Sakya Pandita said, "If you head into practice without having first studied and reflected on the Dharma, it is like someone with two broken arms trying to climb a cliff. He is dreaming!"



197

July 15, 2019

Some of the so-called “gurus” today have no understanding of any of the Buddhadharma and have never studied any sutra or shastra. That is why they are especially against study and reflection, and instead instruct their followers to immediately start practicing



the Dharma. This is like the blind leading the blind, bringing great harm to their followers.

Since they have never studied or reflected on the Buddhadharma, how could they possibly be able to provide sound guidance to their followers? Some of these so-called “gurus” have no knowledge of any of the basic Buddhist teachings and concepts, and yet they tell their followers to focus on practice and not to study sutras and shastras because they are not “important”. This is foolish and absurd.





198

July 16, 2019

The omniscient Longchenpa said, “Only those who have mastered the Dharma teaching through study and reflection can realize the ultimate Great Perfection.” This means that if we hope to be accomplished in our practice, we need to study the Dharma extensively and engage in profound reflection.





199

July 17, 2019

I believe that there is nothing more important than study and reflection in Buddhism. Lakla Sonam Chodup Rinpoche was an outstanding master following in the footsteps of Mipham Rinpoche. He said, “Those who are weary of listening to the Dharma teaching and are unwilling to study and reflect on the Dharma would not be liberated in this lifetime. For those who denigrate study and reflection, attaining temporary or ultimate liberation would be like a barren woman trying to conceive, utterly impossible.”



200

July 18, 2019

I hope that everyone will study and reflect on the Dharma before commencing the practice of Buddhism. Without the proper cause, how could the appropriate effect be otherwise produced? One would not find any reference in Buddhist teachings to support the contention that anyone could gain wisdom without study.





201

July 19, 2019

We should recognize that practice without study and reflection is a journey down a blind alley. I can assure you that this would not lead anyone to a real understanding of the essence of the Dharma. There are those who choose to live in a secluded place and just meditate all day. But without the guidance of the Dharma, they would not make any progress in their practice even if they meditate alone for half a dozen years.



202

July 20, 2019

Some of the people I have met would make empty claims such as “neither samsara nor nirvana exists”, “there is no need to choose between good and evil”, or “I have no fear of anything”. These people would also often chant random tantric verses to appear to be close to the Dharma.

Although some of these people may say they are not afraid of anything, they would be seized with fear when



they encounter the slightest setback. They claim that they have no preference for anything, but when they see an attractive person or are presented with wealth, they would immediately exhibit lust and greed. They believe that they are experienced practitioners, yet they never strive to develop compassion and wisdom that would come from an insightful understanding of the Dharma. They are ignorant of the fact that these are the essential measures of enlightenment.





203

July 21, 2019

There are those who say samsara is pure by nature, there is nothing to let go of, and even if they go to hell, it matters not to them. They say this with apparent conviction, but they would burst into fury and rage out of control if others call them liars. Why should they get angry simply from the insults of an ordinary person when they claim they are even unafraid of the suffering in hell? Most of us don't like the conditions in a human prison, but the suffering in the hell realm is a million, a billion times worse. How could it be possible for anyone not to be fearful?





204

July 22, 2019

The truly accomplished masters indeed neither desire happiness nor reject suffering. They do not seek buddhahood, nor do they fear samsara. However, shouldn't we already know quite clearly which realm of awareness we each are at?

We often come across people who may have accomplished selected worldly virtuous deeds, such as chanting the Avalokiteshvara Mantra three hundred million times. Some of these individuals may proclaim that they are no longer in fear of death. The merits derived from virtuous deeds are indeed inconceivable. But based on the teachings in the sutras, even a single moment of anger could destroy an immeasurable amount of virtue and merit. How many angry thoughts have you had? Therefore, do not ever feel that you are superior to others.



205

July 23, 2019

I once met a monk who loves to boast. I kindly advised him, “You should be careful with your words. Your understanding of the Dharma is not yet complete and you can benefit from more diligent studies and practices.” He replied dismissively, “Don’t worry! I use the prayer wheel every day. I am not scared of hell at all.”

As ordinary beings, we must not think we are always correct. If you clearly desire to gain and hate to lose, love pleasure and hate suffering, like praises and dislike insults, you are consumed by the eight worldly concerns. Your claim to have no attachment to anything is merely deceiving yourself.





206

July 24, 2019

For those who believe that they have already freed themselves from the eight worldly concerns and thus feel superior and look down on others, they are in fact engaged in the greatest of the worldly concerns. Their entanglement in the eight worldly concerns is actually no less than that of any other person's.

Some people claim that they do not want offerings from anyone yet greatly desire them deep down. This

shows that they are entangled in the eight worldly concerns.

Some monastics stubbornly refuse reverence from others. For instance, they are not willing to sit on a Dharma throne or high seat that is prepared for them. Indeed, this is another kind of entanglement in the eight worldly concerns.

Also, some people only act with humility to demonstrate their supposed detachment from the eight worldly concerns, yet wish for praises from everyone else. Again, they are trapped by the eight worldly concerns.





207

July 25, 2019

Those who believe they have already developed deep insights and remarkable realization and yet look down on others, have instead been poisoned by their arrogance. Those who are already following all the precepts and are compassionate towards all those who are not, are the true followers of the Dharma. However, if they take great pride in their observance of the precepts, praise themselves, belittle and keep finding faults in others, they are in fact violating the precepts of the Dharma.



208

July 26, 2019 (1)

There are those who give the appearance of having given up all worldly attachments, living an ascetic lifestyle in a remote location, showing no interest in worldly affairs, and yet they hold themselves to be superior, denigrating others at every opportunity. This is not the true mind of renunciation.





209

July 26, 2019 (2)

Even if you have achieved a true realization of the nature of your mind, you should not hold the view that you are fully enlightened. Neither should you flaunt your accomplishment. I remember meeting an elderly person in Derge named Sogyal when I was eighteen. He had an unremarkable life. However, when he died, he attained the rainbow body. It was then that people realized that he was a highly accomplished master. Therefore, your status of realization should not be carelessly revealed.



210

July 27, 2019

If one can see purity in everything and has no aversion or desire for anything, this is the sign of ultimate enlightenment. Those who believe they possess extraordinary wisdom and thus become arrogant, self-centered, and have no respect for others, are even lacking in character, not to mention they can be considered as Dharma practitioners.

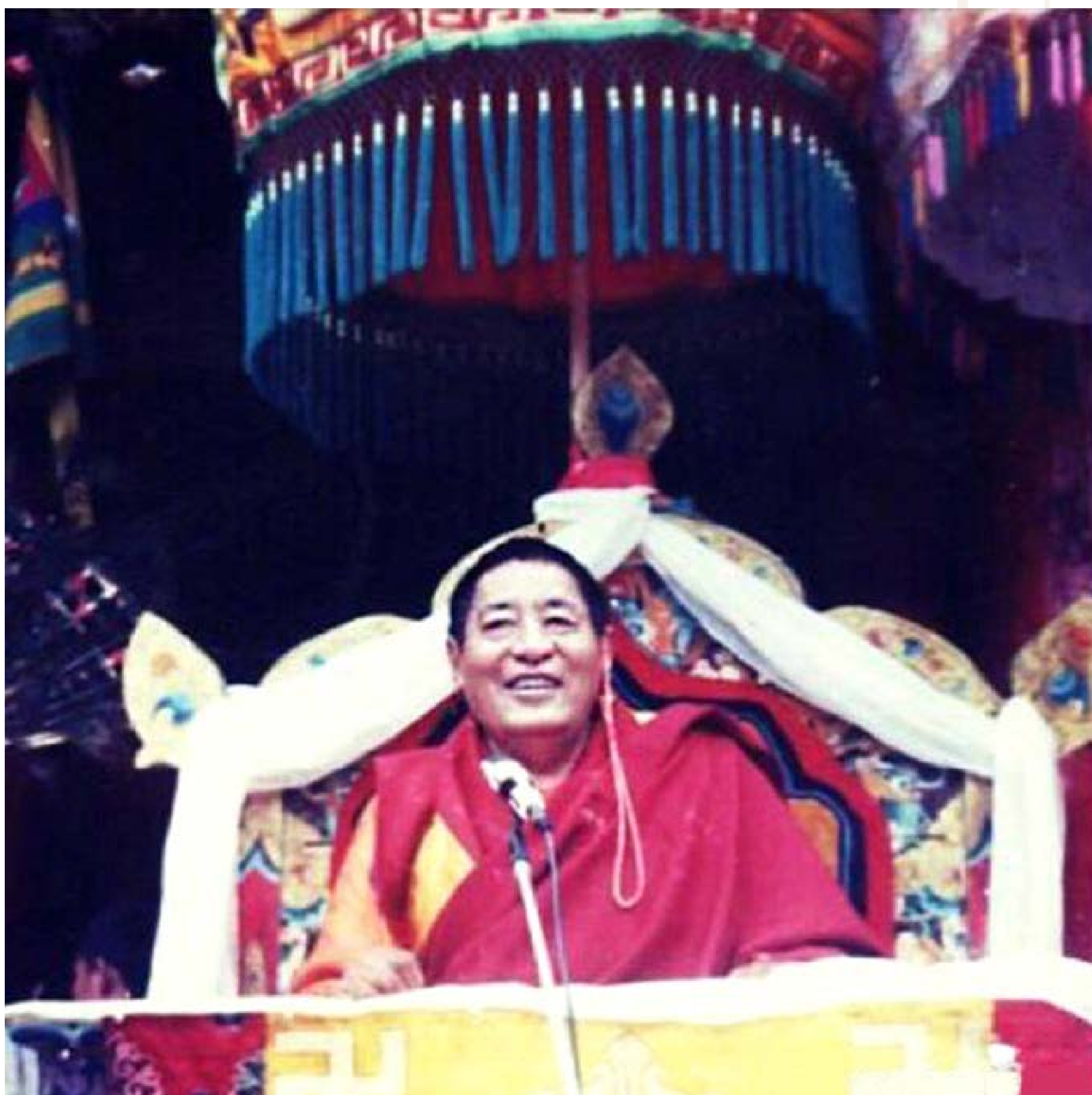




211

July 28, 2019

In our interactions with others, we should be aware of whether we are afflicted with greed, anger, delusion, envy, pride, etc. If we know deep down that these are still deeply ingrained in our minds, there is much work left for us to do. We need to strive to be more diligent in our practice, and we should never be overly contented with minor accomplishments in realization.



212

July 29, 2019

If your goal is to be freed from your afflictions, you must maintain your studies with your guru over a long period of time. Studying for just a few days would likely not lead to significant progress.





213

July 30, 2019

Some people want to meditate alone in a cave or under a tree. What they don't realize is that this could be dangerous because they could easily be led astray by the actions of nonhuman beings. Even though it was stated in the sutras that one should meditate in a quiet place, being alone and separated from others is only advised for those who have studied with their gurus for an extended period, mastered all the teachings, and have eliminated all their doubts about the Dharma. If one goes ahead after just reading a few books and abandons everything to meditate without having an adequate understanding of the Dharma or any sincere devotion to their gurus, one would not gain any benefit. Even worse, it could endanger one's life.



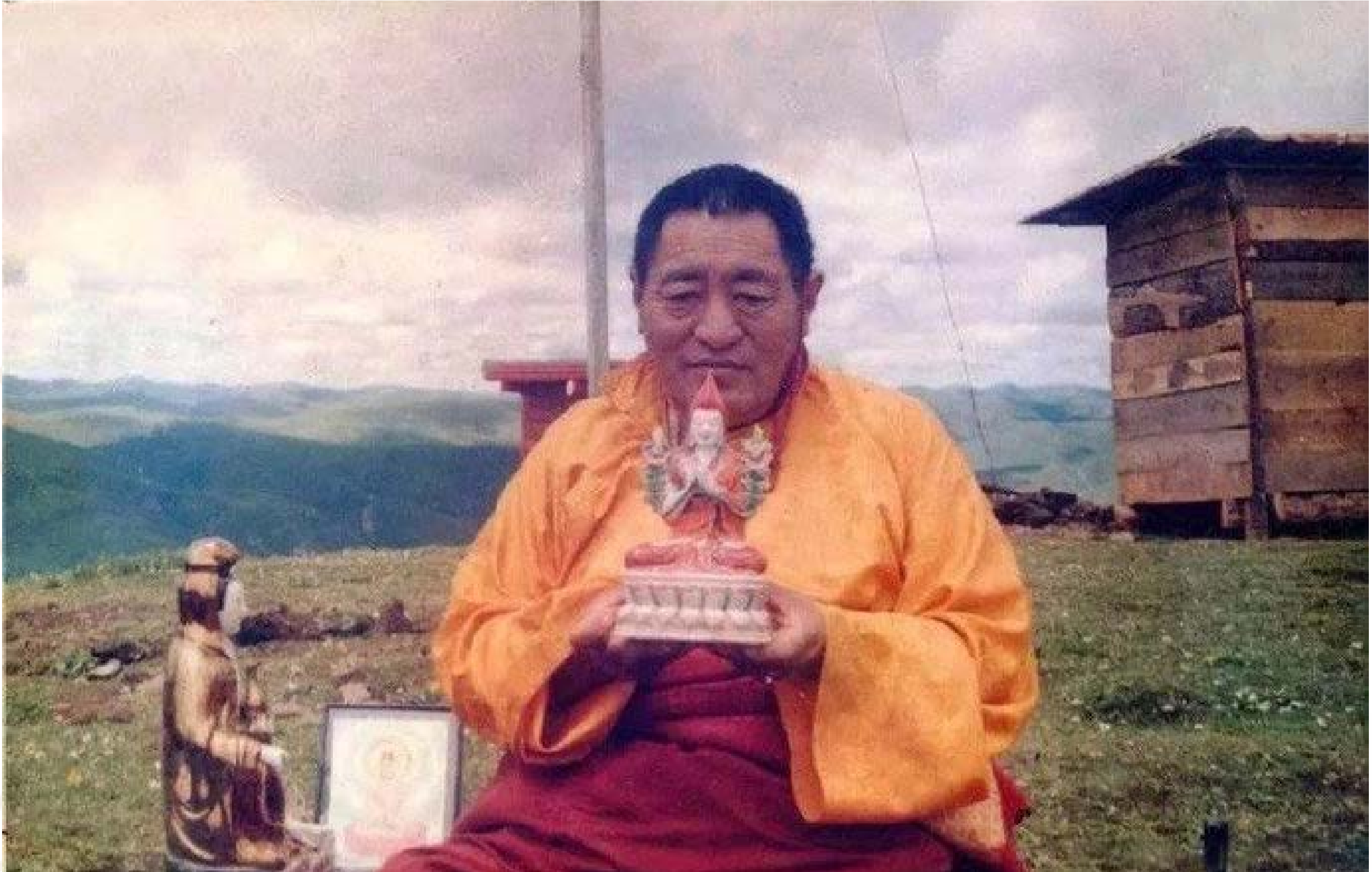
214

July 31, 2019

This is a talk given by H.H. Jigme Phuntsok Rinpoche in Canada back in 1993. One can receive his extraordinary blessing by learning this teaching and praying to His Holiness. As well, one's wisdom, merit, and bliss would elevate as a result.

<http://khenposodargye.org/teachings/khenpos-short-teachings/short-teachings-of-h-h-jigme-phuntsok-rinpoche/>





215

August 1, 2019

If someone intends to practice in an isolated location, there are quite a few important prerequisites. First, they must have devotion to their gurus, diligently practice guru yoga, and pray genuinely for their guru's blessings. Through this, they can avoid being led astray by the actions of nonhuman beings. Second, they must cultivate great compassion. If they arouse bodhichitta of great compassion and loving-kindness, they would not be harmed by any nonhuman being.

Nowadays, some are unwilling to study or reflect on the Dharma, yet they are enthusiastic about meditation. They believe that meditating with their eyes shut all day is the ultimate practice. I do not feel that this is the right approach. Although some may attain enlightenment without much study or reflection on the Dharma, you should ask yourselves if your foundation has allowed you to do the same.





216

August 2, 2019

One should not start his practice in isolation in places such as a cave. Instead, one should begin his study in earnest with constant reflection and practice in front of a qualified teacher from whom he can receive the Dharma teaching.



217

August 3, 2019

Just to be clear, I am not advocating that you should only study and reflect and not engage in any meditation. But to spend your whole life blindly meditating without any study or reflection would likely lead you down a wrong path!





218

August 4, 2019

As we travel on the boundless bitter ocean of samsara, going from one existence to the next, any joy and happiness we experience are only transient and temporary, and as unreliable as the smile of a demon goddess.



219

August 5, 2019

It was told in the *Jataka Tales* that Buddha Shakyamuni was a merchant in a past life and he traveled to the land of Raksha where many female demons attempted to seduce him with a myriad of tricks and intrigues. But after careful consideration, he found that although their appearances were mesmerizing, pain and deceit were at their core.

The joy we encounter during samsara is exactly the same. It changes in the blink of an eye, as impermanent as a flash of lightning. Will any of our possessions that are here today be here tomorrow? Will our strong and healthy bodies be free of illness tomorrow? Since it is impossible to predict the outcome of anything, so it was said that “all phenomena are like lightning”.





220

August 6, 2019

In this world, no matter how wonderful something is, it cannot be depended upon at all. Regardless of its exquisite beauty, it is in fact empty. There is absolutely no reason to desire it. Just like a banana tree, which may appear lush and green, but if one peels it layer by layer, one will find that the inside of the banana tree is completely empty and devoid of any substance.

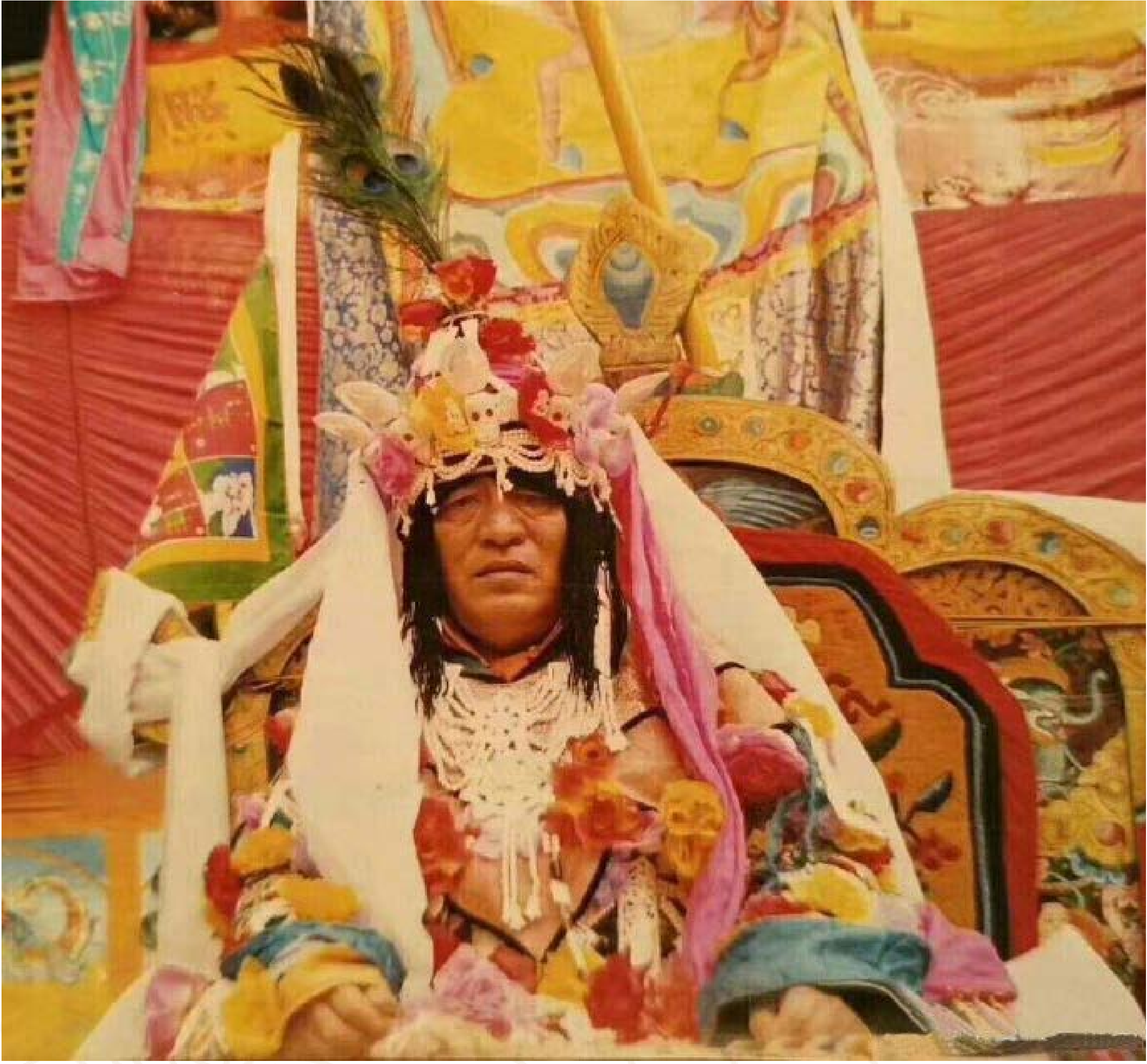


221

August 7, 2019

There isn't any phenomenon that can be relied on in samsara. When we experience good fortune, we should not become greedy. When faced with adversity, let's not be angry. Do not be attached to any phenomenon!





222

August 8, 2019

All of our thoughts are like the mist and clouds in the sky. If you let them subside naturally, they can neither cause harm nor create benefits. However, if we cling too closely to any of these, it would only lead to great harm and produce no benefit.



223

August 9, 2019

Benefiting sentient beings is the only activity that would please all buddhas, bodhisattvas, and gurus. As said in *The Way of the Bodhisattva*, “Buddhas are made happy by the joy of beings. They sorrow, they lament when beings suffer.” *Avatamsaka Sutra* also says, “Anyone who can bring joy to sentient beings would delight all buddhas.”





224

August 10, 2019

When we are assessing any individual or any issue, we should do so with great care and avoid drawing conclusions that are solely based on popular values.

Do not admire those who are evil. Do not exaggerate the merits of those who have not earned them. Recognize and respect those who are authentic masters and do not intentionally disparage or demean them.

My hope is that all of us should be careful of our behaviors and thoughts, and also gain control over our words so that we will not carelessly judge others.



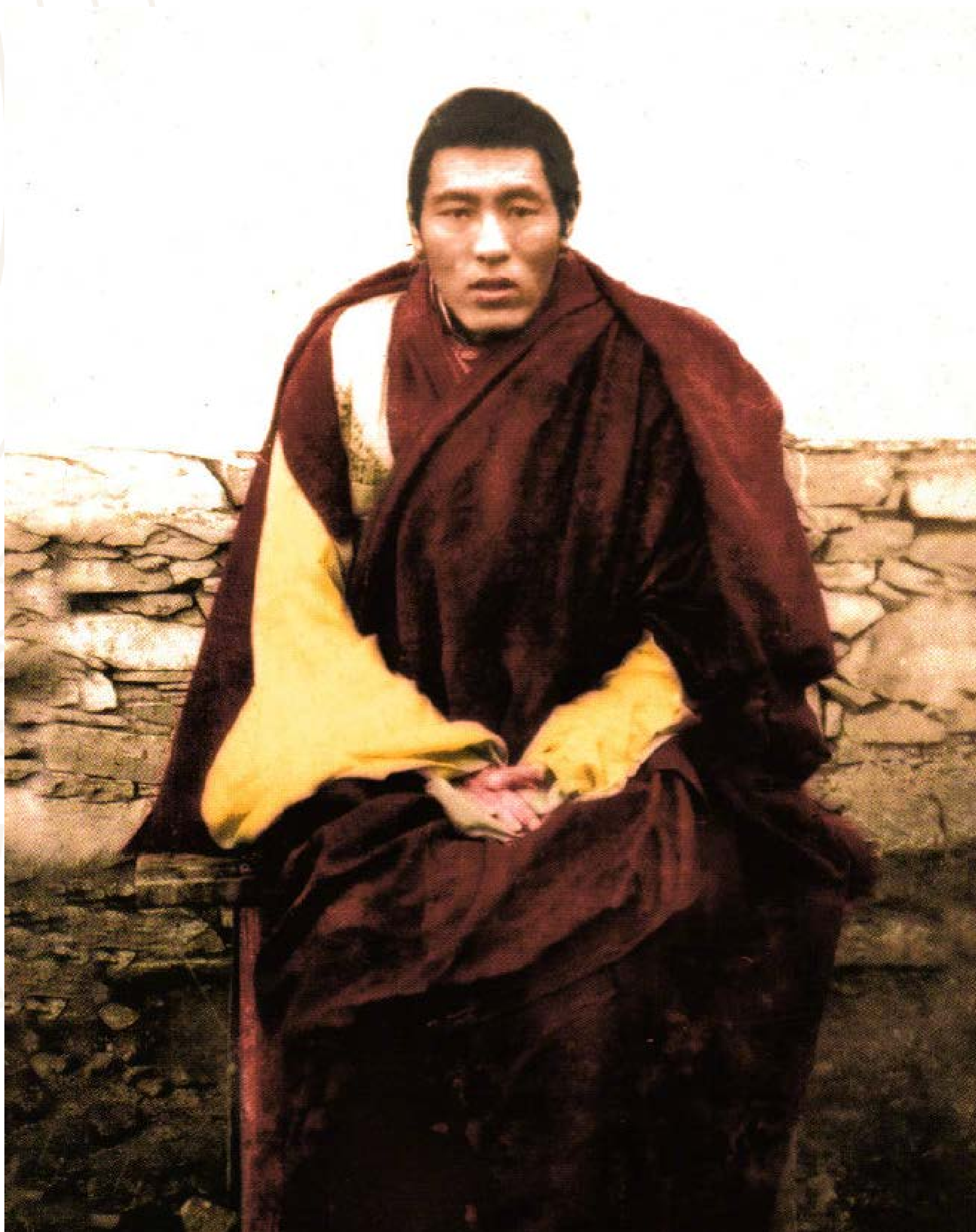
225

August 11, 2019

If everything in a person's life is too comfortable, it would be difficult to be motivated to seek liberation. On the other hand, if one lacks food, clothing, and shelter, his practice would not flourish until his basic needs are met.

Thus the Mahayana sutras have this teaching: "Do not fall into the two extremes, take the middle way."

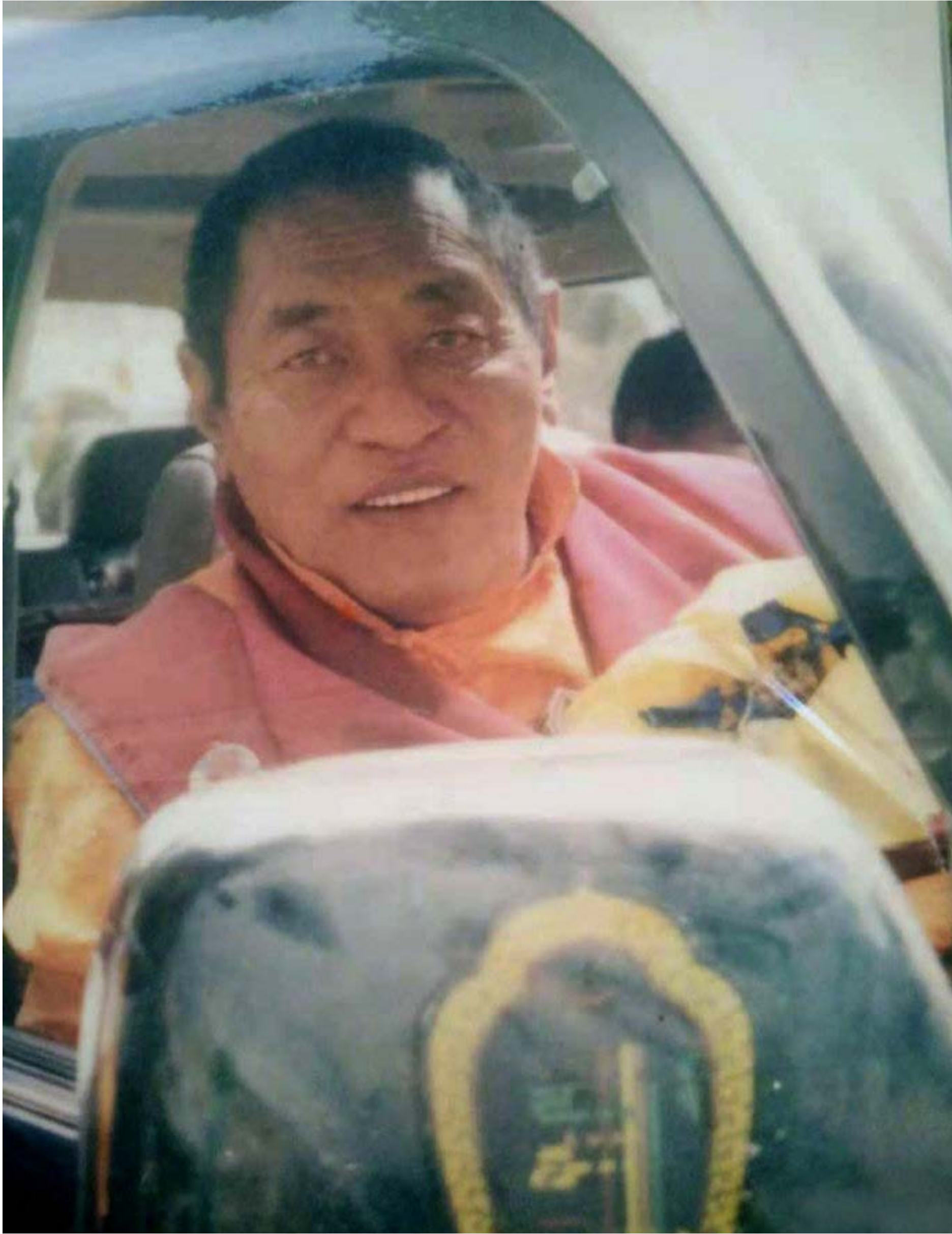




226

August 12, 2019

When we fall ill or experience inexplicable tribulations, do not let despair and animus fill our heart. Understand that we have been given a unique opportunity to understand and experience the plight of others, so you can engage in the practice of exchanging oneself with others. This is indeed a good chance to improve your Dharma practice through unfavorable conditions.

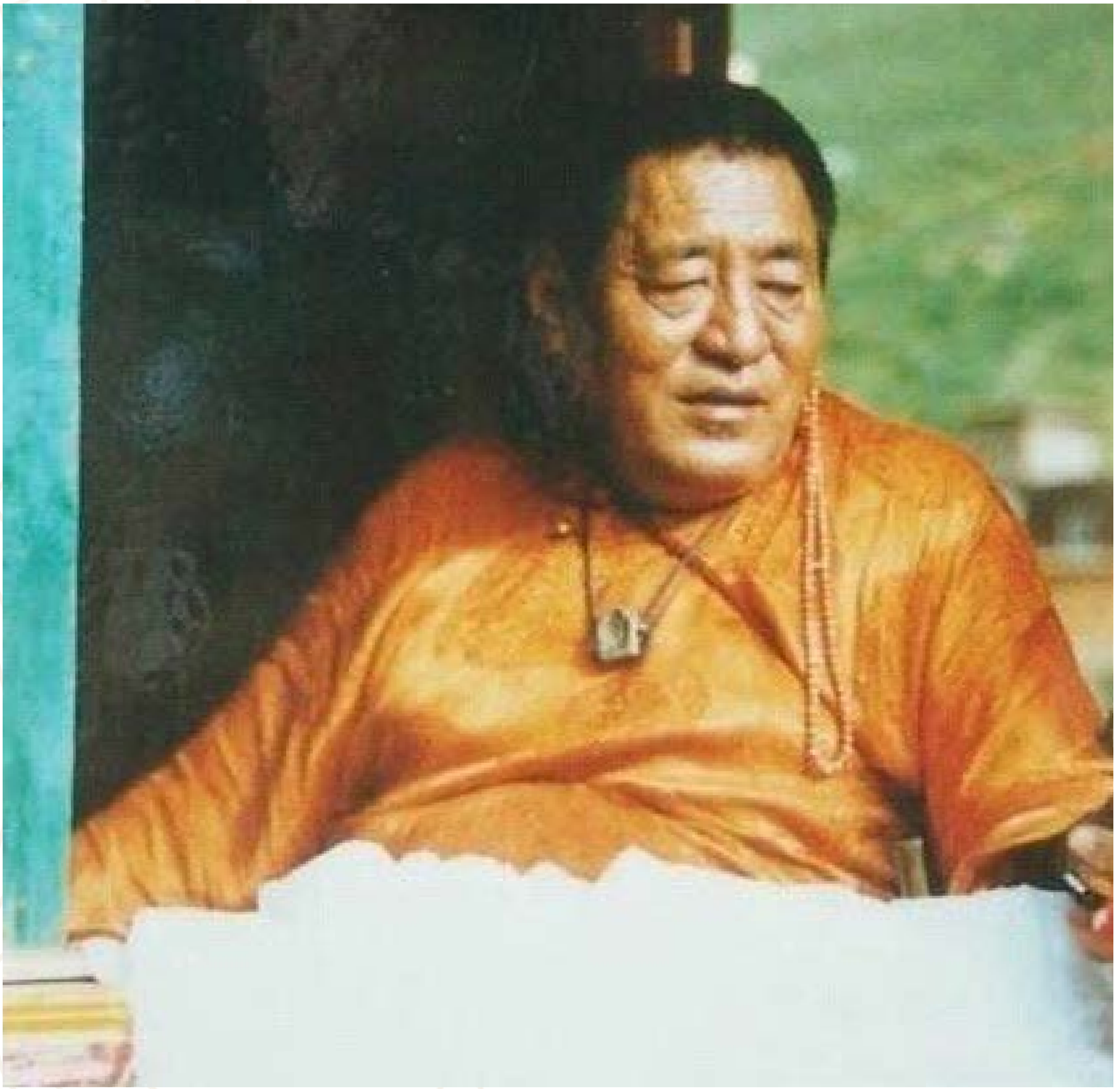


227

August 13, 2019

It is important that we engage in frequent reflection and ask ourselves if we can live in harmony with people from all walks of life and different backgrounds. It speaks well of our characters if we are able to do so.





228

August 14, 2019

When you witness someone's misdeeds, you should consider carefully to see whether this conclusion is the result of your own impure thoughts. Unless it is critical, there is no need to point out other's shortcomings lest you assume the consequences of these actions.



229

August 15, 2019

There are those who would only concern themselves with their actions and their words, making sure that their image is viewed in a positive manner, ignoring their thoughts and motivations. This is like a person who would only wash his face and body but has no clue on how to cleanse his soul.





230

August 16, 2019

Having been born as human beings, we should seek a path of spiritual enlightenment. We would be giving up an immensely precious opportunity if we do not do so. It is as if having arrived in a land full of treasures but we return empty-handed. What a pity that would be!



231

August 17, 2019

As you progress on the path to liberation through the study and practice of the Dharma, you are not alone. The blessing of the Three Jewels will be a constant companion. Therefore, do not forget to pray to the Three Jewels.





232

August 18, 2019

We should cultivate an attitude of respect and appreciation for our gurus, an understanding of what our gurus embody, and what the reasons are for their diligence in practicing the Dharma.



233

August 19, 2019

The essence of Buddhadharma is the cultivation of compassion and loving-kindness. Loving-kindness is the desire for all beings to attain peace and happiness, and compassion is the hope for all beings to be free from suffering. No matter who you are, developing these characters to bring benefit to yourself and others should be your goal.





234

August 20, 2019

Science and Buddhism are both indispensable to human beings. Science and technology satisfy our material needs and help improve the quality of our life while Buddhism brings joy to our spirits and eliminates the darkness of ignorance in our minds. If there were no Buddhism and we were left to pursue solely material satisfaction, our spirits would never be fulfilled.



235

August 21, 2019

The most important message in Buddhism is love. However, this love is not the narrow emotion defined by humans. Instead, it is a selfless compassion for the well-being of others. If every individual can transform his selfish mind into kindness and compassion, and dedicate himself solely to the benefit of others, our society will be filled with peace and affection. Otherwise, our spirits would become a barren landscape.





236

August 22, 2019

Both I, as the teacher, and you, as disciples, should deeply contemplate as follows:

We have had the precious human body that is difficult to obtain, have met a virtuous spiritual guide who is difficult to meet, and in particular, have discovered the sacred Dharma that is difficult to encounter. Above all that, we have even met with the essence of all doctrines, the Vajrayana. Therefore, it is crucial to internalize the perfect and authentic Dharma teaching, making this human life entirely meaningful.



237

August 23, 2019

Among all worldly, virtuous deeds, the benefits of listening to or teaching the sublime Dharma are incomparable. At the beginning of listening or teaching, homage must be rendered to the guru and the tutelary deity. This is indispensable. Not only that, but it is also recommended that one pay homage before giving an oral presentation in front of Dharma teachers or the sangha assembly, or on such kind of occasion.





238

August 24, 2019

Patrul Rinpoche once said, “At best, it is important to recall the motivation of bodhichitta when departing from one’s home [i.e., on the way to the shrine room]. The mediocre should recall this at the moment the conch is blown. At least, when the master reminds disciples to correct their motivation then this must be attended to.” Hence it is crucial that even the khenpos and khenmos who are the instructors remind the listeners to tune their motivation to bodhichitta.



239

August 25, 2019

Practitioners with superior intelligence will rely upon the vehicle of the bodhisattvas that represents the blissful cause and path leading to the blissful resultant state of awakening. This most sublime method solely involves the cultivation of precious bodhichitta, the awakened mind. It states in *The Way of the Bodhisattva*,

*“Just as on a dark night black with clouds,
The sudden lightning glares and
all is clearly shown,
Likewise rarely, through the Buddhas’ power,
Virtuous thoughts rise, brief and transient,
in the world.”*





240

August 26, 2019

The cultivation of this precious bodhichitta is the source of all positive accumulations within the scope of samsara and nirvana, and is the sole cause for all benefits and happiness. Through this, the suffering of all sentient beings throughout the three realms will be fully pacified without exception, and all excellent accumulations of virtue and wellbeing will be effortlessly gathered. This is the conclusion that Lord Buddha Shakyamuni and his heirs obtained after having examined these points for eons, and there is nothing to be found that can ever surpass bodhichitta.



241

August 27, 2019

When this precious bodhichitta arises in the mind stream just once, that person will instantly be named an heir of the Victors — the bodhisattvas. Shantideva said,

*“The moment they awaken bodhichitta,
Even those fettered and weak in the jail of
cyclic existence,
Will be named heirs of the buddhas
And will be revered by both gods and men.”*





242

August 28, 2019

The root of all virtue that is not sealed with the aspiration of bodhichitta is easily exhausted by the four causes that destroy virtue such as failing to dedicate and making incorrect dedication. However, even the slightest virtue that is sealed with precious bodhichitta, temporally speaking, will bring us inconceivable happiness and well-being of gods and human beings, and ultimately speaking, will uninterruptedly increase with no opportunity for it to be wasted and eventually lead us to the state of enlightenment.



243

August 29, 2019

If precious bodhichitta is cultivated in your mind stream, even all definitive non-virtues, such as the five heinous misdeeds that are certain to take effect immediately following death, will be fully cleansed without remains. If perhaps some residual karma were remaining, the duration of time spent in hell will be as short-lived as the bounce of a ball. Shantideva also said,



*“Even though extremely negative karma
has been accrued,*

*Like relying upon a great hero to be saved
from fear,*

*Liberation will occur instantly in reliance
upon this [bodhichitta].*

*Why then would the conscientious
not rely upon this?*

*This [bodhichitta] resembles the fire
at the end of this age of time.*

*All potent negativity is certain to be instantly
incinerated by this.*

Therefore these truly unfathomable benefits,

*Were taught by the intelligent Maitreya
to the bodhisattva Norzang [Sudana].”*





244

August 30, 2019

This precious bodhichitta is two-fold. There is aspirational and practical bodhichitta and each has different benefits to be understood. It is important to receive the bodhichitta vows according to the traditional liturgy. Once bodhichitta arises in the mind stream, the root of that virtue will unceasingly grow. It states in *The Way of the Bodhisattva*,

*“From that time onward,
Even while asleep or unconcerned,
The continuity of this meritorious accumulation
equal to the sky,
Will remain uninterrupted.”*





245

August 31, 2019

None of you should ever throw rocks at domestic animals or stray dogs. When I spoke about this before, you all thought I was being too lenient. I am a person suffering from cardiopathy and probably that makes me too reactive. Whatever the case, without pretense, I tell you that if you hit a dog with a rock you may as well have hit me.



246

September 1, 2019

From now on, if you throw rocks at a dog, it is exactly the same as beating me. Still, there are some monks who look for the biggest rocks around behaving as though they were heroes while trying to overwhelm the dogs with a shower of rocks. When that happens the pain that I feel physically is actually unbearable! It may sound as though I am putting on a show of compassion, but when some of you throw these rocks I do feel sharp pain in my heart. Since that is how it is, protecting the dogs has become my cause. I beg all of you to stop these beatings.

As for the nomadic householders, I am not able to impose rules upon them and they will continue to do



this. There is nothing to be done, much like the way the beings in the three lower realms are constantly suffering and there is nothing we can do to save them. Those of you who see me as your master, please listen when I say stop harming any sentient beings, especially the old dogs around us. I beg you to stop this now!

These days, when reflecting upon the negative karma produced by beings in these degenerate times, I feel unable to rest. Especially when directly witnessing their suffering, it is so uncomfortable! Moreover, when contemplating the domestic animals who are sent to slaughter, and how they must suffer from their karmic condition, it is terrifying. First they are loaded into trucks and taken to the destination during which time it is said that their mouths are nailed closed so that they will maintain their full body weight until death. Once they arrive at the slaughterhouse, the various suffering they must endure is like that of the hell realms but for a shorter duration of time. There can be nothing worse than that! Every time this comes to my mind, I feel so disturbed, but there is nothing to be done about it. Please, I beg all of you not to throw rocks at the dogs or yaks.



247

September 2, 2019

Negative karma that is accumulated in relation to the Three Jewels is the king of all negativity. It is almost guaranteed that this will mature in the same life in which it occurs. If not, then after death, this will surely mature in the very next life. Conversely even if meager offerings are made to the Three Jewels, the merit accumulated will be great. In particular, offerings made to the Sangha exceed the merit of making offerings to the Buddha and Dharma since the Sangha embodies all three objects of refuge.





248

September 3, 2019

Although there is benefit in making offerings to the statues of buddha and reliquary stupas, the benefit of a recipient accepting that offering is not there. If offerings are made to the Jewel of the Sangha, then the two-fold benefit of offering and receiving occurs. Even just offering meager goods or a bite of food to the Sangha practically guarantees that positive results will mature in that lifetime. Moreover, that merit will not exhaust after it matures but rather will increase until perfect enlightenment is reached.

These are the reasons why among the Three Jewels, the Sangha is the special field through which merit can be accumulated. If you are able to offer even meager substances according to your means, the benefits will be inconceivable.



249

September 4, 2019

The time of death is uncertain and no one can predict this. Whether older or younger, the time of death and the circumstance of death remain uncertain for all of us.

If you ask, “What is the authentic Dharma that will bring benefit at the time of death?” The answer is to cultivate faith and compassion and to internalize the teachings of the Great Perfection. These aspects of Dharma will ensure that this is the last rebirth you will take in samsara. There is nothing greater than this. Everyone must strive to practice diligently no matter who you are. It is crucial to internalize Dharma in these ways.





250

September 5, 2019

If the karma of abandoning the Dharma is accumulated, it is said that there will surely be no hope for liberation. Therefore we must be extremely vigilant concerning this issue. What is the karma of abandoning the Dharma? This happens whenever bodhisattvas are being disparaged. Since we do not know where bodhisattvas are and we have no idea who they are, we must be careful with everyone. Bodhisattvas can be lay people as well as monastics, yet we also cannot exclude the possibility of their existence among animals.

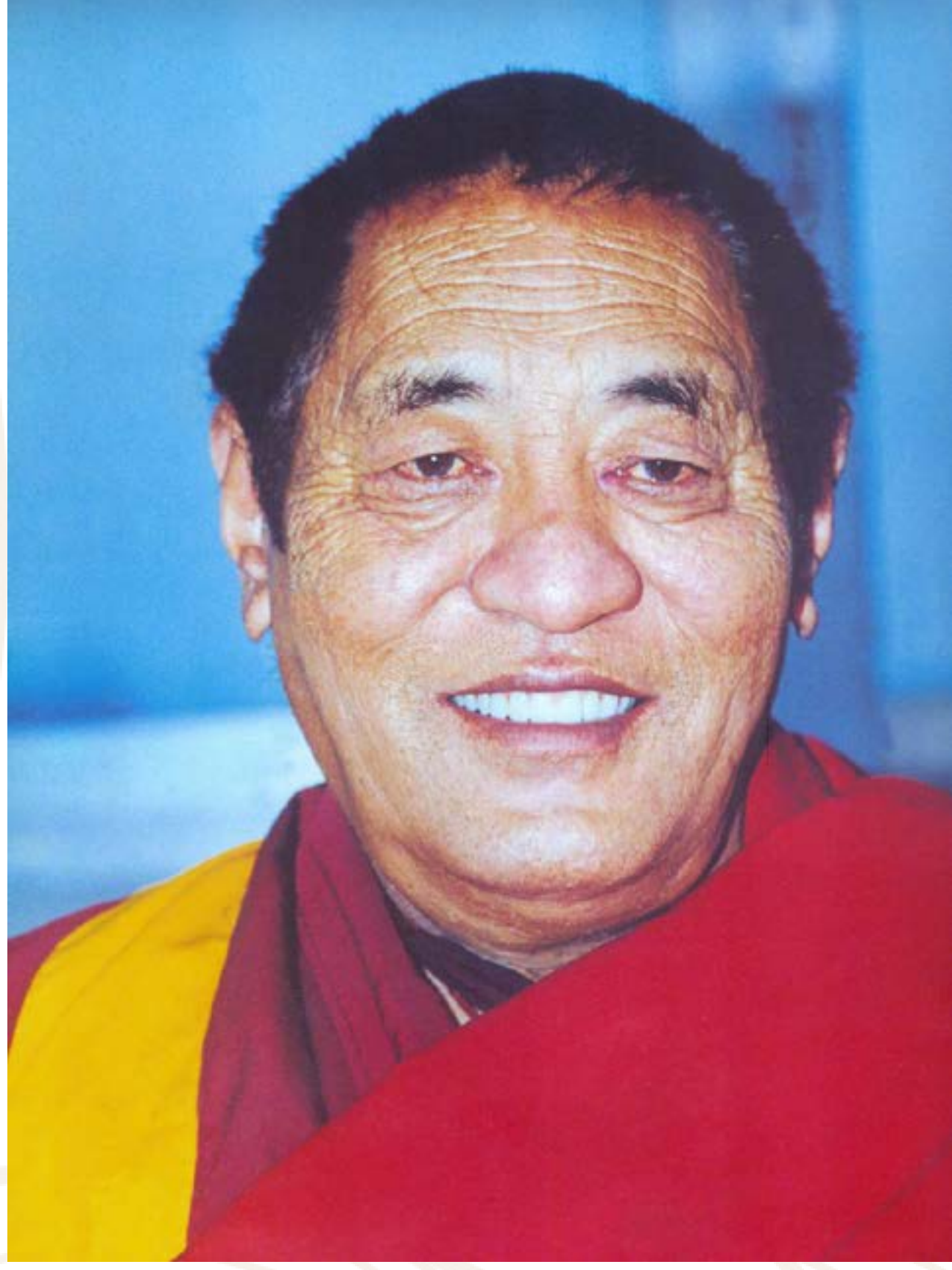


251

September 6, 2019

Generally, in this world, there are the four major religions: Hinduism, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, as well as countless minor religions. If there are conflicts between these religions or within any of these religions — based upon attachment, aversion, and competition — then all sentient beings will be thrown into states of harmful conflict. That is why everyone must be harmonious and free from sectarian biased views.





252

September 7, 2019

Whatever lineage you belong to, there should be respect for all other traditions and sangha members by means of harmony and pure discipline. It is important to cultivate a pure outlook towards other philosophical systems free from any feelings of aggression. At the same time, you must hold strong conviction to your own tradition and take your chosen deity as your own crown ornament. Certainly, only devotion is not enough, and you must familiarize what has been taught and put them into practice. As for one's own lineage, whether it is the specific theories one learns, the sadhanas and mantras one recites, or the stages of the path and pith instructions one practices, one should know them inside out.



253

September 8, 2019

Whether you are monastics or lay practitioners, you should avoid traveling around too much, visiting a variety of monasteries, meeting with a range of people all day long. Otherwise, you will end up gaining nothing and only wasting precious time to no end. Every individual should practice their own lineage perseveringly, thoroughly, and wholeheartedly. This should be the most important matter in our life.





254

September 9, 2019

Generally speaking, the compassion of the buddhas and bodhisattvas is free from any bias. Nevertheless, due to their different manner of cultivating bodhichitta and aspirations while training on the path, if you offer a single supplication to Guru Padmasambhava, the blessings are more sublime than supplicating other buddhas for eons of time. In particular, it is mentioned in the *Seven Chapters of Guru Padmasambhava Prayer* that Guru Rinpoche possesses remarkable power to dispel disasters caused by earth, water, fire, wind, and so forth.



255

September 10, 2019

Everyone must fervently pray to Guru Rinpoche with strong devotion and faith that is free from all doubt. For all Tibetans, the second Buddha Guru Rinpoche is the perfect and most connected master.





256

September 11, 2019

In regard to myself, in this lifetime I have been born into the teachings of the earlier translation vidyadhara lineage, and have also met with the Heart Essence doctrine — the Vajra Essence of Clear Light. The blessings of the masters who are the upholders of the three lineages have been transferred into my heart. That is why I feel that I have the fortune to uphold and master the meaning of the Great Perfection. In general, this is all due to the kindness of the second

Buddha, Orgyen Rinpoche, and this is also due in particular to the kindness of my precious master Mipham Rinpoche. Therefore, if you wish to receive blessings from me, you must rely on the teachings of Mipham Rinpoche as well. Even when determining the philosophical views, you must never refute the views of Mipham Rinpoche even indirectly. Otherwise, the door of blessings will be blocked. For me, even seeing four lines of his words enhances my devotion, compassion, spiritual experiences, and realization, enabling me to easily understand the difficult key points in the scriptures. Such a state usually remains with me for up to seven or eight days. Therefore, I hope all of you will be careful about these points.





257

September 12, 2019

Always view the gurus who have bestowed their kindness on you in all three ways, i.e., giving secret teaching, empowerment and pith instruction, as actual living buddhas and so treat them with appropriate reverence. Try your best to keep your vows and samaya perfectly pure. Strive to internalize the meaning of the Great Perfection and pray to be reborn in Sukhavati. Then there need be no doubt you will accomplish the aim of benefiting self and others.



258

September 13, 2019

At present, we have entered an age of degeneration that wrong views become widespread. Those who lack merit will experience a decrease in devotion even as the Dharma becomes more profound. If you think that you can easily understand the profound



Dharma through intellectual understanding without relying upon a qualified teacher who possesses the vidyadhara's upadesha (pith instructions), you are absolutely incorrect.

Guru Mipham Rinpoche has said, "If you lack the cause of previous familiarity and karmic maturity, even if you are educated and know how to study, to just reflect upon the mere meaning of the philosophy's terminology will not produce comprehension even if you try for hundreds of years." So it is. That is why those beginning their studies must be careful.





259

September 14, 2019

Learned scholars of the past engaged in enthusiastic debates concerning their schools of thought, namely Sakya, Gelug, Kagyu, and Nyingma. Nevertheless, their reason for doing so has been misunderstood and instead the idea has developed that they are in conflict with each other. If you hold the view that this kind of heated argument between schools of thought is like defeating heretics, you will commit the misdeed of forsaking the Dharma, causing you to roam throughout the boundless lower realms.

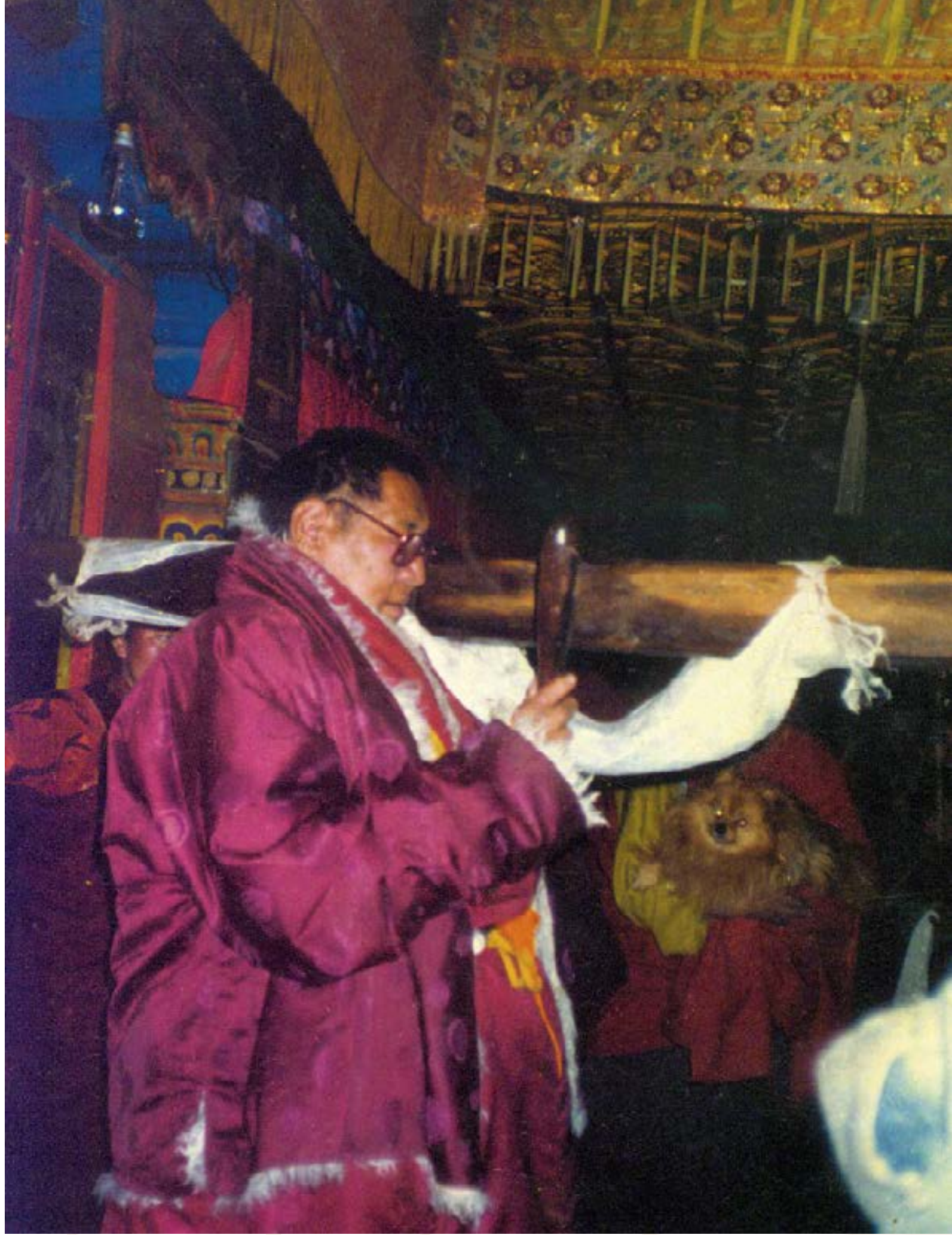




260

September 15, 2019

As a matter of fact, all schools of thought in the Land of Snows are following the teachings of Mahayana. When the Middle Way is discussed, everyone will uniformly agree on the view of the Prasaṅgika School. Nobody will say, “We are the Svatantrika School.” As for Mantrayana, everybody without exception practices Highest Yoga Tantra (Anuttara Yogatantra). These are the reasons why it is crucial to understand that there is no contradiction between schools.

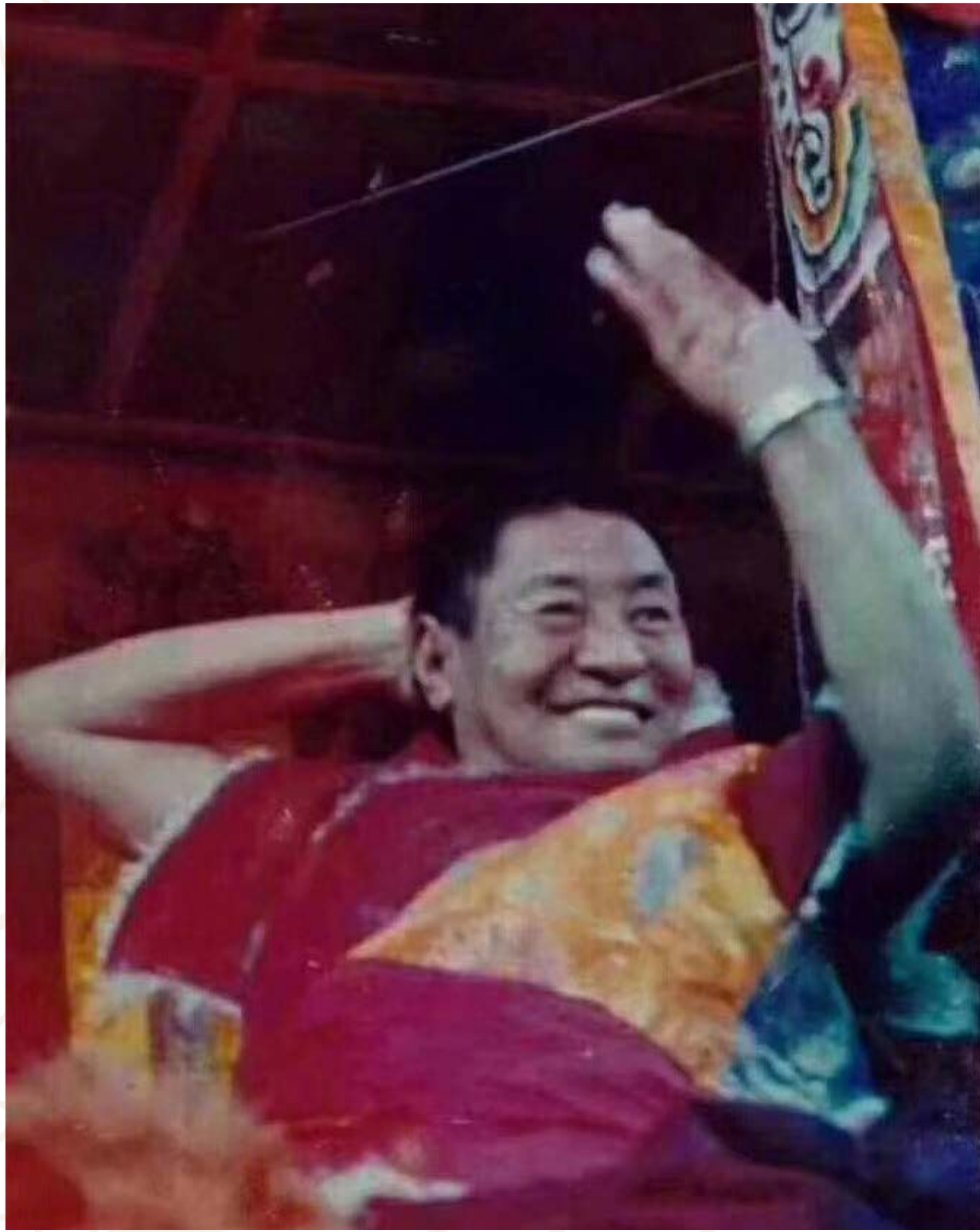


261

September 16, 2019

When a flock of birds land in the same tree, it is impossible for them to stay there forever. Likewise, everyone gathered here today will not remain together in the world for long. Therefore in this short human life we should not make long-term and meaningless plans, but rather all of us should practice Dharma and abandon non-virtue! At least do your best to purify negative karma and accumulate merit through prostration, circumambulation, and so forth. Awaken bodhichitta and perform the generation and completion stage meditations. Being single-pointedly focused on practice is the first category.

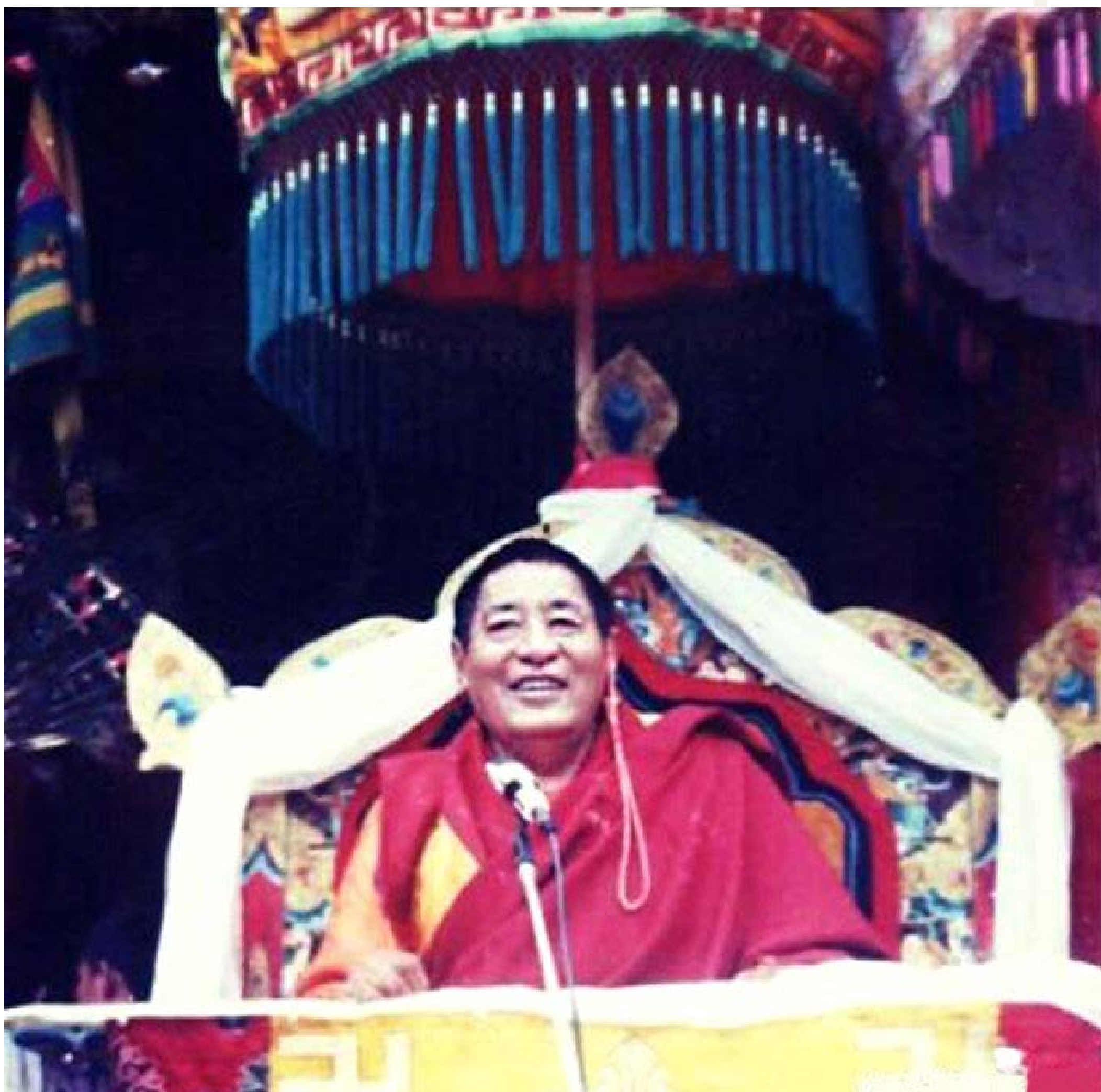




262

September 17, 2019

If you harbor hatred toward any lineage, it is the cause for falling into the lower realms, a misdeed of forsaking the Dharma, and is the sixth root downfall of the Mantrayana. Therefore, the sangha of the ten directions and the various lineages and schools must all be harmonious, uphold pure precepts, and reverently pay homage to their chosen deities by placing them on the crown of their heads like the flower in the empowerment ceremony. Not harboring any aggression towards other religious traditions and practicing pure view is the second category.



263

September 18, 2019

These days between countries in the world and groups of citizens (including families), many problems based on dispute due to attachment and aversion are brewing. Everyone must think carefully about this and in order to bring peace to this planet, we need to work wholeheartedly to pacify various wars and disputes among nations, tribes, and families.





264

September 19, 2019

All of you should avoid being jealous toward people superior to you, stop comparing and competing with people similar to you, and never belittle or disrespect people inferior to you. Everybody should do their best to only cultivate a virtuous heart and engage in altruistic actions.



265

September 20, 2019

From today onward, we will begin this magnetizing activity and commit ourselves to take rebirth in Sukhavati as a single mandala and actually meet Buddha Amitabha face to face and receive his prophecies of our enlightenment. By completing the process of purification, maturity, and perfection, we will benefit sentient beings as long as space exists.





266

September 21, 2019

Avoid any dispute or conflict among lineages or schools, do not be biased toward any nations or ethnic groups, and finally bring happiness and benefit to all sentient beings. This is the pure goal of Larung Buddhist Institute, and if you believe in this then hold this in your heart. This advice is not meant to be kept secret but rather to be shared openly with others. Therefore each of you must propagate this in all directions, and this will serve as my regent.



267

September 22, 2019

All of us are like flowers in the autumn. I am unable to predict how long we can remain together here, but surely some of us will separate from here very soon. Others will live here together for a few more years, but one day, everyone that is here will depart for their future life. Not a single one of us can stay here forever. That is why at the time of death, not a single word of anything else will benefit us aside from the Dharma. Hence we must apply ourselves to Dharma practice.

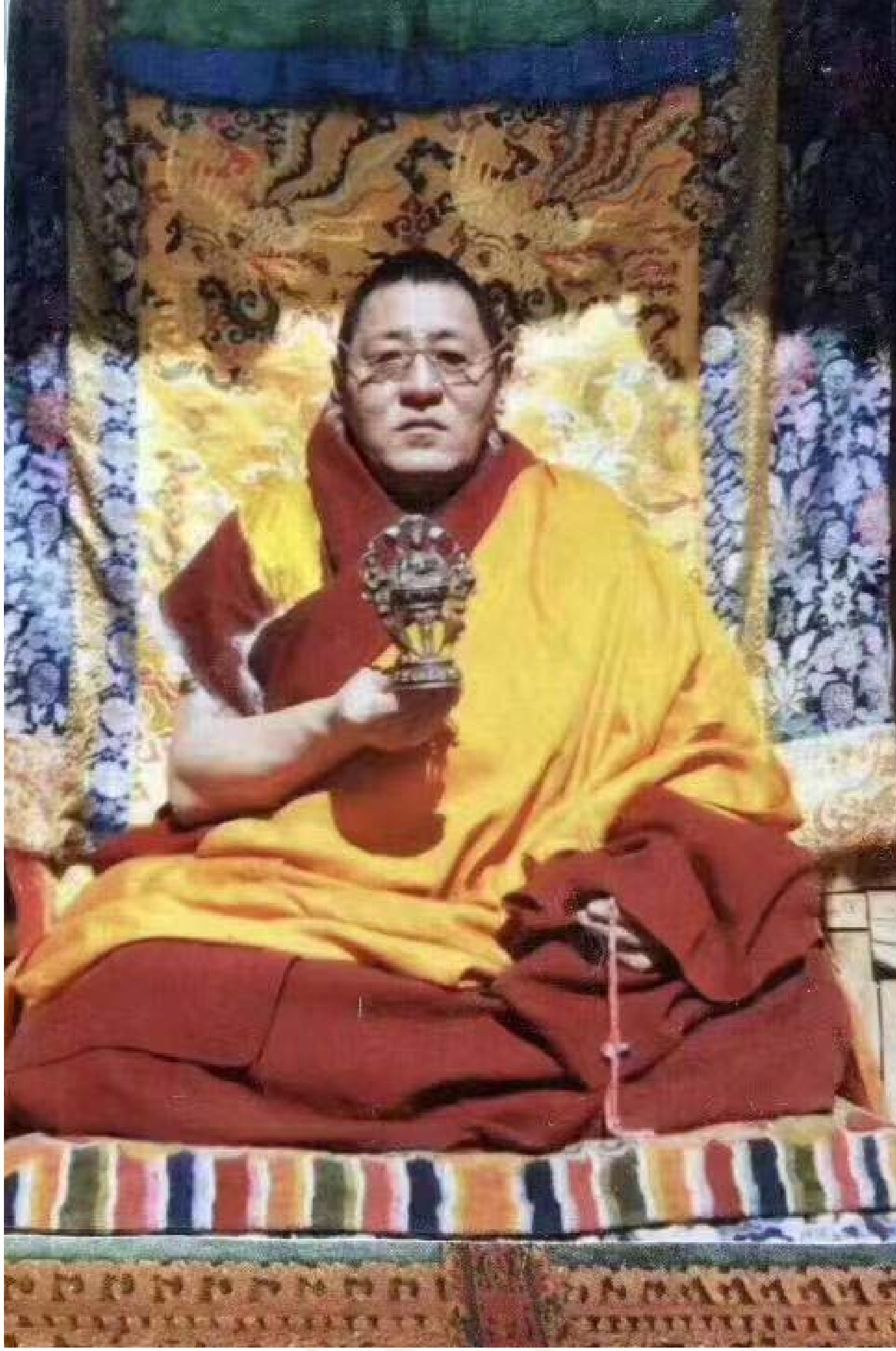




268

September 23, 2019

In Buddhism the teachings are vast, the sublime scriptures are voluminous, and the knowledge is infinite, so in these degenerate times when the life expectancy is short, distractive circumstances are abundant, and obstacles to spiritual practices are rampant, it is hard to actually practice and internalize all aspects of the Dharma. Nevertheless, you must internalize what you can according to your own mind.

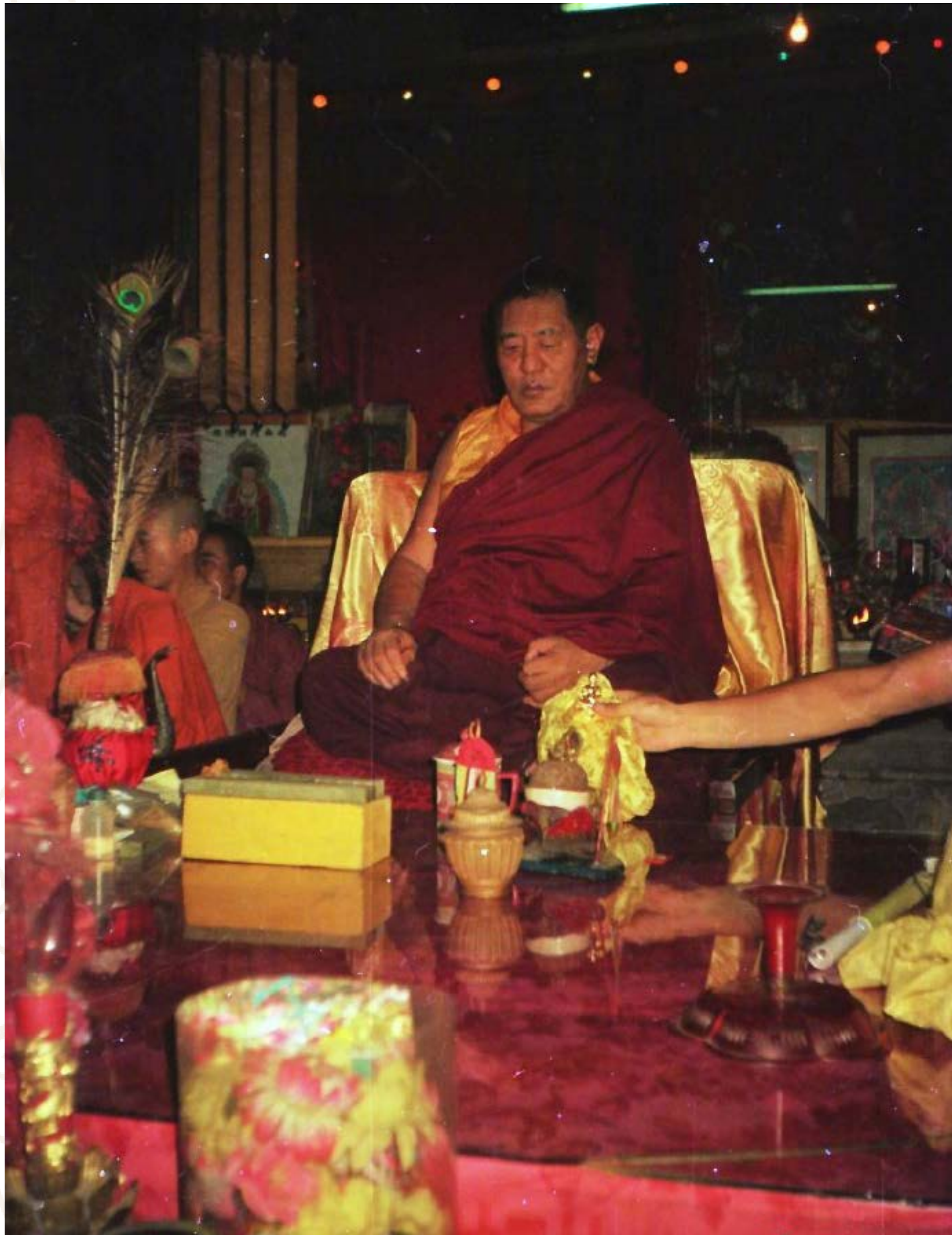


269

September 24, 2019

The superior ones should practice the path of the Clear Light Great Perfection and attain the fruit of the Dharmakaya rainbow body. The middling should practice the Dharma treasury of the path of bodhisattvas and approach buddhahood gradually through the five paths and ten bhumis. The inferior should at least uphold pure discipline aroused from the mind of renunciation and gain freedom from the suffering of samsara.

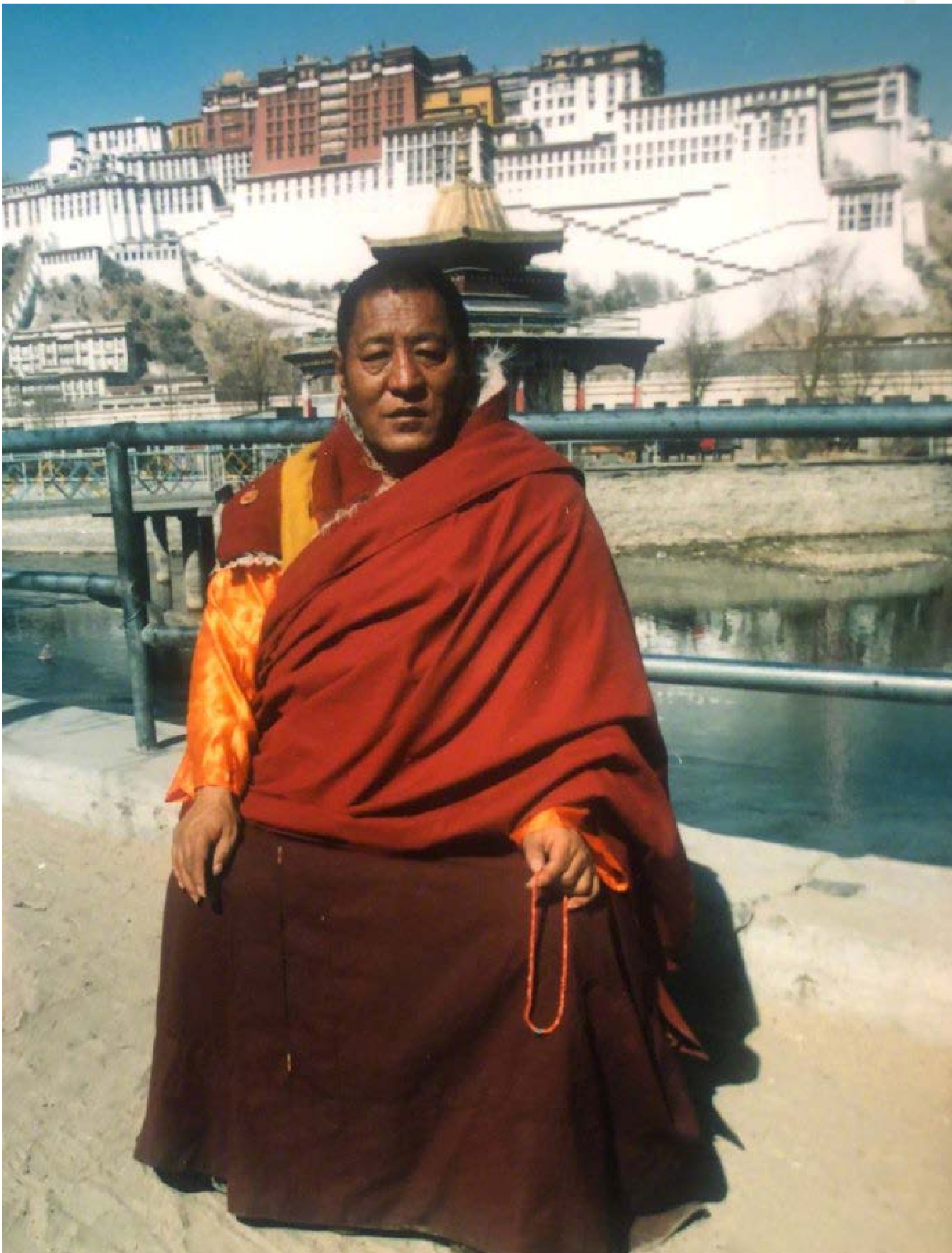




270

September 25, 2019

When you are experiencing the convergence of such favorable circumstances as these, do not deceive yourself. At the time of death, if you believe that whether accomplishing vast or meager virtue, you have kept the intention to practice the Dharma to the best of your ability throughout your entire life, it proves that you have had a meaningful human life. Please hold this advice in your mind.



271

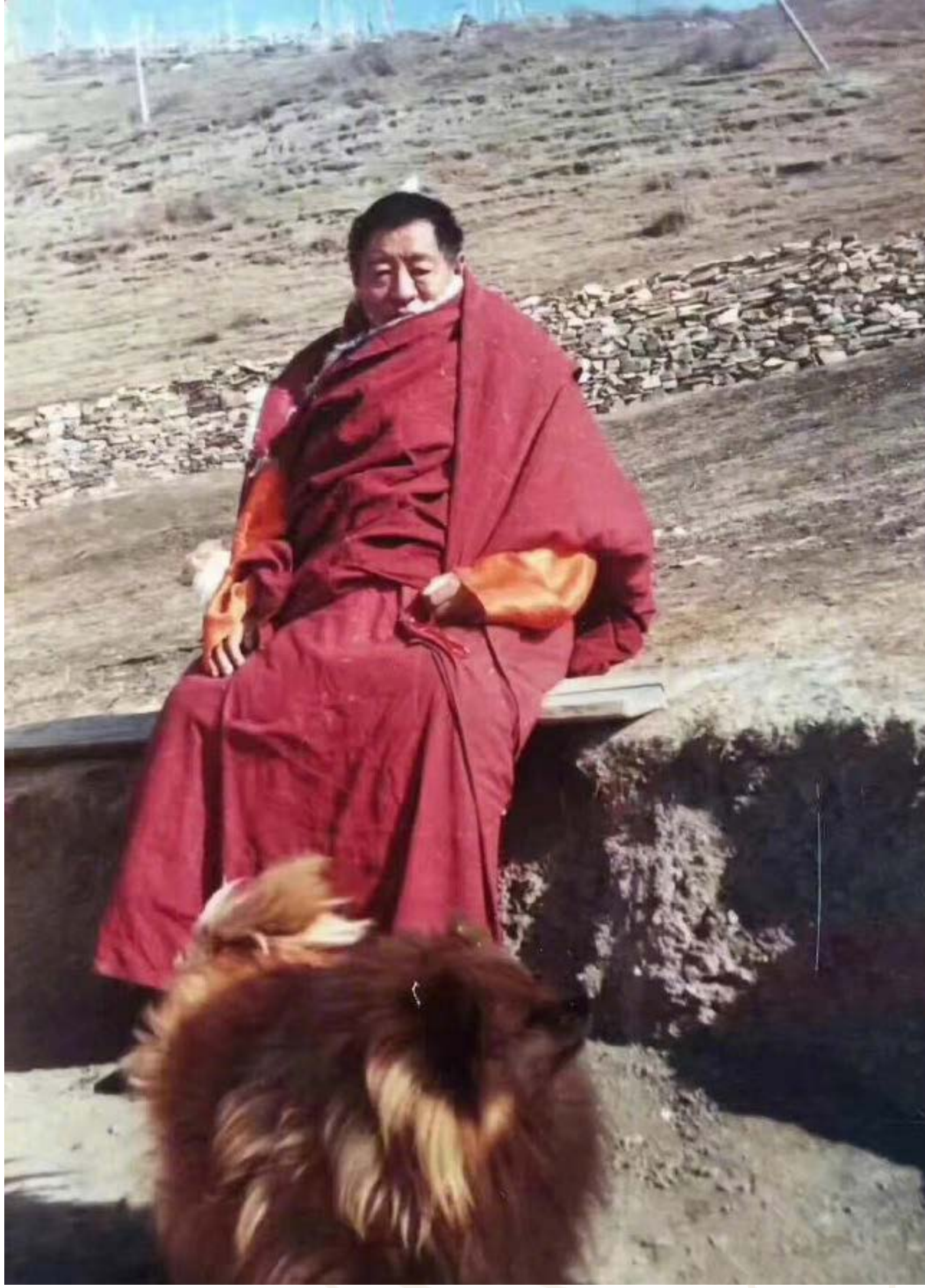
September 26, 2019

The reason why we hold the Great Gathering of Vajrasattva is to purify all downfalls that have been accumulated in previous lives and in particular this is the antidote to cleanse all broken samaya. The most effective antidote to purify everything is the six-syllable



mantra of Vajrasattva. It states in *The Wrathful Vajrapani Deliverance Tantra* and others that if you recite this mantra 100,000 times, even the misdeeds of breaking the fundamental vows can be purified. Therefore, there is no need to mention that this will also clear the obstacles for taking rebirth in Sukhavati. That would include the karma accrued from the five heinous non-virtues and the non-virtue of forsaking the Dharma. All will be completely purified in this very lifetime.

Therefore, this is very important for not only monastics, but also lay men and women. In the tantras, it mentions the number of mantra recitation should be 100,000 but according to the quote — “whatever is taught to be the appropriate enumeration for the Golden Age should be multiplied by four in the degenerate times”, it should be recited some 400,000 times.



272

September 27, 2019

When chanting the mantra, you must do so with the correct articulation and single-pointed concentration. The best is to combine this with the stage of generation and completion. You should at least recite the mantra along with four remedial powers. If this is done, all ordinary non-virtues and broken vows of the pratimoksha, bodhichitta, and mantra, as well as forsaking the Dharma, the heinous misdeeds, and misappropriation of offerings, will all be purified without residue.





273

September 28, 2019

In the postscript of the profound hidden treasure Vajrasattva sadhana that I revealed at Lake Yutse, it mentions that if this is practiced close to where the terma was revealed, it will be easy to accomplish and will benefit others in the general vicinity of Han-Chinese areas. That is why I think that it will be more beneficial to encourage followers in Han-Chinese areas to recite the Vajrasattava mantra as it will bring the most benefit.



274

September 29, 2019

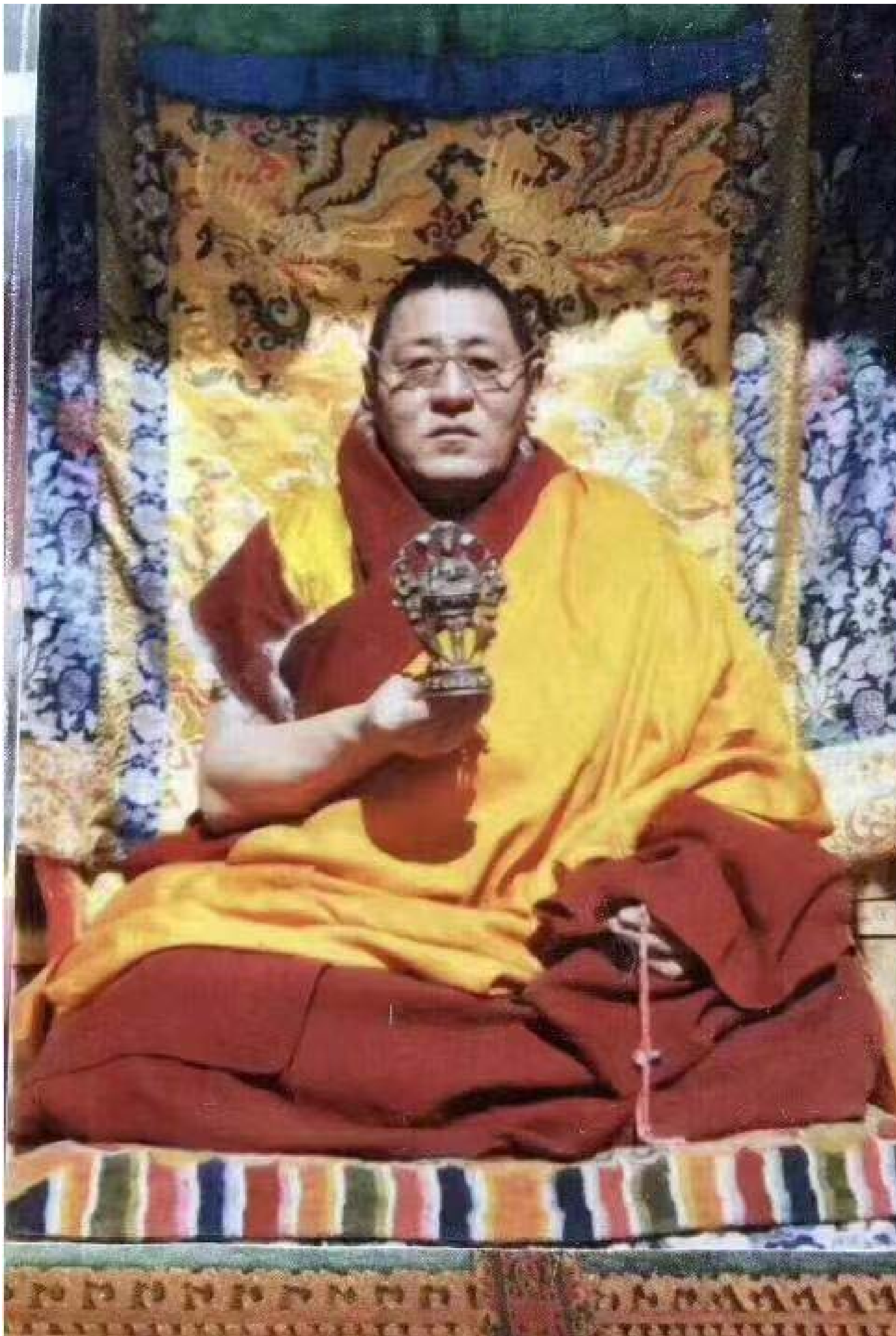
On this auspicious day when Buddha Shakyamuni turned the wheel of Dharma for the first time, our institute is holding the Dharma gathering of Kishtigharba, called “100 Million Recitations of Samantabhadra’s Aspirations”. The focus of this



practice is on Kishtigharba since the 100 million recitations of Samantabhadra's Aspirations are generally practiced in all four Dharma gatherings.

Both the Vajrasattva Dharma Gathering and the Kishtigharba Dharma Gathering are meant for householders, and the latter with the specific aim of providing bountiful harvests and fulfilling wishes. Given these needs, praying for just one moment to Kishtigharba is more effective than praying to Manjushri, Samatabhadra, Maitreya, Avalokiteshvara and so forth for many eons. This is stated in *In Praise of Kishtigharba* by the compassionate Buddha Shakyamuni himself.





275

September 30, 2019

For goals as lofty as reaching the highest attainment of buddhahood or rebirth in the western pure realm of Sukhavati, or as ordinary as gaining bountiful food and sustenance, good luck, reputation, and the



fulfillment of wishes, there is none better than to pray to Kishitigarba.

Anyone who prays to Bodhisattva Kshitarbha, will enjoy a long life, good health, wealth, and the fulfillment of their wishes in this life. Even at death they will be reborn in Sukhavati immediately. This is an uncommon occurrence and will happen not only for you but for even those you are connected with.







276

October 1, 2019

Ultimately speaking, if you pray to Bodhisattva Kshitigarbha, you will surely attain the supreme merit and wisdom of the hearers, self-realized buddhas, and bodhisattvas and buddhas. Bodhisattva Kshitigarbha is a unique jewel that even 100,000 wish-fulfilling jewels cannot compare with. If you pray to an ordinary wish-fulfilling jewel, it can only bestow worldly wealth, but not exceptional transcendental merit, gained through discipline, concentration, and wisdom.



277

October 2, 2019

By the power of the aspiration of Buddha Amitabha and his cultivation of bodhichitta, it is easy to attain rebirth in Sukhavati. There is nothing more beneficial than this. That is why we are holding this ceremony for the faithful.

Practicing together with the ordained sangha community who hold the precepts and have understanding and realization of the Dharma makes this an exceptional opportunity to accumulate merit. Among those opportunities is this swift path to rebirth in Sukhavati.





278

October 3, 2019

The young tulkus must not indulge in receiving offerings from an early age. Didn't Jetsun Milarepa say, "Tainted offerings are the razor of the life channel of liberation, so if you over-indulge, this life channel will be severed." The actual way to sever the life channel is through these impure offerings. In order to partake of the iron balls of impure offerings, you must have the cast iron teeth of accomplishment through generation and completion stage practice as well as the training of a bodhisattva.



279

October 4, 2019

Given that we all have acquired a human rebirth, and especially in this environment where we find ourselves in the ranks of the followers of the Buddha, namely the four categories of Buddhists, as well as among those who uphold the vows and teachings of the Buddha, the right conduct is even more crucial. Once becoming ordained or a follower of the Buddha, then as the Buddha himself taught “those who harm others are not representative of the monastic community”, every one must avoid harming or taking the life of any living creature from the highest form of sentient beings such as human to the lowest form of sentient beings such as insect.





280

October 5, 2019

Whether you are giving worldly advice or Dharma teachings, the main point is to have the pure intention of benefiting others. If this is the case, your actions will bring about glory and prosperity.

When we say someone is a “good person”, it does not mean they must be clever or heroic. Among the clever and heroic, there are also negative people. In brief, if someone has a good and kind heart, then that is a good person. That is the reason why we must always hold good intentions and corresponding conduct.



281

October 6, 2019

What qualifies as having a kind heart? This means those who pray to the Three Jewels, cultivate faith, and wish that all beings may have the happiness that is equal to your own. You must try your very best to cultivate these noble qualities within your mindstream, especially that of conduct.





282

October 7, 2019

It is extremely important to associate with positive excellent friends. Patrul Rinpoche once remarked, “If you associate with friends who have great desire, hatred, and delusion, your own three poisons will in turn increase and you will become like them.” On the other hand, if you associate with friends who have faith and compassion, you will also cultivate more faith and compassion. Therefore, until the first bodhisattva bhumi is attained, it is crucial to associate with the right companions who will help shape you and bring you to the direction that you wish to pursue.



283

October 8, 2019

No matter where you live, whether urban or remote areas, it is foremost to always keep your distance from negative friends. As a monastic, if you like to associate with businessmen, this may indicate that you will eventually become involved in business. If as a monastic, you associate with philosophers, then you will become a philosopher or scholar. If you like to be with people who always meditate, it means you will



become a practitioner. Therefore, if you are attracted to negative friends, it demonstrates that you yourself have an inclination toward negativity.

If you want to examine whether someone is a good or bad person, you can determine this by observing their conduct. If the person is always around business people, slackers or thieves, then it is certain that he or she is also like them, dishonest or someone who steals. Haven't we heard many times about a good monk who gradually lost his vows and position because he associated with the wrong companions?





284

October 9, 2019

Although you must have related to negative friends before, begin now to associate only with virtuous friends. Mipham Rinpoche said, “Discontinue all forms of distraction! If you can’t do that, then at least associate with sublime friends who will inspire you in a positive way. That will be the panacea for your problems.” If you really cannot restrain yourself from distractions, you should choose friends who have excellent qualities, and they will gradually inspire you to change as you absorb their good qualities.

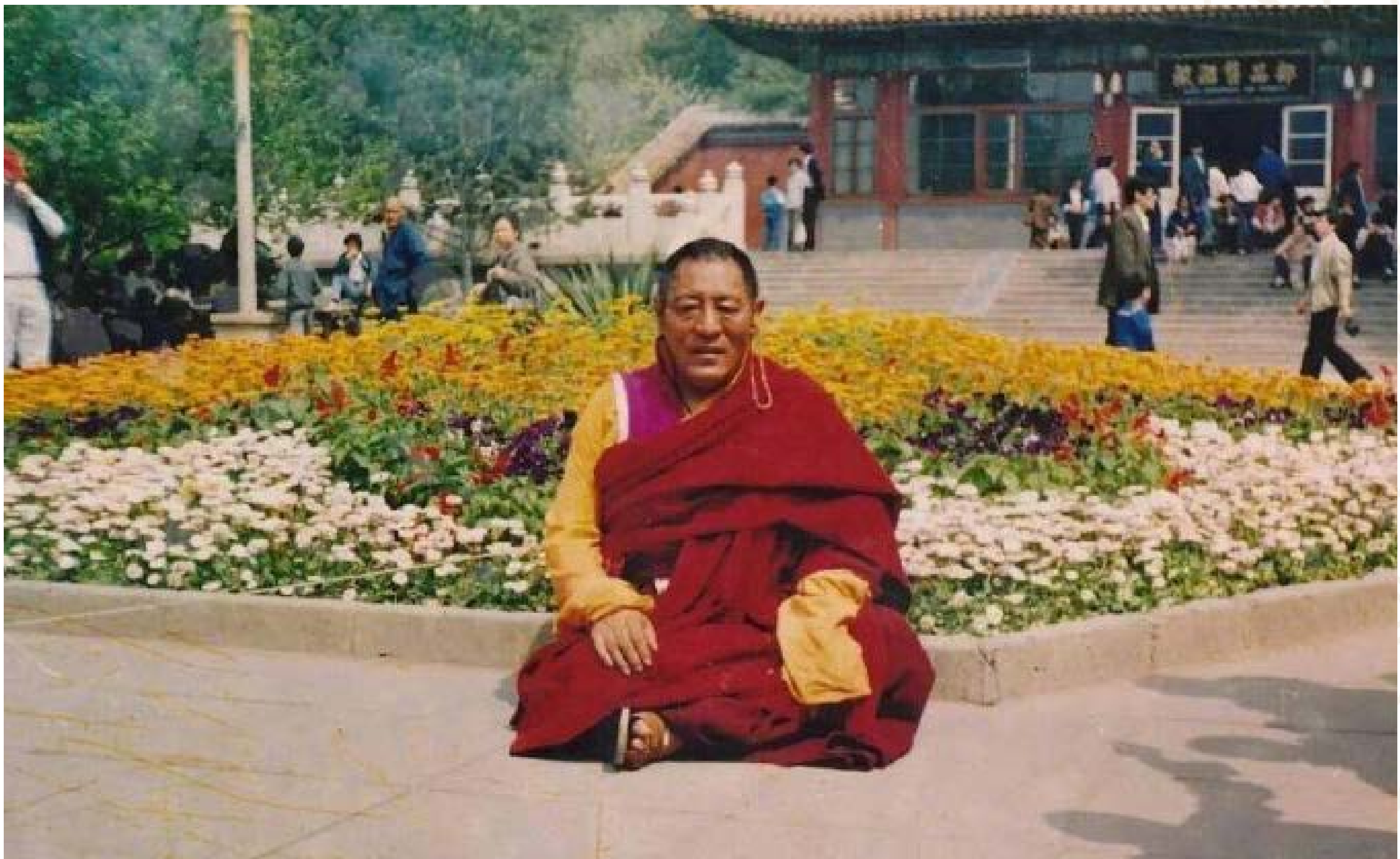




285

October 10, 2019

It is necessary to cultivate compassion toward all living beings without encouraging any aversion towards anyone. Even if we are not able to give up hatred toward enemies, we should at least never harbor hatred toward Dharma brothers and sisters who will be our close companions until attaining enlightenment, like the lamp's wick and its light.



286

October 11, 2019

Briefly, as I stated in the *General Notice Concerning Buddhist Ethics*, the foundation of Buddhism is to observe pure morality, the essence of Buddhism is to diligently study, reflect, and meditate, and the fruition of Buddhism is to benefit sentient beings. There is no aspect of Buddhadharma that cannot be included in these three points. Even if all the buddhas were to converge at once there is nothing beyond this that they would teach. That is why we must apply these points to our practice.





287

October 12, 2019

In the land of Tibet, where Buddhadharma is flourishing, the object to be relied upon and trusted is the Three Jewels. If you devotedly rely on the Three Jewels, then you will be happy in this life and all lives to come.



288

October 13, 2019

The money you spend to buy a prayer wheel will reap infinite virtue that is inexhaustible. Therefore, it is an affordable and perfectly practical way to accumulate great merit. So everyone, please go to procure one and spin them diligently!





289

October 14, 2019

Avoid spinning a prayer wheel that is not held straight up or leaving it on a bed or stepping over it. Always keep it in a clean place. These prayer wheels are actually the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara himself, so please bear this in mind.



290

October 15, 2019

These days in Larung Gar, it seems most people are holding malas in their hands. I can't take full credit for that, but nevertheless it is said by many that this is one of my legacies. Just holding a mala indicates that you are a follower of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. Didn't Patrul Rinpoche once say, "Avalokiteshvara is the one deity that embodies all buddhas. The six-syllable *mani* mantra is the one mantra that embodies all mantras. Bodhichitta is the one practice that embodies the practices of the generation and completion stages. By knowing this, one can achieve full liberation. So recite this six-syllable mantra!" Have you heard this before? Recite the *mani* mantra! Recite the *mani* mantra! Om Mani Padme Hum!





291

October 16, 2019

The Land of Snows, Tibet, is the field to be tamed by Avalokiteshvara. If you cannot do anything else, you should at least recite his mantra with a mala in your hand. Or else, you can recite the mantra of Vajrasattva, Manjushri, or Guru Rinpoche. There is no difference. All the deities share the same essence. Accomplishing virtue in this way is universal and no one can say they are incapable of doing this level of Dharma. If they say they still don't know how to practice Dharma, that is untrue!



292

October 17, 2019

The benefit of offering butter lamps is inconceivable, and this is the king of all offerings. In particular, through the interdependence of the rays of light that radiate out from the butter lamp to all directions, ignorance, the root of all mental afflictions, is dispelled from the mindstream.





293

October 18, 2019

There is nothing better than making lamp offerings to dispel ignorance. In the past, great teachers of Kadampa lineage such as Geshe Potowa, Chan Ngawa, and Phu Chungwa, and their followers always had water and butter lamp offerings presented before the images of the Buddha at the head of their beds.



294

October 19, 2019

The special tradition of the Tibetan people originates from the reign of the three Kings, Songtsen Gampo, Trisong Deutsen, and Ralpacan. Tibetan people have widely established the tradition of holding malas, spinning prayer wheels in their hands, reciting the *mani* mantra, and eating tsampa as their staple food.





295

October 20, 2019

Even if you cannot practice Dharma extensively, by just holding a mala, spinning a prayer wheel, and reciting the *mani* mantra, you can be counted as an authentic Tibetan Buddhist.

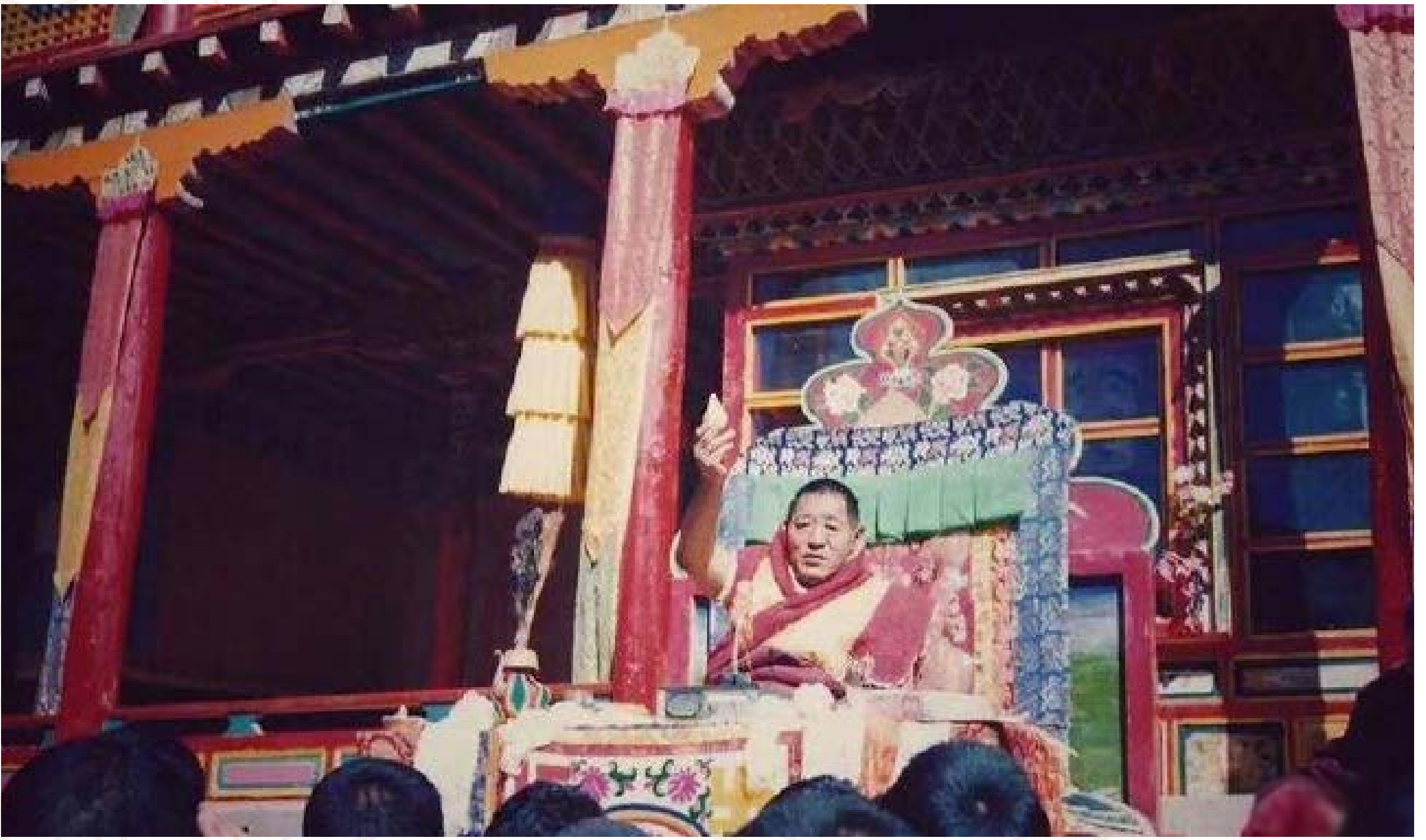


296

October 21, 2019

Once we have kept pure ethics and accumulated some virtue, we must then focus on dedicating this to the pure realm of our choice. Except for some special exceptions, the one we should choose is the western realm of Sukhavati.





297

October 22, 2019

Initially, when I made strong aspirations in front of Bodhisattva Manjushri at Mount Wutai in China, my highest aspiration was to guide all sentient beings across the world to the path that brings liberation. My middling aspiration was to lead as many people in this nation as possible to the path to liberation, and the lowest was to at least to bring the majority of people in the snow land of Tibet onto the path of liberation.



298

October 23, 2019

My wish was that anyone who sees, hears, remembers, or touches me may take rebirth in Sukhavati. Even if that does not occur, I hope that most of them will surely take rebirth in Sukhavati. I hold this in my mind and make the aspiration of being reborn in Sukhavati in my daily practice. This is also good for you to do.





299

October 24, 2019

Some people aspire to be born in Tushita Heaven, the Copper-colored Auspicious Mountain, the Pure Land of Manifest Joy, or the Potala Mountain. Making occasional prayers sometimes to be born in one or the other of these realms may not be useful at the time of death. At that time, when the mind is seemingly surrounded by a strong thunder and lightning storm and there is no stability to direct the mind accordingly, just calling out Guru Rinpoche's name, then Tara, then the master, then the Three Jewels like a rambling madman, will not lend strong focus. At the moment of death, there will be intense fear.





300

October 25, 2019

That is why this is called training to take rebirth in the pure realm. This pure realm does not require our own force of purification because Buddha Amitabha has already set things up for us. To be born there is just like a child returning to its home, since it is not so difficult, everyone should focus on rebirth there without distraction.





301

October 26, 2019

Both Padmasambhava and Guru Mipham Rinpoche said that I will be able to benefit sentient beings in a vast way and through their connection with me, they will take rebirth in the pure land of Sukhavati. In particular, over 200 years ago, Guru Dodrupchen

explicitly prophesized the place of Larung Gar to be located near a holy mountain called Ngala Tagtsei in the lower valley of Larung. In his prophecy, he also mentioned a holy mountain named Damchan in the upper valley of Larung, a goddess of the trees nearby, as well as the sangha of the four divisions residing there along with me.

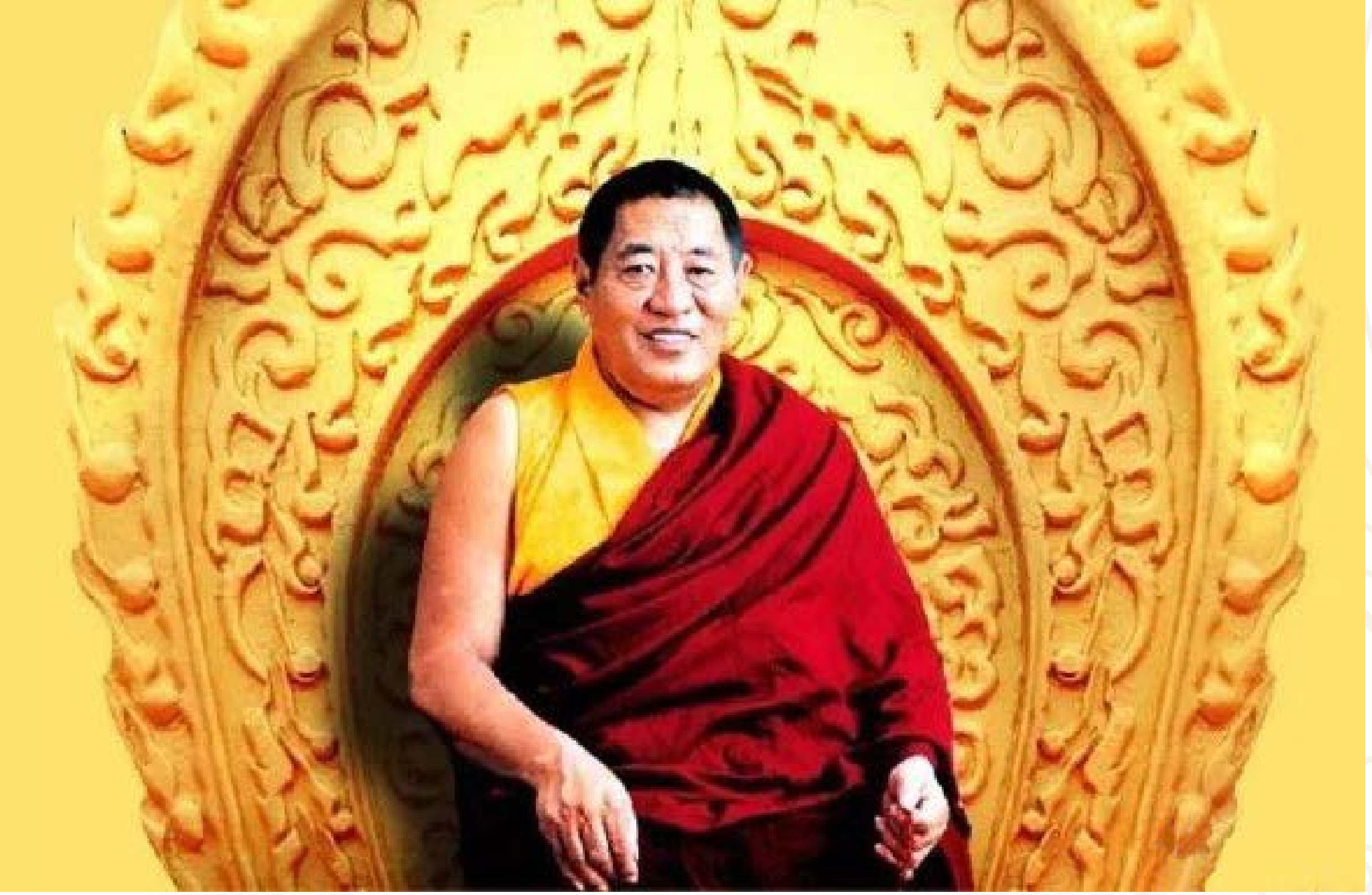
In addition, Lerab Lingpa also said that in the place called Dzumed Cholhai, there will be a person named Jigme Phuntsok. His father will be named Padma, his mother Yumtso and he will be born in the year of the Rooster. His body, speech, and mind will have many marks of enlightenment and he will turn the Dharma wheel that purifies all the defilements of the degenerate times into basic space and leads all followers to Sukhavati.

It is unlikely that their predictions are false. These prophecies were spoken long before my birth. If this had come out after my birth, then it is possible to think that some lamas were saying this just to please me, hence rendering it inauthentic. That is not the case. Even now, there are other predictions, and this is not just made up by me nor am I trying to promote myself. I am telling you this to inspire you. Therefore all of you can take delight in this and pray to take rebirth in the Sukhavati realm.



If all of you gathered here cultivate true faith and refrain from fighting or stealing, I do believe you can all be born in Sukhavati without exception. Even someone like myself, even though close to death, I am trying hard to uphold you all because I believe that these predictions will be accurate and that my endeavors will bring great benefit to beings. Therefore, if you can recite the name of Buddha Amitabha one million times, you will take rebirth in Sukhavati right after you die. I make this promise to you with the buddhas and bodhisattvas as my witnesses. There is no doubt that this will come true.





302

October 27, 2019

Please do not forget to pray to take rebirth in Sukhavati, always keep this in mind. That is my first piece of advice.

All of you must take care not to take the lives of animals. Try your best and do not forget this as the second piece of advice.

You all must attempt to cultivate a kind heart and good intentions towards all living beings no matter their position or status in life. That is the third piece of advice.

These three pieces of advice embody the essence of all Buddhadharma.





303

October 28, 2019

It is possible that this will be our final gathering. I hope and pray we will still meet again and again in this life. Maybe I will soon leave this life and you will say that I will return, and you will search for my tulku even before the forty-nine days are complete. Without having enough time to develop in the womb for nine months and ten days, my reincarnation may already be recognized. But, if I have some control, at the moment I abandon this life, I will surely not return again to this world.



304

October 29, 2019

I hope to be reborn immediately in the Sukhavati pure realm. Once arriving there, I will see the face of Buddha Amitabha, hear his enlightened speech, and he will gently place his right hand as soft as a lotus petal upon my crown. I will receive his predictions for



awakening and will master clairvoyance and wisdom awareness. Then, if I can benefit sentient beings when I come back to this world, I will not be as weak and helpless as I am now. I will have the mastery of ocean-like merit, as mentioned in *The King of Aspiration Prayers*,

*“As I wander through all states of
samsaric existence,*

*May I gather inexhaustible merit and wisdom,
And so become an inexhaustible treasury
of noble qualities*

*Of skill and discernment, samadhi,
and liberation!”*

And when I take birth in this world again, I have already attained mastery of wisdom, skillful means, diligence, concentration, clairvoyance, and so forth.





305

October 30, 2019

I will never forget this world and especially the Land of Snows, Tibet. In particular out of great compassion, I will always remember this area of lower Do-Kham, my village of Serthar, and the Washul clan. As long as I take rebirth in any pure realm, I will never forget all of you in this encampment and beyond.





306

October 31, 2019

Do not lose your own path; do not disturb others' minds.



307

November 1, 2019

If someone asks, “What are the core elements of the Dharma practice pursued by me as the guru and you as my students?”

The pratimoksha vow builds the foundation of our practice, the way of bodhisattvas expands the practice, and the realization of Great Perfection culminates the practice. These piths are indispensable.





308

November 2, 2019

Regarding the pratimoksha vows, the one which summarizes the essence of the ocean-like vinaya scriptures, transcends the *Vinayasutra*, and possesses five unique characters is *The Garland of Precepts*.



309

November 3, 2019

Of all the teachings on a bodhisattva's practice, the most sublime treatise is *The Way of the Bodhisattva*.





310

November 4, 2019

The one that perfectly captures all the pith instructions of Atiyoga, the Great Perfection, is *The Wish Fulfilling Jewel of Lama Yangtik* (Tib. Yangtik Yishyin Norbu).



311

November 5, 2019

Irrespective of who one is, each person has merits. Therefore, even if you have accumulated enormous merits, you must have respect for others, humbly learning from their strengths. By way of thinking less about our own merits yet highly valuing the merits of others, our merits would continue to grow and flourish.





312

November 6, 2019

There are those who appear to be constantly testing their gurus. They lack honesty, never saying what they mean, or they would express one view in front of their gurus but another in private. Such people lack faith and even have wrong views towards the Three Jewels. We should not associate with these people because even seeing them would bring us inauspiciousness.



313

November 7, 2019

The Dharma protectors will constantly offer help to those who are reliable, holding gratitude to others' kindness, sincerely devoted to the Three Jewels and carefully observe their behaviors according to the law of causality. Due to their merit, just seeing these people would bring us auspiciousness and deepen our virtuous roots, and help us accomplish many activities in our present and future lives.





314

November 8, 2019

In this mundane world, we have to experience all sorts of sufferings, and it is never easy for us to make obvious achievements in our spiritual practices, no matter which teaching instruction we follow. This is mainly due to our strong mental afflictions and conceptual fixation.



315

November 9, 2019

In this degenerate age, many people lack a respect for the merits that a guru has attained. Instead, they would choose to follow a guru simply by his reputation. If they later discover their errors and defame their Vajra gurus, this would cause both disciples and gurus to fall into the Vajra Hell. Therefore, it is essential to carefully observe a guru before following him.





316

November 10, 2019

If one wants to follow and rely on a Dzogchen guru, one must first have a deep faith that the master is enlightened under the Great Perfection. If a teacher has not yet been enlightened through this path, how can he lead and teach his disciples? This is the first criterion.

A master's lineage should also be as pure as the pure gold thread and not be stained by any violation of the vows. This teacher must have an unshakable faith in his or her lineage masters and so should all the masters of this lineage in their own masters. This is the second criterion.

In addition, the teacher should show little interest in fame and fortune and have a scant desire for all worldly concerns.

Finally, the teacher must be well-versed in the teachings of the Great Perfection and can effectively teach others.

These are the four criteria for choosing a Dzogchen guru.





317

November 11, 2019

According to the tantras and the shastras, a Dzogchen guru must be thoroughly knowledgeable with all the exoteric and esoteric teachings. Even if he has not fully mastered the exoteric teachings, he should be completely fluent with the 108 pith instructions leading to the Great Perfection. Otherwise, he will not be able to fully explain why, for example, affliction is sometimes referred to in the Great Perfection as wisdom and sometimes it is not. Therefore, a guru must be well versed in all the teachings.



318

November 12, 2019

If one wants to take in followers and lead disciples, one must thoroughly understand all Dharma teachings. This condition is not required if one is pursuing one's own practice of the Dharma.





319

November 13, 2019

As human beings, we must not cease to contemplate our future. Since we have been blessed with our present human existence, in order for us to attain a better and more fulfilling future, we must seek to act in ways that will benefit our present and future existences.



320

November 14, 2019

Before the brightness of the Dharma disappears, we should seize the opportunity to practice the Dharma to be virtuous in our actions, speeches and thoughts and to avoid any evil deeds. This is the most beneficial thing we can do for our lives.





321

November 15, 2019

For teachers who are practicing the Great Perfection, some may regularly manifest clairvoyance while some would only demonstrate it occasionally. Nonetheless, if a teacher can accurately prophesy what is to come, he should be considered as a great accomplished

person, or a Mahasiddha. Since it is often hard for ordinary people to determine if one has encountered his own deity, if a master has been successful in promoting the Dharma and benefiting sentient beings through his strong aspiration, it is a sign that he has developed a close relationship with his deity. These are additional indications that he is a Mahasiddha. Therefore, when you are trying to determine if your teacher is a Mahasiddha in the context of the Great Perfection, three abilities are clear indicators: clairvoyance, visions of his personal deities, and benevolence towards sentient beings. Mipham Rinpoche said that these are the characteristics of a Mahasiddha.





322

November 16, 2019

We should also use these three criteria to examine the khenpos in our academy to determine whether they are true Mahasiddhas. Those who pretend to be Mahasiddhas would often make unfounded statements, and their prophecies about the future cannot be entirely accurate, proving that they have not really achieved any significance in the pursuit of the Great Perfection. The fact is even if we can only take a small step forward in our practice of the Great Perfection, we will receive unmatched inspiration and wisdom. Therefore, as long as we continue to seek improvements, we will surely receive all the virtue and wisdom from the accomplished lineage masters.



323

November 17, 2019

The omniscient Longchenpa once foretold that the Great Perfection would prosper going forward. The omniscient Mipham Rinpoche also noted that when the darkness in the degenerate age further deepens, the light of the Great Perfection will brighten even more in response. As afflictive emotions such as desire, hatred and ignorance become even more serious, the blessings from the Great Perfection will grow and become even more powerful.





324

November 18, 2019

If one has faith in his lama and firmly believes in the Great Perfection, he can become a vessel of this Dharma. However, if a person only focuses on the worldly concerns of this life, he will not become a Dharma vessel that would serve to advance the Great Perfection.



325

November 19, 2019

Since each sentient being has different background and motivation, each person's preferences and actions are also different. Some may find the way we teach the Dharma difficult to bring them benefits, but I believe, on the whole, most people would be benefited greatly.





326

November 20, 2019

If the lineage masters, deities and Dharma protectors are pleased with us, all our activities of spreading the Dharma and benefiting sentient beings will perfectly succeed. Otherwise, everything will be neither running smoothly nor auspiciously. For example, some people encounter various unfavorable conditions during their spiritual practice, which is indeed an indication of their failure to please these awareness holders.

If we try to please them, all our noble qualities will be gradually perfected, with which our present and future lives will be full of peace and happiness, and our activities of spreading the Dharma and benefiting sentient beings will be widespread in a way that even surprises us. Besides, we will naturally realize this is due to the special feature of the Great Perfection, and thus will become sincerely grateful to Garab Dorje — the first human master of the Great Perfection.





327

November 21, 2019

Even if there is the chance, those elderly practitioners who have already gained some certainty of being able to take rebirth in pure lands would not be willing to become young once again, as the spiritual practice of young people may not go off smoothly. However, some others would prefer to become young again, which only suggests that their practice fails to yield an ideal result.



328

November 22, 2019

Practices of the generation stage and completion stage are actually based on conceptual thoughts, which even the practice of completion stage without characteristics does not transcend either. Since conceptuality cannot be eradicated through practices based on it, the aforementioned practices are not the most supreme in terms of realizing the ultimate reality. As a matter of fact, either cultivation of pure perception or reflection on impurity belongs to conceptuality, which must be forsaken ultimately.

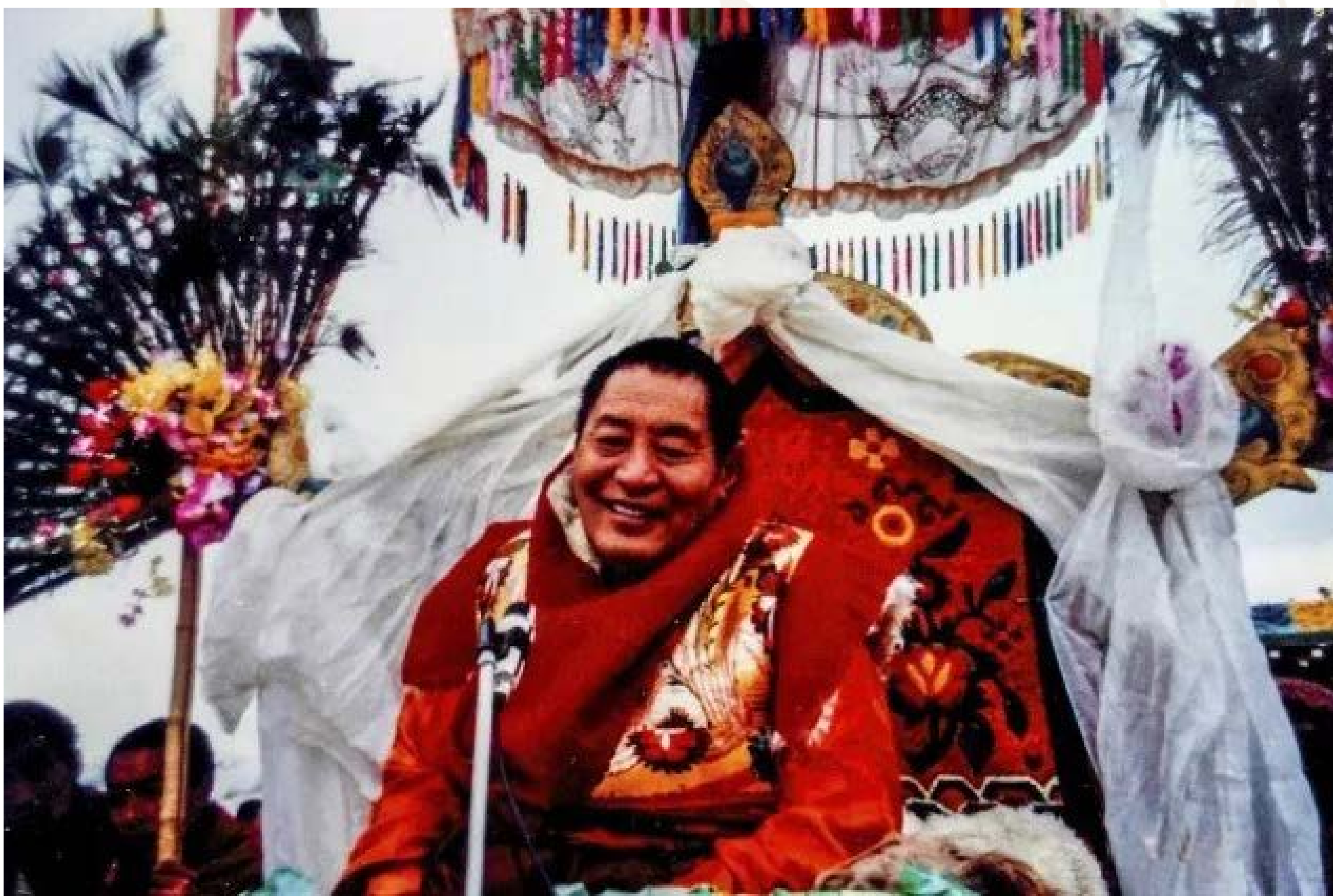




329

November 23, 2019

The Mahayana Vehicle is included in the Great Perfection, and all the conceptual thoughts in the Mahayana path should be eradicated through the practice of the Great Perfection. In the age of degeneration, the myriads of dreamlike conceptual thoughts will not vanish merely through practices based on the conceptual thoughts. Therefore, other than the unsurpassable instructions of the Great Perfection, it is difficult to tame the mind of sentient beings with any other teachings.



330

November 24, 2019

Just like the brightly shining sun in the sky will naturally dispel all darkness, if we diligently practice the Great Perfection to abide in the state of primordial wisdom, all the conceptual thoughts and suffering will naturally dissolve into dharmadhatu. At this time, deities and dakinis will manifest continuously day and night. This teaching contains profound meaning.





331

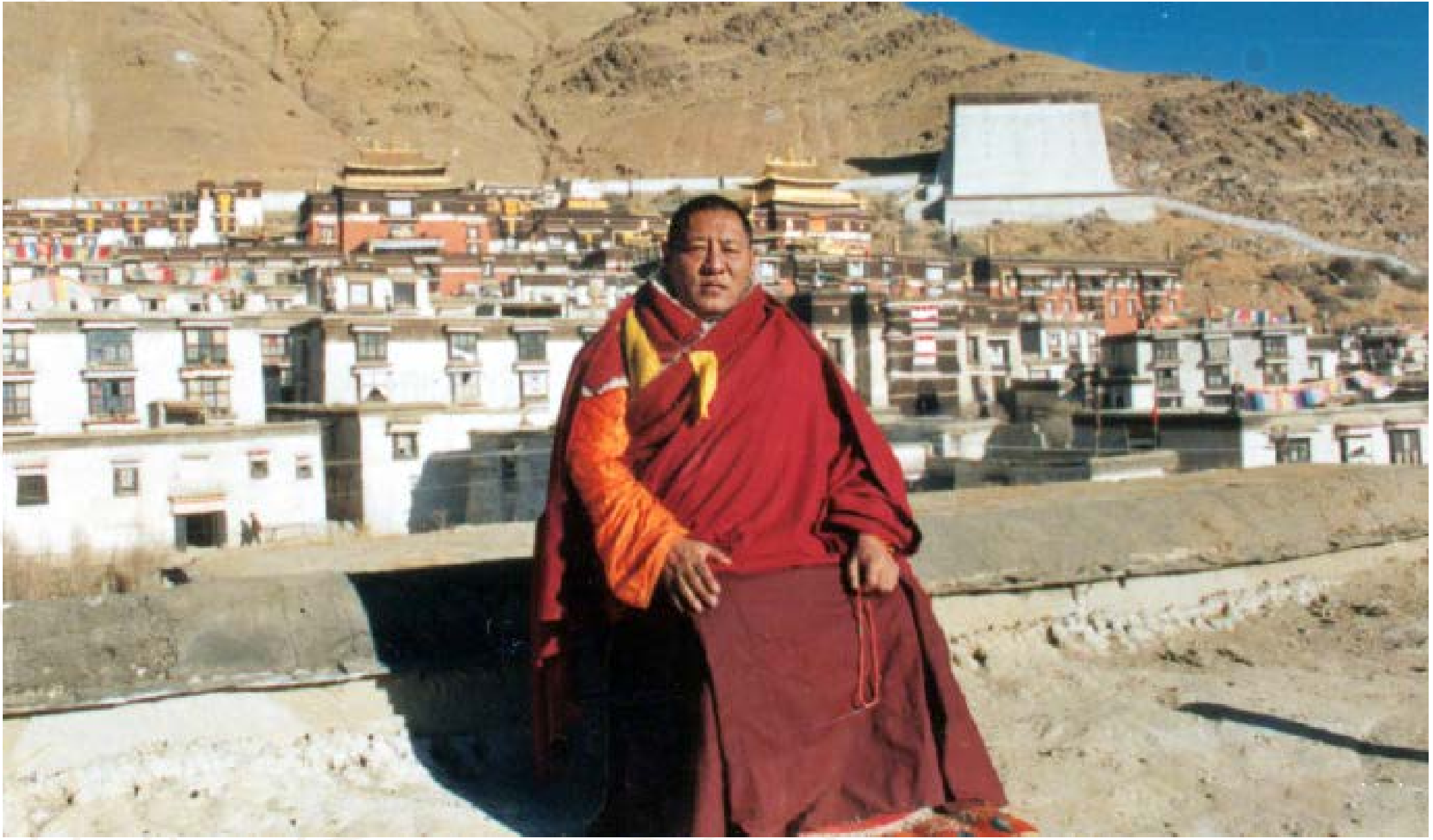
November 25, 2019

In the course of practicing the Great Perfection, doing and not doing recitation are both acceptable. However, different masters have different views on it. Some masters instructed the students not to recite any mantra even in the post-meditation period. While

others recommended abiding in the nature of the mind while reciting mantras. Anyway, if you prefer to do recitation, it is important to abide in the nature of the mind while reciting. Generally, there is no meditating in the Great Perfection, but if you prefer to meditate, make sure you do it while abiding in the nature of the mind.

For beginners like me, it's not a good choice to do nothing about recitation or meditation. Rather, we should not only engage in these two practices but, at the same time, pray to our gurus and deities constantly. However, while engaging in recitation and meditation, we should abide in primordial awareness all the time. Otherwise, without recognizing the nature of the mind, it's impossible to obtain any accomplishment of the Great Perfection.



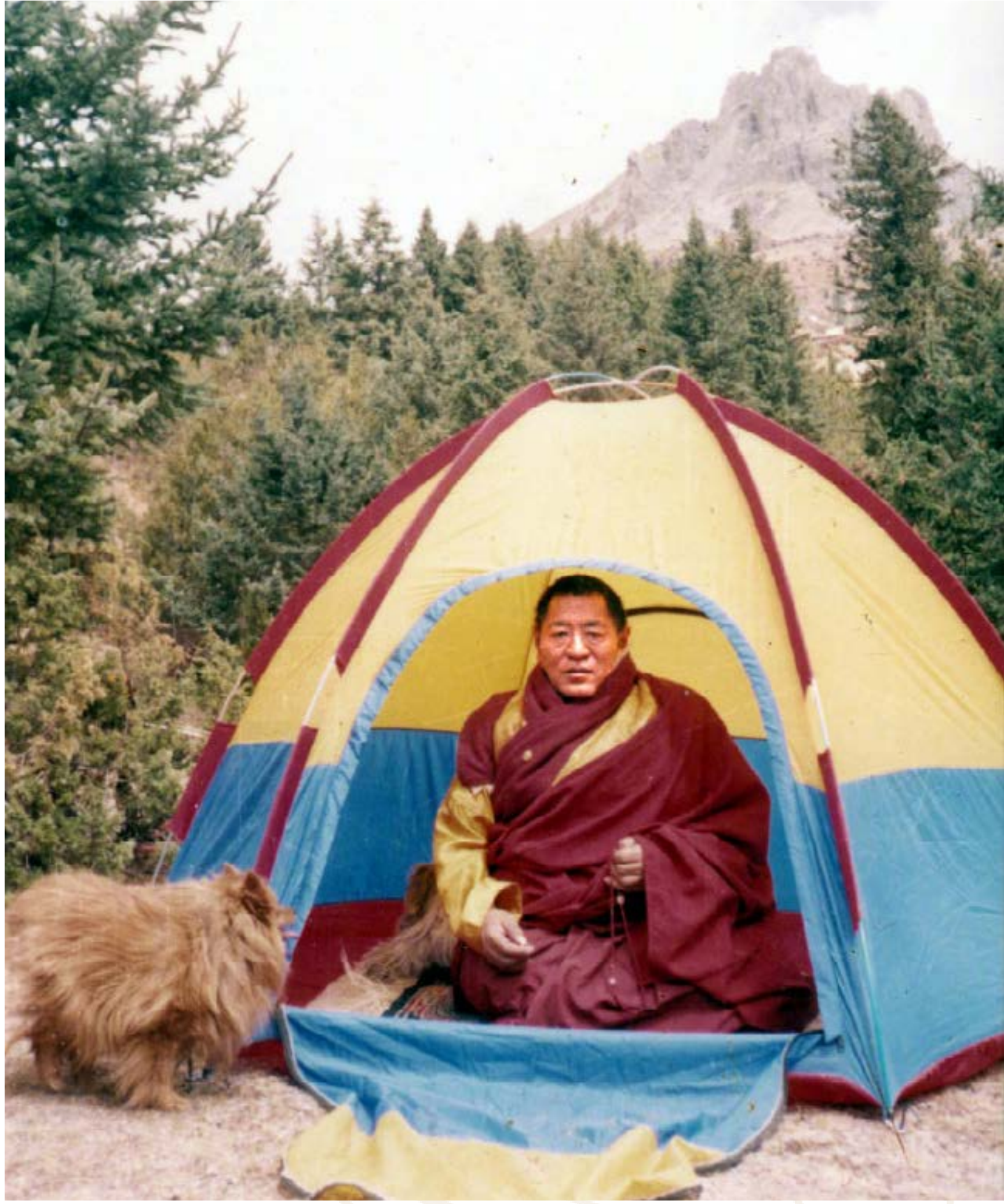


332

November 26, 2019

If we can always abide in the nature of the mind, then deity practice, mantra recitation, and all the practices of generation and completion stages can be included. If, in all our daily activities, whether it is eating, walking, or working in the garden, we can abide in the insight of the Great Perfection, then irrespective of whatever we are doing, we'll be moving towards the path of liberation.





333

November 27, 2019

If we want to find the boundaries of our dreams, we will never succeed. All phenomena in this world are just like appearances in our dreams, they are indeed originated from our minds.

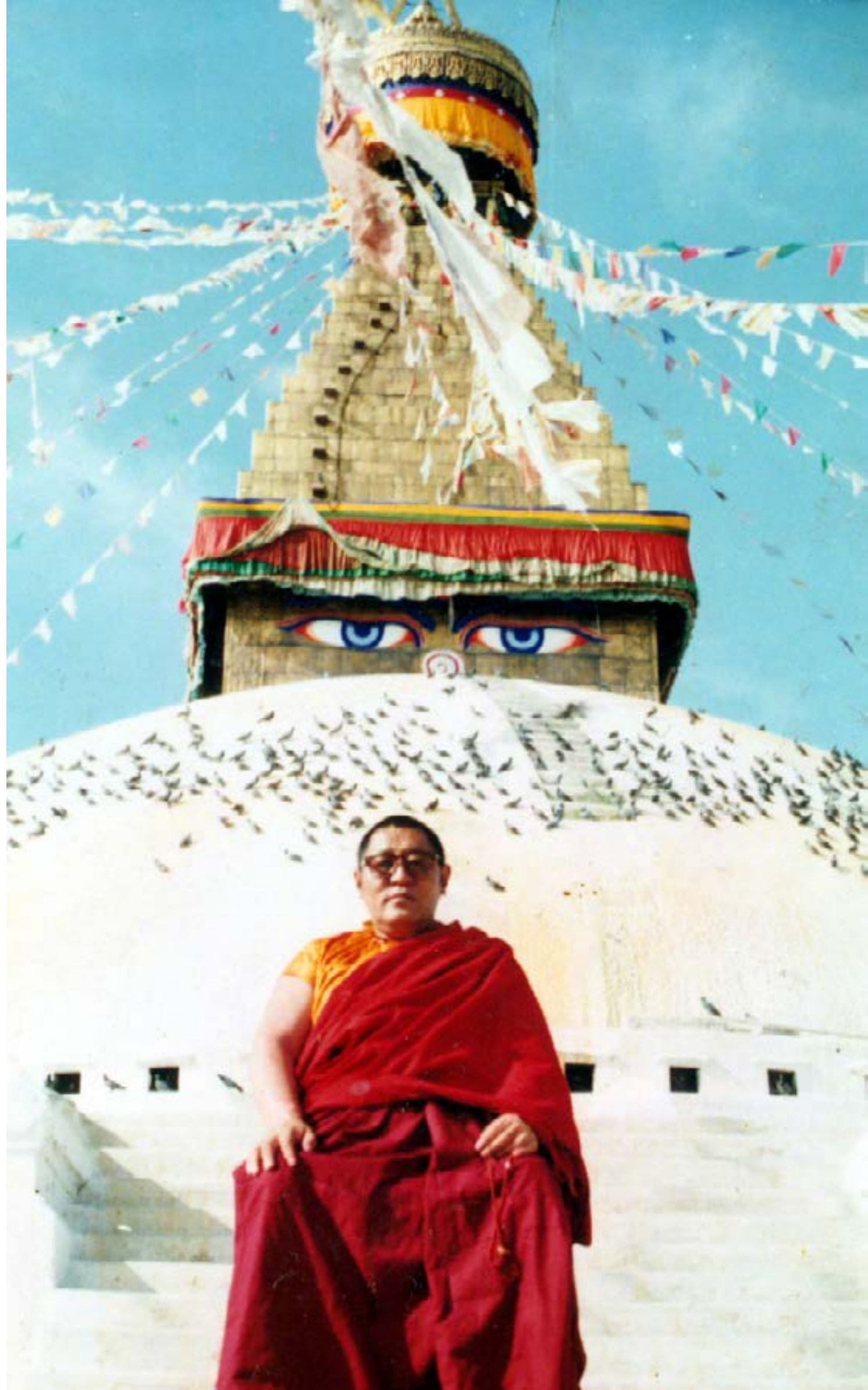




334

November 28, 2019

All the infinite variety of appearances, irrespective of whether they are pure or impure, are fully encompassed within the nature of our own minds.

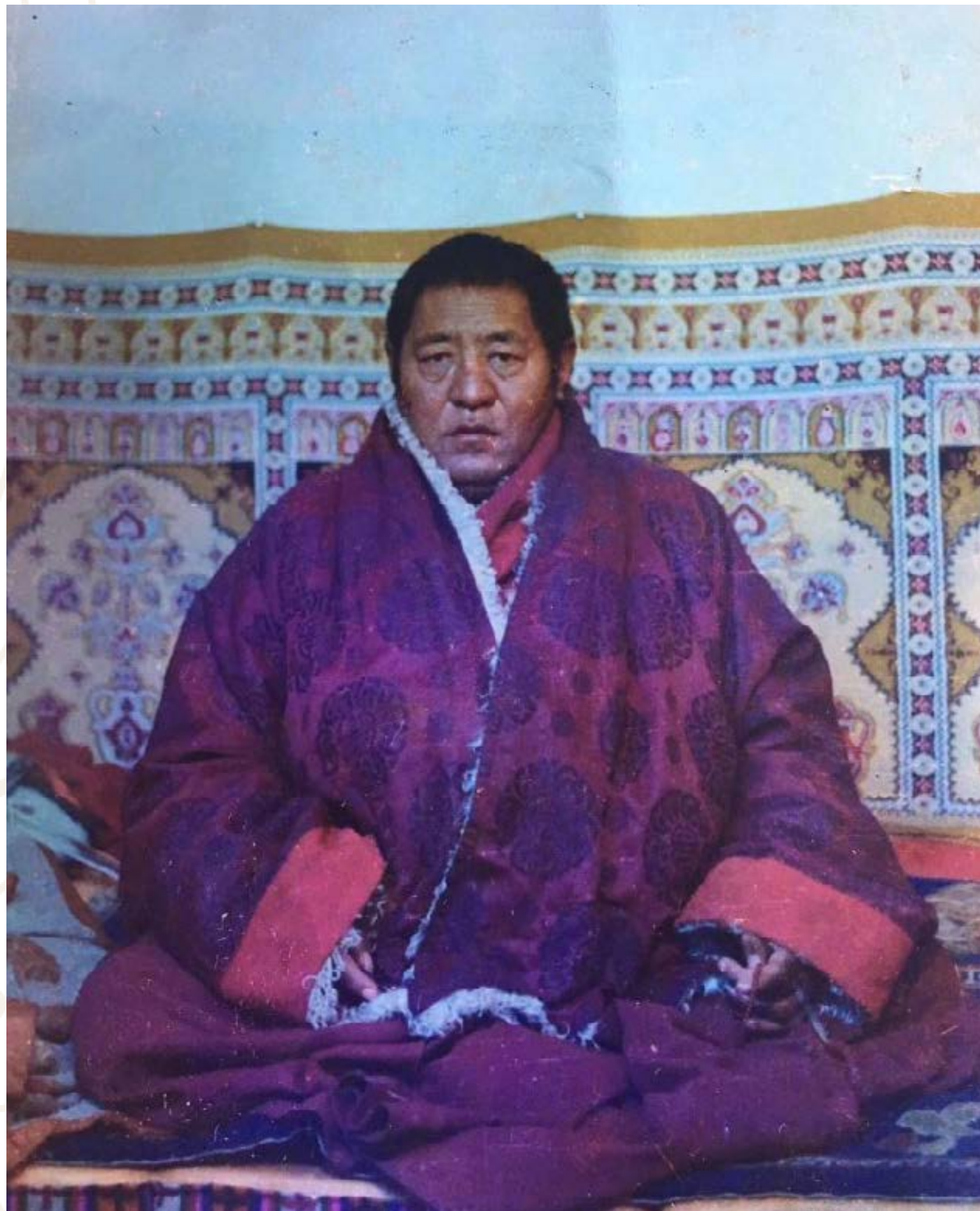


335

November 29, 2019

The true nature of the mind is the inseparability of emptiness and bliss. It is undefinable, indescribable, pervasively illuminating, and inconceivable. If you have understood and recognized the nature of the mind, then everything will be from the pure lands and pure deities. If not, three existences of samsara will appear and various sufferings in the three lower realms will follow up.





336

November 30, 2019

From beginningless time, the numerous sufferings we have experienced have their root cause in our failure to realize the nature of our minds. If we continue in the same fashion as in the past, we will wander aimlessly and remain suspended in the three realms of samsara.



337

December 1, 2019

Just as accumulating wealth in a dream is meaningless, if we insist on holding onto money and properties in samsara, it will one day lead us only to regret.





338

December 2, 2019

Exercise your compassion and never abandon any sentient being; rely on your faith and never forsake the Three Roots (the Guru, the Yidam, and the Dakini); and use your wisdom and never give up the noble Dharma. These three vows are extremely important. The essence of the Buddhadharma from both Sutrayana and Vajrayana is captured in these vows.

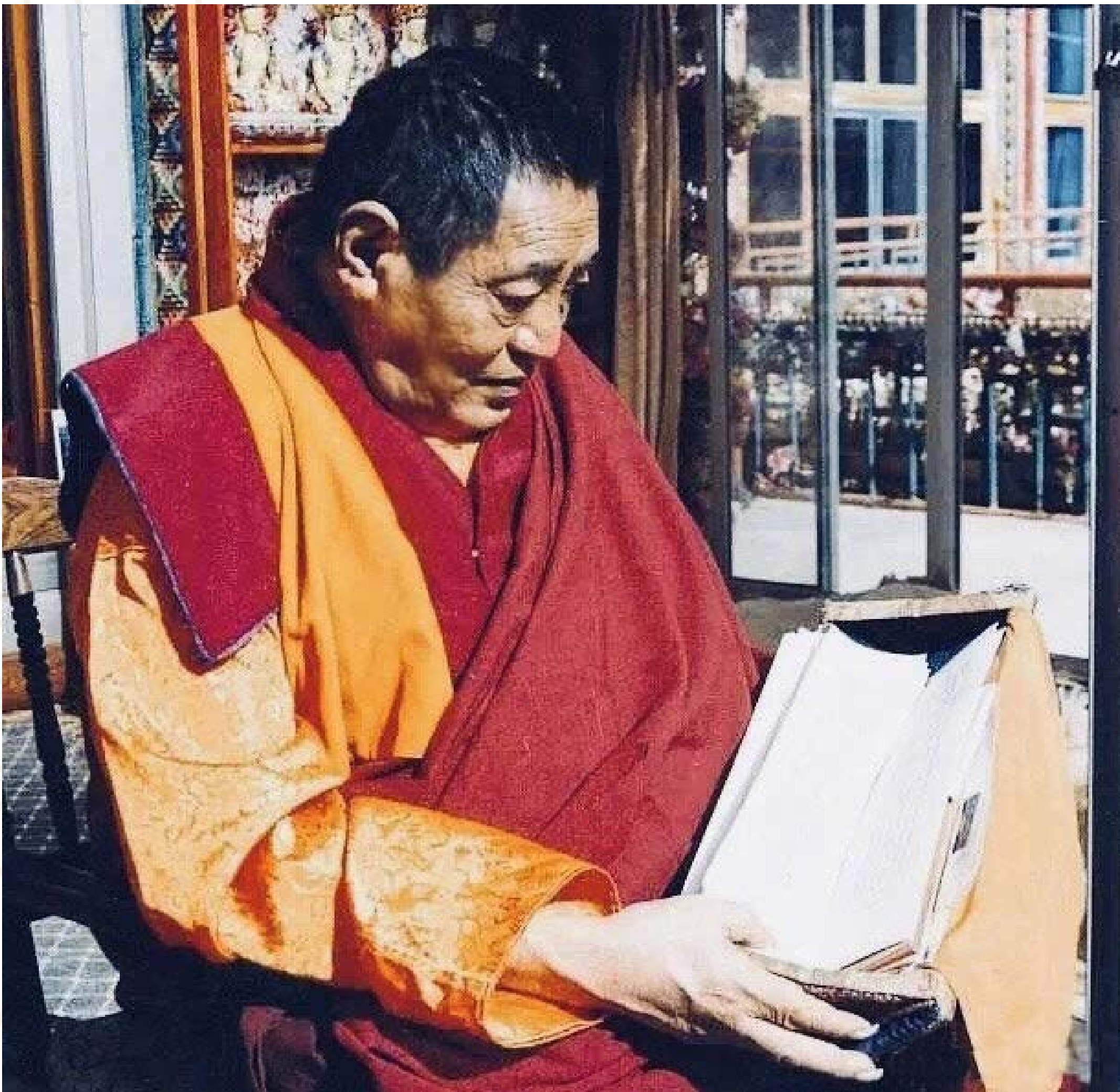


339

December 3, 2019

In its nature, no phenomenon is destined to be adopted or abandoned. This is the Great Bliss of Dharmadhatu. If we rest our mind in an uncontrived state, it could manifest itself. However, if we are occupied by conceptual thoughts, it will never appear, just as one cannot see through a body of moving water.

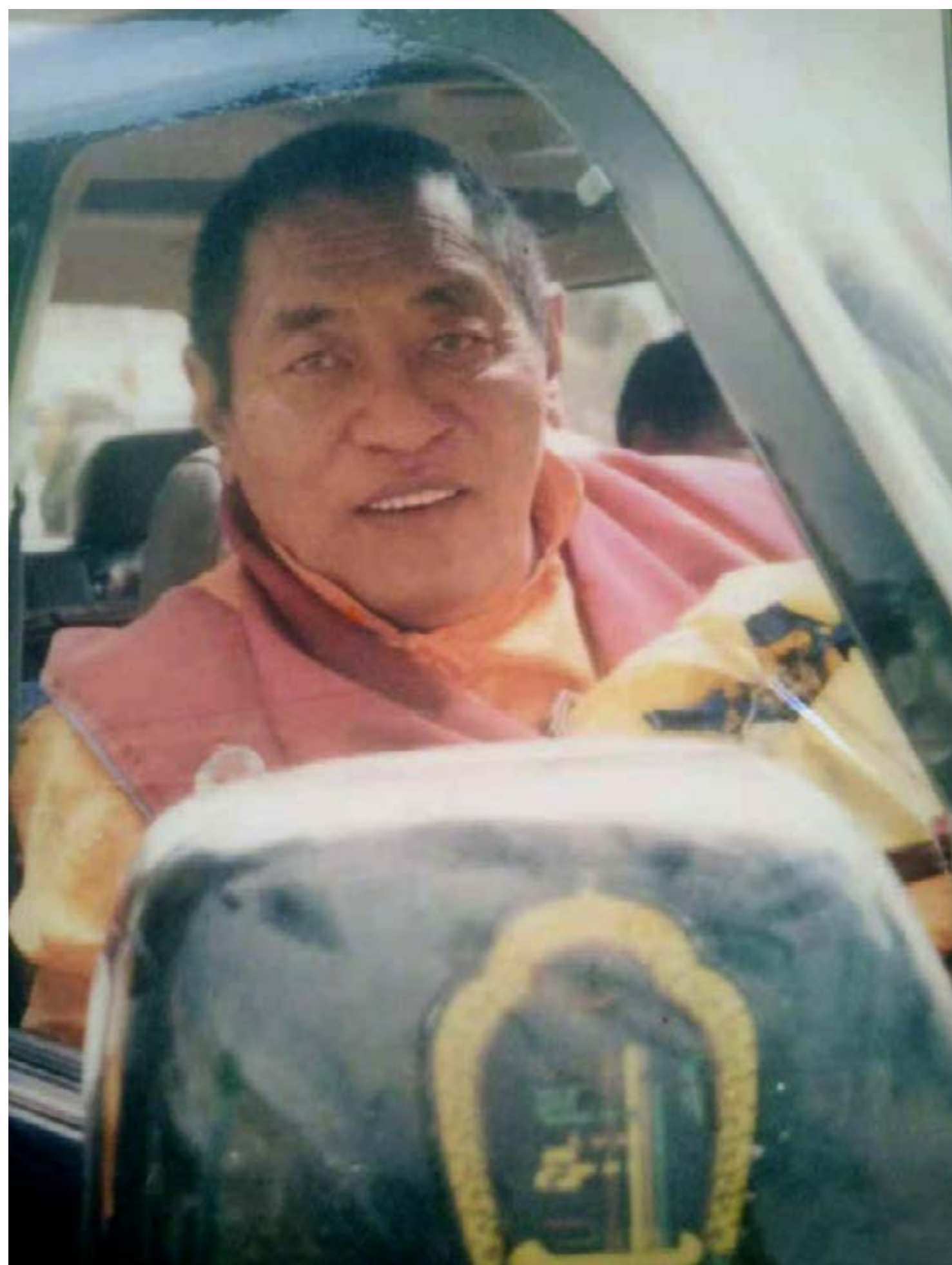




340

December 4, 2019

Some have practiced diligently in a quiet surrounding for a long time but have gained neither any response from their meditation nor the blessing of the Three Roots. What is the reason? It is not because the Three Roots have not offered any blessing. It is because their mindstream, the continuum of consciousness, is like a barren wilderness that has never been seeded and the root of virtue has never taken hold.



341

December 5, 2019

Though you may have long relied on solitude to practice the Dharma, when the negative karma that has been accumulated from beginningless time is manifested, you will not feel the response and benefits of your practice in your mindstream. Therefore, when we consistently fail to make progress in our practice, we should rely on various skillful means to purify our karmic obscurations. After the purification, we'll be able to tame our minds, and only after our minds are tamed will we experience the response from our practice.





342

December 6, 2019

Mantras definitely have their power. So when you do not see any obvious effect after diligently reciting a great number of them, don't blame others. The likely reasons could be your poor ability to concentrate, your violation of the Vajrayana vows, your insufficient devotion, or the heavy karmic debt in your present lifetime, etc.



343

December 7, 2019

Although conceptual thought can be a formidable foe, through the help and guidance of a spiritual teacher, we can pierce its cleverly constructed mask of deception and recognize the true nature of our minds. In order to succeed in this goal, we need to rid ourselves of all greed and desire and engage in the practice of the pure Dharma.

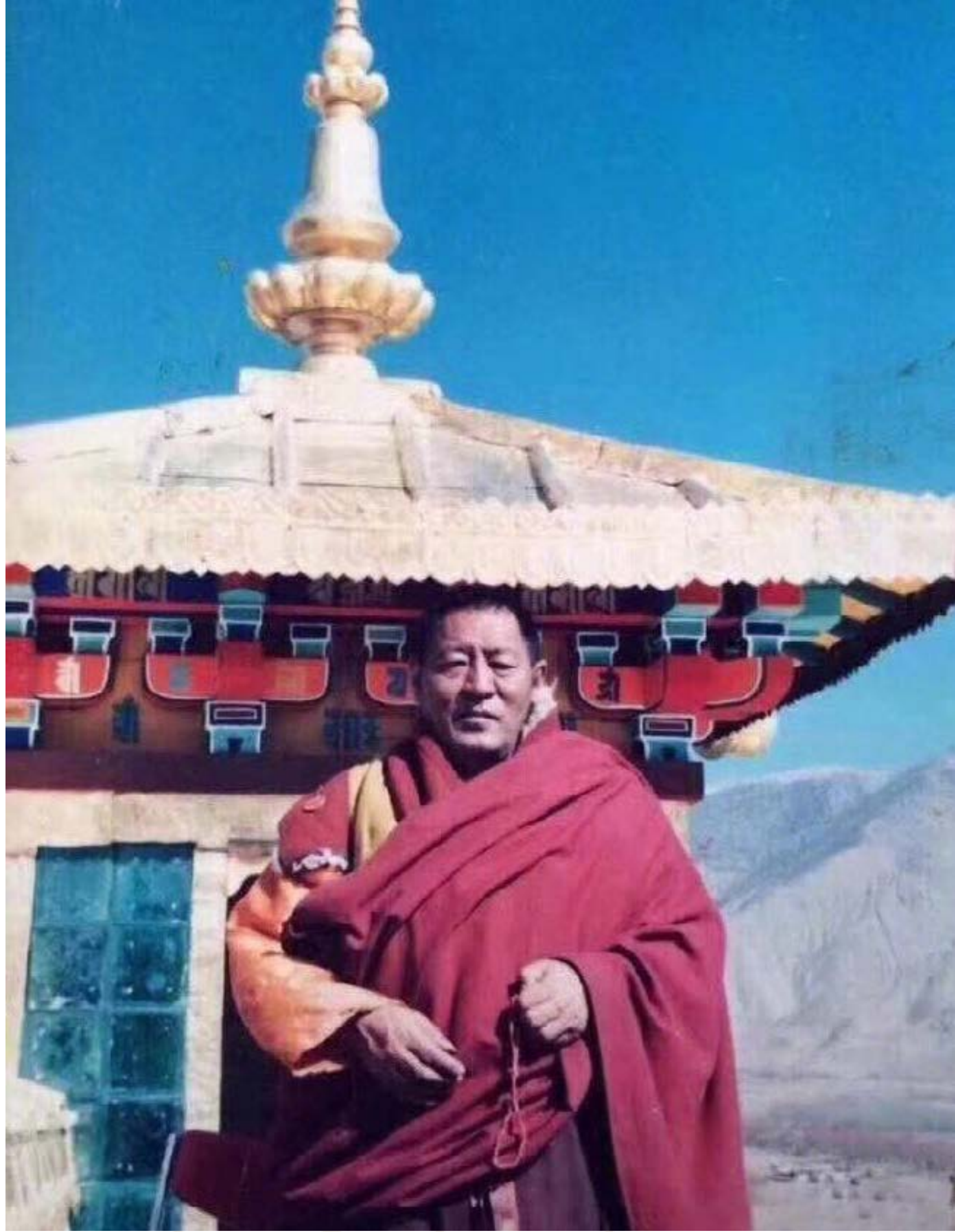




344

December 8, 2019

It does not matter whether your personal deity is peaceful or wrathful; the wisdom bodies of all buddhas are the inseparable one in dharmadhatu. All the noble deities share the same essence of the wisdom deity; all the mantras share the same nature of the secret mantra; all the paths share the same nature of the noble path. Therefore, we should understand that when we practice one deity, we are actually practicing all the other deities.



345

December 9, 2019

In Buddhadharma, there are two indispensable points. First, the pure view is the source of secular happiness, especially having the correct view in believing the karmic principle of cause and effect. Without this view, one would not be able to obtain the peace and happiness of the higher realms. Secondly, immaculate faith forms the foundation of the perfection in this and future lives, meaning that we believe resolutely and irreversibly in our gurus and the Three Jewels they represent.





346

December 10, 2019

For those of us who believe in karma, we fear the effects of all the misdeeds we had committed before and therefore we would sincerely confess before buddhas and bodhisattvas and strive to never commit such misdeeds even if our lives are at stake. Those who do not believe in karma, however, do not consider whether they would end up in hell or be able to enjoy the happiness in this or higher realms. The fact is when the tragic effects mature and they find themselves suffering in hell, you will not find anyone who is not fearful.



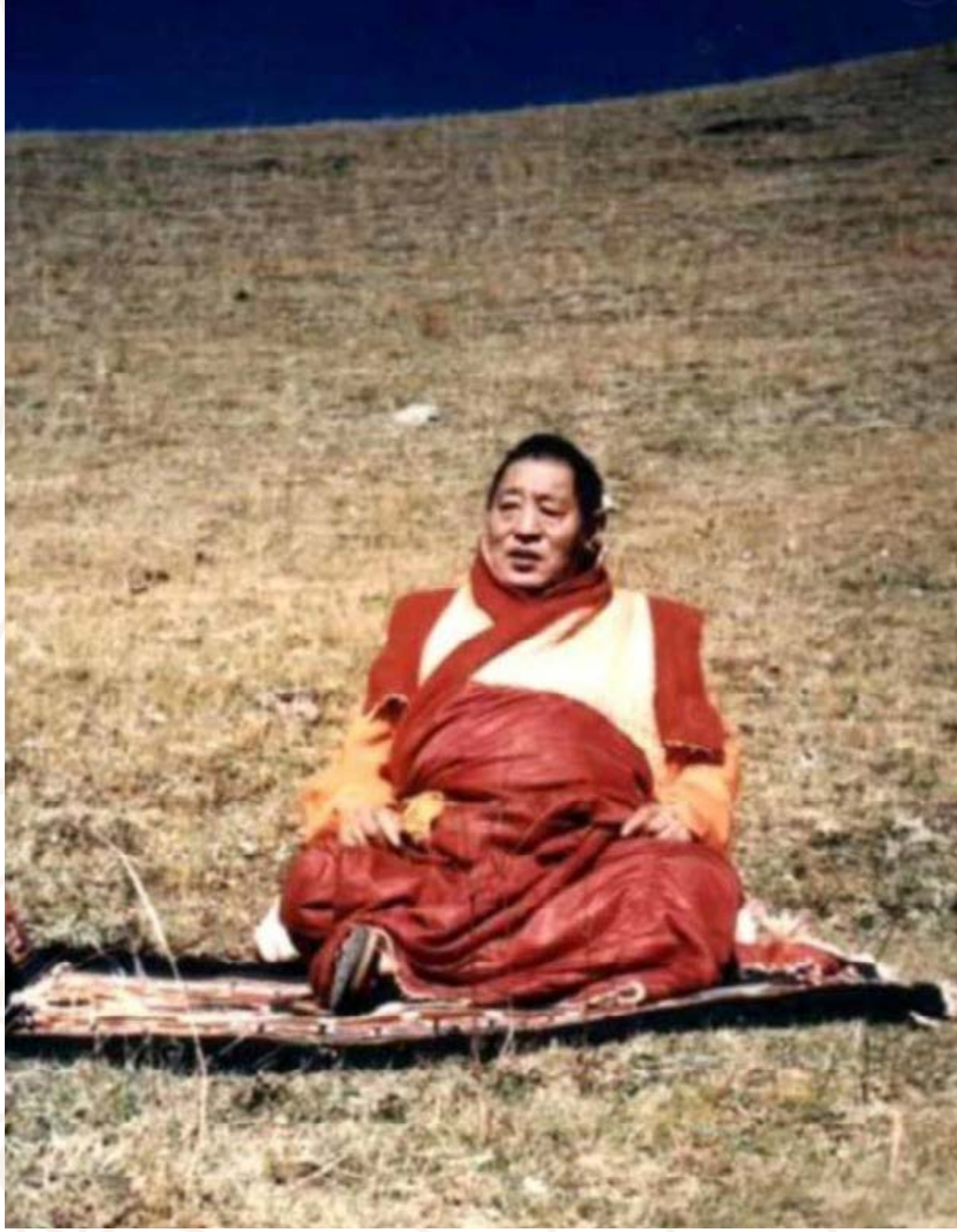


347

December 11, 2019

The Buddha has already emphasized the importance of faith and view. If one possesses both, he will not fall into the lower realms, and his merits in both the mundane and supramundane worlds would grow. Therefore, faith and the right view are our ultimate friends. Anything else, such as property, or friends and relatives, is as transient as a fleeting cloud and does not provide a reliable, lasting refuge. None of these would accompany us when we enter bardo (the intermediate state).





348

December 12, 2019

Our existence is like a bolt of lightning, utterly unpredictable. For the elderly, it goes without saying that our time remaining in this world would be shorter because everything in this world has a limit. It is self-evident that everything is impermanent. It may be easier for the older people to comprehend this in their minds, but younger people should not consider their future to be so distant because our existence can indeed be quite transient.



349

December 13, 2019

As we were all born with our own body, it is no wonder that we cherish it the most. But no matter how we take care of it, we have to eventually leave it behind. If we have to even abandon our bodies, wouldn't we also have to eventually leave our friends and relatives behind? That is why we need to forsake all unreliable worldly concerns and practice the Buddhadharma diligently that will genuinely benefit us in our future existence.

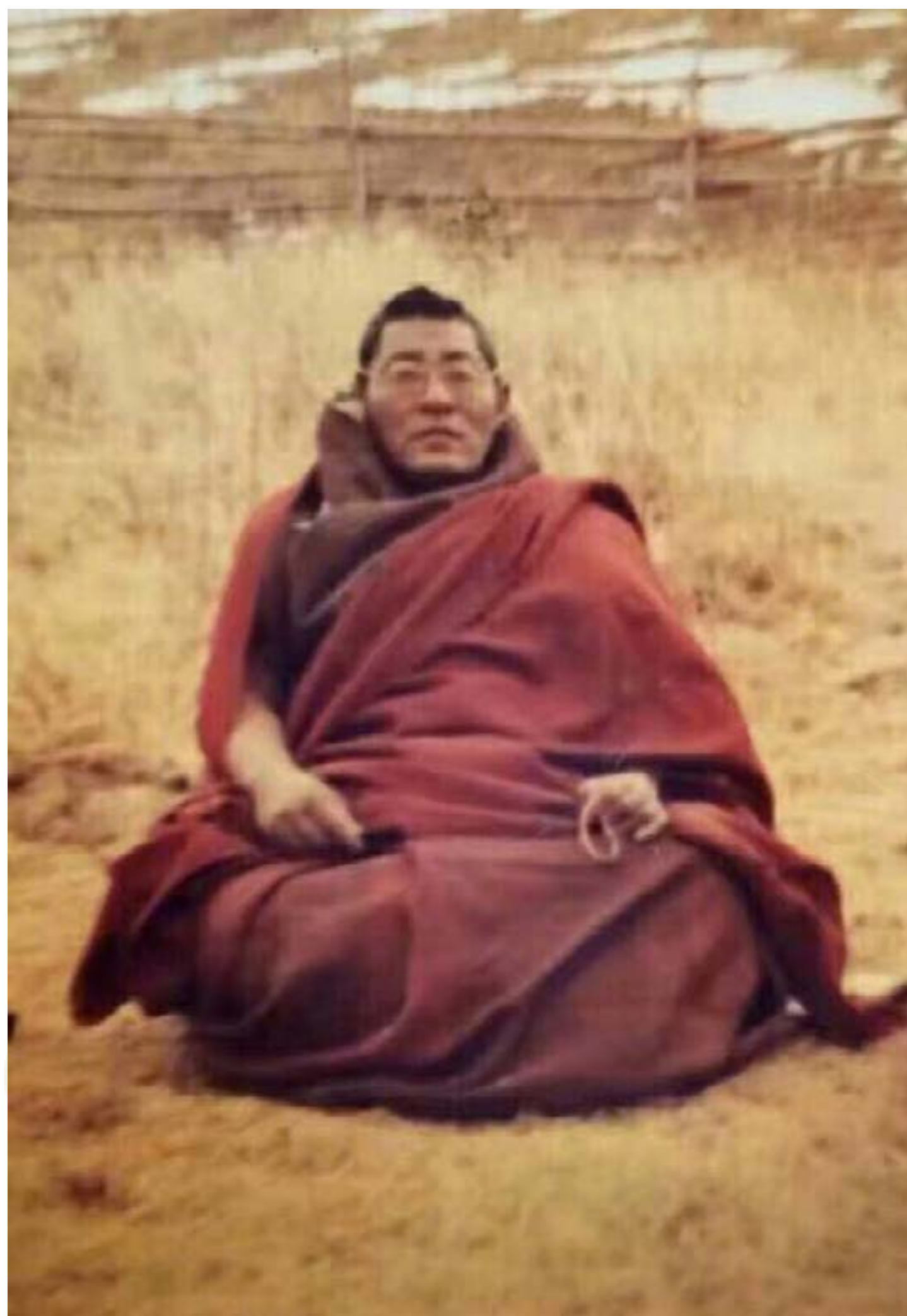




350

December 14, 2019

The impermanence of wealth is like a dark cloud in the sky and the impermanence of status is like mist in the mountain. Most older people have experienced what I have seen when people with high and illustrious status fell into wretched circumstances; the rich became poor, the poor became rich. Huge changes can and will happen in this world like mist in the mountain and clouds in the sky.



351

December 15, 2019

Fame is no different from the echoes in an empty valley. It is quite meaningless when others praise you for your looks, talents, wisdom and so forth. Just as fame is like an echo in an empty valley, respect is like the pleasure we receive in our dreams. When people paid us respect, it is as if we had received the respect in our dreams and nothing substantial was ever gained.





352

December 16, 2019

Young people should not be over-confident and arrogant with their good looks, talents, wealth, and so forth. Although you may be better than some people in your surroundings, but it is inevitable that you will find someone more exceptional than you somewhere else. In the not too distant future, you will all have the trail-like wrinkles on our elderly faces and loosening teeth. When your body starts to fail you, you will no doubt feel sad and depressed. That is why when you are young, you should maintain a modest and honest mind so that peace and happiness can be yours for the present and future lives.





353

December 17, 2019

When we are about to see death, we cannot take our fame, wealth, and status with us. All of these have to be left behind while we leave this world. Therefore, it is best not to have a too strong and firm attachment towards worldly concerns such as fame, wealth, and status. The stronger the attachment, the more suffering we will experience.





354

December 18, 2019

We must have a clear understanding of the nature of all phenomena involved in samsara. After death, each sentient being will follow the force of his own karma, so from the perspective of the karmic law, there is no difference between an unfortunate beggar and a king of high prestige. After they die, their standings in front of the Lord of Death are the same. Therefore, we should not commit any more transgression simply to fulfill our desire for happiness in this life.



355

December 19, 2019

Everyone seeks to be liberated from suffering and gain happiness. Regardless of what kind of sentient being one is reborn as and where in the next life, we still want to have peace and happiness. Therefore, in order to gain lasting peace and happiness, we need to exercise the choice we still have in this transient existence to practice the genuine Dharma.

Mipham Rinpoche said in one of his teachings, “The



present life is the soil for causes, your future lives are the fields from which you harvest the effects, if that is the case, then why aren't you focused on virtuous deeds now?"

Just like a farmer, if we want to harvest in the Fall, why are we not sowing, ploughing, and irrigating in the Spring? If every sentient being must follow the force of his own karma, then we must engage in virtuous deeds now.





356

December 20, 2019

For some of you who consider yourselves to mainly study the Dharma, don't think that just by keeping your vows and following the precepts you are good enough and need not bother to engage in other Dharma practices. It is obviously not easy for one to strictly abide by the pure precepts stated in the sutras and vinayas. Therefore, one should not become over-confident and self-righteous. Instead, one should study and practice the Dharma with a humble and modest attitude. Furthermore, one should rely on the instructions of his guru to move forward one step at a time towards the City of Nirvana. This will have a meaningful impact on your present and future lives.





357

December 21, 2019

All eighty-four thousand Dharma practices can be distilled into the unsurpassable Great Perfection or Atiyoga, and the essence of Atiyoga is contained in the primordial wisdom. The primordial wisdom is the natural luminosity of the mind recognized through the pith instructions of our gurus. This is the non-dual wisdom and also the nature of Bodhisattva Manjushri.

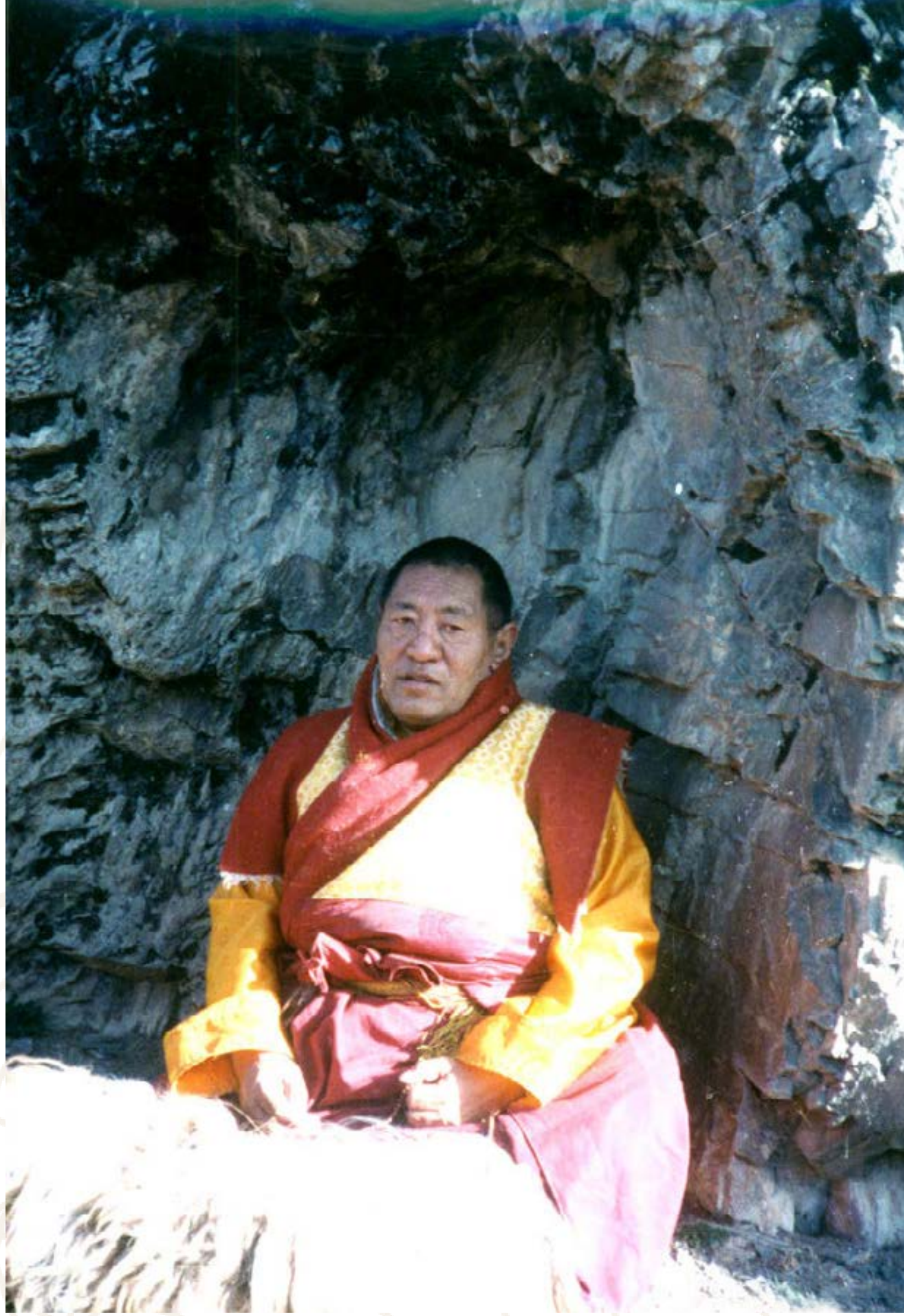


358

December 22, 2019

All buddhas and bodhisattvas can be encompassed in the form of one deity, which in turn is the nature of our mind. The Great Perfection is achieved when we finally recognize our own naked nature, which also is our own deity. However, our ordinary mind is like a naughty monkey, constantly influenced by different surroundings. Hence our initial goal as we pursue our practice is to keenly observe our own minds in quiet places.



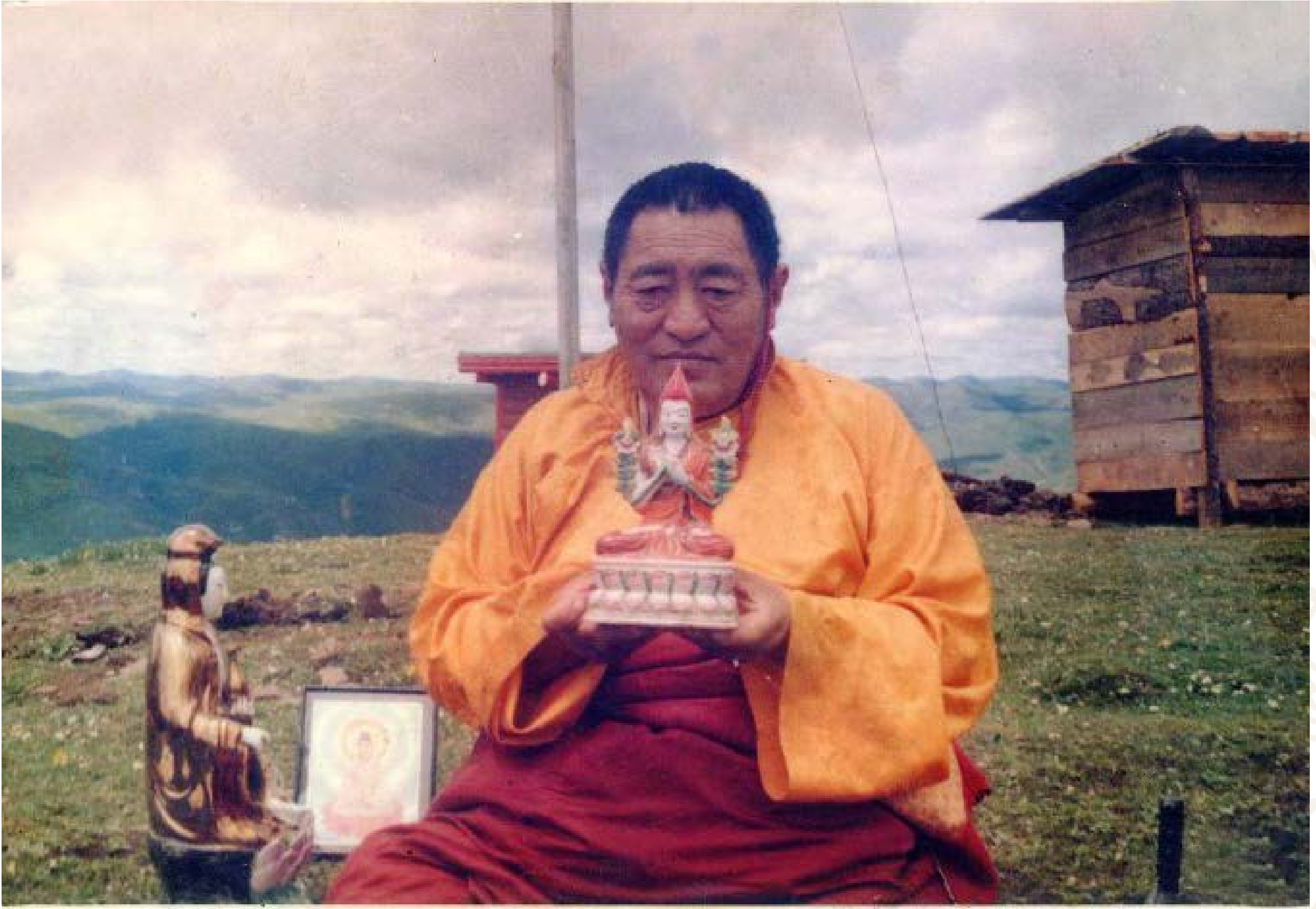


359

December 23, 2019

Buddha Shakyamuni once said, “Although people may have just seen a buddha’s image on a wall in passing, through this connection to the buddha they will someday attain liberation.” This is the Buddha’s infallible Vajra words. For those who see a buddha’s image with a heart filled with hate or unrest, though they may temporarily fall into the lower realms, their bond with that buddha will eventually help them achieve buddhahood. Therefore, it’s my hope that you have faith in the images of any buddha.





360

December 24, 2019

Bodhisattva Manjushri is the embodiment of the wisdom of all buddhas of past, present, and future; Padmasambhava is the representative of all buddhas of past, present, and future. We should constantly visualize Padmasambhava, Manjushri, and our guru as being inseparable. If we persist in visualizing in this way, they will never abandon us until we attain buddhahood. They will constantly bless us with their great compassion and bring us all kinds of happiness and benefits.



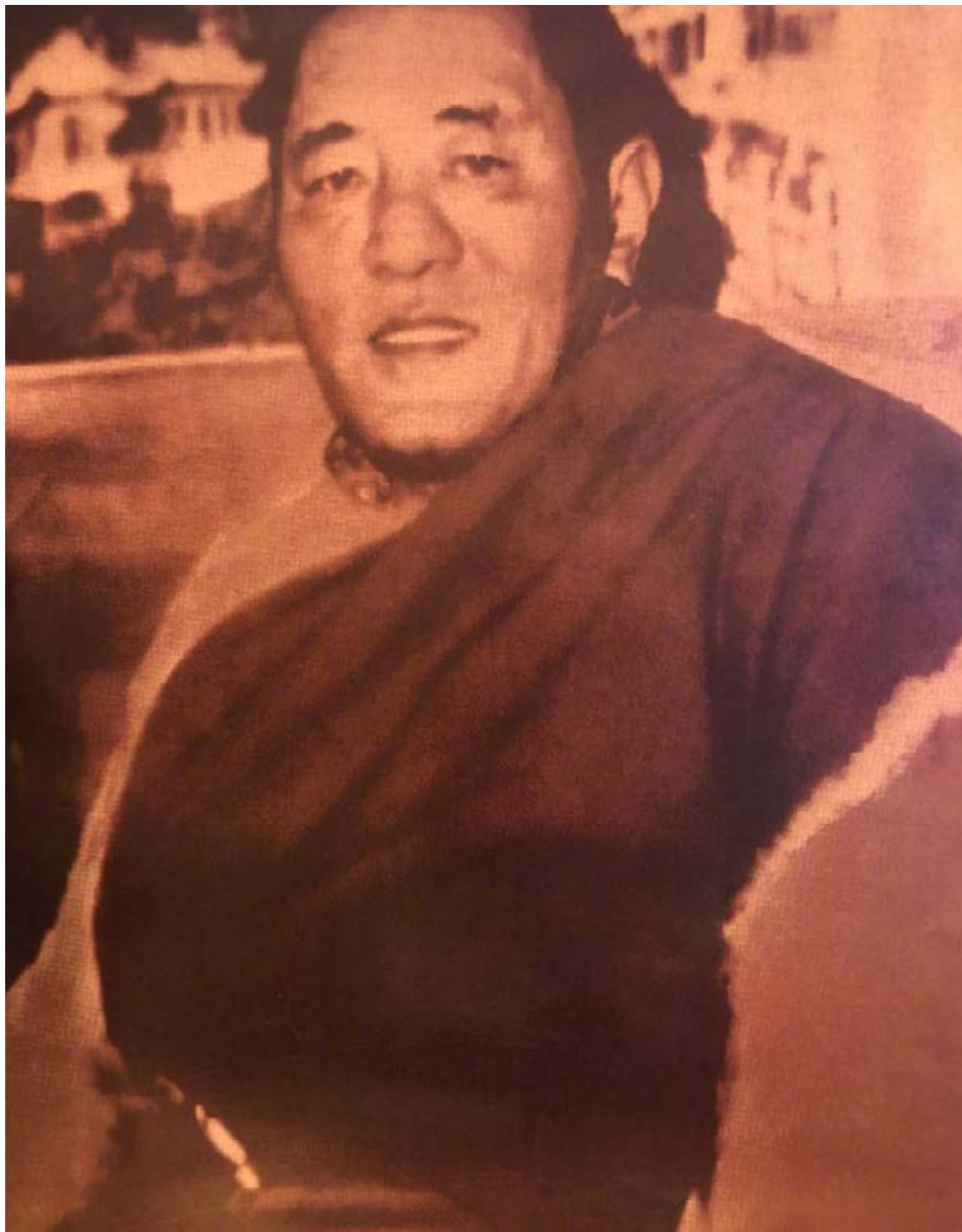


361

December 25, 2019

No matter which deity we pray to, our wisdom would be bound to increase. More specifically, if we seek blessings, we pray to our gurus; if we seek accomplishment, we pray to our deities; if we pursue activities of benefiting beings, we pray to the dakinis; and if we want to dispel unfavorable conditions, we pray to the Dharma protectors. I hope we will make prayers an integral part of our lives.





362

December 26, 2019

All conditioned phenomena are impermanent, just like the fleeting lightning. We should not desire them. Otherwise, we would have an unending stream of them. The omniscient Longchenpa once said, “For all the trivial matters in the world, they will continue to persist if we desire them. However, whenever we put them down, they will cease.”





363

December 27, 2019

We should carefully observe the impermanence of our thoughts and treat all phenomena as if they were a dream or an illusion. By practicing in this way, we will be able to experience the state that all phenomena are illusory, and thus avoid being too attached to secular matters. It is just like watching images on the TV screen. Naturally, our attachments to these matters will gradually vanish.



364

December 28, 2019

We should eliminate any intention of greed and hatred in our relationships with anyone in this world. Rather, we should treat all with a heart of equality. By acting this way, we'll naturally gain all merits both in this secular world and in the spiritual practice.



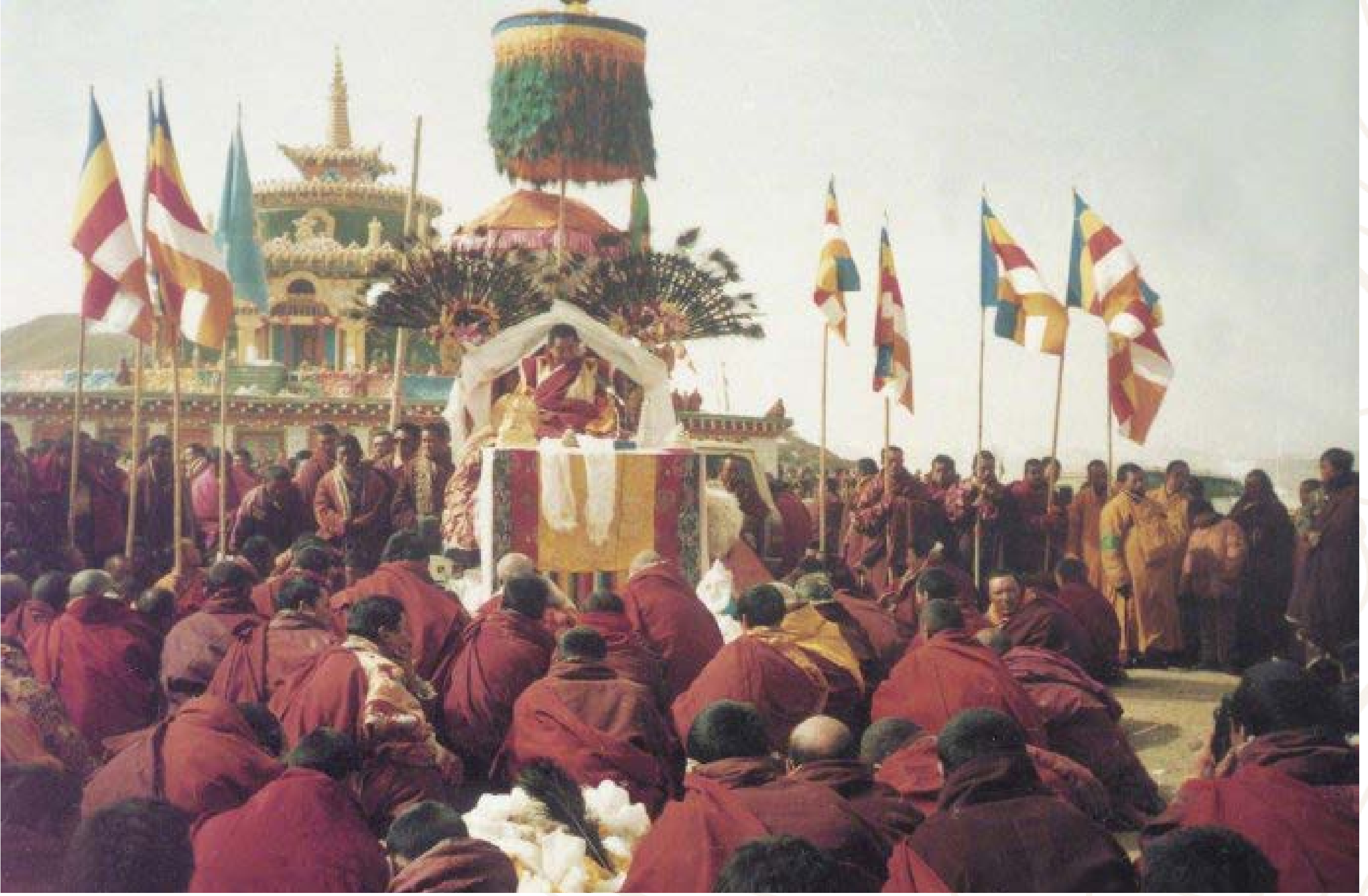


365

December 29, 2019

Many of us treat our impure bodies, which have to endure the pain and suffering of birth, aging, illness, and ultimately death, with great care, constantly grooming ourselves to be more attractive. If we are willing to give so much attention even to this impermanent body, why are we not making our best efforts to adorn our minds, which will be with us this and future lifetimes, with all the merits we can generate? Why do we pay so much attention to our body while ignoring our mind? We must put our best efforts toward cultivating virtuous deeds.





366

December 30, 2019

For us ordinary beings, our wisdom is like the old moon at the end of a lunar month, almost invisible to the eye. Therefore, we need to work hard persistently to improve our wisdom, so that it would grow like the new moon from the first to the fifteenth day of a lunar month, increasingly luminous in the sky.





367

December 31, 2019

There are two types of successful practitioners in this world. Some can achieve a deep understanding of the Dharma and experience the wonderful Dharma ambrosia in a place of peace and quiet. While others accomplish great merits and renowned reputation

and are admired by all people. The Buddha said that both types of individuals deserve our utmost respect, and as Buddhists, we should also praise their accomplishments. Of course, it would be wonderful if an individual is successful in both endeavors. Nevertheless, even accomplishment in one should be deserving of praise and joy.

Either practicing diligently in peace and quiet or benefiting beings by engaging with them is key to being a successful practitioner.





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