

Supreme Master Ching Hai
A Master from the Himalayas
Three-time invited lecturer for the United Nations
Recipient of the World Peace Award and the World Spiritual Leadership Award



Experience The Divine
Be Veg, Go Green, Save The Planet
A collection of spiritual teachings by
Supreme Master Ching Hai



I do not belong to Buddhism or Catholicism. I belong to the Truth and I preach the Truth. You may call it Buddhism, Catholicism, Taoism, or whatever you like. I welcome all! Since the ancient time there is always a way to go back to the kingdom of God, there is always a way to see God. There's only one religion: The religion of God, of love and of understanding. There's only one church, one temple: The temple of enlightenment. Come to that temple;

then we'll know all religions of the world.

I dream that the whole world will become peaceful. I dream that all the killing will stop. I dream that all the children will walk in peace and harmony. I dream that all the nations will shake hands with each other, protect each other and help each other. I dream that our beautiful planet will not be destroyed. It took billions of years to produce this planet and it's so beautiful, so wonderful. I dream it will continue, but in peace, beauty, and love. Yes, that is my dream.

**Contents and original words in this book are permeated with
grace and blessings of Supreme Master Ching Hai**
The Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association
Offices in all major cities and countries around the world
Headquarters: PO Box 730247, San Jose, CA 95173-0247, U.S.A.
P.O. Box 9 Hsihu Hsiang, Miaoli Hsien, Formosa (Taiwan 36899)
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A little message:

In speaking of God, or the supreme spirit, Master instructs us to use original non-sexist terms to avoid the argument about whether God is a She or a He.

She + He = Hes (as in Bless).
 Her + Him = Hirm (as in Firm).
 Hers + His = Hiers (as in Dear).

Example: When God wants, Hes makes things happen according to Hiers will to suit Hirmself.

 As a creator of artistic designs as well as a spiritual Teacher, Supreme Master Ching Hai loves all expressions of inner beauty. It is for this reason that She refers to Vietnam as ‘Au Lac’ and Taiwan as ‘Formosa’. Au Lac is the ancient name of Vietnam and means ‘happiness’. And the name Formosa reflects more completely the beauty of the island and its people. Master feels that using these names brings spiritual elevation and luck to the land and its inhabitants.

 The logo’s characters, SM, stand for Supreme Master, signifying the Supreme Master power within everyone. The logo is an interweaving of red and gold colors. Red symbolizes the physical body, while gold represents the radiant Buddha nature or kingdom of God within.

 Abbreviations - ‘Q’: Question; ‘M’: Supreme Master Ching Hai.



Preface

This book is a compilation of original quotes sampled from numerous lectures, interviews and informal talks given by Supreme Master Ching Hai. Excerpts from oral teachings were gathered over the course of several years by one of the fellow disciples. What began as a sampling of her own favorite quotes given by the Master, soon became a voluminous collection of material. With the help of many fellow disciples who transcribed and translated dozens of lectures, a book began to take form. Through dedicated patience, devotional love, help from fellow disciples and the grace of the Master, this work is now presented to you. The entire contents of this book are the original words of the Master, recorded verbatim. Editing has been done only on the order of quotes, and on the grammar and punctuation of the transcriptions themselves.

Through the spoken words, a living Master can bring ancient wisdom to life. To experience these discourses in person, the seeker is affected on all levels of understanding, beyond space and time, far beyond any mental concept. These types of Masters, having become fully conscious of their supreme nature within, offer a perfect mirror of the most noble and divine qualities within each of us, a reflection of our own potential for self-mastery. As one comes into contact with this perfect image, one's life begins to turn away from fear and self-doubt and to move toward more tolerance and compassion, more hope and joy. Such is the experience that countless hundreds, thousands, millions of people have had in the presence of Supreme Master Ching Hai. She speaks above and beyond general philosophy and theology, echoing the Truth, which lies directly in the hearts of all seekers. This kind of experience is beyond the words alone, but rather an invisible connection all of us share with the infinite. Through Her words, Her eyes and Her voice, one can obtain limitless blessing and inspiration. With Her help and the practice of the Quan Yin method of meditation, one can quickly progress along the path to full enlightenment.

Supreme Master Ching Hai is world-renowned for Her great wisdom, sense of humor, humility and deep compassion. She has traveled to all parts of the world dedicating Herself and Her time in order to teach others that the Truth we all seek is not far away. Her multicultural background (She is fluent in five languages English, German, Chinese, French and Aulacese) allows Her to express one ageless Truth in a multitude of ways, so that each individual receives his or her own answer, according to his or her own needs.

Through daily practice of a non-denominational meditation technique call the Quan Yin method (contemplation of the inner Sound stream); we can all attain understanding of the great joy, compassion and heavenly bliss described within religious and spiritual scriptures around the world. More than just a simple meditation technique, this living teaching brings to anyone who sincerely desires it the ability to carry the meditative state into all parts of their lives. It offers each of us a way to have true love and understanding for our fellow beings, to play our part in society while still keeping our mind clear of worry and attachment, and a way to find freedom here and beyond this world.

All of this, Master Ching Hai offers free of charge and conditions to anyone seeking the Truth. She does not personally accept any donations, all of Her public lectures are offered

free of charge, and initiation into the Quan Yin method of meditation is given to anyone who is truly dedicated to their own spiritual development. Master says that a spiritual Teacher should never charge the student for what they already own. She simply opens the door to our own inner wisdom and then guides and protects us until we have fully realized our own treasure inside.

May the Truth guide you along the path to your own great awakening.



Introduction

Every human being has, at one time or another, wondered about the deeper meaning of his or her life. We witness on a daily basis the suffering caused by our ignorance, often feeling helpless to change it. But we are also blessed with brief glimpses of deep insight and joy, which bring temporary comfort and hope to our lost souls. Regardless of the tides and turns of our lives, the recurring questions still remain, 'Where do I come from? What is the purpose of my life? What am I here for? And where am I going after I die?' Should we search for answers to these questions, we would open the door to a multitude of philosophies and practices, some safer than others, some quicker than others, yet not an easy choice for anyone to make.

Searching alone may seem like wandering in a maze, not knowing what turn to take next. Countless road signs may seem to point in different directions, leaving us confused and constantly searching outside of ourselves. We seek relief from an undefined longing, a void which lays buried behind the distractions of our lives. But the day we find ourselves in the presence of a true spiritual Master, we know that the search has come to an end, for this living Teacher proves to us that complete liberation and self-mastery is possible in this lifetime and we only need to claim it, for it is ours.

When we take away all that divides us from the world around us, we find that only love remains, and this is our true essence. Once a living Master introduces us to our own divinity, all of our previous illusions of self-identity begin to fall away and instead of having to learn more, we begin to unlearn, to let go of useless, negative habits and ways of thinking. Our path is now set before us on our journey back Home.

When a traveler is lost, he must find a higher vantage point in order to obtain a better view. The higher he goes, the wider and clearer his vision becomes. Soon, the ominous dark shadows that once petrified him are discovered to be only mere shrubs in the wilderness! Likewise, the higher we go on our inward journey, the more our fears and false limitations are revealed to us. We learn to see them for what they are and let go of them just as we would discard an old worn-out garment. As we shed the outer appearance of ourselves, we no longer see separation and we feel united with everyone. The color of our skin and the language we speak may vary, but our innermost fears and aspirations are identical. So as we get to know our true selves, we gain comfort and understanding both within and far beyond ourselves.

If you feel that you are ready to embark upon such a journey, this book should provide you with priceless guidance and blessings, much needed in our present times. Supreme Master Ching Hai addresses in a very specific way some of the most frequently asked questions posed by seekers around the world. She clarifies often-misunderstood concepts without oversimplifying them. This collection of Her teachings is very much like a practical guide to your own treasure hunt. It will provide you with an overall map, warning you of obstacles ahead, teaching you how to prepare yourself. With Master Ching Hai by your side, you will surely find your way Home.



The heavenly cardinal Supreme Master Ching Hai

Throughout the ages, mankind has been visited by rare individuals whose sole purpose is the spiritual upliftment of humanity. Jesus Christ was one of these visitors, as were Shakyamuni Buddha and Mohammed. These three are well known, but there are many others whose names we do not know; some taught publicly, and were known by a few, and others remained anonymous. These individuals were called by different names, at different times, in different countries. They have been referred to as Master, avatar, enlightened one, savior, messiah, divine mother, messenger, guru, living saint, and the like. They came to offer what has been called enlightenment, salvation, realization, liberation, or awakening. The words used may be different, but in essence they all mean the same thing. Visitors from the same divine source, with the same spiritual greatness, moral purity, and power to uplift humanity as the holy ones from the past are here with us today, yet few know of their presence. One of them is Supreme Master Ching Hai.

Master Ching Hai is an unlikely candidate to be widely recognized as a living saint. She is a woman, and many Buddhists and others believe the myth that a woman can not become a Buddha. She is of Asian descent, and many western people expect that the savior will come from their own culture. However, those of us, from all over the world, and from many different religious backgrounds, who have gotten to know Her, and who follow Her teachings, know who and what She is. For you to come to know this will take a measure of openness of mind and sincerity of heart. It will also take your time and attention, but nothing else.

People spend most of their time earning a living and taking care of material needs. We work in order to make our lives, and those of our loved ones, as comfortable as possible. When time permits, we give away our attention to such things as politics, sports, television, or the latest scandals. Those of us who have experienced the loving power of direct inner contact with the divine know there is more to life than this. We feel it is a pity that the good news is not more widely known. The solution to all of the struggles of life is sitting quietly inside, waiting. We know that heaven is just a breath away. Forgive us when we err on the side of over enthusiasm and say things that may offend your rational mind. It is difficult for us to remain quiet, seeing what we have seen, and knowing what we know.

We who consider ourselves disciples of the Supreme Master Ching Hai, and fellow practitioners of Her method (the Quan Yin method of meditation), offer this book to you with the hope that it will help bring you closer to your own personal experience of divine fulfillment, whether it be through our Master or any other.

Master Ching Hai teaches the importance of the practice of meditation, inner contemplation, and prayer. She explains that we must discover our own inner divine presence, if we want to be truly happy in this life. She teaches that enlightenment is not esoteric and out of reach, attainable only by those who retreat from society. Her job is to awaken the divine presence within, while we lead normal lives. She states, 'It is like this. We all know the Truth. It's just that we forgot it. So sometimes, someone has to come and remind us of the purpose of our life, why we must find the Truth, why we must practice

meditation, and why we must believe in God.’ She asks no one to follow Her. She simply offers Her own enlightenment as an example, so that others may gain their own ultimate liberation.

This book is the original verbal teachings of Supreme Master Ching Hai. Please note that the lectures, comments, and quotes by Master Ching Hai contained herein were spoken by Her, recorded, transcribed, sometimes translated from other languages, and then edited for publication. We recommend that you listen to or watch the original audio or video tapes. You will get a much richer experience of Her presence from these sources than from the written words. Of course, the most complete experience is to see Her in person.

For some, Master Ching Hai is their mother, for some She is their father, and for others She is their beloved. At the least, She is the very best friend you could ever have in this world. She is here to give to you, not to take. She takes no payment of any kind for Her teachings, help or initiation. The only thing She will take from you is your suffering, your sorrow and pain, but only if you want this!



A biography of Supreme Master Ching Hai

Master Ching Hai was born in Aulac. Her father was a highly reputed naturopath. He loved to study world literature and was especially interested in philosophy. Among his favorites were the writings of Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, and these were available to Master Ching Hai as a young child. She read these and other Buddhist texts before She entered primary school.

Although Her parents are Catholic, they were open to Buddhist thoughts. Her grandmother was a Buddhist. Master loved to spend time with Her grandmother, and she taught Her the scriptures and Buddhist worship. Master Ching Hai developed a very open attitude toward religions due to this background. She would attend a Catholic church in the mornings, a Buddhist temple in the afternoons, and in the evenings would listen to lectures on the holy teachings. This left Her with many spiritual questions, such as 'Where did we come from? What is life after death? Why are people so different?'

At one time, there was a shortage of doctors and nurses in Her town, so Master helped in the hospital after classes. She washed patients, emptied bedpans and did errands in Her efforts to ease people's suffering.

Master has always had a soft spot for animals, and would often take a wounded animal home, care for it and release it. When She saw an animal slaughtered, She would cry, wishing that She could prevent such unnecessary suffering. She has been a vegetarian, and has always been repulsed by the sight of killing or of meat, all Her life.

She worked for a time in Germany as a translator for the Red Cross. She translated between the Aulacese language, German and English, and also volunteered to work long hours in the service of Aulacese refugees. She did so at the expense of Her own health and comfort. Her work with the Red Cross put Master Ching Hai in contact with refugees from many countries. She was continuously faced with the suffering and turmoil brought on by wars and natural disasters. Master suffered a great deal trying to alleviate the pain She saw, and She realized how impossible it was for any one person to stop the suffering of humanity. This drove Her more strongly toward finding enlightenment, as She realized that only this could help alleviate mankind's pain. With this as Her goal, She practiced meditation even more seriously. She sought out new teachers, read everything She could find, and tested many different methods. She felt, however, that these efforts were not working, and that She was not experiencing the spiritual phenomena She read about in the scriptures, nor was She reaching the enlightened state. This was extremely frustrating for Her at the time.

While in Germany, Master Ching Hai was happily married to a German scientist, with doctorates in two fields. He was a kind, attentive and supportive husband. He became a vegetarian, traveled with his Wife on pilgrimages and was very supportive of Her charitable works. Eventually, Master felt that She needed to leave Her marriage in order to pursue Her spiritual goals. She discussed this at great length with Her husband, and their separation was with his agreement. This was an extremely difficult decision for both of

them, but Master felt very strongly that this was the right decision. She needed to devote Her undivided attention to the pursuit of enlightenment.

After leaving Her marriage, Master sought to find the perfect method, which could lead one to attain liberation in one lifetime. In the Surangama sutra, Shakyamuni Buddha said that the Quan Yin method is the highest of all methods. None of Master's teachers knew it, so She traveled and searched everywhere for the right Master. Finally, after many years, She found a Himalayan Master who initiated Her into the Quan Yin method, and gave Her the divine transmission that She had sought for so many years. After a brief period of Quan Yin practice, She became fully enlightened. She continued practicing and improving Her understanding, and remained in retreat in the Himalayas for some time.

Eventually, Master Ching Hai traveled to Formosa. One evening, during a typhoon with heavy rain, as She meditated in a room behind a small temple, a group of people knocked at Her door. Master asked them why they had come, and they answered, 'Quan Yin Bodhisattva (The Goddess of Mercy) replied to our prayers and told us about You, saying that You are the great Master and we should pray to You for the method to reach liberation.' Master tried to send them away but they would not go. Finally, Master, touched by their sincerity and devotion, agreed to initiate them, but only after several months of purification and their agreement to adhere to a vegetarian diet.

Shy by nature, Master Ching Hai did not seek out students to teach. In fact, She ran away from people who sought Her initiation. This happened in India, and in the United States where She was living the unassuming life of a Buddhist Nun. When She was 'discovered' for the third time in Formosa, She realized that She must not run away from the inevitable tasks that lie ahead. She began sharing with all who wished to hear Her message of Truth, and She began initiating sincere students into the Quan Yin method.

Master Ching Hai's work has spread by word of mouth from this first small group in Formosa to many millions of people around the world. She has traveled and taught throughout Africa, Latin America, the United States, Asia, Europe and Oceania. Many people from all walks of life, and from many different religious backgrounds, have made great spiritual progress with Her help. Grateful friends and disciples are to be found all over the world, ready and willing to help others learn from their beloved Supreme Master.

In addition to helping countless numbers of people through Her spiritual teachings and initiations, Master Ching Hai has used Her boundless love and energy to assist those who are suffering or in need. In recent years, Her humanitarian efforts have touched the hearts and lives of millions of people all over the world. Master does not discriminate between suffering caused by spiritual ignorance, material privation, or circumstantial events. Wherever there is suffering, She will help.

Some of Master Ching Hai's humanitarian activities in the past few years include aid to: The homeless throughout the United States; victims of fire in southern California; victims of many floods in the Midwest United States, central and eastern Mainland China, India, Malaysia, Aulac, Holland, Belgium and France; disadvantaged elderly in Brazil; those displaced by the eruption of Mt Pinatubo in the Philippines; disaster victims in northern Thailand; destitute families in Formosa and Singapore; lepers in Molokai, Hawaii; spiritual communities in India, Germany and Uganda; families of mentally retarded children in Hawaii; victims of the 9-11 tragedy in New York and victims of the Los Angeles, Turkey and Formosa earthquake; veterans of the United States; orphanages in Aulac; institutions of medical research on AIDS and cancer in the United States; and many, many others. Of

course, we must also mention Master Ching Hai's never-ending and tireless efforts to help the Aulacese refugees, those both inside and out of refugee camps.

Although She has not ever sought acknowledgement of any kind, Master Ching Hai has been recognized and honored for Her humanitarian work by government officials throughout the world. For example, October 25, 1993 was proclaimed 'The Supreme Master Ching Hai Day' by the Mayor Fasi of Honolulu Hawaii, and February 22, 1994 was likewise proclaimed by the six Governors of the States of Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Kansas, Missouri and Minnesota. She also received the 'World Peace Award' in Honolulu, and the 'World Spiritual Leadership Award' at a ceremony in Chicago on February 22, 1994. Congratulatory messages were sent to Her at the Chicago ceremony by many government officials worldwide, including Presidents Clinton, Bush, and Reagan.

In recent years, Master Ching Hai has also devoted Herself to creative expression of the beauty She enjoys within. Her creative works include paintings, decorated fans, lamps, dress and jewelry designs, and songs. Many of these items are made available for purposes of fundraising.

Master Ching Hai has told us that She is not always enlightened. She lives a normal worldly life, and knows from experience about our problems, our heartaches, passions, desires and doubts. She also knows the heavenly realms of kingdom of God, and how to get there from here. Her sole function at this point in Her life is to help us with our journey from the suffering and confusion of the un-awakened state to the bliss and absolute clarity of total divine realization. If you are ready, She is here to take you Home.

Master Ching Hai takes an unusually broad view of all religions. She has studied and taught the words of Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, Lao Tzu and many others. She always emphasizes the similarities among the great teachings, and lets us see through Her eyes how all the great Masters are preaching the same Truth. She often explains how different religious opinions have arisen, due only to the difference in opinions of different people in different countries at different times.

Master Ching Hai gives initiation and a variety of lectures to interested students and people, according to their backgrounds and cultures, including Christians, Moslems, Buddhists, Jews, Hindus, Taoists, or atheists, et cetera. She speaks fluently in English, German, Chinese, French and Aulacese languages. Those who wish to learn and practice the Quan Yin method with Master Ching Hai are welcomed to receive Her initiation.



Experience the divine – Be veg, go green, save the planet

SUPREME MASTER CHING HAI'S CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR WISHES FOR 2009 ¹

Greeting, precious people!

On these magical days of Christmas and coming New Year, I would like to thank you for all the good things you've done in your past, wishing mighty blessing from heaven to shower upon you and cherished ones.

Especially I thank my loyal and faithful friends whose love and courage have sustained goodness on earth and charmed the mercy from heaven.

And I thank you for all the support and shared ideal that maybe we just can make this earth a better place or even a heavenly place.

Personally I know some of you but not all of you.

However, I know you are the best friends that anyone could ever ask for – wish I have the chance to thank you and embrace you all in person.

If the planet survives, it's because of your love, because of your heroic dedication.

Pray that your shining example will lead everyone to hope, confidence and emulation, so that together we can rebuild not only our planet but goodness in human's heart.

We will continue to work toward an ideal and peaceful tomorrow.

I have no worthy present to give such noble friends this Christmas.

But if you ask what gift pleases me, I would say, 'I WANT THE PLANET.'

May you continue to be a beacon of lofty splendor, befitting the children of God.

With tears of gratitude.

Ching Hai

1. Supreme Master Ching Hai's Christmas and New Year wishes for 2009 (Originally in English).

THE BLESSING OF BENEVOLENT ACTION ²

[Dr. Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, former NASA scientist, Thai parliamentarian and educator: When will the crisis of global warming hit us? And what is the actual cause of this global warming?]

According to all the reports every day, Dr. Ayudhya, we have been hit by the climate change already. It's just in different areas of the world, and so we do not see the total impact of it at one time. Anyway, if we do not do anything more than right now, the worst will come still, in approximately four years. And if no one has turned to the compassionate lifestyle, then the bad retribution, or, 'As we sow so shall we reap,' will be upon us. According to this collective bad karma, none of us or very few will survive. The actual cause of the global warming, according to the law of the universe, which is the law of cause and effect or the law of action and reaction, is that we will be reaping what we have been spreading. So, all the anguish, the crying of war victims, of the oppressed and the innocent beings – from the deep jungles to the vast sea, from a developed country to a less developed country – all this suffering and lamenting engulfs the earth right now and covers the planetary atmosphere, piercing even to heaven. So, how can we reap any better reward if countless beings grovel in such agony and suffering that even hell would pale in comparison? And when will it hit us? Well, it's already hitting us, but I'm not sure how more worse it will become. I pray that we, as a human race, wake up and take action quickly, really quickly, like yesterday, so that we will not have to bear the worst consequence that is awaiting us.

Governmental support in saving the planet is key

[Mrs. Kannika Sirikantraporn, President of the Associate Judge of the Juvenile Court: How can You persuade everyone in the society, including not only the leaders of the country and communities, the spiritual leaders and the lay people but also those who are poor and uneducated, to turn around and start seriously helping and taking care of the environmental issues such as the global warming?]

Yes, madam. I think the government must reinforce new laws and make information available to all corners of the world. Each nation must take responsibility to explain to her people about the importance of the survival project. The humans have to survive first before we talk about anything else. So, the governments play a very important role, and also the media, if we can have their blessing. People will understand if the governments explain it and make all the information available. No matter how uneducated, people will understand, because it's concerning their life and death. We must make grassroots seminars to offer evidence and logic and the solution to the global warming. In the case of imminent disaster, the government would evacuate people in no time. And in the case of war, people are always informed how to protect themselves. The governments even recruit new army members so that they can go out and protect the country or go out to war.

So, in this case, it's even more urgent than war. I'm sure the government will have a solution to it. I'm sure the people can be informed anywhere in the nation. The government has the power that's vested in them to do this. So, I can only beg the governments of the world to please use their mighty force to rescue the planet. Thank you. May God bless us!

2. 'Stop global warming: Act now!' videoconference, Pathumthani, Thailand, October 11, 2008 (Originally in English).

[Thank You. And then I have another question. Cattle farming is one of the causes of global warming, but for those whose life and well-being depends on the occupation, what should they do?]

Good question, madam. They can grow organic food. Right now, organic food is very 'in.' It's very healthy for everyone, and it's in very big demand. Also, we are short of food; we are already informed of that. Raising livestock makes us even more short of food. So, organic farming uses less water, less time, less labor and produces more healthy food in abundance for all to enjoy.

In our Association, we have many members who are doing organic farming. And it's proven that anyone can do it. Anyone who is interested can log on to our website to know all the information of how to do organic farming. It's so easy and so simple; you don't even need much water at all. And the food grows so fast, even one or two person can take care of many hectares without much problem at all.

So, we have the www.SupremeMasterTV.com to inform everyone who is interested in it. It doesn't even need much capital, but if capital is needed, the government should give subsidies to help the organic farmer instead of using those to help the meat production, which is harmful to us. To help organic farming is helpful to everyone, including the farmer. So, I think it's a very wise step. Thank you, madam.

To prepare for global warming, just change to compassion

[Mrs. Prasertsuk Chamornmarn, Director of the Office of Natural Resources, Environment Policy and Planning, Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization: How should a community prepare for the upcoming effects of global warming?]

We cannot prepare much. We can only wait and see because we don't know when it will strike us and where and what we can prepare anyway. Even if we stockpile some food and so on, it is not always helpful. It just makes the world food shortage worsen. So, we can only rely on the good karma that we can create. And that we can do: We can save ourselves right now by turning to the vegetarian diet, which is benevolent and very compassionate. And by being compassionate to others, heaven will be compassionate to us. The law of cause and effect is always very correct.

So, the only thing we do to save ourselves is to be compassionate and to change to a more noble, benevolent lifestyle without meat or animal products. Then you can see immediately, the weather will change. Everything will return to a more peaceful abundance because heaven is merciful. And we have to start to be merciful like heaven; then we can experience heaven. There's no other way we can prevent such a disaster like this. That's the only thing I can tell you.

The ways we are going right now are destructive by all means – physically, mentally, scientifically, morally – which is all wrong. If we cause suffering to others, we cannot expect happiness in return. We have to do the opposite of what we are doing right now; then the outcome will be opposite. What we have been doing is bringing us disaster and trouble and maybe mass destruction in the very near future. So, if we want to reverse the course, we have to reverse our action because every action provokes another reaction. So, if we want to have a good result, we have to start doing good. Be veg, go green, and do good deeds.

Our only ‘escape’ is through good action

[Miss Pornprapai Sueakeow, news reporter from Daily News: We have heard the scientists acknowledge the global warming problem and that it will cause natural disasters and flooding to come. There is news that scientists are finding a new place for humankind on another planet. I would like to know if You know about this and how much You know about the situation to move humankind to somewhere else. Thank You.]

We cannot run away from bad karma. We cannot run away from the consequence of our actions. We have to pay, you know that. So, if we don't want to have the bad consequences, then we have to create good action. So, anyway, in case you want to go to another planet, I don't think we are very far at it yet. We have a couple of space stations; if that's enough for the whole planet, I'm not sure. And we have some crane camera on Mars and some dirt from the Moon. That's what we have for now, and that's where we are. It's not very optimistic. But where do you want to go? We have to be vegetarian and be compassionate; then everything will turn around because good karma and loving atmosphere changes everything.

The immediate response of a meat-free planet

[Mr. Saton Sanpipat, Strategic Planning and Business Development Manager, Management System Certificate Institute: Should the issue of global warming be made into a national agenda? If so, what actions should we take to make this happen?]

First of all and foremost of all, we should use the government system to encourage new projects, like new levels of citizen cooperation. Namely, we must let people know it's urgent now and it's time to stop the global crisis. Time is short and we must all act as one to save our world from disappearing, to save our lives and all the lives on the planet. Everything else takes too long. I have told everyone many times that technology takes too long, even if it helps, it takes so long. So, the fastest and easiest way is to stop consumption of animal products. Then we will have more time to develop better technology and scientific advancement. If we stop livestock raising and the cruel practices on human and animals, the result will be like a miracle: Almost immediately or within a few weeks. If everyone stops eating meat right now, within eight weeks' time the weather will change into benevolent, immediately: Everything that has been damaged, will return to normal, in eight weeks' time. If everyone on the planet stopped eating meat and turned into a compassionate heart, the results would be immediate. It's just like we want to go south but we are heading north. So, the only way to see the south is to turn to the opposite direction and head south. The way we are doing right now, in killing the animals and humans, it's not benevolent or respecting lives. It's wrong. So, if we want the opposite effect for ourselves and for our life, we have to do the opposite. That is very simple and logical, and everyone understands that. Thank you so much.

Eliminate animal products and the earth will become a paradise

[Dr. Darika Kingnate, Assistant Director of Emerging Infectious Diseases, Ministry of Public Health: We are at a time where the Arctic ice is melting at a very rapid rate and concurrently; we are seeing more than ten new human diseases being transmitted from emerging animal diseases, for example, mad cow disease, pig virus and bird flu. The main reason is caused by human livestock production. Master, do You think it is possible to convince people to reduce livestock production or not and using what means to do so? Thank You.]

Of course, doctor. Reducing livestock production and livestock raising will reduce the major cause of global warming, at least eighty percent of it. And it also reduces weather turbulence, natural disasters and fatal diseases for which animal consumption is the cause. It's even scientifically and medically proven that people should adopt the life-saving habit of the vegetarian diet and stay away from all animal products. Then we will save the earth and save our lives and the lives of our children and animals as well. We must turn to this beneficial vegetarian, meaning animal-free diet. Then everything else will be as you want. The earth will become a paradise. No one will ever lack anything. No one will go hungry. No war, no disease, no disasters, no global warming. Nothing anymore except peace, happiness, and abundance. I promise in the name of the Buddha, it is like that. Thank you.

The protective shield of true goodness

[Ms. Yaowarin Srichainan, Computer Engineer, Bureau of Internal Revenue: To what extent would Thailand be affected by the effects of global warming and what would be the worst we could all expect? What would be the most efficient and effective way to create awareness of the seriousness of global warming to the world so that everyone would help do their part to prevent this crisis as soon as possible? Thank You.]

We should not emphasize the worst effects of global warming. We should not expect the disaster to come; we should begin to focus on how to prevent it. We have to turn to the opposite direction, which is in the best interest of Thai people and the world. That is, again, to live a compassionate lifestyle, to be a vegetarian, better even, vegan, meaning no animal products whatsoever so that the benevolent atmosphere will envelop our planet and of course Thailand.

With protection and blessing from heaven, we create a shield around us, around our planet, by a very compassionate, powerful, benevolent atmosphere. That is the only protection that is safe and everlasting. So, we have to help spread this awareness of global warming and the survival solution. The government must inform themselves well and then inform the people so together they can decide the best course of action to change the negative energy to a beneficial and merciful one. Then all will be saved and live happily now and in the future. We must live according to the compassionate teaching of the Buddha. Be veg, do good and we can go green after.

GOD LOVES YOU SO! ³

[One night during the gathering with disciples in France, Master was inspired to sing outdoors. As initiates gathered in silence beneath the midnight starry sky, the spontaneous and exquisite notes from our Master soothed the souls of all present, extending to the heavenly spheres and touching all beings in the universe.]

Good night, beauty; Good night, glory,
You are divine, remember well!
Have a sweet dream, wonderful friends,
Love of heaven, beauty of mine!
God loves you so, I love you more,
You are divine, you are God's love.

Good night dear friends, love of heaven

3. Group meditation, Paris Center, France, September 1, 2008 (Originally in English).

Glory of life, wonder of mine!
You are so loved, you are so dear,
Heaven shields you, and God loves you
And I love you, you know it's true
Forever more, you are my love.

Sweetheart of mine, you are divine
Never forget, you are God's child!
You are the one, that I so love,
You are the one, that God so loves!
Remember well, you are divine,
You are glory, you're from heaven!

We love us so, no matter how,
No matter where, always together.
We are best friends, life after life,
Never apart, 'cause we are one.
'Cause I love you, and you love me,
'Cause God loves you, forever more.

We're from heaven, please don't forget,
One day we will, all go back Home
Where we belong, where no sorrow,
Where no sorrow, only beauty
And love and peace, and bliss and glory,
No more no more, no tears no more!
No more sorrow, never, nevermore,

'Cause you're God's love, 'cause you're my love!
Maybe you forget, but you'll remember,
'Cause you're divine, 'cause you are wonder!
You are the best, no one better,
You are the ones, God loves the most!
I love you so, every day more,
Nothing will change my love for you!

Have a sweet dream, wonderful vision,
Go to heaven, visit your Home
That's where we'll be, that's where we belong,
Not this terrifying, and fearsome world.

One day we'll leave all this behind,
Only you and I, with love in heaven!
No more worry, no separation,
No more sorrow, no more trouble!

Everything here, just come and goes,
Have peace in your wonderful heart!
Remember dear, that day long ago,
You were carefree, you were in heaven

Remember dear, you are that one,
Full of happiness, full of wonder.

Remember dear, you are that one,
Full of glory, full of beauty!

You are that one, I know you are;
Please remember and be happy!
No matter what happens in the world,
You are in safety, forever and ever.

'Cause you are not human, we are not the body
You've just forgotten, remember please!
Then you'll be well, then you'll be happy
Never forget, you are divine!
You are God's love, you are my love
Remember well, you are God's love!
You are beautiful, you are wonderful,

Only I know, I wish you know!
Do not forget, you are the best,
I tell the truth, believe it's so.
It's the ego that makes trouble,
It's not your Self, you're just wonderful!

You're so pure, you're so pure,
You are so kind, you are such a love!
I wish you know who you really are,
Then you'll be happy, never sorry!

Because I know, I know you well,
Just wish you know the way I know.
Then you'll be free from all trouble,
Then you'll be free from all sorrow.

I love you so, only I know,
I wish you do, just like I know!
One day you will... know what you are,
That you are love, that you are pure,
That you're divine, that you're God's child,
The only love of the whole heavens!

I wish you know just like I know,
I wish you know God loves you so!
And if you feel that you're lonely,
It is not so, dear love of mine!
God's always there, look after you,
Looking at you, with all Hiers love!

Just wish you know, the way I know,
God loves you so, every day more!
Just wish you know just like I know,
Then you'll be free from all sorrow!

One day you will, one day you'll know,
No one, no one, can make you fear!

No one, no one, can hurt you more!
The day will come, you will all know
Peace in your heart will be forever!

You will remember who you really are
Then you'll be free, forever and ever!
Just wish you know the way I know,
The day will come, you'll know God's love!

Have a sweet dream, remember God,
Have a sweet dream, remember God!
You are divine, you are God's love,
Remember well, you are my love...(!)

THE COMPLETE PROTECTION OF VIRTUE ⁴

Right now, many disasters are happening around the world, more frequently than ever before and even more deadly. This is because the force of the negative retribution of the killing karmic consequence is more ripe than before. So, people are suffering a lot around the world.

But all of our suffering is from the killing of eating meat. If we didn't eat meat, no one would kill for us, to offer us meat. So, the vegetarian diet will minimize all the disasters and even clear them all out. If people just turn their hearts around, they would be compassionate and loving like real human beings, because humans are inherently very compassionate and loving. It's just they have been misled. They have not been informed since a long time and the bad habits or the negative information has already been ingrained into their way of life. They have been misled very, very badly.

So now, we have to inform them and remind them again that it is not the way we should live our life. The way we should live our life is with love, compassion and peace with all beings, including animals. So, we have to continue doing our job of informing people. Tell them to be vegetarian to minimize all these bad effects. Even if I sit here telling you that the cyclone will come or not come, what good does that do? If this cyclone doesn't come, another cyclone will come, or some other disaster will come if we don't change the way we live our life. If we don't change to live according to the harmonious system of the universe, then we are out of accord. And when we are out of this protective harmonious cycle of the universe, we're out of protection. And that's why bad things happen.

SAVING THE PLANET THROUGH LOVING KINDNESS ⁵

So, after we save the planet, of course people will be different. They have to be different now in order to save the planet already. So, your part is to be positive. Save the planet first and things will change after. It's not you alone who can save the planet. It's the people who change their consciousness. If they would be veg, go green, and do good, then that means they have changed for the better. Their consciousness has gone up to a higher level; then of course they merit the earth and could continue to live here and also their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and so on. At that time people will be in a higher level of consciousness and things will be clearer to them and to all. We will live in peace and love.

4. Videoconference with Bangkok Center, Thailand, July 24, 2008 (Originally in English).
5. Videoconference with New York Center, U.S.A., July 13, 2008 (Originally in English).

You have to envision a positive world, the heaven on earth that you would like it to be. You have to envision the nobler world, the positive world, the beautiful world, the heaven world.

Saving the world is a compassionate act. Even if the world is not saved, you are. You are saved by your loving kindness. Your merit will be multifold because you want to save others. This is the point that many of you still don't get. If you want to save the world, if you want to do anything toward this goal, you're enlarging your nobility, your heavenly attribute. So, if you spread the encouragement to save the planet, if you go veg, if you go green, if you do good deeds or you help others because you want to save other beings' lives on earth, then you have a saintly quality. You reawaken your holiness. It's not just about saving the physical planet and the physical lives. It's also about how great you are for wanting to do so and actually partaking in this life-saving crusade.

So, if people do want to be veg, go green, and do good because they want to save the planet, then their spirit is noble. They have elevated themselves. And I hope you continue the way you're doing. Even if you cannot save the planet, you save yourself. Let's put it this way: If we cannot save the whole planet, we will be able to save some souls, the ones who will walk the way with us, the ones who, due to your diligent spreading of the news, will return to their original noble self. Those people will be saved at least.

A VEGETARIAN EDEN ON EARTH ⁶

- Q. *Master, are the recent disasters around the world somehow connected with the billions of animals slaughtered every year for human consumption?*
- M. Of course, they are. 'As you sow, so shall you reap,' and 'Like attracts like.' Scientifically and spiritually speaking, we have been warned. So, all the disasters that have happened around the world, of course are connected with humans' unkindness to their co-inhabitants. That's the price we have to pay for what we have done to the innocents who have done us no harm, who are also the children of God, who have been sent to earth to help us and to cheer our days. Because, generally, humans also had very good merit before they came to earth. That's why they became human, because of their good merit. So, from their good merit, there has been give and take and deductions and additions. Otherwise, if things had not been canceling out some of the bad retribution, then it would have been worse. Or the earth might have disappeared altogether already, but luckily the humans also do have some good merit, and it has not run out yet. That's why we are still hanging in here.
- Q. *Master, if the world were to go a hundred percent vegetarian right now, what kind of earth would we live in and what effect would this have on the world economy? Also, how great would the changes be and how long would it take to see the effects of these changes on our environment?*
- M. If the world were to go a hundred percent vegetarian right now, the good effect of it would be seen within more or less sixty days, or eight weeks. Within eight weeks we would see an immediate effect. Of course, you'll also see almost immediately. But to see the whole big picture, you can realize it within eight short weeks. And what kind of earth would we live in? It would be Eden again. We will have sudden peace, and sudden realization of sameness between all nations, between all humans and between humans and animals. The realization will dawn upon us. There's no need for explanation; people will suddenly understand that we're all equal. We and all co-

6. Videoconference with Surrey Center, United Kingdom, June 12, 2008 (Originally in English).

inhabitants, animals alike, are equal. And people will have respect even for trees and plants.

I really wish that we could have it right now. Things will be more lushful and abundant. People will feel happier, even without reason; they will not know why they feel happy, and food will be enough everywhere. Rivers will run plentiful again. Disasters will cease. Heaven will smile on humans, and good wishes will be fulfilled.

That is a kind of Eden. If we were to be vegetarian, all of the humans on the planet, that will be the effect. That's what we wish to have.

Practicing non-violence is number one

Q. *Master, is the world doing enough, and are we as initiates doing enough to save the planet at this critical time?*

M. Well, you have been doing fine. Most of the initiates are doing their best, and sincerely. But the world... no. They're doing something; they are trying but they are not doing it fast enough and they are not doing enough. And even the 'something' they are doing is often off track. I'm sorry, I have to be blunt; I've been too polite all these years and it doesn't work.

Now the thing is, most often the world is doing things that are second or third important in line. Like you have the throne, with number one in line, number two in line, number three in line and so on. But they are not running after the Crown Prince. They are running after the second, the third, the fourth or fifth and the eleventh.

The number one thing that is most important is non-violence – to humans and animals. Of course, that means vegetarian diet; that means completely abstaining from all animal products. That is the thing that has been ignored up to now. Some people have spoken out; even some government officials and organizations have spoken out about that, but too little. If we stop killing, if we practice non-violence to humans and animals, if we stop all the killing, then all bad effects will stop, almost instantly. There will be no end to happiness and freedom, of any aspects, body and mind, if we stop the main cause of disaster, that is the killing. The main cause of disaster is the violence of the people, mostly from the people. We have to stop all this. We have to stop all the killing. I keep saying it again, and again and again. We have to live and let live. We have to respect and save lives. But tell me, who will be wise enough to listen? And who will be strong enough to carry this out? That's the point. Perhaps everyone knows this, one way or another. But it needs a strong will to carry out. Not just knowing, but practicing. Practicing is very important.

We have to respect all lives, including that of our so-called enemies even. Directly or indirectly, we have to stop the killing. We have to all be vegetarian and abstain from all animal products. And that's how the killing will stop. Everything else is secondary.

Q. *Master, Oprah Winfrey is well-known by many people around the world and she recently has gone vegan for twenty-one days. And a lot of high-profile people are realizing the benefits of a vegan diet, and in turn are influencing a lot of people around the world. Master, is this a good turn in the right direction?*

M. Yes, it is. And bravo to Oprah. She has done the most glorious thing in her entire career, methinks. And I think she will continue in this direction. She's a wise woman,

and she has a huge bunch of followers. So, if she continues in this direction, she will do a great service to herself, humankind, and her believers. I think she's very wise; she will do it because, I think she put something in her blog, saying, 'How can you proclaim to be a spiritual seeker when you have no compassion for animals at all?' So, I think she's a wise woman. I think she will continue that and it will be very great.

After all, what is the good of gnawing or biting on a dead corpse, for such a dignified human as us? As the human who can conquer the moon, can explore Mars, and do many other incredible feats, how can we not conquer our own appetite? Because the appetite of most humans has caused untold suffering to the weak and defenseless animals. And we even have an abundance of food choices! It's not that we don't. So, if people just stop and think about this, they will realize how unfortunate it is that we have fallen into this trap that we have to kill to live, or that 'If I live, you must die.' This is a very pitiful situation for human beings. If anyone takes a little time to think about it, this is really, really tragic.

So, I hope people will realize it in the long run. If they stop and think about it, this is a really very tragic situation that the humans have fallen into, to let themselves be deprived of compassion or the loving instinct of a human. To succumb to this kind of cruelty, this is really a pity. It's not what humans intended to be at all.

Every effort counts in saving the planet

- Q. *Master, more and more news reports are mentioning going vegetarian as a solution to address climate change. For example, on June 3, 2008, BBC2 'Newsnight' featured a program about measures to tackle climate change, and the headline said something like this: 'Is it time to turn vegetarian?' It said the best solution would be for us all to become vegetarians. So, it seems that people of the world over are getting the message. Do we still have time to save the planet, though?*
- M. Yes, they are getting the message. But it's not enough. I want more of that, and on every television channel, every billboard, on the sidewalk, in every house and in every newspaper. This should be the topic that we talk about every day. Not the whole newspaper or the whole program, of course, but I mean some part of it has to be devoted to the most urgent need of our time, which is the climate change, and to stop it.

But nevertheless, they are doing something, and I am grateful. And I want to tell you some good news. The message, if people listen to it and do more, then of course we can save the planet! Right now, because of all the efforts that people have put into action, like planting trees, and driving less and sustainable fuel, we've gained more time to change the world. Also, many people have turned vegetarian, and some of the news media have helped to remind the public. And the governments also have done something or have thought about it. All this, however little, positive energy that people sincerely put their efforts into will bear fruit, and the more people turning to vegetarianism and preserving the planet, the further the deadline will recede. And then we will have more time, more and more time.

We have to thank the people who have changed to the vegetarian diet, and thank the governments who have put effort into preserving the environment, and we have to thank some of the news media who have been putting in efforts to remind people about our deadly situation. So, if you guys continue helping to remind people, and if the government gives us more blessing and the news people continue the trend of

giving the public more knowledge, then we still can save the planet. I do hope so. Thanks to the BBC2!

We salute the wise and courageous leaders

- Q. *Master, Prince Charles recently expressed his concern about the urgency to fight global warming in an article titled '18 months to stop climate change disaster.' It was published in May 2008 in the Telegraph newspaper in the United Kingdom. And being a member of a Royal Family and other people in such high positions in the political field, and so on, they're being advised what they should and should not say to the public. I was wondering what words of encouragement Master would offer these leaders to help them speak the truth and get their important message through.*
- M. I am very grateful to His Royal Highness and other courageous leaders in the world for stepping out of their boundary and speaking out for the sake of everyone. Even if the public does not appreciate their goodwill, heaven will take note. And they will have a great reward hereafter. It is, of course, very difficult to be in the position of authority. I understand that and I'm glad you understand their position. Of course, they've been told what to do and what not to say. But the advisors are not always wise. So, I think the leaders themselves should act according to the intuition of a highly developed human being. To be a leader is to be endowed with bravery, compassion and nobility. That's why you are a leader. It's not easy, of course, to be in the position of a leader. That's why leaders are few.

In a nation, there's only one king, one queen, some princesses, some princes, one president and one prime minister: Very few leaders, compared to the multitude of this world. But fewer even still are brave leaders, courageous leaders, righteous leaders and wise leaders. To such wise and courageous ones, we offer full support and respect. We pray that heaven gives them more strength and more wisdom to carry out their noble duty. Of course, bravo to Prince Charles, and other leaders. Prince Charles has been an environmentalist for many, many years. And he's getting always more and more vocal about this. And I hope he continues to set an example for other leaders because as I told you, leaders are few, and fewer still are those who are wise and courageous. Being a leader, we must know what is good for our subjects and what is not. What is good, we have to encourage or facilitate for them to do. And what is bad, we have to stop, to protect them. That is the true meaning of a leader.

He's a good man, a gentleman. I have always liked him. He's honest and straightforward. Being a prince, he is true to his heart. That is a very good quality. And he's not swayed by glamour or praise and gain. He's really a truthful man, and I really pray that he will have more strength to continue and do better and better still for his subjects and for the world, to make an exemplary, noble figure of a leader, for the world to follow.

The unimaginable cost of killing

- Q. *Hallo Master, recently a Supreme Master Television crew visited the island of Skye in Scotland, and they interviewed the founder of an animal sanctuary where they rescue farm animals. Rima Morrell, the animal sanctuary founder, who is also an author and animal telepathic communicator, when she was sitting with one of her pigs, he started sending messages saying, 'Now is the time that humans have to stop killing animals for food.' And the message seems really urgent. So, the question is: 'How can we help stop more people from eating animals?'*

- M. Yes, I have been asking myself that question, and you also, for many years already. This is a very frustrating question, because we don't always have the immediate answer, knowing that the habits of humans are hard to quit. I just hope that heaven has been warning enough with so many frequent disasters and incurable diseases, so that people truly wake up this time and stop all this cruelty to our co-citizens of the world, namely the animals and each other as well. If anyone would stop and think about it, it is really incredible how we still kill each other or even think of killing each other these days, not to talk about the poor defenseless innocent animals.

Well, all we can do is spread the news and explain to people as much as you can, hoping that your words or my words fall into some wise ears. Most humans do have telepathy, but they have completely lost it. So, they cannot hear directly the animals' cries of suffering, their cries of sorrow or their cries of advice, because they have been covered up tightly with a veil of ignorance from the king of illusion, from maya, from the so-called devil. So, it's very difficult for them to hear anything. But I just hope that at this time of peril, maybe they will wake up. So, we try to tell them anything that is convincing. Maybe they can wake up; maybe some of them will listen; maybe half will listen or maybe two-thirds will listen. I hope all of them will listen. I hope I will live to see that day.

I'm telling you truly because, as much as I love the animals, I know that their suffering has an end. Even if one animal suffers by abuse, torture or massacre in the slaughterhouse, they have only that life and then they will be free to heaven. It breaks my heart; I don't want to imagine how they suffer. But even then, it's not as bad as what the humans have to go through because of mistreating animals. So actually, I'm more sorry for the humans than the animals, do you understand? [Audience: Yes.]

If they are abused and badly treated, then they will be in a higher heaven. But the humans who have done all this to them will pay terribly. And that's what I'm worried about. Even though I love animals so much, the physical suffering, we will endure one way or another, even humans, too. But the spiritual suffering, this spiritual loss, it's a terrible loss. And humans commit terrible acts against themselves every day, causing them to lose spiritual merit because of killing animals, because of killing each other and because of eating animals. So, you see, it's the humans that I'm worried about.

We're trying as best as we can to awaken their real knowledge. But it's not easy. I thank you for all you have been doing. I thank you for bearing all this frustration with me. And thank you for still having unwavering faith that the humans will change. Maybe they will change and maybe we can still save the planet. We just have to continue. Okay? [Audience: Yes. Thank You, Master.]

The powerful vegetarian message

- Q. *Hallo Master! We have recently interviewed a musician lady who lives near the stone circle in south England. She told us she used to be vegetarian for many years, and then she went back to eating meat. But on the very day she and her mom watched Supreme Master Television, they went straight back to vegetarian diet again. And she cries every time she watches the channel, she told us. And she said after going back to vegetarian, her conscience feels great, and she feels pure, better and cleaner.*

She also said the channel informs people of the important issues of our time and the challenges we all face, and people are blind to it, about how and why to be a vegetarian. And she thinks people should start watching Supreme Master Television

because to her, this is how the television should be and this is what television should be used for.

- M. Right, yes. That's why we're doing it. I also met some people who had been vegetarian before and they went back to a non-vegetarian diet. And after meeting me and talking to me, and seeing that I eat vegetarian, they became vegetarian again! Personally, also I'm working; I am also a 'mini-Supreme Master Television.' All of us can have some influence in some way. That is cool. But it's just not fast enough for my patience. Anyway, we're doing what we can, and it's not just for other people; it's for us also, for our children and grandchildren, our friends and family members. They all are important. It's a pity that the world is not doing it together with us! If it were, then we'd have Eden on earth right away, within eight weeks! Within eight weeks all disasters would stop. That's how heaven is created. Where do you think heaven comes from? Heaven is a place where all beings act in the same way, not uniformly, but in the same level of compassion, the same level of love, and the same level of spiritual knowledge or understanding, the same level of nobility. That's what heaven is. And we can turn this world into heaven anytime. If human beings just turn around, all will be forgiven. Heaven is forgiving, because they did not know about the killing of the meat diet, they did not know anything much about killing. Of course, they knew a little bit, but no one emphasized it; no one really made it like a matter of fact. If the government, the media and all the people who have the power can wield their power in a correct way and inform or educate the public to make them know what is right and what is wrong, and that vegetarian diet is a must and the only diet that everyone should follow, then it will be done!

Look at how many people have decreased smoking. Even if smoking cigarettes has not been banned completely and has just been banned in the public only, look at the percentage of people who have decreased smoking and how much disease has been minimized. How much money of the taxpayers has been saved, just in a few months? You watch television; you know this. You know the effects immediately. Look at that! And it's not even banned completely yet. Can you imagine if it's banned completely someday, or if meat has been banned, or has been advised to be less and less, can you imagine how good it'd be?

The government is supposed to govern goodly and rightly. So, this is the time the government should do their governing like a righteous, natural thing! Just like children have to go to school. In some countries, the law obliges parents to send the children to school. So, maybe one day we will oblige all the people to leave the animals in peace, just like the way we want to be left in peace. We don't want anyone to cut our throat, so why go out and cut some other being's throat and drink blood from it and eat their corpse. And we call that civilization! It's the twenty-first century, my goodness. And so many Masters have been on earth, teaching us already that we shall not kill, we shall not eat meat, we shall not drink alcohol, we shall not take intoxication.... We have been taught so long, century after century! So, this is the time we should be the human being that we're supposed to be.

Okay, we made mistakes; we didn't know it before. But now is the time! We should do research, we should know about it. Everywhere there is plenty of vegetarian diet advice, books and recipes. Even in our television, we have ten-thousand-and-one international delectable recipes daily, offered free of charge. They can always download and keep it in their family and try it all. It's beautiful, it's tasty and it's harmless to anyone. There's no excuse anymore to sink your teeth into that piece of flesh which is rotten anyway. I don't know how human beings can consume such a

thing. It's below dignity and it's unhygienic; it's unhealthy; it's poisonous; it's ignoble. Pardon my bluntness. I've been polite for too long.

So, it's about time we wake up and change our behavior, to be noble and to be dignified as a human being. And all the animals will be living in peace, without fear, without suffering, that's the main point. The main point is that we will have Eden on earth.

COMING TOGETHER TO UNDERSTAND AND CHANGE ⁷

Change ourselves to save the planet

[Mr. Roland Jung, Asia Affairs Advisor of the United States Democratic Party: We are well aware that humankind's daily habits and the changes of the sun are affecting the earth's climate in many ways. It is predicted that in 2010, the earth's climate will experience a massive change due to a great explosion of the sun's sunspots. It has also been predicted the climate will cause an oil crisis, or kind of an oil shock. Therefore, it seems that there is a need for worldwide awareness and change concerning global warming. I would like to ask Your specific opinion and message concerning this. What do You think we need to do as preparation?]

Thank you, Mr. Jung. Against this kind of great upheaval of calamities, the only refuge that we can take is in heaven's grace, by being virtuous, compassionate and a true believer of God, and praying for God's grace; then we can be saved. We should start to change our way of living now. We have to change. We have to. That's the only way we can save ourselves and the planet, and the whole world and all the beings in it; because as the saying goes in ancient India, 'Any nation that produces ten great persons worthy in the eyes of heaven will not know destruction.'

So, what is meant by ten great personages? That means the person who is truly a human being: He is compassionate, he is spiritually elevated, and he is unconditional and selfless. He is serving others and remembers God. For doing that, we are a little bit far. So, if we really want to save the world, that's the only way we can. Otherwise, even if we dig a hole into the mountain or under the ground to stay away from the sun's heat, or we go up in the mountain to avoid the sea rising, there are other calamities that will be coming our way. Anyone who has any belief in any religion should study their scriptures again, and do exactly what is commanded therein because: 'As you sow, so shall you reap.' All the religions have told us that.

So, now we come back to the ancient saying in India that ten persons who are virtuous can save a nation. How do we do this? In the ancient times, the nations were smaller than they are now and ten persons in each country should be enough. But for our expanded community nowadays, we need more than ten persons in a community. I would say it depends on the population also. New York, for example, we would call a nation in the old times. In New York, we probably need a million people to be virtuous, upright and spiritually elevated, in order to save New York.

So, I think we have to do it faster than what we are doing now. I'm glad the governments are doing something and all the celebrities, the distinguished people and organizations just like you today, are concerned and trying to push with all the vital actions to save the planet

7. SOS international seminar on global warming videoconference with Seoul Center, South Korea, May 22, 2008 (Originally in English).

and to stop global warming. I'm very happy about that, but maybe we should move faster and take more action: The vegetarian diet is number one. Green energy is number two. Everyone must work together to be frugal and protect the environment and the animals. It's not that difficult. It's just the habits that we have to change, that's all.

The cause of natural catastrophes

[Mr. Kim Jung-Gi, News Reporter for SBS TV's Future & Vision Desk: If you look at recent years, there have been catastrophes among nature. For example, last week there was a disaster in China and there was the cyclone in Myanmar and a great heat wave in Spain. My question is, in Your personal view, are these all caused by global warming? If so, why are they so increased compared to the past? I'd like to hear Your thoughts. Thank You.]

Yes, Mr. Kim. According to the United Nations' and scientists' research and reports, nine out of ten disasters are because of global warming. Of course, you know about this because you are a journalist, but I know you are asking this question for the public's sake. We have more disasters nowadays, and it saddens my heart very much. I keep trying to tell everyone to minimize it. From an individual standpoint, just stay away from animal products; plant trees, and use sustainable energy. It's only three steps, actually, very baby steps. I hope everyone still listens, and still will do it. And thank you for your concern, Mr. Kim.

If humans decide to change now, there's no need for disaster

[Mr. Acarya Shubhacintaananda Avadhuta, Chairman of East Asia Affairs, Environmental Society of Anandamarga from India: I'm curious to know about the future of humanity after climate change. Is climate change going to have an impact on human psychology, or is the human understanding going to improve and elevate with this change?]

Of course, sir, that's what I hope. After all the great disasters... it depends on what they are deciding right now. Actually, I hope that there is no disaster. I hope that there's no 'after.' I hope that humans decide right now to just stop all the unnecessary habits that they are living with and change to the better one, the more noble lifestyle. Then, we don't have to worry about the aftermath. The climate will change for the better; we will live on; we will still have the planet, and they'll become wiser and better, more virtuous and more blessed, and peace will reign on earth for a long, long time.

Guidelines of love and compassion to turn our life around

[Mr. Gwon Tae-Hyung, Director of the Environment and Green Land Department in Daegu City, South Korea: I'm very happy to have a chance to ask a question. I'm working for a local government in Korea, and as a global citizen, I appreciate You for Your efforts to rescue our globe. People who know the great urgency of global warming are busy trying to solve the problem, like today. However, many more people have a poor perception of global warming. Even though they know the situation, they have lots of barriers to putting the truth into practice. For example, governments should try to reduce the cattle or livestock for less greenhouse gases, but instead governments give households subsidies to increase their incomes. And governments also negotiate the imports of meat. In this context, what is the first and best policy of governments to avoid global warming? Thank You again.]

You see, from all the consideration and all the concrete evidence that's been given to us by the United Nations' research and the scientific evidence from the scientists, not to talk

about moral obligation, I think, number one: We have to stop all the killing, stop all the harming of humans and animals alike. Number two: Stop all consumption of all animal products. Number three: Encourage a more virtuous lifestyle, starting from the leaders themselves. I know I am asking for the moon, but since you ask me, I have to tell you the only solutions we must follow. Number four: Turn people to a more religious mind, meaning they should remember more about God. The governments have to get involved and do not say that politics is separate from religion. They must encourage people to go more to the church, or to pray more at home together, to read the bibles, to study really what Jesus said to them, to practice really what the Buddha told us, to practice really what guru Nanak told us or what prophet Mohammad wants us to do. We have to study truly our religious bibles and practice what is taught therein, not just reading. And number five: We have to repent and pray for heaven's grace. We have to ask for forgiveness from heaven and from all beings for all the harm that we have done to them. And the powerful collective, the positive and loving power of the whole world will repel darkness that is coming towards us, that is facing us right now.

That's the only solution I have. I hope my words are falling into some wise ears, and I hope people are doing it. I am not sitting here as a religious head or as a moral person. I am sitting here as your co-citizen, and I am telling you truthfully from my heart that it's the only solution we must take. Even despite all the scientific developments, despite all the physical means that we try to elevate, the farming techniques or the adaptations to climate change, that will not do for the long run if our spiritual value is not up to the expectation of the human value, that is, if it's not up to heaven's standard. We must turn our life around. We must. I don't say anyone should follow me; no, no need! Just study your bible and act accordingly. All the bibles and scriptures of religions in the world have told us we have to love one another; we have to be compassionate to all beings, including animals. That's all there is, love one another and compassion. That's very simple, love. Love your neighbors; love everyone else; love the animals. When we love, we don't harm. When we love, we don't kill. The only religion is love. One simple solution is love, that's it. We have to follow our heart.

The cause of global warming is our unkindness

[Mr Jeon Chang Ryul, President of the Student Body at the Seoul National University: I think we are at a point where we will have to face a dark future unless we change. In order to solve the problem, every sector in our society has been making many efforts. What I want to ask You is about our coping strategy. It seems like civic organizations and academic institutes are leading the initiatives to stop global warming. But it seems that the government is lagging behind. For example, Seoul National University, which is a national institution, consumes one of the highest amounts of electricity. The energy consumption levels of government institutions are high as well. However, I think lowering our consumption level is not the only solution. I would like to ask Your opinion about what the public sector, especially governments, should strive to achieve in terms of policy.]

As I have mentioned before, we have to tackle the root of problem. The root of the problem is the cause of global warming, and that root is our unkindness to our co-inhabitants. Every action provokes a reaction; this is very scientific. If we sow an apple seed, we will get an apple tree, and after a while that apple tree will bear apple fruit for us. This is a circle of life. If we kill, we cannot expect life from that. Every action bears the same fruit afterwards. This is not religion speaking; it is scientific. So now, the root of our problem is that we have been unkind to our co-inhabitants: The living, feeling, walking, acting, loving beings, like animals of all sizes and shapes. And we have also been unkind to our environment. We have been massacring our co-inhabitant animals, and we have been destroying our

environment, like deforesting and destroying the water and destroying the air. From all this, we cannot expect a better outcome.

So, in order to solve the problem that we are facing right now, we have to reverse our actions. We have to be kind to our co-inhabitants. Instead of killing, massacring, and sacrificing them, we have to take care of them, be kind to them, and look after them. And instead of deforestation, we have to plant trees again, take care of whatever environment we have. And instead of polluting our planet and the air, we have to turn to friendly energy and sustainable energy. Just reverse our actions. I think we have to come together as a people to let the government know what we want. Write to the government, all of you, all of the people. The people have to understand that the government also has its own problems. There's no problem greater than saving our lives and the lives of the next generation. If everyone realized this, then we would drop everything else. Everything that is not useful to us, everything that is not kind and conducive to our living here and our next generation's life, we have to change. We have to drop it, drop it like a hot cake, like a hot potato – because it burns you. No matter what everyone else says, no matter how much you lose, you have to drop the hot plate, because it hurts you.

Stop the killing and stop global warming

Global warming is like a hot plate, an iron-hot burning plate! We must take care. If the government does not take care, the people must take care. Just become vegetarian and refuse all the animal products. Then no one will raise animals anymore and no one will kill them anymore. Then we'll stop the physical harmful effects of animal stock raising, which is the number one cause of our climate change. And that's the one thing that we as individuals can immediately contribute. We can change it; there's no need to wait for the government. The people have to take action and then perhaps the government will come along with it. If the government doesn't lead you, you lead the government! There is no need to sit there blaming each other.

But you see, it's up to everyone to choose what they want. God gives us free will. I respect that also. So, I can only inform, I can only give my opinion, but the people have to do it, because the people have God inside them, they have wisdom, they have understanding. It's just that they have to choose to use it. Now we have to do more than that. It's not fast enough right now. This is urgent. The killing of animals will be the killing of ourselves and our next generation. That is the fact. Like attracts like; what we sow, so shall we reap. There's no need to even talk about religious scriptures; that's just the facts.

Thank you. Your question is very intelligent. I hope you spread the constructive news to your fellow students and more people. We need you. Thank you, Mr. Jeon.

Protect the children by informing them of the urgency of our time

[Mr. Lee Byung-Woo, Director of the Public Relations Department for the Korean Teachers & Educational Workers Union: Some of the teachers in the Korean Teachers & Educational Workers Union are coming together to implement a set of teaching curriculums that enhance the quality of students' lives. For example, we are going out in nature and taking care of school gardens for one or two months at a time. However, in our country, as perhaps in others countries, due to academic prestige, entrance exams and excessive competitiveness in school environments, it's difficult to carry out major events on global warming and green activities in our education systems. As a society, people do not pay attention to it. I'd like to ask for Your advice, through the experience and examples

of the roles and attitudes of teachers in the public education system in regards to this issue, and how local communities, schools and teachers can work together. Thank You.]

Mr. Lee, you are a teacher; you know the answer. What is more important now, in this urgent time of need, is to protect the children first. Protect their lives before anything else, because if they don't have their lives, even if they are highly educated, it will be a waste of the teacher's time. So, as the teachers, you are wise, and all the teachers should be wise and leaders of the young who rely on the teachers. So, the teachers should tell the students what to do, should inform them more, and should encourage them to lead a better life, to be more informed about what is important to them, not just the normal teaching standards because we are not in a normal situation anymore. A different situation requires a different measurement. It's good that you take the students out to nature sometimes. Take them to the slaughterhouse. Let them see the cruelty to the animals when they are being treated inhumanely; it's very cruel. Take them to some damaged environment area. Let them know the effect of it. Let them know about global warming facts.

Let them know all that. Spare no one; they have to know. They are your students. You have to teach them what is important. Suppose on one of your walks with your students into nature, then suddenly some danger comes. It's not a normal walk anymore. It's not a nice, quiet strolling along between teacher and students anymore. Suddenly there comes some danger. So, what do you do? You have to tell them immediately how to react. You cannot continue walking the way you used to do with your children. So, it's the same right now. Our house is on fire. Our planet is in peril. You have to inform them. You have to take immediate action. Tell them what to do. Lead them into a better life. They look up to you; they will be grateful. And I will be grateful to you, too. Thank you for your question, and thank you for your concern. Please, do something.

Restoring our original peaceful nature

[Dr. Kim Sung-Jang, Dean of Wonkwang University and the Director of Oriental Studies: All kinds of pollution and environmental problems have been created by humans. I think this is because humans do not live as stewards of all living creatures; instead, we live according to the law of the jungle. Could You please tell us how we can restore our original peaceful nature and live in harmony with all living creatures?]

Your question shows your deep kindness and I appreciate it very much. All the Masters in the past have already mentioned how we should live our lives. So, as I have already mentioned before, we should return to our religious teaching. Look deep into the meaning of the scriptures of our own religions. Even if we do not think that all religions are the same, nevertheless, just look into our scriptures and see what our religious leader has told us to do. It's all in there. It's all compassion, it's all loving, it's all caring. You see, the thing is, we have to live up to it. So, I would summarize in brief what is noble and good, we do it as soon as possible. What is bad and base, stop it immediately. What's good, do it; what's bad, stop.

So, right now, what's good for our planet – vegetarian diet, new technology, new energy – we do it. We try as best as we can. What is bad for our planet – violence, war, killing and all the immoral issues – we stop it. That's it, very easy. But you see, it's an individual choice. They need strength; they need courage to do it. Just change the habit, how difficult can it be? Just change it. It will not hurt you; it will only do good to you. So, what's good we should do it; what's bad, we should stop. If anyone is not aware of the urgency of the global warming then they should study it. They should research on the internet. They

should look into www.SupremeMasterTV.com. We have gathered all the latest up-to-date information and evidence of global warming and how, from an individual point of view, to stop the majority of it, like eighty percent plus of it. I say eighty percent because I want to be more objective. I would say a hundred percent if you believe my words.

Nevertheless, even if we do not develop technology quickly enough, we could keep all the cars and even the CO₂. It's still not as bad as eating meat, as killing people and animals, because these cause the worst of all pollution, and that is the bad retribution of what we do. That is a taboo, killing anyone or killing any animals, our co-inhabitants; that brings very bad retribution back to us. That's what it is. Because the CO₂ is not only from the cars; it's in the ocean. And once the ocean is warm, it will be released. And also methane gas, all this is scientific evidence. I am speaking as a citizen who is well informed of what's going on in the world and I, in turn, am informing you. Please do look into all the sources of information. If you cannot find it, then the www.SupremeMasterTV.com will have it for you. The evidence is enough on there.

Besides, sir, it's good that you're concerned because it's not only global warming that will be facing us. There will be other things like the gentleman advisor of the United States Democratic Party for Asia has mentioned, that we also have sunspots exploding and it's going to be bigger this time, and we also have comets that might hit the earth, and we might have even explosive – like volcanoes from the middle of the earth's oceans that will blow everything up. So, it's not the technical problem or the technical reparation we have to concentrate on. It's the cause and retribution that we have to pay attention to. The cost of killing or violence is far worse than any sun's explosion or any ocean explosion combined together because we have to be responsible for our actions. Every action provokes a counter reaction. So, we just have to stop killing. We just have to stop killing animals and man. We have to stop it. And then everything else will suddenly come clear. We will find better technical means to tackle the climate problem, and the sun might even stop exploding. The ocean explosions might just stop. The typhoons might just stop. The cyclones will be silent. The earthquakes will just be gone. Everything else will turn to a peaceful way of life because we create peace and then we will have peace, not only among humans but among all co-inhabitants.

That's why I keep emphasizing the vegetarian diet. It's the moral code of being a human. It is the mark of a great human. It's very easy to do, especially nowadays. There are all kinds of means to do it. The meat diet not only causes the greatest emission of poisonous gas into the planet's atmosphere, there are many other costs. It's not only the animals who emit the methane gas because we keep multiplying the animals and they keep multiplying, spraying gas into the air. But that's not only the damage. It's not only methane gas from the animals' waste. There is the transportation energy cost; there's electricity energy cost; there's water wasting cost; there's a land resource occupation cost; there's a deforestation cost, there's a related illness medical cost; and there's the grievance and sorrow of the people who lost loved ones due to diseases related to the meat diet's cost. And because we use food to feed livestock for human consumption instead of feeding directly to humans, there is thus the cost of war and famine due to shortage of food and resources. Add them together, then we will see the real answer.

There are many causes that breed negative energy into the atmosphere of our planet, and you know what I'm talking about. When you walk into a room and someone hates each other or is hating you, you feel the energy like the cutting edge of a knife. When you walk into a lovely, happy party, you will feel the lively energy and the happy energy. That is what causes the happiness or the sorrow of our life, the energies – the negative energy or the positive energy. Now, the vegetarian diet is benevolent, so it will bring you happy

energy and that in turn will breed more happiness, will attract more happiness, and when you're happy, everything will be better. You think better, you react better and your life becomes better. Your children will be better; everything will be better. Now you understand what I'm talking about. Thank you, sir, for asking.

A gift of creativity reawakened

[Ms. Hong Hui-Yoon, Korean novelist: I am a writer and I had not been writing for quite a while. Recently I read Your book, 'The Dogs in My Life.' I laughed a lot and read the book as if romping around and doing a play with children. After reading it several times, my affection strangely went toward Hermit. When I looked at his eyes, Hermit was asking a question of me: 'Now do you believe we animals have our own souls?' 'I do,' I immediately answered. From that day, inspiration would somehow come to me. One day just naturally, I started writing again. I was so overflowing with inspiration, some days I would spend the whole day writing, yet I was never tired. It was so simple and very joyful writing. In the past, writing used to be a painful process to me, writing line by line. But now, I found myself very happy and joyful. Whenever I would feel tired I would read Supreme Master Ching Hai's 'The Dogs in My Life.' Reading the book made me very happy, and now I find myself enjoying writing very much. I truly thank Supreme Master Ching Hai for writing 'The Dogs in My Life,' which gives me artistic inspiration.]

You are welcome, Mrs. Hong. You are welcome. And I am glad that your writing career is soaring again. I wish you all the success. And you know what? The animals will help you; they will inspire you more from inside your heart. As you have already seen, they will do more to help you. I have told you animals are our helpers. It is stated in the Christian bible that the animals are our helpers and friends. Now you believe? [Ms Hong: Yes.]

I am so happy that my dogs' book helped you. It will help many other people. It will help all the people who read them. That's why I wrote them. The reason I wrote the books is so that people understand more about our animal friends and make use of their help and their blessing. They are angels in disguise. Also, so that people will have more understanding and respect for our co-inhabitants, so that they do not commit the very unkind and detrimental act of killing our helpers and our friends. That is the purpose of my book. I am happy that at least I heard some fruitful outcome of it. Thank you for your feedback. Thank you so much. And I have other books, you know, right? *The Birds in My Life* and *The Noble Wilds*, maybe you should also read them. Well, they are not in Korean yet.

[MC: By the way, Master, we thought that maybe You would like to know: The Dogs in My Life has become a number one bestseller here in Korea.]

Oh wow! Thank you so much. Thank you all the involved persons who made it happen and thank you all the readers for your support. They will help you; the animals will help you. Just tune in, just be kind, calm your mind and tune in, and you'll know what the animals are, as angels. Thank you, thank you. I am happy.

The divinity of animals

[Ms. Park So-Yeon, head of CARE, Korea's largest animal protection group: I am an animal protector, so I am going to ask about animals. Since I was young, my dream has been to communicate with animals because I thought understanding what animals wanted to say would give me a whole new experience. As an animal protection activist, I have seen many people who abuse animals and treat animals cruelly. A lot of people think that animals have no emotions; thus, they think animals can be treated like machines.]

Recently, I have read Supreme Master Ching Hai's book, 'The Dogs in My Life.' I have found that animals have more subtle emotions than I had ever thought, and have the same needs as human beings. I want to ask Your advice on this matter for people who think animals have no emotions, feelings and sufferings and that they can be treated like a machine.]

Mrs. Park, thank you for your compassion for the animals. You see, many people have not been educated in how the animals are another being like us, because everyone is busy and they are too overwhelmed by survival on this planet, which is already difficult for them, so they seem to have no time to study about the feelings of other beings, which exist next to us daily. That's why I wrote these books *The Dogs in My Life*, *The Birds in My Life* and also *The Noble Wilds* so that everyone knows that domesticated animals do have feelings and emotions, and even the wild animals have emotions and feelings. I'm not the only one who knows this. Anyone who cares to know about animals' feelings can also ask some animal communicators or animal psychics; they can study in books and log onto the internet to see many true stories about animals who show their emotions and are even heroes who save humans' lives and help them in many, many ways. There are so many true stories about it. And on our Supreme Master Television we also show animals who are heroic, who are lovely, who are cute and who are also compassionate.

Anyone who really wants to know if animals have feelings or not, just take a few minutes to observe them loving each other, caring for each other, and that they really, sometimes, sacrifice for each other. Then you know that they do have feeling, they do bleed. If we pinch them, they scream; that means they feel hurt. If we scold them, they hide away; that means their emotions are being hurt. If we love them, we call them, they come with wagging tails or showing a happy face or happy voice or singing. They do have emotions; of course, they have. Everyone knows that. And to inform you of something: Every one of us can communicate with animals telepathically, every one of us! It's just we don't take time to do it. If we take time and we are sincere, we can hear them speaking.

Look at the example of one of your writers. She has said that she suddenly heard the dogs talking. She had not heard them before. Why? It's not like suddenly she developed this psychic power or telepathic ability: No, no. She had it all the time, but she never used it. Like everything else, if we don't use and if we just leave it in the corner, it gets rusted, moldy and maybe just all forgotten and useless.

So, try to use it. Quiet down your mind. Ask the animals to help you to listen. They will communicate. They will be glad to talk to you all the time. They have been talking to us all these millions of years; we just don't listen. So, sometimes they stop trying; but if we try again it will work again. That's how I tried. I'm no different than you. I just tried. I'm just sincere, and I just really love animals. I wish that I could do more than just crying and shedding tears over them or even just the Supreme Master Television; but, at least, I'm trying something. It's not enough, but if everyone tries a little bit like me, then the world will be a better place. We will have peace and we will have help and blessings from animals; our lives will be more enriched and beautiful.

[Mr. Lee Yong-Jung, Secretary-General of the People's Coalition for Children's Health, former Head of the Policy Research Team for Children's Health on the Presidential Commission for Sustainable Development: I have been listening with interest to Your discussion, which I think could be summed in the three words: Spirituality, vegetarian diet, and co-existence. I want to raise several issues that are related to foods and a sustainable society. We are surrounded by foods that are poisonous to our bodies. When we are exposed to these kinds of foods, the balance of micro-organisms in our body will be

broken and we might have to fight a war with these micro-organisms that make up half the world's organisms. The diseases that we might end up getting will be atopy, splenitis, asthma, and ADHD, which have tripled compared to twenty years ago. High blood pressure, cancer, and diabetes have also tripled. Problems that manifested in Korea include avian flu, noro virus, and antibiotics microbes, all due to poisonous foods.

There is a need to examine these poisonous foods. The first one is chemical additives in processed foods and food packaging. The second one is the overdose of antibiotics that are pumped into livestock in factory farming. The third is the overuse of pesticides. The fourth one is genetically modified foods and mad cow disease-affected beef. This problem is serious when we consider our dependency on foreign foods, which is about seventy-five percent, compared to twenty-five percent of our domestically grown foods. When investigating them, these food problems are interwoven with global warming, methane gas, and carbon dioxide issues, which lead to children's health problems, as well as the survival of humanity. You have summed up these complex issues into one simple issue, which is vegetarianism. Although I understand, I wonder whether we do not need more comprehensive approaches. For example, we have to practice sustainable agricultural approaches and we have to change our patterns of thinking. We have to change our food paradigms. We need to educate people that through our food choices we can save ourselves and humanity as a whole in a more concrete educational system. That's what I think.]

It seems not that easy to tackle, but it's actually very easy. If you have a child and you know what is good for him, then you definitely want to give it to him. And if you know what is bad or poisonous for your child, you will take it away from him at all costs. So, it's just the habit thinking of humankind, the feeling that this is not do-able, but it is. Just take away that piece of meat, and replace it with protein from the vegetable kingdom. Nowadays, we have vegetarian food available everywhere; it's very simple. Even if we don't have available food, all kinds of beans, rice, lentils are packed full of vegetarian protein, and they will make your life much, much more comfortable, healthy and wise and are very, very spiritually elevating. I don't understand why it is so difficult for the government or for any parent, or anyone who is responsible in this matter, not to change the habit of giving the children what is healthy for them. You want your children to be healthy, yes? And so, we do the research, we know what is the up-to-date best for the children. Vegetarian diet, without milk or dairy products even, is the best diet thereof for everybody at all ages. So, why don't we give them the best?

For me, it's simple. Just give them the best food, and then everything else will come along. You will see the benefit. And if it doesn't benefit, you can always change back to the meat diet. But I'm sure you – I mean the parents and the teachers, the ones who are responsible for children's health – will like the vegetarian diet. You will see their improvements in all aspects of life, not just health but in intelligence, vitality and the peacefulness of their character. You'll have less to worry about with your children's violent behavior.

Thank you for being concerned about the children. They are our future. Thank you, Mr. Lee Yong-Jung. The people have to do it. The government can do or not do it; this is up to the parents to choose.

Conscience and compassion in society

[Mrs. Lee Hui-Jung, Secretary-General of the Korean Parents Association for Correct Education: Right now in Seoul, in front of the Cheonggye River, students are participating

in a candlelight vigil gathering. This is to protest against importing meats that may have mad cow disease. This meat could be used in their school meals. So, students are protesting because they don't have any choice in uniformed school meals. That's why they are having a candlelight demonstration at the Cheonggye River, because they do not want to eat 'mad cows' meat. Their parents are protesting as well, because they do not want to have this beef in their children's school meals. The protest shows that students are seriously concerned about the current educational environment and the problems of the current school meal system. I think children generally have more sympathy compared to adults, and that's why they have come out to the streets to protest. They saw some clips on the internet about how animals weren't treated humanely and from that they felt that animals were like them because their educational environment is not so desirable. It's so competitive; they have to study till midnight or in the early morning in their school rooms. It's like they are in a cage, a little cage without having much choice, so I feel that our students empathize with those confined animals.

Although their sympathy becomes dull as they grow in this kind of educational environment, they are still pure enough to feel this pain, so they have compassion towards these animals. Unfortunately, the more we are educated under these kinds of circumstances, the more we lose our sense of consideration for our co-inhabitants. Our school environments should be set up so that our children can spend time in nature, where they can be near animals. However, our children are confined in terms of space and time in the current educational system. They are forced to complete their curriculum.

Our educational environment should cultivate children's compassion for the needy and the weak, including animals and the suffering of confined livestock. Our educational system needs to be designed to encourage concern towards our planet and our co-inhabitants, and to promote solutions to our current planetary problems through education. But in reality, it is not designed that way. My question for Supreme Master Ching Hai is: We are forcing our children to become desensitized from their own empathy for our planet by putting them in this kind of educational environment in the name of competition. What can we do in order to encourage their ecological empathy? So, I would like to ask You about these matters.]

Thank you for your concern, Mrs. Lee. And by the way, I would like to convey also my sympathy and my gratefulness to the students who are expressing their opinion right now in Seoul concerning the beef imports, and concerning their love and care for the animals. I am very impressed by their attitude, because as students they are quite busy and it's not like the curriculum in the school would have informed them or taught them anything about animal cruelty or how to be kind to animals. But they do know about it; they do research about it, and they do take action about it, and I'm very glad. I do hope this will even spread further into other schools and whole nations and keep people aware of the harmful effects of animal products as well as the unkind treatment that we humans measure upon them, the poor innocent defenseless brothers and sisters. So, I thank you and I thank them on the animals' behalf.

Concerning your question about how to raise children rightly, this is a very, very important question and the parents and the teachers should get together to discuss this. And the leader of this movement for the teachers and the parents should be more equipped with all the concrete scientific and convincing evidence of the better diet for the children, meaning the animal-free diet, absolutely free from animal traces. Even eggs and milk are harmful because they're derived from animals. The animals have been fed with chemical substances, all kinds of hormones, which drive the children crazy. So, if your children's behaviors are not according to your liking, please do not blame them alone. They are born

nice, innocent and sweet. They have been brought up by us and we have not given them the due goodness, due care or the due best standard that they so deserve, because we also, as parents, have not been fed this due attention that we also need. So, now we have to change the course of history. We have to research; we have to know for sure that the vegetarian diet is really absolutely healthy, the best in all aspects for our children. Get the evidence. Get all the studies necessary, all the scientific and convincing evidence, and get together to spread this information.

And decide together that we have to change the diet of the children. When you change the diet everything else will change. Their behavior will change, their intelligence will improve, and you will be a happy parent and they will be happy children. You want the best for your children, and that is the best for them. The vegetarian diet, you must give them that, and then everything else will come along. Believe me; trust me; you try and you tell me. It will do no harm. It just helps you to save more money on groceries. You go straight to the vegetarian section; you don't need to go anywhere else. Vegetarian diet and no alcohol, no cigarettes, no drugs also.

For optimal health, choose natural and fresh

And by the way, a message to the vegetarian-producing people. Even with vegetarian food, we have to also be careful we don't put additives, too many preservatives into it; we don't put any harmful substance into vegetarian food. And we don't put too much glutamate or too much salt. Those things are also not very good for health. So, the vegetarian diet should be fresh from the local market. That would be the best for your children – local market, and the fresher the better. Not just vegetarian but the fresher the better, and the healthy vegetarian products. To all the producers of vegetarian food, please be aware of this.

Thank you for your question. Your question is of paramount importance because it's concerning the children and the society at large. Thank you, madam. I wish you all the success. I wish the children's movement that you mentioned just now, the students' movement, will spread all over your country and into the world, and that all the students will follow suit. Everyone will heed their cry for help for a better life that they deserve. Thank you so much. Heaven bless you and bless their movement.

[Mrs. Park Kyung-Yong, Head of the Korean Association for School Meals: I am in charge of preparation of school meals for students. My question is related to earlier questions. The government has made a regulation that thirty percent of school meals have to be animal source protein. In order to keep the regulation, we provide beef, chicken or pork every day for school meals. If we add up the amount of consumed beef and other meat that is served for school meals around the country, it would be a staggering amount. It means the number of animals slaughtered for these meals is huge as well. I have never considered this a serious issue as a worker, but after attending this seminar I think that I need to reconsider the meat consumption in our school meals. In addition, I think we need to set new government policies and regulations. I think we need to use protein product alternatives to animal fat and protein such as soy, since as everyone knows it provides such high-quality protein. We are currently including more vegetarian choices for our school meals. But, I thought we might need to take meat consumption more seriously as an issue to discuss and develop menus that use alternative protein sources. I realize that we needed to provide greener meals, vegetarian menus for school meals. Since You are vegetarian, I wonder whether You could provide some vegetarian menus and recipes for school meals. And if You have any advice on alternative school meals, I would like to refer to that when we design our school meals.]

Oh, wow! Very good question, Mrs. Park. Very good endeavor. Thank you so much. You see, this is a very good start. First of all, in my humble opinion, you will be blessed by wanting to do this, and then you will continue to have strength to do it. You have to inform the facts to the parents' association, and to all the parents that you can. You can give leaflets to each of the students to bring home or to the school board and ask permission to distribute it to the children. Get all the facts about how good the vegetarian diet is and all the facts about how bad the meat diet is. And then get their support. Inform your students. Inform everyone that you know in your society, in your world, in your school. And then, get them all the materials necessary so that they understand what you are talking about and support your ideas. We have to give them the facts, we cannot just tell people, 'Okay, be vegetarian. It's good for you.' We have to evoke their intelligence and curiosity; we have to provide them with all the materials that are convincing and truthful, and then they can decide together, 'Okay, we choose this diet.' The majority of them will choose it. I do hope they do, after you diligently inform them of all the facts about how good the vegetarian diet is from the scientific point of view, because people only believe in science.

And then comes the moral issue. You can show them some of the cruel pictures, cruel videos about how the animals are being treated, being slaughtered, and ask them a question, 'How would you feel if it were you?' If people see the evidence and are faced with the cruelty of how the animal has been treated, I'm sure that they will decide to get a vegetarian diet. Right now, it's a worldwide trend that everyone knows the vegetarian diet is good and the meat diet is very harmful. They recalled millions of kilograms, millions of units of meat because of the harmful effect, everywhere in the world. Up to date, there are many countries in the world that do that. So, get all this evidence and show it to them. You never know what you're eating. It's better to choose the healthy diet.

You see, importing meat and all that, you never know if they're good. The government cannot control every piece of beef for you, actually. There are loopholes everywhere. There are also lobbies; people will turn a blind eye and all that or take it for granted that the meat is safe. We're talking about health standpoint only, not to talk about the moral obligation to our weaker, smaller, defenseless brother and sister co-inhabitants. We cannot be cruel. We have to be kind. We have to be loving and compassionate because we are human. Every time you see someone treat someone nice or do something good, you say, 'That's very human, that is humane treatment.' You see? Because we are human, we have to give every other being human treatment, including our own neighbors. Okay, so, because we are human, we have to be kind, we have to be compassionate because that's our nature. Don't let anything else make us forget that. Thank you for your question and I wish you all the luck and blessing from heaven. And I love you for doing this. Thank you.

By the way, in SupremeMasterTV.com we have all kinds of free to download international cooking recipes for you. It costs you nothing if you want to download and use them. Or, you can contact our Centers in Korea to ask for free recipes. Also, SupremeMasterTV.com provides in this matter all scientific and convincing information and evidence for you to download if you need to use them to inform other people and to convince them about the idea of changing the diet for the children in school.

Of all the ways to save the planet, the animal-free lifestyle is best

[MC: There are many ways to cope with global warming and climate change. Supreme Master Ching Hai, You have suggested the most efficient and effective ways, including using sustainable energy, planting more trees, saving energy wherever we can in our daily lives, and perhaps most importantly, using products that are animal free. Using animal free

products also includes adopting a vegetarian or vegan diet. Could You please share with us more details about these solutions?]

We have covered the moral, ethical, scientific and physical benefits of a vegetarian diet. Not only because of moral or ethical or physical benefit, but because this is the easiest way for every one of us to contribute to saving the planet. Before the governments even do anything, before the technical developments are being offered, we already stop global warming if we forsake that piece of meat and replace it with a piece of vegetarian protein, which looks similar, tastes similar, and is even better in every way – for our health, for our spirit, for our intelligence and for our next life in heaven. We will be blessed right now even, not to talk about the afterlife. So, I guess everyone should join in and be vegetarian; that's all I am saying, because it's the best and the fastest way to save the planet, and everyone can do it. There's no need even for technique, new energy or for the governments yet. We do it; we do our part. That's why I emphasize the vegetarian diet. And if the governments join in and help us to promote more, wow! Thank you so much. If they have developed better technology and produce it fast enough for us to use, thank you ever so much. But the vegetarian diet, we must start right now. That's the best way, the fastest and the safest way for us and for our children. If you love your children, try the vegetarian diet. Thank you.

BEING VEG IS ENOUGH TO SAVE THE PLANET ⁸

If all the governments would give us the blessing and encourage more... because we have only several years to change the course of history of climate change. But I'm happy that many governments now are encouraging children to eat vegetarian, with less meat and more vegetables. I'm so happy; maybe we can still save the planet.

And one more thing is if we have the blessing also of the media. Every day when they print the newspaper, just put one headline somewhere: 'Be veg, go green, to save the planet.' That's one thing I thought.

And all entertainment programs, whenever they do some entertainment, they could say it before or after: 'Please save the planet. Be veg. Go green.' Everybody can help, and the governments could put billboards everywhere: 'Be veg. Go green. Save the planet.' And then, all the billboards and every advertisement should add one sentence: 'Save the planet. Be veg. Go green.' Then we'll be fine. We'll be smiling.

Even if you're a meat eater, like you eat meat every day, if you now eat only half a week meat and half a week vegetarian, we already can be singing; we can be happy! So, that's what I think. That's the solution for the planet.

What I mean is, if you know some newspaper men or women, you can suggest this: Just one little headline or any headline anywhere, every day when they print a newspaper: 'Please save the planet. Be veg. Go green.' If a person wants to know more, they can ask everybody else or can watch our television, or they can ask on our website. It's easy. I spent a lot of money already advertising on newspapers, but it's not enough. I think all the media should help to save the planet, because if the planet's gone, they're also gone. Everybody should realize that: Money is useless. House is useless. Power is useless. Everybody will be gone. So, we do what we can to make people realize that. We have to save the only planet that we have, and the most beautiful one that we know.

8. Group meditation, Monaco Center, Monaco, May 4, 2008 (Originally in English).

Even if everyone in the whole population of the planet eats only half vegetarian, we can save the planet already. That's the best and the quickest way. Because meat is not only about the land, it's about the water, medicine, energy, pollution from transportation, and the conscience; that's what makes people sick.

So, if you can tell people to be vegetarian, that's the best thing you can do for them and for the planet. Then we can even keep all the airplanes; we can keep all the cars; we can keep all the things now, because CO2 is not as bad as 'conscience sickness,' and not as bad as spending so much water on animal raising, and wasting land, and deforestation and transportation. If we eat vegetarian, we still can keep all the airplanes, cars, trains and even everything as usual. We don't even need to rely on the government, because the government cannot always do everything. The government cannot forbid people to eat meat, for example. Maybe they can, but they don't want to do it.

So, the individual is the best to save the planet. Just go vegetarian, and we'll save a lot of methane gas, a lot of transportation pollution, a lot of wasted water and land – land that we can cultivate, with enough food for everyone. And the food we feed the animals, we can feed the hungry. We would never go hungry. The whole planet can be fed if people go vegetarian. And then we can even keep all the styles that we have now, like the airplane. Of course, it's the best if we don't. But even if we still have cars, airplanes and trains and so on, if the planet's people are vegetarian, then we can save the planet still. Not everyone knows that. So, tell whoever you can to save the planet. But even if we cannot, then we cannot.

One more thing about the climate that everyone worries about: If we have the blessing of the government, it would be good. But otherwise, everyone can do it. Just be vegetarian, and we can save it. We can save a lot. Because of the bad karma, 'As you sow so shall you reap,' if we do bad things, then we get bad things. It's not just about the physical energy or even the ways of war and all that. The bad karma will come back on us, and no one can save us, not even God. Because even if God tells us to do this and we don't do it, Hes lets us be free. If you want to make a mistake, it's your freedom. God is not someone who controls you all the time. It would be good if Hes does some controlling, but Hes doesn't do that.

So, we have to control ourselves; we have to know what's good and what's bad. Read the bible or the scripture of your religion. Really study well to see what the scripture tells you to do. All the tips in any scripture of any religion tell you how to survive here, how you can save the planet, how to live well and how to go to heaven afterwards. It's all in the scriptures; it's not me saying anything.

CLIMATE CHANGE: THE SOLUTION ⁹

No one wants to do anything. We have a solution but they don't do it! There is a solution, of only three steps: Be vegetarian, use sustainable energy, and plant trees. How much more simple can it be? But no one does it because not all governments endorse it and there's no sense of urgency. And in the media, we are the only one or almost the only one airing it on television.

We're also almost the only one that airs so often and cares so much about it and gives so much information about the evidence as well as the solution. We air a big scroll every day. It costs a lot of money to air all these solutions and problems of climate change ten or

9. European retreat, Klagenfurt Center, Austria, February 28, 2008 (Originally in English).

twenty minutes at a time. We don't take any donations and we don't take any advertising money. We are the only ones who really unconditionally help. For everyone else, it seems like it may be another few centuries until things really start kicking in.

I'm trying so hard and the solution is so simple. If the government and the media jump in and help and spread all this, and say, 'It's really urgent, and everyone must do it,' then we still have time: Two years. Okay, it's short, but we have time, to keep the planet 'as is.' Not as good as before, but as is, and not worse. But they don't do it.

One solution: Stop raising animals for meat

We have solutions. Everyone knows the solutions. They are doing some, but it's not just doing; the government has to really broadcast it on their internet. They have a lot of money, and they can do anything; they're powerful. I do my best: The flyers, seminars and everything are just for that, just to save the planet. But it's too slow, just like a little bit here and there. The government has to say something, just like they ban smoking. When it is banned; it's done. The government could do that. They ban cigarettes, and they're banned. And they ban drugs, and they're banned. They're not legal. The cigarette reduction now also lessens a lot of illness everywhere in the world. People know that. The same with the climate change policy. If they just do what they know is good, then it's very quick. In no time, we will recover, or we can stop the effects. If we don't raise any more cattle or animals, then the earth will be more sustainable, with no more greenhouse gas or methane gas from the animals and no more multiplying all the time. Whatever we have already, we keep it; and no more raising for profit and meat. Then the earth will recover.

After a while, the cows will be gone the natural way and then all the land will be planted with trees and vegetables again. Because if you raise cattle, even fifty years later you still cannot truly cultivate on that land. It's been stamped on and is hard and deprived of sustainable quality. They just have to stop meat eating because it's bad karma also; it's not just about the methane gas. Every day we air all kinds of warning signs and evidence. My God, what are we talking about all day except this! This is the only important thing right now. First you have to survive, and then you can do anything else you want. But if you don't survive, if you don't have the planet, what's the use? Unless they want to kill their children. If that's what they decide, what are we going to do? We try our best. Apart from working very hard already, we spread the news; we go out with flyers and everything. We advertise on newspapers from our own pocket. We air it on television from our own money. We tell everyone we know.

Some do care; they say, 'Oh yes!' They're interested; they want to know, they really care. But maybe they forget afterward, because there is television to watch, theater to enjoy, husband-and-wife relationship, children, or business and still more money. They don't seem to know the priority.

Wealth has no value when climate change affects the whole planet

There's a film called 'I am legend' with Will Smith. The city is besieged with mutated people who are sick and have been transformed into vicious animal-like beings. The main character, who is still alive, is the only normal person in the whole city of New York. Everywhere is deserted and just full of mutated, vicious animals and vicious humans. As the main character walks into the bank, the whole floor is covered with money, and then he goes into the bank vault that's full of gold bars. You just see the truly useless nonsense of making or amassing money. If you see him walking on the stacks of money, my God, it really drives home the message. But people watch it and

just think it's entertainment. Because if they were afraid, they'd have to do something – unless they don't care whether they die or live; that's also okay with me. Or, unless they want to kill their children knowingly, which is really gruesome; knowing that your children are going to die by your actions now, and you still let it happen.

So, we do what we can do, and at least you're doing it with your heart. Give the flyers and all that; maybe some people will awaken and maybe those people will affect other people. We just hope. We're always hoping. Positive thinking is better than negative. So, we just meditate, help people the way we always do and distribute the flyers to awaken whoever can be. Some of them are scared but then you have to do something, not just put the seeds in the Arctic, and save it in case. What's the use of saving the seeds when there's poisonous gas all over, and people are all dying and diseased; who's going to eat them? If we die, no one can eat them. Or even if they save so many, it may be just enough for a few. The wealthy and the able are the ones who can reach it; they're the ones who will be able to profit from it.

I don't understand humans. The point is, maybe some of us think that if we have money, we'll be able to survive, or if we can reach the seeds, we can plant them again, and so on. But who knows, maybe you can't, whether rich or poor, when disaster strikes. It will be difficult to tell, even if you have money or you're powerful, if you can survive or not, and even if you survive, for how long. If the whole planet is destroyed or polluted, where do you go with your seeds, with your money and with your power? And, one more thing: If all or most of the poor people die, they are the work force. Who's going to plant seeds for you? It is the workers, the farmers, the poor people who are cleaning the roads, planting the trees and sowing the seeds. So, I don't understand the thinking of this world. I know you understand, but then we're doing our best. We still do the flyers; who knows, it might help. But still, you understand the feeling.

Well, it's happening everywhere already, or at least they are a little bit panicking now. It seems like all the governments concentrate on it. At least these are some of the topics that are being discussed, and they gather here and there to talk about it recently. They have to do it concretely. Everyone knows by now from the United Nations' report that meat eating and animal raising is one of the worst factors, or even the worst factor of climate change, or global warming. But no one talks about it. Everyone talks about new energy, bio-fuels, hybrid cars, compressed air cars, carbon sucking machines, or digging a hole and storing the carbon, as if it will not bust one day. But before that, you have to breathe in already, as if it will not affect you.

Putting down meat is a key to human survival

I don't understand this. What is so difficult about putting down one piece of meat, and replacing it with one piece of tofu, which is exactly the same, with better nutrition and better for your health, also more economized? How can anyone not sacrifice just a little palate taste? Even if the meat tastes that great, even if they so love the meat, how can they not sacrifice it, just for the sake of everyone's survival, and their own children? How can they not? Just replace one piece of meat with another piece of tofu; that's all there is to it. Especially even nowadays we have all kinds of vegetarian meat that tastes so delicious. Even soya, it looks the same. I don't know if it tastes the same or not, but it tastes good to me. It tastes delicious, even better. But they still cannot put down that piece of meat, no matter if they die tomorrow, or if their children suffer.

It's not just about dying. It's the suffering – mental and physical, psychological and emotional – before dying. Because all this gas, it's already in the air. It affects people a

lot. Yet they don't admit it; they don't even claim it. But some have already said that it is because of that. Some scientists already do research and say it is because of global warming that people have more mental illness, more internal organ failure and so on. There's evidence everywhere, but it seems like no one listens or no one cares. Still, we continue to do it. And then if we die, oh well, we die happy. Where else do we go?

It's fuming everywhere. It's just that at the moment, it's not so intense. Then you probably have a headache when you pass by some place, and you don't know why suddenly the headache comes, or why suddenly your heart hurts or burns. You don't know why today your liver is no good, so then you take medicine and you forget about it. But it'll be more and more intense if we don't do something.

Suppose no one does anything and the planet is kaput. What will you do? Any idea? Suddenly, do you see how many 'Time to act?' Before, we didn't have them. Now you can look everywhere, and they're doing something for the environment. I hope they all do it and quick enough. I hope the governments and the media really put their thumbs into it. That's all I hope for, every day. And just ban this, ban that: No meat anymore and then we're saved. Truly, it's very simple! Just use the meatless or animal-less diet; use sustainable energy, with limitless sun or wave power; and plant trees. Everyone can plant only a couple of trees, not a lot. And the government, instead of putting money into war, they could just use the money to pay people to plant trees in areas of desert, dry climate or where it's already damaged, to revive the atmosphere. It's very simple!

We'd be happy to also go out and plant trees free of charge, and donate our labor anytime; we can, if the government is really behind every one of these programs. We would also be happy to go out and cook vegetarian, to show everyone in all of our houses. We can invite people to come into our house and show them how to cook vegetarian. After a few weeks, they'll know how, if you can do that first. But what I mean is, if the government and the media are really behind it, they just have to put down that piece of meat. Even if it is a sacrifice, it's really worth it. It's really the most noble thing they could do in their whole life. Just put down that piece of meat and replace it with the veggie meat. We have so much food to eat; it's not that we don't have a choice. Why don't they just try it?

Make every home a vegetarian restaurant

From now, each of you should be a teacher. Anywhere you go, anyone you meet, you talk about it. You invite them to your house and show them vegetarian cooking. Show it on hand; otherwise if they just see it on television, it may be different. Use your personal energy and love to show them. We just spread it out and do what we can. Use your time for saving the planet. Show them how to cook vegetarian food.

Every house, I want turned into a veggie restaurant. Show them what you eat. If they don't know what vegetarian is, they don't know how to do it. Truly, they don't know. Even if some people know that vegetarian is good, they don't know how. They even ask on the internet: 'How did you do it?' Truly, some people have never heard of it before. They never thought about it. So, we do that. All of you in the world teach them how, every day and every time you can. Invite them at random, as a guest, unconditionally, and show them how. Anyone who smiles at you, talk to them and invite them for coffee in your home: 'I live nearby! I didn't know such a lovely neighbor exists. Wow, what an honor! Let's go to my house and have a cup of coffee.' And then, from then on.

Start it; I'm not joking. Do something because you're out there. I do it on Supreme Master Television and in cooking for my dogs. I talk to whomever I can also. But I'm also very busy with the planet things. So, do that; be a restaurant owner, or restaurateur. Learn to cook well and learn to show it. With your smile, a stone will melt; and with your food, the heart will melt. There's nothing to lose. Vegetarian is very cheap; you can always afford to invite someone. And it's a good investment; it saves the planet. So, it's worth it. You try what you can, through Supreme Master Television, through flyers, through books, through the internet. It influences a lot. But still, that habit dies hard. Just tell them to change the habit, that's it. Invite whoever you can, show the vegetarian diet and make them feel welcome. It's like everything else. Put candles and all that. How much does it cost? Not so much. It doesn't have to be a lot. Make it festive and welcome and homey. Make the food taste good and then they'll come back for more and you can show them how.

Because truly, they don't know. I'm telling you the truth. Not many people know how to cook vegetarian. They think vegetarian is just to eat green beans, like string beans, and then they worry they become like a string. Surely many would ask you, 'Oh, vegetarian! Can you live on that? Is it nutritious enough that way?' They ask you like that because they don't know, truly. They don't research into that, so they're not used to it.

Ban all meat for the good of the world

I hope I live to see the day that the governments really ban meat because it's also poisonous to people. Not to talk about methane or waste gas, depleting energy or water or medicine, nothing like that. Meat makes everyone sick. Meat is poisonous. Everyone knows that. The people's leaders have to help protect people.

Suppose you know something is poisonous to your children, will you deliberately give it to them, to kill them? No! So now, all the evidence points out that meat is also poisonous and alcohol is bad. Just ban them outright. There's no more discussion. Poisonous things you don't give to your people. You don't allow them to be near your people. And children even have access to alcohol, not to talk about meat. Okay, that's it. We have to ban meat. We're banning it now by showing people how to cook and eat vegetarian. We all go out. This is really for survival. You have only two years to change, two years. Four years is when it happens but within two years we have to do something; otherwise, it will happen, do you understand me? [Audience: Yes.] Do you know how long two years is?

Q. *Very fast.*

M. Seven hundred something days; that's it – one hundred and four weeks. With fifty two weeks per year, two years is only one hundred and four weeks. One hundred and four weeks. That's all we have. Do you understand? Does it sound very long?

Q. *No!*

M. It's short. When you say two years, it might sound long. No! It's only seventy hundred days, one hundred and four weeks. That's a very scary number. Okay, we have to do it. We have to take matters into our hands. We do what we can. And if we die, we die, but we have to do something. Make it your mission in life, to inform people about the danger of eating meat, and show them the solution.

Meat is really not good for our planet. Meat is bad. Because meat is the reason, not the people! Not the people, right? They don't know! Truly they don't know. They influence each other. And they're really poor victims of the situation. It's really, truly like that. You have to do it with love. You have to have big compassion, to sacrifice your time and your energy.

Q. *There's an organization called Animal Aid. I got an email from them the other day and they've got a system where they train you or you can train yourself, so you can go and speak at schools. They get the schools for you and you can pick the age group of people you talk to. And a brother is thinking of going and doing it with younger children.*

M. Yes, we can do that.

Q. *You can speak about vegetarianism or climate change or anything.*

M. Yes, you can volunteer to go to any school, to cook a free meal that day, or bring samples. Or ask whoever wants to come with you to learn vegetarian food, and everyone brings a few carrots.

Q. *Because the children love the animals and then they start to ask the parents, saying, 'We can't eat these, they're beautiful beings.' Yes, children are great.*

M. Yes, if we can.

SUPREME MASTER CHING HAI'S NEW YEAR WISHES TO CHANGE THE FUTURE OF OUR PLANET ¹⁰

New Year is the time of celebration and reunion, of generosity, reconciliation and forgiveness.

We join billions of people around the globe in joy and thanks, that life on earth still offers most of her inhabitants much beauty and comfort.

We pray for the less fortunate and wish all beings many good years to come.

May heaven grace all with love and wisdom to walk the right path, to make the right choice, to continue in all that is good, merciful, loving and harmonious.

May all renew strength and courage to start the New Year with determination to walk the noble way, to pursue the noble purpose, thus bringing heaven to earth with everlasting peace for all beings to enjoy.

Wishing you an abundant, lucky New Year with much love and happiness.

The media can share the truth about global warming

Q. *Master, media is the key for people to realize how urgent this situation of climate change is on our planet. Would You please tell us, what's the role of the media for this year, so that they can better spread the important message to everyone?*

10. Videoconference with Supreme Master Television staff, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., February 7, 2008 (Originally in English).

- M. Regarding your question, in my very humble opinion, if it's at all possible, the media could inform the public of the urgency of climate threat and also could spread all the methods to brake it. I personally would be very, very grateful for such endeavors from the media. We thank them in advance because I think they will do it. [Applause]

The five basic commandments for saving the planet

- Q. *I would like to ask You: What are the immediate goals that we need to achieve this year to make sure that we can save the planet?*
- M. I'm going to give the 'Five commandments.' First of all, remember God, and pray for heaven's mercy. Second, abstain from all animal products. Third, refrain from harming any living being, be it human or animal. That is, respect and honor all life. Fourth, protect and preserve the environment and resources: Be frugal in all. Fifth, change to renewable energy.

Positive efforts bringing positive planetary change

- Q. *Dear Master, if I may ask, what positive changes can we look forward to seeing this New Year?*
- M. Well, it depends on the humans' decisions. But I do see quick efforts to halt climate change from many corners, many directions, many countries, many organizations and many individuals. You work at Supreme Master Television; you should know! There is good news every day. Let's just hope that there will be much more and faster actions to brake the threat that is facing us nowadays, whether we call it climate change or global warming. We pray for that, no? We pray for faster action and more action.

Work together to make our dreams for the planet come true

- Q. *Most compassionate Master, what is Your vision for the upcoming year and what can we do to make Your vision into realization?*
- M. My vision is that all war will stop and all people will concentrate on protecting lives and saving the planet. There are ways you can do it. For instance, if you cannot do much, then you can dream about it and pray for it. Or, the best is that all humanity should do all they can and work together sincerely and fervently to make it happen. Of course, with grace and mercy from above, that can be realized.
- Q. *Beloved Master, what is Your message or reminder for us for the upcoming New Year?*
- M. Well, you are doing your best already; thank you, all of you at the headquarters of Supreme Master Television; and thank you, all the people involved who are helping from remote corners of the world and all the ones who support mentally, emotionally, physically, in any way: I thank you all. [Applause] You help in bringing good and important news to the world and also, by the way, reminding fellow beings to be good, to be kind and to be protective of the earth, which is very, very crucial right now in our present period of time. I don't really have many messages for you because you're already doing your best. So, just continue doing it; continue on your noble path with unconditional dedication for the peace and happiness of all; because unconditional dedication is the only way we should work in our life. It offers the most benefit to

others, and it ennobles our life. My message for you honestly, since you ask, is congratulations: You are working for the best, that I know of, television channel in the world.

A message from the animals

- Q. *I just wanted to say thank You for Your love. And we wanted to wish You and all of the beautiful animals in the world a really bright and wonderful lunar New Year. If they had something to tell us, what would the animals wish for the lunar New Year?*
- M. Maybe you can guess: The animals thank all involved who try to protect the earth and respect lives, and their lives, of course. They are very grateful to God and to all who help them preserve their privilege on earth. They express their wish to live out their precious lives, so that they can have the chance to bless our planet, bless the world with their love and their spiritual endowment, and that in spite of everything, they say that they do still love humans and do still want to be their friends. And they do wish us all the best, especially in this time of difficulty. We thank them. [Applause]

To keep the planet safe, continue the noble way of living

- Q. *Master, it is said that many children born now are much more evolved and have a higher level of consciousness. So, will the children who will be born in the next few years have even higher levels of consciousness, now that there are more free souls in the world?*
- M. Yes, it is true that we have more spiritually elevated beings descending into this world. It is surely good for the planet, if we still have a planet. Such a precious and beautiful one is hard to find. But you know what I mean; after all the reports about all the planets, like Mars or any other. Even the Moon is not as beautiful as our planet. It's a very rare gift. And it's a very beautiful jewel. So, it now exists due to the exceptional good merit of all its co-inhabitants, namely humans and animals, and even minerals, plants and trees.

So, if we really appreciate this planet, all of the co-inhabitants must continue in a meritorious way so that we can keep and enjoy it. Even if the higher beings do come down to our world, we have to keep our noble way of living in order to keep the planet and to welcome them.

Big change can come from many smaller steps

- Q. *In the upcoming year, what are the really determining things that we can do to safeguard and protect our planet, in regards to the environment and vegetarianism and technologies?*
- M. Actually, nothing big; just a few baby steps. Everyone can do it. Just change to better, healthier, nobler and more wonderful habits. For example, try the vegetarian or vegan diet, produce more and rapidly use sustainable energy. Everyone can plant a couple of trees. Isn't that easy, all this?

We have the means, the intelligence and the extraordinary scientific talents to do all this. See, it's very easy – a 'piece of cake' for the New Year. Anyway, it's interesting and exciting to try a new lifestyle, don't you think? We should all do it. You did it; everyone else should do it. Methinks, it's easy!

Best wishes from our intergalactic friends

- Q. *Master, are there any messages that beings from the other planets and from our galaxy have for us earthlings, and are we ready for intergalactic communication with them?*
- M. Some planets send their best greetings and best wishes for the oriental New Year this year, the year of the rat. They know that; wow, they know everything! Some planets laud the world's efforts to preserve life and protect this earth. Some planets say that we are all co-related; thus, they desire that all co-inhabitants on earth succeed in curbing the present danger. They mean global warming, I think. They wish that life here will continue and progress till the time we can meet with them in peace and friendship. [Applause]

Some express their regret that earthlings cannot communicate much with them at present. But they will be able to do so in the near future, when human attention focuses more inward, less into war and more into love.

Heeding the experts' advice: Be vegetarian!

- Q. *The chief of the intergovernmental panel on climate change said that we should reduce the amount of meat consumption to lessen the effects of global warming. Do You think the people of the world should follow his advice?*
- M. Of course, they should listen to the chief of the IPCC, because he's the chief. Not only is he the chief, he's the chief from the United Nations and he even has a Noble Peace Prize. Who else can have more authority to speak about that? Honestly, he knows what he's talking about, and it's been proven that what he says is correct. It's good to be vegan for people's survival anyway, as well as the survival of the planet. It's a kinder, nobler lifestyle, more befitting to the humans who are the crown of creation. I think everyone should try that.

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE ¹¹

Spiritual practice does benefit the earth

- Q. *Do You think that spiritual practice could help heal the world, and how?*
- M. Of course. We already help a lot, invisibly. You see a lot more peace news now and a lot more caring for animals now. Even climate change; they're speeding it up. It's just not as much as we want because not the whole world is practicing, just a group of us and some other groups.

It's helping a lot, because I'll tell you a secret: If there hadn't been a lot of practitioners, then the world would have been kaput (disappeared) long ago already. It's just not the way we want because this world is still under the influence of maya somehow. That's because the people carry it within themselves. They don't want to wake up. They just worry too much every day about material existence and not the spiritual one. So, it's still better than nothing.

11. Videoconference with Supreme Master Television staff, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., January 20, 2008 (Originally in English).

Is global warming reversible?

- Q. *I was just wondering, are the effects of what we have done to the planet reversible in regards to climate change? If we were to survive through this period, can we reverse the damage that we have done to the earth?*
- M. To some extent. If the government and the people in the world act fast, maybe we can reverse it somehow, yes. Not so quickly to a hundred percent, like the primordial state of the world before, but we can protect ourselves if we act quickly; then the world will not get worse. The earth will be more protected if somehow we act very fast; then maybe some damage will be recovered.

We are just doing our best; we are really doing our best. Let's hope they will do it faster, for the children's sake; all of us who are already middle-aged and old, we don't care. But we can also do something.

For instance, the Amazon rainforest, because it has been there for a long time – thousands or millions of years – it's the lungs of the world. So, even if you plant new trees, it's not the same; but it helps somehow. The bigger the tree and the older the tree, the more effective it is for producing oxygen and neutralizing carbon dioxide. I don't know if the governments are trained to build something to reflect and send the heat back into space in such a large area and in such a hugely effective way, like the way nature has made or like the ice does.

The reason climate change is now

- Q. *Master, I wanted to ask You why all of these things are happening to us, in our generation?*
- M. Because karma accumulates; it takes time to accumulate until it peaks, like Rome was not built in one day. Even with all the teachings of the Masters from ancient times, people don't listen, and that's why it happens. It happens now and again; this is not the first time.

You remember Atlantis and so on; they were also happening similarly, and Noah's time; that's why he had to build a boat and so on and so forth. So, it's not the first time. And recently they even found a new city under a lake somewhere. This is just a thing that happens.

And now and again the world happens to go under like that because people don't listen to all the teachings of the Masters. So, the Master comes down again, again and again. Different Masters come down and tell people, 'Please be vegetarian, be moral, be good, be compassionate.' But no one listens, or not many people listen; and they even persecute the ones who listen, or the Master. Therefore, it just has to happen now and again, when it accumulates enough karma or enough destructive power.

But we have the shield. We have the power; that's the thing. Everyone dies one day or another, anyway. The question is: Where do they go, or where do you go? You are under the protective shield of the Master. If you listen to everything that is moral and good, and kind and compassionate, then you will be safe in the high heaven. Most people are unaware of the consequences because they have been misled by some

so-called religious leaders. But even they will also be helped by the Master power of the present time. And they will be also elevated in some kind of heaven.

So, the real ‘baddies’ have to go to hell. That’s it. But it’s not a question about dying or not. It’s a question of whether they can be liberated. So, the people of the world have been helped spiritually; their souls are liberated, because it’s not all their fault. It’s not all their fault that they eat meat. It’s not their fault that they don’t understand the bible or the teaching of the Buddhas, because no one really expounded them really correctly.

So, the ones who have been initiated, they are protected for sure, if they follow of course. If they break it, then they also have to bear the consequences. And the other people, the people who have not done anything wrong, who just follow the masses and are really ignorant, also have been helped; their souls will be helped.

- Q. *Almost all agree that climate change is happening, but some people still don't believe that it's caused by humans.*
- M. Well, it's caused by humans most of the time. Everyone knows it by now.
- Q. *Some people still say that they're not sure it's caused by humans.*
- M. What else? What else is it that causes the carbon dioxide from the cars? You think the aliens are driving our cars and the aliens eat meat?
- Q. *Master, another question is: If You had a message for the world, what would it be?*
- M. That I love them very much. Because I know it's not their fault, whatever they do. It's just the veil of ignorance that has been cast upon them and makes them oblivious to the Truth. They have also been misled by circumstances, and by people who do not understand the doctrine of the Master. So, that's all I can say to them: I love them very much. I feel more sorry for them than blaming.

Just do our best to help people become vegetarian

- Q. *I showed one of my friends the NASA climate ad, and he seemed to be convinced with it, and then I said, 'Well, are you going to go veggie?' And he said, 'Maybe in a few years time.' So, with those kinds of people, how do You convince them more; how do You make them take action?*
- M. I don't convince anyone. I don't know how. I've done this all these years and not too many people are vegetarian. It helps some, but it's not as much as I want. Even if I go around from door to door and stick the NASA's flyer on everyone's house, I don't know how convinced they will be because human habits are very difficult to change and also because of reverse psychology. Sometimes you tell them to do it, and they don't, just because they want to go against what you say. It's the human reverse psychology.

Humans have been like that since time immemorial. It's difficult. It's not just about being vegetarian; it's about many other things. People love me everywhere; it's just when you tell them to be vegetarian, they hesitate. Because let's face it, also it's difficult for people to know how to eat vegetarian. It's not all that popular, like all over the world vegetarian is a big trend. So, the meat eaters don't know how to cook a

vegetarian meal. For the Chinese and the Aulacese (Vietnamese) it's easier because we cook tasty meals with tofu and so on, or chop suey. But the meat eaters just put the whole chunk of beef in the oven, and that's all they know.

It's difficult; even if they want to, they just don't know how. That's why we have to teach them how to cook vegetarian on television, but even that is difficult. When I was in Germany, I invited my neighbors every week to vegetarianism, but that didn't turn them into vegetarians. They loved the food I cooked, and then I gave them recipes and so on, but that didn't make them vegetarian.

- Q. *So, when a person chooses to become a vegetarian, is it because of fate or destiny, or else they will come back to not being a vegetarian?*
- M. It's because the person has a strong will and wants to do something good that he or she knows is good. Only that person will change. The person who is weak, even knowing it's good, he won't do it! God gives the free will for people to change from bad to good and vice versa – whatever they choose to do. That's the problem, the free will of humans, and there's the ego to boost.

The thing is, if we have the planet, we have the planet. If we don't, we don't. I wish really that we do have the planet, that we continue to live, and that the children can grow up in a better environment. But you see, it's not all up to our group. It's not even up to heaven. It's up to humanity to decide what they want and which direction to turn. It's just up to them to change. And with all the power of the leaders, they should do something faster than this. So, we just pray for the best. That's that, okay? If half the population of the planet becomes vegetarian, that would be already fantastic news.

Climate change doesn't mean only hot. It means the change of the climate around the world, and a lot of frequent disasters, with hot places becoming cold and cold places becoming hot. And then it becomes kind of chaotic, and it's a lot of suffering for the people later on, with many countries and many cities that will be under the water, and so on. And more storms, like more typhoons, a lot before it really ends.

It will be agonizing for a while, and a lot of people will suffer and they would not even understand why. So, we contact people, like politicians and newspapers. Just write them letters or send them flyers; just do whatever we can to save the world. Each one of us is responsible; we do something as we can.

- Q. *The data from the NASA's climate reports indicate that the polar ice cap will be gone by 2012. This coincides with the end of the mayan calendar; is this like a coincidence or something else?*
- M. Maybe it's not coincidence. Some people do see things. Some people do see things in the future, but people still can't change. The thing is, would they like to change? Would they be strong enough to change? I try everywhere I go, of course, but it's not that easy. Our program and leaflets and the lectures, they change many people, millions of people, but that is not enough.

Forbidding meat eating as a harmful substance

- Q. *I wanted to ask, if You have a message for the leaders of the world, what would You say to them?*

M. I would say to them to use their mighty power to change the diet of the planet. Adopt immediately, new technology and sustainable energy, and set an example themselves by becoming a vegetarian or vegan. Change their diet; use their mighty power. Use their example to set a new diet for the planet: The vegetarian diet.

They first have to be vegetarian and then they can use their power truly. Like the way they forbid smoking, they could do that by forbidding meat as well, by citing all the harm that meat would do to humans and the planet. They can do that, just like forbidding smoking. Forbid meat eating, just like forbidding the smoking of cigarettes and drugs. That's also another kind of harmful drug.

Q. *Also, did other civilizations in the universe have the same problem?*

M. They did. Wherever there are people and planets, these things can always happen. Once the technology has developed to a certain height, the side effects will follow. If people are not spiritually stable or developed, then the technological development will outweigh the spiritual balance, and they will destroy their planet.

Q. *Dear Master, we want to take this opportunity to thank You for graciously accepting to have this session on the environment. For all the work and encouragement You've given us, we want to thank You. We love You very much. Thank You.*

M. I love you too, guys. [Applause] Heaven loves you, all the animals love you, and I love you. [Audience: We love You! [Applause]]

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ¹²

First we have to save this planet so that we'll be able to stay; that's first. And then we will think of our own place. The way it is going, if they don't fix it, in four or five years' time: Finito, no more. It's really that urgent, because the time is short. So, be more diligent in practice. Four or five years' time is very short; it's only the blink of an eye.

The main point is that we spread good news on Supreme Master Television. Second, we have to meditate a lot – every second you can, every minute you can – and do whatever you can to save the planet. For instance, go out with the Alternative Living flyers and tell people to eat vegetarian, tell people to plant trees, spare some electricity, water, and so on. But that is not much. The government has to do something. They have to stop it altogether. Anyway, I have done my best, and we have done our best.

I feel sorry, because the humans have been misled. As I've told you, they don't really know. If no one teaches them, how will they know? One blind leads the other blind, and they all go down into the pit and don't even know it. So, I feel really sorry, and that's the only thing that makes me keep working – despite all the frustration, all the sadness, all the mistreatment that they measure out to me, all the pressure I have all these years, and all kinds of unfairness. The only thing keeping me working is because I feel so sorry for everyone, that they have not been taught. They have really been misled, gravely, big time. And then once they start in that direction, it's very difficult to turn back. Besides, no one even tells them to turn back.

The ocean bed has a lot of poisonous gas. If the ice at the poles all melts, and the sea gets warm, the gas will be released from the ocean, and we'll all be poisoned by that gas

12. Christmas four-day retreat, Paris Center, France, December 23-25, 2007 (Originally in English).

from the ocean. No need then to talk about flooding, or warm climate, nothing. If the surface is warm, the gas will be released. It stays down there because it's cold there right now. But if the ocean water is too warm, it's possible that the gas will be released. It's a lot of gas, enough to kill everyone. We'll die simple and quick. Don't worry, there's no suffering. To die by gas is no suffering. It's better than dying by anything else, like suffering by flood or to die slowly by roasting from the climate.

The climate is warming quicker than they predict; that's the problem. Because when one thing warms, it makes another thing warm. So, if the ocean is warm, it melts the ice. When the ice is there, it reflects the heat, and so the ocean is less warm. But now the ocean is warm enough to melt the ice, and so there is nothing to reflect the heat; therefore, the ocean is warmer. That's why they could not calculate it well. And so it keeps warming faster than they think. So, in that case if the governments or everyone doesn't do anything, then that's it. That's the way it is. It's logical; no need to be scientist to know it, and no need to believe me. Because the ice reflects the sun, sending it back into space, but the ice is melting so fast now that there's not enough reflection. And because the sea is already warm, it melts the ice; and because the ice melts, the sea is warmer. It's a cycle. There's no need to analyze any further than that.

We've been warned long enough. If you see the Singapore lecture I made ten or fifteen years ago, I already warned them that we have to change the way we live our life; otherwise it's too late. Or before that, I always talked about how we deforest our planet. Meat eating and so on contributes to a lot of the damage to our earth planet. They listen and yet they go home and do the same. What else am I going to do? Sometimes I am ready to give up already. But it's okay, we just continue as much as we can. If we can save the planet, we save the planet. If we cannot save the planet, then we cannot. There are only two choices, right? It's very simple.

Scientists say many things. They are listening now, but I just hope they do it fast, that's all. It just takes action. They do know everything now; all the governments in the world really take it seriously now. The United Nations has already declared it, and the United States and China are trying to cut down on everything. I'm just worried the action might be too slow.

I'm telling you so that you meditate more, in case it happens. But if you meditate more, maybe things will change and it might not happen. Then it's also good; at least you have extra meditation power. That's no harm.

OUR WONDROUS ANIMAL COMPANIONS ¹³

*[On November 16, Golden Year 4 (2007), Supreme Master Television was launched as a global satellite channel. On that same day, the Los Angeles studio was graced with a live videoconference interview with Supreme Master Ching Hai. During the interview, Master kindly permitted audience members to ask questions about Her two recently released books, *The Birds in My Life* and *The Dogs in My Life*. With the popularity of these books reaching # 1 bestseller rank in venues around the world, this interview was a unique opportunity to receive further insights from the author about God's precious animal creations.]*

13. Videoconference with Supreme Master Television staff, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., November 16, 2007 (Originally in English).

Animal companions' care is beyond measure

That is the very touching thing about the animals, that whenever I find myself in a sad situation or some unhappy circumstances or feelings, the dogs and the birds are always there to comfort me. They just come by themselves, either licking toes or sitting around or jumping or playing the fool, like playing stupid, 'dropping dead,' or chasing each other – any trick just to make me happy. And the birds maybe just grab me by my hands or even by my clothes and want to kiss me and tell me that I'm beautiful and so on. They are very touching, very sentimental and extremely sensitive to your feelings. And of course, every time I think of these things, it makes me happy.

Animals also benefit from love

- Q. *Dear Master, since Your birds are essentially rescue birds, what changes have occurred in their behavior since they've been given a new life?*
- M. Of course, they become happier, content and grateful to God. And one more thing, they become more human or more like human.

The gift from animals to humanity

- Q. *I'm really excited that these books have become best sellers. It's absolutely wonderful because it's sharing the consciousness that we're one with all of creation. What inspired You to do this?*
- M. It's my wonderful birds themselves. I did ask their permission and I got it. They're so happy that they can contribute some joy to human life and to shine some knowledge about birds and animals to all readers. Every time we look up into the sky to watch a bird flying, they want us to remember heaven.

Tuning-in to animals' communication

- Q. *I was hoping that You could talk a little bit about the process that You use to communicate with the animals. Is there something we can do to better communicate with our own pets and animals around us? Thank You.*
- M. The number one secret is love, love and love. If we have love for the animals, they will respond. Slowly, if you continue in this fashion, you will have the intuitive sense and the feeling or the quiet voice will be transmitted to you, and then you will become like one with the animal and what they feel, or what you feel they will feel. Or, you can ask them to help you. In the beginning, you can sit quietly with them in the night, or start stroking them or petting them, and talk to them inside. Then, start quietly; try to listen and pick up the intuitive answer to your question. Ask them some simple questions; see if they answer and see if their answer is clear. Otherwise, an animal communicator can help you.

Mostly we have no need to talk. Even inside, there's no need for too much talking. The inner world is the world of beauty and of silent understanding. There's not much talking like the way we do here, so just treat the animals generally as a best friend and enjoy their presence. You will feel a rapport if even it's not quite a conversation. Of course, we must be patient, have a quiet mind, have lots of time and practice and above all – lots, lots and lots of love. Good luck.

The giving nature of companion animals

- Q. *Master, would You please tell us more about the purpose of the animal co-inhabitants of our planet?*
- M. As you can well see, some of them are there to help people with their physical needs in areas where good strength is required. Some are also there not just for physical help but to ward off bad influences in general, to protect their human companion or their caretaker or their other animal companions through their presence alone. This is because they do have divine invisible power and because they are connected with the divine. Some of the animals are there to convey messages of good news that will be coming to you, or warning you of misfortunes ahead; that is, if we can listen. Many people are too busy to hear what their animal friends are telling them.

Otherwise, some animals just quietly bless their caretakers with good luck, good health, good fortune, happiness and even spiritual upliftment. There's no end to what an animal can and will do for the near and loved humans or their companions.

Animals bring many invisible blessings

- Q. *I'd like to respectfully ask Supreme Master Ching Hai if You could share with us some information about animals' qualities and abilities, especially some of their abilities that we don't know much about yet. Thank You.*
- M. As we have mentioned, they have blessing power; they have protective power and they have telepathy, which most humans do not possess. Most of them are in touch with the divine grace and are just happy and forgiving. Their love is pure and absolutely unconditional. They know their past and your past lives; they know the present life, and they know the future life and the future that lies ahead for you, which many humans do not have the ability to know. Some of them can see past lives over a ten or twenty-thousand year span. Some are from very high levels of consciousness and come down in the animal form to help humankind and other beings. So, they are not as they appear, not always. Good question.

How humans can help animals

- Q. *Shalom, Supreme Master Ching Hai. I am from Israel. I would like to ask You how animals perceive their world differently than we do. Since You communicate with them, I'd like You to tell me how they feel and what they think. Thank You.*
- M. Shalom! That's a good question. Although they look different than us, they have a similar outlook as we do. They want love and they want happiness, just like we do. But their world is simple as you can observe; their needs are few. They depend absolutely on divine grace, and they thrive on love. Love, to them, is the most and the only important thing: Love from God, love from human companions and love from each other.

That's why you can see in the dogs, for example, that no matter what you feed them or how much you feed them, they love you like no other. No matter how you treat them before, they worship you like a king just a few seconds later if you call them, and no matter how long you have been gone, they never forget your face. They never forget you and they show their happiness beyond words whenever they see you again, at any time, even if it's just a few minutes that you are apart.

However, in a way, animals think that we live in a disorderly fashion, as we are so disconnected from the source of our strength and intelligence. They see that we pay attention to the less important aspects of life. They feel that we need more help in this, to awaken from our sleep and to recognize our divine self, because that's the most essential purpose in life if we want to live even a human life of real fulfillment and happiness and, in turn, bring joy to all around. That's what the animals see and think about us and about the world surrounding us.

Some animals are heavenly reminders

- Q. *In relation to human beings, what is the mission that the birds have? What are they meant to show us and tell us?*
- M. The purpose of birds concerning humans is that they want to remind us to aim high, as high as heaven; also, to remember heaven as home and to trust completely in God, just like they do, and that heaven is the only true freedom.

The importance of the animal-human friendship

- Q. *Master, would You kindly explain as to how a loving relationship between humans and animals would affect our planet?*
- M. That would be a big peace on earth: Capital P-E-A-C-E. And heaven will bless humans beyond measure. I hope we will live to see that day.

ANIMALS CAN HELP US DEVELOP OUR INNER LOVE ¹⁴

Thank you for taking the time to join us on this grand occasion. To the representatives of the government, the honorable guests and Archbishop of the Philippines, let me express my appreciation for your support for this event today. This shows that every one of us has a loving spirit in wanting to protect animals, which we express in different ways. I hope that this book will awaken the love power that lies within everyone.

Because each one of us has God, or the Buddha nature, within us, surely we have love and compassion as well. However, due to our busy life and excessive pressures from the need to survive in this world, we often lack the time to recall this love within. Some people are able to express this love and remind themselves, while others are busy or have forgotten how to bring out this inner love power.

We ought to remind and love each other, including loving animals. They appear weak, small and helpless, needing our worldly and material help, love and protection. However, if we truly understand animals, we will realize that they are on a high spiritual level.

Loving the weak is the way of the true hero

If we love and protect animals, in return, they will help us in many ways. However, we should not help animals because we expect benefit, but because we love the weak and small. This is the way of the true hero. Heroes do not have to go to war or perform spectacular deeds. The heroic quality lies in the heart.

14. Videoconference with readers during the release event of Supreme Master Ching Hai's new book 'The Dogs in My Life', Taipei Center, Formosa, October 25, 2007 (Originally in Chinese).

If we can love and protect small animals, that means we can also love and protect other sentient beings. Someone said to me: 'If a person can love a dog, a bird or any other weak and small animal, that person definitely can love other humans, too.' Thus, by loving animals, we help bring peace to the world. If we do it together, there will be no more wars among us.

When we love and protect animals, our compassion will develop naturally. If any of you have a dog, a bird or other pets, you will have noticed this change. When you hug them or look at them, your heart will naturally fill with love and you will not think of anything else. By loving and pampering them, this loving aura will pervade our house, our whole family, and emanate beyond, extending the positive atmosphere to the world.

When every family is full of love, there will be peace in the world, because of the atmosphere. You all know how important that is. When we see people living in harmony and loving each other, we will also feel very happy. Suppose we enter a house where people are quarreling or fighting, we immediately feel uncomfortable, too. Is that not so? [Audience: Yes!]

Therefore, animals can help us develop our inner love, change our ambiance, and make us happy; and this happy atmosphere will affect the whole world. Imagine if every family could be so happy and loving; of course the world would be a wonderful place, wouldn't it? [Audience: Yes.] We don't need to talk about whether animals are of a high spiritual level or of any significant benefit to us. At the very least, they can help us develop our compassion. That alone would make us feel very comfortable.

If we have time to sit with a dog, pat it, and show our love, very soon our whole body will feel very comfortable. Even our body feels comfortable, not to mention our atmosphere. Our whole body feels the presence of a serene electrical current that is very soothing. We can feel it distinctly. Therefore, dogs can really help us in this way; it is not necessary to communicate with them through supernatural means or use telepathy to understand their language. Just the sensation in our physical body is enough to prove that dogs are truly helpful to humankind.

God created animals to help humans

In the bible, it is said that God created animals to help us. We should give some thought as to how they help us. My personal experience is that they have helped me. Scientists have proved that if you love animals and keep pets at home, you will be physically healthier and mentally happier. When you are happy, you attract good luck and a happy atmosphere to your home because like attracts like. Also, seeing your pets every day, your love will develop, and this love will attract more love. For instance, when you go outside, people will love you more, dogs won't bite you, and you might attract more love to your home.

Therefore, in helping animals, we truly benefit ourselves as well. No matter whom we help, we always benefit. We often think that when we help others, it is the other party that benefits. This is not necessarily the case! That person will reciprocate with love. So, when we help someone, he will be grateful and pray for us, and our lives will be more comfortable and happy. Prayers are effective!

Animals communicate directly with heaven. So, if we help them, they will surely report to heaven that this person is very nice. We can say that they pray for us. If not, heaven has

eyes! If we have been nice to people and helped them, heaven will record it. When we help animals, heaven will also record it.

In Au Lac, we have a legend that says if you have been benevolent and treated dogs well, when you cross the bridge (to the other shore) after you die, the dogs will not bark loudly. This is because, if they bark loudly, you will become frightened and fall into the hellish river, where there are many crocodiles and snakes, which is almost like hell. However, if you have been nice to the dogs, they will greet you, love and protect you, and let you pass safely and smoothly into heaven. That bridge separates heaven and hell. That is what the legend means. I have not been there, but it makes sense. Whatever the ancient people said always makes sense. Why would they lie to us, right? [Audience: Yes!]

Exhibiting our noble heart

Whether this story is true or not, we should love and protect the small and weak when we see them, for in doing so, we show the magnanimous heart of a hero. As such, we are already a noble person and would not wonder whether they will help us or not. Of course, they have helped to bring out our noble heart, which is more important than wealth or social status. Thus, we ought to love animals. In every country, there are animal shelters or similar facilities. We should do our best to help them in any way we can. If we cannot adopt any animals, we can make a financial contribution or help these organizations take care of animals or find good families to adopt them.

The way to treat animals

Our pets should live in happiness and be assured a comfortable and dignified life. Like us, animals also need dignity; if you can communicate with them, they will tell you so. Treating animals with respect is very good and beneficial for them. For instance, if you respect them, they will also respect you; you can feel it. For them, it is very important to live with dignity; food is not everything. They really do not come to this world just to eat; it only appears that way from the outside.

BEING VEG TO SAVE THE LOVING ATMOSPHERE OF THE PLANET ¹⁵

It's a loving atmosphere that we have to create. It's not only about the animals who suffer; it's about our loving nature that we're killing. And it's not about eating the animals who you see suffer or you don't see suffer. It's also the green policy for the planet. The more animals we eat, the more they raise. The more they raise, the more non-green it becomes, and the more endangered our planet becomes.

So, it's not just about you, whether you can or cannot eat that kind of meat. It's not about whether the Buddha forbids, or the compassion even. It is you yourself. We have to save the planet by cutting out the unnecessary food that is no good for us, anyway. Everyone knows already that meat is not good for us. Why not just cut it altogether, and save everything else?

Everyone knows that raising animals is the heaviest and the worst cause of our planet's pollution. Everyone knows that. It's everywhere. It's from the United Nations' report and everything; the whole international community came together and concluded that it is so. And still they beat around the bush, saying: 'We'll change to biofuel, we'll plant some more

15. Three-day retreat, Paris Center, France, October 25, 2007 (Originally in English).

trees, and we'll protect this forest.' No one stands up and says, 'Let's go vegan; go vegetarian!' No one stands up and says that. I'm waiting for whoever that leader may be, to just stand up and say, 'Look, we go veggie. That's the quickest way first; everything else later.'

How come no one says anything about that? They just beat around the bush on everything: biofuel, ethanol gas, change the bulbs, less water. The water that you're using every day may be a lot, but it's not a lot compared to the water they use for animal raising. So, they just beat around the bush with things like: 'Save the water in the bath; don't run the water while you're brushing your teeth.' That is nothing! Of course, it saves a few gallons, but they put hundreds of gallons out there for one cow just for a few days to wash, to rinse, to let them drink, or to water the grass or whatever it is for them to graze upon, just so that they will end up on a plate anyway.

So, the main cause, they don't want to talk about. Everyone just runs around it and tries to avoid it. They don't ever talk about going veggie. Everyone knows about the United Nation's report, but no one touches it; no one talks about it. They can't even put down one piece of meat for the sake of health – the planet's health, your own health and your children's health.

So, whatever happens, it's our own doing. There's no one there to help us. Not even God can do anything, if we don't want to do it. God put us here to do things. If we don't do our job, what is He going to do? Then the Lord of Karma will take over our lives, and then we will scream like murder; we'll beg and pray: 'Please God, help me do this; help me do that.' Now we still can pray, but if we are in hell, it's very difficult to pray. You don't have time to pray; you don't have the mentality to even think of praying. There's too much suffering!

THE BEST WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH ANIMALS ¹⁶

Most people love animals. They love to keep birds, dogs and so on, but not everyone can look after animals. If people do not want to keep animals, it is not because they have no compassion; it is perhaps because they do not have the time or experience, or possibly the environment does not permit. For instance, some people's houses are too small. So, we still need to consider whether or not we are suitable to care for animals. We don't have to own animals to show that we have compassion. If we cannot house animals, we can still continue to support animal protection groups, or spread the message of loving the animals. This is also very helpful.

If we have the chance to adopt an animal, say a bird, for example, then we should be mentally prepared. We have to find out what kind of bird has better affinity with us. We have to study books and decide what kind of bird we like, what conditions are needed for adopting the bird, and what we need to do. We should check and see whether we can do all of these. It is not enough to just bring animals home and feed them. Every day, we have to take care and communicate with them in the same way we treat our beloved friends or relatives. This is what we should do. Only when we are able to do this, then the animals can live happily, because they also have deep feelings. They are very faithful and sentimental, and they treat their human caretakers like their own family.

Besides that, we have to scrub and clean their cages every day and take them out to play. If you cannot do that every day, then at least do it once every one or two days. However,

16. Videoconference with readers during the release event of Supreme Master Ching Hai's new book 'The Birds in My Life', Taipei Center, Formosa, August 24, 2007 (Originally in Chinese).

you must communicate with them and talk to them every day. It is all right if you cannot communicate with them on the inside; just talk to them in English or Chinese; they can understand perfectly. Give it a try! [Master and audience laugh.] Suppose you have a bird. It is all right if you cannot communicate with him every day in the way I do. Just treat him with love and he will feel it. The more loving you are, the more you are able to communicate with the bird, and naturally you can understand each other very well heart to heart, as distinct as human conversation. The same applies to all animals. If we want to communicate with them, sometimes their language is different from ours, so we really need to have love to understand them.

So, do not worry that your animal cannot understand you; just worry that you don't understand them, but slowly you will understand. Actually, we don't have to use language to understand each other. We all have the telepathic ability within. After living with animals for a longer time, this telepathy develops gradually. When you sincerely want to understand the animals, this dormant spiritual quality will naturally emerge. I never learnt any technique of communicating with birds; it revealed itself spontaneously. When you have love, it will transcend all languages, and you will understand each other more and more.

If you are caring for animals, sit together with them on some quiet nights, try not to think about anything else, and ask the animal from your heart: 'Can we try to communicate with each other?' Then you will be surprised to find that he or she can communicate with you, not with language, but through telepathy, very distinctly. If you really cannot do it, suppose you are too busy and cannot quiet down, and you cannot get your telepathic ability to emerge naturally, it is all right. We don't need a lot of words. Just look after the animal like you are taking care of yourself, and then you will feel from within that you understand each other.

Actually, birds and dogs do not demand much; you don't need to talk to them a lot every day. I also do not communicate a lot with my birds every day; we just treat each other with love, and that is enough.

Master's blessing to readers of Her new book 'The Birds in My Life'

My best wishes to the readers of 'The Birds in My Life.' When they read this book, they will feel very happy, and thus attract all kinds of good luck. It is because when we feel very happy, good luck will also come. Before writing this book, I asked the birds whether this blessing sounded okay or not. [Master and audience laugh.] The birds said, 'Okay!' They also want people to know that they are very happy. Therefore, this book will make everyone feel happy together. I like it this way. [Applause] When we are happy, naturally we will have good luck!

Sharing the world of animals

- Q. *Master! Will You please talk about Your main objective of writing 'The Birds in My Life'?*
- M. Firstly, to all readers with affinity I wish to introduce the magnificent animal friends of our world. One of them is the birds, which are really beautiful, and their souls are also very, very beautiful. As well, they are highly intelligent and have deep feelings, just like us. Therefore, I hope everyone can appreciate them. Secondly, perhaps through these little bird friends, we can understand more about other sentient beings.

- Q. *What is the message that this book intends to convey to the readers and the general public?*
- M. We hope that humans will understand more about the world of animals, and will treat them as partners, take better care of them, and try to understand each other. At present, some people do not understand the animals; they think animals are stupid and unintelligent. In fact, they are very clever and intelligent.

The gifts animals bring to humans

Although we do not expect reciprocation from animals, there is a saying in Au Lac: ‘Save the animals and they will repay your kindness.’ This is indeed true. Sometimes, animals can bring lots of good luck to you; perhaps it is prosperity to your business, perhaps good health, or more love and joy to your loving relationship or family life. Each animal brings a different gift; you have to perceive it quietly.

In San Francisco of the United States, there was a very rich man. Previously, he lost all his wealth and became a homeless wanderer. One day, he came across a dog that then accompanied him all the time. After adopting the dog, he began to feel much better; his mood as well as his health improved. From there he stood up and worked again, and finally became a very rich man, a billionaire. After he died, his property was all left to that dog. A very big house was built to accommodate stray dogs and take very good care of them. Most probably you’ve heard this story. That dog had brought him great wealth.

In addition to bringing happiness to people, many dogs also bring prosperity. Each animal that comes to your house will definitely bring a gift. You have to observe carefully and quietly. I don’t mean it will bring you a book or a cookie, no! It is not like that. Instead, it will gradually bring you all kinds of delightful spiritual surprises from within. However, if you cannot communicate with it, you might not think that it is the one who brought that to you. For example, after adopting a dog, if your life suddenly improves and your business booms tremendously, then you should begin to wonder. [Master and audience laugh.] Perhaps it was the dog that brought you good luck; try to observe carefully.

I have a bird that brought me lots of money, but I am not telling you which one. [Master and audience laugh.] [Applause] I never imagined that this would happen when I adopted it. I only discovered it later. It was because, after it came to my home, we began to understand each other slowly. Through our communication I realized that it had brought a lot of money, but I used it all to help needy people, and other birds, dogs and animals. I didn’t adopt the bird because I wanted the money. When I first met it, I did not know that it would bring any money. Usually, animals won’t immediately let you know; they’ll first find out whether you treat them nicely or not, before revealing the gift to you. It is really like that. The better you treat them, the greater the gift they have for you.

Animals are also from heaven. Some of them are highly developed spiritually, even higher than some humans. Don’t think that they are ordinary beings just because they are wearing an outer appearance of a dog or bird. You have often heard stories of animals transforming into human form to help their human caretakers. Those stories were true, but we need to use our spiritual eye to perceive it. Unfortunately, many people cannot see this. We should remember clearly what God has thus said in the bible: ‘I have created all the animals to befriend you and to help you.’ God wouldn’t tell lies. Therefore, I cannot be wrong when I say that the animals are bringing us gifts. Besides, I have personal experience. More and more I realize that all my animals have brought me different gifts. Some brought me good friends; some brought me good helpers. I don’t mean that they

called them on the telephone and asked them to come. [Master and audience laugh.] It is just that, when the animals are living in my house, naturally they attract those good friends to come, or the money, or helpful persons. Or, suddenly my life becomes more free and easy. Some previous karmic hindrance, the bondage related to some people, would suddenly be severed. These are brought by the animals.

Animals are really born to help human beings. Later, when we have the opportunity to publish the book, *The Noble Wilds*, I may reveal some of the secrets to you. [Applause] Originally, I dared not reveal it in writing, because it belongs to our inner communication. So, I really dared not reveal it all, in the books about the dogs and birds; I just wrote a little bit. In the first place, I only wanted to write an ordinary book on how humans and birds should live with each other. For instance, to every day enjoy meals, play games, and have fun together. I had no intention to write about the heart-to-heart communication. However, sometimes I had no choice, so I had to write a little about it.

Even some wild animals will also help us. For instance, there might be some wild animals near your house, and you might have fed them occasionally, then they would also help you. Even if you cannot communicate with them, they would still help you. Of course, it would be better if you could communicate. I once communicated with a swan and it told me a lot of things that I didn't have time to think about. Not that I wasn't aware, but I had no time to think about it. After communicating with the swan, I remembered those things and that I had to do this and that.

Really, all animals are born to help human beings. The bible is correct! We should remember that they are our helpers. Unfortunately, some people are not aware. Be patient and calm down, then we can communicate with animals and understand what kind of help they are giving us. What a shame if they have helped us yet we are not aware of it! It is not necessary that we must help them first and then they will repay us. Regardless of whether we have helped them or not, if we interact and communicate with them, they really will help us. In this way, it is really good for us. Not only good for them, but also really good for us!

HUMILITY REVEALS TRUE KNOWLEDGE ¹⁷

Humility is very important. Humility means the absence of ego. Ego means the absence of humility. Without humility, you will cause a lot of trouble and headache for everyone, including the Master. Even if you want to do good, you do just ego. It's just the way you think! You ignore everyone else. You don't consider. It's not because you want to; you just live that way. Your ego leads you into that kind of inconsiderate way of life, and then it's very difficult for you to understand anyone else's feeling or convenience.

So, the ego is your worst enemy, worse than eating meat! If people already kill it and you eat it, okay, you have some karma, and you don't have too much compassion. But with ego, you even forsake compassion, because you don't know what compassion is anymore. You are blind to the people around you, to their feelings and their emotions and their needs. You are blind! If you have ego, you just think of yourself, the way you want to do this and do that. You do it your way, and you don't think of any other alternative. You don't consider anyone else. The ego is the one that stands in between you and the true knowledge of providence. So, anyone who has a big ego, don't consider yourself intelligent at all! You are just a repeating kind of parrot, learning from anything that you know. But you are not truly intelligent.

17. European three-day retreat, Paris Center, France, August 22, 2007 (Originally in English).

The one who truly has knowledge is the one who has no ego. Then your knowledge shines, and you do everything right! It's just like that. So, don't be afraid of any danger or any trouble – be afraid of your own ego. Ego is what? From where do we have ego? It's from past life impressions and accumulated habits or associations, and background. If you learned something and you became good at this, and then you learned something else and you became good at that, and everyone kept praising you, then over time, you get so used to being praised, your ego grows, and you think that whatever you do is good because you've become used to being at the top. And then you don't consider anyone. It's just become a habit. But these are very bad for us; so try to eliminate that.

Only when you eliminate your ego will your knowledge be truly revealed. That's why in the old times, it is said, 'The man who knows looks like the man of low knowledge;' he looks like an ignorant person, because he might not show off his worldly skills or knowledge. He doesn't even want to show off! If he knows, he doesn't show off. For him, it's not important anymore. The important thing is the real knowledge of heaven, the true, original knowledge, which we forsake for learning some skill or something in this world, or for any doctrine or any policy or any special talent, just to be on top of the society – forsaking our own great self and the real knowledge that we always have, to be a great person.

So, to have knowledge in this world is not the top priority, really. Learn what you can to survive, of course. But if we forsake our real knowledge for worldly skills, that is a very great pity. It will enhance only our ego, and it will separate us more from our true knowledge – from the one who knows everything, the one who pervades everywhere, and the one who never goes wrong.

Practice noble quality to help it grow

The noble quality is just like the IQ; you can also practice and enlarge it. Human quality normally is given to you. NQ, or noble quality, is also given to you before you're born. According to what you have from the last life, this is the leftover and that's what you get. It's not like heaven has a different favor for Mr. Smith or Mrs. Mueller from Hamburg. This is different. It's not like that. So, suppose someone only has three percent NQ from the last life. Why? Because he was just a very ordinary and a simple man; he didn't do anything good, or he didn't feel anything about anyone; he didn't feel love or compassion for anyone. Perhaps it's because he wasn't required to do so, or perhaps because he wasn't acquainted with a group of compassionate people, and thus he wasn't motivated or taught or trained by those people, by associating with them, so that his NQ didn't go any further than that. Or, he was not exposed to any situation that evoked his compassion.

Suppose you have compassion in your heart, but you have never seen any situation where you need to show your compassion. It doesn't touch you, because you don't see anything that is suffering. So, how can you have compassion? Therefore, even God, Buddha or the son of God has to come down here in order to see. In heaven, there is no requirement for anything like that. Everything is blissful and happy and peaceful. So, if you want to develop compassion, it's only in this world, in the physical world, or in hell perhaps, if you can survive it there, just like a lawyer goes into the prison without being affected by it.

Anyhow, suppose that guy or that girl has been in the past some animal, maybe a low NQ animal, like those predators or animals of prey, where they have to kill to survive. Those have lower NQ than other animals. The very peaceful animals, like elephants for example, have thirty percent NQ! So, to develop NQ, you just take what you have, the 'capital gain,' the capital that you had before you were born. It will be with you at the time of birth, and it will continue to be with you. But unless you use it to maximize or to multiply, then it won't

grow any further than three percent or four percent, or whatever percent you had on the day you were born.

The majority of people have only three, four or five percent NQ. Why? Because that's what they had when they were born. They were born with that, and then they don't have a chance to develop it. They could develop. The more you are exposed to the sense of the needy's suffering, the more you feel your compassion being touched. And then you want to do something for that person or that animal or that situation, and then that's how your NQ grows, like the interest rate in the bank. You can have the capital and just put it in the bank, doing nothing, or you can invest it. You can do business with it, and then it will grow.

So, HQ and NQ can be developed. The quality is inborn, but then it can be developed, and like everything else, the more you use it, the more you have it. It's funny! It's not like the more you use it, the more you don't have anymore. It's not like that. It's not like money, where the more you give, the more you don't have. But these are not material things. These things, the more you use, the more you have. Saints are developed from ordinary people. So, it's like that. It's not like everyone was born with three hundred percent NQ.

Many of you have only three, four, five, six, ten percent... or fifteen, twenty or thirty percent. That's very good already. But you are expanding it; that's the difference. Because you are exposed to the teaching, it's like nourishment for the NQ. If you are exposed to some other different situations, your NQ might even be less, or it might just stand still. If you are exposed to noble teachings and you know how and you go about doing it, then it really becomes real. Maybe at first you don't feel so much, but it will become real. Because if you're touched by the sense of suffering, then you really want to do something, and your love really awakens in your heart. That is when NQ begins to germinate and grow more and more.

But meanwhile, at least you do something. Even if you don't feel so touched, suppose you exchange the position, like if you were that suffering person, what would you like to have? Then it's very clear to you. If a person's in an earthquake and they're injured, of course they need medicine. Or, if their house is lost, of course they want a tent at least. They want water and clothes, because they've lost everything. Just exchange your position; then you know exactly what to do and how you would feel. Even if you don't feel exactly like the person who is affected, you begin to be more identified with each other. You'll be one with each other, and then you will feel more and more what other people feel. But God will put in a break somewhere, so that you don't suffer too much. Otherwise, if you suffer like everyone else, overwhelmingly, then you cannot bear it from the inside feeling.

If the person is just in a position from birth or from inheritance, or from tradition, then that doesn't develop their NQ or compassion. Compassion and NQ have to be in real life, real action and real exposure to suffering. Not by yourself perhaps, but if you see someone else suffer, then something will be awakened in you: The love that is pure and unconditional, a true love. Then your NQ will develop. Even if you're not doing anything much or you cannot do anything for that suffering person, just your sympathy, your desire to do something to lessen the suffering of that person in front of you, that is already good potential nutrition for your NQ. So, do not feel afraid of suffering, and do not feel afraid to help other people, because it's only good for you.

DEVELOPING OUR HUMAN QUALITY AND NOBLE QUALITY ¹⁸

This is the problem with karma; if we create violence, then it will return like that. I always say the same thing: War is never the answer. The thing is, people did the bad karma with each other a long time ago. If they would forgive this lifetime, then there would be no problem. It's just that they don't forgive each other; that's the problem. They continue because they don't learn the good teaching. Maybe they learn but they don't understand, because the teaching of every religion says that you don't make war. Also, it says you have to love the neighbors and all that, but they don't understand it. Even within our group, we have people who have done not-peaceful things before. But this lifetime, they don't do it again.

At the time of initiation, we erase the karma already. It's just this lifetime's karma, and lifetime karma stays like that. But if in this lifetime you come back and you're supposed to do bad things again, yet you follow good teachings and a good Master, then you won't do it. That's how this lifetime's circle of karma is broken, and then everyone will become better. [Master is speaking to the initiates.] So, you have no bother and no trouble?

Q. *No, we're just happy to hear You. I feel quite blessed today. I recently arrived from Australia, having lived there for five years with my wife who's here also. This is our first time at this Center and we feel very blessed that You've actually called. So, thank You.*

M. You're welcome. You're happy there?

Q. *Yes, it's great. We've lived here before, but this is our first time coming back to the country after five years; we were initiated in Australia, in Brisbane. We saw You in Thailand at the Thailand retreat; it was wonderful.*

M. Just a far-away seeing, yes? Okay, so you are British?

Q. Yes.

M. But how come your accent is like 'Australian, mate'? [Laughter]

Q. *It's from hanging around too many Aussies, Master.*

M. You get affected, huh? [Audience: Yes.] Can you imagine? Just five years and you've changed; you sound like Australian to me.

Q. *It was a wonderful time over there.*

M. Yes, okay. But can you imagine how much we are affected from when we're born and we live in this world for so long? We change also, and so we forget our origin. If we live here too long in this physical world, or maybe not just in this world but many other physical worlds for too long, then we become more like identifying with the physical. Just like the brother who came from Australia – only five years there and he sounds like an Australian now. And I'm sure he eats many of the Australian foods, which he cannot forget and he might continue to eat in England, too. Or, he will acquire many of the Australian people's habits or traditions, which he will continue to exercise in England.

18. Videoconference with Surrey Center, United Kingdom, July 1, 2007 (Originally in English).

So, this is the thing with us; when we live too long in the physical world, be it on this planet or another physical planet, it's the same. We become too much attached to physical things and the physical way of life, the physical way of thinking, and the physical way of attachment. And that's how it becomes very difficult for anyone at all to even try to remember heaven. You know it very well, that even though you are under my guidance and you assimilate my teaching, and you understand it partially and you try your best, yet still you struggle many times because of the past habits and karma. But I'm telling you, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what bad karma you did in the past, you are always forgiven by heaven and by God, if you turn around. This lifetime is important. This is not about the past karma; it's about this lifetime. So, this lifetime you must take really good care of it and then your future lifetime will be in heaven.

The importance of selflessness

Try to be like a heaven person then; be selfless, be selfless, be selfless. Always think of what is good for other people, and then you do it. I don't have any other secret except that. Anything that's good for everyone else, even animals, I will try to do my best for it, sometimes even forgetting my own comfort and body. That's just the way I was born. This I cannot teach you, as I've told you many times. But you can emulate and you can try and it will become second nature. Even if you don't do it for a selfless or unconditional purpose, at least the person who receives it benefits.

So, just try to do it as unconditionally, as lovingly and as selflessly as possible. That's the only way we can get out of the past karma for this lifetime. Because even if you do something wrong in the past life, and the person who has been wronged forgives you, but you continue with this kind of trend and do not check yourself and do not become more noble – then it's useless. Then you carry this residue with you all the time, and you will attract more of this 'like attracts like' kind of atmosphere or energy; then you will not become better at all, ever, or maybe become worse.

HQ and NQ measure spirituality much more than IQ

The problem I have discovered with humankind is of course the ego, the karma. And there's another problem, which is what we call the IQ. IQ is the intelligence quality. But that is not as important as NQ. Do you know what NQ is? [Audience: No.] It's noble quality. And there's another thing, called HQ. Do you know what HQ is? [Audience: Heavenly quality.] HQ is human quality. Human quality is the amount of human cells that you earn. The more noble you are, the more human cells you have. You'd be surprised how many so-called noble people in very high offices, or in some of the most powerful positions of the most powerful religions don't have enough HQ and NQ. And I'll tell you a secret: Animals have very high NQ – not all of them, of course. For instance, the lion and the tiger have very low NQ, or noble quality. That's why they are like that. And some humans, if they don't have enough HQ and NQ, the ones with low NQ, they will be degraded again for a while.

The people who in this lifetime sometimes have not enough NQ or HQ, it's because they had been doing very bad karma in their last life: For example, being vicious or killing people for a low motive, like killing to rob possessions, or killing just for envy or jealousy. Any kind of low motive like that of course degrades them into a hellish or animal kind of existence. Even after they have paid their debt, and they come back as a human again, they do not have enough NQ and HQ. But once they are in a human form, they will have a chance to develop their NQ and HQ.

The IQ is the easy part. The IQ you can attain by learning, worldly knowledge or by being practical. The more you work in different and various fields of life, the more IQ you will develop. IQ is similar to natural reaction. If you have been exposed to many, many different fields of work or many different situations that force you to think or react fast for your own survival, then your survival instinct skills will surface. That's how you develop IQ. Just by being exposed to various circumstances, various situations, various jobs or various ways of life, you develop more IQ. That's why people who travel more or who do a lot of different jobs are just more intelligent. Actually, it's just a habit. If you develop different or quick thinking, then the brain will just get used to that way and it records different data and just springs it out in the time of need. It's just like a good computer with a lot of data in it: The more you download in it, the more information that comes out.

So, IQ is not really a big deal; we can develop it easily. But I am surprised in the way life deals with us that some people don't even develop IQ. I am surprised. You should be very intelligent by now, by the way you live in this life. What I mean is IQ is easy to get, while NQ and HQ, not. HQ is given by heaven according to the merit before you were born. It's just like karma, more or less. HQ is the human quality that everyone must have in order to be human. To have a human body, you have to have at least sixteen percent HQ. So, the more HQ, the more you are benevolent and the more you are like a human. The less HQ, the less like human and the more and more like a vicious animal.

Many animals have a high HQ. Even my dogs, for example, they have would look like you, or me. [Laughter] Even some wild birds and so on, they have a high HQ. But the tiger and the lion, for example, they don't have any HQ. All animals are not alike; I don't advertise that. The good animals have more or less some percentage of HQ, the human quality. So, for the people who go around bombing and killing others, they have very low HQ. Or, even if they have enough HQ to be human, maybe they have been dragged down by the past karma and by the associated karma. Associated karma means the people that they associate with, the situations they are in, the places they were born, and the DNA they inherit from their parents. Many different things contribute to that. And if they do not somehow try to rise above it, by chance, by luck or by coming in contact with the good teaching of a Master, then they will stay like that, or sink lower and then go back to where they belong again, to a hell-like or vicious animal life.

Some animals have more NQ than humans

But not all animals are lower than humans. They don't have the human quality to become a human body, but there's another factor they do have, which is NQ. The NQ is even more important than the HQ, because if you have enough HQ you become a human, but if you don't have enough NQ, which is noble quality, then we also will degrade again and go back to a kind of hellish existence, or go back to the vicious or very frightening kingdom, if you can call that a kingdom. The animals that are born naturally, for example, by choice or by heavenly creation, they have very good HQ and very high NQ. Because of the NQ they have, they live peacefully with each other and they will go back to where they belong later on, not necessarily to be a human; they may even go higher. For example, many people eat the pigs, but they don't know anything about them. A pig has a lot of IQ, HQ and NQ. The NQ of the pig is thirty percent. Are you surprised? [Audience: Yes.] Some of our humans have only two or three percent NQ!

That is something that people don't know. That's why they continue to eat pigs and chickens. Even chickens have four percent NQ, for example. The NQ quality enables you to be more selfless, more protective of your loved ones and just more unconditional. I guess the chicken doesn't need a lot of NQ, so in his own position or his own world, the

NQ is enough for him or her to protect his or her own kin and his own folk. With that, the chicken does very well; he or she is very noble. For example, if you see a chicken with her little chicks, if some big animals come and try to attack the chicks – even though she is so much smaller in size – she will try to fight. She will scratch whatever she can and pick and do whatever to protect her chicks, even if she has to die. I have also seen the ducks, the ‘quack, quack’ that people eat; this is very cruel. The ducks have something like eight percent quality of NQ, the noble quality.

And I have seen it for myself that the ducks’ mother defends for her ducklings with all her might. If any other animal comes near – big, small or whatever – she just fights them all off with her little body like that. I saw that with my own eyes when I fed the ducks and the ducklings; the mother had just come out from the nest where she had been hatching all these days and she didn’t even eat much. She let all the chicks eat first; she didn’t ever eat one morsel while they were eating.

These are the wild ducks I’m talking about; I’m not even talking about tame and humanly raised ducks who have been more so-called civilized. These are wild ducks. I just happened to live near a wild area where they have ducks and I feed them. The duck lets her ducklings eat every little thing that they can. And then even after they eat and they’re scared or something so they run away, she runs after them. She would not even eat. She just takes them to safety first. And all the while she stands guard to let her children eat first. So, she has something like eight percent NQ. Most of the ducks are like that, but some are even more exceptional; they have more NQ than that, even up to ten percent.

The ducks and the chickens would not kill a human to eat, or any other animals. But we kill anything: We kill bigger, smaller, the fish in the sea who do no harm to us, the birds in flight who don’t even go near you or bother you or anything; we shoot them down and eat them; we feed some up and eat them; we go into the jungle, take the elephants and eat them; we go into the sea, take the whales and eat them; we go into anywhere and eat anything. People eat all the beings that are more noble than us. They are much more noble than us; that’s why humans are the most scary living beings on the planet. I’m telling you: They have to change. They are changing; can you see the trend or not? [Audience: Yes.] There are more vegetarians and more vegetarianism, which is even encouraged by governments now.

I’m so glad about that. I’m so glad; I’m so thankful; I’m so happy, because sometimes I have to shut my mind off. Otherwise I would be screaming all day: ‘Stop it, stop all this cruelty; please stop this!’ It’s not bearable, it’s not acceptable, it’s not humane at all, all this killing on the planet. Every day millions of animals suffer – not every day, every minute. And it’s just for people to eat, when they have so many choices already. Maybe tigers and lions don’t have any choice. But humans, we have choices; we are intelligent and we can find anything to eat. We can cultivate, and we can do agriculture. We have enough food for everyone – but no, we have to go and eat the more intelligent, the more noble beings than us, just because they’re more noble and they don’t defend themselves. That is why they don’t defend, because they are noble.

A story of the duck’s NQ

I’ll tell you another duck story, just the ducks and chickens, so you know what it is that the human is doing. There are two ducks, a couple, who always come to my house because they’re used to me now. Whenever they’re hungry or whenever they feel like it they come to my house and I give them food. But there are some other low-quality ducks, like one that just comes and chases after the wife. So, he always stands on guard, and whenever

she's eating, he is not eating. If they come to my house in the yard and I give out the food, he will let her eat first. So, she eats, eats and eats until she doesn't want to eat any more, and only then maybe he will eat, maybe.

Mostly, I feed them on the water because it's easier for them to swallow. The bread goes into the water and it's softer and easier so they don't choke. But if they come to my house on land, I also give it to them; I don't want to shoo them out or make them wait. So, I chop small, small pieces of soft bread, whole wheat and soft sliced bread. And then they eat it, but sometimes because it's too dry on the land, they have to run down into the water and drink. I know that he loves the bread because sometimes if she's sleeping nearby or something, then he comes and eats, eats, eats, like he's so hungry. But normally if she eats, then he just stands on guard; he looks around him, and he doesn't even take an interest in food at all.

So, this is the duck, the very common wild duck that people hunt and eat or look down upon. These are the ducks that are much more noble than many human beings. Some have double the noble quality of many human beings. But you know what? There's good news. Even though some humans have less noble quality, because they're not trained to be noble, if they study a noble teaching they also can avoid a lot of bad karma and can themselves become more noble in time. At least they will not do any harm.

The essential quality of a living Master's teachings

So, the good teaching of a living Master is really important, because I'll tell you what: In some schools where people teach a good thing like the Quan Yin method or non-violence, even in our group, some people have only very low quality, like two or three percent noble quality. Yet they're still doing a good job for the world and still living a noble life. Well, at least they're vegetarian, with no killing, no doing bad things, no harming anyone. But these people still have some residues in them such that maybe they do things without unconditional love. Maybe they do it because of loving to do it or being workaholic, or just wanting to be a big shot or just wanting to do something, or it sounds like a good thing. But sometimes these kinds of people, when they do something, they still have residues of the lower quality of ego. Or, maybe they do some harm also, by the way; at the price of doing good they also create some harm. But at least they are not doing it intentionally. And they are not doing anything bad to anyone at all, as long as they can help it. So, this is a very good sign of a teaching of any good school of spirituality. Even in our school also, some people don't have enough NQ, but they are trying and they are developing and they're getting a few more points into their NQ store. And this is a very good thing; I'm very glad I discovered these things and I have thought that it's very good I'm doing my job, like reminding people to keep adding more NQ and HQ into their treasure instead of euros or dollars or rupees. [Audience: Thank You, Master.]

The good teaching of a Master is really very important and very helpful. Even if the whole world or most people on average don't have enough NQ but they believe in the teachings of Jesus or Buddha, maybe at least they don't do any harm. It's still better than the people who don't believe. In Au Lac if we're angry with someone we say that person is an atheist. It means that being non-religious is the worst thing you can call a person in Au Lac. They say 'ĐỒ VÔ ĐẠO,' that's the worst name you can call someone, that they are non-religious, an atheist, a non-believer. So, even if the teachings of Jesus and Buddha have not been implemented for enlightenment nowadays, then at least the moral teaching is still useful to many people.

Some people are doing bad things that constrain them somewhat in their behavior and their moral standards. I don't mean all. You can see this already in previous past times, that even religious people go against each other. But it's very less often now, and as it becomes less and less, hopefully, prayerfully it'll become none, or even that all religions or non-religions can live together in peace and harmony. That's the way it should be. That's the way God intended us to live in this world. We should live here in richness, in peace, in love and in abundance. That's the way God intended us to live, but because of all our wrongdoings and our lack of soul or moral thinking and our lack of striving for a nobler, more heavenly kind of life, we're sinking and we are drowning. So, the teaching of the Master is always good. It will bring us to shore, to safety, and keep us there. It will keep us even in a better kind of protection, and then we can grow in that protection, further and further, and we will go higher and higher, away from danger and away from temptation.

Developing our human quality and noble quality

So, the noble quality and the human quality is what humans should develop. The more loving, benevolent and selfless you are, the more NQ you have. And the more NQ you have, the more HQ you have. Then that level will also measure up and up to heaven, and that's how you develop your level of consciousness. The past karma we cannot help. But the present is important; the present we have to cultivate. Every minute of every day of our lifetime, we have to do good things, anytime possible. Think good, do good, and be good; that's all we have to do. Think good; do good; be good: There's no other way to elevate ourselves from this terrible suffering illusion of the physical world.

Even though now a lot of people meditate in the world and the consciousness of people is elevated, they will not go any higher if they just stay right there. Maybe they are liberated and maybe as good people of the world they will not go to hell this lifetime, because of the grace of the Master power and of God or of heaven. But they will not go too high, just between the level of sinking and drowning. For instance, say that a person was drowning and a good swimmer came and dove into the sea and risked his life to rescue that person out of the dangerous and turbulent sea; and he put that person on the safety of the shoreline of the sea. So, on the beach, he's safe; he's not drowning anymore and he'll be okay now. But he has to continue walking! He has to walk back home; he has to walk to goodness and civilization and food and shelter. Otherwise he'll be just standing there and that's where he will be! You see what I mean? [Audience: Yes.]

The people in the world, or the disciples in my school are being elevated to some degree so that they will not suffer hell or anything that is unpleasant or which would cause them sorrow. But they still have to walk on their own feet; they have to be more noble; they have to be more selfless, unconditional, loving and helping each other. Then they will go far. They'll go much higher in heaven after this physical lifetime.

Aspire to more than this transient physical world

The physical lifetime doesn't last long anyway; so why everyone worries so much about physical life, I don't understand. Because of physical life, they make war. Because of this transient, ephemeral physical body, they go kill each other! This is really the most incomprehensible event of human life; I won't ever understand it. If you eat a little bit more than last year or yesterday – fine, you feel better; you look good, you look fatter, but how long will it last you? At the end, you'll still go into a square meter under the earth, that's it! Or, you become ash; it depends on where you live. Or, you become just hanging on the ceiling somewhere so people will make use of your body slowly; it depends. In some place people still eat people. They do that!

So, all becomes food for the worm, or food for the fish if you are in the sea or in the water. That's where we end up with this physical body. So why so much karma and so much suffering? Why do we cause so much suffering for others through war and fighting, just for this very little transient physical body? Even as the president of a country, so what? How long will it last? How long will any position last with this physical body, anyway? The majority of people are occupied with this transient, helpless little body – for survival, for eating, for wearing better clothes than the neighbor, for having a more powerful car, or for having more controlling power over others. People do kill, they do maim, and they do make suffering for other fellow beings, not even to talk about animals. Animals are already helpless; they are already hopeless and helplessly victims of humans since time immemorial. And if that's not enough, they even kill each other, their own fellow beings that look like them and act like them and live just like them. The Iraqi people or the Afghan people live, love, and act almost exactly like the Americans, English, French or Italians. Whatever the nationality, the people do the same thing. When they love someone, they also say, 'I love you,' and they hug that person; they make love to that person just the same as the Americans or any Europeans or any Asians or anyone else, too. And they also eat when they are hungry; they sleep when they're tired, and they protect their loved ones. They make their businesses to keep themselves alive. They wear and sell clothes to be protected from the elements. They do the same things that we do. But how can the same race go out and kill another being of the same race? You understand the ridiculousness and the incomprehensible thing about war or fighting or criminals or gangsters or whatever it is. So, all this is because of a lack of NQ and HQ. That's what I discovered.

With the Quan Yin method we can ascend to a high heaven

But even then, if we lack NQ or HQ, we can still modify them if we follow the Quan Yin method or if we follow the teachings of a Master. It's better with a living Master and better yet with the Quan Yin method. This would be best for anyone, whether low IQ or not. Low IQ is okay, but even low NQ and low HQ can still go high. The person can still be a noble person; they can still be a saint; they can still ascend to high heaven by the teachings of a living Master who teaches the Quan Yin method. That would be the best. The best of all the teachings of any of the schools is the Quan Yin school, the Quan Yin teaching or the Quan Yin method. But any other method, the 'model' ones such as the good religions or theories, they're still helping. They help beings a lot and are better than none. It boils down to NQ and HQ, noble quality and human quality. So, you must try to develop that, by being unconditional, by being loving, by being kind, by being selfless. Also, meditate, and follow the teaching of the Master.

It's not that difficult, really. Every time you do something with some low motive, you just scold yourself, go meditate, and begin anew with a noble intention. That's how you train yourself. No one else can be there twenty-four hours; even the Master physically cannot be there twenty-four hours to scold you, to correct you, to put you back on track. No, you yourself are the master! That crown on your head now means you are the master; you will teach yourself. You will be a noble person, you are a saint.

To be a saint is a big responsibility! [Master and audience laugh.] It's not like 'Okay, I become Buddha; there's nothing to do.' No, no! That's just a way of speaking. 'Nothing to do' means you don't have to compete with the world the way you used to do; you don't have to envy the neighbors for having something better than you. You don't have to be jealous with your partner if there is a 'she' more beautiful than you. You don't have to be anything lower than the human standard of a noble person. That's what you don't have to

do anything of anymore. But it's just a way of speaking. To arrive there, at doing nothing, takes a lot of effort and a lot of doing.

The real meaning of 'Nothing to do under the sun.'

When the Zen masters say, 'I have nothing to do anymore; I have arrived there,' that means you are doing without doing! You do without ego; you do without thinking, 'I'm doing, so I'm good, I'm excellent, I'm noble, I'm charitable, I'm generous.' You never have any idea like that anymore. Even maybe if you give ten thousand dollars, in the back of your mind you know that it is a kind and generous act, but it doesn't mean that you register it as, 'Okay, I am good; I am generous.' You just register it as a general measurement for a kind act or as a thing that people should do. You think of it as a generous kindness that people should have, that's all. You don't register it as an ego doing, like, 'I am doing it; I am good, aren't I? God, am I good? Do You see, am I good?' And then, 'Reward me with something!' Or, 'God, why don't You give me anything? I have given a thousand dollars to charity and nothing else happened in my life, how come?' It's not that kind of doing.

That's why the Zen masters and the Zen enlightened practitioners say, 'I have nothing to do anymore.' Don't listen to that and just sit at home or go eat and then do nothing. You have to do, but without doing. And all the time remember God. Remember that God is the doer. Anything that you do which is good at all, just thank God for giving you a chance to be a better person, to earn some little quality of a good person. Thank God all the time in your heart for any chance that you can do something that is so-called good. That is how to do without doing. And that is the Zen meaning of 'I have nothing else to do under the sun anymore.'

When the Zen people say, 'I have nothing to do under the sun,' or 'There is nothing to do under the sun,' they just mean doing without ego. Doing selflessly and unconditionally; that is what Zen is talking about. They even go so far as to say, 'There is no one that I should rescue anymore.' Once they are enlightened, they say, 'Oh, the job is done; there is no one to be rescued anymore.' But that doesn't mean at home you enjoy your enlightenment and you let your neighbors sink into a hellish existence or ignorance; it's not like that. You have to go out, spread the teachings, and get them up. Just like you before, when you were ignorant, how much suffering then did you have to undergo? All this suffering. So, the neighbors are the same.

And it's not like after enlightenment you have nothing to do, no one to rescue, no one to save; it's not like that. It means that after enlightenment you rescue people's souls, but you don't feel that you are doing anything. You're doing it just like you are breathing, just like you're scratching when you're itchy. You do it like you drink when you are thirsty. You do it like the sun emitting the light without saying he is great or thinking or knowing he is great. That is the meaning of the Zen masters when they say, 'Okay, I have arrived there; I've got it; there's no one to be rescued anymore.' It's the same as 'Nothing to do under the sun.' That is exactly what it means, because you are doing with selflessness, with unconditional love.

Do as much as you can to spread the good teaching

Okay then, I guess you go to eat now, right? [Audience: Yes.] Go take care of your body, and then go back and take care of your souls. [Audience: Thank You, Master.] And take care of the whole planet. Not just like, 'There's nothing to do under the sun.' There's nothing to do under the sun, but we have to do a lot! Do as much as you can to spread the good teaching, because that will prevent people from killing each other, from suffering by

themselves, or even the planet from being destroyed. They are studying a lot about Mars right now. If we are not careful and if we don't do something for this planet, it's going to be like Mars; and in not a very long time, either, the way the climate change is speeding. Mars has once been inhabited; they were just like us. Then they developed too much technology and they went too fast, just like the way we are going right now. That's how the planet became dried up. It doesn't take long. It doesn't take as long as people think.

So everyone, do something. Go car pool or bus pool. Save, anytime any little electricity you can; any megawatt you can save, okay? [Audience: Yes, Master.] Any apparatus that lights up when you are not using for standby, you unplug it. I told you this already in the Austria retreat. That's important. If you want to stay alive a little longer to meditate, then you have to also do your part. Whatever is less harmful, you do. For example, if it's better to cook with gas, then you use gas. It doesn't have to be gas; what I mean is, whatever is less polluting in your house, or for producing it. For example, it takes a lot to produce electricity. Something like that is not as green. But it depends on how they produce the electricity. That's just an example. Do whatever you can to go green, and to green the planet. Then you can stay a little longer to meditate. Do it for the children at least. Spread the news, spread the good teaching, spread the awareness, spread goodness, spread moral standards. Anything that is good for humankind and the planet, you do what you can, in your spare time.

I do my best. Even in my house, I unplug all the standby electricity apparatus. I put them all together on the extension that has two or three plugs and a light on it. And when you turn that button off, the light's off, and then everything else is off together. So, I don't have to unplug them one by one or turn them off one by one. Because for example, some telephone chargers have a light on them, so I just unplug it or turn it off altogether by turning off the electricity in that area. So, I plug all the standby lights together in one extension and whenever I don't use it or at night, I just turn it off altogether. I turn it off when I go out of the room, and I turn it back on when I come in. What's the use of leaving it in standby in your room; it burns off your pocket money and pollutes the planet as well. Alright, I leave you with aspirations for noble quality and human quality. HQ and NQ, remember that. Have a blessed day. [Audience: Thank You, Master!] [Applause]

ELEVATED CONSCIOUSNESS IS THE BEST GIFT TO HUMANKIND ¹⁹

It's a funny world. It's such a funny world, that we have to depend on money to live. Isn't that so lousy? [Audience: Money makes the world go around...] I know, it makes the world go round. But it's such a funny world. We shouldn't be depending on those pieces of paper to survive, but we do. It's horrible! The system used in this world is like that. In other worlds, they don't use this system. They just have enough. They share; so there's no one who is ever short and no one has too much. Everyone just has enough of what they want and that's it. There's no 'more' and no 'less'; everyone has enough.

If our world had the same system, we wouldn't have war, and we wouldn't have hunger. They're just exchanging, the systems on other planets. They just exchange. For example, if they have to build a road, then the engineers build the road, or the builder builds the house, the doctor treats the patients, the farmer tills his land. They're exchanging services; that's all. Everyone has a common store where they come and get what they need, and it's distributed. Everyone has just enough of what they need, not according to how they work but according to what they need.

19. Group meditation, Klagenfurt Center, Austria, May 29, 2007 (Originally in English).

There's no money on such a planet. Everyone uses the same resources and protects the same environment. Everyone is aware of the interrelation and interdependence between each other, and they treat each other like a big family. The food and necessities are distributed evenly everywhere, to every corner of the planet, so everyone has access to them. And each one works according to his or her ability. No one is denied food or the basics of life, no, no! But there's no money; you don't carry anything with you to go to buy anywhere. If you need something, you just go in any of the stores and ask the store manager. You can say you need this or you need that, and that's it: Voila! You can go and get what you want, or he will find what you need. It's just like going into a supermarket: You take what you want, and ask if you don't see something you need; then the manager will sort it out for you. But this is without paying. And everyone on such a planet has more developed mentality; they are more responsible, more loving, more kind, more understanding and more enlightened about each other's values and the values of all beings on their planet. I think their system is more excellent, don't you think? [Audience: Yes.]

Renewing the brotherhood of humankind

Because of money, we have war, we have strife with each other, and greed and grabbing. And then, more or less, we worship money, more than we worship God. That's the problem. It should be 'In God we trust,' not 'In gold we trust.' It's just a theory right now, but perhaps one day our planet will adopt that system. It's going in that direction somehow, I see. All the rich countries now are helping the poorer countries, and it seems the brotherhood of humankind is very possible. According to the information that we collect, and we air on Supreme Master Television, the brotherhood of humankind may be possible very soon, and peace is very likely. Yes, it looks like that. I'm very happy. I'm getting more excited every day! We see something nearer to brotherhood, nearer to peace and love and kindness. We can also use that system, ourselves. We just stay with each other and work for the world, and exchange what we have. But because this system in the world is already based on money, we have to go according to that for the time being. Maybe later, slowly it will change.

The mentality of people has to change, not just the system. I hope it will change, because people will be more enlightened and will understand more that the money you keep, you can't use all for yourself. No one can use as much as a million dollars per day. So, even if one person earns a lot of money, everyone else profits by it. Or if he dies, then the whole family or clan will make use of it anyway. So, what's the point of accumulating karma? It can be bad karma anyway, through unethical means. For example, there are many not-very-good professions, like manufacturing or selling weapons, selling drugs and selling or making alcohol. All of these are not very good professions, not very conducive to the owner of that factory. It's very bad for him, or her; it accumulates very bad karma for them. And the money they earn, honestly, the owner doesn't spend all that on himself. Maybe he spends it initially, to have a good car and an airplane. But later, everyone else is using the money, like his relatives, his friends, the employees, or whoever relates with him. If he puts it in the bank, the bank makes interest, and maybe even uses it for some other not-very-good purposes. If his money is used for good purposes, then the owner of that money profits, spiritually. But if not, then he will be also in trouble with bad karma, and that's no good.

So, to be fair, the person who creates all these jobs, like making or selling weapons, or making or selling drugs, the bosses of all these selling systems, they don't profit much. And they have such headache for whatever they have. Even if they amass a lot of money, they are the boss; it's so much responsibility! Even for a bad job, you are also responsible.

And you attract all kinds of people who come just for drugs or quick-money schemes and are not very honest, and then they don't really help you very well. They mess up your life; they mess up your schedule; they mess up your plans. It's not always good to be the boss in such a business. And he has headaches all day long! He has a lot of trouble, a lot of work, and even if he has a lot of money, he doesn't have enough mood to enjoy it. When someone has so much responsibility and so much headache like that, how does he enjoy anything? He might not even eat well. He might not even enjoy the luxury that he has, apart from times when he shows off with his friends or relatives, or whoever comes and he makes a deal or something. But that is very short-lived, compared to the headache he has to go through. Even if you have a good business, you also have headaches – not to talk about bad business! Then you have more headaches.

Seeing beyond the effects of this world

Thus, earning money by not-very-good professions, like the ones involving in killing or ones that damage people's brains, mental well-being, emotional well-being or physical well-being, these are very harmful to the owner of the operation, not to talk about the person who buys his product. So, the owner is the worst. For example, if you manufacture weapons and you are the owner of that company, you have the worst, terrible karma waiting for you. If you own a drug-producing company, you have the worst karma waiting for you. The owner or the boss, the mastermind, has the worst karma waiting for him somewhere – not heaven! You know where! It will be very bad for this person; he has to endure a lot, a lot of suffering after this life or even in this life already.

But sometimes we don't know it. I mean the headache, the heartache, the trouble that he goes through and the pressure of it, that's already hell in this lifetime. But there is worse to come, after this lifetime. Some people do not believe that heaven and hell exist, so they are doing this kind of job or have this kind of operation. If they did know, if they just had a glimpse of what real heaven is or real hell is, I think they would just renounce everything. They would go into the forest or mountain alone and repent – even leave family, leave friends, leave everything – just to do penance quick, before they have to fall into hell, after this lifetime.

But this physical body is a big hindrance for every being. People cannot see anything beyond their physical eyes' distance. They can see only a few meters away. They cannot see heaven; they cannot see hell. So, I sometimes feel very sorry for all the people who have somehow fallen into this kind of trap and know not how the consequence is so great for him or for her.

Waking up so the earth is more like heaven

But I think the world will wake up. Everyone will wake up one day, and then things will get better. I do pray that, so that all the ignorant people, all those who don't know the consequence, don't know hell and heaven, they will also wake up and see some glimpse of the terrifying effects of the work that they are doing. Or, the good work that they are doing, they can see good effects. If you do good work, you see good effects; that's for sure. Somehow, you feel it. At least if you don't see directly, you feel it's good. So, only good things make you feel good. Bad things will make you feel bad; that's for sure. But some bad things and good things are also very subtle. We don't feel the effect so strongly. Or, some people are so insensitive, so busy, and so caught up in their job, their thinking and their way of life and habits, that they just ignore the warning of the inner voice or their intuition, and the moral calling from their subconsciousness. They ignore it completely.

Maybe they know it and they just don't want to hear. They don't want to know because they're so blinded by the immediate profit, by the short-lived pleasure of amassing wealth.

But even in this world, if you watch television, you would know the effect of your own profession. Some people are just ignorant, completely. I don't know how someone could live, knowing that your production will take people's or others' lives, even innocent women's and children's lives. I don't know how someone could live with that. I don't know how someone could sleep if they're selling harmful things or murdering weapons that take other people's lives, and profiting from that. I don't know how any man or woman on earth could accept it consciously, in his own heart of hearts, how he or she could accept that as a justified course to earn a living. Do you think anyone could accept that? No! But some people do! [Audience: It's people who have very low consciousness.]

Yes, very low consciousness, maybe that's it. Or, maybe they've just been trained and they fall into this kind of situation. Their background might have trained them from childhood to do this. And that's how it happens. It's a pity we don't have enough means to convey good messages to everyone. But we do hope that whatever we convey will spread through the air, in a subconscious layer to everyone, without language, and will wake everyone up, and one day the world will become more like heaven.

Replacing money with sharing

The system of money, maybe one day we will just abolish it. Everyone will share what we have. The whole planet will share together, because the planet is not just for you, for me, for him or for her. It has to be for everyone. No sign is written anywhere that the planet is for the rich people only or for Americans only or Europeans only. It's not written like that anywhere! So, we should share everything, actually – technical, inventions, food, knowledge, wisdom – for everyone.

That's what we are doing, but we're doing it on just a smaller scale because we are a small group. We're not like a big empire, a financial mogul or anything like that. We're just earning our honest money, and whatever we can spare, we share with people. What's important is that we share the message of love and peace. Now, through the media there's a way; and it is better. I'm willing and very happy to spread this love and heaven's message on earth so that everyone can have a better life. Because let's face it: Even if every day I finance giving food to all the African hungry children, for how many lives can I do that? After I die, I cannot help the next children's generation. But the awakening of consciousness will make them more intelligent and make everyone else wiser and more compassionate. Then they can help each other, and then they also become self-dependent, because they will be wiser and more intelligent. And with the help of other already-able bodies, they will be able to sustain themselves. Therefore, I help indirectly. I also help directly of course; whatever we can; we do it all, all of us. But what I mean is the awakening of higher consciousness is the best gift to any being. Then they can wake up and become more able for themselves, to be able to help themselves – in many ways, not just the physical way. Because once you're intelligent and calm, you can think! You can think straight. You can think: 'I'm going to do this and that project to help myself and my family. I will make enough money to sustain them.' So, that's the best help we can offer.

Anyway, so I do hope that one day we abolish all borders. Maybe we have government but just for the service of humankind: No borders, maybe even no money, just sharing and taking what we need. But for that level to be achieved, people have to wake up; they have to know what they need instead of just what they want. What we want is too much. What

we need is very little, or much less. That's why I advise you to live simply, so you don't have to be dependent on so many things.

The role of the media in global uplifting

Q. *Sometimes our profession does not give us the freedom or let us know what will be done with our results. [M: I know.] And if someone pays money for our deeds, he often uses our inventions according to his or even other people's goals who we don't know.*

M. It's true.

Q. *So, there is always some margin of doubt that we sell our minds or our soul for money. How do we find the balance? Maybe it's not even possible to avoid that; I'm not so idealistic. But how do we balance that and find the right path?*

M. I don't know, either. The thing is, the whole planet has to wake up. The whole planet, the population of people have to all wake up and rise to a higher level of consciousness. So then, if you invented something good, they would not use it for a bad purpose. It's not your fault if they use it for something bad; maybe you will not have to feel responsible for it. But the whole planetary population has to wake up to a higher level, higher thinking, and better moral standards. Then everything will be fine. But to balance it, there's not much you can do, except that you earn money and you have to maybe deduct some of it for charity then. But there's not really much you can do if they use your invention for something that is not noble. That's the problem.

That's why the Nobel Peace Prize was born, because that person felt it was terrible that the invention had been used for destructive purposes. So, he changed it and that money is for a peaceful purpose now. That is one way of balancing it, one way to voice the message of peace. Still, we would like it if nothing like that should even happen and that we don't even need to balance the outcome of our profession. But we have to work for the whole elevation of humankind's consciousness. And that's what we are doing; we are doing it together.

Television is for that purpose; it's also one of the tools, maybe an even more widespread, effective tool. But we're still doing it in many small ways: Everyone goes out and spreads the message, gives flyers, invites people to a vegetarian meal and serves people a vegetarian meal, goes to expos, gives booklets and gives seminars. Everything we are doing is toward that goal, so that you don't even have to balance the outcome of your profession.

Spiritual destiny is based on behavior

Q. *There are people who might be scared of hell, but they aren't. There are also examples of people who are very noble but they are also atheist. Yet they feel some inner Master; they feel some ethical standards very strongly, even sometimes stronger than those who practice and believe in God. So, is it really necessary for all people to believe in God and hell in order to be good?*

M. No, no. If they don't do anything bad, then even if they don't believe in heaven and hell, they go to heaven.

- Q. *They strongly refuse to believe. They sometime declare that they want only to believe in something they can see.*
- M. These are scientists, right?
- Q. *Not all so.*
- M. Well, I mean only those people who are so badly engrossed in unethical professions that they don't see heaven and hell; that's why. But for the people who don't do anything wrong, no one cares if they believe or not; no one wants to force them. It's just for the people who are really in trouble that I wish they could see heaven and hell, and then they would stop being destructive or selling destructive things to others to destroy their lives. You understand me?
- Q. *Yes, Master. What You mean is that their motives are just for profit or some other very low-level motive.*
- M. Yes, yes. And they will go straight to a very undesirable place.
- Q. *Is it only fear that can stop that, if they fear something?*
- M. Yes, if they know something. It doesn't need to be fear, but if they know the truth behind everything, behind the ways that have been covered, then they would not dare to do destructive things or sell destructive weapons or instruments. That's what I meant. But if people are morally correct, if they're doing good things all the time, they don't need to believe in heaven and hell. They just know it inside their heart, even though outside they may say, 'I don't believe in heaven; I don't believe in hell.' But maybe they do believe, or at least in their subconscious they know it exists. That's why they're doing the correct things all the time. So, this is just for the sake of discussion. It doesn't matter if you say you believe in heaven or don't believe in heaven; you don't have to depend on things of the mouth.
- Q. *The brain does not believe?*
- M. But maybe they do believe, or maybe they're just saying that to look tough or to be in fashion or something. But otherwise, they do believe.

THE QUALITIES OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVE ²⁰

Unconditional love is a very uplifting power. You must try to be like that, but I can't teach you that. I cannot. That you have to do yourself. I cannot force you into unconditional love. Then you'll say, 'Okay, I'm giving this with unconditional love,' but that's not it. It must be real, from the heart. Every time, after you do something unconditional, really unconditional, without thinking of reward, just for the recipient's benefit, you immediately get some revelation or some good vision, some enlightening idea or something revealed to you that had not been revealed to you before. Or, the blessing or the bliss or the happiness from divine protection or divine grace – you will feel it.

I cannot teach you this. I can only tell you to be this, but I cannot teach it to you. It depends on your karma; it depends on your determination to be good; it depends on your determination to get that blessing that you lost. If you're really determined, then your mind

20. Group meditation, Klagenfurt Center, Austria, May 27, 2007 (Originally in English).

will also change automatically, and then you'll become unconditional at one point. Or you will be unconditional from that point and then your life will change. But all this is only talk about unconditional love; I can't help you to do that. I can't even give you your unconditional love, because it's yours. You use it or not; it's up to you.

Unconditional love is when you're doing it without thinking that you are unconditional. You just do it automatically and heaven will judge for you. Try to be selfless at any time; at least train yourself, so that one day it will become real; it will become automatic. Train yourself in any selfless act you can; also random kindness as I have told you. I did that, not because I wanted blessing from heaven; I just did it because it gives others pleasure. And I feel what he or she feels, because I can identify myself with that person.

It's not like I am a psychic or I have a third eye to see. It's not that kind of knowing I'm talking about. I just know everything, like how the cashier feels in a supermarket all day long when she's moving her hand and taking sometimes heavy things, like a big pack of mineral water or a big bottle of milk. She has to take it, scan it and put it on the other side, and then sometime has to lift it again into a plastic bag for someone. Or, she lifts something up to scan it and all that; she does it all day long. I know that. I know that she would feel pain, but not everyone knows that, even though it's as obvious as your hand here. You would not know that, but I know that. That's why I tell you I know everything. And I know how the taxi driver would feel in his humdrum everyday life of feeding two children and raising them into college. And even the mother who stays at home helping some relatives in Kosovo or Africa or wherever she originally came from. Many taxi drivers I met are foreigners in Europe. So, I know how they feel. I just know it, and I have sympathy with all these people. That's why I tell you I know everything. That's how I love them.

Acting purely for the sake of the other being

Whatever I give them is purely love, just to make their life better at least for that day. I talk to them; I ask them about how they feel in this land, and they tell me everything. 'Oh, it's very hard, the language, and being a newcomer is very difficult; now we still feel like strangers here. They don't think we are French and they don't think we are English.' He tells me all his emotions and his family problems and his uprooted feelings, everything. And I'm sure he will feel much better after that. He feels unloaded. It's not only the tip I give him; I give him my love, my sympathetic ears and my sharing of sympathy for him. It's because I know how he is and what he feels; I just know it. So, I don't want to boast to you, saying that this is a kind of unconditional love. But it is a kind of unconditional love! I do it just for them, not for me. Sometimes I would rather sit there quietly and meditate, which is also good for him. But to him, the practical help is just to talk to him and give him good tips also. Or, I let him talk and I just meditate. But I listen, you see? He knows I'm listening, and that's helping him.

This is just an example. Whatever you do for others, purely for the sake of their feeling good and their own happiness – that is unconditional love. To not even consider having a reward from heaven or having a blessing because of unconditional love – that is unconditional love. But you have to do it. You have to retrain yourself. You have it in you! You are divine. You're from God, or you have at least some quality from God. You are that. You only need to retrain yourself, okay? Retrain yourself into the divine footsteps. Go in that direction, and then slowly you will remember: 'Yes, it's like that.' You'll do it automatically, and you just cannot help but feeling love for every thing and every creature you meet.

The animal's innocence of a child and dignity of a creature from God

You know, I love all the animals around me that I see – the squirrels, the ducks; oh they are so beautiful in my eyes, so lovely, lovely. And they come knocking at my door every day for food, but they knock with the innocence of a child and the dignity of a creature from God. They don't look like beggars. They walk with their head high and come to my door expecting love, knowing that they will get love. So, they're very confident, with a very secure kind of attitude. They don't come begging for food, no, no, no! They know very well what I feel about them and what they get from me and they are very confident that whatever they get is pure love, pure respect and nothing else. I really respect them as well. So, they come in – oh, so beautiful! Like royalty. Sometimes I make fun; instead of saying 'The duke of something,' I say 'The duck of Reedlington,' for example, Reedlington, a ton of them, a ton of 'reedlings' next to my lake. So, I call him 'The duck of Reedlington' and the female duck, 'The ducess,' instead of the duchess. The duck and the ducess of Reedlington – I give them some royalty names. I have only royalty around me, nothing else. I have a whole country full of royalty, beautiful brigades of 'Sir this' and 'Duess that,' and Princess this and Prince that, because that's how they behave.

They come to me, not like beggars and not even as children waiting for their mother, but as creatures of God. With the pure innocence of a child, they have no doubt that I will love them and I'll give them food. They have no doubt in their mind. And they have no humility, no humble feeling that I'm giving them anything. They feel that this is normal. That's just love exchanging through physical means like bread or cereal or some fruit or salad. They love salads. Some swans eat salads, or sometimes we grow alfalfa, or lettuce or peanuts and give it to them. I ask someone to research what they like, and then I give them that. But they don't come like a beggar or feeling ashamed. They have dignity all the way through, which is beautiful.

So, if you give something with unconditional love, the person or the beings who receive it don't feel shame; they don't feel degraded, they don't feel like a beggar or a receiver. They don't feel that. They just feel there is love – expanding love and exchanging love or recycling love or interacting love. They don't feel like they need this bread or they need this tip, nothing like that. They just feel happy. And they feel dignity because I don't give with the attitude of a giver, even to a taxi driver or anyone. I give with respect. And I do respect. So, the animals feel the respect, and the person to whom I give the chocolate or the tip, they also feel respected. Because before that I make sure, even if the humans don't feel much, I make sure they know that their job is good, that they are doing well. I thank them very much for keeping the airport clean, for a very good ride, for a very clean taxi, for his patience, for driving every day like that, and for being a good earning father to take care of his family. I let him know that he's worthy of what I give and that he just receives what he deserves. But I do respect his job. Without a taxi driver, no matter if I have a million dollars, can I walk a hundred miles? Nothing can help you if the taxi driver's not there. So, I make sure they understand all that – by talking, not explaining or teaching but by talking together. Then he feels that I respect him. Or, the same with animals; they know that I respect them and I love them so much. So, they just come with a natural dignity and wait there. Or, they knock at the door or come next to the door and tell the dog. They feel very natural.

So, unconditional love will make people feel dignified, deserved and loved. And that is what we should offer to people, not just money or kind words. It has an effect like that, if you exchange with real love and respect. [Applause]

I cannot teach you, you have to do it yourself. And perhaps you're doing it, so that's good. That's what many of you do, I guess. So, that is good. Continue doing that. Even if at first you do it with intention, just keep doing it. At least the other one benefits! And later on, it becomes automatic, so that you don't even think. Everything needs practice, just like riding a bicycle. First you have to get hurt, with skinned knees and bumps on your elbow, or you fall down oftentimes. But later, you ride automatically. You even stand on the seat, and do some tricks! If you continue your practice, you'll become excellent at it. So, you already have love in your heart. Just reuse it. Retrain yourself. Relearn how to use this love, to spread it and to give it. The more you give, the more love you have. It's just like that. And you cannot stop; later on you cannot stop loving anything you see. You're already doing it now, you've already started to love people more. You love the flowers and you love all the animals more than you loved before, because you see them now with different eyes, with enlightened eyes, with the loving eyes of a saint. And to some degree, you are a saint already, a different degree of sainthood. So, just continue it. Make it more. Any opportunity to show love, just do it. And then you have it, and then the love is all-encompassing again, and you will regain your unconditional love, the whole thing again, a hundred percent. And that's how you do it. That's how you get more blessing. Not because you do it for blessing, but it's just the automatic outcome.

WE MUST FIGHT WITH ALL OUR MIGHT TO GO HOME ²¹

When we come down here, we're all confused. If we knew everything when we came down, it would be great! Then there would be no need for me to teach you. If you knew everything already, why would it be necessary for me or any Master to come down? As soon as we come down to this world, we become like this. This is my point. I thus do not blame you for your wrongdoings. I only encourage you to try your best. Otherwise, we will lose. We must try our best, and we must win!

We must always practice diligently, meditate and keep the moral standard. Only then can we go up and return to our original Home. We must practice more in order to go back Home.

Look at Shakyamuni Buddha: He had to practice austerely for six years, and He had to put down everything, including the whole country, five hundred wives and His child. There is no parent who doesn't love his or her children. But the Buddha had to put down His child to get back to the right path. He spent six years practicing asceticism; He was skinny to the bone and almost died. But still He could not regain His original level, because He practiced the wrong method. You all know He was from Tusita heaven, which was recorded in the sutras. Jesus was the same. Only after He practiced for more than twenty years did He recognize His true self.

The reason I talk about these examples is to let you know that even though you make mistakes and struggle, it's not always your fault because the past karma might come and stick to us. Even though we might have been to hell and burned all our karma, when we come up, the residue karma in the air or in the magnetic field of the universe still comes to us, sticks to our body, and makes us suffer and struggle. When we try to do good, it pulls us the opposite way. Even if we don't do bad things, it still affects our brain. So, don't worry; just keep trying, keep meditating, and keep walking on the right path. We must be persistent no matter how hard or how painful it is. There is no other means; this world is like that.

21. Group meditation, Klagenfurt Center, Austria, May 27, 2007 (Originally in Chinese).

CONTRIBUTING TO THE NETWORK OF POSITIVE NEWS ²²

The power is very strong. So, the world is listening, because we are all telepathic in a way. Even though the mind may not know it, the whole world knows it. So, we have to keep doing our positive work and broadcasting positive news and a positive way of life; then the world will go along with that. We see that it's working already, no? [Audience: Yes!] Yes, I am very, very encouraged. Aren't you? [Audience: Yes!] Good! So, we still continue to work together, even if we don't see each other as many times as we wish to. But we are working together day and night, so we are always together. I don't feel separated from you.

It is okay. Even if we don't see each other, since we are looking in the same direction and doing the same noble work, then we are always together, no? [Audience: Yes!] So, I am very proud of you and all the work that you are doing – I mean the brothers and sisters throughout the whole world, I am very proud of all of you, and I wish I could see all of you all the time. It's just that we have to work according to the karma, and according to the situation that I am in. But you are always in my heart. [Applause] Even if we are not physically near, we are mentally, spiritually and emotionally near, near, near – day and night! I hope you feel the same! [Audience: Yes!]

Do you give feedback to the Supreme Master Television? For instance, you can send cultural heritage stories or any news, any things that Supreme Master Television might not know about, from all corners of the world. [Audience: Yes, Master.] I encourage everyone to be a journalist, because we have to carry positive vibrations around us. Everywhere that we can find something positive, we should feed it back to Supreme Master Television, so the whole world will know. [Audience: Yes, Master!] We have to find the diamonds in the dust. Sometimes it's not easy to find positive news. But, it abounds everywhere. It's just that the mainstream media feels it has to feed the public with negative news, because they think according to their research that the public likes and demands negative news.

But I think the trend will change. [Audience: Yes!] Or if it doesn't change, even if the whole public out there still needs to have the dark excitement of negative news, at least we can provide an oasis of refuge for those people who are too tired of the negative vibrations on television or the newspaper or the Internet. At least, if they're too tired of that, they can switch on our television and refresh themselves with something uplifting.

It's a very good channel, so all of you, in all corners of the world everywhere, in every Center – be a journalist of positive news. Together, we can create a positive network around the globe to elevate the spirit of humankind and to save the planet for the future generations. It's very important! [Audience: Yes!] Yes, it's good! We can all become journalists. We give feedback and send in our messages of good news from all over the world. Everyone must work as a journalist! We have to contribute to this network, so that you create more abundance of positive energy on this planet. It's very important.

LOVING THY ENEMY ²³

So, no matter what the religion is anymore, we should just be an example of divine love, compassion and sacrifice. Then everyone will feel impressed, even our enemies. Talking about enemies, we really have to love our enemies; do you know that? Because they come back, and then you have to love them. They come back as your wife, your husband,

22. Videoconference with London Center, United Kingdom, March 18, 2007 (Originally in English).

23. International five-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, February 24, 2007 (Originally in English).

your sons or your daughters. That's the way you have to love your enemies! You can do it now or you come back and do it later. You can do it willingly, or you have to do it by order of the Lord of karma.

A man died, and he went to hell. And the king of Hades received him in front of his throne, together with another person, and he said, 'You, Mr. Johnson, you owe this person, madam Smith, so much money but you haven't paid it back. So, she's suing you because you didn't pay her back. But I don't think you can ever pay her back if you come back the next life as a human again since you don't have any merit in your account and you are not going to have any money at all again in the next lifetime. So, I am going to make you become a horse or maybe a buffalo so that you can work all your life. You can pull the cart and keep carrying her all your life until you repay your debt. Maybe it will spill over into the next life even.'

The man, the money-owing person, said, 'Oh, king, maybe that's not a good idea. Even if I become a horse or buffalo or a dog or whatever, I will never be able to pay it off to her. So, why don't you make me become her father, and I will pay my whole lifetime?' [Laughter] 'From her date of birth, I will keep paying, paying and paying.' In that case, he will be paying very willingly, because he will love his daughter or son, whoever that might be or however she might have reincarnated. And in that case, whatever she wants, he will give, willingly, lovingly, and even proudly: 'Yes, that's my daughter. I paid a hundred thousand dollars for her to go to college. Look at what she is now. I'm still paying for her apartment. She wants a helicopter, and I'm going to get it for her.' So, that is really similar to 'Love thy enemy!' You must love them now or else you'll have to come back and love them even more.

THE TRUE CROWN OF CREATION ²⁴

I hope that one day the human race wakes up. We have to know that animals are the same as us. We are alike, just a different form. They're just different flowers, but we're all flowers. How simple can that be? Yet how difficult it is to ingrain into someone's heart. Well, I'm glad you believe me, and I'm glad you follow the loving way of life, of 'live and let live.' [Applause]

Anyone who acts out of ignorance, of course we don't condemn them. But I do really feel sorry for the animals, as well as the ones who kill them, because the karma will be upon them later on. Truly, the king of illusion wants every piece of his creation to be repaid, and many-fold. You cannot just pay for a piece of beefsteak on earth, eat it, and think that's 'finito,' or it's even. No, it's not! The Lord of karma doesn't want your money; he wants your flesh. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, in the world of illusion. In the physical world, it is only like that – an eye for eye, and a tooth for tooth. There's no mercy and nothing you can bribe the Lord of karma with. He doesn't take bribes, not at all. Even if you give him the whole world, he doesn't care, or the whole three worlds, he doesn't care, because his job is that: He likes to check on people; he likes to see who is doing bad. He even tempts them to do bad, to see how strong you are, how noble you are, and how much power you have in your heart to resist temptation.

'Love thy neighbor' means everyone

To harm other beings is the most terrible sin we can commit. So, if the ones I have been diligently teaching not to kill and not to eat meat are still going out and doing that, I don't

24. International five-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, February 22, 2007 (Originally in English).

want to know about that person. If you didn't know it before, and you commit it, it's okay. Everyone does it; the world makes you do that. Even your parents forced you to do things when you were young and you didn't know any better. But if you know already that it's not right and still continue doing that, just because you could not forget your taste palate – it's just a small sacrifice, very small! Even if you still want to eat meat, it's a very small sacrifice, especially when we have so much beautiful vegetarian food in the vegetable kingdom. Even any religion will tell you it's the food for you to eat, but no one wants to see that page; not many people want to listen to that. 'Love thy neighbor' includes our animals! If we cannot love animals, then there will be no more neighbors for us to love. Neighbor includes everything. Jesus didn't say, 'Love thy neighbor: Man and woman or children.' He said, 'Love thy neighbor.'

Who are our neighbors? Everyone! Everyone, including humans, animals, dogs, cats, birds, ducks and geese – wild or tame. Can you imagine just for one moment if you were an animal living among humans like this? Every day they fear for their lives. Can you imagine the kind of life that we impose upon them? Suppose we humans were living together with other giant kinds of creatures, and all the time they killed us to eat, one by one. How would you feel? Helpless and miserable, no? And so sad, so terrified! It's the same with animals. They don't do anything to us. But we, on the contrary, subject them to all kinds of suffering. Some of them are even working to help us, and we still kill them to eat at the end. No 'thank you' to them, nothing! Not even a peaceful and dignified death. We kill and eat, without mercy, without remorse, without even thinking that we should never do that, without even thinking anything. We just do it like a natural thing, and we call ourselves human, intelligent, the crown of the creation. What kind of crown could be put on our head?

In our world, if we kill someone, it's called murder. And then we have to go to jail and so on. But we kill billions, trillions, zillions of animals every day, and no one puts us in jail. Isn't that amazing? And the animals are helpless! They're fearful living with us, fearful every day. How can this be, a world like this? How can it be that we make ourselves into such fearful, vicious kinds of beings, feared by all other creatures? We dominate all the other creatures in the whole world; we take away their habitat sometimes, and we make them fear every day for their lives. Even our brother and sister human beings, we make them fear also: By power, by guns, by atomic weapons, by economic sanctions, all kinds of things.

We put fear in each other's lives. How do we call ourselves the crown of the creation? That, I don't know. I don't know what kind of crown that we merit to put on our head, and I don't know who would put that crown on our head. All our brothers and sisters are fearful of us, and we're killing them every day somewhere on the planet in different ways, not just by guns or knives, but by bullying, by causing spiritual oppression, emotional stress and physical suffering. We cause that to each other, day by day. How can we call ourselves civilized human beings and the crown of the creation?

To be great, simply do no harm

In this New Year, everyone in the world should rethink the program or the direction that they should lead their lives, and the truly noble goal that they should reach during their lifetime, while they still have time to correct it. To be a noble human being is so simple. It doesn't need a saint to do it. It doesn't need a nun, a monk or a holy personage. Just leave the animals alone; that's all we have to do. Then we are noble already, immediately! All the animals will praise you in their hearts, and will pray for you. Your life will be lengthened, your happiness will be multiplied; your health will be more assured, your love

will expand to no end, and you'll become a great being already. No need for Master Ching Hai, no need for initiation, nothing of that yet. Just leave the meat alone; then you really can become Buddha, or at least reach the third level. [Applause]

The Buddha meant just that when He said, 'Put down the butcher knife, and you can become Buddha.' It's truly like that! If you don't kill or don't eat any animals, you truly can immediately attain the third level - the low one, but third level. That is for sure. But no, how many people do that? How many people can sacrifice just a little taste of the palate to be a noble being, to be a compassionate person worthy of being the crown of the creation? Then I don't even need to go teaching; I don't need to do anything anymore. It would be much better; and the animals will be happy, humans will be more elevated, and hospitals will be fewer. Fighting will be no more, because everyone, through the vegetarian diet, will have enough food to sustain themselves. The whole planet will have enough food for every single person on the planet, without any cost. If we are just vegetarian, then the planetary wealth will automatically somehow be divided evenly, and there will be no more hunger. Truly, it's like that. But how many people want to do this noble deed?

Awakening the noble quality within

I just hope this New Year that the planet people will also be very smart, much more contemplative inside, and see truly what they want within, not being blinded by outer temptation and influences of the negative power. They should be strong, noble, and looking within themselves to see what is in their heart and what truly their heart wants to tell them, because if they do look, they will find it. 'Knock, and it will be opened.'

So, I do hope they really look! Because if they look, they will see they are a noble person or a noble being, and it's not within our dignity to kill and eat some innocent creature that's not even our own size. Some are bigger, and we bully them too. Even the fish in the sea, they do no harm to anyone; they're swimming in their own world, and we fish them up, kill them, and eat them. Or, the animals in the air, they're flying there, doing no harm to anyone, doing nothing wrong, and we shoot them down and eat them. And the animals in the jungle or in the forest, they also mind their own business; they don't harm anything, yet we go there, hunt them down, kill them, and eat them also.

Do you think that's noble? Anyone would know that it's not noble, is it? How noble can it be when a strong person with all the power and intelligence goes and kills someone who is weak, small and defenseless? How noble can that be? Even in China and in Au Lac, the martial arts rule is: If a person has fallen from their horse in battle, you don't wound or kill him. If the person is already down, that's what we say: Don't kill him. So, how would it be for a smaller animal? They're already frightened and paralyzed at the sight of a human! How can we not feel compassionate and sorry or pity, and let him live? How could a human being not feel any pity in his heart when the animal is frightened and running, running, running for their life already, begging for their life? It's incredible!

In the New Year, maybe all our wishes will come true; so let's wish that these things won't happen again, and that human beings, all of them, will wake up to the noble intention inside their heart from before they were born, or when they were just born and they were noble, pure and heroic. Let's hope that the human beings will awaken within themselves these superior qualities, which make us the crown of the creation. Let them wake up these superior qualities, and then we will all be in heaven. Really, if there's no more killing, this planet shall be heaven. [Applause]

BRINGING HEAVENLY PEACE ON EARTH ²⁵

[On February 18, Golden Year 4 (2007), Supreme Master Ching Hai, Association members and other guests in the Hsihu Center, Formosa, rang in the Chinese New Year with an important message of peace, love and preservation of our beautiful planet, mother earth. A delightful song composed by Supreme Master Ching Hai permeated the atmosphere of this festive occasion and filled everyone's hearts with love, compassion and peace.]

The immense blessing of a New Year's wish

Wishing you all good fortune, a prosperous year, and most importantly, a peaceful year! I have changed the lyrics a little to suit the occasion of happy New Year. And we shall sing it like the 'happy birthday' tune:

Happy New Year, heaven.
Happy New Year on earth.
Happy New Year, all beings.
Happy peaceful New Year.

Can you remember already? Okay. Let's sing together. [Master and everyone sing.] Very good! We wish the world can be in peace: Peace in heaven, peace on earth, peace for everyone and all beings. At least this year! If our wish is sincere, it might come true.

It seems like we are going to have peace, and pretty soon, according to all the news that we have nowadays. Even though we still have a little friction here and there between some previous-life incarnation enemies, they are ironing out their problems. But it looks like we have more peace now than ever. Is that not so? [Audience: Yes.] Yes!

We are going to have more and more peace. That's the way it has to be, if humans are to survive, because we have already done a lot of damage to this beautiful being called mother earth. And I hope that we still have enough time to redress it, to correct it, to repair it somehow.

So, peace must be, because in peace, we can rebuild countries. In peace only, we can rebuild human relationships. In peace only, we can attain heaven. There's no other way we can ever live with each other, except in peace. There are more important things to do in the world – everyone knows that – than to take up a gun and shoot someone. This is the least thing we could even think of. We should never even think of anything like that in all our whole lifetime!

But our brothers and sisters have kind of awakened somehow to this urgent, important and 'must-be' cause, the cause of peace. Everyone talks about peace, but we must do something to contribute to it: By loving our neighbors, by stopping from doing anything that we think and know is wrong. Anything that is wrong, we stop right away. Anything that is right, we do it right away.

This is a very simple kind of living. There is no need to look anywhere else for heaven unless we are at peace with our neighbors and within ourselves. As I've told you many times, a young man and a young woman grow up from the love of their parents. They have been loved since they were born, before they were born, after they were born and as they

25. International five-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, February 18, 2007 (Originally in English and Chinese).

are growing up, they are thriving and growing in the love of the parents, dear friends, their beloved spouse and children.

That's the way they should grow up and live their lives, in love and then in peace. There's no one on earth who should turn that love into hatred and make people go out somewhere to destroy that love and to destroy someone else's love, who has done nothing to him personally. That is wrong! That is absolutely wrong, even in the eyes of human beings, not to talk about in the eyes of God. We have no need to bring God into any discussion before we start doing something right and living peacefully among each other.

We have many urgent things to do: We have hunger to resolve; we have children who have been starved to death; we have elderly people without care; we have animals who have been neglected and abused. We have all kinds of little problems here and there, and big problems here and there that we should take care of, so that life on this planet will be more beautiful.

We cannot afford to waste our energy, time and money in killing. We have to spend our time and energy in love and in building peace. Because if we don't stop the war right now, everyone knows we have no time for anything else. Maybe the winners in war and the losers in war may die sooner than the war ends, if our planet ends. I've told you many times already, so there's no need to repeat here anymore.

Be the first to protect the earth

But there is one thing: I have to thank you, our Association members, over all these years, especially these years when we have had lots of man-made and natural disasters around the world. You have been very, very compassionate and very diligent in helping your brothers and sisters in need. So, I have to thank you very much, and I'm very, very proud of you.

We should seek world peace. If we continue to have war, then we will not have time to fix our beautiful world. Our children, our future generations, will not have a place to live. The whole world may be destroyed. Its destruction may cause no harm for us Quan Yin method practitioners, for we have found God and are secured. However, we should preserve this world in order for our brothers and sisters to be elevated as well. If one suffers a tragic and sudden death, it is more difficult for one's soul to wake up and be liberated. So, we have been waiting.

While we are waiting, we should fix anything we can repair. We, in particular, should be the first to do so. For example, we will try to conserve energy wherever we can. I have often asked you to use energy-saving light bulbs and we have done that. Now, if cars with no hazardous gas emissions are available, then buy one. If you can form a car pool for work, grocery shopping, taking kids to school, et cetera, by all means travel in one car. In this way, we can conserve energy and reduce hazardous gas emissions.

At home, try to recycle everything that can be reused. For example, try water conservation. Water may be readily available, but we need electricity to bring water to the house. Therefore, supplying water to the house consumes a lot of energy. So does supplying electricity. We should save energy wherever we can. This is not just a money problem. It is to save this world as well. Don't wait for your neighbors to do it first. We do whatever we can do first.

I came back to Hsihu in a taxi. The taxi driver asked me many questions and I gave him my explanations. I told him how I conserve energy, like using cars that do not emit any hazardous gas, which are an innovation. I said that I am a vegetarian. Now the United Nations has announced that animal husbandry causes the most hazardous emissions, so it is good that we are already vegetarian. I told the driver that love is the primary reason why I am a vegetarian.

He said, 'What good will it serve if you are the only one eating vegetarian and ten others are eating meat?' I said to him, 'I can only take care of myself first. If everyone thinks the way you do – each one waiting for the other to take the first step – then when could we reach the goal? I see what is right and what is proper to do; then I do it first. If my neighbor agrees with me and follows my example, it's great. If not, at least I have done my share and fulfilled my obligations. If I don't do what I think is right, and everyone else thinks the same way, then no one does what is right. Many people do not do what is right and what is proper, because they wonder what purpose it will serve if they are the only ones doing it and ten other people are not.' Will it serve any purpose? [Audience: Yes.] Yes.

I said to the taxi driver, 'For example, it is better to have two or three lights in a dark plaza than to have none at all. When you enter a big, dark house, and you light a candle, aren't you able to see many things then? It doesn't matter if the big house has been very dark for thousands of years. Once you come in and light a candle, you can see the surroundings. Then, when another person comes in and sees how the candle has lit up the surroundings, he or she follows suit and lights another candle. Then it will be even brighter with two candles. That's what we do. One after another, step by step, we influence others. We don't have to say anything. In fact, sometimes we talk a lot, yet no one listens. Sometimes people don't understand clearly, and sometimes few people listen.'

Now you produce the Supreme Master Television, which broadcasts videos of my lectures dating back a long time. I have watched some of the programs. 'That person speaks quite well,' I said. 'But who is She speaking to? Why is She traveling everywhere and speaking about things that few people seem to care about?' However, we have to care, because we are still in this world. When we're still in this world, we must try our best to protect this world and all sentient beings of the world. When we ascend to heaven, then it won't be necessary to speak about this again. However, while we are still here, we have to fix and protect the world.

Similarly, if you have sold your house to someone else, then there is nothing you can do. But while you are still in your house, surely you have to repair and maintain it, not just for your own but for your friends' safety as well. It's not right to invite guests to a house that is broken and may collapse at any moment. It's not that we care so much about the physical things. But wherever we are, we try to fix the place, not only for our own sake, but for the whole world as well. Actually, this physical world is not so important to us, because we already know the way Home. Even if this world did not exist, we would know there are billions of other worlds we could go to. But a lot of people don't know that. So, we have no right to destroy this world. Right? [Audience: Yes.]

QUAN YIN MEDITATION HELPS YOU TO RENEW ²⁶

You ought to do more Quan Yin. I observe that most of you just sit there and do a lot of Light, and don't do the Sound. The Sound will make you more comfortable and with less sickness, even physically. When you feed it back to your body, it recycles your energy.

26. Group meditation, Duisburg Center, Dusseldorf, Germany, January 2, 2007 (Originally in English).

Most of the energy is lost through the outer apparatus. When you sit in the Quan Yin position, you recycle it. You withdraw all the energy within and not too much is wasted outside. So, one of the reasons to cross the legs is to preserve the energy, really.

If you know something about white magic, they will advise you to do something like that, too, even if they are not a yogi or anything. One protection white magicians use is that when they sense or when they see some bad aura or energy from other people who sit in front of them, they cross their legs and maybe cross their hands as well, if they can. So, actually it is natural also when you don't feel like talking or when you feel defensive, that you cross your arms, too. It's a kind of closing in. And when you feel lovely, when you want to greet someone with your heart, you just open your arms in a gesture of defenselessness, openly. But when you feel bored or you don't like the person, you tend to just cross your arms. It seems to be that way.

So, even though you don't know why you cross your legs, it's still good. And Quan Yin conserves the energy even more. It's good for you also – physically, psychically, everything. But if you are tired, of course you can stretch your legs a little bit. As long as you can meditate well and enter samadhi, it's fine. Position is not really that important. Just physically speaking, it helps to also preserve the physical energy. And it helps you stay more well and more healthy. In the morning, or after the Quan Yin meditation, if you look into the mirror, you will see yourself with very clean pinkish skin and bright eyes.

When you do Quan Yin for a while, and then you go look in the mirror, it looks like your skin has renewed itself. You feel different and you look different. You look bright and smooth; you're glowing after some time of Quan Yin – Quan Quang also, but Quan Yin is more obvious. Whenever you meditate alone with Quan Yin, then if you happen to go into the bathroom and have a look, you look different. Your skin looks new, more tender and you glow with pink, even if you never had pink color before. And your eyes sparkle! Anyway, these are some techniques that really do help; they help you stay young.

RESPECTING THE LIFE OF ANIMALS AS EQUAL TO OUR OWN ²⁷

[With deep compassion for animals and concerned about repeated outbreaks of epidemic diseases among animals and humans, Master has offered the world a fundamental solution to the problem by personally designing a friendly but convincing leaflet entitled 'Alternative Living' to remind people to choose the vegetarian diet and stop killing in order to overcome global medical crises and save our fellow beings. Master has also instructed all initiates to share this message with their brothers and sisters in every corner of the world. In response, the practitioners have initiated an all-out effort to share Her words of love.]

Let peace happen this year, the year of the pig. Pigs are very peaceful creatures. They just eat and sleep, sleep and eat. Who could be more peaceful than that? A pig doesn't even have a beak like a bird, to pick at anyone. If he wants to dig something, he uses his nose. It must be a terrific nose! He can dig the earth with it, rocks and everything, with his soft nose. Maybe it's not that soft after all. Did you ever touch it? [Audience: Yes, it's really hard.] It's hard? [Audience: Yes.] Well, it doesn't look hard. It looks like just flesh tissue and even looks pink. The white or light-colored pigs, they look pinkie-nosed; the nose looks so tender. The black pig, his nose is also black. It's so weird. No, not really. Some black pigs have a white nose, or half-white, half-pink, half-black. Pigs are cute. They say that pigs are very intelligent, even more intelligent than dogs. Can you imagine killing such

27. Group meditation, Duisburg Center, Dusseldorf, Germany, December 31, 2006 (Originally in English).

a beautiful creature, so peaceful and intelligent, and eating it? Yuck! The moral standard of humans sometimes is really not that favorable. It's not noble. I mean, pick on your own size!

Well, the humans do; they go and have war with each other, and then have war with less defensive or lesser beings. But if you could hear the animals talking, you would not dare, because they are beings. They do talk with each other, and they do have feelings. They're just like us, only different shapes, that's all; they're here to color the world, just like we have different flowers. Can you imagine how ridiculous it would be if this flower, which is bigger and a different color or different shape, looks at the small flower and says, 'Oh, you're useless; I'll eat you!' Doesn't that sound funny, and stupid and unimaginable! Similarly, we humans, we look bigger than some animals, but that doesn't mean we should eat them. How about the elephants? They are bigger than us. If they came to eat us, would we like that? Well, in the minds of the elephants, they are bigger, yes? And they are different from us. We look different to them; we look weird in the eyes of the elephant. If you asked an elephant if he ever wanted to marry one of us, he'd say, 'No!' He would say, 'You look weird; your nose looks so weird!' Do you understand? [Audience: Yes] So, that doesn't mean the elephants come and eat us; we are useless to them. The language we speak, they don't understand. We are small, we are of no help to them; they live well without us at all. In the jungle, anywhere they live, they don't need us, and they could eat us as well. But no matter how hungry an elephant is, he wouldn't harm us because he has this love within him; he has the sense of right and wrong.

Animals live in harmony and help us

When one elephant dies, the whole herd stands there a long time mourning him. And if there's a baby elephant in danger, such as when other animals want to attack them, then the entire herd of elephants surrounds that baby and makes a strong fortress against the enemy to protect the baby. If you see many films from Africa – people make these films – you will know that elephants have intelligence. And if you have psychic powers, you can talk to them. Then definitely you'll know they are beings with all intelligence, all love, all resolution, just like us! So, how can we ever eat any other being and call ourselves loving humans? We don't have love if we do that, or at least we don't know what love really is.

Nowadays there is a lot of information about how animals get slaughtered. The cruelty of it should make every human on this planet shed tears, break their heart and swear forever never to harm any animal on this planet and never ever to touch meat again. If they all saw that, they would know that this is no way to treat another being. We call animals barbarous. We look down upon animals, but many of them don't eat us. They don't harm us; they live in harmony with us and many even help us. For instance, if you are in the sea and in danger, the dolphin or the whales will help you and bring you to safety. And dogs even rescue strangers if they see them. So, how can we say animals don't have intelligence? Some humans wouldn't dare to risk their lives to rescue our fellow beings. But dogs, even untrained dogs, they do it, even for strangers.

Recently, there was a dog who rescued a boy who was drowning, and the boy was a stranger to him. The dog had not been trained to rescue like that, but the boy was drowning and crying for help, and the dog just jumped right in, let the boy grab and hang on to him, and then swam into the shore. Who taught him that? And even if he was taught, he's smaller than a human being; how would he risk his life like that? And that's just one of the instances.

There was another dog called Shana. He dragged two elderly people back home with him. One he dragged on his back, and the husband was holding on to the wife's leg. He dragged both of them through a tunnel to go home, under the trees and under the snow. I'm awarding him a hero jacket! I designed a special one for Shana – the Shana hero jacket! [Applause] And the other dog called Zion – he also got a hero jacket with his name on it. It's special, because I want to honor them. I want the whole world to know that animals are really real beings with hearts and blood and brains, intelligence, love and compassion, some of them even more than many of us! I want the whole world to know that animals are to be revered, or at least to be befriended, not to be killed or harassed.

We have to be more noble, more compassionate, more loving and more protective of the weak and the needy. We are big and strong. How can we harass a little dog or eat a little pig or a little chicken, depriving him of his life when he has done no harm to us? Even the animals that are bigger than we are don't eat us because of their size. The cows don't ever attack humans. They are so gentle. I think it's about time that the whole world has to wake up to this and be the noble humans that we should be. How can we harass and molest the beings who are as helpless and gentle as that? The chicken is just as loving as any bird you can buy from an exotic shop. Really, he's very loving, and he responds to you.

I once had a chicken and a rabbit, and the rabbit was so amorous of the chicken, he copied her in everything. Before, they didn't know each other, but once the rabbit knew the chicken he began to be in love with her and wanted to be near her all the time. Rabbits don't jump very high; they don't climb on tables. So, when he saw that the chicken did that and he was too low, he didn't know what to do. But because I had something like a dais, a small chair and then another lower table, he first jumped on the small chair, and then from the small chair to the higher chair so he could go near the chicken. He was so clever!

And because the Chinese disciples love instant noodles, they thought the chicken would also love instant noodles. So, one time they gave the chicken some instant noodles, the dry type, and the chicken ate them. So, the rabbit looked and looked: 'If you eat them, I eat also!' I don't know if the rabbit had ever eaten instant noodles in his whole life! He was already an old rabbit; it's not like he was born yesterday. But he went and ate the instant noodles also. Whatever the chicken ate, he would go and eat it. When he was with me, of course I gave him carrots and salad and so on, and he ate those all right. But if he ate with the chicken, he would eat whatever the chicken ate. He would eat it no matter what! He didn't look at the label, he just ate. And he was so loving with that chicken. He ran around her all the time, rubbing on her wings and wanting to kiss her and all that. But she wouldn't have any of that! So, she always jumped on something higher and looked down upon him. But then soon he followed. They were so loving. No one taught the rabbit like that, to come after the chicken; no one taught him anything.

And there was a goat who kissed my chicken. It's a real story; we didn't do any touch-up or special effects, it's not that. The goat came and just kissed the chicken. And the chicken let him, but it's not that they had been friends or anything like that. I'd had the chicken for a while, but the goat came from a nearby farm, and he just came over and kissed the chicken. And the chicken would eat bananas or anything I gave her.

We can enjoy everything on the planet without harming sentient beings

I wish I could make the whole world understand that animals are just like us. They truly are like us! Just like the different flowers here. [Master picks up a flower arrangement from the table.] In this world there are different things, just to make it colorful. So in the garden, for instance, we have different flowers – all these different shapes, different names and

different colors – just to make the world beautiful and colorful. If we had only one kind of flower, it wouldn't be that pretty; you cannot make a bouquet out of it. But look at that: Isn't it wonderful that we could put more color in it? All kinds of bright color! They make up the gardens of the world for us to enjoy. Similarly, God makes different species so that we can be lively and colorful together.

I wish I could make all the humans in the world understand the animals' sentiment and language. I wish I could do all that, so that no one would ever harm any little animal anymore and no one would ever dream of eating any of their innocent flesh anymore. I wish I could do that. I wish the whole world could understand that we have to love and respect the animals and enjoy them just as we enjoy the colorful garden with its different flowers and different trees and different fruits. We must enjoy everything on the planet but not harm the sentient beings at least, because they have feelings. They are moving and they are talking through their eyes, in their own way. So, how can you go to a moving being and just chop his head off like that, or cut his leg off, cut his throat like that and then stop his breathing?

If we want to catch up with other planets in the solar system and in the universe, we have to change our way of life. We have to live and let live. We have to love all beings equally, or at least leave them alone. They don't ask anything of you. The birds in the sky don't ask anything of you; the fish in the sea don't even go near you! Why go over there, dig them out and eat or kill them?! They're gasping for breath when they're dying like that. It's terrible!

We possess all intelligence, all wisdom and all the tools that God has given to us to survive. We don't need to kill to live. We waste so much resource just to kill, not just in war but in raising animals to eat. We deplete the resources of nature. That's why we have hunger everywhere. And every one of the humans who are still eating flesh are responsible for hunger in the world. It's not I who even says that. It's researchers of the world; it's the most intelligent people who do research and have scientific facts and evidence who say that. As long as we don't give up this flesh-eating habit, we are still harming the earth; and consequently harming ourselves and our children in the future. So, we have to all turn to becoming vegetarian, the sooner the better. [Applause]

It's time to clean up our earth in peace

So, the time is right that everyone should push for peace now, at any price, because without peace we cannot build anything up. There are more pressing matters now than killing, my God! There's global warming; there's ice melting. And it's not just the warming: After it has warmed it might get cold. And that's even worse. If it's warm, you can jump into the water, but if it's too cold I don't know if you have enough things to keep you warm when it's freezing all the time. Because of the changes in the atmosphere, it might get worse and become freezing even, after the warming period. Sometimes the pollution damages the ozone layer and then maybe all the heat escapes. Then after a while we won't have any heat, because then maybe too much pollution covers the sun and with too many changes then everything will get so bad and it might be freezing. That's even worse also.

THE MOST IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL QUALITIES ²⁸

You have to learn to be humble. Number one: Selfless. Number two: Humble. The most important is selflessness, and then humility; they are the most important. Then everything will come; you'll quickly go higher. But if you always think of yourself, then you'll stay there. This I can promise you, a hundred percent. The first thing is selfless. Selflessness means you think about others before yourself. You sacrifice. Then, number two is humility. And number three is maybe... well, they all come together. These two are enough. Selflessness means always love; be loving and kind. Humility means you put yourself last; you're obedient; you listen to instructions; you think you are no one. And that's good, because you don't have any body. You are a saint. So, behave like one. You are saints; therefore, we have nobody or have no self.

Selflessness is normal for us. It should be normal, because we are saints. We don't have any body. We don't have any desires. We are not here! We don't exist. Because of that, you will go up faster. If you realize that we are not really here, that we're just a shadow in this non-existent planetary world, then how can we worry about ourselves so much? Therefore, whatever anyone says is okay. If they tell you to go here, you go here. If they tell you to go there, you go there. Especially when I say so! If I say and you don't even listen, how would you listen to anyone else, like your boss in the job or your friends? How would you yield or give way to other people?

So, if you realize that you are no one and you don't need to really consider this 'self,' then you always have the bigger self. But when you only think of this little self here, which is only the body, then you're just stuck there with the little one, and you'll never go anywhere else; you'll never grow any bigger. When you were little and very young, like a baby or even two, three or four years old, you loved childhood so much. Father takes care, mother takes care, you always have something to eat, with no worries and everyone protecting you. You don't have to work; you don't even have to go to school. Wow! That's a wonderful time! But do you want to stay three or four years old forever? That is impossible!

So, it's not possible to stay three or four years old forever, enjoying all kinds of spoiling and love and care without any worries. You cannot do that! Similarly, we cannot stay forever the small saint, ignorant saint or very low-level saint. We have to let it go in order to grow bigger.

ALLAH IS GREAT! ²⁹

Thank God – thank Allah – that you can come. [Master speaks to the Persian initiates.] Blessed be Allah that He helps and loves you so much, that you can come here and be our brothers and sisters. Please thank Allah – everyone. [Audience: Thank You, Allah!] Allah is great. Say that: 'Allah is great.' [Audience: Allah is Great!]

This is how to say it in the Persian language: 'Allah is great. God is great: Khoda bozorg ast.' [Master speaks to the audience.] Can you say it? Please: 'Khoda bozorg ast.' [Audience: Khoda bozorg ast!] Allah is great! [Audience: Allah is Great!]

Wonderful. Thank you, thank you! Allah means God in the Persian language. It's not a strange God; it's just the name in Persian. In English, it's God and in Persian it's Allah. So, you can say 'Allah is great.' or 'God is great.' Without Allah, nothing happens. Without

28. Group meditation, Duisburg Center, Dusseldorf, Germany, December 17, 2006 (Originally in German and English).
29. Special seminar, Pataya, Thailand, November 28, 2006 (Originally in English).

Allah's blessing, we cannot do anything. So, we always have to thank God and thank Allah. That is correct. Don't ever forget; don't forget to always thank God!

I am so happy you came. Allah must love you very much! Good for your country. Oh my God, you must be very sincere. When you are sincere and want something, Allah will help, always! It's no problem. Never forget God.

Spiritual opportunities for beings on this and other planets

- Q. *Is the planet earth the only physical planet? If not, are there other physical planets in the solar system?*
- M. Yes. There are many more physical planets where there are people similar to us.
- Q. *I've heard from Your discourses that there are beings on other planets in the solar system such as the Moon or Venus, and their consciousness is higher than human beings'.*
- M. No, not necessarily. I've said before that some other beings in the Moon are either third level or fourth level; the beings in the Sun are similar. But they are not developing like we are. Some of us do not have as high a level as they do, but we are catching up with them now. And some of us are higher level than some of the beings in the Moon or in the Sun, for example, because they are invisible beings.

Any invisible being or physical being is either born as lower level or higher level. And if they don't have a spiritual teacher to teach them, they stay like that. They have no problem at all, but they just don't change. In this physical level, we have the advantage that in the human body it's quicker to progress in spiritual practice if you have a spiritual Master to guide you.

But on this physical planet there's a lot of suffering. In the Moon, or the Sun or some other planets, they don't know what suffering is. They don't have that word in their dictionary. They don't even have a dictionary! They don't need verbal language. They enjoy peace, happiness, stability and spiritual bliss, and they enjoy telepathy. In a way, they are highly developed. But we have the advantage of having the body and having this suffering to motivate us to practice quicker. In the Moon and the Sun, for example, they don't have any problems. They enjoy bliss all the time. They don't feel the need to practice. So, it's very seldom that they can jump to the fifth level like a human being here; we can jump to the fifth level.

But what a price we have to pay here! Even being a Master, what a price. A master on even an astral planet isn't ever persecuted there. And the beings over there, even astral planet beings, are more sensitive to the teachings, more open, more accepting and more receptive.

Anything on this physical planet is hell; it's difficult because we have this body. The body is a beautiful vehicle, but it's also a great hindrance. It makes all kinds of trouble. It makes war within nations, it makes war within religions, it makes war between religions, it makes war between nations; it makes war between family members, between husband and wife. Just because this physical body has the mind and brain and has been programmed so many different ways that two programs are never alike – and so we clash with each other most of the time. That's how we have

problems on this planet. But this is a very good instrument also, just that it's like a knife with two ends: Difficult to maneuver.

The heroes of Allah

Q. *There is another question.*

M. Yes. [Master listens to the Persian language.] I feel it's so beautiful, but I don't know what it is.

Q. *That is a piece of poetry.*

M. No wonder! I wanted to cry when I hear her speak, even though I don't understand the language.

Q. *The meaning of it is, 'I was full of sadness not knowing that You were coming, but when You came all my sadness went.'*

M. Wonderful! That's very wonderful. [Applause] [Master speaks to the translator.] You cannot translate now? Is it too beautiful?

Q. *Yes, I can; I'm just so touched. This initiate's husband and her eldest daughter send their love to You, Master. And they have been so cooperative, doing their best to make sure that everything is in place so these guys can come here.*

M. Send my love to them and my 'thank you.'

Q. *Also, her daughter has done some paintings of You meditating and full of Light, from a vision. And the husband said that he hopes we will have more families of vegetarians coming.*

M. Yes, more will be coming. Just keep your meditation strong and pray to Allah every day. It will come.

Q. *Master, thank You so much for changing my life so greatly. Today is the best day I've ever had in my life. [Applause]*

M. [Master speaks to the translator.] Tell them I also thank them, all the families here. It's they who change their own life. It's their high level of spiritual understanding that makes them recognize whatever they think is right. That means they have it within themselves. They will bring a lot more blessing to their country. They will bring good change into their nation and to their people. They are the heroes: All of you are the heroes of Allah. [Applause]

Q. *I'd like to thank You, Master, for Your protection. When our mother passed away, we could feel it.*

M. That's wonderful.

Q. *We are grateful. We felt Your grace, all of us in the family, when it happened. Thank You.*

M. It's wonderful because you should feel happy that she has gone to a higher planet.

Spiritual practice reveals Allah's omnipresence

- Q. *With the Quan Yin method, I have a significant change in understanding about what prayer is. Because of the law of karma on earth, how can we use prayer to help other people?*
- M. Our meditation is the best prayer: Direct contact with the source of all blessing, and all protection and all love, which is Allah. God or Allah knows what we want before we even say it because He is omnipresent. So, if we contact that even more, we can even know that He knows.

What I mean is that before we have contact directly with Allah or God through the Quan Yin method, we prayed to Allah but we didn't know whether or not Allah heard. We think that Allah knows but we don't know. Now we know that He knows; we contact, we feel it and we know it. Before, He knows that He knows, but we don't know that He knows. And now He knows that we know that He knows. And we know that He knows that we know that He knows; it's clear! That's the difference. So, meditation in the Quan Yin method is the best prayer; it's the direct prayer.

Before the Quan Yin contact, Allah always knows what we want, and Allah always tells us what to do, but we don't understand it. But now after the Quan Yin contact, we intuitively feel what Allah wants us to do, how He helps, and how His grace operates every minute of time in our life. We are more aware of God's will. The more we practice the Quan Yin method, the more we are aware of God's instruction, because it's at the level of the soul, which is the greatest intelligence. It's not like before we practiced the Quan Yin method that God doesn't help or God doesn't hear or God doesn't bless, it's just that we're not receptive enough to see or to put it into action. So now, we are more aware all the time, more every day.

Peace will come, as we wish

- Q. *Master, I love You very much and I know You are the manifestation of God on earth to help people. I had been practicing meditation for twenty-five years and I love the Light, so when I saw You on the Supreme Master Television I knew that You're the one.*
- M. Oh, really! That's wonderful. You Persians, you are all so beautiful, like the ancient beauties, so beautiful and so pure.

I told the Chinese and the Austrians yesterday that the spiritual practitioner of the Quan Yin method will move mountains and level the oceans with their power, without doing anything. So, just be patient; meditate and world peace will come. [Applause] There have been great changes in China, great changes in Formosa and great changes in Au Lac. I cannot tell about too many different countries; I just tell you about the countries that I know. Great changes! Great improvements in these countries that no one imagined would happen before, for instance, that Formosa and China shook hands with each other. Every day now, the Chinese can come visit Formosa. This never happened for so long, and it happens now. [Applause] Think positive and meditate; it will happen. It will happen. [Applause] The good things will happen because God really knows. God knows what we want. We just wait and see.

- Q. *I want to say that I owe You my life, and I thank You for everything.*

- M. You're welcome, love. So, did something good happen to you?
- Q. *A lot of good things. I have been initiated since September, and my life has changed since I did the convenient method. Day by day, I see changes. It may not be apparent to other people, but inside I feel calm and I feel peace, and I owe it to You.*
- M. It's alright; you owe it to yourself. You're good.
- Q. *You have made me confident and clever, and I thank You very much, Master.*
- M. That's wonderful; you're welcome. Of course, you thank me. But actually I feel you should thank yourself and I should be thanking you, because you make the world different through your practice. If I'm alone I cannot make much difference, but because of you the world changes. In fact, even though it feels like we have war everywhere, it's not like that. We have less war now than a few years ago, more than fifty percent less. And it's going to be less and less and less all the time, because the people are already waking up. They're fed up with war. They're fed up with violence. They realize now that only love, only peaceful means can really bring happiness to people, including themselves, including the leaders!

So, even though it seems like still a lot of war, we have less now. In just a few years, it will become less and less and less. And world peace is really possible. It is possible; it will come. [Applause] So, everything changes. People change; the situation changes. Peace will come, as we wish; peace will also come.

The world has to change! It will change; it will come. People have to realize it one day. After so much suffering, people will realize that it's useless to have war. Then peace must come within nations also, and things will open. Borders will open, countries and nations will open to each other and people will shake hands. Leaders will support and understand each other, and peace definitely will come – and very soon! [Applause] Yes, there is much good news. We just have to be peaceful and we just have to be good. Then, everything else will come. We just have to be positive about other people, about other nations, about the government and about anything. Just put out the positive, and things will become better. Things will change. Don't worry, alright?

Master and disciple can become one, without attachment

- Q. *In my meditation yesterday I had an experience, and I think because it is related to everyone here, I'd like to ask Your permission to share it with You.*
- M. Okay.
- Q. *I saw in my experience that You elevated me to a higher level of consciousness. And I am sure You have done this for everyone here, so I would like to thank You for that.*
- M. You're welcome, very welcome. [Applause]
- Q. *You have taught us that to go to a higher level of consciousness, we need to let go of the desires that belong to this world. The question is, do we get to a point where we have to let go of our Master as well?*

M. [Master laughs.] If you want, of course you can let go of me, no problem, anytime! It's just that before you can run, you hold my hand to walk first, and later you run alone. But you don't have to let go if you don't want to. We are friends; why let go? Let go of physical attachment only, but spiritually we become one together. Not 'one' like everything here is one. Not one like that, but we're connected so that I can help you to go up where I am going. And it comes at one time that you become a master of yourself.

But when you let go, I don't know. It depends on the people. I don't know if some can let go. After twenty years they're still crying when they see me! [Master jokes.] I don't understand these guys. So, maybe you can teach them how to let go. I guess we become like very deep friends; we have a deep friendship. So, we will not feel attached about the physical body or nearness, but we feel very close together.

Q. *Thank You, Master. I am glad because I was worried that You would say, 'No, you should not depend on me anymore after a while.' I'm glad that I don't have to let You go.*

M. That's different; it's not attachment, it's just a oneness of feeling. For example, some people are so attached to things like alcohol and money, they worry all the time about these things and they cannot even live their life. They become slaves of money, or alcohol. That is true attachment. And that even destroys them. But our friendship makes us both happy. It's not like you cannot live without me, but you like to live 'with' me, or to see me.

Attachment is when, for instance, some man cannot live without a woman. Every day he needs her. Or, a person who cannot live without money: Every day he wants more and more. That's different. We can live without each other. You go back to your country, and I stay here or somewhere else. We are not together, but you're happy. You think of me and you feel that we're together. And you like to see me now and again. That's okay, it's not attachment. It's just happiness and enjoying each other. That's unconditional friendship. If we see each other, we're happy. But if we don't, we go home and we think of each other. It's not binding so that's not attachment at all. And the thing is, the more we think of each other, the more we're happy, and the more elevated. So, it's a good thing.

We are Muslims in the true spirit

[Master talks about the Muslim outfit.] It is the most comfortable clothing. And I think the Muslim people are very smart; their clothes are convenient everywhere. Sometimes it's cold and I also put a scarf on my head and I wear that. Once a Muslim woman came up to me and asked, 'Are you Muslim?' I said, 'Yes. I am! I am, in the true spirit, yes.'

DEVELOPING AN HONEST SPIRIT ³⁰

It is not that I am heartless in refusing your sincere gifts, but it is my usual practice to reject any gifts. Let me tell you why. As we accept more and more gifts, it will develop into a habit and we will become corrupted. Therefore, I am resolute in not accepting gifts! Our fellow initiates also do not accept gifts or any offerings. Our monastic practitioners do not accept offerings, nor do I – not even a single cent. Therefore, understand this clearly. Do

30. Special seminar, Pataya, Thailand, November 26, 2006 (Originally in Chinese).

not give me any gifts. Since this person has brought a work of art here, we will leave it at the Thailand Center as a souvenir.

Normally I do not accept anything because I want to set an example. [Applause] It is not that a few dollars or a couple of things would do any harm. However, if we accept something today, tomorrow we are bound to accept other things. Having accepted it from this person, we are bound to accept from another person tomorrow. If today we accept a dime, tomorrow we will accept a dollar, and the day after, ten thousand. On another day, we will accept two million. The snowball will keep rolling because it will be difficult to refuse after having accepted once. You have to be honest and upright as well, because this is the way you should be. [Applause]

After receiving things from people, we are bound to give them special treatment, and then partiality will arise. I have been treating the rich and the poor exactly the same. I don't know and I don't care who is rich and who is poor. That is why I can treat everyone fairly and with the same love. No one can buy me with money; no one can buy me with anything. I am yours, the same for everyone. [Applause]

That is why I tell my monastic disciples not to accept gifts. After eating food offered by some people, we have to serve them. When other people come to us, even though they might have better reasons and better merit, we give priority to those people who gave us offerings. This is not right! If we refuse to serve them, they might think that we look down upon them. They might think, 'I have given you lots of money, yet you treat me just like the other guy!' Then they will be angry, and from anger breeds enmity. This money, this profit and fame, is no good for us and no good for the world. Therefore, we ought to be honest and upright in everything. You earn what you spend, and refrain from taking people's things. Understand? [Audience: Yes!] [Applause]

I know you are very sincere. For instance, that fellow initiate personally painted a vase and offered it to me. I understand your sincerity. I do. However, I rush around doing a lot of work, and I must stay honest and upright. I have been like this since my youth and I have told you several times. When I was a student, one time my parents were late in sending me money. I went hungry for several days, yet I didn't ask anything from anyone. Someone left some food for me, but I did not know that because he didn't tell me. Even when I was without food for three or four days, I never touched other people's things. A person gave me money and asked me to go stay with him, but I didn't accept. I scolded him fiercely and warned him, 'Get lost! Or I'll call the police!'

I have been like this since I was young, not just now. If we are not honest and uncorrupted by nature, then we should train ourselves to become upright persons. We should not sell our soul in exchange for any ephemeral things of this world.

REMEMBERING GOD IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE ³¹

We have to always stay tuned; otherwise, you won't know where you are, nor what you should do in this life or after this life. There's no excuse. We live only to contact God: That's the most important. We work, we eat, we sleep, but these are the second most important things. Because if you're not strong yet, you still have to work, eat and earn a living; but that's not the most important thing in life. The most important is to live for the meditation. Meditation means praying; it's the same. If we don't know how to meditate, then we pray. It's the same. After the Master such as Buddha or Jesus went to heaven,

31. Group meditation, Paris Center, France, October 22, 2006 (Originally in English and French).

people didn't know how to meditate; so they prayed. But we do pray properly, meaning meditation. It's the best way to pray. If we don't pray like that, we can't know our God, our self. Then we are lost. You might earn a lot of money, have plenty of children or eat a lot of couscous, but it's for nothing. After you die, it's finished! All the couscous, all the children, and all the wives mean nothing. They don't help at the time you go, when you leave this planet or in this life – not at all. This is the most basic I say it again and again, and you don't understand.

But you must meditate; that's the most important in life. It's more important than anything else in your life. Otherwise, you won't make it. You think you stay one or two hours and you listen to a sound, inside or outside, [Master jokes.] depending on how deeply you sleep, but it's not enough! That's why, even if I elevate you to the fifth level, you could go down immediately, almost more quickly than you ascend. When our heart is just single-minded and one-pointed, we arrive at the fifth level very quickly. But when our heart is scattered, meaning our thinking is scattered, then we go down – zip! like that.

Because of this, Jesus said, 'Unless you become like a child again, you cannot enter the kingdom of God.' It's very difficult to control the mind, more so than a hundred elephants. When you see a little flash of Light or you hear a little Sound, you think it's good enough. But that's not it. No, because you're still here, you still feel it, you still feel the outside and you still feel good, just a little bit here or there and you know it. That's not it. If you really hear the Sound, you will be pulled up faster than a UFO or rocket to the Moon! And there is nothing in this world that can distract you, nothing in this world that you want. You would even give up your life; even if someone came and wanted to kill you, at that moment you would say, 'Please, you're welcome.' You have no idea of anything that you really want in this world anymore: There's nothing at all. That is when you really meditate. And the rest is just practicing, practicing, practicing.

To improve spiritually, we must do it ourselves

That's why I say, 'Please, practice meditation.' That's why we call ourselves spiritual practitioners. It means that you try, try, try. Sometimes you try and you arrive; sometimes you try and you don't arrive. But if you're not stable, even if you arrive due to the grace of God, you will come back down again so quickly! If you're stable, you will not go down, even if you work in the world. If you're not stable, even if you go to a monastery, even if you go to the mountain, even if you live in the meditation center, it's no use, even in the presence of the Master. The Master cannot eat for you. Just now, I've given you chocolate. But you are the one who eats it; I cannot eat for you. I bought a lot of chocolate. But it's not for me to eat it all. If I eat it all, will you feel anything? If I bought a lot of chocolate and ate everything, would you look at me and say, 'M-m-m, what good chocolate!?' [Laughter] Is there something like that? No, never.

So, I have to give you the chocolate. But if you don't eat it, you also don't feel anything. It's the same if you are in the presence of the Master but your concentration is not on the Master, then the grace cannot penetrate you too much. Maybe some, but not a lot. Also, if you have some restriction on yourself, like some preconceived idea about what a Master should do and what a Master should look like, then you build a big wall around yourself that separates yourself and the Master's grace. Then you have absolutely even less.

Elevation is individually earned

You remember the story of the Buddha: He had an attendant who was very beloved and dear to Him and who was always day and night with Him. His name was Ananda. When

the Buddha died, he could remember every word the Buddha said. So, almost all the scriptures from the Buddha are written according to Ananda's memory. But Ananda had not attained anything big; he did not even enter the third level. That's why after the Buddha died, the whole monkhood, or sangha, did not let him enter into the discussion of the assembly. They excluded him from the assembly of the high-level monks. So, feeling very ashamed, he went into a cave and shut himself there for some time, until he attained the higher level. And then the monks invited him in.

But why did the monks do that to the most beloved assistant of the Buddha? Does that mean that the monks were so hard-hearted, so cold-hearted and so harsh to Ananda? [Audience: I think it was to shock him and wake him up.] Yes. [Audience: To force him to work spiritually?] Yes, that's also true. Who else? [Audience: To avoid contamination?] Yes, also. To avoid contamination! That's right. If someone is not pure at heart and not highly developed spiritually, he will contaminate the assembly. That's the most correct. But also to shock him so he can see that he needs to work – yes, it's normal. Because during the time he spent with the Buddha, he didn't practice. He was too close; he was the Buddha's only attendant. That's why he never improved his level. That's the only reason. The reason one of the sisters gave, that he should work for his spiritual development; that's correct also. Because all the time he was with the Buddha, he was too proud as the only assistant of the Buddha, and he did not think that he needed to practice anything; that's why he did not.

Also, he had a super-human memory. He could recite everything that the Buddha said from A to Z, repeating it also. He remembered word for word; he didn't forget anything. Even when the Buddha would make a mistake, like repeating something or clearing his throat, Ananda remembered all that. That's why the Buddhist scriptures even now are not well edited, just written exactly the way the Buddha spoke. So, sometimes you read them and you feel a little tired, like the Buddha keeps repeating the same sentence or explaining in such a very elaborate way so that the disciples can understand, just exactly the way he was talking.

In all the Buddhist scriptures it's stated, 'Thus, I have heard...' in the beginning. That's why, because it is written according to what Ananda heard. Even such an important person as Ananda was almost like a record player. His memory was so super, it's like today's computer or record player. But even for such an important person as he, the monks of the assembly or the Buddha's sainthood excluded him from the assembly because he wasn't elevated enough. Even if he was important, it was still no good.

So, you can see how important spiritual elevation is. It's not who you are, it's what you are. And it's not just what you are, it's what you are inside. That is the most important thing in life. The most important thing in life is what you are inside. Now you understand what's the most important thing in life, not because of Ananda and not because of Buddha, but because of yourself. Because after we die, we have nothing! Truly it's like that; I don't have to tell you. You all know that. But you don't realize it deeply; that's the reason you neglect your most important mission in life.

So, from the case of Ananda, we could also learn something: The lesson of humility. We have to reconsider every day whether we have enough humility, so that we can develop more. Because only if something is empty, then can we put something into it. If the glass is empty, then you can put water into it; but if the glass is full, nothing can go in. The glass can be full of water, or full of garbage. If the glass is already full of garbage, we don't put water in there. It would be best if we have what we want inside the glass instead of all the garbage. In the same way, we should fill our life, our being and our understanding with all

the best possible things of spiritual value, because we could also possibly fill it with all kind of nonsensical, unnecessary and detrimental things to our being or for our development.

Everyday life as spiritual practice

Every day, we should make sure to fill ourselves with all the best possible for us, just like every day we try to select the best nutrition for our body. Every time you eat some good thing, you have to remember: 'I have to also put some good things into my soul, into my spiritual development.' So, even while you're eating, you can practice. When you put some nice clothes on, you should remember, 'I must also adorn myself with spiritual splendor.' Every time you see some beautiful flowers, you can say, 'I must also cultivate my spiritual garden.' With similar things, always remind yourself. When we hear the birds singing and we feel so nice and comfortable, we must also remember. We should never forget the Word of God. And when you are deeply in love in a romantic relationship and you're happy, you should also say: 'I must also remember the love of God, which is everlasting, which is the true love.' But if you cannot separate that, then you have to remind yourself: 'Yes, I will try to remember; I will do something so that I can also make the relationship between me and God more flourishing, more romantic and more intimate.'

Every time you love your children, you have to remember how God really loves us and your children also. This is the truest and greatest love for everyone. And every time your pets love you and you love your pets, or you caress your pets or your pets caress you, you should also remind yourself that this is part of the love of God, and that only God's love is really true and pervasive. So, you see, we can use every situation to remind ourselves not to forget the spiritual path that we have chosen to walk. In this way, we always reinforce ourselves during this mundane existence on earth, always to be in the remembrance of God. It's always the same.

But with the practice, no one can become a master overnight, even Ananda. So, do not feel discouraged. We just have to be sincere and practice all the time. In the presence of the Master, you might develop more quickly, but it depends on how receptive you are and how pure you are. It's like the glass: If it's full of garbage, then nothing else can go in, or maybe very little.

SHARING A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE HELPS BRING UNDERSTANDING AND PEACE ON EARTH ³²

I wish that in the whole world, we could speak only one language. It would be more convenient to have one language, but also the native language. I wrote a letter to the president of the European parliament. I praised the EU for all its achievements, all its generosity and all the beautiful policies, which have helped make Europe a better place, with better welfare for many citizens. The EU is good. Its members are doing their best for humanity, and they really take care of whatever they can. So, I praised them for that, because they help many under-developed countries.

Then I said that, in my humble opinion, it would be much better if at least all the EU member nations learned one language, apart from their native language. I didn't say to abandon the native language, because the EU countries have many languages and they still accomplish a lot. But can you imagine if all the member nations spoke just one language? It would be easy to understand each other, and there would be quicker

32. Four-day retreat, Malaga Center, Spain, September 30, 2006 (Originally in English).

decisions. The EU opinion is that they want unity in diversity, and they respect all cultures and all languages, which is very beautiful. I never heard anything more beautiful than that! But we could preserve our culture and learn one extra language. We need it anyway.

They already speak English in the meetings of the parliament and elsewhere. So, why not just choose one language? They could choose it by vote. I wrote in my letter: 'We can vote openly to choose one language.' All the people could vote for it, so that the EU won't seem to be discriminating, for example, preferring English and looking down upon Polish or French. We could list all the languages and see which language the most people vote for, then choose that language as the official one for the EU. And the rest is the same. Through that, we still can communicate with each other easier. When you learn English as a child, you speak like the English people. It's easier. And then you can communicate with any other nation and can learn of the beauty of that nation through already understanding each other.

It's easier that way, in my humble opinion. Because, let's face it, even the most intelligent person cannot learn all the languages in his lifetime. No matter how much a person respects all cultures and languages or would love to be able to speak all languages, it's not very possible. Number one, you're busy with many other things. Number two, your brain has a capacity limit. And above all, your time: Life is short. So, that's why I encourage all of you to study English. Even though it's not voted as an official language in the EU or any other union, it's easier, and it's more or less universal. So, we don't vote; we just learn English. How about that? [Applause] I vote; one vote only. [Master laughs.]

Understanding fosters connection and friendship

For example, it would be easier if I could speak English with a Peruvian. Then, even if I don't understand Peruvian, she can tell me about all the beauty of her country in English, I can tell her about all the beauty of my country in English, then we go from there. If we begin the friendship with the same language, then I can study more Peruvian or she can study more Aulacese, if she chooses and if she has time. She might choose to learn Polish instead; I wouldn't be offended. Or she might choose to learn French to know the French culture; I would not feel insulted, because I also understand her in English.

I don't see any problem in speaking one universal language and learning other native languages by choice. Learn it from childhood in school and have a double language in every country: The official language and the native language. Then if you understand this universal language, you can translate all the beautiful treasures: The beautiful literature, all the things that you want to say about your country you can write in English, and the whole world will know about it. For example, everyone who wants to know about Peru will read and say, 'Wow! Peru is great! Peru is really, really ancient and cultured; there are really good spiritual people there. I like Peruvians. I went to Peru and I studied more about Peruvians. I married a Peruvian, and now I stay there!' [Laughter and applause.]

So, then each person has a choice. If he doesn't feel that Peruvian culture appeals to him, he can turn to French and read all about France, in English. And he might think, 'Oh, this sounds better.' Then if he likes it, he can go to France, marry and have French children. [Laughter] But if he still doesn't like it, he can turn to Spain and read all about Spanish literature, culture and history. Depending on whether he likes that or not, he can go to Malaga, stay in the Center and be a monk or whatever. [Laughter]

It's okay to understand everyone. So, I see that it's more beneficial if we have one official language. And I said in the letter that Esperanto was a very good idea, even though not all

people approved it. So, we don't need to learn more languages; we have already too many languages. So, we just make an open vote, and all the EU members vote for the language that's easiest or most convenient for them. Why discriminate? It doesn't matter if English is the official language or not. You're all EU already; aren't we there for unity? So, it doesn't matter what language is chosen. We are not English or Polish; we are not anything any more. We should say we are EU. Then it doesn't matter which language is chosen; it's among us, right? We just choose one by the most votes and announce it to everyone. And then we learn that language. That's my humble opinion. [Applause]

Encouraging unity while preserving diversity

The EU concept is almost like us; we also respect diverse culture. We have Peruvians here to prove it, and we have Mexicans, and Germans, the English, Polish, [Audience: Columbian!] and Columbian even, from so far away. And we have Puerto Rican, we have Portuguese; we have all kinds here, yes. But it would be nice if we understood each other in the first instant. Then we could share with each other whatever we wanted, without having to wait for one more year before I could talk to you: [Master jokes.] 'Wait there, I will learn Portuguese in one year and I'll come back.' 'You wait for me, okay?' 'I'll marry you, but wait one year!'

Actually, language is not all that necessary; love is the most necessary. But the thing is, if we could express our love and opinions and beauty through a universal language, there would be less war, more peace, more harmony, and more love among humankind. So, I advise you, even if you are French or German or Spanish, let your child learn English, privately, if they don't learn English in school.

Most people who study in school know some English. Even if it's just a simple conversation, people feel they're connected. The inner connection takes a longer time! See how long it takes between me and you? So, for Pete's sake, do make the outer connection first! Because even if we speak English together as English persons, we still sometimes misunderstand; imagine how we misunderstand each other in speaking so many different languages. And every language is expressed differently!

So, how long will it take you to learn English, if you don't learn it from childhood? Or any language; English is just an example. Even though English is very simple already, it takes many years to understand all the hidden nuances. So, how would we be able to understand each other if we wait until we are big and then start to learn another language? It's possible, but you cannot learn them all! So, it would be better if all the countries got together to vote for one language. Not just the EU, but the EU will start it from here, and then every country will join in learning one language. And then, apart from the native language, we also preserve all the culture. We don't diminish anything; we just understand each other more. We appreciate each other more if we know what it's all about. If we don't know, how can we respect? How can we love, how can we connect with that native race of people if we don't understand anything about them? For example, there's so much talk about Arab Muslims or Iranian nuclear, but it's not like all Iranian people are bad or that they are even bad at all. It's just that it takes so long to understand each other. So, if we have just one language, then we can translate all the good things from any language into English, and it can go into any public library so we have all the available information about all the possible countries, and then we'll understand each other more. It's so easy!

Every language has its secret beauty. So, we have to preserve all the languages in the world, that's for certain. But still I think we need one universal language so that everyone can be united and more harmonious, and the world will have peace more quickly. I

suggest English, but if you don't like that, you could learn French or Spanish or Chinese. Of course, the more the better, if you have time. But English to start with because it's more simple and more people speak it. Is that right? [Audience: Yes.] Okay, then we'll do that. [Applause]

Miracles do happen, but aside from miracles, everywhere in the world you can find some people who know English and who can help you right away. Language is very important. How often do you go to another foreign land, and even though you just speak a few broken words in their language, they're so happy? It's a pity that we don't have enough time in our life to learn all the languages, which are all very beautiful and very, very amazing! So, at least if we learn English, we can always find someone if we get into trouble. Even a taxi driver speaks English. A coffee shop owner speaks English. A waiter speaks English. From them you can get help; you can understand each other, to begin with. You can find someone who speaks English anywhere. So, at least you can help yourself.

That's my humble advice. If you're stranded in a country and you don't know where you are or where you're going, and you're hungry and you need some food and so on, but if you don't speak that language, what to do? There's always someone, somewhere who speaks English. That's my experience.

Start learning now

All right, then I guess we can start our kids learning English. Maybe privately is better than nothing. You can get a private teacher or an initiate who needs to earn extra money who can teach them some basic English, if the school doesn't teach English, or if they're too young to be taught English in your school. Because sometimes they don't start teaching a foreign language until they're in high school, and it's too late then. It's not because I'm a British naturalized subject that I advise this. It's just that in my travel experience, it helps me a lot: To clear misunderstandings, to find a destination or to find a necessity. Maybe you can organize something like one English teacher for the whole Malaga or Madrid Centers, for your kids or for yourself. Learn as much as you can with the teacher; later you can buy discs or tapes. You can listen when you sleep. You can listen all day, like you do with music, or just for a while and then you'll get the hang of it.

Nowadays there are different ways to learn a language very quickly. Not just English – any language except maybe from a tribe in Africa, or some remote local language such as Aulacese from the mountains. I don't know if they have that. But to find some popular language, like English, French, German, Italian, Spanish or Portuguese, I don't think it's very difficult. If possible, demand the quick learning method. [Master jokes.] We are the immediate enlightenment people; we want everything quick!

After you learn the basics, you can continue trying to read newspapers, or read my lectures if you don't like newspapers. Our magazine is also in English, and we also have news around the world, or you can listen to our program in English. The more you listen, the more you understand; the more you read, the more you understand. You are lucky, because I also speak in English, and my English is very simple. Even as a foreigner you can understand it, if you know basic English. So, whatever words you don't understand in any article, highlight them and go home and look in the dictionary or look in the computer. That's how you learn.

And now, because we're always interacting with each other and there are always English people, you try to talk to him or her. It might be first in broken English, but that's how you correct yourself. I say English because in many countries people do learn English and it's

easier to find an English interpreter or someone who speaks English than to find a German-speaking or a French-speaking or Portuguese-speaking person, in my travel experience. Because sometimes if I get lost, I look at the person and ask (in German), ‘Do you speak German?’ ‘No.’; the same for French, Chinese and Aulacese. But when I ask, ‘Do you speak English?’ ‘Yes!’ So, since we already have a very convenient, easy to learn and popular language, why don’t we just learn that? It’s not because we prefer the English people; it’s just that their language is okay, and we use it for our convenience.

THE PRECIOUS GIFT OF BEING HUMAN ³³

Do you see how many undeveloped souls there are in the whole universe? And humans are getting fewer and fewer every day. People take anti-baby pills and they don’t allow a soul to come down here to work out the karma and to go up anymore. It’s very difficult to become a human. It’s not easy. There are so many souls hanging around waiting to be human, and cannot.

It’s not only limited like this; the affinity has to be right. For example, if you want to come down here, your future parents have to have affinity with you, whether good or bad. The persons who have affinity with you can be your parents, but if they are already gone, then you have no chance to come down. It’s not like if you want to come down, you can come down. So, if you have human life, if you have the opportunity to be human and you don’t work out your karma – if you don’t finish it and you don’t develop quickly to become a higher-level god – then it’s very difficult to get the chance to come back again. It takes a long time! You have to just sit. Nothing bad happens to you; you don’t go to hell; no one punishes you, nothing. But you just sit there and wait, just like sitting in kindergarten. Nothing happens to you, nothing good! And you’ll be very sorry.

So, even in this physical life, if we suffer a little bit physically or if we have to do some hard labor or have suffering, misery, or anything like that, we still have to be patient and work it out, because the chance is very rare. Some people don’t come back to be a human for many thousands of years because there’s no chance for them to do it. To be in this life, you have to either meet friends or enemies or someone from before who had affinity with you in a former life, if they are now on the physical plane. And then you have to have their permission to be your parents or not, if they want to or not, because there are many other affinities that might take priority. The parents can only have so many sons or daughters! And nowadays, they take anti-baby pills, and then you have to wait longer. The list is long, no? You have to wait until that parent comes back again and has another five sons or five daughters again; then maybe it’s your turn, or not.

WORKING TOGETHER TO SAVE OUR WORLD ³⁴

The plastic bag is produced by some of the poorer countries, and some people have to work in such an industry. I saw many years ago on television that the people who work in the plastic industry are very sick because of the smoke that comes out of that city. The whole city was enveloped in clouds and smoke – it really looks so dark. Also, they have respiratory problems and the children are already affected. It’s very terrible to work in such a plastic industry. That’s why I told you I don’t like plastic bags too much. If we have to use it, we use it; but try to economize in anything you can, anything at all, even white paper. Everything is made from something. People have to suffer for it, work for low wages and

33. Group meditation, London Center, United Kingdom, June 12, 2006 (Originally in English).

34. Group meditation, London Center, United Kingdom, June 12, 2006 (Originally in English).

work long hours to support their family, because that's the only job they can get. Some people really have no choice.

So, when I remonstrate you about wasting something, it's not because I worry about my money; it's not that. The least thing I worry about is money. We have money. If we don't have, I can make it. It's not about money. It's for the ecology of the whole world that we have to really take care of the planet, in any small way we can; because if everyone takes care in small ways, then it's big. But if we deplete the resources of the planet, for example, if we cut too many trees to make paper or to burn or to build houses or things like that, then the planet's climate will change. We already have global warming, which has been researched and is said to be because of us.

So, it's not just about money. It's for everyone, for the future of our children and grandchildren, and further on. We want it to last long. And that's not to even talk about so many things we do: We use the resources of the planet to make guns and to make suffering; this is not right. It's not only the resources; it's the manpower that's concentrated on that. Of course, some people have jobs because of it, but in the long run, it's a killer. The killing karma will rub off on everyone who is involved in weapons of any kind. And if we used all that resource and all that money, the whole world would never go hungry, no one! No children would ever have to go hungry! So, you understand when I say to economize something, try to reuse it again and again. It's not because I am strict with you. It goes far beyond that, far beyond our relationship. It's something bigger than me and you. I've hardly told you about these things, but they're everywhere. Everyone has to try to save whatever you can.

So now, you understand that I don't like plastic bags. It just reminds me of too much suffering, of the people who make it. In some of the supermarkets, they ask you if you want paper or plastic bags. I guess it's because of being environmentally conscious. No wonder they predicted that in the year 2000 the world would come to an end! By the look of how we waste the planet's resources and we pollute the air and all that, we could have – not to talk about karmic or anything. It's just like your car or your body; if you overuse it, it's going to be kaput, no? Ruined!

I watched the other day on BBC or something; they say that about global warming, it's very scary. Really, if it continues that way, I don't know. We could die from many different things; it doesn't have to be an atom bomb. It doesn't have to be a bomb. For example, natural gas from the ocean: If it all comes up, it is enough to kill us; no need for an atom bomb, or anything. Or, it could be the global warming and floods from the ice, from the poles. Or, it overheats or something, and we die from heat, or from the gas because of the heat. The heat makes the gas come out of the ocean. Or many things, like the forest and no more air. The forests could all burn off or we could use them all up, and there would be no more air, or no more good air, just carbon dioxide from the cars or the airplanes or whatever – all the toxins from the industries that are producing this or producing that, and all the bombs and everything all together. Earthquakes even affect each other; they affect the volcano and the volcano affects all kinds of things.

All of this is because we are overdoing our development, without reconsidering how to balance development and the environment. But I think the governments are beginning to worry now. Even America is considering importing ethanol from Brazil, which is made from sugarcane, or some natural energy, such as hydrogen or something to run the car, or gas instead of the gasoline used right now. So, it reduces some of the emissions and some of the toxins from the exhaust pipes, exhaust fumes of the cars, and other machinery, and even airplanes. Those who do the research say that if the airplanes don't fly in New York

for only one day or a few days, the sky is so clear, as it has never been for many, many years. Yes, it's like the first time ever, and something else more positive: The sky was so blue.

A LOVING REMINDER TO CONSIDER OTHER BEINGS ³⁵

Anything in this world like that hurts me a lot. I can't watch television right now because of things like bird flu, where they take thousands of chickens or ducks, just take them by the neck, throw them in a bag, close it, and throw it in the garbage. Can you imagine, if it's you? Imagine it's you! They just bury them alive, just like that! Or throw them in the fire, and burn them alive. Imagine it's you! If all the world could just be vegetarian and not breed a lot of chickens and let them be them, they wouldn't bother anyone.

Oh God, I cannot watch all this! It just hurts me, and I can't sleep. Anything in this world, when I look around, it hurts me all the time. Even when I was younger, if you remember I made a poem, 'I don't know what to do with my heart.' It's because of that. Even when I was younger, before big enlightenment, before the Himalayas, I really couldn't bear it. That's why when I was married, I couldn't enjoy. If I watched television, I would feel sad for many days and many weeks. I worked in the Red Cross, and nothing was happy. And when I was young, I witnessed people dying and suffering, and war and all that. There's just nothing really good in this world.

So, anything can hurt me, so easily. Sometimes I even see healthy, good children being pushed around in prams without any covering in the front. Of course, they are warmly dressed, but the cold air can hit their face, also the debris from the street or anywhere. Because you are tall, you are walking up here but the baby is down there. So, I also feel hurt for that baby, because they are delicate and something can flow into their eyes, or they can breathe something bad or the cold air into their nose, which can be painful!

Some humans are very inconsiderate. Sometimes they put the dogs behind them on the truck, without anything to grip. So, they're just running under the hot June sun, or in some very hot weather kind of country. The dog is just slipping here and there, and he might be hurt on his legs or in the heat from the sun. We could not even bear it! So, I don't know how a lot of people do a lot of things. I don't know how some humans have no feeling.

So, the thing is, whatever you do, consider the other party. Then it's easy to understand and to feel it. Don't ask me how enlightened you are and what level of sainthood you are in. Just watch yourself. Watch how you react with other people, how you treat other people and how you treat the less fortunate animals. Then you know what level you are; you don't need to ask me. Because if you are enlightened, you must be more intelligent. More intelligent human beings can see everything better than before. When your eyes are open, you see better! So, just watch yourself. Don't bother asking me when you're going to reach the fifth level and be a Master and all that.

You have to do the best, alright? If you can! There's no use rescuing some animals and then just putting them into another different kind of hardship and neglect. Talking about these things, it makes me feel painful again. I cannot rescue all the dogs in the world, but if you see a neglected, suffering animal or something that is not right, try to correct it. Don't ignore it just because of inconvenience.

35. Group meditation, Surrey Center, United Kingdom, January 8, 2006 (Originally in English).

CLEAN LIVING MAKES THE WHOLE WORLD A PARADISE ³⁶

Actually, if the people in the world are wiser and more sensible, they will pick the world leaders with more spiritual awareness and more clarity in mind. But you can only do that by disciplining yourself. Like the ancient wisdom says, you have to first cultivate yourself. That means you really have to discipline yourself and meditate and have wisdom. Without wisdom, how can you rule the world? How can you help anyone if you can't even help yourself! If you don't know where you are going when you die and you don't even know what to do in some situations, how can you lead anyone or help anyone, let alone a whole nation!

You have first to cultivate yourself, which means make yourself wise. By what? Meditation and discipline. But you can only do that when you're clear, and your body is well. If you are not well, how do you think well? Alcohol makes you worse; alcohol doesn't make you well. Alcohol and cigarettes make you sick. Everyone knows that! Why would you damage yourself when you want to lead the nation? So, you have to be disciplined and meditate: To calm yourself down, to find the wisdom that is inside you and also to cultivate yourself. That's it. Then, you can take care of your family. Of course, your children need you. If a little kid looks at you drinking and smoking all day, how are you going to take care of your family and tell them what to do, when you don't do it? And then if you even fool around or something, that's also a bad example for your kids.

So, first discipline yourself with wisdom and virtue, and then you can take care of the family. That's natural. The old ancient wisdoms don't even forbid you to have a family, but to cultivate yourself, and then you can take care of the family. Further on, you can lead the nation. They don't even say, 'Lead the nation.' They say, 'Pacify the world.' See how big it can be? They don't even limit it to a nation: Pacify the world! That is the great power of a spiritually cultivated person, a wise person. If the world were really wise and awakened, they would have chosen their leaders more carefully.

Spiritual practitioners are shining examples for the world

I suppose any good government would like to keep its subjects healthy, happy and intelligent. That's the aim of any government leader. So, if anyone helps the government to do that, then they should be the friends of the government. And we are the friends of the government, because we keep the society sober, clean, moral and high, by making an example and spreading this example or giving people teachings to do just that. Any government always says, 'We want to keep our people safe; we want to keep our people peaceful; we want to keep our people clean, happy and crime-free.'

We are doing just that, to help the government! So, any government should give us an award and say, 'You are doing good; you are helping us!' Free of charge, even! They don't even have to pay us. All governments have to pay their police or army to suppress crime, suppress criminals and protect the people. We are doing just that: Without getting paid, without clashing with the police, without harming anyone and without having any weapons to harm anyone to begin with.

Imagine if everyone just did what we do! Maybe they wouldn't be vegetarian to begin with, but no alcohol, no drugs and no cigarettes, would be so clean and more healthy; it would save a lot of money and everyone would be happy. They could have a good house, a good car, good health, a good family and be a good example for the children in school. Nothing

36. Group meditation, Surrey Center, United Kingdom, January 8, 2006 (Originally in English).

tragic would happen anymore, or less would. Because let's face it, sometimes children are not taught well at home. So, when they get into school, they become bullies because they have a bad example at home! Maybe the father is drunk every day and beats up the family. The child learns from that, or he gets frustrated. Maybe the father is drunk and then dies or kills someone and goes to jail, and then the child is alone with the mother only and he's frustrated. So, he has to defend himself and grows up aggressive, because that's the only way he knows – to rule and become a bully. The family doesn't make a good example. He came from a broken family; what do you want him to do, with no one to teach him! The father's in jail or died, or was maimed or is a vegetable for life. Sometimes he drinks and goes home, beats the family up or dies because of alcohol. Then the kid doesn't know what to do, so he grows defensive. And it works, because he's weak and scared, and then that's how he grows into aggressiveness and becomes a bully.

If we take away the alcohol and all the meat and cigarettes, then the family will be much better already, and the school will be a better place. So, it affects everything! The effect of a clean life is really big. It's not just for one person or one family; it affects the whole society.

So, I think the world should do this. If they just do like us and follow our example, they don't even need to study meditation with me or become all saints. I don't need to teach them; they don't need to come see me. All they need to do is just live a clean life. They can even pray to God, or pray to whatever they want. But their virtues, their good life, will affect the whole world and the whole world will be a paradise already. No need for me!

Why doesn't the world see this? Why don't more leaders of nations reinforce this kind of clean-living, happy, peaceful heaven for everyone? If they really want to take care of their family, that's the way. At least reinforce it by making an example, because that's what you have a power for. You can change the world! You're the leader of a nation; you can at least change your nation.

LIFE CAN BE LESS EXPENSIVE AND MORE JOYFUL ³⁷

Sometimes we just waste money on so many things that we don't need. Otherwise, our life can be less expensive and more joyful. There was a program on television that I watched two days ago. It said there was a guy who was supposed to pay the mortgage for twenty years. But there was one expert who came and taught the couple how to pay it in two years only. And they really did!

He came and checked out whatever they had to cut. For example, the husband loved to buy all kinds of gadgets. So, he said, 'Well, you don't need them!' The man would buy a lot, and he'd just leave them laying there. So, number one, they took them all out and sold them at a garage sale to take some money in. And from then on, if he has to buy something, he has to consider that it must be really necessary! Otherwise, don't buy it. That's the number one thing.

Number two, instead of going to the restaurant to eat every day, or the coffee shop or cafeteria, they just pack a sandwich lunch and take their own coffee. And then they save a lot every month. Not a lot but here and there, and it adds up.

In the first six months, they saved about six thousand pounds. In six months! So, that's a thousand per month of a little bit here, a little bit there. For example, the girl also smoked,

37. Group meditation, Surrey Center, United Kingdom, January 7, 2006 (Originally in English).

and he pointed out that one package per week cost fourteen pounds or something per week. She didn't even smoke two or three packages a day, but he calculated that in one whole year or two years, she could even buy a car! Two years passes very quickly. So, you could even buy a car if you don't smoke! I hope you don't! [Laughter]

Then, instead of going by car to work, they go by train. It's cheaper and quicker and safer. You sit there and read newspaper, catch up with things, read Master's books or whatever. Or, learn something new while sitting on the train. So, they save another, maybe a hundred or fifty per month. No, more! Petrol is very costly nowadays, right? And if you keep running here and there all the time, like going to work, it probably costs more. It depends on where you go, of course, but at least you save a couple of hundred pounds per month if you go by train and not go by car to work. Or not?

Q. *You've got parking, as well.*

M. Yes, parking space and everything. So, how much do you save? One of you tell me. If you don't go by car to work, how much do you save per month?

Q. *Probably two hundreds because there's insurance and road tax and parking.*

M. I know, but even if you don't go by car, you still have to pay for insurance and road tax, right?

Q. *When you give up your car, then you don't pay for insurance.*

M. No, what I mean is, if you have a car lying around in the garage, you still have to pay, right?

Q. Yes.

M. Or you pay less, or not?

Q. *You can pay less on the insurance because in America, you pay less if you prove that you don't ride more than once a week.*

M. Oh, that's even cheaper! Well, just say two hundreds per month. Wow, two thousands four hundreds! You can buy a lot of things with that. In ten years, you have how much?

Q. *Twenty-four thousands. But if you invest it, you will have a lot more.*

M. Yes, yes! You have more interest. Okay, so maybe you have about four thousands in two years?

Q. *You will have four thousands eight hundreds in two years, and then with interest, probably five and half thousands.*

M. Wow! Okay, see that? Five and a half thousands, you can go into the Himalayas and sit there for five years, doing nothing. [Laughter.]

Q. *Master, maybe I can help. I'm a financial analyst.*

M. I'm doing just that! I'm doing this analyzing for them as an example. And that is not all; there are many other things, like you go buy the clothes on sale instead of buying the trendy ones. Or wait until the winter sales, also the end-of-season sales, and you save a lot more money. And wear simple, practical clothes, so you don't always have to change and be in the mode, or anything like that. If you want to live a free life, you can't always be modish. We don't even need that. Occasionally maybe, for something special, like if you go to work and you have to have an interview, or some job that needs presentable clothes, maybe then you need them. But you don't have to pay a lot of money for brand names. There are some cheaper clothes that look as good. That's for example.

But the two couples, not only did they save on those things, they also worked extra. She was good at singing, and he was good at doing some other thing. So, they would go out to work and bring in extra income every week. Because every money you earn that you save, that means you're earning as well. And of course, if you earn more, then it adds up, all the time.

So, there are many ways we can live a happy life without having to work a lot, or without having to toil day and night – just to burn it. Plus, in all of that, you don't drink alcohol. You don't know how much it saves you every month, do you? Do you know? [Audience: Yes.] For example, if you drink, say, a couple of beers every day, how much would you save a month? [Audience: Two hundreds.] Two hundreds easily, yes! Because not only do you drink, the friends come, and then all of them drink together. And then he invites you and you invite him, and then more and more; it's always more. And not only that, it costs your health. You have to go more to doctor, pay lots of money for medicine, and your insurance mounts up. If you are more sick, the insurance gets more money. The next time you want to insure your health, they will check how often you visit doctors and how ill you are, then they will just raise the fees.

Not only that, if you have an accident, it might cost you your life or your arms or your legs even. It might cost you an arm and a leg, [Master and audience laugh.] the way the English people say it! And then, if you die, that's the end of the story, fine! But if you don't die, then you will be dependent forever: Maybe on health support or air support, oxygen support, and then you just lie there being a burden to your family and society and making sadness for everyone.

So, don't talk about the benefits of meditation or anything. My job and my teachings already clear you of a lot of trouble. Even if you don't meditate at all and if you don't see any Buddha, or you don't become a Buddha, you're already safe: A safe citizen for yourself and for the world. Because drinking and driving kills thousands, tens of thousands of people every day! Around the world, hundreds of thousands of people die every day because of drinking and driving. Not only the driver, the other drivers around him as well, including women, children, pregnant people, anyone! You know that, right? So, our teaching is good for you, yes or no? Any complaints about my teaching? [Laughter] Raise your hand. No? Good!

MAKING MIRACLES WITH YOUR POSITIVE SPIRIT ³⁸

If that kid [Master is referring to a sixteen-year-old boy in Rwanda who touched Her heart with his upright spirit.] or any human being were merely a physical body, it wouldn't be

38. Group meditation, Surrey Center, United Kingdom, January 2, 2006 (Originally in English).

possible that he could think like that. There must be a soul behind it; there must be some great force behind it. Otherwise, an ordinary person under such dire circumstances couldn't still have such an upright spirit and wouldn't be so proud, not begging or anything like that. For example, one of the mothers had a baby who was very ill, and she didn't have money. So, she wanted to walk twenty miles and bring her to the hospital in the next town, in the bigger city, to beg them to help her somehow, if they would. But then a journalist coming by gave her and the baby a lift into town. And the journalist also gave her some money for the baby's treatment. She was stunned. The native Rwandan looked at the journalist, very surprised and said, 'But your lift was good enough!'

These are really good people, very proud and very honest. And they deserve help. But this is just an example so that you know that if you just keep your positive spirit, miracles happen. Even if you're still lousy and negative after you learn the Quan Yin method, miracles still happen. Can you imagine if you're more positive, with more faith, how much more powerful you can be? You bless yourself, bless your life, bless the whole world, bless the universe and make miracles happen everywhere, wherever you walk. So, do that! And it will happen.

That kid, he was only sixteen, and he also spoke like that. The whole village wouldn't talk to him and wouldn't go near him because he and his family were so poor, saying that they weren't very lucky or good or anything. But the boy said, 'I will prove them wrong!' So, he worked eighteen hours a day at sixteen years of age to nourish his five brothers and sisters and his elderly grandparents. He said he wasn't afraid of anything, only that he might get ill, that's it, so that he could not work. But meanwhile, he still studied things by himself, like in a book that he grabbed somewhere. And because of that spirit, miracles did happen.

With only thirty pounds Sterling, he can buy a parcel of land and some goats, and make cheese and milk and plant vegetables, sufficient for the whole family. So, the money I sent is more than a miracle. More than ten times that I sent to him, apart from what was sent to other people as well. It's just that he has a strong spirit. And he's not even initiated; he's not anything spiritual or anything special. He just wanted to concentrate on working to feed his family. Such a strong power like that could make miracles happen. It is a miracle for him because the whole family needs only thirty pounds to be independent forever. And he has more than that now. For that country, for that situation, it's like a big fortune.

For example, if you won a hundred thousand pounds all of a sudden, and all you needed was maybe ten thousand pounds, that would be a miracle. It would be the manifestation of a miracle. And this boy earned it because of what he said, because of the spirit of positivity within him and because of the sacrifice he made for his family. It's so positive and still so strong that it can make miracles happen.

So, how much more could you make in your lucky situation, with the spiritual power that you've been given and you've acquired and continue to develop? We can make anything happen with mind power. Just think good for others and do good for others. That's the miracle you're making every day. You are the miracle! You are the miracle for other people, for yourselves, for the less fortunate. That's what heaven is made of. What else do you think heaven is to that boy sixteen years of age when he gets more than ten times what he needs for the whole family, forever? What else do you think heaven looks like, or a miracle is?

So, we make miracles all the time. We make them with our own hands because we earn money. And then with those hands, we can give life-sustaining power to some unfortunate

people. We can comfort them with our thoughts, with our speech and with our loving kindness. These are all miracles that you're making every day. And I'm proud of you that you're doing that. Anytime someone needs you, you give. And surprisingly in our societies, there are still people who need us, not just in Africa. So, we have a chance to do something every day. Maybe we just give fifty cents to a homeless person for warm tea, maybe one pound to someone else who's sick and can't work, maybe a cup of coffee for a neighbor when she can't go out and maybe buying some medicine for her when she needs to go to the pharmacy but can't. Maybe it's just doing any little thing, because those are all miracles. To the people who can't do it, they're miracles. Just like you, when you want to come here but you can't: So when you can, you say, 'Oh, it's a miracle!' [Laughter]

Miracles happen all the time. Miracles depend on what you need. To you, a miracle is just to go and see some strange woman, [Master jokes about Herself.] not to earn any money or care if you don't have any! [Laughter] That's a miracle, a big deal miracle, not just a small one, that goes to you. To that boy in Rwanda, a thirty pound gift is a big miracle. And it was even more than that, ten or twelve times more, enough for the whole family forever or at least for life, to build their life, whole and strong. Maybe the boy can open a business as well, not just goat cheese but maybe a farm or something. And he'll also be able to send his brothers and sisters to school and buy medicine for his elderly grandparents and help other people later when he becomes rich.

It goes on forever; it's not just for him. Because someone helps him now, later he'll help someone else. That's always for sure! He will never forget the day that he needed, and he will understand the people who need. A person like that will not forget.

So, it's not like I'm just helping him or his family. It will continue. The kindness will be redeemed as more kindness, and many people will benefit from that. And this is a good way; this is how we should live our life. We breed kindness. We nurture it, make it grow and spread it all over the world. And that's how the world becomes better. It does affect us in many ways, not just in a spiritual way but in a physical way as well. The thing you may not know is that it affects the government, affects the leaders and affects the peace. It affects everything. For example, you see now more and more people are vegetarian, you see that the war in Ireland is finished, and that South Korea and North Korea talked – so many things that one cannot even remember sometimes! Even the emperor of Japan just read a loving and sympathetic letter to the whole world, saying how sorry he was and how much sympathy he felt for the victims of the war. This has never been done before. Maybe you think it's because of economic or political pressure, but that has always been there. This is not the first time any nation has had pressure from anyone else, from another country or from an international power, and it's not the first time the Japanese or any other country has had that. So, it's getting better all the time.

Of course, there's still the cleansing of the astral. But the rest will be fine and strong and will get better all the time. Look at how far we have lifted, in all aspects. The disasters cannot be helped; that's the karma of the astral energy. But otherwise, whatever the improvements, it just gets better and better all the time. Could you have imagined before what we have now? [Master picks up a cell phone.] Talking to a square piece like that, saying 'Hallo!' then a guy from the other end of the universe answers you! And there are many other things. For example, you can concentrate a thousand songs into that small iPod. No one knows where it came from. Or, three hundred songs in just a small stick, like a piece of chewing gum. That's powerful!

Nowadays, we can even see each other from a hundred thousand miles away, just by holding a square thing in our hand. We have video pictures, songs, DVDs, everything. And

a person at the other end of the globe can see it like it's right in front of them, but it's right there in your hand. That would have been a miracle a hundred years ago or maybe even fifty or seventy years ago. So, life is a miracle all the time. If you look, you see miracles. It's just that sometimes we take things for granted, wishing and wishing for something else, which is not really important or necessary at all. The miracle is in your hands. When you go out, you work with the miracle that's inside. You go out, work with it and you bring home miracles. And then you can spread those miracles all around you and around the globe.

We have miracles all the time. The whole body is a miracle! Just make use of it, and make more miracles. If you don't use it, there's not much miracle except if you can see it. It's good already. Don't wait until you're blind and think, 'My God! I had a miracle before!' Appreciate it. Every day, thank God. Thank the universe for its sustaining power so that the whole planet doesn't drop into somewhere, so that the sun stays in the sky, so that the moon even comes out and says 'Hallo!' to you every month on time, with no clock needed. Miracles are everywhere. The snow brings water for your garden and for the agriculture.

Everything is a miracle! So, don't take them for granted, but use them to invest and make more miracles. Use your miraculous hands to make more events happen with more financial success. Then you can enjoy life and spread it out. And our life is simple; that's why we can afford to help someone else, because we don't need much. You use whatever you have, and whatever you have with you is a miracle. Even your hair: You can do a thousand things with it. Don't wait until you lose it all and say, 'Oh, my miracle's gone!' [Laughter]

We can see the world around us; that's already a big miracle. Can you imagine if you didn't have that? At night, when you're groping in the dark, you know what it's like to have the miracle of your ears so you can hear. Your health, all the tissues in your body functioning in harmony, that's a miracle. When something goes wrong, then you appreciate that it was right before. Sometimes it's late. But it's good that your life and your body are in harmony together. The mind, the brain and the body work together to make you a functional, perfect human being. And you are beautiful already, very beautiful. You have everything; you're lacking nothing.

THE POWER OF TELEPATHY ³⁹

You don't have to be a psychic or a dog talker to understand the language of dogs. They understand you. They understand English, Russian, German, French – whatever you speak to them, they understand very well. Because dogs understand words by pictures, whatever words you speak form a photo or a picture in their mind. And that's how they understand you perfectly clearly, with no mistake about it. In every language, every word has a symbol, invisibly.

That's also why I tell you to be pure in speech. Because it does have an impact on the people who hear it and it does have a real meaning. It does form a picture, and it does send some energy, bad or good, to the environment that you're walking around in with it. So, that's why we have to be pure in speech and action, and thought as well. Everything has a reason. I am not trying to control you or anything; I am just telling you all the scientific evidence and scientific logic behind the precepts that we keep.

39. Group meditation, Surrey Center, United Kingdom, January 2, 2006 (Originally in English).

Everything we think also forms some kind of picture that people can see as well. Some people can; not everyone can. Nevertheless, it will be around in the ether and people can perceive it. And the energy does stay. Depending on how strongly you mean it at the time of saying it or thinking it, it will last longer or it will last shorter. But, it will last. And sometimes it lasts for a long time, almost forever.

You've heard about the curse from generation to generation: It's true. The person doesn't have to be a witch to form this kind of curse energy; it can come from some person with strong hatred or strong love or strong revenge ideas in his or her head. When he says it with all his mighty power, then it will come true, whether it's a curse or a blessing. That's why sometimes you go to a priest or some holy person and say, 'Please, bless me,' or, 'Give me some blessing.' Because it does work; it's not superstition.

Maybe in the future we won't need television or anything similar; we can just tune in wherever we want, and the picture will come on. And that's what telepathy is all about. Dogs and animals have more telepathic power than we do because we lost it. Many of us lose it, because through the complication of the survival network we have to think too much in physical terms, and do too much in the physical field and think too much about physical obligations because of survival. So, we are more and more physical every day, and that's how we forget the telepathic self or the telepathic ability that we had.

Some people still retain it, to the minimum or maximum, or half-and-half. Sometimes, in some instances, you seem to understand what your partner is saying, without his speaking it aloud. That's when you collect a little scattered ability of the psychic power that you do have. Now and again, it comes out. And that is true. Can you imagine, if we hadn't lost it all we'd have it all the time. But it's also good in a way. Because if you have that power, you don't always hear the good but you always hear the bad also. And that would be a little bit too much for us.

An effective and safe disinfectant for all sentient beings

I have some vinegar spray, just for washing hands for my dogs. And I take a bottle of half-water, half-vinegar with me all the time. Sometimes in the restaurant, I use it to wash my hands; spray it on my hands and then wipe it, and spray on the public utensils, to disinfect them. And wipe it off, and then it's clean. You know, like a dry-cleaning system: 'Zzzt...!' It helps, and there are no chemicals. Vinegar is harmless; you could eat it, so it doesn't matter. I carry a little bottle all the time. You've learned another trick now!

And sometimes, you can spray around your window and so on. Or you spray some insect repellent, the non-toxic kind, around the window so insects don't come through. Even mosquitoes stay away. The small insects stay away from your screen. But if you don't have that, then you spray vinegar. It also helps because vinegar dispels all the smell, and they're only attracted to smell. So, instead of perfume, maybe you spray some vinegar, and then the mosquitoes won't know if you're a lettuce or a hot-blooded blonde. Maybe they think you're a cabbage or a salad! [Laughter]

If you have dogs, clean them with vinegar water only. And if you have dogs or cats or pets in the house, clean your house only with vinegar and water mixed. Now and again, if you really want it clean and you don't feel sure, then clean with whatever you have to. But afterwards, you have to clean with water throughout so that no more chemical residues are left in the house because you could kill your dogs or cats that way. Not killed immediately, but it would make them suffer for many years. They cannot bear it. If you can hear your dog, they will tell you.

So, vinegar water, that's all we want. Half-vinegar, half-water, to clean: Clean the dog's body when you want to let them in the house. Clean the paws and everything with vinegar-water and a vinegar wet towel. And then after that, around the eyes, you have to clean quickly with water so it doesn't smart their eyes. In the sensitive areas that have revealed or sensitive skin, then you have to clean it back with water immediately afterward so it takes away the sting. That's the best! If you really cannot get vinegar on hand, you can use a baby wipe. But then wipe with water immediately after, so there are no more residues of the chemical, whatever it is.

PROGRESSING SPIRITUALLY ELEVATES THE IQ ⁴⁰

The higher one's spiritual level, the higher one's IQ will be. So, among us, we have people with genius IQs. Because a hundred fifty or even a hundred forty is a genius IQ, and we have lots of those! But appearances are sometimes deceiving. Some people look stupid but they're not, while others look smart but they're not.

Because the more spiritually elevated you become, the higher the IQ you will have. One goes with the other. Have you ever wondered why Einstein was so smart? He was a vegetarian, but why? He must have practiced something; otherwise, why would such a person be a vegetarian? At that time, very few people even knew what a vegetarian was! So, the only reason Einstein ate vegetarian must have been that he was in touch with some yogis and practiced spiritual meditation, and so his IQ went up; because at that time such things were very remote. Few people knew what yoga was; few meditated and few were vegetarian. So, Einstein was one of the very few. Of course, his IQ was high! If I threw you back into that era, you would all be Einsteins because you'd be too smart for that time.

You are all Einsteins: Big Einsteins, small Einsteins, mini-Einsteins! Because your IQ has gone up together with your spiritual practice. So, the spiritual level opens up all the channels. It cleans out all the clogging up from inside your spiritual 'arteries' and even your physical veins; it makes the blood flow better and the information travel better. Everything is clearer.

The higher you go, the clearer the channels become. So, you get more information and even more correct instructions from the brain. Otherwise, even if the brain is smart and tells you what to do, your hands may be clumsy. The blockage is here [Master points to Her upper arm.] and only a little bit of information seeps through. So, you do only half as well. Spiritual blockage thus also influences physical clarity.

So, if people don't practice spiritually, they become less intelligent. Even though they may have been intelligent when they were younger, if they grow up and ruin themselves with meat, alcohol or things from this damaging environment, they become less smart. So, it's not that we practice spiritually just to go to heaven. While we're on this planet, we can already make use of it. We can help others because we're smarter; we become leaders. Then when someone doesn't know what to do, you come along and say, 'That thing is easy!' And within two minutes, you've already offered a solution. And that person was thinking, 'You look so young! How could you be so smart?'

If you have a situation that tests you, you'll know you're smart. Because most of the time you don't know. You practice and you grow slowly, and because you were stupid before

40. European retreat, Budapest Center, Hungary, February 26, 2005 (Originally in English).

you think you might still be stupid. [Laughter] But when the situation comes to test you, you realize, 'Hey, I have gone up a little in IQ!'

It's okay if you're not tested, but the more you're tested in different situations, the more you realize that you're really smart now. You are really smart! Not like crafty smart, but truly intelligent. And then you feel proud; you know that spiritual practice really works. Even your family members and co-workers will be left wondering. They might say, 'What happened to you? Something is changed! What did you do?'

You might not be in an environment where you can be tested or where people can see you or feel the difference in you because they've been with you for some time and they can tell the difference. So, if you work alone or live alone, of course, no one knows or notices and then you also don't think about it. But if you happen to rub shoulders with other people, then you know you are really different. Because they also know you are different! They don't know how or why, but they do know that you are different, that you've grown in some way and that you have something now that they don't understand and they don't have.

So, even though you're small potatoes here, [Laughter] I know you are something outside. Don't think I don't know it; I do respect that and I do respect your accomplishments. But I don't want you to stop there! Every time you come here, I push you, I kick you, I pull you and I scrub you to make you better. And then when you go back home the next time, you are different! Don't think so little of yourself, even if I reprimand you. It's just a process that you're going through. You are allowed to make mistakes, of course. You are disciples! Otherwise, you would have been masters.

TO BE A SAINT, BE THE QUALITIES THAT ARE SAINTLY ⁴¹

Perhaps you're all kind because you learn with me. You think, 'I can't kill anyone,' or, 'I'm not eating meat so I'm good.' But you learned that. Otherwise, you might not have been that good. You're trying hard to be good, which is good! But to be good is not enough; to be saintly is not enough. You must be more than that. You have to be more compassionate, considerate, intelligent, helpful, willing, kind and at all times have unconditional love. Especially unselfish love: You have to always think of how to serve humanity at large and how to help the less fortunate. That's really saintly.

Think of how you can do better for others. This is also a kind of meditation. Even at this stage of my life, after the daytime when I'm busy with fixing whatever I see, I think at night of the birds outside and whether they're too cold because of the cold night. And I think of the foxes and the dogs or the sheeps or the goats on the mountain. Wherever I am, I think of the beings and whether they're warm enough and fine enough. It's just automatic.

So, being kind is not enough. You have to be the kindness. You have to be the compassion; you have to be the love. And then it becomes you so that you cannot be anything else but love. Then, you're a real saint. Otherwise, you're just living a borrowed sainthood, or a granted sainthood. For example, some people study very hard for many years in order to become a doctor, while others just get an honorary doctorate. Maybe you're like that. It's fine if you get an honorary, fake or paid doctor degree. But then, be one! Since you have the title, why not be one? Become a real one.

Some people work very hard, study well and then become a doctor. But even if you become a doctor first, then practice and become one. Become a kind doctor or a

41. European retreat, Budapest Center, Hungary, February 24, 2005 (Originally in English).

knowledgeable doctor. Study a little bit more and catch up afterward; that's also fine. You've already gotten honorary sainthood. So, be one! Be one to match it, to make it real. Convince yourself by being a saint. Walk the way of the saint by acting like a saint, thinking like a saint, feeling like a saint, helping everyone else, considering other people and giving love. Always try to go in that direction; train yourself in this environment and this saintly domain. Then you'll become a better saint.

CATCHING UP WITH THE PACE OF UNIVERSAL DEVELOPMENT ⁴²

We have to help the world evolve higher and higher to join the other evolved galaxies, and by so doing we also help ourselves to elevate.

Everything has changed: The world has changed, I've changed and you've changed. Everyone must change. We must catch up. I look the same, but I'm not the same anymore. Everything's changed; the inner concept has changed and my way has changed so you must change. Change the way you think, change the way you treat yourself and change the way you treat meditation. You must make it the most important thing in your life!

So, if you have to do something, do it. If not, just go find a place to meditate; anywhere will do. Even if you have to sit on the snow with your coat on, so be it. Just sit there and meditate. You won't be the first one, except that you are more fortunate. There was one Master in China, who, before he became a Master, knelt outside in the snow for three days to ask for initiation. After three days of kneeling on the ground in the thick snow, his Master still said, 'No.' So, to show his sincerity, he cut off his arm, took the arm and offered it to the Master. Then the Master was touched and initiated him, and he became one of the six patriarchs of China. [Master is referring to Master Hui Ke, the second patriarch of Zen Buddhism]

I'm not asking you to chop off your arm, please. [Laughter] But you are already very fortunate; that's what I mean. Even if you have to sit in the snow to meditate, so be it. Do it! Even if you sit there and your mind runs in all directions, God still knows you're devoted and you get your points. Because we can only try our best; it's not our fault that the mind is occupied with so many stupid, mundane and unimportant things in life. This life overwhelms us in all directions, at all times and in any situation. So, whenever you have a chance to meditate – be it at the Center, on the bus, in the park, in the baby-sitting area, anywhere – you should meditate. Especially at this time, in the transitional period when planet earth is joining all the more developed galaxies, everything is blessed and open for the faithful ones.

Even if you stay hungry and thirsty, just meditate. Of course, if you have food and drink, then take care of yourself. But even if you have to die while meditating, just do it. That's the only thing that stays with you. Never mind; don't worry. We're also helping the world to transition well into the new millennium. You've heard that in the year 2000 the world was supposed to have been 'kaput.' That was true, but I didn't want to tell you. Of course, also because I'm here it won't happen. In London, I told you it wouldn't happen and it did not happen. But it almost happened! So, disasters on a biblical scale are everywhere. You know that yourself. I've even told you in advance that you need to do more diligent meditation because the cleansing period is going on.

42. European retreat, Budapest Center, Hungary, February 23, 2005 (Originally in English).

You can see this yourself, once you change. As you meditate and your level becomes higher, you can feel it yourself. And everyone else around can see it. You're lighter, you're more open, you're more easygoing and simple and it's very easy for you to understand quickly. The people who are lower level are more complicated, or they have always been complicated and they still stay complicated. But once you transit from the second level into the third level, it's completely different. It's very quick and very different! And the higher the level, the more distinct the difference is.

Before you pray, think; think of whether your prayer is really good or if it's selfish. Prayers have an effect. Make sure that what you want is really good for everyone because everything you pray for, I have to do – no one else. So, sometimes if I meditate more, it's better for you and better for the world. It's not that my seeing you is better for you. That's not necessary all the time.

We are always connected. I never feel that I'm far away from you so why do you feel you're far away from me? No matter whether I sit here or I sit in a cave, I never feel that I'm separated from you. Why do you feel separate and feel that you need to see me? There are two types of things in life you have to distinguish: The things that are necessary and the things you desire. The necessary thing is good; it has to happen; you have to have it. The thing you desire, if you have it, good; if you don't have it, okay. The necessary things are okay; we should have them but the things we desire have to be separated from that.

Even if you want to see me today or tomorrow or next year, how long will my physical body last? So, I'm in here [Master points to Her wisdom eye.]; I'm in here [Master gestures toward Her heart.] The best thing is that you're with me all the time, twenty-four hours a day. That means you meditate, be good, treat others well and remember God, and that's it. That's how we are together – we look in the same direction. Remember? It is said that love is not looking into each other's eyes but looking in the same direction. That is very correct. So, as long as we do the same thing and we think the same thing, we're always together. And later, we'll all be together all the time, forever. We have to help the world evolve higher and higher to join the other evolved galaxies, and by doing so we also help ourselves to elevate.

That's the best thing. That's the best union with me. Otherwise, when you come here, you sit here but we're a thousand miles apart. You're not one with me. You follow your own stupid mind; you don't follow me. So, even if you sit around, it's useless. You might as well go home.

You must save your time. Anything that's unnecessary, don't do it. And anything you have to do, do it quickly! One second is your life; half a second is your life. Meditate well and join the saints in the whole universe. You cannot lag behind; they will laugh at you, especially since you're my disciples! So, to become a Buddha is easy. You just get the right method and practice. It's like a science: You just research in the right direction and you find it.

Being natural is being true to your self

Do not care for appearances, do not care what people tell you about yourself and do not care how people think about you because the whole world is illusion. It doesn't matter who is there to think of who is who, and so appearances sometimes deceive people and we don't try to do that kind of thing. So, you have to check yourself as to whether you're sincere here. [Master places Her hand over Her heart.] And don't make an outward

appearance of being a virtuous person because that's sickening. Everyone thinks you're good, but you are not. It's bad for you! Not just bad for the other people who misunderstand you, but it's also really bad for you. Because people expect you to be that way and then you think you are okay, and you stay that way all the time.

So, you don't check yourself and you don't improve! Because you think that if you're just smiling, being friendly and being diligent at the Center, everyone will think you're a saint and you use that to cover up your inner weaknesses and your lower level. But it's really bad for you because it works; it does work! So, you continue smiling and working and helping. Whenever people know that you're working, you work so people think you're working. Or, you smile and are pleasant and people think you're a saint. So, it works for you, and you just keep using it that way.

But the more you use this outer mask, the less you'll be in contact with your self because it works for you, so why not? After a while, you also think you're okay and you don't know that you should improve more inside: Sincerely, really and genuinely. Appearances really cheat a lot of people; you can even cheat yourself. So, don't do that. I'm not happy if you come here and prostrate ten thousand times. I told you to meditate; I never told you to prostrate to me. It bugs me.

Whatever you do, make sure you face yourself, not me and not the person next to you. Face yourself: 'What am I doing? Am I correct? Am I really being honest and sincere with myself? Am I really improving?' Face yourself, not me; I don't care. Even if I scold you and say, 'Don't do that!' I don't care because it doesn't concern me, but your life is your life so make a beauty out of it. Don't go everywhere just bringing garbage and disturbing everyone for your own sake. Seeking attention at the Center is just as bad as seeking attention outside; it's all desire for fame and profit.

So watch it: Don't just stay there forever, relying on all these masks to survive in this society. This body is nothing; any body is nothing. We're just housed in it for a while so we can fulfill our purpose. Don't make a big deal out of appearances. No one cares. Just be honest and sincere and genuine. Be natural; I love that!

The more you serve, the more you expand

The problem with some of you is that you come here and think only of yourself. You don't even care about the person next to you or about what he wants. You don't think of anyone, which is good but it's selfish. So, it depends: If you come here to concentrate on meditation and on God alone, that's good. But if you just try to take everything for yourself – the attention from the Master, the place of the fellow practitioner – to get the so-called best and all of that, it's no good.

There's a difference between being self-centered and being selfish. Being self-centered means that you're centered in yourself and you meditate; that's good. And you don't care about what's happening, or the gossip or the things that don't concern you; that's correct. But if you're selfish, you want to take everything for yourself and then it's very bad for you. Even when you come here, you won't get anything. You might actually lose some points because selfishness always makes you lose points. Anytime you concentrate on trying to get things for yourself alone, you lose everything! Whereas if you try to serve other people with love and unconditional devotion you gain.

That's the irony of the universe because whenever you offer yourself to other people or even to one person, you expand. Your energy or aura expands at least into that person's

area. But every time you think of yourself with 'I need this' or 'I want all this for myself,' you're framed in it.

The more you serve, the more you expand. You get bigger! I've been telling you this for twenty years, and you say you know: 'Yes, that's good, Master. You speak so nicely.' But if you don't even understand and don't practice what I tell you, it's a waste of time. I don't mean any of you in particular; we're just talking in general, but for those people who still have this lingering trouble of selfishness and ego, just drop it!

The more you grab, the more you lose. This is a very paradoxical law of the universe, but it's like that. So, improve yourself; do whatever you think is good and really try hard. I know the world is very unkind to you. Many times it gives you trouble and gives you obstacles. Even your family members, even the ones you love, the ones you think understand you and are closest to you, make trouble all the time. I understand this.

That's why I tell you these things again and again. I don't get angry and then just throw you out because I know you don't know; I understand. It's very difficult for you to survive in this world spiritually because everything tries to take you out of it. The moment you want to sit, even the thing from yesterday comes back. It's not that a person bugged you yesterday and then it's done; it comes back to you. And it lasts many days. Sometimes the heart aches for many weeks, sometimes for many months, sometimes for many years.

So, it's not just like someone hurt you yesterday or last week, and then you suffer one week or one day and that's enough! No, it comes back to you all the time, stabbing your heart, and you try hard to concentrate here [Master points to the wisdom eye], to think of God and to think positively but it's very difficult. I know that. So, just try. No matter what, your effort has borne fruit because all of heavens know.

Only spiritual evolution can bring out universal harmony

In case you have any questions, you can ask me. If not, you may meditate again. That's your job, but you do it to make your life better as well, to clear up the fixed karma you should pay in this lifetime. If you meditate, it's also lessened and it helps the world become even more elevated. It also helps the universe to become united and to balance things out so that one planet isn't too high and another planet isn't too low. Because then we have war between the planets.

Interplanetary war has happened before. The planets were so different in frequencies, spiritually speaking, that they made war with each other. So, to have peace we need to meditate to bring the atmosphere into a peaceful state. Because even though this world might be at peace, if other planets are not peaceful, you still have war: Not war on the planet, but interplanetary war.

This world has been destroyed before. This world has reached a very high level of scientific success, but then because people knew too much and their spiritual side didn't develop, they made war with other planets and other planets made war with them so many things were destroyed.

We used to be more civilized. We're getting back there now; we're getting back, but if we don't balance our knowledge with wisdom, and if we don't balance the material gains with spiritual success, we will destroy not only our planet but other planets as well. Many planets have been destroyed because of this. If we have too much intellectual knowledge but no spiritual wisdom we just have war with each other.

It's now the twenty-first century of this planet, the twenty-first century since the time of Jesus, but this planet existed for an even longer time before that, and we're still making war! Can you imagine? Like barbarians! We call ourselves human yet we're killing other humans without any remorse. And we call that 'civilization.' At this time, we're still killing each other like in the jungle or caveman times. We call those people cavemen, backward or primitive but at least they didn't kill each other on this scale! So, material civilization doesn't offer us any comfort or any peace; only spiritual attainment does. You can see that for yourself.

REMAINING FOCUSED AND DETACHED DURING RETREATS ⁴³

To the ones who have progressed: Congratulations! You've done your best. You've put down many things. That's how you've progressed. For the ones who have not progressed: You have progressed, but too little.

In order to progress quickly, the way you always want and the way you always ask me, 'Master, how do I progress quickly?' I tell you, 'Put down, put down, put down everything,' but you don't. You come here with a lot of friends, relatives, sons and daughters. I tell you, you have them all day long, all life long and you have only five days here for God! But no, that guy comes second. That's why you don't progress.

The only secret is to put it down. God takes care of everything. We can't do anything! If God's grace isn't there, we can't do anything. Of course, you come here and ask me to intervene in your destiny. Sometimes I could ask God to do it. But it's not my problem. I could intervene; I could do anything for you. But it's your problem. Because if you come here with that intention, that's all you get. Maybe your son gets better or your daughter has a good marriage, but that's all you get. The whole treasure, you leave behind. And that's a pity for you.

That's why I'm not bothered if you ask me any questions, even mundane or petty questions; I can answer them for you. I can help you with anything. But I just feel bad for you. You came here for only five days, and you can't even remember God.

Just for once, you should come here just for Hirm, just for God! But no, you always come here and try to make excuses, asking for all kinds of favors. All these kinds of favors you could ask for at home. I tell you truly: Anytime you pray to God or the Master power, it's heard. We're not deaf! I hope you don't think so. [Applause]

And I hope you don't think that 'I' am here [Master indicates the physical body] – that I am sick, I am ill, I am weak, I am small, I am big, I am this and that. No, no, no! It's not me; it's not this person. We're not deaf, we're not dumb, we're not blind and we're not stupid. So, there's no need to come here whining about your family and friends or your problems and misfortunes. You can; you can talk to me about anything you want. Of course, if you want to take me as a mother, as a friend, as a shoulder to cry on, that's fine also. But remember, these are only secondary.

And whenever a retreat comes, you should take advantage of the time, of no disturbances, no demands from family and friends, no business, no work, no boss, no colleagues, no husband or wife – we separate for you – no quarrels, no kids. You should concentrate. Treasure this time as if, after this, you'll die. You'd have no more chance then to even worry about your family, who would be left behind! Will you have a chance to worry about

43. Christmas international five-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 28, 2002 (Originally in English).

them when you die? No! And you don't know if I'll be alive again the next day, much less after five days if I'll still be here to conduct another retreat. So, you're really silly.

The ones who don't progress are really silly. Every time you come to a retreat, we remind you to concentrate on one guy only: One husband, one wife. [Master is referring to the almighty God.] That's true faithfulness. It's not about you being loyal to your spouse on this planet. But you have to be loyal to the spouse in heaven; this is most important because the spouse here can leave you at any time. If you become ugly, sick, old, or he meets someone better, like the karma loosens and he meets someone from a past life he feels better with, then you're doomed. But the spouse in heaven will never, ever leave us. And we're very unfaithful; that's bad news. Nevertheless, I hope you learned your lesson this time, those of you who haven't progressed. Whenever or if we have a next time again, take your chance then, okay? [Applause]

I'm not angry with you; I'm not frustrated with you; I'm nothing. I just do whatever I have to do, at that moment only. So, whatever poison you feel, give it back to me now. You can go home and you're free. You're good, you're perfect again, and you're the person you are. When you're here, I have to correct you, I have to cleanse you, and the process is sometimes very painful for both of us. But it's okay. It's done, and you're free. After the five days, whatever's bad here or good here, it's gone. [Applause]

So, you're perfect, you're loved and you're wanted, as usual, and during the retreat, too. But other kinds of treatment might make you feel that you're unwanted or unloved. It's not true. It's just that administering medicine was necessary at that time. So, whatever you don't need, give it back; put it back right here and go home free. You're perfect as usual, even if you haven't progressed. You've just learned another lesson, at your own expense. I mean, money-wise, also. [Master laughs.] You spend a lot of money, coming here and going back for nothing.

It's not my fault; I sell everything! Everyone has the same sale. I don't reserve anything for anyone special; everyone can have the same merchandise. If you want to buy it, everyone has a chance.

Now, for the ones who have progressed, you should be happy and proud of yourselves. I don't have any reward or certificate to give you, but you know you're rewarded. You have your own certificate. You should be happy. [Applause] And for the ones who have not progressed at all or maybe just a little bit, since you can't help but progress a little – I hope there will be a next time for you, so that you can undo your mistakes. Next time, if we have any time, if you have any more chances to come ever again for such a retreat, please be one-pointed as if you're dead. If you're dead, no one can do anything to you. Put the word 'Dead' on your forehead before you go out the door. Take it off and say, 'I'm alive again!' when you get out of this retreat. That's really what it is. [Applause]

Because if you're not dead to the world, you can't be alive with God. It says the same thing in the bible: 'You can't worship both God and mammon.' So, we have to be one-pointed. Whatever I did during this retreat was to guard you or herd you into this one-pointedness. Be it loving, be it petting, hugging or scolding, it's all to help you during these five days only. So, don't think that you're more special if I give you more tenderness, and don't think that you're terrible if I give you a scolding. You're all equal, equal, equally loved in my heart. [With tears in Master's eyes.] I love you so much! [Extended applause.]

Because even though sometimes you do things I don't like you to do because I know they're not good for your practice, or you have something in your heart that's not good for

your practice, I know it's not your fault. It's just the circumstances that made you this way. It's this terrible world that pushes you into these situations.

I have nothing but love for you. I don't want to give you any harsh words or anything, but I have to. It's for your own good, but I just want you to know that I love you through all that. It's just like sometimes you scold your children, but you never stop loving them. And maybe if some of your children aren't well, you put them in the hospital. It's a terrible treatment for them, but you want them to be well. So, you put them in the mental ward, because you want their mind to be sharper, you hope, in the future. That's all there is to this treatment, but treatment is never pleasant. Just try to meditate more so you don't have to have this kind of treatment anymore.

Some of you were more enlightened in heaven before you came here, but you wanted to be even more enlightened than that. For example, when you were eighty percent enlightened in heaven, it means you were in the fourth world or something. But you came down looking for me because you knew I'd be here. And when you came down, your enlightenment became less than when you were in heaven. And you suffered and suffered here, and forgot everything that was on the path and in heaven for you. You've suffered more here because you've forgotten.

So, I'm trying in every way to make you remember, to reach back there and above it, above the level you were on before you came down. So, anything that's possible, I'll do for you. But you also have to try to remember your real self. Otherwise, the less we remember, the more we suffer. Anyway, I just want you to know that you're very much loved and very much respected because you're good. It's not because you were bad that you're good. It's because the situation makes you so bad, yet you're still trying to be good. That's why you're good. [Applause]

You have so much pressure from home, society, friends, colleagues, jobs, boss, husband, wife and so on. And you still try your best to meditate at home, go to group meditation and also come here on retreat. Even if you come on an airplane, it's easy and all that, but it's not all that easy. So, for that, I really love you. I know you try your best, and God will know. So, anything you want, you should just pray for at home. The next time you go to a retreat, just desire to know God: For just five days, be dead to the world. [Applause]

GOD CAN BE EXPERIENCED EVERYDAY EVERYWHERE ⁴⁴

God is to be experienced not only through the wisdom eye center or the heavenly 'audio center' but also every day with everything – with your breath, with your body, with your feelings, with your intellect, with your emotions, with your mental attitude and also with the people around you. Because God is everywhere. He brings you experiences and wonders every day, all the time. You just have to notice it.

And sometimes we don't notice. We just wait for God to appear in meditation, but God isn't like that. So, in meditation we can have a more quiet experience with Him. But most times every day He blesses us everywhere. However, sometimes you don't know it. Sometimes you're supposed to have an accident, and it looks like you're almost having a car accident, but who is veering your car away or veering some other car away so that you remain safe? These are the times when we notice God is there. But then we just think, 'Oh, it's a coincidence.' Or sometimes we happen to find a good job that we never expected and we think, 'Oh, it's another coincidence.' But no – God is everywhere and He always protects

44. Videoconference with San Francisco Center, California, U.S.A., August 25, 2002 (Originally in English).

us and helps us. I think you know this very well. So, quit expecting God to appear to you only through the wisdom eye center. He appears all the time.

IT'S MORE JOYFUL TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE ⁴⁵

We should try our best to help others as much as we can. However, this doesn't mean that we have to go out and help a certain number of people every day. We should do it in a natural way, spreading our love very naturally. For example, sometimes I see street people or destitute people and I immediately give them what they need. [Audience: But there seem to be too many people who need help and there's no end to it.] Just do it naturally when you see people in need; do it when you can; if you can't do it immediately, then wait until the next time! You don't have to force yourself.

Helping others is a great honor and pleasure rather than a job or responsibility. If you feel obliged, then don't do it; offer your help only if it makes you happy and joyful for it is your honor! It's truly a great joy to give; it's truly very comfortable to help!

For example, the day before yesterday, I was planning to get a sofa for my dogs. The sofas in the shops were too big for my small house, and I thought there would be no room for them. The dogs have their own beds, but they wander around outside during the day. Sometimes when they're tired, they don't have a place to sit, so they usually sit on the sofa at home. [Master laughs.] That's why I decided to buy one for them.

I went into a shop, but before I could find the sofa section, I saw two sad little children pleading with their mother, 'Please, please! We want to have it today.' I overheard their conversation, and it seemed that the mother wanted to buy a double-decker bed for the children. But they would soon be moving, and if they made the purchase that day, they would have to pay transportation charges again when they moved. Besides, the bed would have to be dismantled and then reassembled. Thus the mother had reservations about buying the bed for it would incur additional costs.

'Can I pay the transportation charges for their move?' I asked the manager. 'I can pay you now, and you can help them move when the time comes.' The two children were delighted to hear this! They asked for my address, phone number, name, et cetera. [Master and audience laugh.] But I said, 'No, no! Sorry, I'm very busy! This is a gift for you. I just want you to be happy. Don't ask any more.' Then I ran away.

I was very happy in my heart to see the children's eyes sparkle with joy, as they said, 'Oh! Is it true? Thank You! Thank You! You're Santa Claus, aren't You?' [Master and audience laugh.] [Applause] Then the smaller one said to his mother, 'Mama, Santa Claus does exist!' If they had not made the purchase that day, they would not have been able to sleep in the new bed on Christmas, and would have had to wait until after they moved the following year. The bed had captured my heart as well. [Laughter] The design and colors were just right for kids; it was very bright, but not the disorderly or gaudy kind. It had a cozy blend of two or three colors. I thought the children had very good taste, but the mother might have been reluctant to spend the extra fifty dollars, thinking it might be a waste of money. For them, that might not have been a small sum.

Then the manager of the shop asked me, 'Do You know that it will cost fifty dollars?' I said, 'That's all right! It'll be worthwhile if it can make the kids happy.' I gave him a hundred dollars and said, 'In case fifty dollars is not enough, you can cover the expenses with the

45. Christmas international five-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 25, 2002 (Originally in Chinese).

other fifty. Please make sure that the children get the bed today. Christmas is coming and it's important to make children happy. I love children; can I entrust this job to you, please?' He said, 'Sure, no problem!' Then I quickly slipped away. Originally I had intended to buy a sofa for my dogs, but under the circumstances I dared not stay, [Master and audience laugh.] and left without looking for it.

The children kept coming around to ask for information such as my phone number, saying that they would like to send a thank-you card, et cetera. But I said, 'No, no! It's really not necessary.' If we allow people to send thank-you cards each time, our mailbox will be too small! [Master laughs.] I slipped away as soon as I gave the money, feeling very happy. The children's happiness was infectious.

When we were little, we'd feel terrific if we could have something we liked right away! If we had to wait a couple of months for it, who knows what changes could have occurred during that period of time, right? [Audience: Yes.] And it was Christmastime, too! Their mother didn't say she wouldn't buy the bed; she already loved her children very much. It was just that I felt they didn't seem to be very well off. That was why when I offered to pay for the transportation, they were amazed beyond speech. I simply said, 'I love children; besides, it's Christmastime.' So, they thanked me repeatedly, and I replied, 'No, no! It's I who should thank you because you gave me this opportunity to make myself very happy.' It was truly so.

Therefore, when we have an opportunity to help others, we should thank those at the receiving end. I was truly grateful to them for giving me the chance to help the two children and make them happy. Some people are skeptical about your intentions and don't accept help readily. Besides, the manager was very cooperative. It was like everyone supported the idea, making me feel very easy and comfortable.

Thus, helping others is not a responsibility, but a great honor that brings you immense joy. I was very happy that entire day. [Master laughs.] [Audience: But the mere thought of so many people needing help makes me tired.] No, it doesn't have to. Where do you see so many people in need? You help when you see someone in need. We can't help the whole world, and even if we did, there are still beings in hell, and then there are animals! Just do whatever is necessary at present, and it's all right to do one thing at a time. You don't have to think that you'll have to do ten things. If you find someone who needs help today, and if you're capable, just help; if not, then just be supportive in your mind.

Like in the example I gave just now, we could also have told the mother, 'Oh! This is really a nice bed so do whatever you can to give it to the kids!' This is fine, too; we don't have to offer money. If we have a supportive heart, making them happy and giving them encouragement, that's also good. If they had failed to buy it that day, it would have also been all right. You could tell the children, 'Never mind! One month is very short and passes very quickly, and then you'll have it.' You can try to encourage people and you should really want to do it. You don't have to force yourself to interfere in any situation, no, no! Do it naturally. God incidentally gave me the opportunity that day so I felt very smooth doing it, very happy inside. I was really very happy to help! If in case I couldn't help at that time, I would feel very sorry. Because the thought of the two kids going home empty-handed and unable to get the bed until a month later would have made me feel very uncomfortable at heart. So, I was delighted to be able to do it then!

That's why I tell you that helping others isn't a responsibility but something that brings happiness and comfort. I often do it, and I often feel happy. [Master laughs.] Happiness doesn't come only that first time or the second or third time. I feel happy every time I help

others. Of course, there are different kinds of happiness each time. To be able to help truly needy people, oh! I feel so comfortable, so contented! Perhaps sometimes we may suspect whether those people really need help or not, but if they ask, I give. We shouldn't suspect that they're lying. Even if they're lying, that's their business, and I still help them. At that time I may not feel very happy. However, it's better than withholding help skeptically. Because after I get home I may think, 'Ah! I should have helped them at that time.'

Sometimes we might pass by street people, but we have already driven past them, so we have to drive a long distance before we can turn back. And I feel happy only after I've helped them. If I just drive past without turning back to help them, I surely feel uncomfortable after I get home, feeling that I failed to take an extra step to help people. So, I don't know why it's so hard for some people to help others. You don't understand, really don't understand! When you give more, you'll know how happy you are. The more you give, the more joyful you feel, believe me! [Master laughs.] You don't have to give a lot. Give as much as you can, but you don't have to give away all your property leaving nothing for yourself and your family. No, no! We should also take care of our family. Then, if we're still in a position to help others, we should try to help, and then we'll feel very happy.

When we give help to people in need, we feel very comfortable in our hearts, just as though we're receiving help; we feel an empathy with those people. The reason is very simple. If you were the one in need, and suddenly someone came to help you, wouldn't you feel great? [Audience: Yes!] You'll know it if you think this way. It's not necessary to have magical power to know it. The happiness of that person becomes your happiness because you clearly understand what he feels, like knowing how hungry people feel when they get food.

Likewise, when I help others, it's as if I become that person; that's why I feel so happy. Whomever I give to, that person seems to become me so he and I both feel very happy. However, I'm happier than he is because I not only feel his happiness, but I also know that I've brought him happiness. The two together make me happier than he is. That's why we say, 'The giver is happier than the receiver.'

Therefore, if you don't give or help others, it's really a great pity! Such a pity! You miss those happy opportunities. I'm not forcing you to give alms. I'm only telling you that it is an opportunity to have happiness and joy. Karma or no karma, we can talk later! Never mind karma when you give. Only think of those in need, without thinking about yourself, and only then will you be happy. If at that time you're still thinking about karma, feeling afraid while giving, then don't give because you won't be happy at that time. When you give, you should completely disregard the consequences. Only then will you feel happy.

MAKING YOURSELF THE PERFECT PICTURE OF A WONDERFUL YOGI

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Everyone gets into difficult situations sometimes, and some people are more sloppy or forgetful than others. But anyway, that person also has to check out whether the things said by others are correct or not. If so, if he or she did do something wrong you should write a note and put it on his or her door, telling that person, 'Next time, please do this.' Don't say, 'Don't do that.' Just say, 'Next time do this.' For example, if he or she forgot to turn off the lights just say, 'Next time, turn off the lights so that we can cut down on the

46. Videoconference with Toronto Center, Canada, August 4, 2002 (Originally in English).

amount of the electricity bill.’ Tell him or her what you want them to do such as, ‘Clean up the yard,’ or ‘Please clean up your room,’ or ‘Wear your initiation card every time.’

And if you’re too forgetful, I suggest a very easy solution: Put a big note on your door before you go out the door. ‘Put on ID card right now!’ And then when you open the door, you’ll remember, come back, get your ID card, put it on your shirt and go out. If you’re forgetful, you have to write a note reminding yourself. No one else is there to remind you all the time.

There are two ways to live with each other: The wrong way and the right way. And for me, there’s only one way – the right way. But everyone is learning and everyone has a different mindset, different habits and different ways of expressing themselves. So, you have to make your life better for yourself. You have to remind yourself; you have to know which way is the right one and do it. And don’t rely on someone else to remind you.

You’re mature; you’re grown up; you’re a responsible being. And you’re even a good practitioner; I can tell. It’s so little, this bad habit; you can change it. Don’t make the bad habit become a bad reputation for you. Don’t let the habit get you down and make you become like a fool in front of everyone. You have to earn respect. You have to let people know that you’re a respectful, responsible person, not that you can do anything you want. Now make a list of what they’re asking you to do and try to do it. It’s easy! You can do it just like that.

This is the problem with some of us: We’ve not been taught. And I tell you; this little problem sometimes causes the break-up of marriages. It can cause the loss of a job or the heartache of losing a loved one. So, be mindful of your own environment. Make it as clean as a first class hotel. If you don’t know what a first class hotel looks like, go into one and look around. Then go home and make your home look like that. This isn’t the same as decorating or anything; make it tip-top clean so that you could even eat off the floor. Make it as if I’m coming to visit you tomorrow, how about that? [Applause] Because I live where you live; I’m there. Have respect for me in my place: Save my money on the electricity bill, keep my house clean, keep the window closed and keep everything in perfect condition because this is my house. Your house is my house. [Applause]

Cleanliness is Godliness. Try to look for that. If you were a God or a Buddha, how would you behave? Try to do that. Remind yourself, for example, by putting a note on the door. So, the solution for all the forgetful people in the world, in every Center or private house, is this: Whatever your weakness is, for example, if you usually forget to close the window so the air conditioning or heat goes out and increases the electricity bill – put a note on your door and before you open the door, you’ll see it. Ask yourself, ‘Did I remember to close the window?’ or say, ‘Remember to take out the garbage.’

Just put the whole list there and every day when you go out check the list. ‘Did I do number one? Check. I did. And number two, did I close the window?’ Go check it out and come back: ‘Check, I did it.’ Then, ‘Did I take the garbage out, number three? I did, check.’ And then you can go out. And even if you forgot at that time, at least when you come back you’ll remember again.

This is better than if you never remember and make a mess of your house, with stinking and trouble for yourself and everyone. Make yourself a perfect picture of admiration, of respect, of a beautiful yogi because we’re not in the Himalayas. We’re here. We’re with a lot of people, and that’s good; it’s nice; it’s cool to have a big family. It’s beautiful. We’re

always there for each other. There's no one else out there who will help us as much as we help each other. Remember that. So, we're what we have. We're the family.

MOST BLESSED BEINGS IN AN ERA OF ADVANCED VISUAL COMMUNICATION ⁴⁷

I am very happy that we have this opportunity to see each other through the Internet; so, we can get together to discuss questions related to spiritual practice. We truly have great blessings to be born in this era, when we can pursue spiritual practice easily and expediently, and have all kinds of conveniences. Although we can't meet in person, we can talk to each other like this. This is really comfortable; we are really blessed! Let's be thankful to God! [Applause]

Apart from that, we ought to be more diligent in our spiritual practice. This does not mean just crossing our legs and meditating; we always have to remember our noble ideal and remember God. Care not about fame, gain, wealth or the good or bad qualities of other people. Also, do not pay too much attention to your physical needs, or be deceived by the desires of your minds for fame and gain. We only need to persist in spiritual cultivation, and then we will be increasingly able to forsake these material things, and become nobler people.

We should endeavor to be monks of modern times – monks in civilian clothing – because we are blissful and unrestrained at heart. Regardless of what people say, we will still know ourselves and know who we are. Only this is most important; only then will we be people with the greatest blessing. Others may praise or insult us, but it does not mean anything to us. The main thing is that we know ourselves and we know our own qualities. Only this is the happiest blessing. It is only we spiritual practitioners who can have this kind of blessing, which cannot be acquired through wealth. Once we have it, we will never lose it because no one can steal it from us. However, no one can bestow it upon us, either. We can only earn it through spiritual practice, and then we will be able to keep it and use it. In this sense, we are truly the most blessed people in the world!

WE ARE CATCHING UP WITH HEAVEN ⁴⁸

Many decades ago, when I wasn't on this 'job' yet, I read in the newspaper that, one day, people would be able to talk together and even see each other's picture through the telephone. So, this is what we have; the prediction came true. And soon we'll have much more exciting news. I'm not sure how we're going to realize it. But a lot of things you already know, like when I told you about the other planets where people don't need to carry babies in the mother's womb.

In this world, we'll have the same thing. It won't take long. The technical advances are so awesome that we have no time to even catch our breath before something changes again! In Japan, I heard that they've already developed a kind of box in which they put some liquid that corresponds to the natural liquid inside a mother's womb when she's pregnant with a baby. And they'll try to raise the baby that way.

So, maybe in the future, if you want to have ten babies, it'll be no problem. [Laughter] For nine months, you can come see the baby every weekend or every day, whenever you have time, even after work. They can even make the shape of the baby, the way he or she

47. Videoconference with Taipei Center, Formosa, August 3, 2002 (Originally in Chinese).

48. Videoconference with Houston Center, Texas, U.S.A., July 28, 2002 (Originally in English).

looks, and choose the sex and whatever. It's very exciting; we're catching up with the advances of the higher planetary systems.

And right now we're also using laser and light to heal patients. Remember, in one of my earliest lectures in Formosa? At that time, I didn't even speak Chinese well? We mentioned the light therapy used on other, more advanced planets. Those scientists have been born on this planet now, and they're bringing their treasured memories with them. So, they're making our planet a better place in which to live, as far as physical comfort is concerned.

And also, maybe soon, or not very far in the future, we're talking about years only we'll probably have flying cars and so on. And it'll probably be easier to see each other, with less traffic congestion. And we'll have a faster commuting service.

All of this is very exciting for me, too [Master is referring to Her view of Centers in a worldwide conference.] Seeing your pictures right here, thousands of miles apart, is really good. So, it's because we're also practicing very well, thanks to you, all the beautiful, lovely, happy yogis. [Applause] All of this has to do with us. So, as much as I'm excited about this news, I also want to thank you and many other groups of practitioners. Maybe they don't belong to our group, but they're also doing their meditation on the Light and Sound, or maybe some other less advanced techniques. But they're trying their best to contact God. And that's how we uplift the ambience of this planet.

And so, because the planetary vibrational frequencies have been lifted up into the higher levels, those highly developed scientists from the higher planets are able to reincarnate into our world with less suffering, without losing much of their memory about where they came from. And hence we have such wonderful advances in technology nowadays, thanks to you.

This is beautiful. So, we should continue to practice, even if we're not scientists or computer wizards or anything. But as long as we meditate diligently, to purify ourselves, our aura, our environment, we indirectly contribute to the progress of our planet. And that's really the great contribution we can make to our society. This is wonderful. So, all the things you enjoy right now are not only the labor of the scientists and the laboratory people, but also the fruit of your own spiritual endeavor.

It's so wonderful to see the outcome of spiritual practice. You see how we didn't have anything before! And suddenly, in just one-and-a-half decades, everything has developed and we even have a hard time keeping track of our technical developments. But you can see the difference.

So, this is a practical outcome of our spiritual practice. It's not just spiritual enlightenment, it's not just individual happiness and blissfulness, it's worldly development as well. We're catching up with heaven. We're catching up with the more exciting and more advanced planets. Can you imagine? And soon, if we live that long, we're going to be traveling to other galaxies, other planetary systems live: Not just sending a robot, not just going to Mars to pick up some dirt, but going to some populated and spiritually advanced planets to say hallo. And we can even teach from here; we can even say hallo from here. And we can see each other from zillions of miles away, light years away. We can say hallo then like we're saying hallo to each other right now. Won't that be wonderful? [Audience: Yes!]

So, keep on your golden path and never doubt for one second. You're on the right track. I guarantee it. [Applause]

LIFE IS MOST MARVELOUS MOMENTS – MEETINGS WITH MASTER'S TRANSFORMATION EMBODIMENT ⁴⁹

The more we practice the Quan Yin method, the more powerful we become. But new initiates cannot withstand too much blessing from God all at once so it's okay for them to meditate only two to three hours a day, and then sit longer by and by. Some can meditate for eight hours, or eighteen hours, or even twenty-four hours a day after they have practiced for a long time. But new initiates cannot practice so much; otherwise, there may be a problem because they cannot bear so much of God's power. Although this power was ours originally, there may be problems if we have not adjusted or adapted ourselves well when we suddenly receive too much power. That's why I have told you it's okay to meditate just two to three hours a day. Half an hour to one hour is enough for convenient method practitioners. It's not that the 'greedier' you are in practice, the better you become. Of course, more practice helps, but you still have to take your time.

Some great spiritual practitioners in the Himalayas practice all day long. They meditate eight or eighteen hours a day, so their magical power is strong. They can appear and disappear all of a sudden before you know it. Of course, that's their inner Light form. Sometimes we can touch this manifestation form, just like we were touching a physical body. Try it on your neighbors. [Master and audience laugh.] Maybe it's a transformation embodiment. [Laughter] Those practitioners are on very high levels, so they have countless manifestations. It's just an outcome of cumulative practice.

How does this happen? Our bodies and the cells in the body evolve, and so do our souls. Most people take millions of years to advance to this level in the natural circulation system. However, with the Quan Yin method, it takes only two to three weeks to attain the level that takes ordinary people several lifetimes of practice to reach. As a matter of fact, this is not really spiritual practice; it's just becoming involved in the circulation system of the universe. Ordinarily, those who don't practice the Quan Yin method, but instead rely on doing charity, observing the precepts, and being good people, can reach this level only after eons.

The Quan Yin method includes spiritual cultivation, keeping the precepts, purifying our body, speech and mind and meditating on the inner Sound and Light; so that we can elevate ourselves with respect to the whole evolutionary system. Human beings were originally crude. Their cells and brains were all crude. They had to evolve gradually to become intelligent human beings. After we learn the Quan Yin method, we can evolve into more intelligent people, having both spirituality and magical power; not tangible magic, but a kind of 'doing without doing.' The more we practice this method, the higher we develop ourselves, and the higher beings we become. We will progress very quickly in the evolutionary system.

When humans first appeared on this planet in very ancient times, some looked like gorillas, not only in appearance, but in thinking and behavior as well. At that time, humans could not do many things and gradually developed into what they are now. If we practice the Quan Yin method, our levels can soar through several levels, without waiting millions of years for evolution to take its course.

The Quan Yin method is nothing superstitious or mystical. We simply have an inner system that makes us progress. Even if we do not speed it up, it still automatically proceeds, but slowly. The Quan Yin method accelerates this system. Therefore, when we

49. Tea party, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., May 12, 2002 (Originally in Chinese).

first begin to practice it, we cannot practice very much; two to three hours a day are enough.

The practitioners in the Himalayas practice all day, and they are constantly in samadhi; thus, they have great magical power. They transform, appear and disappear, and we can never get hold of them! Some of our initiates also have seen the inner Light form of Master in their meditation or at home. Sometimes the manifestation form of Master talks to them. They see Her not only through their inner vision, but also when they open their eyes, just like I see you now. They can even shake Her hand. But this form of Master doesn't stay very long. Of course, the manifestation form of Master can stay, but it's not necessary for it to do so. And this form of Master only speaks a few words and then leaves. These initiates really have this sort of experience because they have practiced the Quan Yin method for many lifetimes or have practiced very diligently in this lifetime.

It's really a pity if we don't practice this method! The more we do, the greater we become. If we really know the benefits of practicing this method, sometimes we like to forsake the whole world, and hide ourselves in some secret place for spiritual practice. Inside of us there is much potential power that we have not yet developed. In this world, we are powerless and lead a poor life like a beggar. But it doesn't matter. We can take our time. Maybe several lifetimes from now our magical power will grow as great!

Have you ever read the story of Yogananda (a great Indian saint of the twentieth century)? [Audience: Yes.] His Master Babaji often came and went, and His disciples could never get hold of Him. Sometimes Babaji would come to a disciple's home and then disappear, and the disciple might think his Master had gone. Since Babaji could conceal Himself in the wind, rain, sun and air, you could never get hold of Him because He had practiced for such a long time! Those Masters are very different from ordinary people. They fly rather than walk. Sometimes they don't even bother to fly – they hide themselves in the air and disappear. We must have enough merit to see their manifestation forms.

Some of our fellow initiates have also seen this kind of manifestation form. I have heard stories about people seeing my manifestation form. Right? [Audience: Yes.] You saw it? Was it Master's inner Light form or a physical one? [Audience: It looked like a human body, except it didn't talk.] Maybe you have not evolved to the level of being able to converse with it. [Master and audience laugh.] This is quite good already! Practice more and the manifestation form of Master will talk to you. [Master and audience laugh.] Could you touch it? [Audience: Master's manifestation form turned around and smiled at me. We were riding a bus together.] Riding a bus together? Poor me! [Laughter] Maybe I had too many disciples at that time, and I had no money! [Master and audience laugh.] Tell the story again, because they haven't heard the story and don't understand what we're laughing about.

Q. *It was eight years ago. I was on a local Hsinchu bus when I saw Master. She was sitting opposite me, only one seat away. But I didn't know Master at the time. When the bus passed by Chungli, and arrived at Lungtan, Master got off the bus, and She turned and smiled at me after crossed the road. I thought, 'Why, this person makes me feel good!' The next day, I saw a poster in the same place, saying that a Master from the Himalayas was going to give a lecture. Only then did I realize that the person I had seen the day before was the Master on the poster.*

M. Maybe She was taking the bus to the lecture at the time. [Master and audience laugh.]

- Q. *I thought so. But later a sister nearby said that Master was on a retreat; besides, She couldn't be traveling alone.*
- M. Right, I don't remember Her ever taking a bus in Formosa, but maybe She had no money at that time! [Laughter] Or maybe She snuck out alone to do it, and didn't tell me. [Master laughs.] Some non-initiates have also seen the manifestation form of Master at their homes, but after that they became fellow initiates.
- Q. *About seven or eight years ago, upon arriving home, my tenant told me, 'It's a pity you weren't home – your Master was here!' [Laughter] She asked me, 'Are you hungry? Have you eaten?' And I said, 'I'm not hungry. I don't want to eat.' Then Master said, 'You should eat. Come, let me wash the rice and cook it for you.' Your Master is really powerful! She even knew where you stored your rice!' [Laughter] My tenant said she didn't trouble Master with the cooking, and added, 'It's really a pity that you didn't come back in time.' She was completely unaware that she had seen Master's manifestation form!*
- M. It's a pity that she didn't eat the rice cooked by the Master. You didn't see it yourself?
- Q. *No. I'm very happy already that Master came to my home!*
- Q. *Master, the following is not my personal experience, but a story that a sister initiate told me. Her neighbor was over eighty when he passed away recently. Before he died, the sister initiate showed him Your photo, which reminded him of something that had happened some forty or fifty years earlier, when he was recruited by the Japanese army and sent to Manila, the Philippines. The boat he took to Manila sank to the bottom of the sea while crossing a very deep ocean trench. From the ocean depths, he saw the manifestation form of Master come to rescue him, and was thus saved from drowning. When he saw Master's photo on the cover of Her aphorisms book, he found that the lady in the picture looked exactly like the person who had saved him many years earlier. He was very grateful to Master for saving his life.*
- Q. *Master, my father-in-law once told me that when he was hospitalized, he saw Master come to see him. At that time Master was in white and asked him, 'Do you know who I am?' And he answered, 'You are just an old woman!' [Laughter] Master then replied, 'Look again, and look carefully.' Then he thought to himself, 'Well, maybe She is my son's Master – Master Ching Hai!' Then Master said, 'Take care of your health; you will be all right.' Hearing this, he was so happy and touched that he began crying, and Master soon disappeared. The following day, my father-in-law received a call from us, telling him that we would come to pick him up and he could live with us. He was very delighted. Thank You, Master!*
- Q. *Over ten years ago, I paid a visit to a friend and got lost on my way home. I got stuck for a long time and still couldn't find the right directions home. Later I saw Master in front of me, looking the same as in the photo in which She is dressed as Quan Yin Bodhisattva (the Goddess of mercy)! I then followed the directions of the manifestation form of Master, and found the right way home!*
- M. Great!
- Q. *Later, I bought a copy of that photo. [Master and audience laugh.] After my experience, Master wore the dress I saw in my experience.*

M. The photo of me in a white dress led you home?

Q. Yes!

M. There are still many people who have had experiences! What we are talking about is Master's manifestation form that can talk to you physically. It's a special situation, and not the way you see in your meditation. What you see in your meditation is an inner vision. What we are talking about here is Master's manifestation form communicating with someone in the realm of the physical world, and this is different from what you see in meditation. In these cases, Master comes down from above to reach you. But when you see Master in your meditation, it means you have elevated to a higher dimension. If you see the Master with your eyes open, it means that Master has come down to communicate with you in this world. The Master you see here now is neither 'up' nor 'down.' It's called the level of the 'tea party.' [Master and audience laugh.]

Q. *I have two stories, but they are not about my own experience. The first is that of my wife's nephew. When my mother-in-law was a new initiate, one day she took her grandson to the Taipei Youth Park. There, the child said that he wanted to go to the washroom, so my mother-in-law strolled about while he was inside. After emerging from the washroom, the child couldn't find his grandmother, so he became frightened. At that moment, he knew that he shouldn't cry for he was afraid he might be taken away by bad people because if he cried, others would know that he was lost.*

M. How old was the child?

Q. *About four or five. During the time when the boy was very afraid, Master came up and talked to him, saying, 'Follow me, and don't cry!' He followed close behind Master and found his grandmother after they had gone by two places. Then he told his grandmother, 'I saw Master just now. She led me to you.' This was the first time I had heard of Master's manifestation appearing near our home. Before that I had only experienced being tested and awakened by Master in my dreams. [Master and audience laugh.]*

The other story I have is about a Hsinchu sister initiate's experience. One day before she was initiated, she went shopping for food at a market, where a small nun gave her a sample booklet, and told her to go to a lecture. When she looked at the booklet, she thought, 'Gee, isn't this person in the photo the nun who gave me the booklet?' [Laughter] But she couldn't find Master when she turned around. Master had not only appeared before her, but also spoken to her. Of course, she was later initiated.

M. Your work is not perfect enough! You see, I have to hand out the sample booklets myself! [Laughter] Lazy workers! You missed one of my disciples and I had to look for her myself! You see, it's better for me to rely on myself! [Master and audience laugh.]

Q. *My daughter has had frequent communications with Master since she was little. But I try not to ask her about them because we shouldn't ask about others' experiences. Once she acted in a very strange way. When I was chatting with an initiate, she kept bowing here and there. I found it very weird so I asked her, 'What are you doing?' And she said, 'Master has come!' I replied, 'If Master comes, bow to Her only!' My daughter then said, 'But She keeps moving!' [Laughter] And I responded, 'Tell me where Master is so I won't bump into Her!' [Laughter]*

When my daughter was two or three years old, I took her to the suspension bridge over Taipei Bitan (the largest lake in Taipei). I put her on the bridge and told her, 'Sit here. I have to buy something. If any bad people want to take you away, shout for me.' She answered, 'I'll call Master, not you!' [Master and audience laugh.] The other day, my daughter and I went out with some initiates. I saw a big rock, and told my daughter and another little initiate to stand on it so I could take a photograph of them. To get a better picture, I asked them to move back a little. After taking the picture, I came up to my daughter and found that right behind the rock was the ocean. The children had been standing on the edge of the rock and had almost fallen into the sea! I asked my daughter, 'Why didn't you tell me?' And she replied, 'Master is here. I'm not afraid!' Around that time, she had often talked about Master coming, and this time I didn't expect that Master had really come. After the photo was developed, we could see that my daughter's arm appeared to be transparent, and the sea behind her could be seen through her arm. The owner of the photo studio was very surprised and asked, 'What happened?'

M. Maybe something was wrong with your film. [Laughter]

Q. *Seven or eight years ago, I drove to Yangming Mountain one day and gave a woman hitchhiker a ride. I gave her a copy of Master's sample booklet because she seemed to be a Buddhist. When she saw the booklet, she said: 'Gee, I seem to have seen this Master before!' Finally, she revealed that several times while she and her husband were riding a motorbike on the way to the Yangming Center, they had seen a nun jogging along the road. The woman said she felt strange because the nun jogged even on rainy days, and seemed to be insulated from the rain even though she didn't wear a raincoat.*

As I was giving the woman a ride home to Wanli, my car went by the Yangming Center and she pointed to a certain place and said, 'The nun I saw disappeared here, but I don't see any temple!' The place she pointed to was the location of the Center, where Master had previously stayed. But Master was abroad and not in Formosa at the time the woman saw Her. The woman then said, 'When it's sunny, she jogs; when it's rainy, she still jogs.' [Master and audience laugh.] Both she and her husband had seen it. Then I gave her some issues of Master's news magazines and a sample booklet, and asked which form of Master she had seen. She said it was the one on the old version of Master's sample booklet, in which Master was dressed as a nun. Thank You, Master! [Applause]

M. Why are you thanking me? I just jogged. [Master and audience laugh.] People thank me just because I do exercises. Can you believe it? [Master and audience laugh.] I was just bored on Yangming Mountain, because they boxed me in there, so I had to jog a little to get some fresh air! When talking about your experiences, you can never finish! [Laughter]

THE POWER OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH ⁵⁰

Use only positive language

We should always speak positively! Since making negative comments takes up the same amount of time and effort, with little difference, then why not use positive language? Refrain from speaking false words out of false courtesy, which only makes the listener feel

50. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 30, 2001 (Originally in Chinese).

agitated because they aren't true. We practice the way of the Truth, and we don't like hearing words that are empty and false, do we? [Audience: No, we don't.] For example, 'Master, it's been different for You.' 'Master, You haven't eaten?' or 'Master, this and that...' [Laughter] It sounds so dull, without genuine sincerity. You should not make such false remarks, wasting your time and energy and making people irritated. Also, it creates a negative atmosphere around us.

When you hear someone say, 'Oh! I'm so happy today,' and then hear another person say, 'I feel so bored today,' which of them sounds more comfortable? [Audience: The happy one.] Yes! Sometimes, you do not feel irritated yourself, but when someone just speaks to you, you feel irritated. For example, you sit down to enjoy a cup of tea, and someone comes along and says, 'Oh! My son has just gotten married!' 'My daughter-in-law has given birth to a plump, lovely baby!' 'My business is doing well!' 'I'm healthy and sound!' 'Oh! I have great hopes for the future. Although the situation isn't so good now, it will improve later.' Do you prefer listening to these delightful words, or do you prefer frustrating comments, such as 'How come my grandson is so fat?' 'Sigh! Why did they get married?' 'Oh! That son-in-law of mine is really troublesome! I told my daughter not to marry him, but she wouldn't listen. He is definitely not a good guy. Very soon the two of them will get divorced for sure!' [Laughter] For example, if people said that, would you like it? [Audience: No!] Even if what they said were true, you wouldn't like to hear it, would you? [Audience: No.] We love to hear things that are happy and positive.

There are plenty of good things in this world for us to enjoy. For example, the flowers are beautiful, the sky is serene and the moon is enchanting, so why should we look at those silly corners? Besides, I was not the one who said that it had been different for me. How did she know that it had been different for me? I went out happily to see the fellow practitioners and to touch you like this. All of us were very happy, but then we heard 'It's different for You, Master! It's different for You, Master!' Oh, God! Then I felt it was really different for me, and really didn't want to do it anymore! [Laughter]

With our speech and thoughts, we can help people but also curse people. We can elevate people and make them very happy, but we can also put them down and make them feel uncomfortable. Unless you're a teacher or master, who must edify people and rectify the mistakes of the students, you'd better refrain from saying anything negative. Of course, you may say it when it is necessary. For instance, if your child behaves very badly, you might say 'You're not behaving well today!' In this way, at least you've put in a positive word 'well.' Or you might say 'You are not a good child today!' Although the word 'not,' is there, the word 'good' is also there. [Laughter] Refrain from saying 'You are really bad today!' When children hear positive words such as 'behave well' or 'good,' they try their best to improve. In educating people, you should also speak in this way as much as possible. For instance, about someone who is overweight, we should not say that he is fat. Instead, we can say, 'He is not that slim.' [Master and audience laugh.] Between friends, saying more beautiful words will make your friendship more lasting. Regarding the Master, you should just leave Her alone. She was born to rectify people's faults. She is stern when She should be stern, and She is gentle when She should be gentle. She has to do that; She has no other choice! Such is the power of creation. For example, it takes a torrential downpour to bring lots of rain. If it only drizzles every day, we won't have enough water to use. However, a heavy rainfall can also cause inconveniences. Roads can be destroyed and the traffic disrupted; we might get wet when going outdoors, or some agricultural produce might be washed away by the rain. This is unavoidable for such is the situation in this world. We won't have these problems in heaven.

Our speech is also very powerful. Even ordinary people who are not spiritual practitioners

have power in their speech. That's why some people's words come true when they curse others. Or when someone wholeheartedly wishes you well though he isn't a spiritual practitioner, you will still benefit due to his sincerity. 'Everything is created by the mind.' When a person is sincere, he becomes really pure. It doesn't even matter if his usual behavior isn't good. The moment he's sincere, his heart really becomes pure. If he wishes you well at that moment, the result will be very good. But if he's full of hatred at the moment he curses you, it will also generate a great influence. Curses by spiritual practitioners are even more powerful; whatever they say will come true. Therefore, you must be cautious in your speech.

Science has demonstrated the immense power of thought

In Japan, scientists have conducted experiments with water. First they froze a cup of water, then observed the changes and took photographs. They found crystallized forms resembling snowflakes. If the water had been unclean, however, the crystalline pattern in the photo would not have looked like snowflakes, but would have appeared very blurred without a definite shape. A cup of dirty, polluted water, after being sanctified by prayer before it was frozen, was later observed and photographed. The resulting crystals were also as clear and beautiful as snowflakes.

They conducted many other similar tests. For instance, they said 'Thank you' to a cup of water, or pasted a piece of paper with the words 'Thank you' written on it, and then the crystalline forms became very beautiful. If they wrote the names of bad people like Hitler on it, the crystals, when photographed, looked like ghosts or even formed a ghostly face! It was very horrible and filthy. If the names of saints were written on it, the crystals took on a different pattern. Depending on the greatness of the saint, the photographs would also show different images. Perhaps it was also related to the sincerity of the person conducting the experiment. Therefore, even without spoken words, just a written word or a focusing of our thoughts can create an impact. During the experiment, if they said, 'You are very bad! I'll kill you,' the crystals looked very horrible in their photographs! Thus we cannot say that the speech and wishes of non-spiritual practitioners don't have power. They do!

Before embarking on the spiritual path, I traveled a lot visiting enlightened masters. When I got home, I shared my experiences with my former husband and he said, 'Those people may not be really great. You can also become an enlightened Master!' I responded, 'You must be joking! Who am I? Don't you know that these people are great masters?' So, he said, 'You definitely can become an enlightened Master!' and I replied, 'Oh! Thank you!' At that time, I didn't give any thought to being a Master, but he was very sincere when he said that. He added, 'I think You can also become an enlightened Master, even better than any of them!' [Laughter] He had faith in me. He made this observation as we lived together every day. He didn't understand those enlightened Masters, but he understood me. We were married for two years, but most of the time I slept in another room and chanted scriptures every day. [Master and audience laugh.] At that time, I didn't know any other method; I only knew about chanting the scriptures. I chanted the Lotus sutra in the morning and other scriptures in the evening. Each day I chanted different scriptures. Sometimes, my body had a levitating sensation so I felt that I was getting some kind of response.

So, sometimes when we're working on something and there are people supporting us or wishing us success, we will really do it very smoothly. However, if a group, a couple or several people are working together on something, but one of them opposes it, the process won't feel the same. It will seem as though it's being pulled back or dragged down

by something, and the job can't be accomplished even after a long time. This kind of obstructive atmosphere can really affect our work because all beings are one. If everyone has the same ideal, everything will go smoothly because everyone is cooperating well. No one is opposing it; each person has the same target, each one contributes to the best of his ability, and everyone marches in the same direction. Therefore, anything we do can be done smoothly.

Our thoughts and speech are truly very powerful so we must be very cautious when we speak! I'm also very cautious now. When we speak, the more careful we are the better. We really have to take care of our actions, speech and thoughts. Now that we have scientific evidence, we feel that it's even more frightful. Previously, you just listened to me talking about it and never realized that it could be so serious. So, speaking is not the end of it; it's also recorded in the universe and will affect the atmosphere around us. Just by pasting a couple of words on a cup of water, leaving it there overnight and then freezing it, the photographs come out differently.

Thus since ancient times, people have invited spiritual practitioners to dispel ghosts, bring blessings and join in the celebration when they move into a new house. On New Year's day, we Aulacese select a very good person to enter the house. That is to say, the first one entering the house must be a virtuous person instead of just casually letting anyone in. At that time they place a broom by the door, meaning that evil people aren't allowed into their homes.

Q. *Master, You just said that whatever we say comes true. I've had several such experiences. I'm afraid that when I say something that's not good, it will also come true. So, since childhood I've always spoken very carefully, and even if I'm very angry, I dare not curse people. Take one incident for example. There are many mango trees at the Hsihu Center, and once there was lots of fruit on them. I wanted to eat a piece very much, but was afraid that the resident practitioners would scold me if I climbed up to pick one. Sitting on a slope, I said to the mango tree, 'If you let a mango fall and roll all the way near my hand, then I can pick it up and eat it. In that case, I think the resident practitioners won't scold me.' [Laughter] Eventually, a mango actually did fall and roll over by my side.*

M. That was very positive thinking! [Master and audience laugh.]

Q. *Another time, I took a stroll in the mountains with my daughter, and there we saw many red persimmons. Both my daughter and I wanted to eat some of them so I said to the persimmon tree, 'This belongs to God anyway!' [Laughter] Then a piece of fruit actually fell! Sometimes, fruit falling from a tree has worms inside, but the one that fell then didn't have worms in it and was very fresh. When I'm with my kids, I feel as though I'm with God. Then I picked up the persimmon and ate it; it was very fragrant and sweet. So, since childhood, I've never dared speak recklessly. Even when I'm very angry, I dare not say things that aren't good; because I fear that it might come true, and then I'll be in serious trouble.*

M. If you say it wholeheartedly, it will really come true! But if you don't give it much thought when you say it, then that's okay. If you really say it with your heart, of course, it carries greater power. Thus, it's better if we say only positive things. I know you're very benign, and have no reason to curse anyone. If you can wish others well, then that will be best. If you can't, then hold your tongue. It's not because we're afraid of death or disaster, but that we don't want to pollute the atmosphere around us. We have to live in it, too! The atmosphere is just like the air, intangible and invisible. If we

poison the air, we poison ourselves, too. If the air is clean, we also feel very comfortable.

We Aulacese have a saying: 'If your house is clean, you feel cool. If your dining utensils are washed clean, your meals taste better.' Why? It's because we're happy and feel homey. Sometimes, when you eat in restaurants, you may notice that their dishes aren't clean or that they're greasy, and then you don't feel like eating. No matter how hungry you are at the time, very soon you have no appetite left. Is that right? [Audience: Yes.] Or, when we go to a certain place, no matter how nice the house is, if it's filthy and dark inside, we won't want to touch it. Our mood changes and we feel obstructed. When we're irritated at heart, obstacles come. The negative power naturally converges there.

WARMING YOUR BODY FROM THE EARS ⁵¹

Buy a hat to cover your ears because the ears are very important. If your ears are warm, the whole body is better. Sometimes I have headaches because my ears are cold. If you have long hair, it's better. If it's too cold, bring two sleeping bags: One to sleep in, and one to cover outside. Because the sleeping bag is very insulated, and insulation is good; buy a good one. Or sometimes a simple one also helps, because the cover of the sleeping bag is meant for insulation. So, if it's very hot, you can put the sleeping bag on top of your tent and open the window. Just leave the screen door open. When you sleep inside, at midday it's still very cool. And if it's very cold, you can spread the sleeping bag over the top of your tent to make it more insulated. It's much better. And cover your ears with that loving hat, and cover with a blanket. You can also cover your head like this [Master pulls a sleeping bag over Her head.], and then sleep inside a sleeping bag. This makes a big, big difference.

And wrap another blanket like this, inside your sleeping bag, on top of your body. That also makes a big difference. I just cover with this a little bit and I feel complete, immediate relief for the ears, and it feels very warm. It really makes a big difference that you cover your ears. The women can put their hair down and still cover their ears; the men can cover with a hat. Because this is where you feel a headache. And sometimes the cold wind goes through your ears. Your ears are very sensitive inside. And they have a lot of nerves connected with the whole body and the head. So, if your ears get too cold, it gives you a headache. And you have a cold and flu and everything like that. So, it is better to keep your ears warm.

THE MIRACLE OF BLESSING POWER ⁵²

Q. *There is physical evidence today that when you bless something, you change its molecular structure. I saw on the Internet that there is this Japanese scientist who took some water, like polluted water, for example, from a river in Japan. And then he froze it and magnified it five hundred times. And he took a picture of it. The water that was very polluted had no shape; it looked like mud, just a big mud thing.*

And then he went to a temple and asked one of the priests to bless the water, the same exact water, from the same sample. Afterwards, he froze the water, took a picture, and the muddy look of it became a beautiful crystalline structure. It's like a snowflake. And then he decided to continue the experiment. He took another water

51. Christmas international four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 28, 2001 (Originally in English).

52. Christmas international four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 26, 2001 (Originally in English).

sample and put 'Thank you' on the container of water; he taped the words on it. And then he took a picture of that water and it had a different structure, he got a different picture, like the water had a language.

And then he took the water, and he said, 'Let's apply some music to the water.' So, he put the water near hard rock, heavy metal rock, really noisy music. And that water was all distorted, and it looked like it had faces in it. Then he took the water and he said, let's say, 'Mahatma Gandhi,' or 'Mother Teresa' near it. And every single thought or every single word produced a different image. The water changed every single time, even the polluted water. So, it's really amazing when we think about Master's blessing food, and even ourselves, that we do even change the structure of the food or the water. And there's physical evidence of this.

- M. You know, I'm very shy. When you ask too much about what kind of power I have, I have a hard time explaining it. So, I probably just tell you that they like the food or they like the cakes or something like that. But you have to find out for yourself. I'm not a very good advertising agent. I rarely talk about things like that.

If I say something, I say, 'the Master,' or 'the Master power.' It's not me that I'm talking about. The Master or the Master power, that is impersonalized. But just for the physical evidence, any priest or anyone with good intentions can bless something and make it better than nothing. When someone with spiritual power blesses water, it has Light. And you can see it. When you put two different waters here, one that's blessed and one that's not blessed, the one that's blessed will sparkle with Light.

Kids, they will go to it, or dogs will go to it. You don't have to tell them which one is the blessed water. They will go and take it instead of the other one, because they can see the Light. Not all kids can see; younger kids can see, and many dogs, they can see. They can see the spiritual auras of people. That's why some dogs bark at some people, but they don't bark at anyone else.

So, there is such a thing as spiritual power or different energy from different people. Sometimes you go out to eat in some restaurant or somewhere, and even though it looks clean, you still feel dirty. That is the energy; there's some blessing power that's missing. So, a lot of people bring food to the temple or to the church to ask the priest or the commissioner, the nun or the monk, to bless them. This does have some effect, even though these monks and nuns, maybe they are not really practicing Quan Yin or anything. But they are sincere, they're pure and they have some blessing power. So, it does work, to some extent, but not as well as with an enlightened person, of course. But it's better than nothing, like the Japanese scientist showed. And when you say to someone, 'Oh, bless your heart!' or, 'May God bless you,' it really has an effect. So, do say these things. Do wish people well.

TO MAINTAIN SPIRITUAL PURITY, CHECK THE VEGETARIAN INGREDIENTS⁵³

There is no such thing as, 'I sit every day and get nothing,' or, 'I keep the vegetarian diet and still have a problem.' No, there is no such thing. If we have a problem, we should check the diet. Sometimes even my attendants make mistakes. For example, they see pickles; pickles are vegetarian. So, they just buy them to bring home. And I almost ate them! But when I read again, there's some fish sauce in it. The Asian people, like the

53. International four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 26, 2001 (Originally in English).

Aulacese and the Thai, put fish sauce in vegetable pickles to make them taste good, according to their tradition.

So, you have to always be careful. Sometimes the cookie looks harmless, but there are a thousand things in it. By the time I get through the list, I don't want to look at other cookies anymore. The ingredient list is so long! Sometimes they print such small words, and it's still so long. I hope we don't have to read such a long list about bean sprouts or tomatoes! [Master laughs.] Now we have genetically modified food. Maybe we will have to read a long list after a while, if they continue that way. When they pack a fresh tomato, you'll have to read carefully: 'Ingredients – Eggs, chicken, beef, milk, soya, glutamate, maggi.' Everything's ready in one tomato! So, if you eat one tomato, you won't have to eat anything else. That's the economical idea about it. [Master jokes.]

But my goodness, you have to read so long before you find out whether you can eat that harmless cookie or not! Sometimes the whole thing is all vegetarian: 'Vegetables, soy beans,' but then: 'Eggs'! [Master and audience laugh.] Sometimes, I read the whole thing and don't see anything that says eggs. But when I read carefully again, there's 'egg whites.' It's just that sometimes they break the word, because the column is small, so instead of 'egg,' they put 'e' and then 'g-g whites,' and it's at the bottom of everything. So, if you are not careful, you might eat something that says 'no eggs,' or you don't see any egg in there, but it says 'g-g whites.'

Mostly they put in egg whites. I have that experience already, so now I look for the 'whites.' I read quickly, but I pay attention not only to the 'egg' but to the 'whites.' And I have better experience now, so I look for two words instead, or many words, like 'dried beef' and so on. Mostly in cookies, we're limited to the egg and the white. But then I'm surprised by 'e-g-g yolk.' [Master and audience laugh.]

Read before eating

I'm sorry; I want to laugh, but I'm crying. What we all do in this world just to eat a cookie! We became vegetarian just to simplify our life: Simple living, high thinking. We should think 'high reading,' or a high column of ingredients! My goodness, where do they find all these ingredients to put in a small, poor little cookie? In my mother's time, there was nothing as complicated as that. If we ate a cookie, we ate a cookie. Now before you even eat it, make sure you stay alive until you finish the end of your reading! Sometimes you are so hungry, but you have to keep reading and reading, you might faint in the supermarket. So, I don't often go shopping, but if for some reason I have to go and I see cookies or cakes with no eggs – because the residents love cookies – I buy the whole 'mountain.' I take the whole shelf. The sales woman or the cashier always says, 'You're gonna eat all that? Oh, man! You're going to get fat!' [Master and audience laugh.]

I know we talk nonsense so much. But one good thing about being vegetarian: At least we save a lot of money if we're too lazy in reading. [Laughter] It helps. One minute, more or less, makes a big difference. If the ingredients were not so complicated, you would buy much more and quicker. But you don't have time, so you just buy maybe one or two items, and then it's time to go. So, at least you don't buy too much, and at least we can laugh about it. How can any meat-eater laugh like this? They don't have to read so much! So, only you can understand me. We have the same problem. [Laughter] And if I go to another state or go to another country, the problem begins all over again! Because I'm in a new place, I see new things, and we begin the hunt again, for the 'e-g-g white.' [Master and audience laugh.]

Better not eat than to eat something wrong

Many cakes and cookies are already better. But some don't list any ingredients. And sometimes my helper just presumes that it's okay; because the last time he bought an apple pie there was no egg, and this is an apple pie, so it must be the same. But it's a different brand name. I don't know why they put egg in the apple pie; the recipe doesn't need any egg. So, you have to be very careful, and rather not eat than to eat something wrong. You will know right away. If you eat something wrong, you feel your stomach is upset or you have a headache, or your meditation that day is very lousy. You feel empty; you don't feel relaxed. You feel the body is even a little different; it feels rigid and uncomfortable, not loose, easy and smooth. You feel that your feeling is not as sharp and not as deep. Something is wrong; it's just that you don't know what. That is 'what.' That's the 'e-g' or maybe the 'y-o-l-k.'

These are the things. Because it's not only just the meat, the toxins, the egg or the poison in it, it's the feeling of the animal that produces these things: The way they kill them, or the way the chicken has been raised in such a small confinement to force it to lay eggs. It just eats and lays eggs, eats and lays eggs. So, there's nothing there for you. It's all negative bad feeling, sadness, sorrow, emptiness and meaningless. So, when you eat these things, you suddenly also feel so meaningless. Your body suddenly is not a fruitful body; it feels so dry or so hard or rigid. That is definitely the food. The body is very easy to tell. There's no need to sit in meditation to feel anything.

THE BEST MASTER IN THE WORLD IS RIGHT HERE ⁵⁴

Wow, there's nothing better that I can think of than your life, your lot in life. Don't have too many illusions about the Himalayas or enlightenment or a Master anywhere else; you have one right here, and I promise you it's the best. The one right here is good; it's the best; you've found the right one; stick to Her, and you'll get anything you want. Then you'll find out that you don't want much, and that's the best thing – that's the best thing to want.

You know because I know this is a secret between us, but I'm too shy. Before I was born, I knew that a lot of people would have difficulties in finding a Master anywhere because their luck was not that good; their luck was not that easy. So, I guess I volunteered to bring it to you. I'm very shy about these things, really. It's very difficult for me to say things about myself because it's the Master self; it's not the physical person that I'm referring to. I'm always worried that you'll think I'm trying to glorify this one, this body of mine. It's a good vehicle, but it's not the one that I refer to – it's difficult to understand that, and it's easy to get mixed up and misunderstand me. Although inside this physical body right now is the Master, the physical alone is nothing; see what I mean? The personal citizen, the physical body is nobody. So, it's not that person that we're glorifying, but still I'm very shy. On one hand there's understanding, and on the other hand there isn't; the worldly way of putting it is very difficult and I'm always shy.

Because people tend to worship the person that houses the Master power, too. So, if you're not careful they'll become attached to it. So, you understand, it's very easy; just remember, the Master power can be born anywhere, at anytime, in any age. There's no need to have a fixed conception about where the Master should be born, and under which lineage, or how long or where or why She got it.

54. International four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 26, 2001 (Originally in English).

The Master doesn't need to get anything; it's just the way of the world – let the law be done. That's all. Jesus wasn't a disciple of John the Baptist, but He just let him baptize Him and still called him Master, and that's okay. But, if people get attached to John the Baptist, they're making a big, huge, giant mistake.

THE SENTIENT WORLD OF ANIMALS ⁵⁵

After we'd been camping on the river for so long, we got one rented room. But it was full of those black and white snakes. They were all over my room and would come and sing to me and so on. Sometimes my staff were not careful and even injured them, and the snakes came complaining to me. So, I told the staff not to use the brush to get them out, because that might hurt their eyes or something. They thought I was so compassionate in thinking of these animals, but I just knew. The staff thought that if they didn't kill them, it was good enough; it was already compassionate. But you have to just use a bag and put it nearby so they crawl inside, then put them out in the bush together.

So, the snakes kept coming in, but they never bit us. They are poisonous banded kraits, with the patches of black and white. They had a whole family there: Big and small, they all came singing with open mouths. They couldn't sing aloud, but they sang loud inside. I could hear. [Master gestures to Her wisdom eye.] They opened their mouths next to my sitting cushion and talked and sang, and danced. Especially the babies, they loved to hang around me. So, I had to tell the staff to be extra careful where they were walking because they could walk on them. It just so happened that in our rented place at that time, the floor was a kind of marble that was also black and white and looked very much like the snakes. So, they both blended together perfectly. I guess that's why they loved to go there: They felt safe, like it was one big banded krait, as big as the whole house.

So, they ran all over there, singing and laughing. They were so funny! And once one of the residents was not careful; she slept on top of them. But they didn't bite her, either. Poor things, they didn't dare. So, the next time I said, 'If you're not careful, I'll make you stand forever, not lying down, and not sitting!' She was a little fat and newly joined as a resident. She would just sleep and sleep, right on top of the snakes. Poor snakes! They didn't dare to break any precept, but the resident did. She didn't do it intentionally, but still, the snake also died unintentionally. Poor thing! So, we had to apologize and walk carefully and all that.

Q. *In a convent where I lived, we had five acres of fenced land, and the cows would help eat the grass and so on. Whenever I climbed over the fence, they would chase me and I was so scared. But one day I just decided not to be scared anymore. And one cow that became a friend, she came to me one morning and told me that the family that had raised her was going to slaughter her for meat.*

M. Can you believe that? They even know in advance, and yet people think they don't know anything and eat all that meat, poor thing.

Q. *When they butchered her, her whole body was contaminated with something so that the family couldn't eat it. She didn't want to be eaten. So, they had to bring everything back and then bury the remains in the ground, and not one part of her was eaten.*

M. Why didn't she want to be eaten?

55. International four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 25, 2001 (Originally in English).

- Q. *She didn't want to be eaten by human beings; that's all. I can't explain it.*
- M. None of them are really willing to be eaten that way. They don't mind giving you milk, and when they die you can use their carcass in whatever way, but they don't like to be forced, butchered and eaten like that. You ask any of them, and they'll say, 'No.' It's not the natural way that they should be born to be doing that. Of course, if you're hungry, if you have nothing else and you ask their permission, they would lay down their lives for you. All of them would do that. But if you eat just for gluttony, that's very bad. Even plants also complain if you just eat for the sake of it.

So, respect all life when you eat; pray and offer to God. That's the right thing to do. And thank them. Thank God for making them, and thank them for sacrificing their life for you. But, plants are the least harmed. It's because they're not moving too much, and mostly they're not as conscious. They are still evolving. But still, if you eat them with disrespect, they grumble.

So, it's a good idea that you come and talk like this; then people will be more aware of the animal's feelings. They are great beings; you can learn a lot from them. For example, if you ask a Maltese, he will tell you that love is the best thing. The Maltese is very loving. They call it the 'million kisses dog.' He always loves you and kisses you all over, all the time. They used to be very beloved in Europe, coming from Malta Island, which belongs to Spain. That's why they're called Maltese.

They will tell you that love is the best thing, and that fear is the next best thing. When you're fearful, you try to learn things and you have more knowledge. But, when you have love, you just know. You don't need to learn. If you have love, you just know, and everything is easy. So, the Maltese has said that if you have fear, you learn, and if you have love, you know. It's very good. So, I feel sorry for a lot of people who are just munching, eating and harassing or mutilating these great beings.

- Q. *The first time I realized that I could talk to animals, at least to ants, I was just initiated. I was living in an apartment and there were a whole bunch of ants that were visiting in my kitchen. So, I reported it immediately to my manager, who said, 'Okay, I'll take care of it.' But in the meantime, something came to me and I thought, 'I think I should just figure out if I can talk to these ants, so that they won't need to be eradicated with poison.'*

So, I started talking to them psychically and said, 'It's time for you now to go back; thank you for visiting, but you can go back the same way you came through.' And that was it. Two hours later, I turned around and looked into the kitchen, and only about half of them were left. And about six hours later, they were gone.

So, the next day, when the manager knocked on the door with this big, huge spray gun, he said, 'Okay, I'm ready to get rid of your ants,' I said, 'That's okay, I've already taken care of them.' He said, 'What did you do?' I said, 'I talked to them.' He said, 'You vegetarian!' He had found out that I was vegetarian a few days before that. [Master: So, he knew that.]

The last story I have was with my mom. One afternoon she had those flying ants in the family room. So, I saw her coming with this big fly swatter and spray gun, and I said, 'Wait, mom! Let me take care of them.' She said, 'What are you going to do?' I kind of didn't want to tell her.

M. Yes, it's difficult.

Q. *I told her, 'I'll talk to them.' She looked at me very funny, and she went upstairs. So, I talked to the ants in the same way. I said, 'Please go back to your home, and thanks for coming. You've already spent enough time with us; bye bye.'*

After I did this, I went to bed. When I came back downstairs at midnight, they were all gone. I didn't know what happened to them. I was worried, because my mom might have gotten rid of them. So, the next morning, I asked her, 'What did you do with the ants, mom?' She said, 'I don't know. I didn't do anything to them.' I said, 'Oh, my God! They did listen to me.'

M. That's good.

Q. *So, from then on I knew that I could talk to them.*

M. You can talk all right, but the thing is whether they answer back. You see what I mean? It's whether you can hear them; because we all can talk to them, but we cannot hear them. That's a special gift.

Q. *I was able to hear a parrot that was visiting the vegetarian restaurant in San Jose. [Master: Oh?] We have one that visits there every day. And everyone stops to see this parrot, because he's beautiful and he talks a lot. He says all kinds of words. One day when no one was paying attention and everyone was so noisy, he started screaming like he was talking to someone, but no one paid attention. So, I started talking to him from a distance. We were talking back and forth. I didn't realize that I was understanding what he was saying because his voice was inaudible to other people, but I could hear the words exactly.*

M. In English?

Q. *In English.*

M. Oh, not inside, but outside.

Q. *Outside too, at the same time.*

M. [Master is talking to another initiate.] So, you talked to your dog? What did he say to you?

Q. *Mostly he can read my mind exactly. Also, I can receive his messages, too. He's thirteen years old. One day I talked to my husband and said, 'He is too old. Maybe I don't want him anymore; maybe we'll give him to someone else.' After that, he said inside, 'Please, please don't give me away.' He would always speak like that to my mind, always saying, 'Please, please, please.' So, one day I said, 'Okay, okay, I will take care for your whole life.' After that he was so happy.*

He also takes care of me. One time, when my leg was broken, he just stayed sitting by my bedroom, watching me all day. Yes, this dog is very, very smart. [Master: Yes, yes.] He's very sensitive, with eyes just like human eyes.

M. You take care of him, okay! Don't give him away.

Q. *Yes, I will keep him.*

M. You promised already. Dogs like to be with their owner all the time until they die, but many dogs don't have that chance. They say that every four seconds, one dog is killed in America, put to death because of being unwanted by the ex-owner. Every four seconds, one dog dies in America alone. It's terrible!

This is not talking about disaster or accidents. They've been put to death in the shelter. Every four seconds, as I'm talking to you now, hundreds of them already die a very miserable death.

So, if you have to put your dog to sleep for any reason, because he is sick, for example, or too old, you talk to him. Tell him what's going on. Tell him the doctor thinks it's better for him. Tell him it's time to go. Hold him; hug him. Be with him all the way through. Don't just throw him in the clinic and let them do it. He understands that he has to go, but he needs love to go. He doesn't mind going, but he needs you to love him and tell him that you still love him; it's just that he has to go. And then bury him, be nice to him.

Q. *Even though he doesn't like to take showers, right now because he's been sick, I give him showers, and he just listens. He lets me give him showers all the time, and he understands.*

M. Yes, if you explain.

Q. *Yes, just like my kids, he understands. He's very smart, the dog.*

M. All dogs are smart, believe me. When you love them, there is a response, always. Sometimes you can talk to the animals. You cannot always tell them what to do, of course. But at least he knows that you care. Even if you cannot communicate psychically, even if you cannot hear his response, you try your best and talk to him in English. And while you are talking, he understands, because you form a picture in your mind of what you are talking about. There is a relationship between what you're saying and what you're thinking inside, you see.

For example, if I want to ask a brother to 'Please bring me a cup of water,' then in my mind there is a cup of water, and that's what he understands. It's just that if we don't have the gift, we cannot understand back what he says to us, at least not so obviously. We could have the feeling and the intuition. But that's a different thing than the sister here; she really can talk to animals if she wants.

THE PURE LOVE OF ANIMALS ⁵⁶

We're supposed to be more intelligent than dogs or other beings, but we still do silly things because our minds distract us. How many times do you have the feeling that something is right, you have an intuition about it and you're going to do it, but then you look at the outside circumstances and your brain tells you, 'No, no. That's not the right thing to do,' and you forego it. And later on you regret it because it's exactly the thing you should have done!

56. International four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 23, 2001 (Originally in English).

If you hadn't looked at the outer appearances or circumstances, you would have done the right thing. Similarly, all beings do what they do because they also have brains, and most animals have younger brains than we do. For example, dogs have the brain or IQ of a ten-year-old; that's what we've been told, but sometimes it surprises me. Yet maybe they should have such a low or young IQ so that they can love unconditionally and innocently like kids.

We grown up people calculate too much and say, 'If I say I love you, what do I get from it?' Or, 'If I treat you nicely, what's the good for me? What's in it for me?' But kids don't calculate so much – very little! Maybe for toys or affection, but not much else, not like a business.

So, maybe that's why animals are so unconditional, so loving and so forgiving. You can scold a dog very badly or spank his bottom and he yelps, but then he comes and loves you the next minute, right away. The minute you call, he comes and forgets all about what you did before. Whether you're right or wrong, he doesn't mind. Whether you have a loud mouth or terrible garlic breath, he'll still kiss you. He doesn't mind if you don't change your underwear for a week! He doesn't mind. That's why people love animals because they're so unconditional. They don't judge you, ever. Whatever you are, you're the person they love, the only one.

LEADING A LIFE IN GOD'S WAY AND EVERYTHING SHALL BE ADDED ONTO YOU ⁵⁷

As practitioners, we don't just sit there. We have all kinds of things to do. We have theories to study, we have precepts to keep, and we have meditation to practice. We have the Master to see, and that's a bonus. But we also have to put what we learn into action, to exercise our wisdom and power of spiritual achievement, and the compassion we develop along with our spiritual improvement.

So, we do many things; we don't just sit there. We do sit there, contemplate the most high and connect with the power within ourselves, which is the highest of all beings. But then we also keep our moral standards high, being a good person, a good boy and a good girl. And then, from the spiritual power inside, we also develop love, compassion and wisdom so that we live a more comfortable life and a simple way of living. And from simple living, we don't have to work as hard as before, but we earn even more because one penny saved is one penny earned.

Now you live more simply and have more money than before, even though you work the same job. Or maybe you work a less busy job because you can organize your life; you can be contented with whatever life gives you, without wanting more and more things that cost you more trouble, more headaches and more money. More money means more work; more work means more health consumed, more time consumed, more energy wasted. Instead of having time to meditate and to direct our energy to good causes, we have to waste it on earning money and paying more taxes because we earn more or have to take care more, paying more to the accountant because we have too much work.

So now that we have a simpler life, we have more time, and more time means more meditation, more wisdom. More time also means more charitable actions and more happiness for everyone around us and for ourselves. More time also means less work,

57. International four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 23, 2001 (Originally in English).

more health and more time for family members, more happiness within our marriage and family.

So much good comes out of this spiritual practice. If the whole world's people knew, they would forsake everything to do meditation and follow our way of life, because this is really the only way of life that we should follow. It's not that we forsake every other way of life, but by following this way of life, we improve in every other way of life, and we enhance all kinds of other ways of life that we didn't have time for before.

Therefore, when you work less, you have more health and that saves even more money. More money means you can go on retreat sometimes and recuperate in terms of your spiritual standard and your state of health. And then the money you save you can use to help other people. Before, you thought you didn't have enough money to even do charity work. But now, look! You do it everywhere. You help America, you help Argentina, you help Chile, you help Afghanistan, you help Africa.

You help everywhere, and with the same amount of money you earned before. Not only can you help, but you can have time for yourself so that you can even recover yourself for anything you lacked during the busy hours of working and serving the world. And more and more you become wiser, kinder, more affectionate, more loving, more tolerant and more understanding. So much more has become of you! You become richer and richer, both inside and out. And you also look even better. You stay young longer and have less illness, and even if you have an illness, you have a quick recovery.

Everything is so good just because it's a good way of life and the only way of life, the kingdom of God's way of life. Follow the kingdom of God, seek the kingdom of God, and everything will come into fulfillment.

This is the practice of the bible and the Buddhist doctrines. There is nothing else to do but to practice it. The Buddha emphasized compassion, wisdom and love. You have it all. Jesus emphasized the kingdom of God, of course: Love thy neighbor. The kingdom of God: Love thy enemy. The kingdom of God means you have wisdom. You achieve the kingdom of God; you contact the kingdom of God, meaning you're wise like God or God-like at least, or moving toward God, more and more toward God. You have it all. Whatever the bible names, demands, or emphasizes, you have. The more you practice this, the more you have it. And that's why you look so happy.

MASTERSHIP IS REVEALED THROUGH OUR ACTIONS ⁵⁸

I sometimes read reports that say people come to you because you look so happy and so kind. And whenever we go out to lecture and you volunteer to distribute flyers and so on, some people tell me, 'I came because they looked so kind and happy, and I wondered why. So, I came to have a look and see why they're so happy, and that's how I came to You.' You see? It's because you're so kind, so happy, so disciplined and so good that you can convince people to go back to the kingdom of God.

That's mastership. Mastership doesn't mean sitting here and having the Supreme Master title and talking about birds and dogs and so on. [Laughter] Mastership is people recognizing you as something extraordinary, having something above or something that they can learn. Then you're a teacher. If someone looks up to you as someone who can

58. International four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., December 23, 2001 (Originally in English).

teach them something that they don't have or that they don't know, then you're a teacher. You're the master of yourself.

And from then on, the whole universe knows who you are. And the more you do it, the more you realize yourself that you really are something: That you teach, not by words but by actions, by example, by just being yourself. Just your silly face is already good enough to attract people. [Master and audience laugh.] You don't even have to talk. I read some reports that said people kept going back and forth many times and didn't want to take the flyers. But even when you were far away, because you radiated this happiness and were so attractive, they couldn't resist. Finally, they had to come and take a flyer and then come to the lecture.

You see how incredibly powerful you are? And you don't even know it. But it's a good thing you don't know! [Applause] Many people distribute flyers outside but they don't look happy, so people don't want to take them. But you radiate this happiness from inside; even from far away, people can feel it and see it. So, it's a good thing that you don't know you're powerful, because like this you don't have any ego. Who needs it? We need the power but not the ego. So, you're cool. The more you do things, the more it reflects on you, and then you realize how powerful you are.

THE HOTEL CALLED LIFE ⁵⁹

The lady of solutions in a company of volunteers

Today we are here to introduce you to the Supreme Master Ching Hai. [Master and audience laugh.] It is an honor for me also because She is great. Whenever you are in trouble you just tell Her to fix it and She does, no matter what kind of trouble. She's a 'lady of solutions.' Ching Hai means the ocean of love, the Supreme Master is God. I am very honored also to work for Her. I am one of the managers of the company, and we have a lot of employees who're always willing to work free of charge anytime, with or without request. It's a very funny company. The employees request to work for free. I am popular here and maybe you are also popular; I don't know.

The boss always says, 'No, no, no... Maybe, maybe...' The real boss always says yes before we even do anything, but the manager is lazy, you know, been employed too long, too secure, too much salary, good everything, everything that's happened is good, working long, and then it's a very good position now, so now the manager is lazy just like many other managers. Oh, don't tell the manager of this convention center. He's different.

So anyway, let's get back to the Supreme Master Ching Hai. She is a good one; sometimes She's a 'He'; that person changes from a 'She' to 'He' all the time. Sometimes She looks like an old lady, old man with a long beard like that. And sometimes She looks like a young lady, a beautiful princess, beautiful king, beautiful queen, beautiful kid... all kinds of appearances She takes when She needs or He needs to help someone who is in trouble. The reason they are in trouble is because they do not know how to get into direct contact with that Supreme Master Herself. I am here to tell you how to get in touch with Her directly every day, with no need for AT&T, no need for the Internet.

[Master is distracted by the brother on the sofa who begins to leave the stage, and She turns to him, inviting him to stay, and says...] I am happy someone's accompanying me. I have been lonely in the hotel room since yesterday. I hate hotel rooms – so lonely, with

59. Lecture at Fresno Convention Center, California, U.S.A., June 23, 2001 (Originally in English).

long corridors, no one to talk to. Whenever you walk out it's just doors, doors, and rooms, rooms. One of the reasons I don't like traveling too much is that I hate hotel rooms. I just feel so lonely in there. The soul is not lonely, just the mind gets lonely, frustrated. And it smells sometimes. If you happen to get a non-smoking room it's better. Otherwise it's not good.

So, the good thing is that I have meditation. I just meditate there and go 'Zzzt' and go somewhere else, leave the hotel room alone. But we need to pay nevertheless. [Master laughs.] It's not that you go somewhere and the room is free. [Laughter] So, if we do this meditation, we can also be in two places, at least, at the same time. One is on the planet earth and the other is in planet heaven. You can do both things at the same time. And later, if you are more improved in your practice, you can be in many places all in one planet, and many planets in one universe, at the same time, but still in this planet; it will cost you a hotel room, if you stay in one. You can just leave your body there, and still you pay for the body. This body costs us a lot every day. Since the day we were born until I am grown this much, [Master indicates with her hands.] I mean, I haven't grown that much but still, until I am grown so much, so much money, effort, time and energy have been put into this body! Luckily, I am employed at a good company, doing a good job. So, I am not a waste of food. [Master laughs.]

We are all children of God

We are all here very humbly doing this human job. We are doing such a good human job that we happen to forget that we are not just human, we are very, very great beings. We encompass the whole cosmos. We can do absolutely anything we want at any time of the day. Regardless of who we are, what color our skin is, what job we have, how old we are and where we are, whether we are in prison, in a restricted country, or a free country like America, we still can do absolutely anything, at any time, and the FBI can never check it out, because we do it with the spirit. We don't even have to leave this body in order to do this. If we are good at our practice we can function at the same time in this world like driving a car, going shopping, doing make-up, washing dishes, feeding the dogs, the cat, driving a boat, and at the same time we still can do plenty of thousands of millions of other jobs required of our power. So, if we know many friends who need our help, in time of trouble need a helping hand, we can always fly there to help them in spirit. And they can see us also, at the same time we are in California having a good time with the ship, the boat, in Santa Monica, or something like that. This is the power that we always have. We always do and we always will. No one can ever take this from us. But we have to reclaim it. We have to rediscover it.

We have to know how, we have to not let the busy schedule of this transient existence blind us, deafen us, or do our heart so that we don't see, we don't hear, we don't know with the real eyes, the real ears, the real knowledge. Every day we must reserve a little time out of twenty-four hours, however much we can spare. We must reserve a little time for us so that we can remember our glory; so that we can experience what the bible has taught us, like, 'The kingdom of God is within you.' 'We are all children of God.' And the Buddhist scripture also has taught us: 'The Buddha nature is inside you. Every being is a Buddha.' If we are too busy, we won't remember this. We just hear this saying but we don't know actually what it is. For a person who has just heard of Sacramento or Fresno and another person who comes here and visits the city, it is a completely different story. So, most of us hear that we are the children of God, and say, 'Ah, I know that. Ah, I'm also a Buddha; I know that.' But we don't really know and that's why every day we suffer so much because there's a part inside of us crying, 'Let me free; let me be the great one; let me be the one I

really am.’ That is the Buddha inside us. That’s the God within us. That is the Supreme Master.

When we already know our real selves, no problem is too big to solve, no death can ever frighten us, no danger can scare us. We always feel good, feel secure, feel God-like, feel holy, and feel ever happy, ever ready to help anyone in need physically and spiritually. Spiritual help is the best help because once you help someone spiritually they can help themselves and then in turn they take care of their own physical needs as well.

In the beginning, perhaps the Master – Supreme Master Ching Hai – helps you in times of need physically or spiritually, but later on, you help yourself, and later on, you help everyone else. Your parents who are even deceased parents, your grandparents, your great, great ancestors, your future family members, all of them are taken care of by you. The day of your initiation is the day they are liberated; if they are already in the other world they will be escalated into a higher realm of freedom and knowledge. If they are on this planet they are going to be helped in every physical way that is possible for this planet. And you yourself enter into sainthood, into being a capable, a real person, a real being that we really are because we are not this body. ‘Know you not that you are the holy spirit? Know you not that you are just the temple; this body is just the temple of God and the holy spirit lives within you?’

We all read this in the bible; we all read this in the scripture but we do not experience in reality what that means, that the holy spirit dwells within us. And who is that holy spirit? It’s our self. It’s our true self. It’s a part of the God self, part of the whole cosmos. And once we know this holy spirit we are free, free forever. The angel of death cannot lay claim to our soul anymore. Once we close our eyes, we are finished with this job in this earthly existence, we’re free to fly anywhere, to our chosen Home in the whole, great universe. We choose where to live, which heaven, to be near Home, to be near our friends, our relatives, in this existence or in a future or past existence; we could choose to live with them or we could choose to live not with them, but go visit them anytime. Just think of them and you are there already. No need to pay for an airplane like I have to pay for to come here. [Laughter]

In this world it is different; in the spirit world we are free. We are free and we are great! That’s why sometimes after meditation we come back to this very small, little prison cell which we call ‘the body’, and we feel a little sad, sometimes a lot sad, but at least we can return to that realm again anytime we have free time. It’s better than every day being restricted within this little body forever. Just like if we are in prison and people can bail us out sometimes. It is still better than sitting there forever. So, this ‘bail bond’ is free of charge; you can bail yourself out anytime and since I am here today, the Supreme Master says you can get initiation right away, instead of having to wait many months. We never know if we’ll live until tomorrow.

It is important to practice in time

There is a story in the book of Paramahansa Yogananda. Have you read that book, ‘The Autobiography of a Yogi’? If you haven’t, you should read it. It is very good for you, to remind you of the spiritual, great self, to urge you toward noble ideas, make you re-awaken to your real self and want to find out more about your greatness. This is a very good book. There are many other books; I just cannot mention them all here; I cannot remember all the titles; maybe I do, but we don’t have time. I don’t come here to sell books. Many spiritual books are good for you, and that is one of them.

In that book there is a story about a guy who wanted initiation. There was a guy who had very, very bad intentions, who wanted to make trouble for the master, one of the masters in the book. I think he was Lahiri Mahasaya. He wanted to go there and try to prove that the master was fake and wanted to make trouble for him. But before he sat down, the master already told everyone: 'Do you want to look at some pictures?' And all the disciples said 'Yes, yes, yes!' So, the master said, 'Oh, you should sit behind each other and put your hands on the person sitting in front of you. So, that's what they did, including the guy who came with the bad intentions. So, they did that.

And after a while, one of the disciples saw a picture of a woman, a very nice young lady, appearing in front of them and everyone else, and then the master asked if everyone else saw the same picture, a woman, including the guy who came. So, he was very ashamed, and he said he knew. He said, 'Oh.' Then the master asked him, 'Who is that lady?' and the bad guy said, 'Well, I know it is my sin. I am married but I have had an extra-marital affair with this lady and I have been squandering money on her. This is no good. I know, but please forgive me. I came here with a bad intention. I wanted to do harm to you and blacken your name, but since you already know, will you please forgive me and would you accept me as a disciple also?' So, the master said, 'Sure! You have to go home. If you go home and can behave yourself morally for six months, then after that you can get initiation. Otherwise, I won't have to initiate you.' So, three months later the guy went back to the same bad habits, all kinds of bad habits he did before. And just a while later he died, so the master never initiated him. He tried but he failed.

And it's the same with us! Many times we put things off until tomorrow, all the while, knowing that this world is just a transient hotel, is even worse than the hotel where I stay. In the hotel where I stay, I pay some money and they leave me in peace. They even clean my room, change my towels, and give me soap and everything I need. But in this hotel which we call 'life' we have to work, pay every day, and even if we pay we still have to suffer. We pay every day with our precious time, our precious energy, our precious knowledge, our precious short existence here on this planet, which we should use to recognize our great power, in order to tackle everything with ease and without effort.

We sacrifice all this because they make us so busy. The system in this planet makes us so busy: Work from morning till night, work all the time, work weekends as well, and still don't have enough happiness. It's not that we pay and we could have a good room, good maid service, room service or whatever, no, no! We pay and pay and still pay and there's not much happiness in it, more suffering than happiness. Even if we have a family, a beautiful family, a good marriage, we still have to pay for it. We still have to work so much in order to maintain this. We work even in the rainy, stormy weather, in a dangerous situation, in our failing health time, in the time when we are exhausted and didn't sleep the whole night because of kids or worry, or whatever, and we still have to work, and no one takes pity on us, no one!

And if we claim sickness too often, they think we are lying, and maybe we get fired. And then we struggle again, to find another job, which is not very easy at all. So, this hotel on this planet is not very kind. It's not doing a very good job for us. If you go into a hotel and you pay good money you expect good service, no? But at this hotel, no! You pay day and night, every day of your existence until your last breath and you don't have good service.

So, if you ask me, I advise you to find another hotel. I know one! [Master laughs.] I know many hotels. In our Mother's / Father's Home there are many mansions. They are all empty, all decorated well with the most beautiful furniture and facilities to your liking and many are still empty waiting for you to go there and enjoy every time now. You don't have

to go there yet, but you can go and have a look now, and then come back and go for it. During your free time, you reserve time for yourselves like two hours, one hour a day, because you work. We all work for the world, for physical, material needs, but we don't work for our soul needs, for spiritual needs. So therefore we are tired. We are exhausted. Even if we sleep we don't feel that good. But if we meditate, even if we don't sleep enough, we feel great, we feel fully recharged and energized. We can move mountains afterwards.

So, no matter how many people go up there, there are a lot of mansions up there, always ready. There's nothing in this world that we can compare to what we have up there. If we only know how glorious our true Home is, we want to die right away! Excuse me for the expression. That's what it is. Many of the people who visit the other world, heaven, our true Home, would not like to come back here, for a second. Even the people that they call people who are 'clinically dead' and who come back to life, they don't want to go back to this life. After they saw the Light, after they saw Jesus, Buddha in heaven embracing them with love, their whole being changed. They want nothing on this planet anymore, because that love doesn't exist here.

That love is what you have been looking for all your life. Through everything on this planet, everything, that looks like that love, looks similar or looks promising to that love, we run toward it, we sacrifice everything for that and then we get disappointed. All these things like, even drugs, or alcohol, all these are the illusionary promise of a better feeling for the whole family, but they are not real. They just make you feel worse afterwards, depleted mentally, physically and even make trouble for the whole family. But the real happiness we can find inside every day without having to pay anything, without having to sacrifice anything, and it only benefits more and more yourself and your family members and friends and whoever knows you.

Lacking this love, we do all kinds of silly things in this world because we think if we do this we will get that love. Inside our soul, we miss that love so much, we miss it so much, we know we got it before, and we know what heaven is like because that is where we come from. Where else do you think we come from? [Audience: Cielo! (Spanish word for heaven)] Heaven! Yeah, yeah, you're right. We came from God. God is our father, mother, and parent, so we sacrifice to get back to it. God is the only friend, the only source of all living things and non-living things in this planet and every other planet in the whole universe. God is the source of our happiness, our real self, and without finding that, we will always be groping in darkness here, doing anything possible with all the physical means to obtain happiness we can not find.

Even the happiest relationship is always painted with something here. There is always a lot of effort to keep it and you don't even know if it lasts or not lasts. Even if it lasts, so much work has to be put into it, so much compromise, so much pain also. But the happiness from heaven, the true happiness that exists within us, is everlasting. That's the happiness we should find, and it's so easy. Just like instead of reclining on the sofa in front of the television, doing nothing, I'll just show you how to find that happiness within, while you are in resting or relaxing time.

Everyone finds a few hours to relax every day, don't they? You need a few hours to relax every day, that is the time when you can find God; it is very, very easy if you just know how. It's not like you have to work; you just sit there, you know, like you always sit after you're tired. You sit like this, [Master leans back in Her seat.] and close your eyes; just concentrate where I'll show you how, or you sit like this, I don't care, put your feet up in the air, also.

The hotel of 'life' is impermanent

So, to find God is something very natural because it's your true self. There's nowhere else to go look except within your self. Without this our life can never be happy. And then we will be running around always in this cycle, just like recycled paper! Sometimes it's in different forms, like people collect recycling material and sometimes they make it into other, different forms, but it is still the same material. Likewise our life has been recycled, recycled and recycled, all the same in this suffering kind of existence and we can not even stay long. That's the point! I told you it's a hotel. I come into the hotel, go into my room, and I start unpacking my suitcase, and maybe pressing a little because it's creased, so I look presentable to you, and put my jewelry here and there and make it look all perfect like home, but I know it is not my home. I have to go in a couple of days. Even then I have to do what I have to do.

Similarly, the spiritual practitioners are doing what they have to do in this world, but they know it is not Home. Because they know what Home is. I just came from my Home. I haven't forgotten it yet. So, if we practice every day spiritually, we will practice going back to the kingdom of God, looking at your new House, I mean your real Home, and then come back here again, come back and forth again. Then you never forget. Even though you came back to this material world; what I mean by come back, it is not just like going and coming. It's just a way of speaking. This language is not enough. So, if we come and go every day, we will never forget our real Home. And even though we are doing things in this hotel called 'life,' we will never be attached to it, no matter how we decorate it. Just like I decorate my hotel room, you know, I make the bed and all that myself. I don't bother the maid. When I leave, I tell them, 'Okay, now you can clean.' Because I put things everywhere, just so it's convenient for me to find. But I know it is not my home, even when I decorate it.

But if we don't know we have another Home, a true Home, we will always be attached to this world, and we'll work and sweat, and feel so much suffering, because we want to keep these things that we have here. And if we cannot keep our things for any reason, then we have so much pain, so much attachment, and we could die, die of suffering, die of pain. A lot of people lose their money, lose their business, lose their home and they commit suicide. Or they fall ill because of attachment to their possessions, but spiritual persons will not feel moved even if they lose everything, because they know they have something better.

Lay not up your treasures on earth, but in heaven

There is a joke I read on the Internet. It goes like this. There is a person who is very wealthy, mucho dinero (Spanish word for 'much money') and he is dying. But he wants to take his possessions with him. He has so much money, so much gold. He used money to buy gold and stacked it all over in his house and he wanted to take it with him. And he was trying to take it, but they said, 'No, no, you cannot take this with you. Everything you earn here belongs to this world. At the time of departure, you leave everything behind; just go by yourself. Nothing! You came with nothing. You go with nothing.' Then the man felt so bad in his heart, so he bargained with God, with the angel of death. 'Please go and ask God, the Supreme Master Ching Hai, whether I can take some gold with me. I need it. I worked all my life for it. I cannot part with it. Please!'

So, the angel of death felt sorry for him. He shook his head, felt sorry for the ignorant man and said, 'Okay, when I visit Hirm, I'll tell Hirm.' So, after God looked down and saw this pitiful state of Hiers being, Hes said, 'Okay, let him take it. It's okay. Don't worry.' So, the

dying man made a big bag and stacked as much gold as he could carry, and then at that moment, he died. He died, and took his bag of gold to the pearly gates of heaven. And saint Peter said, 'Oh, what is it that you carry in that? You are not allowed to take anything from earth to heaven. Do you know that?' And the guy said, 'But I have spoken to the Supreme Master Ching Hai. She said it's okay.' So, saint Peter said, 'Really? Okay, I'll go check.' So, he went in and asked the Master, 'You really allowed this guy to take something from earth here?' The Master said, 'Okay, he is just a poor man. Let him, let him.'

So, saint Peter came back and said, 'Yeah, yeah, you did. You did have permission, okay, but I still have to check what you brought with you.' So, the man opened the bag, and he looked inside. He said, 'Oh, that's that! You brought the pavement, pavement, for the road!' [Laughter and applause.] Yeah. You got it? Okay. Well, just in case you didn't, some kids didn't, in heaven, they use gold to pave the roads. Yes. And the diamonds we like so much here, they use to build walls, on the pavement or the path, whatever.

So, we walk on gold and diamonds and rubies. And all the trees are precious jewels. All the leaves, everything, they look like jewels but they are not like solid. They look beautiful, but they are not like piercing. It's just a very beautiful substance. These are the real gold and diamonds. The diamonds here can hurt you. Even though they are forever, they are not. You can destroy them, but the diamonds and gold in heaven, you can not. That's where we came from. We came from beautiful palaces. We came from a precious abode. We came from freedom. We came from loving and kindness, and we degrade it into the stage of what we are at right now, with the suffering, and the pitiful helplessness of human existence. But we don't have to stay like this because we have treasure inside ourselves. 'Lay not up your treasure on earth, but in heaven.' How do we do that? Find it again. Find the treasure in heaven, the real jewelry that we have inside; the real glory of our true self.

I am just here to show you that part, nothing else. That is very important. So, if you'd like to, we will have time to show you and guide you through the initial steps until you have found your true self again and are happy here and ever after. Thank you. [Applause]

- Q. *Dear Master, the Quan Yin method tells us to concentrate on the inner Light and Sound. But how can people who were born blind or deaf practice?*
- M. Oh! These are not the light and sound from outside. It is the real one that is inside us. It is the kingdom of God. You don't need the physical eyes and the physical ears to hear it. You understand? So, blind people can see, deaf people can hear it, the kingdom of God. It's not the physical body that we are talking about.
- Q. *Dear Master, enlightenment is a journey every soul has to take. The role of a guru or master is to help a person progress through spiritual growth. You had to go through the same rigors of dedicated practice that Buddha and guru Nanak (the first Sikh guru) and many others went through. So, how can You, in a moment, claim to enlighten Your disciples? With due reverence, Master.*
- M. You will see. You will see how. Try me. [Applause]
- Q. *Dear Master, as an enlightened individual, how do You get past the obstacle of knowing who You truly are, to have that peace and joy, when seeing so many around You who are still asleep, who refuse or reject or ignore the way which You hope to show them?*

- M. Oh! They have their own choice. Everyone has the freedom to choose to go back Home now or tarry around here. So, it is no problem. You leave them alone. If you want to go Home, you go. If they don't want to go Home, let them bear it and be there.
- Q. *Dear Master, I have a cat and a dog and I feed them meat. What is Your opinion of this?*
- M. Ask the cat and the dog, not me! [Laughter and applause.] Well, I don't decide what you want to do in your life, least of all with cats and dogs. But some of our disciples feed them vegetarian food and they are okay. I have five dogs and they are all vegetarian and they are all very excited, healthy, beautiful dogs. Yes, it's no problem. I have also fed cats vegetarian food; they were okay, too. They didn't complain. In the shop also, for pet food, they have vegetarian food for dogs and cats. Maybe you can inquire about that. I feed my dogs 'Wysong' (a brand of veggie dog food). It's good. But my dogs don't eat dog food. They eat human food. I cook a lot; I feed them first, and whatever is left over, I eat. At first, they eat dog food, later on after they eat my food, they don't want dog food anymore. They just sneak around and they look at me as if to say, 'What, what's that?' [Laughter] So after that, I have to feed them food every day. They just eat dog food, when I don't have time to cook. They just eat a little bit, symbolically, just to make me feel good, and wait for goodies from the kitchen, from the real food.
- Q. *Dear Master, You said that all of the inventions and ideas that come from the universe are garbage. I have a lot of these. So being initiated and practicing, will I improve?*
- M. Oh sure! You will invent some better garbage! [Laughter] I don't mean garbage. What I mean is, whatever we have here, even the best inventions, are left over from other, more highly developed societies; but, as we are not as developed as they are, this garbage is excellent for us! So, please, do collect some more! We need them.
- Q. *Dear Master, if I have been a vegetarian for a long time, but I have eaten eggs, may I still be initiated?*
- M. Okay, no problem! Just don't eat them anymore. Eggs attract negative energy and make you slow in spiritual progress.
- Q. *Dear Master, what is the difference between God and Jesus?*
- M. There's no difference. 'I and my Mother / Father are one.' Didn't He tell you? [Applause] Well, there is a difference because we saw Him, people saw Him in the physical body and we don't see God in this physical body. So, we think God and Jesus are different. But God manifested within Jesus to show people the way back to themselves.
- Q. *Master, why do we have physical ailments? Do they teach us something, or are we to struggle to overcome sickness?*
- M. Sickness is some malfunction in our spiritual, mental, emotional or physical body. Some sicknesses come from spiritual 'dis-ease,' some come from emotional imbalance, and some come from physical discomfort. So, we have to check what kind of sickness it is. Most diseases come from karmic background, but other than that, we

also do not take care of our body very well. A body is like a car: You have to refuel it, you have to polish it, you have to wash it, and you have to change the oil and add gasoline now and then and check the engine periodically so that it runs well. But many of us take rotten care of ourselves. If you feel tired, depressed, you have to take vitamins, have good rest, relax, or do some yoga. If you don't want to be initiated here, go find some yoga group, at least do some yogic exercises, or do something that is good and relaxing, like listen to music, or watch a good, relaxing film. Take vitamins; take Vitamin B12 more if you are depressed. That is what they say; it helps depression, a lot of multivitamins to compensate for some lacking nutrition in our diet. Because some of us eat junk all the time and don't realize it and expect the car to run well. You have to put petrol in the car, otherwise it won't run. And the body needs a lot of nutrition. It needs protein; it needs fruit; it needs vegetables; it needs good food. If you keep eating un-nutritious food every day, not balanced, then of course your body gets imbalanced.

- Q. *Dear Master, is it true that after initiation, one must give up all worldly wealth and possessions such as money and jewelry in order to attain enlightenment?*
- M. If you want to. [Laughter] But it doesn't cost that much. It costs only a few hours a day if you can spare that, nothing else. No money is ever needed. You keep everything that you have right now. I never demand anything from you, never, ever. Keep everything, enjoy this life, and be blessed while you meditate. That's it. So, you can have both. [Applause]
- Q. *Master, what constitutes sexual immorality in the five precepts? And does this include homosexuality?*
- M. Sexual misconduct means you should not indulge yourself too much in this physical activity and forsake spiritual practice. If you happen to love a person of your own sexual identity, then you should just practice moderately also. Homosexuality is not forbidden. It is just that, you should have love, if you really love, not just sex. Sex alone is not good. Love is okay, whether you love a woman, between a man and a woman, or between a woman and a woman, or between a man and a man. Because we love, when we love it is with the heart and with the soul. When we have sex for its own sake, it is just physical. It is not engaged in emotional involvement and commitment; it is not involved in spiritual elevation. Therefore, it is not satisfying and it is degrading to our feelings. Afterwards we don't feel good about ourselves, and that is what we call misconduct. And if you have one, you should honor each other and not hurt the other's feelings by including many others, for example. Because the sexual gift is a gift from God. It is not to be misused. It is better to accompany sexual activity with love. Then you feel much better. You feel nobler. Most people, after spiritual practice, only engage in this physical act once in a while, for the purpose of procreation. Well, I have gone too far. [Laughter] Go, ahead. Just keep love. Whatever you do, do it with love, then it's okay. [Applause]
- Q. *Master, after twenty-four years of meditation, my marriage dissolved. I loved my husband and this makes me sad. Why did this happen?*
- M. What kind of meditation is that? Twenty-four years, right? Well, it's not my fault. I wasn't there. [Master and audience laugh.] I've been here only for fifteen years or something. Well, the meditation is not the cause of your marriage separation. The separation came as part of a karmic solution. Today you see these beautiful flowers here. Tomorrow they die; if not, next week. Everything takes care of itself in time,

including our life. We will not last here forever. So, if the marriage lasts until the end of our lives, then it's okay; it's just a couple of more decades. If it lasts for twenty-four years, if it lasts for forty four years, there's not much difference; it's just numbers. If the marriage lasts long or not long, it doesn't prove anything. Go find another man in short! [Laughter and applause.]

Q. *Dear Master, I am fourteen years old. My mother has been sick for ten years now, since I was a little girl. I know I should be strong, but a lot of the time it is very hard for me. Do You have any advice?*

M. Not much. I feel very sorry for you. You are a very good girl, a strong one. Continue! Pray to God for help, for inside strength. Get initiation; practice. That will help you feel super, like a superwoman!

Q. *Master, why is the age limit imposed for initiation? Is it because they are unfit or beyond the scope of initiation?*

M. Or they don't have enough time to finish the course, if it is the elderly ones. And if the young are too young, they need permission from their parents, so that they can help them, so that they don't go against their parents' will. This world is like that; it goes with the physical law.

Q. *If I get initiated today, and if for any reason I can't practice or if I stop, what negative effects will that have on me?*

M. When you don't practice anymore, that is the worst thing that could happen to you. If you marry someone and then you divorce, what happens? Then you divorce!

Q. *Master, how can I know that I have improved in my spiritual practice?*

M. You will know. You will know, just like when you grow up, and you know that you are growing.

Q. *Dear Master, is enlightenment the same as living in one will with God? Is it the same thing as surrendering my human will to God and as living only with the will of God?*

M. Yes, it's the same thing.

Q. *What are the main things that stop our path towards enlightenment?*

M. Ourselves. When we want to practice, nothing can stop us. When we do not want to, then everything can stop us.

Q. *Master, I am Catholic. So can I still keep my beliefs and my practices and my prayers and still be initiated?*

M. Me, too! I am Catholic, too!

Q. *Master, if I am initiated today, can I still cook meat for my children to eat? Is it okay?*

M. It's okay, if you can bear the smell after a while.

- Q. *There is a cause and effect law in the universe. So, is it possible to eliminate the wrongdoing that we have already caused?*
- M. No, you cannot. But we can minimize the effects by spiritual strength and knowledge, and we can avoid the future repeating of these same mistakes.
- Q. *Master, if I have already studied with an enlightened Zen master, what is the difference between You and that master? Can I study with many teachers at the same time, and become awakened?*
- M. If you have enough time. I don't know how enlightened your master is. You'd better ask him whether he takes you to the highest kingdom and is with you all the way from the physical level up to the very highest level. Then you don't have to come. If the answer is no, then you'd better come, quick.
- Q. *Master, I have seen examples of teachers showing students the Light and Sound, and those students are not being guided correctly. These students become lost, almost like being disoriented. What assurance can You give that Your guidance is good?*
- M. You can ask my people. If they are well, then you know. [Applause] You know the tree by the fruits. No?
- Q. *In the book 'Conversations with God,' it is said that earth is heaven. We are living in heaven and if we think we have to go to heaven, we have already placed ourselves in a lower level and there is nowhere to go but here. So, what is the difference between here and heaven, because we are put here to experience everything, the good and the bad, aren't we?*
- M. Yes, that's true. But do you know heaven here already? Can you sit there and see heaven? If you can't, I have to show you how. It's true. Heaven you can see right here, but you have to know how. Anywhere, you can see it – in the toilet, in an airplane, in the park, or anywhere, in the supermarket. It's true. But you have to know where to look. And that is what I am here to show you. [Extended applause.]
- Q. *Master, I am a student. My major is nursing and medical terminology. I am required to take biology lab to complete this major to get my degree. We kill some animals and some kinds of vegetables to gain experience, then compare them. Killing the animals is violent. I cannot bear to see my classmates killing the animals. Does it effect my meditation? Will it effect my meditation? Do I have to change my major to avoid killing animals? I would like to complete my major.*
- M. If you would like to complete your major, then you have already answered yourself. If you don't want to kill animals, then don't. If your classmates kill them, that is their problem. You can't limit everyone to do what you want. You just do what you want. Just go ahead with your studies. Tell them you don't like to kill animals, but you will just watch.
- Q. *Dear Master, what do You think about taking hallucinogenic drugs for spiritual experiences?*
- M. Any drug is not natural. Everything you already have in here [Master points to the wisdom eye.] What do you need of drugs? My path is just to show you what you

already have, not that you have to add on. We are already confused enough in this world. We don't need to add anymore confusion to our mind and our system. Drugs have bad effects in the long run. Everyone knows that. [Applause.]

Q. *If there is no sadness, how can you really appreciate happiness in heaven?*

M. Oh sure, there is sadness enough, so now is the time to appreciate happiness.

Q. *Is the Quan Yin method similar to Zen? Can I practice both and still awaken?*

M. After a while you will know that you should just choose the Quan Yin method. I have been in Zen. The real Zen before was the Quan Yin method.

Q. *My son gets initiated today, and my husband, too. Please give me some tips to help them keep the precepts.*

M. Oh, they will? If I have to give them tips, then what else should I do? There is already everything written there, so if they have chosen to do it, then they will keep them.

Q. *Is a human clone or any clone of a living thing still a creation of God?*

M. You want me to get killed? You ask me many controversial questions. Well, I would leave the creation choice to God. That is my answer. We have enough trouble with overpopulation and maniacs and mishaps already on this planet due to technical failures. So, I would just leave the creation power in the hands of God.

You want to hear another joke? It is not very spiritual, but it is appropriate. It is on the Internet. I don't want to claim authorship for this. It was a joke like this. After reading about too many airplanes crashing and airplane problems and airplane danger in the newspaper, people were fed up and went on strike and they didn't want to go on airplanes anymore; they were so scared, scared they would get crashed, scared they'd explode in the airplane. So, there was a company, a group of scientists, who put all their efforts together to make an airplane which had no human pilot, just everything was controlled by electronics and computers and machines.

So, after a long time they made this airplane and it was the first flight ever. And all the passengers had already boarded the airplane. And after the airplane took off, they heard a voice similar to a human voice from the computer saying, 'Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the first ever electronically controlled airplane. Now there will be no more human failure that we used to be worried about. Now just kick back and relax, because there is nothing that can go wrong, go wrong, go wrong, go wrong, go wrong...' [Laughter]

Q. *Dear Master, how do you control the negative or bad thinking that pops into your head?*

M. I just leave it. It will go away by itself. If you keep battling with the negative, you won't have time for the positive. So, every time you hear, or you recognize some negative thought in your head, just replace it with some positive ones. Go do something more positive, more fun and forget about that. Or during meditation, I will teach you how to combat this problem.

- Q. *Master, how do we take care of bugs and insects in our house if we can't kill? They cause illness, and they contaminate our clothes and food.*
- M. You should take care before they come in, not after. It is a little late. Okay, you should just clean your house thoroughly with water and vinegar, fifty-fifty. That disinfects and doesn't smell and deodorizes everything; what I mean is it neutralizes all the odors that attract the insects. Clean whatever is infested all once and for all, put them in the sun, shake them out and clean them every day or as often as possible with fifty percent vinegar and fifty percent water; it could be more vinegar, if possible, if you can bear its smell. And you have to spray your window frames and your door frames with insect repellent, a harmless one, outside of your house. Then the insects won't come in later. Otherwise, they will keep coming all the time. You should spray it once a week or every once in a while, then they won't come in. And you must keep yourself washed and clean and hygienic. Then they don't have the ground to breed in your house.
- Q. *Master, is it already fixed or determined that a particular child will be born good or bad? I am a mother and I worry about my children and bad influences.*
- M. It's possible that some are born with a little bit of lack of control and lack of gentleness, but with proper guidance and spiritual help, they will change.
- Q. *Master, I know we are allowed to drink milk and eat cheese, but here in America, cows are treated cruelly. The milk contains a growth hormone and many cheeses are made with dead cows' stomachs. Should we be vegans?*
- M. If possible. Now and again it's okay; don't be fanatic, but if you can live without it, it's okay, too.
- Q. *Master, my wife has been a vegetarian for about one year, but ever since she became pregnant she has been craving meat or eggs. What can she do?*
- M. Ask her. Well, is that a disciple or non-disciple? She is practicing the convenient method. Okay. That is just an excuse, to blame it on the child. Poor kid. Anyway, she is only practicing the convenient method. If she doesn't want to eat vegetarian, we do not force her. Everything in our family here is volunteer. If you are ready to go Home, I show you the way and how to get there, and what to avoid on the journey to make yourself have quicker and smoother travel. But if you do not feel ready to go Home, you can do what you want, you can eat meat, drink wine, go get married, whatever. It's all up to you. I only teach people who want to learn. If they think they are not ready, it's okay with me. Take it easy; take your time.
- Q. *Master, I have heard You say many times that when we are initiated, five to seven generations are also saved. Does that mean they will be taken to the same level as the person that You initiate? Or will they be on a different level? And can the initiated person visit them?*
- M. Oh, sure they can, at different levels. It depends upon how sincere they are inside and how much karma they have. But the initiate is free. He can visit anyone anytime, anywhere, no problem. I mean, after they are deceased, or even during their existence, they always can come to visit their people. And afterwards, they will be together all the time, no matter if it's a different level or not. Because you will be existing on different levels, not just one. So, if your parents, for example, are on the

astral level, which is the lowest of the spiritual levels, and you are on the creative level, which is one level above, then you can also exist on the astral level at the same time, because wherever you go, you earn one more extra level, but you exist on other levels as well, if you want to. So, your parents will see that you are always there with them, too. And in the mean time, you are on a higher level, everyone else on that higher level meanwhile can also see you. So, there is no feeling of missing or lacking or separation in the spiritual kingdom. It is different than here.

Q. *Dear Master, after we have been enlightened and we reach the level of Jesus and the Buddha, are there even higher levels to learn?*

M. Oh, yes, yes, much higher levels to go to. That is just the level of general mastership. There are many more, anywhere you want to go, higher, lower, it doesn't matter. But when you reach mastership, it's okay already.

Q. *Dear Master, You said the roads of heaven are paved with gold. Also, do spirits need palaces in the next world? I think only physical bodies need palaces. Gold is only precious because we don't have much in this world, but in heaven there is much, so is it precious?*

M. Over there no one cares about gold. It just happens to be there. But that doesn't mean they care to put it there. It is just that kind of level; everything is beautiful, shining, precious and illuminating, not like in this world. The gold of that world is much better than in this world. It just like in a rich house, you go there and find everything that is rich and opulent.

Q. *Master, what do You think about organ donations after we die?*

M. I don't think anything. You give what you have and what you want, no problem, just like giving money.

Q. *Why did God put us through a human existence and all the trials and tribulations to realize ourselves when we were perfect to start with?*

M. It's because we want to have fun. You see a lot of rich people; they go on vacation every day, every year, or all the time. Do you see them, people who have big mansions and servants all over the house? What do they do when they go on vacation? Sometimes they rent a thatched hut so small – it looks like a poor person's house. And they go out and row boats, sweating in the sun, while they have big yachts that cost hundreds of millions of dollars at home with engines that run, zip, to the moon, for example.

We want to have fun. When it's fun, it doesn't matter what we do. We did not recognize our perfect self until we came here, into the world of imperfection. And that is what it is, to see the reflection, so we can know ourselves. This world is created so that we can know ourselves, know God. It's like a woman was created so that there is a difference between man and woman. If there were no comparison, we would not know ourselves. You got it? [Applause]

Same like the rich man, after rowing and sweating in the sun for a month and living in a thatched hut and simple living, he is glad to go back to his palace, glad to go back to his yacht and his airplane and his conveniences and everything that is a comfortable life.

Q. *Dear Master, I don't know if I am ready to go Home. I admire You and I have a desire to meditate and know God, yet at the same time there are talents and skills and strengths that I want to develop in this lifetime. Does it mean that I am not ready to go Home? Does it mean I am not at a high enough level to be initiated?*

M. No, no, you should just love life; that's good; that's wonderful; you shouldn't wait until you lose all the strength, your talent, your power, and you're depressed and poor and handicapped to get enlightenment. You should do it when you are fully happy and have everything. That's the perfect time. That means you are at a very high level, because you have all this and you have all the blessings, and you still want to see God. You are a saint already.

Q. *Master, if a person is initiated, and he practices a little but then he gives up, then a few years later he dies, is it possible for him to reincarnate back into this world or do You just take him up?*

M. It depends on the Master, and depends on the person. The Supreme Master Ching Hai will take him up, if he wants to go. Nothing is impossible with this woman, She is cool. [Applause]

Q. *The king James' version of the bible says: 'Except you become as a little child, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.' What does it mean?*

M. That means we have to clean ourselves of all the preconceived ideas, clean ourselves of all the previous karmic hindrances that have saturated our mind, body and emotions. After initiation, the Master cleans you, cleans you with fire, with the spiritual blessing, makes you shining, pure, and innocent again like a kid. Then, that's why you can see heaven immediately.

Q. *Master, You said that karma is caused by ourselves, by our own moral standards and our experiences, so if a person has no moral standards, will their karma be less, because they do bad deeds, but they don't think they're bad? Or if a person has a bad memory and he forgets about some of his bad deeds, does that mean his karma won't be as much?*

M. That's a good excuse! [Laughter] Just go rob a bank and tell the police, 'I have forgotten what I did. Sorry.' Do you think the police will believe it, with all your fingerprints, your face in the camera and everything? It's a nice way to cheat God, but it is difficult. No matter what kind of mental ability we have, what kind of disposition we're in, whatever we do is registered in our subconscious mind and it will never, never, fade away, unless treated by spiritual power, unless you erase it from inside of the subconscious mind. That's how we are redeemed, that's how we become as a child again after initiation.

Q. *Master, if I'm unhappy in my marriage, can I divorce my husband? How do I know when is the right time to do this?*

M. My God! Talk to your husband! Both of you have to agree on the same thing, then it's okay. That's if you have to leave him, if you have a better purpose, not just to run away from the problem, because the next man you meet might have a worse problem for you. Because the interest increases, the karma.

- Q. *Dear Master, when initiates return from a three-day retreat, why do people see them as different or changed?*
- M. Because they have become cleaner, more purified, more radiant.
- Q. *Dear Master, in my heart I have five dreams of things that I want to happen. I want to get a blessing from Master to be successful in this life. Can a person participate in an international retreat with the spiritual body? How is it different than coming in the physical body?*
- M. I understand. So, she wants to stay at home and then say, 'Okay, I am going with my heart.' That's very convenient. That's a good idea; next time you come here, I'll just say, 'Well, I'll be here in my heart. I don't have to appear in physical form.' Can I do that? [Audience: No.] You answered yourself. It's a wonderful idea you have, my God!
- Q. *Dear Master, I'm seventy nine years old, and I was able to see You in Florida for the first time visiting America; this is my luckiest day. Thank You, Master. I would really like to get initiated even though I was told that I was too old. I'm in very good health. Master, please, can I get initiation?*
- M. You have a lot of good health, but not a lot of time. Don't press me on this. If you want to study in college you have to have some time. There are some things that require time. Go get the convenient method; it's excellent already.
- Q. *Master, I am a disciple from mainland China, I am very glad to be able to see You before going back to China, and I wish You a happy and beautiful life forever from all of the Chinese fellow practitioners. And I have two questions. The first question is, and many people ask this question: May I travel with You, because I intend to spread the teachings to the Westerners? I'm searching to make a life of service to my fellow humans.*
- M. You should just stay where you are and serve your family members and your community, and that is serving the world, that is traveling with me. Traveling with me doesn't mean physically, but traveling with the same ideal, same direction, and we'll all get there in time. Because if you travel with me, there are many inconvenient things; your family members will miss you; your society will be short of one diligent, talented worker. Just like a house needs many bricks to sustain its structure, if you take one away, then things will be different. Stay where you are and be a saint.
- Q. *Master, do the angel of maya and the karmic master both work together to keep people here in bondage?*
- M. Yes, they do; they are one and the same. They are good, they are doing their good job, strengthening your determination to know yourself.
- Q. *Can a person get initiated today, and right away or maybe in a short time be able to help the people that he loves to lessen their suffering?*
- M. Sure, to a certain extent, right away, because you don't know how many generations of your ancestors are being lifted to higher dimensions, out of hell, out of suffering; you don't know. And also, during the course of your life here, you will help countless people.

A SINCERE HEART IS THE BEST SANCTUARY ⁶⁰

Only if your heart is pure can the Center help you. If you don't come with a sincere motive, even if you're in God's presence, you don't feel anything because your mind is attached to outside phenomena. And then even if God is right in front of you, you gain no benefit. Everything is according to our mind and our heart. And if we can't control them, then anywhere possesses the same chaos.

I'm glad you profit in this environment. It's good for you. Many of you are like that. That's why you love to come to the Center because here is really a good place to help satisfy your sincere longing. So, you can sit quietly all day, anytime you want. That's very good. But it's because you are good also. If you bring the whole world here, even ten Centers can't help you. You have the longing in your heart so this place is conducive. A Center where you can sit and meditate freely is conducive. Not because the Center has a saint and somewhere else doesn't; it's just that the Center has quietness and an environment that is conducive to meditation.

But only if that's what you want. If you don't want it, then even if you come here, you're still thinking of many things. And you also feel more agitated; and even want to go home quickly. You think to yourself, 'Why did I come here? I shouldn't have come here. Now I have to wait three, four or even seven days to go home.' You don't feel good at the Center. So, if you come here and you know what you came for, you'll always get the best out of it.

The Center is very conducive. But you have to want that, and then it helps you. It's not that the Center doesn't help; it's just that you also must help yourself. You must really want to meditate, to be quiet, to find yourself at the Center. Otherwise, it's no use. You can sit all day long, and nothing will happen. You'll have more trouble and feel it's a waste of time, like you should go see a movie or do something better in the outside world or in the city where there's a lot of activity.

So, being a saint or not being a saint is all up to you. We can only help facilitate the process. But you're the only one who can profit from your own purity and sincerity.

OVERCOMING YOUR OWN LAZINESS ⁶¹

We should give a reward to anyone in any way, for example, to the homeless people. I do that all the time. When I see someone, sometimes I turn the car or make a U-turn on the highway, just to give them something. Sometimes my driver complains, 'That's difficult! It's inconvenient.' I say, 'Yes, for us it's very inconvenient, but for that man it's even worse. Can you imagine how much more inconvenience he has to endure every day? Compared to our inconvenience, his is very great. So, just turn.' On the highway sometimes it's difficult, of course. But considering his inconvenience, ours is very small. We can always make two more minutes for a person like that. We can always go through a little inconvenience just to help someone out. And it feels good when you do that. It feels good when you defeat your own laziness or excuses; knowing what you want to do, you do it. It feels good.

60. Five-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., June 12-16, 2001 (Originally in English).

61. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., June 11, 2001 (Originally in English).

ENLIGHTENMENT COMES IN THE RELAXED MOMENTS ⁶²

We bathe in the ocean of love

I am very happy to see you today. You must be good today, good people. Because sometimes not very good people have come and I also feel it. Today, probably you are in a good mood, like flying spirits. Just relax, and then everything will come to you. Just relax; remember that the bible says, 'Don't worry about tomorrow, because God will take care of everything, including even the blades of grass and the lilies of the field.' How would He not take care of you? You are His begotten children in His own image. You are saturated with His love and blessings, all day long, for twenty-four or even twenty-five hours, over and over. Just be still and feel it. Be still; then you can feel it.

For example, the wind is blowing and the breeze is so nice, but you keep struggling: 'I want wind; I want the wind; I'm hot!' The more you struggle and sweat, the hotter and more uncomfortable you feel. Then you become exhausted, and you might even drop dead – in the presence of the wind!

My dogs are like that. So, don't be a dog! [Laughter] When a new dog comes, especially a puppy, he's always panting, 'Ah, ah, ah!' He always wants me to do something, and he always wants to hang around me. I'm right there, but he's always hanging at my feet, obstructing both of our movements. Sometimes, for example, I put him inside a room with all of his toys and a big, big place to play. And he has water and everything. But he has to hang around right at the gate, panting all the time, drooling and sweating and screaming – for no reason! He could have relaxed. I feel terrible putting him in a crate, which is only for when he's naughty and only for a while. It's just for training purposes, or for when he's sick, so that he rests instead of jumping all over and wasting energy. So, I give him a whole room, which is bigger than my room. I treat him at least as an equal, or sometimes even better than myself. The dogs eat before I do; they eat fruit and all kinds of things. I peel fruit and vegetables to give them. I don't even do that for myself! Most of the time if the disciples or whoever don't have already-peeled fruit, I don't eat fruit. They bring the whole basket up, and then they bring it down again, hoping that one day I will see the fruit and eat it.

I never see the fruit; I never bother. I don't think of fruit. But now that I have dogs, I peel the fruit every day, and then give it to the puppy. I treat him better than myself. But he's so panicky, running around next to the gate, then climbing up and down the gate all the time, exhausting himself and sweating and drooling. And he looks so terrible: For what? I already told him, 'I'm busy right now; stay there, and in a while, I'll take you out, if you're good.' But no, he obstructs himself. He messes it all up, and then pees everywhere – not where he's supposed to, in the designated area – then he gets more punishment, and then he can't get out, ever.

This is the problem with us, too. You're always right here in the presence of God, all the time. If God is not here right now, God is never anywhere. If God doesn't know what you want already, He knows nothing. Then He's a stupid guy; there's no need to worship Him or go find Him. So, just relax, know that God is all-knowing, and ask for whatever you really need. I always know you are here, and if you're more relaxed, I will come around. If I feel your relaxed atmosphere, maybe I will be attracted to it. Because I love this kind of cool atmosphere. And then I will probably inch myself in your direction and ask you something, and then we can be a couple of good conversationalists. We can talk about

62. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., June 8, 2001 (Originally in English).

things that you would never probably dream we could talk about – instead of grabbing me for two seconds, getting scolded, and putting your tail between your legs to run away like a dog. You're not dogs; I'm sorry, don't be offended. But you do have a tail somewhere; some of you have! [Master and audience laugh.]

Anyway, just relax; whatever happens will happen. Many of you are always like that. Spiritual practice is not like doing business out there, where you have to climb on top of each other to get the glory. You don't have to snatch the profit from the next person to get it. Everything you do outside to get attention, to grab glory or success, drop it before you come through the gate. If you want that way of being busy or bugging people for yourself, then you can pick it up when you go out. But once you come in here, you can relax. Remember, you are a saint or saint-to-be; behave like one. You're noble, you're good, you're protected, you're loved, you're noticed, you're welcome, and you're cared for – twenty-four hours. You are the ones the world should look up to. Walk like that. Then you will be like that.

Keep thinking of yourself as a saint

Believe me. Whatever you think, you get; so think of yourself as a good, good saint. Even if you don't believe it that much, try. Keep thinking like that because you are. You are in the process of remembering again that you are a saint, anyway. You were a saint before you came here. It's just that you have chosen to forget, to be a human and do whatever silly things you have to do for the role you play here. But now, once you go into a Center, that is the time to forget your role and to remember your real self. So, every time you walk through the gate of the Center, remember: You are a saint, you are a Buddha, and you are reclaiming yourself now. 'This is a time all for myself, all for my sainthood; nothing else comes between that and me. I'm okay; I'm great; I'm going to practice during these two, three, or four hours I am here, as a saint. I'm going to practice and rehearse again my role as a saint in this world.' Because if you want to be an ordinary stupid person again in the Center, where else can you be a saint? Where else can you remember yourself as great, as holy, as flawless, as intelligent, as enlightened, as all blessing, all grace, all glory, all God-like?

You may ask me questions; that's okay. You may ask them to satisfy your brain. But don't act like a stupid nuisance. Don't lower your level of dignity. Don't lower your consciousness. Don't be contented with the lower self. Don't be a habit-driven creature, going everywhere and being a nuisance, grabbing and greedy, bugging people and making a fool, a stupid 'you-know-what' of yourself.

The law of God is: 'As you think, so shall you become.' Keep thinking until your thinking power becomes very strong, and then you become that. Whatever you think you are, you will become. It may not be in one day that you think and you become a saint, or that you will remember yourself as a saint right away. But keep thinking in that direction, or at least whenever you go to the Center. That is the time for you to be a saint, at least.

The power of creation is within your sight. It's in your head, in your brain, and in your mind. Because you're God, you have this creative power. So, you can create what you are. Create yourself with dignity; create yourself as a saint; create yourself as a Buddha. Keep creating, until it becomes reality. How do you think we became like this? Because we have been thinking and creating ourselves like this – until we became it. It took time, but it happened. That's why we have to meditate every day: To create, re-create, and remember – until we are firm in our remembrance of our original self. Then we are assured that we are saints. We have just forgotten, and now we have to try to remember, again and again.

Every time you walk through the Center's gate, remember that you are a saint. The more you remember, the more you will be one, and the more enlightenment will come to you and be nearer to you. It is already there; it's just that the more you remind yourself, the more you realize you have.

So, do not obstruct yourself with those stupid habits. You are a saint. Don't make a fool of yourself. It looks silly, it looks funny, it looks stupid, and I'm not proud of you when you do that. I'm proud of you when you walk with your head high, when you're in very noble spirits, when you're self confident, knowing that you are saints, or at least knowing that you are saints who maybe doesn't realize it yet. At least you can say, 'Maybe I haven't remembered it fully yet, but I know I'm a saint.' Each time you think and walk like a saint, you are a saint – there's no question about it. Because you are already! It's just that you always forget it. Each time you remember, that is the time you are. My God, it's so easy to be a saint. It's easier than eating, sleeping, or anything else. Just remember it.

The state of enlightenment

Enlightened people are confident as human beings. They are truly human beings. They do what they should do, they do what they want, and they know what they're doing. At the same time, they know that they are not human. But they're also okay being human. They don't contradict themselves; they don't have any problems or struggles like, 'My God, I'm a saint! I can't do this!' It's, 'I can! I can! All right!'

That's because you know everything already. You know that even though you are saints, you are here. You are here and you are there. [Master points heavenward.] It's okay; the two states don't contradict each other, and we live both lives at the same time. We feel good, confident and happy, knowing who we are. And that is correctly so. Otherwise, if you keep thinking of yourself twenty-four hours a day as, 'I'm a saint! I'm a saint! I'm a saint!' it's no fun! And then you won't enjoy your food or your drink.

CHILDREN ARE ALWAYS A GIFT FROM GOD ⁶³

If you happen to have a kid, don't worry. It's God's gift to you for some reason. In the high spiritual realms, if you want a child, it's no problem! You don't need a husband, like you do here. And no one laughs at you if you don't have a husband. You just produce kids by yourself. It's very simple! You can sit there and say, 'I want a kid.' And you look down into the lower realms, because mostly if you want a kid, you adopt from a lower realm so that he can be elevated. Just like here, we go to the orphanage and adopt a child so that he can have a better life with us in the family. Of course, you can also adopt kids from a mother who doesn't want to take care of them or who is not able to because of her situation or inconvenience, or because of reputation or whatever. So, then you just adopt them.

From the higher realms, you look down into a little bit lower realm. You see which soul is available and which one you like, and then you ask that soul whether he would like to come up and be your child. And if he's okay, you just sit there and the kid will come up to you – in the center of the Light. All your family members sit together and concentrate. There has to be the Light in the middle, and the kid will be born in that Light; he will come to your family just like that. Immediately! Probably some Light will look like a lotus, and the kid will be born out of it. And then he becomes your family member immediately, and his spiritual status is immediately also elevated. It's just like being adopted by a noble family

63. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., June 7, 2001 (Originally in English).

or by a president. Then you become the president's kid. You become the 'First kid,' no matter where you came from or what kind of background you had. Yes, it's like that.

It's not the certificate, it's the newborn soul that matters

But in our world, a person may be pregnant and has no husband, or the husband deserted her. She has to have a certificate; otherwise you can't call that person 'husband.' And if he doesn't want it, then a lot of people laugh at her or something like that. But it should not be this way. This is the way of the world. It's the way of people who have competition and the way of people who look at things physically and critically in a world where they care so much about stupid name and reputation, which is all empty. So, it should not be that way. But our world is still very low-level. It cannot accept free love or free kids, free born, free birth or things like that. It still cannot, or too many places cannot. Some places do accept already, and this is good. Being a single parent is maybe more difficult in raising the kid, but it's okay. It's no worse reputation than that of a married woman, in my opinion! But in many people's opinion, maybe yes. And that is a pity.

A newborn soul should be welcomed with all love and glory and attention and gladness, so that the soul can develop into the useful person and spiritual being that he really is to begin with. Our world has many incorrect, preconceived ideas, which are very harmful to ourselves and to whomever concerned. If we criticize other people in that case, we are very undeveloped spiritually, because whatever happens is also God's will. If God meant to give this soul a chance to be a human being, and especially to be a spiritual family's child, then so be it. It's no one's fault that he is there, not even the person who ran away. He is just a vehicle, just a back door so this soul can sneak in, into a family that is spiritually elevated and enlightened. So, he can have a chance to meet the Master and become a spiritually liberated being.

Countless souls are waiting

Many souls are wandering around in the invisible realms, waiting; they're dying to come down to be a spiritual person, to be born into and become a member of a spiritual family, so that he or she can see the Master immediately, without going through searching, without going through obligation, obstruction or trouble of any kind. If you are born into a spiritual family, of course you become a spiritual practitioner. Before being born, you are already vegetarian. You are ready to get initiation any time after you are old enough. So, there are countless souls hovering around, waiting to be born into your family. Sometimes he or she can go in the front door with full-flying colors and all glory. But sometimes he has to sneak in the back door when you are not aware, using a different means to come in.

So, do not despise these beings or the vehicle that carries the being until he comes out to us. In fact, marriage in a spiritual sense should be like this: Whenever you express your feelings of love for each other, physically or sexually, you should also remember: 'This is a chance that I can offer myself; I can offer my body as a temple for a new being to come, to be liberated by a living Master. This is the chance I am willing to give to my other brothers or sisters who are so much longing to come to this world to meet the living Master.'

Giving a soul a chance to be born

The souls don't always meet a living Master, because if their time comes, they will have to incarnate quickly somewhere else. And it's not necessarily over there that they could meet the Master in that country or in that time. So, whenever the Master is somewhere, living and moving around, the souls are dying to come down; they are praying for it. But many

spiritual practitioners, afterwards, do not want to give this chance to other beings anymore. They take contraception or something and just enjoy the expression of physical love, but they forsake the noble purpose that goes along with it, which is to offer a chance for another being to be born into a spiritual-ready family.

Of course, I am not telling anyone what to do. I am just saying to you what you want to hear, or what some of you want to hear, in case you see some cases like this. For instance, some of our sisters or brothers have kids without getting a proper certificate – a ‘stamp’ to be husband and wife, or to have a real father or whatever. All are God’s children. Whoever brought him or her into the physical world is only a vehicle, only the means for that soul to come here and meet the living teaching and become liberated.

This kind of chance, you don’t have in billions or trillions of years, because you can see how difficult it is. Even if any Master comes, how many people want to follow? And then, how many people want to stay after following? And how many people truly practice, even staying? Very few! Every day, how many new souls come into the world? But not too many new initiates come into our family. So, any newly born soul who comes directly into your spiritual family, that is the purpose for that one. He is there to practice. That’s why he came. There is no question, no second thought about that guy. So, any time, if our spiritual person has a kid, welcome him and help him or help her, in any way you can.

RECOGNIZING THE WONDERFUL NATURE OF ANIMALS ⁶⁴

Dogs say hi to everyone; it's so beautiful. They know what you need and are very therapeutic because they know who needs love. For example, there are programs in hospitals and homes for the elderly and for sick children where they bring dogs in to just love the people. Whoever the dog puts its paws on or licks feels much better afterwards, because they feel loved. Animals love unconditionally! Even though they might never see you again, they'll give you everything, the whole thing. A dog licks whomever he loves.

Dogs and cats especially know exactly what's going on. So, they come and touch the people who need it. The dogs who visit homes and hospitals are already trained, so they're not too unruly. They just come to visit the old people or the children or the terminally ill and make the people feel great. The patients love it so much that they keep asking for more. Because dogs have this gift: They can communicate love without having to say or do anything. We can keep saying ‘I love you’ the whole day long and still no one believes us. Maybe it's because we don't mean what we say!

Most people can't know the inside of a dog because dogs don't talk. We can't even understand each other as humans so it's very difficult for a human to understand the inside of a dog. That's why, after a while a person might say, ‘This dog is no good,’ and throw the dog out. The animal shelters are full of dogs ready to die. If people don't adopt them, after only one day to a week, they can be killed.

64. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., June 6, 2001 (Originally in English).

People don't take time; they just want to kill things. They don't understand that it's a living being, and after a while, the dog messes up. If you don't train them well, they misbehave. Then the person gets fed up because the dog might chew the furniture and other things. Most people don't even know that dogs need toys. They also need company and time to play with their owners, and not just eat food and guard the house. Even guard dogs need affection just like anyone else.

Especially, if you take in a lone dog or a cat, they in turn take you as a partner or family member. Sometimes they even fall in love with you or at least become very, very attached to you. So, if you're the one who's the partner and you don't care for his or her emotional needs, of course he'll become destructive or depressed and grow to be very undisciplined. And then we blame the dog for being bad.

How can a dog be good if it's tied at the neck all day long sitting in the sun, unable to go anywhere or do anything? The dog doesn't have company and doesn't have love, only food. Even we humans don't live just for food. Also, we know of many things we can do; we can do anything we want. We have a lot of choices to help diffuse our depression or loneliness, and even then we complain that we're lonely, isolated and so on.

We have so many choices. We can pursue as many activities as we want, but dogs can't! If you tie a dog to a tree, what's he going to do? Or, what if you cage him all day long until you come home at night or just lock him up inside the house eighteen hours a day? Then you come home, give him a little food, pat him on the head and say, 'Good boy' and then 'Good night!' So, a lot of people just take dogs or cats in, thinking they're like toys. They call them pets or toys, but they're not. They're wonderful beings. They have so many gifts that we don't have. People don't realize that, and they treat animals really badly.

In the bible, God said, 'I will make the animal as your helper,' meaning our friend. That's why we should never eat them or mistreat them because God's intention in creating animals was to help us. They help in different ways, similar to a shepherd. But you have to train them in their profession. Even with a shepherd, you have to train him in how to herd your sheep.

Most people train dogs for hunting, killing and so on, which is no good. If people leave their dogs outside and don't really take care of them, they can become flea or tick infested and they suffer a lot. But since they can't talk and can't take care of themselves, they rely only on their owners. And they're so loyal and faithful that they won't go anywhere, even to seek help. So, if we're the solely responsible person and we neglect him or her, it's very cruel. It's not human.

If you don't want them, you'd better not have them, and if you have them you'd better treat them nicely. It's a lot of work, but the reward is that they love you eternally. They'd lay down their lives for you if it came to that.

When I read stories about animals, I can't help but love them. Apart from having love for all beings, these kinds of stories touch your heart and make you love them more. So, the people who neglect animals or who don't know how to treat them properly are just ignorant. They don't know about dogs, about the inside nature of these wonderful beings. They think they're just animals. Maybe because they're smaller than we are, we look down on them. But that's not right.

Honoring all life maintains nature's balance

Animals are our brothers and sisters, and it's very important that we know how to live with them harmoniously and respectfully because they're there for a reason. You can see that certain birds and animals carry out special jobs in the world. Some, like vultures, even clean up garbage. Of course, they make a mess of it, too! But their job has something to do with the whole environment, the balance of our planetary ecosystem. They help balance nature to keep the atmosphere good and clean.

Everything has something to do. For example, trees are here to give oxygen to the planet. Without trees, we'd die. Really, we would. We'd die without trees because we'd have no more oxygen, and there would be less water because there'd be no trees to attract the water and retain the moisture when it's there. So, all things on this planet, including us, are inter-related and are helping each other to make our life here comfortable and liveable.

If we don't know that, then we're killing ourselves. Every time we kill a tree or kill an animal, we're killing a little part of ourselves. If we have to cut trees, we should replant more. For example, plant three more. But even that takes time; the tree has to grow up. So, if you intend to cut trees, you should plant others beforehand. Because it takes a long time for a tree to be able to produce good air and absorb the bad air for us. Bigger, older trees have a greater ability to do this than younger trees, even though they may appear to be the same size. Just like when we're older, we have more abilities and more knowledge about things, including spiritual wisdom. Our growth is similar.

Selflessness and innocence make everything wonderful

You just have to be sincere and then everything will turn out all right. And don't have expectations! You should do it because you love to do it for others, then it works wonders. Everything is like that, but people still haven't learned this, or at least many haven't. It's just the ego that stands in the way.

If you do everything like this without ego, with no strings attached, just unconditionally and for other people's benefit, not for yourself and not even in the hope that Master will come, not in the hope of getting merit or getting a blessing from God – not for anything at all – then it's wonderful. It feels very good to join this kind of group and to help or interact with these kinds of people. I like that very much.

I wish all of us could become like that. The same is true when different people ask the same thing. Sometimes I feel very irritated by one person but not another, even though they ask the same question. It's the selflessness, the innocence that makes everything good. Even though it may be the same question, it's the different motive or inner purity that makes people feel good or not. The same is true of actions, whether they make people feel positive or not about joining, helping or even watching. We all know that, but not all of us can practice it.

That's the problem: The ego, which always wants to do things for profit, for fame, for fortune, for whatever, even for blessings from heaven! That's also not the right way to do things. We have to do things because we like to do them, to share goodness with people and make others happy just as we are. If we benefit from something, we want to give it to others, and that's the only motive we should have.

But unfortunately, some of us haven't learned this, even those who are long-time practitioners. On the other hand, some people are new but they're quick. Perhaps because they've practiced in many lifetimes before, they're very natural, pure and selfless.

Love your pets as yourself

If you have a dog, you have to treat him at least like yourself – with good hygiene, food and love. He's like a member of the family, only different looking. Every time we take the dog out to relieve himself on the grass, we must pick up the 'deposit.' Or we should have plastic ready to catch it, so it doesn't spread any dirt, disease or filth to other people or to other dogs. If your dog is sick and he relieves himself everywhere and other dogs step on it, those other dogs will get sick, too. And so every time we bring him out to relieve himself, when we bring him back in, we should clean his whole body. I will show you how.

For example, you can get a kitchen towel or any towel. This one [Master shows the towel She is holding.] is too small, but it's just for demonstration. A kitchen towel is tougher. It doesn't tear. So, on the dog, you have to clean everything, because it might smell or stink. Clean the whole body, up and down and so on. First, clean his leg. [Master cleans Her poodle.] And then clean his paw, and then all four paws and the pee and the poo. And then he can come into the house. Because then, whatever disease or bacteria he accumulated has been de-sanitized. I use lemon water, but you may have other things. Use lemon water or vinegar water to clean the house, so the house doesn't have chemicals in it. Because the dogs sleep on the floor, and they lick the floor when they eat and drop their food. If they eat off of something you cleaned with chemicals, they die or they get sick. And then you spend either the whole money or the whole time for the doctor bill, or you throw the dog out.

This is a problem with a lot of people. They punish the dog for their own stupidity, carelessness and lovelessness. So, many dogs end up in the animal shelter when it's not their fault at all. It's the human's fault and stupidity. Many humans don't deserve dogs. Sometimes I'm driving outside and I see pickup trucks in the summer heat of Florida; the people put a couple of dogs in this roofless bed behind the pickup truck. There is nothing to hang on to; it's just metal. And then they get too hot. They run all around and sometimes fall down behind the truck.

Maybe they get used to it. I don't know how long they have to be used to it. But they probably have headaches when they come home. And they cannot tell you if they have a headache. If you sat in that pickup truck all that long distance, you would have a headache, too. And you even have long, big hair to cover yourself. Those dogs are such poor dogs. Some dogs have short hair; some don't even have hair. When I see this, I think humans don't deserve dogs. Dogs are so loving, so kind, and so faithful. They would die for you. They lay down their life for you whenever danger comes. Their guarding instinct comes out, and they would die for you, any time, with no regrets! But some humans don't deserve dogs, really. So, it breaks my heart every time I see people treat animals this way. At the same time, if someone says you are an animal, it is a curse. It means you are very low, bad and stupid. But can you imagine anyone more stupid than we are sometimes? Some of us are stupid.

Of course, some dogs are raised to live outside. But still, you have to take care so they don't have fleas. There are preventive medicines; they don't even cost that much. Once a month, you can apply some worm medication and flea medication, and he will be free of suffering. Once a month, that's it. Or, there are shampoos to keep him flea-free and things

like that. But it's better to prevent than to kill. We don't want killing. Even worms or fleas, we don't want to kill them.

So, just prevent it by keeping the dog healthy and clean. Because outside, even though the grass looks good, sometimes it has bacteria or worms or eggs attached to it. So then, if we bring the animal into the house, our house is exactly as dirty as the outside. Many of you also walk with shoes in the house, and that's how the dog gets sick, too. It's not your shoes that are dirty. It's the things you pick up outside that make your shoes dirty. And then you bring them into the house. Sometimes the wheels of your car also pick up things like feces or urine from a sick dog outside. And then when you bring it into the house, your dog licks the floor or your shoes and gets sick.

So, if you want to have animals, make sure that your house is so clean you could sleep on the floor, so clean you could lick the floor and feel comfortable. You can clean your house with half vinegar and half water. Fifty-fifty. Clean with it all over, for sanitizing and deodorizing. So, if the dog happens to pee there, he will not smell it again. Because if he smells his pee, he will pee in that place again the next time.

These are just some examples. But if you want an animal, you'd better study first how to care for it. You have to study whether that particular animal is suitable to your personality and your lifestyle, also. That's one of the reasons people throw dogs or cats away, because they are not compatible. They have a hyperactive dog when they are weak and feeble, like an old lady who couldn't handle it. Or a very messy dog that they don't train and don't know how to handle. Or a very playful dog with people who don't like to play or don't have time to play. And then they throw away the dog, because they think the dog is bad, bad, bad.

So, there are many different types of dogs or animals that could be suitable for you. But you have to study before, also to find out whether taking care of that dog or cat is too much for you or not. Then, if it is too much, you'd better not take it. You have to be honest, that's all. It's not that you don't love all animals equally. You just have to know how to love and which one to love, so the love doesn't turn into trouble and then pain for both of you. Because the last time, one of you gave my dog away and then you let that dog run away and get lost. And it broke my heart for a long time.

So, if you get an animal, you have to commit, no matter what. And if you can't, you have to find him a good home. Wait to find him a good private home. Advertise in the pet shop. They will find a good home for your dog. And give him away; don't sell him. Give him away as a friend, as a gift. Someone will like your dog. You can describe his personality, what he likes and what he doesn't like. And there will be one person who is suitable for that kind of dog. They will pick him up in time.

Don't give your dog to the pound, because they will kill him in one day. Sometimes they do! It's not always one day, but from one day to one week. The maximum is two weeks. So, he won't last long there. If that's what you want, it's okay. But make sure you know. I want to make sure you know that your animals can be put to death in as quick a time as one day in the pound. But some shelters are 'no kill.' You could also give your dog to that kind of shelter. Describe everything about the animal's personality so that later the shelter can match him with people who would love to have that kind of personality.

There is always a solution. Don't throw away your animals, because they are living beings, just like us. When you look into the eyes of an animal, sometimes you will realize, 'We are equal. We are the same.' And that feeling will send shivers all over your body, and will give

you an enlightenment that you would never dream of having. I told you that animals can teach you – also flowers, trees and everything. See how well he behaves. [Master gestures toward the poodle sleeping on Her lap.] How can anyone throw away this kind of dog? He is so loving.

THE SECRETS REVEALED BY MASTER'S HAIR ⁶⁵

The secrets revealed by Master's hair

In Korea, some people invented a very interesting machine that can tell you about your DNA, your sickness and everything, and, by the way, can tell how many chakras you have open and how much. Maybe you can go and check it out. [Laughter]

I was very tired this time, and one of the brothers, who knows someone who invented a machine like that, took my hair and went there to check it out. The person didn't know who I am, and the brother did not tell. So, he came back with the whole list: All the chakras are open, and to the highest degree. [Applause]

Perfect enlightenment and the body code

Also interestingly, the person found a body code. He said that he had never seen a body code like this before and anyone who has this body code can be enlightened anytime, suddenly. So, maybe that's why I was enlightened so quickly. If you want to blame anything, blame my body code. The Buddha had a different body code, I guess. His body code takes six years for enlightenment; my body code takes six months. [Laughter]

Is our brother here? He's one of your brothers. He was taking my hair to check my disease only. And the doctor was very surprised, and said, 'Who is this? It's an honor to work for a patient like this. Who is this patient?' He kept asking about this all the time; I don't know how to explain, either. I don't know why I was enlightened quickly. Brother, you explain. Tell them everything you told me yesterday.

The other-worldly machine

[Disciple Dr. Kim [Originally narrated in Korean.]]

- K. *It is a kind of magnetic measurement tool. The usual people have a chakra degree of four, seven, or something like that, but You have twenty-one. The person who was operating the machine was very surprised and very honored to have this kind of person's hair. This machine might be used in the higher worlds already, so it's very good of the person who invented this machine. Usually, a person's body code can be divided into sixty four systems. But Your code is very special; he had never seen it before. He said he was very honored to see that, and the person who has this hair could get enlightenment immediately. The person who invented the machine and the person who operates the company are also spiritual practitioners like us. Maybe they make special things, not ordinary ones.*
- M. He's not a disciple. He didn't know that the hair belongs to me. Only after he had the results, he asked, 'Who is this person?' But I told him to keep quiet. Today you pressured me two or three times about why I got complete enlightenment so quickly and others do not. I forgot and I blurted it out, but there's nothing secret, nothing.

65. International six-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 20, 2000 (Originally in English).

- K. *As to the chakra, the invisible halo or aura of an enlightened Master can be measured by the machine.*
- M. It can measure that, yes. This machine is very advanced; not everyone can use it. He just found this out by accident. We did not mean to find out about this; it just came out by chance, by the way. It was hot cold, hot cold, so fast, and I kept changing clothes back and forth. The body temperatures were very different and I felt very tired, so the brother worried that I might have some serious disease. He said that in Korea they had invented a very good machine that can tell the disease by the hair, so he asked me for some hair. I cut some and gave it to him. And in case, because I had dyed my hair and it would maybe not be accurate, I gave some old, long, black hair that a resident had. He gave them together, and both hairs had the same results. [Applause]

I am very thrilled. Once he introduced the machine to me, I knew what it was, and I am very happy for Korea that they have such a machine. It is not from this world. It is transmitted through this person to use, to help humankind in this world. It's not one of the best, the highest in the higher worlds, but it's useful for this world. He is a very rare person; he is a scientist from another world. But, of course, I cannot prove it to you, never mind; I am just telling the brother. This machine is so advanced that ordinary people cannot use it; ordinary doctors cannot use it even though they have buttons and things like a computer. You have to concentrate here [Master points to Her wisdom eye.] in order to operate the machine. Even though he is not a Quan Yin practitioner, he practices another meditation method and his concentration is very deep – deep enough to contact the inner world to have instructions to make this machine. He brought it with him.

I think in some other country like America or Japan, they also have a similar machine. Soon in the future, we will use this kind or a similar kind to discover and heal sickness. You can walk into a room full of these vibrations from the machine and be healed. You won't need too many operations and too much medicine that are so painful. In one of the very, very first talks to the Formosan disciples, I mentioned how people heal in the higher worlds. They just use Light and vibration. This is one fraction of the ways on the more advanced planets.

Our brother also got a machine and tried to use it, but only when he concentrated well would the machine answer him. If he thought of any other kind of things, the machine wouldn't respond. It's just like UFO's or other phenomena. Even if we had UFO's on this planet, rarely could people use them because you have to use the mind, be trained in the mind – not in the technique and in the hand, but trained in the mind, programmed in the mind; they use the mind power to operate the machine. It's very interesting that our world is getting something from the higher dimensions, the higher planets.

Actually, I'm just happy to tell you that I am not sick of any kind – just overly tired. [Applause] Anyway, in order to find out whether I am sick or not, he had to find my body type, body code, from the sixty-four. Humans are divided into sixty-four kinds of body types and eight patterns can have cancer. If your body code fits in those eight types, then you are prone to cancer. Every body type has different categories, like the special eight types are for cancer and are called 'cancer type.' People in these eight kinds of body codes have cancer, genetically have cancer, or are easily prone to cancer. And, for example, if you are in that type of body type and you smoke, and you drink as well, then you will get cancer more easily and more definitely than other body

types. In order to find out whether I have any sickness, he had to find my body type and therefore, he realized that the body type is so rare. He had never seen this before, and he's a very famous doctor here; he's seen hundreds of thousands, and maybe millions of people. I'm very impressed by his invention and his deep concentration. He's a very dedicated scientist.

I hope that in the future more doctors can be trained to use this machine. It would be very helpful to the patients. They won't need to go through a lot of probing, poking, and needles for all kinds of blood and samples. These are very painful procedures to find out what your sickness is. This is very simple. Some samples of your hair, and they can tell you everything – if the doctor can use the machine. Otherwise, the machine doesn't respond.

Anyway, I am so happy for the Korean people. Because they concentrate very deeply, they have a lot of things. I'm very grateful for the other doctor's dedication. He found out about my unique, exceptional body code just because he wanted to find my sickness, not because he knew who I am and was trying to find out anything. It's just by accident that he found out. And then he found out about all the chakras just also by chance.

It's funny that yesterday I got it, and today you asked everything about why I was enlightened so quickly, and why no one else is the same; and why the Buddha took six years, and Jesus long years. I don't know, maybe it was my body code. The doctor said this type of body code is very rare. He had never seen it before. Whoever has this body code can get enlightened any time; I mean, at any time he or she can be enlightened. So, maybe that's why when I wanted enlightenment, I got it right away. Six months were for the complete, but the immediate, I already had.

The power of concentration

K. *Thank You, Master, for praising the machine.*

M. No, I am praising the doctor, the inventor of the machine. The machine is useless without his mind, without his concentration and dedication. It's he who makes the machine work. He brought his power and knowledge from the higher world because the machine, if given to someone who doesn't have concentration power, won't work. The brother said if he thinks of all kinds of stupid things or any other thing instead of concentrating, the machine doesn't respond to him. So, he has to concentrate. You see; the power of concentration can even move machines. All the UFO's you have heard of are all operated by mind power, concentration power.

Is there anyone else who wants to get complete enlightenment in a short time? You are all enlightened already. It is just that you have to concentrate on enlightenment and know yourself better. You concentrate a little and you think of every other thing, and you concentrate a little again and remember every other thing instead of your great self. That's why you are not completely aware of your greatness. It's not that you are not enlightened; you are. But to be aware of the complete enlightenment, you must devote more time, more concentration. It's difficult.

I was a little blind – blind for enlightenment. Suppose, now that I know everything already, you tell me, 'Go back to the Himalayas; you will get more enlightenment.' I would say, 'No, thank you!' At that time, I was blind. I was blindly in love with God alone, and too stupid to be aware of danger, any trouble or any impossibility. Now,

my eyes are opened already, my wisdom eye is also opened, and I'm scared of what I did. I could not do it again. It is okay if you are really so blind like that; you would get it. God looked down and said, 'My God, what a stupid kid! I have to protect Her. She wants it so much that She became so stupid and blind. Okay, give Her the enlightenment so She won't die.' [Laughter] God felt sorry for me, I guess.

Remember the story I told you about two guys who were seeking enlightenment? One was a monk, and he practiced diligently. Every day, he hanged one leg with an iron chain to the tree. He hanged himself there all day to get enlightenment. And then there was another guy who also wanted enlightenment, but he didn't know what to do. He happened to pass by and see the monk hanging by one leg with the iron chain to the tree, and he said, 'What are you doing?' And the monk said, 'I heard that if you hang by your leg on the tree like that, God will feel sorry for you and you'd have enlightenment.' So, when the second guy heard that, he went and found anything, some straw, and put the straw together and made a very quick and simple straw string. Then he prepared to hang his leg from the tree, and the monk said, 'Oh my God, are you stupid! You know I have been hanging with the iron chain so long already, and I still haven't got enlightenment. If you hang with a straw rope like that, you might fall down and die before you get enlightenment. You go and find an iron chain; it's safer.' But the second guy said, 'I don't have time to wait; it's okay.' And so he hanged himself, and his rope broke, of course, because it was straw and very stupidly put together. And God came and caught him, and didn't let him die, squash himself on the rock. And so the one with the iron chain complained, 'My Lord, what kind of God You are! I have hanged myself for many years already, and You never appeared to me; and this stupid guy comes along with a straw string and then You appeared to him, helped him, and protected him! What kind of God is this?'

I hope you don't hang yourself tonight; this is just a parable. I don't have any stories about myself, so I borrowed a story of other people. I don't have stories like Jesus and Buddha, so I borrow them. There's no need to have stories about myself. There's plenty already from them that I can borrow, and never finish. In the Buddha and Jesus' time, maybe they had a lot of time, they had nothing much to do, and this life, we are busy – immediate enlightenment or nothing! Everything nowadays is very fast. We have to go with the fashion, with the era.

Quan Yin method enhances the body code

- Q. *Master, I have a question about body type. I would like to know if we practice the Quan Yin method, could our body code be changed after we practice the Quan Yin method?*
- M. I don't think so. I think you have to go and ask the inventor. I don't think it changes because there are two types of hair that I gave to the doctor: The one that's now, the new one, just cut yesterday, and the one that the resident gave from a long time before when I still had long hair. And the two hairs gave the same results, so that means even though I have practiced long since then I still haven't changed. That means we don't change; we're born with it. But we could change our vibrations, change everything else, adding to it. The body code is just something physical. But then certain types have certain types of body code, I guess. But anyway, the brother can experience something new and maybe he will report to you.
- Q. *The code never changes.*

M. The body code, I guess, is just like your appearance – already there. But you could add in just by practicing the Quan Yin method, just glorify it, that's all. Like your face is like that; you could put on more makeup and change your hairstyle to make you look more beautiful, but your face doesn't change. I don't think the body code changes, but it helps to practice the Quan Yin method. For example, you have cancer, it becomes less, or it disappears. Many of our brothers and sisters have this kind of story. It helps a lot.

FAITH IS THE MOTHER OF ALL MIRACLES⁶⁶

Many of you touch me so deeply, with your true faith in the teaching of the Master, not because of my physical body, but because of the teaching of the Master. And that's how you survive in this world without a scratch; you're always protected by your own faith. It's like Jesus says, 'Your faith can make you whole,' and this is like that.

Faith can overcome a lot of things. But it is a gift, also; it's not that you want to have faith and then you can have it. Some people are so poisoned for a long time; even though they pray for faith, they can't have it. So, these people, you must feel sorry for them; it's not their fault. They have been brainwashed in all kinds of negative influence and thinking, so that it is very difficult for them to stand up. Oh, for you, these lucky people, I look at you and I feel so happy because you are really okay. It's not because you believe me, because there is not a 'me' anyway; it's not because you believe me that I am happy, because I'm flattered; it's not that. I am happy because you are okay, because you are protected and you are happy and I don't have to worry about you guys. So, I save a lot of time, so that I can worry about some other 'sick' kids. And because you are okay, you can also help me take care of many other new people, and other less strong people.

And that's why I'm happy, not because you believe me, you believe me or not; it is good for you that you believe me. Because belief is the mother of every miracle. Even if your Master is no good, your faith is good, and that's good for you. It really is, because you are so pure. That's why you can believe a person who's a stranger to you and not related to you. That means you are good. That doesn't mean that I'm good or not good; I don't know yet. [Master laughs.] [Audience: Yes, You are.]

What I mean is, I may be good, or I may be no good, but if you believe in me that means a hundred percent that you are good. That's the thing that you should know. Whether I am good or not is difficult to tell maybe, but if you believe in me that means you are good already. That is definitely good for you.

Remember I told you the story about the thief who came out? There was a story about a couple who had been without spiritual guidance or aspiration for a long time, and they decided that now that they're old they'd better go out and find some spiritual Master, but they didn't know who to find. So, they went into the forest, and they sat there and prayed and they made a promise to God that whoever came, the first one, that would be their Master. And a thief came along [Laughter] and made them stay there, and then they did stay, and then God did appear. It was their faith because God is within you. It is not that I make God for you.

So, if you believe in me that means you're so pure, no matter if I'm good or not, you're so pure that you believe, and this faith will protect you from everything. And it makes you a blessing, a gift, to this world and the next. And that's why I'm happy; it's not because you

66. International six-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 13, 2000 (Originally in English).

believe me that I'm happy. I'm happy to be friends with such pure people. It's an honor for me to have you as a gift in my life. That's why I'm happy.

DEVELOPING YOUR OWN PERSONALITY ⁶⁷

Sometimes you have to understand, you take what's necessary, and in different situations, you have to do it right. Don't always do everything that Master says. What I say is what I know. You yourself have to be flexible and learn your own way and do your own thing, so that each one of you retains your own individuality, without everyone becoming a Ching Hai copy. It's very boring. I don't like copies. I like you to develop the way you are, just like a rose next to a lily. So, not everyone becomes half-rose, half-lily. I don't even know what kind of flower that is!

It's better if you are what you are. Because you are unique. And that's what makes us special, what makes the world beautiful. That's what God wants. Creation has to be different, has to be very colorful. Don't just copy what I say or what I do. You have to know what is good, what is right. Different country, different custom. Before, for example, one time I highlighted my hair, and then the next week also everyone highlighted their hair – the monks even! [Master and audience laugh.] Some of them. And then, I remember I shaved my hair, and a lot of people shaved theirs. And then I leave my hair long, and everyone leaves their hair long, even men. And then when I cut my hair, people cut their hair, too. It's so funny. Don't do that, okay? You don't follow a Master because of their way of life. Everyone is different. You follow the teaching, so that you can develop your own wisdom.

Anyway, do what you want. If you feel fine with that, it's okay, too. It just looks funny. It's like some people learn with Japanese monks, and then they change their houses all into Japanese stuff. And people learn with an Indian monk or Indian master, and they change their houses into all Indian. You know, they wear Indian clothes, decorate their houses like Indians, and eat Indian food. [Master and everyone.] Too bad, just to become like the master. But it's not from outside. So, sometimes, in everything, if you follow to the extreme, it's no fun. You have to know freedom of expression, freedom to grow, freedom to be yourself. I want you to be yourself, a better self only, not a copy of me. Because I do things that look good on me. But when you do it, it doesn't look good on you, because you are different. I cannot copy you and still look good. And you cannot copy me and still look good.

You have to be yourself, completely free of all kinds of prejudice, preconceived ideas, all kinds of tradition or anything that is not good for you. You have to always think: 'In this situation, what shall I do? Or what would the Master do?' It is different! So, learn the method, have the same wisdom, but use it in different ways. It's just like electricity. It is the same, but you use it in different ways. It's not that just because we have electricity we light here, and then you light everywhere. The fridge and the cooker, we also have to use. God makes different personalities for different reasons, and you are fine. You just refine yourselves, but don't change to copy exactly like everyone else.

67. International six-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 12, 2000 (Originally in English).

MAINTAINING A POSITIVE OUTLOOK AND THE CONDITIONS WILL FOLLOW ⁶⁸

Don't stay where the illness is; don't even go there. Don't go to that miserable situation or to the places where your soul doesn't belong, but instead concentrate on the present and the blessings you have. Concentrate on whatever's at hand that's nice and lovely. If you always focus on the bad side of things, you'll forget the goodness that's right in front of you.

You have so much, but you don't realize what you have. So, I feel very sorry for you – not for your sickness but for your stupidity, for your whining quality, for your thinking, which is damaging to you. We have everything; we already have exactly what we need at exactly the right moment, and we chose it to be that way because we're perfect.

When you whine too much or pity yourself too much, you make yourself less than a dignified person. No wonder your life is no good and you have sickness all the time! Because that's all you have. That's all you concentrate on, that's what you think about so you become it. You let everything pile up over your head and overwhelm your happiness, and then it controls your life instead of you taking control of everything. That's why your life is miserable. But no one can help you except yourself. You have to be fed up with this kind of mentality in order to get well.

PAINTING YOUR LIFE COLORFULLY ⁶⁹

After we practice the Quan Yin method, our level rises a little higher and we lose a lot of interest in life. We still do things and work, but we don't have as much attachment and excitement about life. Some of us are like that. Sometimes we see there is no use in having a boyfriend, because we have lost interest in sex and everything else; so what's the use? And then when he feels that you have no interest like that, he also feels no interest. Or maybe he feels, 'What's the use of having a girlfriend?' if he's not getting anything. So, of course he gets bored and you get bored, and both of you are bored, and what can we do? It's okay; just enjoy, and don't be too serious. You forget we are just remembering that we are saints.

Everything else is the same, but just adding into our lives. There's no need to be so serious about being a saint; just enjoy whatever comes. For example, suppose I am a Buddha. Suppose just because I am a Buddha, I don't need to say, 'Oh, I don't need all these flowers! These are all ephemeral; these are impermanent; what are all these for? Tomorrow they're gone, so don't put anything here for me. Don't put anything here. They are impermanent. They are all illusion, maya!' I don't need to do that. I enjoy it; I see that the flowers are beautiful, but my heart doesn't get attached to them. If you give me flowers, it's fine. If you don't, I won't die.

Don't expect anything; or not expect anything; don't expect this way or that way, and then you won't feel bored or disappointed. Go to see movies, enjoy life, take a walk, listen to music, hold hands, walk together in the park, do anything. Just enjoy that moment as long as it lasts; be romantic. Look at the moon together. Write poetry to him, paint his ugly face for fun, whatever. Just hang around.

68. International six-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 12, 2000 (Originally in English).

69. International six-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 10, 2000 (Originally in English).

When I said that I was bored yesterday, it was just one of my passing moods because everything doesn't work in my room, and I am too bored, explaining all the time, wasting my time, and I want to have a lot of time to spend with you. I don't want to spend a lot of time fixing my toilet and my bathroom, and looking for my underwear, for example. Because they arrange things in such a complicated way, and I am bored with all this fuss. But that doesn't mean I'm bored with life. It doesn't mean I'm bored with you. I'm very happy that you came. In every one of you I'm very interested, because I am sure that if I have time to spend time with every one of you, I am sure everyone of you will have a lot of interesting things to tell me. And I can learn a lot of nice stories from you and we will have a wonderful time together.

So, it's just that, for the sake of pacifying the world I can't afford to always have a personal relationship with every of you. But each one of us has to develop fast and then also help our neighbors to develop so that our world is not such an unbearable place, or disasters don't come too quickly, so that everyone still has time to remember his God nature. So therefore, I can't afford to spend time with you. Otherwise, each one of you is a wonderful piece of creation, and is a wonderful book of poetry, and life, a real thing, a real creature, with a real history. Each one of you has a real history and you should treasure that. You should treasure your boyfriend's good point of view, and his good qualities, and his wonderful inner wisdom and nature. You must dig that out and enjoy it.

Don't just look at the surface. Don't just think, 'Oh, if I become a nun I will be better, a saint or more quickly enlightened.' 'If I have a better boyfriend I will feel better.' It's not true. Whatever you put into a relationship, that's what you get out. It's the same with life and enlightenment and everything else. Whatever we put in is what we get out. We are the only ones who really create our own life and experience. Change whatever is necessary to make yourself feel better. Change your hairstyle, change your make-up, change your clothes, change your lifestyle, change something! Make it nice and more interesting. If you are an interesting person, you will never feel very bored, anywhere.

SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES MUST BE BALANCED BY SPIRITUAL WISDOM ⁷⁰

Our world has developed very speedily over the last century: In technology, in science and in many other aspects. But it behooves us to develop spiritual wisdom along with scientific discovery. Otherwise, we'll be in danger of imbalance; our way of life will become too one-sided. We'll be too attracted to and reliant on technology and machinery instead of relying on our true self and the true world, which are more everlasting. We're in danger of destroying ourselves if we don't have enough spiritual wisdom to handle these technological advancements.

THE SUPREME MASTER CHING HAI, THE QUAN YIN METHOD AND THE CHINESE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA ⁷¹

[On May 6, 2000 at the fourth seminar in a series of eight panel discussions, 'Religions and the Chinese People Worldwide,' Supreme Master Ching Hai was invited to speak about the Quan Yin method and its development in Southeast Asia. The seminar was held at the Academia Sinica, a prestigious national academic research institute in Formosa. The conveners of the seminar were the Southeast Asia Research Project from the

70. International six-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 8, 2000 (Originally in English).

71. Public seminar, Taipei, Formosa, May 6, 2000 (Originally in Chinese).

Academia Sinica, the Taiwan Religious Institute, the Central Broadcasting Corporation, the Overseas Chinese Research Group of the Contemporary History Research Faculty from the Academia Sinica, and the Chinese Interdisciplinary Association. Numerous professors, research fellows, media professionals, and elite personnel from many fields participated in the discussion. This seminar on the Quan Yin method (presented below) was also broadcast locally to the public on May 20 by the Central Broadcasting Corporation. In addition, the discussion was available worldwide simultaneously on the Central Broadcasting Corporation's web site at www.cbs.org.tw.]

[Chairman (Mr. Chu Hong-yuan from the Department of Modern History, the Academia Sinica)]

- C. *Good day to You, Supreme Master Ching Hai, Professor Ruaan Jy-sheng of National Taiwan University, and friends from the academic and public sectors. It is not often that the Academia Sinica has an opportunity, as it does today, to comprehensively explore a topic from both the religious and academic perspectives.*

I am the convener of the Overseas Chinese Research Group of the Institute of Modern History of the Academia Sinica. Our group has been sponsoring a series of lectures over the past few years. Beginning this year, we have, at the recommendation and with the support of Director Lin Mei-rong of the Taiwan Religious Institute, incorporated religious perspectives into our research on the Chinese in Southeast Asia. Thus, we have invited an important religious leader to this seminar at the Academia Sinica today. This is the fourth in a series of eight lectures. The first three lectures were on Islam, Christianity, and I-kuan Tao. The topic today is a very special one, namely, the Quan Yin method, a new path led and taught by Supreme Master Ching Hai. Let us learn more about this new spiritual dimension and its tremendous impact on Chinese people around the world.

We are coordinating the Chinese project with the Southeast Asian research project, also conducted by the Academia Sinica. This combined effort is proceeding under the guidance of Professor Hsiao Hsing-huang. Professor Hsiao has demonstrated his support for this activity by contributing an honorarium for each lecture. It is not much; nonetheless, it indicates his moral support for this academic study. We will be presenting this honorarium to Supreme Master Ching Hai for Her lecture. [Master immediately contributed the honorarium back to the convener.] In addition, our overseas Chinese research group, which is now conducting studies on the Chinese in Southeast Asia, has prepared a token fee for Professor Ruaan, who will be serving as commentator today. But this is not important. More important is the cooperation evidenced in this event between the different institutes of the Academia Sinica working together on comprehensive research topics.

We are especially delighted to have representatives from two organizations with us today. We have the Central Broadcasting Corporation, represented by Mr. Wen. Mr. Wen is the producer of the radio program 'The Overseas Chinese Community on the Air,' which is broadcast to listeners worldwide. Today's lecture will be simulcast on his program to overseas audiences, and so he will record the entire lecture today.

We would also like to thank the Chinese Interdisciplinary Association for being with us today. Since its establishment nineteen years ago, the association has launched a series of interdisciplinary activities with the support of university professors around Formosa. Nearly two hundred individuals with doctoral degrees are currently working with the Association to promote various interdisciplinary events. Research on

religions, as well as Southeast Asian Chinese activities, is a highly interdisciplinary subject. Thus, we are delighted that the Chinese Interdisciplinary Association is participating in this seminar. We also have several other important leaders in our audience today. Of course, our greatest appreciation goes to the Academia Sinica for its attention to the lecture series, especially this fourth seminar featuring Supreme Master Ching Hai. Certain newspaper reports have raised concerns, and perhaps some tiny misunderstandings. Professor Yang Kuo-shu, Vice President of the Academia Sinica, as well as several other important administrative officials of the Sinica, have called me several times to discuss this matter. I would like to express my immense gratitude to them for surmounting all obstacles and accepting an activity of this nature.

Since this is basically an academic activity, we must first request that we remain in academic discourse. Supreme Master Ching Hai has traveled to many places, and I have asked that She begins Her lecture by discussing the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. Then, She can elaborate on the development of Her organization, as well as related developments of both past and present. Of course, it is inevitable that Her spiritual teachings will be mentioned, but we hope that the Master will focus Her talks on the Chinese in Southeast Asia. In other words, we hope that She will refrain from discussing any doctrines or activities involved in sharing the Truth, related difficulties, and future prospects in regions outside Southeast Asia, and save these topics for a future time.

Today's seminar will be conducted in two sessions, each lasting approximately one hour. I think that this is a precious opportunity, one that none of you has ever had anywhere in the world, even at the Taoyuan County Stadium (Master's lecture venue the previous day). So, please try to be concise and keep Your discussion within the scope of Southeast Asian Chinese academic research. We hope to gather relevant information on this topic with You serving as our witnesses. Time is precious.

Now that I have completed my basic introduction, let us respectfully invite Supreme Master Ching Hai to speak on the Quan Yin method and the Chinese people in Southeast Asia.

- M. Thank you! Thank you very much! Since I am here at your invitation, let me proceed immediately without being too courteous, so we won't waste any time. Thank you for your trust and for giving me this honor. I have always felt that Formosa is my home, so my return this time does not seem like anything special. I haven't visited Formosa for a long time because I've been very busy abroad.

I delivered a lecture yesterday and you probably were there, and so have some reference. However, since I have promised to deliver this special talk today, I will abide by the guidelines set by our chairman and confine my talk to today's topic. Should I make a slip, please help me make amends.

Perhaps most of you are aware of our presence here, because we have created quite a sensation in Formosa. I mean that the government and the media have helped us become very famous. [Laughter] Although there are misunderstandings, these are nonetheless part of God's arrangement. He does things in His own way. Sometimes, He lets people praise you a lot to make you famous; at other times, He lets people misunderstand you, and that too makes you famous. The second way is not so enjoyable and we don't like it that much. However, Jesus Christ, for example, was misunderstood by many people and subjected to immense suffering, yet He is

worshipped throughout the world today. Shakyamuni Buddha was framed and misunderstood by many people during His lifetime; however, the whole world worships Him today. If these two great Masters had to endure suffering and wrongful accusations, this little bit of suffering should not matter to ordinary people like us. It cleanses our karma. In our group, we are grateful to those who insult or rebuke us, because they cleanse our karma for us. It is inevitable that we will, at some time in our lives, do something that does not appeal to everyone, and that causes misunderstanding among people. When people speak ill of us, it means that our karma is cleansed; we become more prosperous, and will be rewarded after our death.

The beginning

Now I will talk about our development activities. Although we have contact Centers in many countries and places, we have more brothers and sisters in Southeast Asia than anywhere else in the world. By 'brothers and sisters,' I am referring to our fellow practitioners. That's what we call each other because we practice a common method.

Initially, I didn't know anyone in Formosa, but now everyone treats me like a Formosan. I am really honored. Yesterday, I felt as if I had come home. When I'm overseas, people introduce me as someone from Formosa. When we render relief aid to other places, they refer to us as a Formosan group. Therefore, I am just going to stay on here as a Formosan. Even when I am not here physically, my heart and soul will be here. This is something that we cannot change; perhaps I was born here in a previous life. Some people have, during meditation, seen me eating sweet potato leaves in Formosa in a previous life. We share a deep affinity with each other.

Although I didn't know a single soul when I first arrived here many years ago, I was greatly impressed by the warm hospitality that the Formosan people immediately extended toward me. I was ordained here, so I followed the traditional customs. I abided by the rules and disciplined myself. It was just like taking driving lessons and following the words of the instructor. There is a supervisor by our side while we drive strictly and very rigidly according to his instructions. Once we know how to drive, we don't need an instructor anymore; we have become so familiar with the rules that we can drive smoothly and naturally.

The people here took very good care of me when I first came. The temples welcomed me and treated me well. They gave me money when I was in need. I was penniless at the time, but now I am earning some money. Once, I was on a retreat in a temple when, at midnight, about a dozen people came knocking at my door. I was bewildered to see them at that hour. They came in and revealed that the Quan Yin Bodhisattva had asked them to seek me out and learn something from me. I knew few people then, and was on a retreat. I was surprised that those people knew about me, but they said it was the Quan Yin Bodhisattva who had tipped them off. I wasn't ready to teach people, but started to do so because of their intense sincerity.

I am not a Formosan citizen, so I then went to the United States, where I stayed for more than a year. There again, people came to me, claiming that God had told them to come to me at a particular temple. As a result, I established bonds of affinity with the Americans as well. Initially, I shared ties of affinity with the Chinese only, but had to leave Formosa when my visa expired, whereupon I went to the United States. I couldn't, and still can't, stay permanently in Formosa.

After I had developed bonds of affinity with the Americans, the Formosan people asked me to return because they really loved me. I agreed and stayed here for quite some time, which was why our group was able to grow and expand in Formosa. This is a natural affinity. I began to shuttle between Formosa and the United States, and also traveled to other countries later.

I have affinity with the Chinese people. In Southeast Asia, where there are Chinese populations, the news spread by word of mouth. We had not issued any printed or audiovisual publications back then. I was invited to Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, et cetera. Before we extended our reach overseas to America, our group was concentrated mainly in Southeast Asia, especially in areas sharing relations with Formosa and the Chinese people. In Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand, which we have just mentioned, our group members were mainly confined to the Chinese people living there. The people there are mostly of Chinese descent and can speak Mandarin or Chinese dialects like Fukienese or Hakka. Also, one dialect in Thailand is identical to a Chinese dialect. People have discovered that the northern Thai language is exactly the same as a dialect spoken in one area in China's Yunan province. These two peoples can communicate with each other. This proves that we Chinese once lived in Thailand. Singaporeans also speak Chinese.

When I first came to Formosa, the only Chinese words I could speak were 'Is your mother well?' (This is a mistake that foreigners often make when they say the Chinese characters for 'How are you?' in an incorrect sequence.) [Laughter] I didn't really understand the language. When senior practitioners in temples chanted the name 'Amitabha,' it sounded like 'Ami-tofu' to me. I was astounded to hear them repeat the word 'tofu' all day long.

However, I quickly mastered the language because I like the Chinese people very much. They treated me very well, just like a sister. Perhaps it was due to affinities made in previous lives. We could communicate perfectly despite the language barrier. But I was forced to learn some Chinese as I stayed on in Formosa, and I still remember some of it. I haven't forgotten it completely during my stay overseas. However, sometimes my tongue is tied because I have not spoken Chinese for a long time. I am most fluent in English; I even have difficulty speaking my own mother tongue, the Aulacese language. It's been so long since I last spoke in Aulacese that I have almost forgotten it.

Development in Southeast Asia

As our group continued to grow, later on Centers were established throughout Formosa, and people volunteered to be contact persons. In this way, we set up many bases, and expanded to other countries, especially in Southeast Asia. Since the chairman has asked me to talk only about Southeast Asia, I will do just that and ignore the other areas. We have numerous liaison points in Southeast Asian and other Asian countries.

As more and more people learned about us, and as our contact Centers grew in number, an increasingly large number of people asked to see me in person. Since I could not be physically present everywhere, we began to produce video and audio tapes so we could reach more people. Then, we printed sample booklets for people who could not come to us. Later, we also issued news magazines. That was how our group developed in a natural way.

Master used to live in a tent

Our contact Centers are not fancy or grand by any means. They are mostly located in ordinary buildings; some are makeshift structures built with thin metal sheets. They do not look in the least bit majestic. We haven't built, and give little thought to building big, grand temples. However, when our fellow practitioners find the contact Centers too shabby, they try to do what they can to make them look better. We used to live in tents; I still have a tent up on Yangming Mountain. When I am back in Formosa and if I can afford the time, I go and stay there for a while. We have no plans to build anything for ourselves. Sometimes, however, it is set up naturally.

- C. *Supreme Master, let me ask You a question. All of us have a complete set of information prepared by the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association. As we listen to Master, let us turn to page 20 on 'Activities in Malaysia.' Please tell us something about Malaysia, where most of the people are Islamic. How did You succeed in promoting Your activities, in sharing Your method there, when so many other people couldn't? Can You please elaborate on that?*
- M. Most of the Chinese are rather traditional by nature. The Quan Yin method makes no distinction between religions, nor does it mandate that people should remove their veils or worship at temples. We have already explained that the Quan Yin method is a path that will lead us to our God nature and heavenly kingdom within. It does not matter what religion you follow.

Our fellow practitioners from different religions meditate together while dressed in different attire. The Muslims wear their Islamic clothes; the Buddhist monks sometimes wear their monastic robes. Even monks from different countries are dressed differently. Some of them are from the Hinayana school, while some are from the Mahayana school; some are from China and some are from Korea. They dress differently and are accustomed to a wide variety of fashions. They gather together and meditate without discussing any religious issues.

When they attain self-realization, they become better Muslims, Buddhists, or Christians. They are so full of love and joy that their traditional appearance does not affect us. Of course, as the chairman knows, Malaysia and certain other Muslim countries, being stricter than Formosa, impose some restrictions on the people, but their governments do not interfere with us. They are quite liberal. It is all right if the Muslims join us on their own initiative. We have never gone knocking on their doors or taken other actions. They come by themselves. At that time, we had a note on our lecture flyers, 'Muslims are not encouraged to come.' [Laughter]

- C. *We all know that there were anti-Chinese sentiments in Indonesia.*
- M. That was in the past.
- C. *Right! Yet You were allowed to deliver a lecture there in 1992. This is on page 21 of the information sheets provided by the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association. In March 1992, the Indonesian government permitted Supreme Master Ching Hai to give a lecture, conducted in a question and answer format, in its country. Can You tell us about it? In 1992, since anti-Chinese sentiments were running high, Chinese literature was not allowed.*
- M. That is true.

- C. *I visited Indonesia around that time, too, but Chinese books were banned then. How did You manage to deliver a discourse there?*
- M. I spoke in English. However, thank you for reminding me. I had completely forgotten about the things that you just mentioned. It seems like a remote story to me. [Master laughs.]
- C. *Right! But we research associates of the Institute of Modern History love to listen to stories. Could You please elaborate for us?*
- M. All right, but it was too long ago. When I finish a lecture, I forget about it. Ask me what I talked about yesterday, and I can't remember a thing. Let me take a look. Maybe it will bring back some memories.
- C. *Let us listen to Supreme Master.*
- M. The Chinese expatriates in Indonesia were miserable at the time. I cried when I heard their tragic stories. However, good will be rewarded with good. As time goes by, the arrangements will be revealed. You can see that the Chinese people there are much better off today. God has His arrangements. When people misunderstand or abuse us, we should learn from the example of endurance and toleration of humiliation set by the Chinese, and we will realize that God does take good care of us. Sooner or later, He will fix it for us.

Back then, the Chinese people could not study Chinese. They could not even speak their own mother tongue in public; they had to speak in English or Indonesian. However, they could speak Chinese at home. When one of our well-to-do fellow practitioners invited me to his home, all of us just squeezed into his house. It was huge and had many rooms; we were in a room that was as big as this one. There, we could speak in Chinese. I gave my public lectures in English, though. I could not violate the law. Since I was allowed into Indonesia, I had to cooperate, and everything proceeded smoothly.

- C. *Let me ask You about Your trip to Thailand. Please refer to page 21 again. In 1994, You met Princess Sirindhorn at the Thai Imperial Palace. Can You tell us about that?*
- M. That was after our lecture. The royal family knew and apparently had approached our fellow practitioners about it. I don't know too much about the background story. I was there on their invitation. In most cases, our fellow practitioners make the arrangements for me. When they inform me about the invitations they have received on my behalf, I accept them when time permits. It seemed that Thailand had just suffered some kind of disaster at the time, and we had contributed some relief aid and provisions.
- C. *Quilts and woolen coats.*
- M. That is right. We did that on a number of occasions, not only that one time. Perhaps the royal family had learned about our contributions and wanted to meet us. It was quite an honor. We presented some gifts to the Princess. But when they arranged for a second visit, I said 'sorry' to them because I did not have time. I was busy with other matters. Members of the Thai royal family are very humble and cordial. The Princess is very pure; you will surely like her when you see her. She does not act

pretentiously. She does whatever has to be done, and wears no makeup. The people love her dearly, and so do I. But I didn't have time later.

C. *Please turn to page 22, about the activities in Thailand in 1999.*

M. That was in Thailand. We have many activities there.

C. *You have many activities in Thailand. The information here covers a World Vegetarian Congress held in Chiang Mai. Can You tell us about Your Centers in Thailand?*

M. Well, we have many.

C. *Do You have Centers in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Bangkok, and other places?*

M. Yes, we have Centers in Hatyai, Khon Kaen, and Bangkok, but I can't remember the names very well. Our fellow practitioners know better than I do. I only travel around; I don't remember much. Sometimes I work so fast that I forget the time. I have to call my fellow practitioners to ask them the date, what time to do what, and if we are leaving for Japan or staying in Formosa today. Sometimes, I am very busy, having to pack my own luggage. It can be exhausting traveling alone, but I would draw too much attention if I were to travel with a crowd. I prefer to travel silently, but I have so many matters to attend to, that I sometimes become forgetful. However, I know that we have Centers in Khon Kaen, Hatyai, Chiang Mai and Bangkok; I don't remember the others. We have a large number of fellow practitioners in Thailand. Some of them speak Thai and some speak Chinese. Their translation is not bad. When I first went to Thailand, some of the Chinese people could not speak their own language, but they soon learned after listening to my audio tapes. I joked about charging them a tuition fee! The people there are very nice and benevolent; they have great respect for spiritual practitioners. Once they notice that you are a spiritual practitioner, they kneel before you and offer you flowers. They are a very humble people.

C. *Now, let us go on to Singapore. You were there as early as 1991. It seems that there were some Aulacese refugees in Singapore at the time.*

M. Several hundreds of them.

C. *What was the situation back in April 1991?*

M. I visited the refugees and bought something for them while I was there, but the main purpose of my visit was to deliver a lecture. There were lots of people and the lecture venue was packed until there was no space to walk. Many people sat in the passageways or on the staircase. It was the same yesterday. We had even more people and it was really crowded. [Master is referring to Her lecture at Formosa's Taoyuan County Stadium on May 5.] Things in Singapore went pretty smoothly. The Singaporean government is very open-minded and the local people, being spiritually advanced, accepted us immediately. Their country is very clean and the people are law-abiding. If you spit chewing gum on the street, you will be fined five hundred US dollars. The people are able to maintain a steady spiritual practice; once they start, they continue. You just tell them and they understand immediately. The people of Singapore develop their wisdom really well. And I am very delighted about that!

C. *What is the most important method that they understand? What is the vital point?*

- M. I just talk to them casually. [Laughter]
- C. *But it doesn't work when I talk casually!*
- M. They are rather intelligent! [Laughter]
- C. *All right, let us talk about the Philippines. In April 1991, You were in the Philippines to help the Aulacese asylum-seekers. Why do You use the word 'Au Lac' instead of 'Vietnam'? This is the first question. The second question is, why did Manila present You with the City Key and confer upon You honorary citizenship?*
- M. I have no idea. They did it as soon as I arrived because someone had told them who I was and why I was there. The mayor of Manila invited us and gave us the key. I thought that the key was beautiful, so I kept it as a souvenir, but it cannot open any doors. [Laughter] I felt great receiving a key for the first time in my life. I didn't have a home then; I was living in a tent, yet I had a key. I wrapped it nicely in a pouch. Later, I lost the thrill as I received many more keys. I put them side-by-side, just for looks. I received several keys in the United States. I can give you one if you want. [Laughter]
- C. *It is only good if the local government gives it to me. From You, maybe it's also okay!*
- M. We can share it.
- C. *Now, let's go on to that part about the Aulacese refugees. Please talk more about it, since You are from Au Lac. We will discuss Au Lac in greater detail later.*
- M. At that time, I was negotiating for the Aulacese refugees with the Philippine government to help and offer asylum to them. The country eventually offered asylum to the five thousand refugees who were still in the Philippines. The local people are very kindhearted and generous, even though their country is poor. Therefore, I paid them a visit a couple of days ago to express our gratitude.
- 'Au Lac' is the ancient name of Vietnam. It means 'happiness.' I use this name because I feel that it brings good luck to the people. I love names that sound good. Being a designer, I love beautiful things, including beautiful names. That is why I prefer to use the name 'Formosa' instead of 'Taiwan.' You can see that we have used this name in the information sheets in your hands. We call this island Formosa, not Taiwan, though we sometimes forget.
- C. *Au Lac was hit by floods, and two million people were affected. How much did You contribute to their aid? Where did this money come from? This issue of basic necessities is very important, so I have to be blunt.*
- M. I don't quite remember because it was so long ago. It isn't that I don't want to talk about it, but I have lost count of how many countries we have provided aid to, and the amount of relief provisions we have given. Does anyone remember the amount? I don't.
- C. *What I mean is, did You raise funds for the contribution?*
- M. You are asking where the money came from?
- C. *Exactly!*

- M. Well, we got it from the bank. [Laughter] We had to; it would be very dangerous to keep such a large sum of money at home. [Laughter] We work to earn most of our money. I design clothes and other things. I designed a variety of clothes then. Now I design more expensive clothes. I also designed some minor things at that time, or we wove hats and other things for sale. Being spiritual practitioners, we ate only one or two vegetarian meals a day. Life was simple. We lived in tents and didn't have many clothes, just two or three sets. Therefore, we saved most of the money we earned and then used it to help the refugees. We also had fellow practitioners who volunteered to deliver the funds. We do not directly accept contributions from fellow practitioners. If they want to contribute, they send it directly to the affected countries. Our Formosan fellow practitioners have provided financial contributions to the Philippines, and many other countries and places. And Formosa is now well-known for its disaster relief. We are regarded as a Formosan group worldwide.
- C. *Perhaps the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association can tell us more about how the funds were raised and how they were used. This is a very important question. However, we can raise this matter when we open the floor to discussion, since some important leaders of the Association might be present. Let us continue, as time is precious. We still have Cambodia to cover. Can You tell us about Cambodia?*
- M. The whole country knows about it. Contributions came from the whole country, not just our group. Everyone contributed a little, and we sent whatever we collected to Cambodia. How much we sent, I have forgotten. Really, I forget very quickly; however, I think it was a lot, about six thousand tons of rice. You can find that information in the newspapers. We sent the relief provisions to Cambodia because it had been in bad shape for a long time. People were starving, and crops were not growing. Now they have no problem. They saved some of the rice that we contributed to plant. Later, their Prime Minister reported to me: 'Master, we planted many rice paddies from the rice that You contributed, and the yield is increasing all the time.' The assistance we provided serves not only at that moment, but future generations as well. The children and the elderly are now sufficiently clothed and fed. They are very grateful to the Formosans – fellow practitioners and otherwise, for their aid.
- C. *The last two questions are about Cambodia. Under item six is the 1996 retreat. Could You please explain this retreat and give us a brief introduction?*
- M. Each year, we reserve some time to sit down quietly to introspect on ourselves, since God dwells within us, and to strengthen our inner realization. This is the purpose of a retreat. We put down everything for a few days – three, five, or seven days, depending on the situation. During that time, we concentrate entirely on our God nature, or the God within us. This is called a retreat. We have retreats every year in different countries. The last one was in Thailand; next week, we will have another one in Korea. We do this for ourselves and for world peace. When we get together, the power is stronger and it is more convenient to pray. This is what a retreat is for.
- C. *I think approximately thirty-five minutes have passed. In this first session, I asked Supreme Master Ching Hai some simple questions regarding the activities of the Chinese people in Southeast Asia. Professor Ruaan Jy-sheng of National Taiwan University will now give us his comments. [Applause]*

Comments from a Scholar

[R. (Professor Ruaan)]

R. *I am as excited as every one of you to have Supreme Master Ching Hai with us. I don't think many people, including the conveners, expected Supreme Master Ching Hai to grace us with Her presence today. I, myself, feel especially honored. The comments that I am about to make will be directly related to the theme of our seminar – The Supreme Master Ching Hai, the Quan Yin method, and the Chinese in Southeast Asia. The theme has two parts, one being about Southeast Asia. We have a number of experts and scholars sitting among us. Our chairman, Professor Chu, is an expert in the study of the overseas Chinese, especially the Chinese communities and religions in Indonesia. He has published several articles in this area. We also have with us scholars from the Taiwan Religion Institute and the Southeast Asia Research Project, who are more competent speakers than I am on the subject of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. Therefore, I will comment mainly on Supreme Master Ching Hai and the Quan Yin method.*

I read the material provided by the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association before the seminar and have just listened to a speech by Supreme Master. I get the impression that the Quan Yin method and its leader are very special; maybe we could say that they are of a 'different variety.' They are really unique. My general observations tell me that the actions and speech of this leader often shatter boundaries and rules, as they do not conform to the social codes we are familiar with. She is very uncommon and above normal etiquette. For this reason, it is very difficult for people to understand and categorize Her according to existing concepts and habitual rules. In the eyes of worldly people, Supreme Master Ching Hai is very different than other religious leaders. Supreme Master Ching Hai is an Asian lady of Aulacese origin. She has given lectures in Chinese, English, Aulacese, and even German and French on the earth's five continents. She is well-versed in all the major religious scriptures and can easily expound profound doctrines in simple words of common usage.

The Supreme Master gives initiation to Truth-aspirants of any ethnic group or religious background, without demanding that they give up their original faith. She imparts a supra-worldly method of liberation, but is also very concerned about worldly suffering, conducting disaster relief and charitable activities when the need arises. She teaches the Quan Yin method, a simple and apparently novel method, which She claims is the most ancient and a magnificent one. Her disciples are required to strictly observe the five precepts and a lifelong vegetarian diet, and to meditate for two and a half hours each day. They are also encouraged to practice the middle way, to refrain from going to extremes, and to pursue a life of Truth, virtue, and beauty. However, while She gives lectures on the Truth, She also writes poems, composes songs, plays musical instruments, recites poems, sings songs, paints, cooks vegetarian cuisine, and has compiled vegetarian cookbooks.

M. This is very important to the Chinese!

R. *She is also a fashion and jewelry designer. She has held art exhibitions, fashion shows, and musical events in several of the world's major cities. People have difficulty detecting Her spiritual traits, and are even skeptical about Her being a spiritual practitioner. [Laughter] She offers financial assistance and dedicates Her endeavors to helping the world's most needy people, in both material and spiritual*

aspects. She does not build temples or churches, nor does She accept offerings. Disciples everywhere would love Her to stay with them as long as possible, but She prefers to wander around the globe without a fixed abode, not willing to settle down in any one place. With Her intense compassion for humankind, She helps people with all Her heart and effort, but occasionally reprimands them out of Her profound love for them. She has been called 'the Master who reprimands people.' At a time when people are pessimistic about the last stage of the dharma, or trembling with fear about a coming doomsday, She speaks with high spirits of stepping into a new, golden age. Although it is said that She attained ultimate enlightenment deep in the Himalayas, She convinces people that it is not necessary to practice asceticism in the mountains after receiving initiation, because it is possible to attain enlightenment by practicing at home. She has the power to attract thousands of disciples and have them fly around the globe to attend international retreats. [Laughter]

M. It sounds like we have supernatural power!

R. *This is even more impressive than those who travel island-wide on Formosa. [Laughter]*

M. Professor, we do practice supernatural powers!

R. *Their gatherings are attended by thousands of people. Very often She has to meet political leaders in different countries while conducting charitable or relief work. However, She claims that She is naturally shy, and loves to live a free, easy, and simple life. Depending on the occasion and the country She is in, She wears imaginative self-designed clothes or the traditional attire of the different countries She visits. She appears in different styles and forms, like a woman with a thousand looks. It is for this very reason that She often causes misunderstanding among people and is a target of criticism. Nevertheless, She continues to act in Her own way, enduring it all in silence and playing Her role. She claims that the method She teaches is the most ancient one, while She gives people a very modern impression. She even expects Her disciples to become modern spiritual practitioners. All these unique, transcendental and uncommon things that She does broaden the views of the people and puzzle them as well. We can understand the puzzlement and doubts of worldly people, but we cannot deny that She teaches people to perform good deeds and elevate themselves in both material and spiritual aspects. We cannot find a negative trait in Her. We might say that for the general public, religious researchers, and spiritual practitioners, Supreme Master Ching Hai and the Quan Yin method offer a new message and a new choice. This is a profitable matter, no matter what.*

M. Thank you.

R. *An open and pluralistic society welcomes all kinds of harmless new things. I think Supreme Master Ching Hai has brought to us a brand new sensation! And Her many unique contributions have provided more free choices for society, making our social culture richer and more colorful. Finally, I would like to thank Supreme Master Ching Hai. May God be with You! Let us ask Supreme Master to say a few good words to God for Formosa, for the people on Formosa and the Chinese mainland, and for humankind. [Applause] To continue, I would like to ask a few questions. The first one relates to the religious nature and definition. This question has three parts. Part one: Both the general public and religious researchers regard the Quan Yin method as a new religion. The convener also referred to Your group as the Ching Hai religious group. Is the Quan Yin method a religion? This is the first part of the question.*

All religions originated from the Quan Yin method

- M. The Quan Yin method is not a religion. However, all religions originated from the Quan Yin method. There are already too many religions in the world; I don't want to add another one to the list. I had no such intention in the first place; otherwise I would have done it long ago. It would be nice to hear people call you the 'founder of a religion,' [Laughter] but by practicing the Quan Yin method, we are restoring our original self. Religions usually discuss the experiences of ancient people. Take Jesus Christ, for instance. The focus is on the abilities or supernatural powers He attained through spiritual practice, how He reunified Himself with God, what His disciples achieved through spiritual practice, and how they finally reunified themselves with God. In the case of Shakyamuni Buddha, the focus is on what He achieved through spiritual practice, how He became a Buddha (enlightened Master), and how His disciples practiced and became Buddhas in the same way. Today, our Quan Yin method teaches us to walk the same path. Therefore, all religions originated from the Quan Yin method. People call it 'Christianity' because Jesus Christ came; people call it 'Buddhism' because the Buddha came. This is how so many religions came into existence. I beg you not to call us the Ching Hai religion after I die! [Laughter]
- R. *The general public and religious scholars refer to Your group as the Quan Yin method or the Ching Hai religious group. Would You accept the name 'Ching Hai religious group'?*
- M. Of course, you have the right to call us any name you like. However, since we feel that we are simply a group devoted only to knowing our real self, we don't want to create another religion. We worry that it might have an impact or create more religious controversies. We only want to know our God nature, our best quality within, so we don't think there is any need to give ourselves a label. However, it is all right for you to call us the Ching Hai religion. We won't print it on our name cards, though!
- R. *The second part of my question is related to the fact that You have said You don't belong to any religion.*
- M. That's right.
- R. *Then what is the relationship between the Quan Yin method and other religions? I am not sure whether You have already answered this in the first part of the question, or would You like to elaborate further?*
- M. Let me elaborate. I have explained that there was no religion to begin with. Before the Buddha came, there was no Buddhism; before Jesus Christ came, there was no Christianity; before Mohammed came, there was no Islam. All enlightened persons are here to act through God's will and impart this method of liberation to those people who are ready to go Home. After the Masters and their disciples died, people in later generations knew very little of the Masters' teachings, and so the lineages were broken. People worshipped statues and oral teachings without the power of heart-to-heart transmission. Then, slowly, religions were formed. However, the Quan Yin method is the most ancient and the only path back Home. You have only one path that leads you Home. That is how it is.
- R. *Now comes the third part of the question. We have heard of the transmission of the Quan Yin method in Formosa and abroad. Is there a difference between these other Quan Yin methods and the Quan Yin method imparted by You? I raise this point*

because the theme of the seminar is 'The Supreme Master Ching Hai, the Quan Yin method...'

The Quan Yin method is a path that will lead us to our God nature and heavenly kingdom within

- M. It was other people who named it that way. When we practice the Quan Yin method, we listen inwardly to our self nature; that is, we contemplate the inner Sound current, our original nature and our God nature. If another group is teaching the same thing, then they are also teaching the Quan Yin method, except that they may call it by another name, like the 'sound stream,' 'the inner voice of God,' or 'the Word.' If they can let us hear our God nature within, our heavenly kingdom within, and see the inner Light, then their methods are the same as ours.
- R. *The next question is related to Your organization. According to our knowledge, whether it is ancient Catholicism or the newly established I-kuan Tao, each religion has a huge church and organization, a tight hierarchy, and titles for each rank. For instance, in Catholicism, we have cardinals, archbishops, bishops and pastors between the pope and the priests. In I-kuan Tao, we have the patriarch, matriarch, chief priests, initiate masters, altar masters, and introduction masters. With their massive organization and well-organized hierarchy, these religions can mobilize their members quickly and efficiently. However, this can also easily give rise to a bureaucracy. That is what usually happens. The Quan Yin method is presently practiced by disciples on the world's five continents. I am not sure of the exact figure, but there must be at least several hundred thousands of them, and I believe the number will continue to grow in the future. From our observations and the information I have gathered from the written material, there is only one formal title – the Quan Yin messenger – between You, the Master, and the disciples in Your group. The Quan Yin method group does not seem to be highly organized. However, is it possible for an organization like Yours that is not tightly organized to mobilize its members when engaging in Truth-sharing on a large scale? And can this last long? At present, the answer seems to be positive, because You hold huge congregations. I think this is due to the personal charisma of the leader, but can this continue for a long time? Can You share with us Your views and thoughts?*
- M. Thank you very much. Your question is very clear. You have missed nothing. Perhaps you are very enlightened. The point is that we don't believe in hierarchical organization and bureaucratic positions. Quan Yin messenger is a casual title to let people understand that this person is authorized to give them verbal instructions regarding the Quan Yin method. However, the real transmission within is conducted in total silence, from God, from within, from heart to heart. It is not conducted by the Quan Yin messenger, who is there only to relate the verbal instructions. That is why he or she is called a 'messenger.'

We don't like pompous titles very much. I alone have already endured the title of 'Supreme Master' too much. I don't want others to be targets of criticism as well. We emphasize humility and self-practice, without any desire for positions. Although we have many members working in our group, you seldom see them publicly given credit. The working groups, such as the video team, have done much work, but specific names are never mentioned. Many people are engaged in printing sample booklets and scriptures, but no acknowledgement is given to them. Sometimes the names are listed, but only when required by the law of a particular country. It is better to keep a low profile. However, the names have to be disclosed if it is really

necessary for others to know. They are disclosed when we have no other choice, but the people involved are not interested in gaining a titled position. They are aware of their own greatness within without having to announce it.

- R. *So, if there is any pressure, Supreme Master will shoulder it alone.*
- M. It is better that way, so that everyone else can be free and easy.
- R. *My questions end here. Professor Chu.*
- C. *That was excellent. Let us thank Professor Ruaan for his brilliant commentary and questions, and also Supreme Master for Her incisive answers. Let us perhaps change the agenda a little bit. I am sure that all those present are very interested in expressing their views, asking Supreme Master some questions, or consulting our commentator. Shall we now open the floor to questions? All right, this lady!*
- Q. *This is a follow-up to the question that our chairman asked earlier. Supreme Master Ching Hai has emphasized that She does not accept offerings. However, She has performed many charitable deeds around the world, which could not have been accomplished with a small amount of money. She just mentioned that She wove hats and designed clothes. Are these items sold only to disciples or to the public? Are the proceeds from these sales enough to help so many asylum-seekers, or victims of floods in America, and natural calamities in Southeast Asia? Can You further explain Your financial source?*
- M. I don't accept any offerings. However, if a disaster occurs and our disciples want to send contributions or relief provisions to the victims, they can pool theirs with ours in a package or in bulk quantities. That way, all of us, including the disciples, contribute together.

Relief work for the September 21, 1999 earthquake in Formosa

[R (Reporter)]

- R. *Excuse me, but I would like to follow up on this question. We are aware that in the past, You have provided aid to many places and demonstrated compassion to many people. However, we didn't see You in areas hit by the September 21, 1999 earthquake. Could You please tell us whether You participated in the disaster relief work or provided assistance in any way?*
- M. As soon as I saw the news on television in the United States, I tried to call but couldn't contact the liaison practitioners, as their lines were busy. It was very difficult to get through on the phone at that time. Finally, I managed to get through to a brother Lin, who is not a liaison practitioner. I asked him to quickly mobilize everyone and provide all the financial and material assistance they could afford. Our group was in every place that needed help and was already in the disaster-stricken areas on the very first day. Brother Lin, would you like to tell us about that?
- C. *Will you please introduce yourself before going into the details?*

[L (Brother Lin)]

- L. *My name is Lin Shu-lin and I live in Tainan. On the morning of the September 21 earthquake, I received a call from Supreme Master Ching Hai from abroad. She said that She had been trying to call for nearly two hours but couldn't get through, so She finally called me, and said, 'Please help me set up a disaster relief team immediately, and promptly render aid to every area that needs help. Pool together all your strength and offer as much help, as quickly as possible.'*

This is the first point I'd like to make clear – that Supreme Master was very concerned about the disaster in Formosa. Then, as I transmitted Her message of concern to fellow practitioners around Formosa, I needed to let them know that She was very worried about the post-quake situation. Even though She could not give Her regards and consolation to everyone in person, She wanted to convey Her deep concern about the situation. Therefore, I asked the local Centers to contact their members and set up a mobile car team. On the evening of the earthquake, we reached Chungliiao. There, we left a message on the bulletin board of the local police station, saying, 'If your area needs help or support, please call us at such-and-such number.' We left the telephone number of our Nantou and Taichung contact Centers, which were closest to the earthquake's epicenter.

After September 21, 1999 earthquake in Formosa, fellow initiates rendered help to the affected areas in every way possible.

We also delivered relief provisions contributed by our Formosan members to the sports field in front of the Nantou County Government office. I personally visited the affected areas and found that these provisions alone would not resolve the situation. It was clear that we had to coordinate with the government and let the authorities handle it. Therefore, our fellow practitioners, who share the same ideals and will, together raised a fund for the quake-stricken areas. We raised precisely ten million NTs and contributed it all at that time.

- C. *Now let us ask the Director of the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association to elaborate on this, and then we will take comments from the gentleman in the back.*

[K (Brother Ke)]

- K. *Let me introduce myself. I am the former Director of the Association. My last name is Ke. I personally participated in the relief work in the quake-stricken areas. Upon receiving a call from Mr. Lin, we went to the affected areas, and were the first group to arrive. At the time, the Nantou command center did not have any phone, so we provided ours for them. We also organized a team of excavators, as we didn't see any excavators when we first arrived.*

In general, we took care of the most urgent and top-priority matters. We immediately asked our members to purchase all of the tents available from nearby wholesale stores and factories. You might have seen on television that all the tents in Formosa were sold out. That was because we had bought them all, at a cost of between nine hundred NTs and six thousand NTs each. We purchased a total of four to five thousand tents. Since we have attended many retreats held by Master over the years, we knew about the need for tents. We also bought canvas sheets. If you went to the disaster-stricken areas, you might have noticed some canvas sheets there in addition

to the tents; they were contributed by us. When tents became unavailable in Formosa, we learned that many charity groups had ordered tents from places overseas, such as Hong Kong and the United States, and were flying in more tents by air.

For disaster-stricken areas inaccessible by car, we mobilized fellow practitioners to climb mountains and get there on foot. We organized a medical team to provide service in the affected areas before any television news teams or other groups arrived. We were the first group to reach those places, before other charitable groups.

The ten millions NTs mentioned earlier refers only to the first cash contribution by our group. If we were to include all the relief supplies we provided, the amount would be closer to twenty million NTs. Since we are a spiritual group, we do this kind of thing naturally, without feeling that we are going out of our way to do it. People may find this very strange, because it seems to be a huge amount and we seem to be a very tight organization. Let me share with you some more information. Master always teaches us to act like Jesus Christ – when we give with our left hand, we should not even let our right hand know. Therefore, we do not regard such acts as very serious matters. This is the first point I'd like to stress.

The second point relates to how we mobilize our group in relief operations. Most organizations have an individual leader or a group of leaders, so how was it possible for Master's disciples, when participating in this disaster relief operation, to arrive in the affected areas before other large organizations? In my personal opinion, it is because we are all connected to God, so our only organization is Hiers organization. That is to say, Hes is connected with every one of us, with each of Master's disciples. Master's loving concern for and anxiety about the quake-stricken areas led us to act on our own initiative. Just one telephone call from Her, and everyone was there. It was incredible, though, that we went without knowing who else would be there, whether doctors would be present, or if transportation would be available.

Before any other automobiles arrived, we had already formed a team of jeeps. Later, we saw several jeep teams in about a dozen affected townships. I would like to inform you that our jeep team supported the Relief Center. We also set up a HAM radio communication system. The communication systems used by some of the relief associations were actually ours. Why do we have these systems? It is because we often have retreats in the mountains with Master, so we have to handle communication problems in remote locations. Many people attend these retreats, where we need food, supplies, accommodation facilities, and communication with the outside, so we have had to develop communications systems to equip ourselves. Many of our members have received training at Formosa's Directorate General of Telecommunications, so we knew how to set up the radio equipment. We sent all our electric generators and radio equipment to the disaster areas after the earthquake.

Our members were already there when everything was still in chaos, before any other charitable groups had showed up, tables or chairs had been set up, or relief provisions had arrived at the Nantou Relief Command Center. Later, when we saw other charitable groups moving in, our members quickly dispersed to help in places that the other groups could not reach. I must emphasize again that we perform these acts without feeling we are going out of our way to do so. It was more important for us to reach the places in most urgent need instead of appearing where the media were.

- C. *Now let us continue. The speech by former Director Mr. Ke was very interesting. Of course, we are more concerned about Formosa than Southeast Asia, but since our topic today is the Chinese in Southeast Asia, let us first get on with that. Some of you here may still have questions related to the Master's activities in Formosa. We can discuss them later. Perhaps this lady still has something to say about Formosa, but please raise your questions later. Now, let us get on to our topic of Southeast Asia.*
- R. *I am a reporter for the United Daily News. Supreme Master Ching Hai, You mentioned earlier that Your group is a not tightly organized, but I am curious about its operational structure. For instance, there are so many countries in Southeast Asia. How do You get Your fellow practitioners to voluntarily contribute so much money in such a group not tightly organized? The Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Association, for example, has a fixed operational fund. If You were to ask Your members to contribute only when the need arises, and then send the money over and buy the things there, the process would be very complicated. Therefore, I am very curious about how You manage to accomplish this in Southeast Asia.*
- M. *It is just the same. We really have no organization. If you wish, you may come and investigate. We just contribute what we can afford. I give what I have, and you give what you can. We collect it all and send it over. We do it voluntarily. This is the work of God. Once the God within us awakens, He will know how to save our relatives and friends. There is no need to organize anything. The Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association was established at the government's instructions.*

The authorities said that we had to form an organization so they could have a membership list, and so we had a few hundred people sign up as members. Otherwise, we really have no members in the true sense of the word. We have an identity card to prove that we are really fellow practitioners when we go to retreats. It shows that we go there to meditate, and not to create trouble. We have no organization; all are volunteers. Spiritual practitioners should be easy and carefree. We cannot ask them to do anything permanently or pay annual fees. The idea has never occurred to us. We only want to remind them of their God nature, and then it is up to them to do what they want. They are free to contribute or not to contribute. When they come to our Centers, they don't have to pay for their food, drinks, or accommodations. It is completely up to them to decide if they should do anything or contribute any money. When there is a disaster, everyone has the obligation to contribute and do his share. It is not the responsibility of any single person. Is this clear enough to the United Daily News reporter?

- C. *Let us continue with this discussion. I think we should devote more time to discussion because the Supreme Master tells us more in this kind of an exchange. You should be able to understand Her intent and the hidden meaning behind Her words. It is absolutely impossible to carry out activities so efficiently without an organization, so this is actually an organizing method of the 'supreme' level. Perhaps you have other questions for the Supreme Master.*

[W (Wen Chin-ko, producer of the Central Broadcasting Corporation)]

- W. *Supreme Master Ching Hai, it is my great honor to be able to meet with You! I have heard about You and admired You for a long time. Since I am studying Buddhism, I'd like to ask You a minor question concerning Buddhism. We know that You had already accomplished some spiritual attainments before You came to Formosa. But we also know that You first appeared in Formosa in the form of a bhiksuni (Buddhist*

nun). From the standpoint of the Buddhist community, we wonder why You decided to approach the Formosan society as a Buddhist.

- M. It was my destiny that I should be a monk for some time. You may ask God if you want. [Laughter] For instance, some of us serve in the army for a couple of years, but some make it their lifelong career. Everyone has a different destiny. I have no say over my destiny. Everything is arranged by fate.
- W. *Are You saying that it was not Your decision?*
- M. Of course, it was, but we just do what God tells us to do.
- W. *If it was Your own decision, then what factors did You consider at the time?*
- M. I didn't consider anything. I just do what God tells me to do, which is simpler.
- W. *My question is why You didn't come in Your original status or why You didn't choose to come, for example, as a Christian, Catholic, or Muslim. Why did You choose to come as a Buddhist? I think that there must have been a reason for Your decision. Can You tell us about it?*
- M. I just did. If God wants us to do something, then we just do it; this is the simplest way. It is more complicated to resist His will. Once we are enlightened, our lives become simpler because God makes all the arrangements for us. If He tells us to do something, we just obey Him. We don't use our minds to argue with Him like we used to, or pray to Him for something that we think is more beneficial or suitable for worldly people. Take myself for instance; if I really had a choice, I wouldn't be wearing these clothes and heavy ornaments. When I get home, I take them off as fast as I can. Usually, if I am not going to a lecture or to see people, I don't wear these ceremonious outfits that make me feel uncomfortable. I prefer to be dressed casually and move around like a 'nobody.' Therefore, I just do what God tells me to do. Perhaps you will run into such a situation one day and then you will understand. I have protested to Him many times, but to no avail. So, I just gave in. He has taught me to surrender. Are you satisfied with my answer? If you still have doubts, please ask.
- W. *Sorry, I still have something to say. I have a reason for asking this question. Personally, I respect You very much, but I don't think that Formosa's Buddhist community is very friendly toward You and there is some misunderstanding between You and this community. This is perhaps partly because You once appeared as a member of this community but the Buddhists feel that Your teachings are different. Therefore, from the secular standpoint, I think that Your strategy is, I don't know, maybe You might say that this is God's will. But I feel that it's a pity. I think that You are sharing a method that is so free and full of life, and yet solemn in nature within. This is an excellent or very good way of teaching. If for some reason, there were a misunderstanding or an unhappy experience between You and an existing religious group, I'd say that it must be a great pity. Therefore, I'd like very much to know the reason.*

I live in order to remind people of their own greatness

- M. I was a monk in my past life, but my career was not accomplished, so I had to come back to finish the last part. Once I have finished my job, I don't have to do it anymore;

that is all. You are right about what you said. However, even if I had never been a monk who changed later, people would still have misunderstood me. Jesus Christ had never been a monk, but He was crucified. Shakyamuni Buddha was a monk His whole life, yet someone deliberately injured His leg. He suffered lifelong humiliation by others and remains a target of criticism till this day. He didn't die in peace; there are still people who speak offensively about Him. Today, there are still people who misunderstand Jesus Christ, so what would you expect for an insignificant woman like myself who says things that people don't understand? Of course, if the whole world could understand what I say, we would not be living in this dimension. We wouldn't call it 'earth,' but 'heaven' instead.

I came to this world and I live here not to please tradition, nor to win people's praise or approval. I live in order to remind people of their own greatness. I try my best to do as much as I can and remind as many people as possible. When the time comes, we must leave, whether we are good or bad, whether we wear beautiful or ugly clothes. I don't have much time. I am getting on in years.

- W. *Thank You Supreme Master. I like Your answer very much. Thank You.*
- M. Thank you! It is great that you like it. I love to hear that. [Applause]
- C. *Ladies and gentlemen, we have allowed more time for this first session so we could touch on more solid issues. According to our agenda, the second session should focus first on the Supreme Master's success in teaching the Quan Yin method in Southeast Asia; second, on the main difficulties She has encountered; and third, on the prospects She holds for the future. Could You please discuss Your major achievements in teaching the Chinese in Southeast Asia, the major obstacles You have encountered, how You managed to solve these difficulties, and what plans and expectations You have for future development?*
- M. We pursue spiritual practice in silence in order to help ourselves. We become more cheerful, and our old habits and bad concepts gradually fade away. That was why Shakyamuni Buddha had to practice for a long time before He attained Buddhahood; He didn't achieve it in one day. Things would be worse if people did not practice. According to my decade-long observations, our fellow practitioners have made much progress after practicing spiritually, and this is splendid! As you might have observed, we do not just benefit ourselves; we also serve society. Of course, we cannot prove our inner spiritual achievements. Perhaps after long observation, we can say that someone who used to scold, quarrel with, or even hurt others, has become more benevolent, and that he has improved through spiritual practice. But we cannot say that easily. However, we are of help to society, too. Take your last question, for instance, about how we manage to mobilize so many people so quickly to help others. This is because our God nature has awakened; we have become more loving and know exactly what to do. We see the suffering of others as our own, so we do not hesitate to help society. We do what is beneficial to society.

Sometimes, when our fellow practitioners encounter difficulties or experience much suffering during their work overseas, they meditate together; then, they cheer up and become happy. Sometimes, when they are not very advanced in their spiritual practice, they may have difficulties; then it helps to talk to others and offer mutual help.

Of course, you will encounter difficulties in any work you do. They are not the monopoly of religious groups, or groups like ours that share the Truth. For instance, those of you who are professors sometimes run into students who are difficult to teach. Sometimes your busy work may impair your health; you may have to sacrifice your sleep at night, and still have to take care of your family. Besides facing the difficulties in education, you also have to take care of your family and perhaps fulfill other obligations. Parenting also has its difficult side. Being a professor is not an easy career free of difficulties. Of course, we spiritual practitioners ought to help others. And in our pursuit of spiritual practice, we will encounter obstacles and misunderstandings. However, we have accepted the fact that this is what society is like. We do our work without expecting praise or approval from others, so we are not disappointed.

How we will develop in the future depends on God's will. I will live if He wants me to live, and if He doesn't, I will say 'Bye-bye' – it's very simple. Some of you asked how we have organized and developed so well. It all happens naturally. I don't really take any action. I just say, 'Yes, no, okay, I will come,' or 'I cannot come.' That's all. I don't do anything, nor do I tell them anything or dominate anyone. I seldom call them on the phone; I do only occasionally when there is a disaster. Take this brother Lin, for example. I don't call him or the liaison practitioners every day. Ask our fellows and liaison practitioners and see how many of them ever receive a call from me. None – except when there is a disaster or when there is work to do.

Then I ask them to promptly get help from fellow practitioners. If they don't have enough money, we contribute whatever we can afford from our headquarters. Only then do I make a call; otherwise, I don't. They didn't even know when I arrived here (in Formosa). Only when I appeared on the lecture stage did they realize, 'Oh! Master is here.' Before that moment, they had no idea where I was or what I was doing. I don't trouble or dominate people, nor do I exercise remote control over them. I don't do it! They do things automatically. Since they have had a taste of happiness, they want to share it with others, out of love. Things happen like that naturally. I don't have any plans.

The difference between perceptions of religion's significance

- C. *I think that the members of the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association have a deeper understanding of the Supreme Master than we ordinary people do. Let us quickly scan pages 29 and 30 of the notes, which mention Her major accomplishments. They mention, 'Awakening humankind and elevating the human's level in body, mind, and spirit.' The first achievement is that the disciples, after leading a spiritual life of over a decade, have begun to coagulate into a mighty force that is advancing toward the new era. The second achievement is their efforts in international humanitarianism and disaster relief. We have just heard the testimony of their former Director, Mr. Ke. The third achievement is the promotion of vegetarianism, and the fourth, of course, is the furtherance of a concept of life built on Truth, virtue, and beauty. Let us go on to discuss the difficulties that Her Association has encountered in two areas – perceptions of religion's significance and the aspects of life. Perceptions of religion's significance means, 'Understanding the true essence of religions.' The notes here mention some differences, on which we hope Supreme Master Ching Hai will elaborate. Here is mentioned the experience of being one with God. How can this be achieved? This is one question.*

- M. Suppose you are eating out in a restaurant, and you know very well whether it serves delicious food or not. If you tell someone who is reading the menu outside just how delicious the soup is, how tasty the mixed vegetables are, and that you will definitely come back to the restaurant again, will he understand what you are saying? Most likely, he won't. This is the trouble.

Everyone talks about God and praises Hirm, but very few can actually communicate and chat with Hirm, or ask Hirm questions. We are able to do that because we now remember our original self. We are not this ordinary human body. We existed before this physical body came into being and we will continue to exist after we leave this body. That is our original self. We have established contact and a relationship with this original self, which we call the 'God within' or the 'Buddha nature within.' Therefore, we are aware of how God loves and protects us, teaches us every day, helps us to solve problems, and develops our compassion. We can consult Hirm when we have a problem. The person reading the menu outside praises God all the time, but he has never spoken to Hirm, so, of course, it is difficult for him to understand our explanation. Before he has tasted the food, it is hard for us to prove to him how delicious the dishes are. I might not be as knowledgeable as the professor; I am only capable of speaking simple words.

The true definition of the 'transmission beyond teachings'

As for how 'we become one with God,' that cannot be explained in words. During the time of the transmission, the two of us just sit in silence, while the transmission is done from heart to heart. God talks to the God within us, and there is no place for words. We do speak before that, but only to tell you how you should sit, that it doesn't matter if you sit cross-legged or not while in meditation, and how to relax and where to put your concentration, so you can see God and communicate with Hirm. These are merely verbal instructions. Later, when the true initiation takes place, no one says a word. Such is the initiation, the heart-to-heart transmission, and the 'transmission beyond teachings.' It is so-called because it cannot be found in the teachings. We have had God and the Buddha within us from the very beginning, so who is entitled to teach a Buddha or God what to do? It is possible only after our original self wakes up. This is like taking two candles, one of them already lit. When we touch the other candle with this one, it too lights up. The quality of light is originally latent in the candles; they just need someone to light them. This process needs no words or teachings; all it needs is a lamp to light it. Without a lamp, no matter how you talk about it or beg it for hundreds of years, it still won't light up.

- C. *Thank You! Another difficulty mentioned here concerns daily life, because Supreme Master Ching Hai demands a full vegetarian diet. [Master: Yes.] If You ask people to follow a strict vegetarian diet, they may hesitate to come to You because they may have difficulty putting it into practice. This is a difficulty. Suppose You say, 'Never mind, just do your best to be a vegetarian,' and then lots of people will join Your group. How will You overcome this difficulty in Your future development?*
- M. We don't really want to overcome it! [Laughter] He is a Buddha and he is God. If he wants to wake up, then we give him a hand. He is a candle that is supposed to shine. If he wants to shine, then he should come closer so we can light him. If he doesn't, he can stay there in the darkness for a few thousand years; we won't disturb him. It is the obligation of a Buddha to be a vegetarian. To be a Buddha, one should act like Shakyamuni Buddha: Be compassionate, love all beings, and eat only vegetarian food. We eat some vegetables only because we have no other option. Therefore, we

don't eat much, just enough, about eighty percent full, not filled to the neck. I take only one, or at the most, two meals, a day. I eat more only when I am really exhausted. Therefore, it is the people's own decision whether they become vegetarian or not; I just said that we don't want to exercise control over anyone. We stand by the side ready to help. If they want to come, we tell them what they should do; if they don't, it is all right for them to come next time, and to spend more time thinking over it. They are God; they are the ones who decide when they want to wake up.

- C. *This part is shorter, as our main objective is to further clarify some points from the academic and religious viewpoints. We are grateful to the Supreme Master for Her answers. We will proceed to the second session, and let us again ask Professor Ruaan to give us his comments or responses to Supreme Master's earlier discussions.*
- R. *From this question and answer session, I seem to find a gap here, between one who is talking about Her personal experience as a spiritual practitioner and another who is trying to obtain an objective understanding and knowledge of an issue. The problem seems to be that there is a gap between the insiders and the outsiders. [Laughter]*

In this second session, I am personally more interested in this part on 'Looking back and looking ahead.' Here, we have some literature about ideas and concepts. Being a scholar of history, I think that there have been wars among humans down the ages in recorded history. Despite the fact that war brings massive disasters and suffering to humankind, we still have not been able to eliminate it, even today. Superficially, war is a military conflict; from a more profound angle, the conflict concerns economic benefits and political power. At an even deeper level, we find that it is a conflict of civilizations. And religious factors, differences and antagonism, have, at least at times, been the cause of such conflicts among civilizations.

Humankind has only one religion

We notice that Supreme Master Ching Hai has, for many years, been promoting religious reconciliation and the concept of universal harmony. Some of you here today may have been long-time observers of the Supreme Master, but some may have just read about this in the information sheet. I have noticed that She has been promoting religious reconciliation and the concept of universal harmony. She has raised the concept that there is only one religion for humankind. A few days ago, in the China Times, we read a transcript of Her interview with a South African radio station. She mentioned that humankind has only one religion and the various religions are actually worshipping the same God, except that He is known by different names in different cultures, and the names are different because of the different languages. I think that this is a superb and excellent concept. If all religions could accept this concept, they would respect each other, and slowly learn to love and become united with one another. That will be a blessing for humankind. Supreme Master has advocated and expressed Her support for the convening of a world religious congress that will bring together the leaders of the world's major religions, as well as other spiritual leaders, to pray for world peace and raise suggestions for the welfare of the international community. This would be very helpful to advancing religious reconciliation and world peace.

I have read from recent world news' reports that Pope John Paul II, during a mass at the Vatican Basilica on the Day of Pardon (March 12) this year, openly confessed to

the world the sins committed by the Roman Catholic Church over the past two millennia and asked for God's forgiveness. Such an open confession and plea for pardon by the leader of the world's largest religion on behalf of his church was unprecedented in two thousand years. It required great sincerity, courage, and wisdom! When we heard this news, we did not feel the slightest condemnation or contempt in our hearts. Instead, we felt touched and encouraged. This good news in the first spring of the first year of the twenty-first century gives us a reason to embrace an optimistic view toward the future of humankind and the world. Our Supreme Master often talks about the coming of a new era and the golden age. Perhaps it is not just a dream, after all.

I'd like to raise another point after reading the chronology of the Supreme Master's major lecture events in Southeast Asia. Even though this is only a summary, it covered several pages. After reading it, I find it difficult to believe that an apparently fragile and petite lady could, within such a short time, lead, initiate, and bring together such a massive driving force; and this covers Her activities in Southeast Asia only. It does not include similar activities conducted in other parts of the world. If this is true, then it requires immense love and perseverance to accomplish. I have mentioned in the first session that there are many scholars, experts, and religious people here who specialize in the study of Chinese and religious beliefs in Southeast Asia. We also have scholars of 'comparative religion' who can ask better questions than I. Here, on behalf of the many people who may share similar thoughts, I'd like to ask Supreme Master two questions that are related more to the Quan Yin method.

The door of enlightenment is open to all sentient beings

- Q. *We notice that in Your address to the World Religion Congress in Cape Town, South Africa in December 1999, You did not emphasize the teachings. Instead, You stressed the method of experiencing oneness with God every day. Recorded history shows that very few enlightened Masters have been able to impart this method of immediate enlightenment. My question is, if You have this method, would You, as they did, transmit it only to a handful of disciples? Apparently, before the sixth patriarch, Hui Neng, the Master would transmit the method to only one disciple. Even the sixth patriarch imparted it to only about ten disciples – I am not quite sure about the exact figure. Masters of the past transmitted the method to very few disciples, and their disciples had to go through tremendous hardships before they could learn this precious method. However, the Quan Yin method today, if it is such a method as You have described, is available to all Truth aspirants. As long as they are sincere, You will teach them generously free of charge. You let them get it very easily. We'd like to know why You are doing this. Why is there such a big difference?*
- M. *In ancient times, they also taught many disciples. Shakyamuni Buddha, for example, had tens of thousands of disciples. However, several principal ones, like Ananda and Rahula, were responsible for passing down the lineage. These principal disciples, just like the Quan Yin messengers, were specially trained and had memorized the verbal instructions that they could impart to people outside. However, most of the other disciples were laypersons, and they too had no problem. For instance, there was a lay practitioner named Vimalakirti; he didn't go out preaching, but everyone was afraid of him. He didn't have to go out preaching, because it was powerful enough for him to do it at home. Actually, Jesus Christ also had a lot of disciples, but twelve of them always followed Him and received training that enabled them to help Him accomplish His preaching mission later.*

In fact, if what you said is true, we are now in a less favorable time. We ought to share the Truth quickly; otherwise, it will be too late. I am not a stingy person; I contribute money and everything that I know. Perhaps it is my character.

- R. *Perhaps we should broaden our view further. We cannot just be concerned about the situation in China ; we should hold the whole world in perspective.*
- M. When there is good news, we ought to spread it; but this is a laborious task, of course. I'd rather behave as you suggested, hiding in a corner and waiting for people to seek me out. It would make me feel more valuable. When you share the Truth in society in this way, people rebuke and misunderstand you. You lose face. However, it doesn't matter; this is not our 'original face.' We lose this face, but we will have a better face inside.
- R. *I have a second question, which is also my last question. From this information sheet, I learned that apart from working as a spiritual leader guiding sentient beings to find God and become one with Hirm, You have a dream for this world; You aspire for world peace. This is a common aspiration of all human beings. However, although ordinary people love peace, wars are often initiated and provoked by the politicians in power. Therefore, logically speaking, if politicians in power can become enlightened sooner, [Laughter] it should be a faster and more effective way to achieve world peace. Supreme Master, do You think this is a reasonable idea? [Master: Very reasonable.] Do You have a special way to achieve this goal?*
- M. It is only too reasonable; the problem is that they won't cooperate. Look at me: A petite woman. Would it be easy for me to see them? You bring them here and I will enlighten them. The two of us can work in cooperation. [Laughter] This world has greater respect for men than for women. A person elected to power would not care to see us. We should be grateful already that he doesn't kill us! Some governments are afraid of people who are well-known and have popular support, and whom they regard as competitors. Politicians think that we are also in the political business, trying to gain fame and profit. Therefore, spiritual practitioners like us, who are more open and famous, face the danger of losing our lives. If any government can tolerate and understand us, and let us teach freely, we are already extremely grateful. We never dream that they will come to us. So, this dream of yours is a very beautiful one. [Laughter]
- R. *This dream has to rely on the Supreme Master to realize it.*
- M. It is not easy to deal with this world. As you know, it is difficult to establish contact with those in power. They are so well protected that it is difficult for them to contact us even if they want to. The people around a person in power shield him from contacting whom they think he should not; they give him inappropriate information and different views. He, himself, cannot break through this barrier to contact people; therefore, he, too, is confined. It is rather difficult, but we will try to think of a way, although I am not inclined to. We should just let things develop naturally.
- C. *Thank You very much for Your exchange. I think we should come back to this agenda. Does anyone want to ask any impromptu questions? Actually, we have a distinguished guest here. He is very humble, and declined our invitation to sit up here. He is Mr. Ko Wen-fu, former magistrate of Pingtung County and former vice minister of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission. He is sitting in the last row behind you.*

He is now chairman of a telecommunication company. Shall we invite Director Ko to say a few words?

- M. A great person ought to be so humble. He is very humble; that's why he is a great person.

[K (Director Ko)]

- K. *Mr. Chairman, Supreme Master, and Mr. Professor, ladies and gentlemen. I am so honored to be here. The Supreme Master may have been to my hometown in Pingtung, where She has a Center in Chaochou. I was born and raised in Chaochou township. [Master: I like Pingtung; it is very warm in winter.] I have been to Your Center, which is located at a site contributed by former Chaochou mayor Hung. When I was magistrate of Pingtung County, he was mayor of Chaochou, so he was like a brother to me. Regretfully, he has passed away. When I went to his grave to pay my respects, I saw the Center. It is still there and it's well maintained. In my opinion, it was a pity to see Supreme Master leave Formosa, because it is such a nice Center. When You were around, the Center was like a sacred spiritual place, a sacred place of Buddhism. This method purifies people's minds and guides them toward goodness. It is a force that our society needs most today. My question is, since You began Your mission in Formosa, is there a chance that You will come back and resume this most meaningful activity? [Warm applause from audience.]*

- C. *Will You come back to Formosa again?*

- M. It depends on God's arrangement. People in every country ask me to stay, and that makes it difficult for me to decide. I have to be on the move all the time so I can share my time with everyone. Perhaps I will leave the matter until I am older; when I have nowhere to go, then I will come back, begging you for a place to live.

Thank you very much for your loving concern and suggestion. I miss my homeland very much, but sometimes our destiny is not the same. We have to do what we can. I do miss Formosa very much. Here, I feel I am a native, and everyone loves me very much. Therefore, if there is a chance in the future, of course, I will come back.

- K. *Let me add a few words. I like the way You look now. You didn't give me as good an impression before as You do today. Perhaps, I will follow You, too. [Laughter and applause.]*

- M. Welcome! Of course, I look more amicable this way. I didn't used to dress this way, nor did I wear makeup. I used to feel much more comfortable. When I dress up, I feel as though I have something on my face, but I have gotten used to it. It's good that everyone likes it; it is easier to communicate with you then. Thank you! I can feel your loving kindness. If there is a chance in the future, we will come again. I've been here for three days already; about thirty thousand people saw me yesterday. The whole of Formosa saw me, thanks to the live television broadcast. In this sense, I have been back to Formosa. I have been spending a little time in each country. Anyway, thank you very much. I will find a way. I like Formosa the most; I lived here for more than ten years, and it's just like my home. I've never stayed in a place for that long, except in Au Lac. In this world, I've stayed the longest period in Formosa.

- C. *Thank You very much, Supreme Master Ching Hai. Ladies and gentlemen, there is no gathering that will last forever. We are delighted to have had Supreme Master*

here with us today. In this seminar that has lasted almost two hours, you have witnessed a dialogue between religion and academics, belief and knowledge. Of course, there is a gap between them, but we are researchers of the Academia Sinica, so we are seeking answers in the academic and intellectual domains through this seminar. In the exchange, the Supreme Master provided us with some words of great wisdom, which will be very valuable for our future research.

Through today's interchange, you will have realized that the Quan Yin method, as Professor Ruaan noted, is heading toward educating modern spiritual practitioners. Supreme Master emphasized, in one concise sentence, the return to our original God nature, which is the goal of spiritual practice. Regarding Her organization, we have found that it is very unique and extraordinary. What power makes people in different places reach out simultaneously and spontaneously to help each other? Apart from studying the issue from the religious and academic viewpoints, there is still much for us to reflect deeply upon. Their method of spreading the message is also very special. The leaders of the Association present have already explained that they accomplish their work mainly by doing things in silence, and this really deserves our admiration!

We had hoped to conduct a more in-depth study of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, but we have discovered that religion knows no boundaries. We cannot restrict Supreme Master to discussions on Southeast Asia only. Perhaps this is a special feature rather than a flaw. In the future, the Chinese world will become one connected by all the seas of the earth. The concept of the 'Overseas Chinese' is an important one that our Chinese research group will address in the future. From this perspective and that of religious activities, we can further prove that the Chinese people transcend national boundaries. When they do, especially when they go beyond Chinese and western cultures, we find that we can rise above politics. From the deeds and words of the Supreme Master, we can see that the cultural power is guiding the economic power, and is beyond political restrictions. This is a beautiful phenomenon in a pluralistic society. Therefore, politics no longer control everything. In this pluralistic society, different community groups have opened up their own worlds.

Today, we are very happy to have received the assistance of our colleagues from the Academia Sinica, who have helped make this seminar a great success. Of course, we are also grateful to our research groups and our special thanks go to our assistant secretary. Her efficient arrangements and the enthusiastic participation and organized cooperation of the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association have made the seminar a great success. We would like to thank all our guests from the academic field, the press, and the social sector for their earnest participation. We would also like to thank the commentator for his very profound and wise narration, observations, and questions. Finally, our greatest thanks go to Supreme Master Ching Hai for coming to the Academia Sinica despite Her extremely busy schedule. Her profound and inspirational speech today has left much room for contemplation. Thank you all very much!

- M. Thank you very much! Thank you, everyone! [Applause]
- Q. May I ask one final question?
- C. Oh! Still another question?

- Q. *Are the majority of Your Southeast Asian disciples of Chinese descent? Are there any local people, for example, Indonesians or Malaysians?*
- M. Both Chinese and local people.
- Q. *But, are they mainly Chinese?*
- M. No, no! We will continue to introduce our method to everyone who comes. There are a lot of local people, and many of us need to listen to the translation through earphones. Wherever we go, we often need many people to translate our discourses into different languages.
- Q. *My question is regarding the celestial clothes. You have mentioned that the celestial clothes designed by You are becoming more expensive. We are curious as to where all these celestial clothes have gone after the fashion shows. [Master: Sold.] All sold? Or are they kept for exhibition or other purposes?*
- M. We sell them!
- Q. *To whom?*
- M. To anyone who wants to buy. This is freedom. We also have a boutique in Taipei. Anyone can go in and buy what they want.
- Q. *Then what about the measurements? [Laughter]*
- M. We have to take the measurements and then you will have to wait for some time. Since we emphasize quality instead of quantity, we must take the precise measurements of each individual customer. Besides, we have at the most two or three sets of clothes for each design. We cannot produce too many.
- C. *Good. [Master: Thank you.] We now declare that the seminar has officially concluded. Thanks everyone who is present here today. Thank you. [Applause]*

THE ESSENCE OF LIFE ⁷²

We are, in fact, one. No matter what we do for each other, it is the same as doing it for ourselves, because we love each other. That is the essence of life. The essence of life is love. The essence of God, of Buddha, of Allah, is love. There's nothing else but love. When we make the choice of love, that is the highest choice, the noblest choice, which is our true self, we will feel that we are very close to God, very close to Buddha.

There are many choices we can make in life. Depending on the choice we make, we will become the being that represents the choice.

God is the Light that's brighter than thousands of suns put together. God is the melody that fills our souls with all happiness and contentment no matter where we are, no matter what race or nationality, no matter what kind of background or religion we're from. And if we want to touch God as one of us, He even manifests as one of us; for example, Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed, the Sikh Gurus or the Krishna Masters. These are all personal, individual manifestations of God for us to love, to see, to touch and to believe in.

72. Public lecture, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, April 30, 2000 (Originally in English).

Also, we can still contact these Masters when we raise our consciousness to their heavenly dimension, which is higher than the physical consciousness of this planet. If I can do it, you can. If our brother and sister initiates can, you can. And it's happening now, not a thousand years ago! Because the good news is that we're one in this system, we're one with this Godliness, we're one with everything we can see or dream of or imagine. We are that.

THE WAY OF PEACE AND LOVE ⁷³

We can live our lives in many ways. We can try to use violence or force, or we can try to use unreasonable measures, thinking that we can get what we want. But finally we all have to make the great choice, that is, to come back to own self, to our God's nature. The way of the saints since time immemorial has always been peace and love. That's our true self.

The Light around the Buddha and Jesus is called the halo, the magnetic field of the enlightened one. The more enlightened a person is, the brighter is this Light around him or her. But only when you have opened the wisdom eye, can you see if a person has Light or not. The person who sees the Light inside has Light outside also. The person who does not see the Light inside has very dim or very dark, or very low Light outside. We call this the aura. The aura of the person who is completely enlightened is very, very bright. The disciple can see this Light, because he or she is enlightened. The disciple has the wisdom eye opened, and he or she can see that the Buddha or Jesus has Light. So, they paint the picture just the way they saw it. Some people also have some psychic powers; they don't even practice the Quan Yin method, but they have the wisdom eye opened a little. They can also see who has the great Light, who has golden Light, and who has dark coffee-color Light. But the best knowledge is your self. You are the teacher; you are the Buddha. And I want to show you your great wisdom.

WHY WE ARE HERE ⁷⁴

The Buddhist scriptures say that you are the Buddha and that the Buddha nature is inside you. The bible says that God lives within this temple. So, who else is in there, except God? If we are the temple and God is the only one who lives in there, who are we then, except God? If we don't remember, that's fine, but we are still God.

So, whatever we choose to do as the God of all gods that we are, we should respect. As the Father / Mother of all of these beings that we are, we should respect our own wishes and our choice to live and express our divine selves in whichever way we want.

That's why Jesus told us that we should not judge people. Because we don't know the path that another being has chosen to walk. He or she does his / her thing so that she / he might come to know God in a different way. He or she might choose to be a seemingly bad person, a very lowly person or a very so-called immoral person. But that's his / her way of knowing the divine. By choosing to be ungodly, that person will one day know that's not him / her. But they have to go back and learn the whole being again. Because if we always stay in heaven and are Gods all the time, we won't recognize ourselves as God. So, we need to lower ourselves and come down to this physical level so we can once again recognize our own greatness. That's our choice, and that's why we came here.

73. Public lecture, Colombo, Sri Lanka, April 29, 2000 (Originally in English).

74. Public lecture, Auckland, New Zealand, April 27, 2000 (Originally in English).

So, the answer to our question about why we are here is: Because we want to know God. When we feel the time is up, that's the time we choose to remember ourselves again. That's the time we come to seek out spiritual friends, a spiritual group or maybe a spiritual teacher so that we can remember quickly; because we have forgotten how to remember and where to look. So, some friend who has already remembered himself / herself may be able to help us. And then we recognize that we're nothing else but the supreme being, but God. We recognize the supreme being that's housed within this body.

But actually, He is not housed within the body. He houses our body. But then again, spiritual terminology is never a very exact science. So, no matter how much a teacher tells us about God or how eloquently a spiritual friend might speak about the divine being within us, we cannot understand just by listening. So, the spiritual teacher, guide or friend has to show us practically, not just theoretically.

For example, when Jesus came to our planet, He taught His disciples both ways: The theoretical way and the practical way. And that's why later, His immediate disciples could also do wonders, could also see heaven, could also hear the voice of God as the Word of the creator, could also see the Light of heaven, could ascend to heaven and even see the angels or see the Mother / Father. The Mother / Father spoke to them, like the Mother / Father spoke to Moses. And the angels also spoke to them.

Likewise, we can do that. Because as great as Jesus' disciples were, we are also great. We and Jesus' disciples are the same because Jesus said to us that we are all children of God. But because we have forgotten sometimes one or two friends have to come to remind us, but only when we are ready. Because if we aren't ready, no one can do much for us.

Spiritual practice advances our planet

I'm not saying you should come and practice the Quan Yin method or have the experience of heaven. Even if you don't have it, you can feel that our planet's now a different energy. It's happier, more open, and very relaxed; and human beings are very different from before a few decades ago. Also, our technology and science, everything is just blooming up so fast. It's very amazing what we have discovered lately. Can you imagine the email and the Internet: Wow! It's incredible! So many other things that you don't know, they're already being developed.

The soul group

Do you know why you're so good? Because you are me. [Applause] We get on fabulously well because we're one.

The nature of the soul is not that I am here and I have one soul in here. It's not like that. My soul is bigger than just in here. It might be all over here. [Master makes a gesture encompassing the area of the room.] It might be all me, but it looks different. It's not like God is one and everyone is one with God. It's not in that sense. It's in the sense that one individual can have a great soul that encompasses many so-called bodies. So, we can happen to identify just like we are each other.

Just like sometimes there are two persons, but they think exactly the same thing at the same moment. That's because that is one soul, not because they are one with God or they are one with each other. But they are one soul, just like twins or soul mates. A soul mate doesn't mean only one; it can mean a lot. Because some great souls encompass many

other beings for their own purpose. Therefore, we feel like brothers and sisters; we feel like one. Sometimes you feel very good with your sister or your brother, your mother or your father because that's you! You make it become family, but it's only one: One soul and many individuals. [Applause]

That's why sometimes we say, 'I have affinity with that person.' Or, 'She's my soul mate; he's my soul mate.' Because it's you; it's really you. I mean that's your individual soul group, in one soul. Apart from being one with God and one with everyone else, we also have the individual soul, which can house many big groups of people as just one soul. But it looks different.

Thus, sometimes we feel so good with a group of people. And the more we're with them, the more we feel strengthened because we're at home with ourselves. We're together, and we're at peace together. It's no wonder; no wonder we work so well! Can you imagine you are me? [Laughter]

WE ARE GREAT ⁷⁵

I want to tell you one more thing for the last time ever again: You are not bad. Even if you have a lot of bad habits, you are not bad. It's your brain, your computer, that records all these things and plays them out again. Don't ever identify yourself with all those bad habits. Just kill them, and say, 'It's not me!' Whatever you like about yourself or your way of living, you should keep; whatever is not good for your spiritual development or even your physical reputation, you should kill. Because they are your enemies; that's it! But you are not bad.

Number one, you have to know that you are not bad. It's just your acquired habits that are bad, because you have been associated with some bad people or bad environments. Just like if you come here next to me and I give you some candies, if you go into a fish shop, even though you don't want to buy any, they just touch you or brush against you, and then you feel smelly like a fish.

So, that's all there is to your so-called bad self. Don't ever blame yourself. Just get rid of your bad habits whenever you can, one by one. Make a promise that you're going to get rid of a bad habit, like smoking. If you can't do it immediately, give yourself a week or a month to do it. And if you fail, try again. It doesn't matter. You are very good already. You couldn't harm a living thing; you couldn't harm an ant now. You are so sweet, like an angel; you're a walking angel already. So, whatever else is there, it's doing no harm to anyone.

For example, before you liked to kill or hit people, and now you don't anymore. So, that's all right. Even if you still think about it, it's okay. You are really fine. As long as you do what was instructed at the time of initiation and meditate every day to nourish your soul, that's all you can do. Everything else is just on the surface. The ocean doesn't have waves. The waves come from the wind and the shifting of the planet. You are the ocean. It's always calm and beautiful. So, don't blame the waves on yourself. Blame the wind or the shifting of the planet. As long as the ocean is still on this planet's surface, there will always be waves. If you get rid of one wave, another wave will come. So, today you think you get rid of this bad habit, but tomorrow you discover, 'Hey! What is this? I never knew this before!'

You will always discover things that are not you, which you have recorded. For example, when you were young, you saw your mother become jealous of your father, and then you

75. International six-day retreat, Bangkok, Thailand, December 27-30, 1999 (Originally in English).

learned, 'Oh, when father does that, it's no good.' So, the brain recorded that. Then, when you grow up, you have almost the same situation, and the brain tells you, 'Get jealous now. It's the time to be jealous. This is a situation where you should be jealous.' But it's just on the very surface. All these bad habits are on the surface. They're not you!

You are never anything other than pure beauty and Light. That's what you should know about yourself. I don't know if you understand what I'm saying, deeply. Intellectually you understand, but one day you will realize that you are truly perfect. Even if you do something wrong, it was perfectly wrong! [Master and audience laugh.] It's just the thing that was wrong. But maybe even those wrong things are meant to be, so that something else will come up. Sometimes you have to go through some so-called wrong situations in order to meet the right person or the right thing. It's really like that.

So, just give yourself into the hands of God. Try your best, and that's all. Never blame yourself, and never think anything bad about yourself. Because you are God. They're just some bad habits. [Applause] If you don't like them, get rid of them. You see, you are very beautiful. You have to realize that one day – that you are perfect, just as I did. That's why I am so proud. No matter if you like me or think negatively about me, I still like myself very much. I do not believe you, that I am less than perfect. I don't care how many thousands of you think I am less than perfect; I still think I'm perfect. I not only think it, I know it. And that's freedom; you feel very beautiful about it.

AN ELDER AT HOME IS A BOON TO THE FAMILY ⁷⁶

Nowadays, people put their elderly relatives in pensioners' home. What a pity it is to relegate these sources of great wisdom to such homes without making use of them! You should not abandon our precious older citizens to old age homes. You should treasure them, for they are the most capable people in society, and we have much to learn from their wisdom and experiences. If you let the older people help you raise your children, the younger generation will become smarter more quickly.

Your children and grandchildren love their grandmas and grandpas most dearly, because the old and the young are highly compatible. Children are simple and naive, and elderly people know many things but do not talk on and on, nag, or try to control them too much. They impose restrictions on their grandchildren when the occasion demands, and let them develop on their own at other times. They are not like young parents, who often talk too much and argue meaninglessly. I think it is best to leave your children in the care of their grandparents as soon as they are born, and then work to sustain the family. Each one has a different job to do. Young parents still need to learn a lot and there is not much that they can teach their children. People in ancient times had great respect for their parents and the elderly, who consequently lived longer. Although the situation is different today, it is all right. You will come to learn about this more over time.

THE LIVING MASTER IS THE PROPHET OF THE TIME ⁷⁷

Q. *Do You think that's what Islam is, messages that were sent down by God through the prophet Mohammad?*

76. International six-day retreat, Bangkok, Thailand, December 27-30, 1999 (Originally in Chinese).

77. Interview with reporters from the Iranian TV Network, Cape Town, South Africa, December 2, 1999 (Originally in English).

- M. Yes, they absolutely were from God! It was not Mohammad, the physical person. It was the God within Him and the God of the whole that united and spoke through His physical frame. That's what we call Mohammad. He was the prophet at that time; He was the one and only at that time.

But God has to send many Mohammeds throughout different generations to remind Hiers children again and again. Because we weren't so fortunate as to be born at the time of the prophet Mohammad; we're alive now. So, there has to be some reminder at all times, like the descendents of Mohammad. But the descendents of Mohammad or Christ aren't always necessarily born in Israel or Turkey. They're born everywhere, as God wills it, to benefit Hiers different races of children. That's the will of heaven.

All religions belong to God

- Q. *If all the different religions are from God, then are there a lot of different messages from God? And are all of them okay?*
- M. All of them point to one thing, which is God. And all of them tell us to find God while living. The Koran says that all religions belong to God.
- Q. *But their origin is not what we see at the moment. Because the holy Koran also says that the only religion for God is Islam, and no other religion.*
- M. It's absolutely one hundred percent correct to say 'no other religion,' because at that time Mohammad was transmitting the direct teaching from God. So, for those who believed in Mohammad when He was alive and who received the direct teaching from Him, Islam was the only real teaching because the Master was still alive and was transmitting the real teaching directly. Any other religion from before that time was just theory.

So, when Christ was alive, that religion was real. Because of the direct teaching, people could see the Light and communicate with God. But when any Master is gone, another prophet, be it the last or the first, has to come and connect people with God again. And for the people at that time, that's the only real religion.

See God and all arguments about religion cease

- Q. *But that's in contradiction to the message of the Koran.*
- M. Only because you haven't seen God yet; that's why we argue about words and concepts and theory. If you just close your eyes, I can help you see God in an instant. And then you can talk to Him and ask your Allah, 'What is the real thing? What is the Truth?' You're very, very religious and devoted, and I'm very touched by your faith. But there's one thing missing – God! We talk about God all the time; we talk about the last prophet and we talk about the Truth but we don't see it.

If only you could see what I see, we wouldn't ever have to discuss it again. Would you like to see God now? Do you want to see the Light? I can make you see; I can help you. Because it's in you; Allah is within you! If we don't understand this, if we don't see God ourselves, then our knowledge is very limited. The Koran is the true teaching, but people can't understand it because you have to rise up to the same level or at least almost the same level of Mohammad in order to understand Mohammad's words. Otherwise, there will be a lot of misunderstanding. That's why

there's fighting and killing between different religions and even within the same religion, over the same God! This occurs because we rely on our limited understanding instead of on God's knowledge. So, we could talk forever because I understand differently than you do, and we might even end up fighting with each other.

But I love you because I've been there. I've argued with people before about Buddhism being the best or Christianity being the highest. But now I'm humble; I'm humble in the name of God because I know there's such a great knowledge that no one can say he or she understands everything. I only understand whatever God makes me understand, and I'm so grateful for whatever He bestows on me. And we keep learning forever. Even the prophet learns forever. Because God is limitless! We can know the whole, or we can know each point. If we want to understand each point, it will take an infinite amount of time. I'm just so happy to know God. If you say I'm wrong or I'm right, I don't mind. I know the Mother / Father. So, whatever you say is fine. If you understand the Koran, it's good. If you understand the way you understand, that's good, too. But I just understand differently because I see the prophet. He teaches me directly.

QUAN YIN METHOD RETRACES THE WORD OF GOD TO GO BACK TO OUR ORIGIN ⁷⁸

MC. *Our next guest has been described as 'a living, enlightened saint.' It's said She has crossed boundaries and conceptions of spirituality. As a young person, She spent Her life seeking ways to help the world's pain of the sick and the suffering through the Red Cross and through reaching out to those in need. Through Her own path in the Himalayas, She finally achieved what is known in the East as 'perfect enlightenment.' Since then, She has been teaching to others the power of Quan Yin meditation and through the meditation association organized relief efforts for suffering people and communities throughout the world. What She describes as Her humble efforts has been acknowledged by the international community with awards including the 'World Spiritual Leadership Award' and the award for 'Promotion of Human Rights.'*

She is in Cape Town right now as part of the Parliament of World's Religions. We are very pleased to have Supreme Master Ching Hai on the phone with us. Tell me, what is the message that You have brought with You to this Parliament of World's Religions in Cape Town?

M. It's the same as time immemorial – that we have God within us and since God is within us, it is easy to find Him. And should we forget how, I could show them.

MC. *I think one of the things that You plan to show people while You are here is Quan Yin meditation. Can You explain what it is and how it differs from any other sorts of meditation?*

M. This is an ancient method, which has been forgotten by many of us, but has been revived in every time in different countries. Some lucky people are able to reconnect with it again. 'Quan Yin' is actually just the name in Chinese for the 'Word' in the bible. The 'Word' is the spoken word of God, and also means the energy, the vibration, or the melody of heaven, which creates all things and to which all things will

78. Interview from radio station 'SAFM – Woman Today,' Cape Town, South Africa, December 2, 1999 (Originally in English).

return. So, in order to return to where we came from, we have to rely on this 'Word' or the vibration of heaven, which creates all things. That's where we came from, and 'Quan Yin' means contemplating on this 'Word.'

MC. *You mention that this 'Word' is found in the bible, and I believe that when You were a child, You were brought up in both the Buddhist and Christian principles.*

M. Right.

MC. *How do You manage to equate the two?*

M. It's just that I've been looking for it all my life. I studied different religious bibles and found that they pointed to one same Truth: That God is within us. We call Him by a thousand names, but we still can find Him in one unity if we know how. And there is a way; we just forgot.

Enlightenment takes places in seconds

MC. *I know that You personally found enlightenment in the Himalayas. Tell me, was it a very long process?*

M. It has been very long until that point, but enlightenment takes place in seconds.

MC. *Really?*

M. Yes.

MC. *So, the actual moment when it happened was just a few seconds?*

M. Yes, and we can continue to be enlightened every day – more and more so if we put in more effort. We will know more about God if we go deeper inside every day.

MC. *Apart from being an enlightened being, another thing that You are, amongst many other things, is an artist. I believe that You make very beautiful jewelry. How does that work to improve Your soul?*

M. It doesn't improve my soul. It's just that my soul has improved and then the artistic creativity came. Once we are even partially enlightened, all the dormant talent and ability within ourselves will be awakened. That's normal, because we have God within us. God is awakened and then we can do many things.

God can be found everywhere

MC. *There is one thing that I would like to ask You very briefly. You found enlightenment in the Himalayas. Is it necessary to go up some of the highest mountains in the world or can You find enlightenment in a slum?*

M. Immediately, yes, and here. I'm here to offer it to people at their doorstep. They don't have to go to the Himalayas like I did. [MC: Thank You very much. I do hope that You enjoy Your stay here at the Parliament of World's Religions.]

Bless you, Madam, and bless your country.

THE PARLIAMENT OF WORLD'S RELIGIONS – A GLOBAL UNION OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS FROM VARIOUS RACES AND RELIGIONS ⁷⁹

Thank You Mother / Father.

Thank you, brothers and sisters, for taking the time to come here to pray for Africa. Together we will also pray for the world. May I ask you a few seconds of silence to reconfirm our wish to the Lord. Thank you so much.

I have been praying to God even before I came here, for your land, and for the world, as always. I have told Him, Mother / Father, You know every thing; You grant our wish before we even ask. Whatever You arrange for us is the best for our spiritual development. It doesn't matter how bleak it looks at this moment, Your will is supreme. Your will is always the wisest, the best, and the most compassionate in the end. Pray let us know this; pray let us never forget that Your will is always the most loving in the highest sense of universal Truth.

We thank You also for giving us the occasion to be here today in this beautiful city, one of the most beautiful places on this planet, and to see all these beautiful, pure, simple-hearted people. It is our honor of many lifetimes to have such an occasion, because we are here by Your will. We live here by Your will, and we shall go back to Yourself by Your will. But we don't have much chance to see each other physically.

Although this physical world is a grand illusion, all Your creation, it is still very beautiful to us; it is our home. And in this sense, we also dedicate to You today, if You wish, that the people of this land, or any land, have the home that they wish and a peaceful life with all the dignity as God's children, as You shall will it. We dedicate to You our heart, our love, and our utmost surrender that whatever You shall arrange for us, it will be Your will. Nevertheless, since we are in this physical condition, we must endure many illusionary hardships, which hinder our spirit and separate us from You; therefore, pray Lord, grant us some of the dignity of basic peacefulness so that we may have enough calm, enough surrender, to remember You every second of our lives. You are glory; You are beauty; You are richness; You are the most fantastic vision of perfection that we could ever remember. Let this perfection also be manifest on this planet. Perhaps, in some of the lands of the planet that need more blessings than others, we will be willing to be work together to help some of these less fortunate lands, some of the less fortunate corners of the world, such as this little corner of Your creation. Blessed be You, my Lord, that You remember us in this corner of Africa. Perhaps all Your children deserve Your love and blessings, but maybe this corner deserves a little bit extra.

That shall be our prayer for today.

Amen.

Thank you, brothers and sisters.

79. Prayer at the Parliament of World's Religions opening ceremony, Cape Town, South Africa, December 1, 1999 (Originally in English).

ONLY BY REUNITING WITH GOD CAN WE BE CONTENTED ⁸⁰

Our heavenly Mother / Father never looks at our so-called sins because in Hiers eyes we don't ever sin; we just make mistakes. We forget the noble beings that we are. Therefore, Hes always sends some special persons like Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Mohammad, Guru Nanak or the Jain Masters, to name a few, to show us how to remember again that we truly are the greatest beings imaginable in the whole universe.

Even the angels envy us; even the greatest of the angels has to serve us. Can you imagine? And all the while, we pray to the angels as if they were our greater protectors. They are, but only as long as we're still ignorant of our own glory. As soon as we remember who we are, they stand by and serve us because we're made in the image of God. Suppose we have access to heaven anytime, which we do after initiation. According to your concentration, you go to a higher or a little lower part of heaven; we all do, and we all see God in different ways. So, suppose we go to heaven when we attain a higher degree of enlightenment through diligent, daily practice; then we'll see all the angels and all the great beings with the greatest Light imaginable, lining up on both sides to welcome us.

That's what we truly are. It's better than any 'red carpet treatment.' And if God Hirmself deemed us really fit to receive a true vision of Hirmself, which isn't anything we can describe in human language, we would melt like ice in the Himalayas under the June sun. We'd feel like a baby; we'd feel incredible bliss. The most incredible experience that people describe in human relationships is sexual ecstasy, which pales in comparison to this. I have to tell you this so that you can compare it to something! Otherwise, I don't know how to describe the bliss of heaven.

When you're in ecstasy, when you're in samadhi, when you face God, sometimes Hes deems fit to appear as an image or as a face. Depending on how we'd like to see Hirm, Hes can appear as a Mother or as a Father. Then again, Hes can be just splendor with Light, and thousands of suns around Hiers image. And yet, you also have thousands of suns around your self. Because at the time your soul is liberated, it radiates this kind of Light and you are the Light. That's what all the bibles tell us – that we're the Light; we're the essence of Light. The Word is also Light! That's a vibration. The more condensed version of the Light becomes the Sound. The Sound is like melody in this world. That's why we love music so much; because it's very similar to the music of heaven, to the Word spoken by God, the universal language which, when we hear it, allows us to understand all things: We understand all languages, we understand each other and we love each other. We're so nourished, so energized by this inner vibration, the Word of God, the music of heaven, that we become a new person.

That's why many people glow after initiation. They change so completely and immediately that sometimes I don't recognize them before and after initiation. Sometimes the change is that drastic, and the more they meditate each day, the younger they become. Because all the cells become new. That's why we become like children – we become more innocent, more intelligent, purer and simpler at heart. We become closer to heaven. The bible says, 'Except that you become like a child again, you cannot enter the kingdom of God.' To become a child, we have to go through the process called baptism – baptism with the fire of the spirit. Saint John mentioned this: 'No doubt I baptize by water, but the one who comes after me will baptize you with the fire of the holy spirit.'

80. International three-day retreat, Cape Town, South Africa, December 1, 1999 (Originally in English).

What is the fire of the holy spirit? It's God Himself purifying us, reconnecting us with Himself, taking us, the part, back to the whole again, making the drop of the ocean merge into the vast waters of love. This is the time of baptism. The true baptism takes place in less than a second, and we'll be there right away in heaven, where we should be. Because there's nothing that separates us from our self and God, never ever, except our attention and our thinking that we're separate from God. That's how we're separated from God. So, I'm just showing you how to change your attention to a different place, a different dimension.

For example, now I'm looking at you and I see you so I can't see what's behind me. If I turn myself backwards, I see what's behind me. We can see God while living. We can even choose the time to die. We select our own level of heaven before we go there. Just like you go to an agency to look at different houses and see which one is better for you. Similarly, 'In the house of our Mother / Father there are many mansions' and we can pick one according to our level of understanding and consciousness.

We've never been separated from God; that's what I want to tell you. That's what I've discovered: In just the blink of an eye, we're in God consciousness. A blink of an eye, and we're back here again. A blink again, and we go back to heaven. Blink again, and we come back here. Sometimes the boundary between heaven and the physical dimension is so blurred that you go in and out, in and out. Or you're in both at the same time, as most of the Masters' consciousness are. They're in both worlds at the same time; they've mastered the transcendental art of erasing the boundary between the physical world and the heavenly world. They've erased space and time in their consciousness because they've become one with God again.

It's so simple that every one of us can do it because each of us is already God. We just need to look in a different direction, that's all. I'll show you where to look inside yourself, where the connection with God is, where God resides. If He resides within us, where is it? Within! Then we must go within, not go without. When we go without, we see the physical manifestation of God. We see the walking, physical God who sits behind us, beside us, who loves us physically, who eats with us, who jokes with us, who laughs with us.

Within, we see the reality of all creation, the God who is! The God who isn't physical, yet who has thousands of millions of images. The God who has no name, yet who has been called by thousands of loving names. Just like we call our loved one, 'Honey, ' or 'my dear, my apple pie, my sugar, my candy,' or 'my other half, my better half, my dearest, my loved one.' Anything! You sometimes invent a name to call your loved one. For example, someone might call his wife 'my noodle.' And that's alright! So, some people even call God 'the bride,' 'the eternal beloved' or 'The faithful spouse.'

Anything will do because we love God so much and He loves us so much. We're one so we can call Him anything, but it would be better for all of us to truly reunite with this loved one again. Too much talk about the future fiancé or coming husband but no reunification, no union, is of no use. We'll never experience the happiness of marriage if we never see the husband we've heard so much about! Similarly, everything we say about God – for example, introducing or praising God – is like a wonderful song to our ears and to our soul. But the soul wants more solid experience, being truly face-to-face with God, and that I can help you with. [Applause] God loves you so much!

THE ONLY PATH TO GOD IS INSIDE ⁸¹

MC. *We are now going across to the lady that I was talking about earlier, the Supreme Master Ching Hai. In the eyes of the world, She is seen as many things. She's seen as an artist, as a spiritual Teacher, a humanitarian, and a poet. Certain people who know Her personally describe Her not only as being a living enlightened saint, full of wisdom and compassion, but also someone with a delightful sense of humor. We are very privileged and very pleased to have Supreme Master Ching Hai joining us tonight.*

I am delighted that you're joining us on the program. Now, first of all, because You are coming here new to South Africa, so people don't yet know a lot about You and they may not know of Your work. I would like You to describe, what does being a 'Supreme Master' mean and 'Supreme Master' of what?

M. This is what the people in my group call me. We have many masters in our group also, so in case people get us mixed up, they call me the 'chief one,' just like 'superintendent.' [Master laughs.]

MC. *Tell us about Your life because You don't follow one particular religion, do You?*

M. We have only one religion, and so different names do not make any difference to us, really.

MC. *What do You mean? What is that one religion?*

M. We worship one God. In different religions, we describe Hirm with different names. That's according to my knowledge. So, there's no need to make another religion or to say I follow one and forsake another.

MC. *So, what do You do? What is Your message? What is Your work?*

M. The message is from the most high, not from myself as a person, but from the highest most loving power of the universe; it is that we should know God. The purpose of our coming here is to know Hirm. Therefore, the earlier we know, the better, so we can find peace within ourselves and we can make peace outside in the world.

MC. *Why do we need yet someone else telling us this? There are so many religions; there are so many priests, there are imams, there are rabbis, there are all sorts of people, why You?*

M. Everyone is doing some wonderful job in a different way. Even if there are more people like me, it's probably still not enough to remind our brothers and sisters that we should not forget God, because some of us do. And not only reminding by word of mouth, but we will also show them God face to face so that they can believe and remember Hirm, and be happy again.

81. Interview from radio station 720 'Believe It Or Not,' Johannesburg, South Africa, November 28, 1999 (Originally in English).

Quan Yin method is the easiest way to God

MC. *How do You show someone God face to face?*

M. 'God' is an abstract term to call our creator, the most high. We could see Hirm the way Moses has seen Hirm, the way Jesus, saint John, and other ancient Masters have seen Hirm. When God manifests to us within our heavenly vision, we can see Hirm as Light, brilliant Light, as thousands of suns. Or we can hear Hirm talk in a voice as mighty as the thunder, as great as the ocean waves, et cetera. There are much more when we can calm our minds and go within the kingdom of God within ourselves. We can experience a lot more about God; Hes manifests in many different ways.

MC. *How do You bring people to that revelation, to that understanding?*

M. I do not have to bring people to that state because we all have the kingdom of God within ourselves, as it says in the bible. The moment we calm our mind in a special way – there is a way to calm the mind quicker than other ways, and our way is the quickest way you can calm the mind and remember the kingdom of God. It happens almost immediately.

MC. *How do You do that, Master Ching Hai?*

M. It is not I that do this; it's the Mother / Father that uses this physical instrument. When anyone is ready and wants to come to Hirm again, then Hes will just do that. Hes will reconnect Hirmself to Hirmself within us.

MC. *You make it sound very easy.*

M. Yes, it is absolutely easy, madam.

MC. *Because there are so many people who struggle with faith.*

M. I know that. It is because they don't know the easiest way. We can struggle for thousands of years and not see God, but if we know it, then it's a second, a fraction of a second.

MC. *You said if you know the way, how does one know it?*

M. Some people who know the way show us.

MC. *For example?*

M. For example, I know the way; I can show people the way to concentrate, the way to reconnect ourselves with ourselves, with the greatest God.

Where else should we come from but heaven?

MC. *You talk about the bible, but the background I have read about You says in fact that You are not a Christian, You are not a Buddhist, whatever, but You quote the bible.*

M. I am a believer of all religions because I have found that the essence of all the religious scriptures point toward one thing – that is we have one God. We don't even

need the bible to know this. There must be a creator for all the beautiful things that we see with our naked eyes; but there are more beautiful things, which we can see with our spiritual eyes.

MC. *For example again?*

M. For example, we can ascend to heaven and see that the scenery, the life, and the beings there are a thousand-fold more beautiful.

MC. *How do we know? Who has been there and come back and reported?*

M. We can go there any time; I mean, the ones who practice this way of heaven. There is a way to go back there; that is the way we came from. If we came from heaven, we must be able to go back there.

MC. *But how do we know we came from heaven?*

M. We can prove that to ourselves by going back there to look. Where else should we come from? [Master laughs.] Suppose we don't come from heaven, where else should we come from? Should we come from hell? We are the children of God. Jesus told us that; Buddha told us that; Mohammed told us that, and we can even prove that to ourselves. If God created us, we are the children of God. We must come from heaven.

MC. *There are a lot of people who don't believe in God and who don't believe that God created us.*

M. Right. Well, I don't argue with these people. Sooner or later, they will have to believe. Maybe they believe in their hearts, but they do not want to admit it. Sometimes, it's fashionable to be different; it's okay.

MC. *Okay, I want to go to the lines. I'm talking to Supreme Master Ching Hai who's going to be attending the parliament of religion. She is a very, very well-known speaker. She travels throughout the world speaking about enlightenment, speaking about God, and trying to convince people and show people the way that they too can experience God.*

MC. *Sister, I don't know if You heard the caller's thoughts?*

M. Not really.

MC. *What he was basically saying is that it doesn't matter what creation myth you choose to believe in or the old stories or whatever, the Creator exists in each one of us, and we find Him or Her our own way.*

M. Right. That's correct.

To know God is easier than breathing

MC. *So, You are going to be talking and giving workshops – what sort of thing will You be doing at the workshops?*

M. I probably will introduce to people the sure way to heaven. If people are interested and are ready to know their origin, to know our Father or Mother, then I will show them in a practical way. We will sit down together and let the God within us connect each other again.

MC. *You make it all sound so easy!*

M. Madam, believe me, it's easier than breathing.

MC. *I am playing 'devil's advocate' here, You understand.*

M. No. No. It's fine, please ask anything.

MC. *There are so many thousands of people listening, who are saying maybe the things You say could be interpreted as arrogance. You know the way; therefore, You can show people the way or You're saying: 'Do as I do, and we can all be saved and go to heaven.' There are a lot of intellectual questions posed here.*

M. God is not to be argued or even to be discussed. We just sit down and I tell you, 'Now you will see God,' and that's how you do. It's as easy as that. The bible says that the kingdom of God is within you, right?

MC. Yes.

M. The bible says that we are the temple and the holy spirit lives within us, so who else is in there but God? If God lives within yourself, isn't that easy to find? Hes is there already.

MC. *Yes, if You believe in the bible. What about the people who prefer to believe in the Koran or the Bhagavad Gita, et cetera?*

M. It's the same, madam. It points to the same enlightenment, of knowing the source of ourselves. You can call it Buddha, Godhood, Allah – it doesn't matter. It is just like we call our loved ones by different names – sweetheart and honey-pie. And in different languages, they even use different names. We don't translate all these names, and then we argue with each other whether Buddha is higher or Christ is higher. In fact, both of these terms are Hebrew and Sanskrit terms for the same thing – 'Enlightened saint.'

Everything is made from the Word

MC. *One of the things You do, I'm reading from Your pamphlet, You initiate sincere spiritual aspirants into the Quan Yin method of meditation. This event has been described as opening of the wisdom eye and sudden or immediate enlightenment by the great Master above. Will You talk us through this Quan Yin method of meditation?*

M. Quan Yin is just the Chinese term for 'Word,' vibration, heavenly sound, or melody. In our worldly language, it is very difficult to unify the meaning of the same thing, so I would refer to the bible, which states, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' Everything that was made was made by the Word and nothing was made that was not made by this.

So, in order to find our origin, we have to return to where we came from; we have to trace back the Word that was with God and that was even God. That's what we are made of. Also, everything else in this universe is made of this essence, of the tremendous energy of the universe, which we could call God almighty. When Hes manifests in this world, Hes dwells within us as a human being and manifests materially as a human being so that we can see each other. Or Hes manifests in the flowers, the food we eat, the fruit that we like, et cetera. These are the material aspects of God.

MC. *What about this Quan Yin method of meditation?*

M. 'Quan Yin' means the 'Word' of God. We retrace the Word of God to go back to be united with Hirm. Quan Yin is just the Chinese name. You see, this is how we argue again, because the 'Word' is 'Quan Yin.' Quan Yin means contemplate on this 'Word' of God, on this vibration of the universal power, which makes all beings. But then I started in Formosa, and this word is Chinese, they just keep using it as a habit.

Manifestations of the most high

MC. *Let's go to the lines. Sharon?*

S. *I've heard when people who have been found clinically dead see the Light and experience a great being, they will see the appropriate person according to their belief system or religion – like you might meet Moses, or Jesus, or Buddha. I've just spoken to a friend who saw You in Cape Town and You spoke about death and attitude towards death, and I just need You to discuss this.*

MC. *In other words, where do people go when they die and do they meet people they know?*

S. *No, what I've heard is that if you're a Christian, you'll meet the Christ, if you are a Buddhist, you'll see the Buddha.*

MC. *Thanks, Sharon. Basically, Sharon wants to know about 'death' and 'after death.' She was suggesting that she had heard that if you are a Hindu, you are going to a Hindu heaven and meet Hindu saints and gods and goddesses. If you are Christian, you'll meet Christ. So, it's very culturally orientated, culturally focused. She wants to know Your views on 'after death.'*

M. In short, it is partially correct what she has heard. The most high manifests in different ways; Hes also could manifest as Christ or Buddha, in case that person who dies does not know another religion outside his own. It is also fine, because it's all God's manifestations, anyhow. But for example, in our group, sometimes we meditate in the way that we die daily; we leave the physical body for a while and come back. And the person, who meditates, even if he is a Christian, sometimes sees the Buddha in his vision and learns with Him, or sometimes the Buddhist has the honor to meet Christ so that he can know that God is one. But in the case of a person who dies, because he is used to Christ or Buddha, God doesn't want to confuse him. If Hes wants to greet him to heaven, then Hes will send whoever is the representative or the Master that that person believes in. For the beginning, and later, he will learn to know that all Masters are sons / daughters of God and they say the same thing. They teach human beings to remember the greatest one.

MC. *We're going to take a very short break.*

Welcome back to 'Believe It Or Not.' I'm Kate Turkington, grappling with the meaning of life and meeting God. Our guest tonight, Supreme Master Ching Hai, has utmost faith in Her calling and in the facts. She said that it's a fact that She can reintroduce people to God and show them to heaven. I'm grappling with some of these concepts, Ching Hai, I must tell You. I'm going straight to the lines and talk to Johan. Johan, your question?

J. *Not clear.*

MC. *Johan wants to know how did Your insight come to You? Was it a revelation? Did they come over a period of time? What was the process?*

M. *It is a kind of revelation, but it is a continuous revelation on a daily basis, every time, not just one time. And it comes because of the initiation into this way of heaven. There is a way for everything in this world; there's a way to drive a car, a way to play football, a way to access the Internet. Similarly, there is a way to heaven and some people know it. It's just like a science, very precise. And everyone, I repeat, everyone can have this experience of heaven and develop himself and his connection with God every day after he knows how. It just takes about half an hour to explain to him what to remember, what to pay attention to, and where to remember to find God. Because we look in a different direction, we don't see God. It is just like if you are talking to me and I talk to someone else, then I cannot hear you, but if I talk in the receiver and listen to your voice, then I know you are there and you know I'm there. It's just that there is a way and many of us have forgotten. God has not sent us here without a map to go back Home.*

Asceticism does not denote a Master

MC. *Let's talk to Ivan.*

I. *I have been reading the booklet, 'The key of immediate enlightenment.' It is a wonderful booklet. There's hardly anything that one can disagree with. It's all the same, the spiritual teachings, the same kind of moral code that most of the religions are teaching. So, this is very, very much in line with my own belief. In my previous observation, they all have a lot in common, and what Master Ching Hai is looking for is the common thread that runs through all religions. There is only one thing that confuses me about You, Master Ching Hai, apart from being incredibly beautiful, I mean You can't help that...*

M. *You have seen me in person?*

I. *You are an incredibly beautiful person physically in Your pictures and so on.*

M. *Thank you.*

I. *Most of the spiritual Masters that I know about like Moses, Jesus, Buddha, and all the other Buddhist masters and the Hindu gurus, and so on, all seemed to have adopted an ascetic way of life.*

M. *Right. I did that before.*

- I. *You decided to go against the grain by wearing the most incredibly beautiful, ornamental clothes. You don't think this is somehow putting some people off? It doesn't put me off; I can see behind the material packaging, but don't You think this is putting a lot of people off by being unspiritual?*
- M. Maybe so, sir, but I'm only a servant of God. I have to do absolutely what Hes says even though it's against my liking. And also these things that I design myself, I have to model them.
- I. *Yes, You design most of these clothes. The only kind of criticism that I could possibly have is that most of them wear simple clothes and all of the beautiful ornamental clothes that You wear. And the other thing is that You refer God as Him. Could You please explain that a little bit more and I will listen on the radio?*
- M. It can be called 'Her' also. It's just that most people call God, 'Him,' so I just go with the trend so as not to confuse people. Otherwise, God is not a Him or a Her.

Also, a more extended answer to your question is that not all of the gurus are wearing ascetic clothes. For example, the guru Gobind Singh of the Sikhs wore all kinds of pearls and beautiful clothes. And the Quan Yin Bodhisattva of Buddhism always wore clothes like a princess, for example to cite a few. It depends on the destiny of the Master or the Teacher at that time or on the condition of the world at that time, that God has ordained someone to do this or that. But, you are right; I would prefer also a simple life. It's easier.

Enlightenment releases dormant talents

- MC. *You also write poetry and we have some examples of Your poetry in the booklet, and I see that You do celestial artwork. Now, isn't that rather pretentious to call Your artwork celestial? I might call Michelangelo's celestial; I might call Leonardo's celestial, but it seems a very presumptuous word to me to describe one's artwork as celestial.*
- M. It is because I have inspiration from heaven, so I credited it to heaven and not my own human ability. I wasn't able to do that before and since God has given me enlightenment, I have been able to do many things, and so I credited that to heavenly grace.
- MC. *And the poetry, would You put down to heavenly grace?*
- M. No, not all of the poetry is celestial. The poems are my own feelings even before enlightenment and so they are called accordingly. If it is made for God, then of course you can call it celestial or heavenly, but if it was before that, they are just named differently, like 'Traces of A Previous Life' or 'Love Poetry,' 'War Poetry.' They are just the way they are, and called accordingly.

I also have made poems which are in the name of God; for example, 'I Will Forever Love You,' and 'The Ocean of Love' refer to God, but they are not called celestial poetry.

God bestowed title of Supreme Master

MC. *Okay, let's talk to Edgar. What Edgar wants to know is: Are there other masters, who are preaching either the same message or maybe a different message in other places of the world?*

M. There are, yes. There are quite a few, and there are many more in different levels of consciousness and many different levels of understanding about God. But they all try their best to bring humankind's consciousness into a higher level, to make our planet a more beautiful place, and a safer place.

MC. *I'm still not clear in my mind about this concept of Master and Supreme Master. Where does this title come from?*

M. God bestowed it.

MC. *So, You have decided that God bestowed on You the title of Supreme Master?*

M. I have not decided it; Hes told me.

MC. *So, Hes has told You that You are the Supreme Master?*

M. No, it is so people will know that it is Hes who speaks. It is not a human being who speaks. It's not me, not 'I,' the physical being that speaks; it is the Master that speaks.

MC. *So You say to Your followers, 'This is not me, Ching Hai speaking; this is the voice of God?'*

M. No, the teaching, the one that connects them to heaven again, is God's power; that is from Hirm. No human being can do that.

MC. *Okay, we're going to take a short break.*

Welcome back; I'm talking to Supreme Master Ching Hai. 'Supreme Master,' a God-given title or God-endowed title, it is not something you can earn at a university, in graduate studies, or whatever. Apparently, it is something that you are given.

I would also like You, Supreme Master Ching Hai, to clear up a couple of things in my own mind. You design and sell jewelry. I find that at odds with being such a spiritually enlightened person.

M. Not really, I use the money to travel, to buy airplane tickets and to work for God, and the rest I give to charity for the poor people. There's nothing unspiritual about that. I need to have money to go around to talk to people and to go by airplane and taxi. I cannot take donations because God has told me I can only give, I cannot take.

MC. *You can sell, but You cannot take?*

M. I can only give. I sell, of course; it's my work and my labor. I don't take it away from people.

MC. *No.*

M. I sell, and then I take the money and give it to people; that I can do, but I cannot take donations.

Vegetarian diet is less burdensome to the soul

MC. *Your five precepts that You talk about in Your booklet, 'The key of immediate enlightenment' – 'Refrain from taking the life of sentient beings,' would that include flies, cockroaches, and mosquitoes?*

M. If we can help it. Otherwise, of course human beings are more precious than insects; we are not to be fanatic. I just advise people to keep their houses clean so they don't have to even do this.

MC. *'To refrain from speaking what is not true,' I think that's true for most creeds.*

M. Yes.

MC. *'Refrain from taking what is not offered.'*

M. Right. Don't steal; that's what it means.

MC. *'Refrain from sexual misconduct.'*

M. No adultery, just like the bible's commandment.

MC. *Okay, and 'Refrain from the use of intoxicants.'*

M. No drugs. Refrain from cigarettes even, if possible. But drugs are the most important – drugs and alcohol which intoxicate you, and cigarettes, slowly abstain.

MC. *To get back to Your number 1 – 'Refrain from taking the life of sentient beings.' There is a little rider to this that says, 'The keeping of this precept requires a vegan or lacto-vegetarian diet.' Can you not see God if you are not vegetarian?*

M. No, you can see God the same. It's just that the higher we go, the less baggage we should carry. The animals' energies do tend to drag us a little into a lower kind of energy, so we'd better refrain from it if we want our soul to be less burdened. That's all. But even without a vegetarian diet, we can see God immediately. The people who come to me, the first night or the first day, have not been vegetarian, but they also can see God immediately. I have to let them see so that they can believe, and then of course when they believe in God and when God enters their soul again, they will be purified. They will gladly and willingly be vegetarian also, from then on.

Remember that God is forever loving

MC. *Supreme Master Ching Hai, what message do You have for someone who is listening?*

M. Just remember God. Even though you don't see Him, He is forever merciful. He is not a vengeful God; He is not a jealous God; He is forever loving, She is forever loving, forgiving. So, at the time you die, you must remember that God is the only one, and God is forever loving you. Just remember this so that you can go directly to

heaven. Do not believe in hell; do not believe in punishment from God. God loves you always, no matter who and what you are because you are Hirm.

MC. *Just one last question. What does a person see when they see God?*

M. Well, he can see many aspects of God because God is infinite. For example, one aspect is the Light and another aspect is the way Hes speaks to you. Hes imparts wisdom to you in a voice that sounds like thunder, in a voice that sounds like the ocean, a voice like melody, a voice that soothes your soul and calms your nerves, that opens your wisdom and endears you to Hirm again, makes you become a saint, makes you become a heavenly being again like you were before. But you also can see Jesus or Buddha, Hiers representatives, the past Masters, and talk to them and learn from them.

A MESSAGE FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM ⁸²

When we hear of Africa, we hear of sweating, a scorching sun blackening the skin in one hour, lions running around, and all that, but this is really beautiful. Your country has developed so fast and so impressively. When we drove through the city, I thought we were in New York or Los Angeles. Now you know why I brought you here – so that you are not scared anymore by the African legends. They make very funny advertisements about your country. We see in all the films that were made in Africa – always jungles, lions, Tarzan. This is really nice. I have been in Africa before and those countries I was in surprised me too, but this surprised me even more. South Africa is really modernized, really too modernized. Well, at least here it is a mini-jungle so those of you who expected Africa to be a jungle won't feel too disappointed.

Secret of living forever

This is cool and beautiful. The oxygen from the trees will make you feel good and your skin look good. I look younger today. [Applause] We could live forever in this physical body. Yes, practically speaking we could, because God made this physical body very durable, for eternity. It is just that we damage our environment; we damage our body by overworking, by poisoning it with different kinds of intoxicants, and overtiring it with unnecessary activities and wearing out the mind by all kinds of nonsensical schemes and plans and negative thinking. When you are in such good air in a good environment with a lot of trees and the trees generate oxygen as usual, then you feel that your skin looks better. Look at yourself. The skin looks younger, smoother and the pores are finer. The skin is more refined and your wrinkles disappear. You feel better here, fresher, energized and invigorated and your skin looks smoother, younger and you just feel good. You feel like you have just bathed or taken a tonic or an elixir or something. That alone already makes you feel good and if you meditate, of course, you feel much better.

We really could live forever even in this physical body and in this physical world. That's why when we read the old stories, we have heard that some people live until eight hundred years old and things like that. In China, Peng Tzu lived until four or five hundred years old. Some people still do in the remote regions of the world where they do not have too much contamination and pollution in the air and their lives are simple and their way of living is even. Every day is uneventful and not stressful, their demands are few and their contentment is great, so more or less, they live in the heavenly world in the physical body and so they live longer. Some people who live in the remote areas of the Himalayas still

82. International three-day retreat, Cape Town, South Africa, November 28, 1999 (Originally in English).

live until four or five hundred years old – not too many, but there are some. And even in some of our countries in the plain and ordinary places, sometimes you read in the newspapers that some people live until two hundred something years old. Yes, there are some exceptional beings who live that long.

My grandmother, my father's mother, lived to over a hundred years old. She was a hundred five when she died and she was still healthy. She was still strong when she passed away. When she was a hundred years old, they took a picture of her and gave it to me. She was wearing beautiful clothes, like a lama's dress. She looked so good and smiled so brilliantly. I remember her life was very simple and she had thirteen kids, can you believe that? My grandmother was good, but my grandfather, I was told, was a big, big butterfly. He loved flowers, the mobile, running-around flowers; so actually, I probably have more cousins than I could ever know. He was a high officer, a district chief, or a provincial governor, I forgot to check it out, so many people liked him, especially the women. In the old time, if you married or were a mistress to someone like a high official in the government, then you were 'somebody,' very prestigious, so of course, you can't blame him. It's not that he wanted it; they volunteered. And in the old time, if you had many wives, it was okay. It was just a different tradition than now. Also in the old time, we had a matriarchal system, like the Zulu people now. Do you still have this system here? [Audience: The traditional people.] The traditional people do. Are most people still traditional? [Audience: No.] No, they are modernized now; they have become patriarchal. That's bad; that's the worst mistake they could make, really. I was hoping that some corner of the world still retained a matriarchal system because that is the best system you could have for our planet.

Ancient order of society

In the old time we had that system everywhere. The women were in charge; they took care of the state affairs; they decided great events for the country; they made decisions in the house regarding all the big issues for the family and the children. And the husband just hung around and helped – helped produce babies. In the old time, that was your job, [Master addresses the male disciples.] doing nothing but pollinating, fertilizing, to multiply the race of human beings.

Sometime later, many, many thousands of years later, you became wiser – not really wiser, but you learned from your wife, the clever woman, how to govern, how to concentrate on things at hand, and how to manage the state affairs. I don't mean to offend you guys. Don't get mad at me. I am just telling you historical stuff. I am very aware of your fragile male ego. I am just trying to give you a piece of purely objective information of what I know. If you read history, you will know that what I say is the truth.

I don't know about your culture or European culture but in my culture, in Aulacese culture, in the old time the women were in charge. I think that some countries scattered here and there still have that – like in Tibet, they still retain this matriarchal system. And in your country here, some of the traditional Zulu tribes still remain that way, and it is good so. If you study the genetic system of men and women, the way men and women behave, and the way men and women take care of things, you will understand why. Women are more delicate, more attentive to details, and whatever they do, they do it more correctly, more refined, and in more detail. That is why God entrusted the biggest, noblest task of being a mother to women. It is a very difficult job. If men had to bear a child for nine months, I don't know if they could endure it. It is a very difficult job to raise children.

So, in the old time, we had this different system of the women taking care of everything that is important to the physical comfort of the whole family and the state, and the men doing physical jobs like helping the women with heavy tasks – doing anything that requires muscle and strength. Men are capable of that; therefore, you can see that men developed more and more always. Genetically speaking, they are always stronger than women, bigger, and more muscular, and the women have always been more delicate, more refined, more attentive, and more concentrated whenever they do things. We even have a saying nowadays to admit it, 'Behind every great man, there is always a great woman.' Even now. [Applause]

Natural traits of men and women

A long time ago, men and women were very content to live alongside each other, doing whatever naturally came to them. For example, women are more delicate and brainy, so they took care of intellectual issues and men are more muscular, stronger, and protective, so they did that, and also men have the ability to fertilize women's ova, eggs, and so they worked together fine and there were no problems at all. The world was in a much better shape. Not talking about physical comfort only, spiritually and emotionally speaking, the world was at that time a better place to live because women ruled with more common sense and love. Women were the symbol of love, and they still are. That is why thousands of songs are written in the name of the mother and hardly any for the father. And all the songs about wars encouraging soldiers to march ahead to death are all written for men. Most wars were started by men. We have only had wars since men began to rule the world. You trace back in history and you will know that I am right. Anyhow, it is not to look down upon men or anything. Men today are different; I am just saying how things have changed during all this historical time and have changed our world, too.

In the beginning, everyone thought of God as a mother because, it is very simple, women give birth to children and so it was natural for all of us to think that our God was a mother. It is okay also if Hes is a man, who cares? But what I mean is that in the old time we automatically worshipped God as a Mother-Goddess. And the men also accepted that; everyone said, 'Mother God,' but as usual men sometimes are stubborn and sometimes they are jealous and egotistical so they began to wonder why women should rule everything, why women should be a superior race – just like now women wonder why men should be the superior one and why women should be treated as second best in the society nowadays, like getting a lower job or lower pay even though it is the same work. This happened before, but oppositely; in the old time men were not paid and women took care of everything. The men just helped out with whatever was required, mostly in heavy labor. Now, some of the men were not contented with that, especially the men who were not so good looking and had no woman who loved and chased after them. Before, the woman chased after the man. She would be the one who proposed, who picked out who would be the one who fertilized her eggs, for example. She would pick one and then she would marry him and give him all the things he needed – dowry, jewels, tools, shovels so that he was happy, and build houses for him – just like now men do for women.

Discontentment in paradise

But some men began to feel frustrated and wanted to rule, so they began to inch their way into power by different means and finally they succeeded. And ever since then they have waged war against women, trying so hard to tell women that they are bad, they are inferior and cannot do much, they cannot even become Buddha, for example. Even in Buddhahood, they stand superior. I don't know why it is like that, and many of us still believe that, including women. It is a very nonsensical theory but nevertheless our society

and our world has become worsened spiritually, emotionally, and morally because of this belief, because of discrimination, because of saying men are better than women, or even women are better than men.

In the old time because men were physically fit they were assigned to do heavy labor, and that's all right. Women were more delicate, they were more for thinking, so they did the intellectual work; it's also fine. But then to say that men are better than women is not true because even chemically speaking, we both have the same brain and the same stuff, but most of the time women are more delicate, they think deeper, in more detail, and have more common sense. That is normal because men develop in a different way than women. God made it even like that. God gave men strength and muscle and God gave women intellect. Because they are weak already, if they don't have intelligence and more intellectual power, they will be very, very disadvantaged. So, if men and women combined their strengths, this would be a perfect match. It is not that anyone is better than anyone; it is just a different job, like someone is assigned to work in the office and another who is stronger and has more building talent is assigned to outdoor work for building houses. Someone has to do something.

It is not because men ruled that made the world worse; it is just because they have tried too hard to put women down and not utilize the intelligence of the feminine aspect and that is why the world has been short of a lot of things. Instead of looking down upon or suppressing women, our society should encourage and make use of their talent, their intelligent powers, and their love - the limitless strength of love from the woman, in order to take care of this planet. Then our world would have been a much, much better place to live.

Women are more capable of enduring than men – enduring hardships and difficult situations, and they can think of solutions better than many men. They are just born like that and men are born more strong and protective, more giving. Each one is different, that's all, and we in turn can become men or women again and again. It doesn't mean that this special race has been women forever and this special race will be men forever. There is no need to say that women are better than men or men are better than women. Whenever you are born in a body of a man, you are like this and whenever you are born into a body of a woman, then you become like that. You will take turns to exercise the power of the intellect or the power of the muscle.

So actually, we are all us, men or women. It's just the ego that comes in between. The male ego comes in between now as well as in the old time. The man, being so strong, protective, and muscular, feeling bad when a small woman tells him what to do, feeling that he should be telling her what to do but he could not because he cannot do too many things at once. Someone must organize and someone must carry out the orders; it would be better like that. So, the woman being lacking of physical strength would be more concentrated on the thinking process, therefore she came up with more good ideas. Men who are busy moving objects, building houses, protecting the children, fighting with the bears and the tigers, of course, don't have time to think so they do not develop much in that area.

God gave men strength to do these kinds of things – protecting and building jobs, and women who are weak stay home and think – think of a plan what to do and then use the man's power to carry it out, and both work perfectly. Now, the men want to do the opposite, want to do the thinking, so who is the one who will carry the objects, build the houses, or fight the tigers then? You see how ridiculous? We make use of our weaknesses instead of strengths and now the women have to be fighting the tigers, protecting the

children and guarding the caves while the man sits there and does the thinking and wastes his muscles. So, the world became topsy-turvy. Things have not been done the way they should have been done.

Paradise lost

So, you can imagine, slowly, slowly our world has become retarded. You have heard of the 'golden age.' The golden age is when things were done, carried out, and obeyed the way God intended. But never mind, it is okay; men can also have power, but they should not underestimate the strength of the woman's fineness and intelligence. Women are the greatest help to men and men are the greatest help to women; without one or the other, we cannot live. But it is too late now, and I just hope that the world will change for the better and we will go back to the golden age again. Maybe we will have more queens, more women presidents, more lady prime ministers. We look down upon some countries as third world, underdeveloped countries, like Pakistan and Nicaragua for example, but they have had a woman prime minister and president already. And Pakistan is a Muslim country. I cannot believe it! A Muslim country elected a woman prime minister! It's a wonder of all wonders in this world. We should follow that example. In Muslim countries, they normally treat women very strictly – you have to cover yourself, you can't go anywhere without a man, you can't do this and can't do that, but they elected a woman prime minister! She's wonderful; we must have more of this. Anyhow, it is not about competition between men and women. I am telling you this in order for you to see that we should not change the way of God's intention, and then our life will be heaven.

Now, why is it that since men ruled, things became different? It's not only the physical change of our world and planet, it is the intention, it is the thinking process that has been changed as well. The Mother Goddess became a Mother / Father God. The father is a stern father who punishes, who makes rules, who gives precepts and commandments, and who creates hell – the way fathers, the way men do. Men are stricter and sterner; they rule more than they teach and encourage, and women are more tolerant, more teaching and encouraging. If the children do something wrong, women tend to have more patience and take more time, again, again and again telling the child what is wrong and never giving up on him or her, and men usually do not have this equipment of patience. It is the way God made us. It is not your fault, it's not anyone's fault. God made men and women different for different jobs. It's just that we do it the opposite way; we make use of our weaknesses now instead of strengths. Women's weakness is muscle; men's weaknesses are intellect and patience. But now men make use of their intellect and patience to rule the world, and women try to use their muscles to go out and work and compete with men; so of course, our world cannot be the way it should be.

Anyhow, it is not only that; it is the thinking that changed everything. As we know already, what we think we will get sooner or later. Everything is created by the thinking only, because we are God. If God wants it, so it will be. God thinks, therefore, it manifests. This is stated so in every bible. Now, the thinking process has been changed dramatically because men wanted to rule the world the way they wanted. They have tried to change it gradually over hundreds of thousands of years to make it become a male society. They have tried many ways to press women down and make them feel inferior to the extent that women today believe it is so. Many women still believe that they are inferior to men. They have even included this in all the religions. They make sure to add this kind of inferiority complex to women using religion to put them down. And because of this detrimental thinking, our world has degraded from the golden age to the state that we are experiencing now.

The thinking is very important; the thought is very important. When we think, for example, that God is a mother, that automatically gives us the impression that God is tolerant, God is forever loving, like the way the mother is. Fathers were always very, very strict to children, and they still are like that. It is just the way we are. That's why most children are closer to the mother than to the father. That's just the way we are. When we return and are reincarnated as women, then we are different. No one is always perfect or always a woman. There is no need for jealousy here but human beings did not know that and they still do not know that. Everyone tries to grab power, and men, being stronger and more muscular, have taken full advantage of that to enslave the woman into their control. Since then, we have not changed this system. Maybe we don't have to change, but we should include the woman alongside and have respect for her wisdom and make use of her strength of intelligence. It would be better for us. It's not that women should be better than men or rule over men; it's not that, but women have limitless strength of power and limitless endurance and stamina. That's why they can bear and raise children and can endure a lot of things for the family. That's why the mother has been loved, respected and praised since time immemorial. These things we cannot force the children to do. They just do it because they know the mother is good. So, even if the father brings money home, the children still love and respect the mother more. It's not fair, is it? Too bad! Who told you guys to go out and bring money home? You should stay home; you should do what the woman wants. [Laughter] Instead of insisting on going out and ruling, just be a partner; it would be better.

What we believe is what we get

Since the change of the political system, we have always believed more in a male God and since then we have degraded because we have lost the belief in an eternally loving God. And what we believe, we get. We believe in a punishing God; we believe in hell after life; we believe in sin; and we believe in an intolerant God. It was not like that before. God has made us human; God has let us descend into this world and do whatever we do to learn to become God again, to learn to appreciate God again. In this physical world and in this physical body, we become powerless. We are already very helpless; we already suffer enough, so there should be no more punishment, no more killing of each other, no more abusing of each other, mentally and emotionally. Nothing should be worse than already being in the physical body and struggling for survival. But since we changed the system, we changed the belief as well.

We use fear to control each other. I mean, those who are in power, those who are the negative, bad and frustrated ones, use fear; they create a fearsome God to control other people, including men, too. They cannot say God only punishes women, so they just have to say that God punishes if you are bad, and so men also believe in that. We have lost the power of positive thinking; we have lost the power of believing in a forever loving, unconditional God, which He or She is. Because we think that God is fearsome, God has hell for us, God punishes us and all that, it becomes true in our life. Because of our fear, for everything we do that is supposed to be wrong or that someone told us is wrong, we have fear and guilt, and then we worry. We think, 'Okay, I am going to be punished; I am going to hell; I am going to have this and that,' and that is how we will have it, and that is how we did have it all this time.

Abuse of free will

The more people fear, the more this negative thinking congregates together, and the bigger the devil becomes. He has more power even though he did not exist at all in the beginning. Everyone has a devil now alongside with God. It was a necessary figure for

control and to have physical power on this planet. So, you see, that is how we have lost heaven. That is how it has been so difficult to go back to paradise again. Free will has been abused by a handful of frustrated, ego-oriented males and then they changed the world. So, if we complain about the terrible condition of our planet today, we should know why. God did not create it. He gave us free will and then some of us abused it, changed it around, and made the whole planet think negatively and forget God completely.

Anytime we believe that there is a devil, that is the time we forsake God. Every time we believe that we are guilty and are going to be punished, at that time we have forsaken God. Any time we think that anything God has created is dirty or filthy, including sex, at that time we forsake God. I don't mean sex in the sense of abusiveness, but in the way that two people love each other. But you have been taught that even that is bad. It is for control. It is the most powerful experience of humankind so they make it bad so that they can control people.

How to regain paradise

To make this world into a paradise again is not an easy task but at least now we know what is wrong. Among us, we can change that. The woman should look upon herself as a Goddess, as the guidance of the family; the man should look upon himself as the protector of the weak, of the loved ones, and not feel inferior about his inability to think in minute detail the way women do. The woman should not be made to fear the man because of his muscular strength but to love him, also to protect him with her love, to protect his emotions and feelings, to love him and make him feel a man that he is. We are both human beings; we are both intelligent; we are both wise and strong in different ways and we should work alongside each other instead of competing with each other for supremacy like some of the families do.

As soon as a man marries a woman, that's it! He thinks he's superior to her, and I don't know why. Suppose we don't believe that women are endowed with more intellectual power and intelligence to manage things. Suppose we don't believe that, we should believe at least that men and women are equally created. If a man thinks he's superior to women, I don't know what the difference is between them. There is only a little difference; it's not much, and nowadays we can change that, too. [Laughter] We can go to surgery and make a man out of a woman and make a woman out of a man, so I don't know why all this discrimination about jobs and things like that. In many countries nowadays, women are still paid less than men. It should not be like that. Everywhere women are kind of looked down upon. That is why our world is not as good as it should be – because of the thinking. So, at least among us, I hope that we remember from today that God is all-merciful – be it male or female, I don't care. There is no such thing as a vengeful or jealous God. If a God is like that, we don't need to worship Him. Aren't we like that ourselves already? Do you need to worship another jealous human being? No!

Because thinking will affect the whole planet, even if our group is maybe small compared to the population of this world, our thoughts are not small. Together we can make a difference if our thinking is concentrated in the same direction. And this so-called concentration of thought power can help defeat the other concentrated group of negative power and then we can better the world. That's the purpose also of us being here in the retreat because we can change the future. It doesn't matter how bad the present is, we could change because we have the free will to change the future.

Destiny is only for the present, and still we can also maneuver it to make it different, to make it appear only in dreams, to make it appear only in illusions. This is the magic of

God, not black magic or white magic; it is the magic of changing the illusion, not to make an illusionary object out of thin air or anything like that, but changing the existing illusion to make it different. We have this power to do that by just thinking it up, by just knowing that it will be so. It takes time. To some of us, it's easy; to some of us, it is still very difficult, but we can do it.

CHERISHING THE WISDOM OF THE ELDERS ⁸³

Teenagers, when they grow up, begin to question their parents' authority and wisdom. And I tell you, they're not always wrong. Most parents have children too young themselves. They are not themselves wise enough to lead other unwise human beings. But the system of our world is like that. So, we grow up, many of us being frustrated with our parents, because they want to have the right and authority to tell us what to do. And then we sometimes question that because they are not always right. This is true. But they are authority figures. We cannot argue with them. Yet, we feel frustrated inside. Sometimes younger people have more wisdom than older people, because all of us have wisdom to begin with. It doesn't mean that if you are born later, you have less wisdom. It's not always true. It is because we are born with wisdom, you see!

But then, according to worldly experience, the parents should be a little older in order to understand how to raise their children. But in our society, if you have children, you have to raise them, no matter how old you are, and most people in this society even encourage people to marry early so that they can raise children early while they are strong. They are strong, but they might not be wise. The grandparents should raise the children. The wisdom of the elders is always more reliable, but in this society, when you are old, they throw you in the old age pensioners' home. Bye-bye! And then, young children try to raise other young children, so both are young and inexperienced. And the young parents often lose their tempers as well, because they are frustrated with themselves. They haven't found all the answers that they need. They are busy earning their living, supporting the beginning of their lives, and they have to raise children at the same time, so it is not a very favorable condition for either the kids or the parents. The parents don't have time to learn further because they are too busy raising kids and making money. And the elder who has all the wisdom, strength, tolerance and calmness of those in their mellow years is thrown out of society, his wisdom wasted. Well, the people of our world have a lot to learn, a lot, a lot to learn.

HEAVEN IS ONLY THE BEGINNING ⁸⁴

For everything in this life, we can prepare. We must prepare a long time for everything we want to enjoy or experience. We even prepare for a 'rainy day.' We work hard and then spend some, and we put some in the bank and some in a saving account for emergencies. And we even save for retirement; we prepare for the funeral service, but we forget to prepare for the road after.

Every one of us knows we don't live here very long. We are not here to stay. But the worldly demands and the struggle for survival have always tried to make us forget what we are here for, and that we won't be here very long at all.

83. International three-day retreat, Cape Town, South Africa, November 28, 1999 (Originally in English).

84. International three-day retreat, Cape Town, South Africa, November 27, 1999 (Originally in English).

Learn to face death squarely

Anyhow, all of us will leave this physical world one day, but not all of us are prepared for the final departure. That's why most of us feel very uneasy and fearful about that day. Even though some of us are still very young, like me, we already worry about this fearful day of departure. That is because we have not prepared very well for it. We prepare insurance for sickness, for the house, for the mortgage and for everything else, but we have not prepared for the day that we will depart from this world. In the bible it is stated, 'Forsake the flesh for the spirit; learn to die so that you will begin to live.' We might read this every day or even more than once a day. But many of us do not know how to die daily so that we can know life as it truly is. Of course, that's all right also. Because we all have eternity to make our choices, again and again.

I am not here today to show you how to live your life. I will show you how to die. Because it's only when we learn how to die and face death squarely that we will no longer be afraid of the unknown. Once we die, it's the same as living now, except with much, much better conditions. We are freer. We can move anywhere at a speed faster than light. We can have anything we want in an instant. We are freer than a bird. And we can have access to God anytime, because we will be one with God. But that is only if we have prepared for it. Because our thoughts are very powerful. In everyday life, whatever we think or desire the most will come to us. Suppose at the time of departure from this world that our thoughts were dwelling on something, and it had not come true yet, then we would return again to this physical planet to live out our desires or to fulfill our wishes. So, for anyone who does not wish to come back here again, or who would like to master the destiny of their future existence after this one, there is a way to prepare for that.

At the time of our departure from this world, if our thoughts are very powerful about something, we will be drawn to that thing, that event or that desire. This means that when we are alive, we should train our thoughts in a very positive way every day, as much as we can, until it becomes second nature, until it becomes us. Then at the time of death, we will go where our thoughts lead us. We are the essence of God and we have God power within us, whether we are aware of it or not. So, our thoughts are, practically speaking, very, very powerful.

God is forever merciful

If, during our lifetime, we are brainwashed into believing that we are sinners, that we are unredeemable wretches who are not worthy of God's love, that we will go to hell, and we have been told how terrible hell is – then at the time of death, if we believe what we have been told, we will go to the so-called hell. Even though hell doesn't exist, we create it or other people create it for us. Since the old times, fear has been injected into our genes, into our brains, into our way of life, so that certain groups of people could have control over us and make us submit to whatever their purpose, which was not always very noble. Therefore, in order to free ourselves, we have to re-acquaint ourselves again with the true teaching of all the Masters since ancient times. This teaching is that God – or Buddha or Allah – is ever merciful.

We are the children of this highest power, and we will be forever loved, forgiven, and helped in any way possible in this life and the life after. I have seen that myself. I have seen God power at work. I have seen only love and mercy in the realm of the invisible as well as the realm of the physical. There is no such thing as damnation, hell or revenge from God. Because even if our mortal parents love us and forgive us time and time again, our God Father or God Mother will be infinite times more loving and forgiving. The only

problem is that we have long been brainwashed into thinking that we will be punished for whatever mistakes we may make in this world. We will do so, we do all the time, because our physical brain, the physical body and the physical environment force us into making mistakes. But it doesn't matter what mistakes we make, God can always repair them. So, He would never condemn or punish us in any of the ways that we have been made to believe.

That's what I have discovered. So, I would like to share it with you. And I hope that from today you will keep this in your mind, whether you want to study further with us or not: Remember that God is merciful. And have no fear whatsoever, either here or hereafter. At the time of departure, there will be beautiful beings of heaven waiting for us immediately as the soul leaves the body. The reason that many people have not been able to see this, including at the time of death, is that they have not prepared themselves. Or perhaps they have prepared themselves in the wrong way, such as thinking they have done wrong in their lifetime, for example, like breaking some of the commandments. Maybe these people have prepared themselves in a negative way because they thought they did something wrong in their life. So, they expect damnation or punishment, and that's what they get.

Retrain yourself to find God's essence

Whatever you believe shall be materialized, because you are God. You are one with God, always, even though at the moment, due to physical hindrances, some of us do not realize this. We truly have nothing but God within us and without us; we are nothing but God's essence. There is nowhere else we could go but to be within God's embrace, all the time, twenty-four hours. We are separated from God because of our thinking and our deep-rooted beliefs that we are mere mortals. In order to remember that we are God again, we must train ourselves backward again. The way we have trained ourselves to think – as separate from God – we have to retrain in the opposite direction. We will do that until finally it becomes automatic. And then, because we contact God every day through our diligent and pure intention of practice, we will know for sure that we are one with God. So, at the time of departure, there's nothing but God surrounding us, or heavenly beings that come and greet us to the higher dimensions of love.

Some dead people do not see this phenomenon. Even though Jesus stands by and Buddha is near, they do not see them. Also they don't realize that they could manifest anything at will, that they have the power of creativity in their hands. Especially after leaving this physical body, the whole power will be returned to us again. It's not really returned, but without the hindrance of this physical body we become all-powerful again, just like in the days we were with God, before we descended into this world.

But some of us depart from this world without knowing this secret; we did not learn it; we did not learn to master our thinking while we were in the physical body. So, at the time of death, we forget even more. For example, you have probably heard about people who died and 'came back' complaining that they were in hell, they need help, they need prayer, et cetera. These examples are true but only for those people. They are not true in general – not true for you and not true for me.

For those who have learned the secret of the universe, who have learned the power of creativity, and have learned to be one with the universal mighty power, they know everything before and after they die. They are masters of their own destiny – anywhere, now and hereafter. But to arrive there, we need some practice. It may take a few days, a few weeks or a few months. Not only do we practice to remember our own creative power, we practice so that we also enjoy heaven while living; we enjoy contacting God's

intelligence while we are still here on this planet, so that we can make use of this power to enhance our life and the lives of the people that walk on our path. But this takes some discipline, even though it's so easy. We would rather work for money, for a car, for a house or for a beauty, than work to re-earn the kingdom of God. Why? Because it's become a habit. Whatever we have been trained to do since we were young, we continue doing that.

The brain doesn't like change. The brain likes everything settled, simple and fixed, with the same routine every day. Whether bad or good, the brain likes that. It becomes very upset when change takes place. Because machines are like that, and the brain is also only a machine. Even the power behind the brain, the mind, is not very highly qualified for the purpose of attaining heaven. The mind is just like the electric power behind the computer. So, we have to return to the source of all wisdom and Truth. If we do not train ourselves now, at the time of death it will be too late.

Our brain and our mind have become fixed into some negative thinking patterns, and we have not had enough time to escape from or to repair those patterns. But we can do so during the time that we sojourn on this planet. This is the easiest way. Because if we have not prepared for that day, if we have not learned about what we are doing and where we are going, then at the time of death we will be overwhelmed by different dimensional karmas. Karma is the Sanskrit term for the law of cause and effect. Whatever we do in this lifetime will be ingrained as impressions in our thinking, and when we die we will bring those impressions with us. So, if we want to erase that, we must do some deep contemplation and purification. We can call it meditation, contemplation or deep prayer. But we must do it correctly. There is a very easy way to do it, but it must be correct. Just like everything else, there's a correct way. And if we know that way, it's very easy.

At the time of departure, we all hope to go to heaven. We normally should; every average citizen in the world will go to heaven. But there are different degrees of enjoyment of heaven, just like there are different houses in Cape Town. Some houses are cheaper, while others are more expensive, with more equipment, more comforts, a swimming pool, everything. The extent of our developed consciousness is the extent to which we will enjoy heaven after we leave this physical world. That is, if we have trained ourselves sufficiently, we can ascend to heaven immediately after death. If not, we will sometimes hover around for a while until we realize that we really are gone, that we no longer have a physical instrument to work with, that our speech will not be heard by our loved ones, or that our wife or our husband is bringing another person in front of our nose every day to our bed. And there's nothing we can do about it. It doesn't matter how much we complain or how many tantrums we throw. No one understands anything, and nobody cares.

At that time, it creates great suffering for us. Also, we will be overwhelmed by the results of our thinking during the lifetime while we were in the physical body. During the time we are living, if we keep thinking negatively, then when we die, that's what we get. So, if we die without preparing, without meditation on positive power, without connecting to God's power, the negative thinking that we had during the lifetime will overwhelm us and take us to unpleasant places. And that's why people say there is hell. We could escape from that hell if we are conscious enough at the time to walk out of our own prison. But most of the time, we have not prepared, so we are weak. We are not strong enough to walk out, so we have to stay in the negative atmosphere for a while until it dies down.

There is also another kind of pressure for us, not just our own individually-created sphere of negativity or pressure. We also have the collectively-created consequences of the people on this planet, as well as that of our relatives and friends. Because we haven't learned the art of mastering our own destiny or how to walk the correct way to heaven, we

will stray here and there; we will be pulled apart in different directions or pushed into the unpleasant scenery of an illusionary planet, which to us at that moment seems absolutely real. And that's how people say they enter hell, and they suffer.

Ingrain the right thoughts before death

But it must not be like that. Even if you don't want to practice vegetarian compassion or practice meditation with us, you should always tell yourself and remember that God is merciful. That is the only thought you should remember at the time of death. Then you will be clear enough to see that Jesus is standing by, that heaven is opening its gates, that angels are greeting you with the music of the celestial realms. You must remember something noble like that – that we are the sons and daughters of God, that we can never be anything lower than that and that nothing at all can harm us. These thoughts should be ingrained in your mind. If you think like this, you will not fear the angel of death because he doesn't really exist. He exists because we created him by believing in him during our lifetime, so he manifests. Whatever you wish shall be given unto you. Knock, and it shall be opened; ask, and it shall be given.

Because on this planet, sometimes we ask for something and when it doesn't come immediately, we think it doesn't work. But it works all the time. It's just that because we are hindered by this physical body, we might not see a result immediately. Sometimes it comes a little bit later, and we have forgotten. We forget that we wanted it. We think, 'Oh, this is just luck!' or, 'This is just bad fortune that these things happen to me.' But nothing really happened without us wanting it in the first place. Also, if we are not strong enough in our will, then of course the karma, the negative or positive collective consciousness will affect our daily life as well as our time of departure. In our daily life, we are more or less shielded by this physical ignorance.

At least we don't know when something bad is coming. But when we leave this physical protection, we will see everything. Everything will affect us immediately. If we die, and the loved ones are crying and lingering and missing us so much, and they cry and they suffer, we feel it exactly as if we are suffering. That's why during the time of the loved one's departure, maybe the best thing is that we should just pray for them to go to heaven, to enjoy and be liberated. Maybe we shouldn't be praying, crying, lamenting and missing them so much, because that will make them feel very miserable and delay their departure to a higher dimension. Death should be celebrated, not mourned, because that is our final liberation. Nothing can touch us anymore; nothing can harm us. Nothing can cover us anymore. We will know everything, and we will be a part of everything. We can be anywhere in a fraction of a second. Everything that we wish for will come true immediately.

Remember your heavenly heritage

But in order to prepare for a higher reward than just this, we should learn the art of mastering our own destiny and our own future. We should create our own heaven, prepare our own future, and not let the atmosphere or karma of other people influence us and drag us here and there like a slave or a dog. Because we are the master. We are the children of the ocean of love, of God. We have dignity. We should walk like a God; we should act like a God; we should think like a God. It's not easy, because we have forgotten how to do that. But that's only a habit, and habits can be trained; they can also be broken with time. During our busy activities, of course it is difficult for us to control our thoughts and train ourselves again back to the glory of who we really are. That's why we have to choose a short time-span during our busy schedule to be quietly alone with ourselves and with God. At that time, we can concentrate our power of thinking. Then we can correct the habits of

our thoughts and make them positive. And day by day like this, we will become the children of heaven again, as we really are.

That's why we should meditate every day, not just after initiation. Because after initiation, you're liberated already. You are a free person. You really are free. No one can touch you any more. But in order to have a smoother life here and to enjoy heaven while we're still breathing, in order to retrain ourselves into being the prince and princess of heaven, we must remind ourselves every day. It's sometimes not even enough. Because we have already been reminded, time after time, for a long, long time, just how bad we are.

So now, we have to be reminded again of how good we really are. That's why it takes time. It takes everyday practice to remember this. You are not going to learn anything; you're just going to remember, because there's nothing for you to learn. You are the king of heaven; you are part of heaven, part of the whole universal power. There's nothing you cannot do. Just take the time to remember it again. I am here to help you to remember, and it's not as difficult as you think. It's easier than making a living; it's easier than driving a car; it's easier than sleeping. So, it would be to our benefit to try, because it is so easy and simple.

To those who could devote their entire heart and mind to regaining heaven, we can give you the whole instruction. You meditate two to three hours a day, or as much as you can. For example, you can cut down a little on sleep, talk less on the phone, and watch only the important news on television – don't just sit there and watch whatever comes on. So then you will have a lot of time. We find that we have a lot more time to spare if we cut down on many of the unnecessary activities we used to do just to kill time. Now we don't have time to kill; we use it to live. We use it to resurrect our soul. Then, not only will we feel good and bless ourselves, we will bless others as well.

A habit is hard to break, we all know that. But that doesn't mean it's impossible. Before, I couldn't drive a car. I just got a license recently. So, when I found that I could drive, my God! I felt like a human being. I felt like everyone else on this planet. I was so proud; I wanted everyone to see that I was driving. Because I trained myself. The first time, I failed. The second time, I failed. But the third time, I succeeded. Even learning to drive takes so long! It takes effort, money and concentration. Still, we can do it. We can do this and many other things, like learning English or even learning to walk. We were born crawling – not even crawling, lying helpless as a baby. But as a baby, we know how to try. We try to crawl, and then we try to stand up, and then we try toddling around. Then we try to walk. And then we run, and now we even fly!

An enlightened Master lights the way

So, everything is a process of learning. To a baby, it must seem impossible to see the adult running, riding a bicycle, driving, jumping around or dancing. But to us, it's easy, because we have tried; we have trained ourselves. Similarly, we can train like that to go to heaven. It looks difficult at first, but it isn't. It is more difficult if we try by ourselves. But it's not difficult if someone else already knows how, and shows us by hands-on experience or teaching. It's very simple. That's why since ancient times, God has sent a lot of teachers to show us the way, because we have forgotten.

Being able to show us the way doesn't mean that person is better than us. We call him or her 'teacher' just because in the beginning, they teach us something. In this planet, we call someone a teacher of English or professor of mathematics, for example. But in the order of heaven, no one is lower or higher. There is just someone who walks the way first and

shows the one who walks later. And someone who knows the way already can show us; it's easier, less stressful, surer and quicker.

We could try to walk back to heaven by ourselves, but there are so many parts of the road we don't know because we have forgotten, and sometimes it could be frightening. That's why many people feel they are not up to it. They're scared. But when you have someone walking with you, holding your hand and protecting you, showing you the way to walk and where to avoid, then the road is more pleasant. You have a companion, and it's quicker and easier. So, in short, I am here in case you feel you want to remember again who you truly are. And there's no cost and there are no conditions.

The so-called five precepts are not the five precepts. They are a measure of your readiness, or a way that we can measure our standard of quality. Remember when Moses came from the mountain and handed down the ten commandments? He said they were from God, so that we know where we are and where we stand. It's not that you must follow me 'or else.' It's not that. You don't even have to follow me. I will just teach you once, and you can remember all the time. Then you can do it alone.

After we give you the instruction, you will know what to do. You'll be your own master every day. The difficulty is not following one master, or any master. The difficulty is being your own master, having the discipline to do what you have chosen to do and what you know is the best for your soul.

THE LIVING TEACHINGS BRINGS US NATURALLY CLOSER TO GOD ⁸⁵

Thank you for the things that you have done in the name of God and in your love for yourself and for me. We've done a lot of good things, but not because people need us to do it. Maybe they look poor but they're not, not in the plan of God. They just play the role of being poor so that you can develop your compassion. So, we thank them for the chance to develop ourselves and get nearer to the knowledge that we're God. We're coming to know more and more about our God self, and that's the purpose of anything we're trying to do.

During your daily life, meditation and charitable, noble work I thank you for being along all this time through so many countries and doing so many things so unconditionally. God knows it and you know it and that's what's important. No one else should know or needs to know. Maybe they know and maybe they don't. It's okay. You know I am very proud of you, very, very proud. You make a very good example for the loved ones around you and for those who come in touch with you.

So, I'm proud of you because you have improved your lifestyle; you have chosen to walk a noble way, the way of love. And you really have the courage, the will, the determination and the strong love to continue in this difficult way that you've chosen. To some, it might be very easy. To others, it's not very easy. Nonetheless, you continue to walk the way of devotion, the way of love, the way that you think and that I am sure is the right way. I'm very, very proud of you, and you have no idea how many other people have followed your example. But it's better for your ego that you don't know.

It's not only that you've been charitable and that you help in disasters; you've also helped a lot of people spiritually. You heal their hearts, you heal their invisible wounds with your presence, with your being loving, kind and concerned. And this is the most important goal

85. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., September 25, 1999 (Originally in English).

that you can accomplish in your life. I don't know if you're successful in your business. But if you're successful in your spiritual life, in your inner improvement, I consider you to be very, very successful, and I know you are. I'm very proud of you.

Also, I'm very happy for your children and for whoever comes in contact with you because I know you'll bless them. You bless them with your sincerity, with your true understanding of who you are and of who they really are behind the mask of all the confusing delusions held by human beings: Of being a frail creature, of being a bad loser, even of being a weak being. Behind all these illusions you know who the people really are. That's why you bless whoever comes in contact with you, and that's the best thing that you can ever do for yourself or for anyone else.

But never mind all this; I still thank you for the visible work that you do. I know you have followed my teachings, which are not really my teachings. They've been passed down to us from the many Masters of ancient times to Master Jesus, Master Buddha, Master Krishna, Master Mohammed and so on, and they continue being passed down to us.

But it's not the teachings that are important; it's the practice of the teachings. You've been practicing them and that's why we can become one. That's also why we love each other so much, and that's why we can trust each other so much. Because we know that we're the same, that we are one, that we desire the same things, that we do the same things and that we trust in the same God. You know who that God is. So, I especially appreciate your goodness, your purity and your courage to try again and again for the ideal that you think is most noble and worthwhile to achieve.

SHARING GOD'S LOVE ⁸⁶

God's love always helps people. But we have to share it, and then we will know better. The more we share, the more we know the strong power of love. If you keep it all to yourself, of course, you won't know much. This is just like having money in the bank and never spending it, never knowing the thrill of spending it. You never know how much or what money can bring you, such as this nice car and these beautiful clothes that make you look different and make you feel good. It is the same here. Love, we have to spend, too. The more we give, the more we realize that it is great, that the most important thing in life is love.

Real freedom

Doing God's work is never really tiring; it's just the karma that makes you tired. Doing God's work is very uplifting. It's very nice, actually. During that time, I feel very blissful; it's just my body that's exhausted. But that's the contrary nature of God's world versus the physical world.

The physical world wants to drag you down, wants to stop you from doing good things, wants to tell you that it's impossible. But the spiritual world is always encouraging. It's very nice that we have the same ideal; I love to be among people who are so noble and always thinking in the higher dimensions. This is a very big blessing. So, I'm happy that you have group meditation together to get in touch with really noble people and think only of noble ideas. That's very good; that's really tremendous.

86. International retreat, Marriott Hotel, New York, U.S.A., August 4, 1999 (Originally in English).

Perhaps you don't know what it's like to live with someone who's purely materialistic and who really tries to tie you down or oppress you or drag you in their direction, but it's very difficult. Now you're always among noble people, and this is already a big blessing. Wouldn't it be nice if the whole world were like this! [Applause] The country we're born into or the background we live in does influence us very much. But the individual soul that we are is always our self. So, if you're strong enough, you can overcome any situation, any background, any influence and just be yourself. That's the way it should be, and that's why we should meditate and learn to know God, which means knowing ourselves. So, we'll become ourselves and be free from any stain of the world, any influence due to our background or war or country or ethnicity or customs from what we know. That's what real freedom is.

Is it okay to consume milk?

I didn't say, 'No milk,' just no meat, no eggs and no anything of killing animals. But with milk and dairy products, you don't have to kill to get them. It's just that I myself don't often use them. So, when people ask me should they use them because they don't feel comfortable, then I say, 'It's up to you.' I myself don't like milk so much because of the way it is taken. But in some places like India, they take milk from the cow in a very humane and very normal way.

Also, if you don't drink the cows' milk, sometimes too much milk makes them suffer; it's painful. But the way people do it with machines, and they feed them and then confine them: That I don't like. In most industrial countries, they confine the cow and they force her to take a lot of chemical substances to produce more milk. Or they force them and put some medicine to push them to make more milk. And then the consequence is that their bones are rotten and they can hardly support their bodies. Many of the cows in the United States, their intestines fall down, their stomachs fall down, and they can hardly walk because their bones are so weak from producing too much milk. And that's what I hate about it. I don't think we should survive at the cost of anyone else's suffering, even suffering of the cow.

I don't like the inhumane way that people treat cows. Also, they put too many chemicals into the body of the cow to make it grow bigger than it's supposed to. The weight is very heavy for the cow, and it can fall and get sick. And if its organs come out of its body, they don't even give anesthesia or anything when they want to stitch it back up. They just do the cheap job; any cowboy or anyone can come and just stitch it up like it's something normal. I don't like all these inhumane and uncivilized ways of treating an animal, an animal who is beneficial to humankind, who is so kind and so gentle.

That's why when I think of taking milk, I don't want it. I don't like to be reminded of the cruelty of us, of humankind. It's not that I am fanatic, because people still need milk to survive. The children who sometimes the mother can't feed, they need milk. The sick people who sometimes can't drink or eat anything else, they need milk. I'm not advocating fanaticism; it's just that I hate to see any suffering. But milk is okay.

MEDITATING AND FEELING SECURE IN GOD'S PRESENCE ⁸⁷

The most important thing in life is that you find wisdom within yourself. There's no need to sit around and talk about 'God this and that and the other' because the more we talk, the farther we are from God. So, whatever you can understand is good, but keep it to yourself

87. Four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., February 15, 1999 (Originally in English).

since maybe tomorrow you'll understand differently. Therefore, just discover things for yourself and enjoy them.

There is no one definition of God, and there's nothing we should say about God. I don't know if anyone has ever been able to explain God, even in a higher dimension. Why should we bother about that old guy? We're okay! [Laughter] Whether Hes exists or not, who cares? We come here, we have blessed food, we sleep and we have a performance now and again. We're all right, aren't we? And since God is everywhere anyhow, who cares where we die, when we die, where we go or what we do? Does a fish worry about whether he tumbles out of the ocean somewhere? Does a fish worry that he might run out of water or swim in the wrong direction into the wrong water? No, he doesn't. He is already in the ocean.

It's okay. We're very secure. To meditate and think and so on is just to remember that we're already very secure because we forget. And then we worry, thinking, 'Oh, my God! Where is God?' And, 'Where am I going after this? Will Hes come to see me or will I go to heaven to see Hirm?' Because we don't realize that we are already in the presence of God.

Whatever we do and wherever we are, it's in God's presence. It's just that we become too busy with our material occupations, and then we get scared and threatened by the physical power. By that time we're exhausted, so we have to go within again and meditate and think and remember where we are. And then we are not afraid; we are secure again.

It's just like a fish; he has to still himself for a while and then he will remember: 'Oh, that's right. I'm still in the ocean. I haven't gone anywhere. I haven't gotten lost anywhere. The ocean is surrounding me all the time. I can never lose touch with it. It's in me, it's outside of me and it surrounds me. It is me! I'm born from the ocean. Even though I might look different, I came from the ocean. I live in the ocean, and if I go from the ocean, I will come back to the ocean, probably in another form. But I will also be from the ocean, inside the ocean.' And then the fish feels good. So, that's the purpose of meditation: Know that you are the fish!

The enlightened life is both powerful and detached

After we become enlightened or after we've practiced meditation, we truly don't desire anything. But we can do things even more and more wholeheartedly than we could before because we have greater power of concentration. Yet that doesn't mean we're more ambitious, or that we're still the way we were before. It's not the same.

I'm really not very good at explaining this! But why should we explain anything at all? Just live! You know, life is simple; it's very simple!

THE SOUL'S WORST ENEMY IS IGNORANCE, NOT ANGER ⁸⁸

If you keep truly wanting to kill your temper, that won't do. The more you want that, the less you'll succeed. So, don't want; just do what you can. Also, I'm sure that many situations aren't completely your fault. Sometimes it's the circumstances you're in, and sometimes we're born with different traces of past experiences; this is out of our control. But I'm very proud that you're so young and already so wise and humble that you admit your shortcomings, even in public. I'm sure you'll do very well in the future because half of

88. Four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., February 14, 1999 (Originally in English).

your sickness has already been cured by your own knowledge, that you seek help and that you humbly admit it. So, I'm sure; I have a lot of faith in you.

But temper is not the worst enemy of our soul. The worst enemy is ignorance, or lack of enlightenment, which you've already destroyed. Temper is just a trace of the unfortunate, extra garbage that we sometimes happen to house in our being. With time, either you get rid of it or it will rot by itself. So, don't worry too much. Take it one day at a time, as much as you can. [Applause]

If you can sometimes control it, then control it. But don't hurt yourself by bottling it up. Or, you can sometimes try to express your feelings in a different way. The feeling is true. It doesn't matter who says what to you: If you feel bad about something, you feel bad. But if you can, try to express it in a clearer and more loving way. If you can't and you feel that you must explode and later you feel you were wrong, just apologize and say, 'Mom, brother, I meant it this way, but I couldn't express it better before. Now that I'm calmer, I see it clearly. I'm sorry; I should have told you in another way instead of getting angry.' Then it's okay.

It's not that we can't make mistakes; it's just that we should know that it was a mistake and try to make up for it. And it's not that we can't be angry; but if we know we were wrong, we should make up for it by being more loving later or by apologizing or doing something nice to erase the effects of our negative personality residues on other people.

Try drinking a glass of cold water before you flare up

Take care of yourself, all right? For example, if you think you have a big temper, try a glass of cold water before you flare up. Each time you want to get mad and think there's no reason to, drink a glass of cold water straight down and 'on the rocks.' That will give you time to think about whether you should spend your energy screaming or talking. Sometimes we can learn to do things in a different way. For instance, we might discover that it's better to reason with others than to scream. Because sometimes when you scream very loud and fast, people don't even understand what you're talking about. And it's a waste of time. You may have a lot to tell them, but if you talk in a loud voice like that they won't even understand, which is frustrating.

A QUAN YIN MESSENGER'S TEMPTATIONS ⁸⁹

You think that when you live out there in the world, you have temptations and it's difficult to practice, but there are more here. There are more beautiful people here for you to look at. Once you want to come here, a lot of people want to get you out. A lot of people have fallen in love when they came to the Center. It's very, very famous for that. People especially fall in love very quickly with those close to me; my attendants and such. They look good, they look radiant, and they stand out. And the people who stay here, stand out inside. There is a fragrance about them; there's something about them that attracts people. The stronger your will, the stronger their attraction around here.

When outside people come here, they also fall in love easily because they are happy. Both are happy; and when they're happy, they look good. Everyone looks beautiful when they're happy. Happy people smile a lot and speak in a very lively and easy-going way. Everyone seems to be an angel, so their faces radiate a kind of attraction. Members of the opposite sex also feel the same way because they're also happy here. Then, very easily, they just

89. Four-day retreat, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., February 13, 1999 (Originally in English).

meet each other and help each other. It's very romantic and very reliable. They seem to be very good persons to be with. When people see me, they all seem so happy, beaming with love and contentment; and everyone sees each other at their best in the Center. That's how they fall in love right here. That's how I have lost many residents. If you stay there and have a normal life, there are less obstructions than being a resident. It's very difficult.

Also, every time I send the Quan Yin messengers out, my heart jumps and I keep praying for them, 'God, protect him, protect her.' When they go out in the world there are a lot of things they have to deal with. They're not as protected as when they are here. If they are here, they already have danger, but they have group support and the protection of the environment, and they soon forget it. When they go out in the world alone, they come under so many attacks, emotionally, physically, psychically – a lot of things. So, think about it more.

THE QUAN YIN METHOD IS THE UTMOST TREASURE ⁹⁰

I tell you it is true, that it is the best thing that ever happened to us: The Quan Yin method. Sometimes you forget a lot of things, or you don't know how to solve a problem or a question, but you meditate for a while, you do the Quan Quang (in Chinese words for meditation on the Light), and then you do the Quan Yin (in Chinese words for meditation on the Sound), and then all things come very quick to you. And you know it. That's why 'Seek you first the kingdom of God.' Meditate! Meditate first, and everything else comes along. And if it doesn't come at that time, it means 'Okay, you don't need it.'

TAKING THE INITIATIVE IN LIFE ⁹¹

Remember, you are greater than anything else in this life, be it happiness, disaster, personal affairs, business, success or failure. Nothing is bigger than you are. So, keep it up. God loves us. I know that for sure. I experience it often. Even though Hes makes jokes with me sometimes, I am still okay. [Applause]

Really, you'd be surprised. For example, there are sometimes very small things that you don't notice. Like recently I renovated a place where I wanted to stay. It was an old place and it was dirty, so I asked some people to fix it up a few months ago. I left the money with them, but they didn't do it. It was one excuse after another. When I came to the house, it was still empty, dirty and not ready. So, I rolled up my sleeves, called people, grabbed anyone I could and finished it in one week. They told me it would take maybe a few months. I said, 'Nonsense! There's no such thing as a month of time to waste.' So, we did it in one week, not even one full week.

I got people only because it was like an emergency; I would grab them wherever I could. In the supermarket or wherever, I would ask them if they wanted an extra job. If they said, 'Yes,' I would say, 'Come here, and I'll tell you what to do.' They weren't even professionals, meaning they could only do it after work, from seven to ten at night, or seven to eleven at the most. That's it! But we finished the three or four rooms in one week's time.

But then one place in the kitchen was not painted; because they had to do the tiles first. But the tile guy could not come in the daytime, and that night I had to come here. So, I said, 'Okay, I'll do it myself.' But then I had already worked for a week or more before,

90. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., January 1, 1999 (Originally in English).

91. International three-day retreat, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., December 16-18, 1998 (Originally in English).

running around trying to organize things. So, I was very tired. Apart from our other jobs, I also did the painting and sweeping and all those kinds of things, so I felt half-bad. I also had a little physical problem on top of that; I was stiff all over.

Anyhow, on the last day, I was supposed to go, but I said, 'I have to paint the kitchen before I go.' I wanted it done before I left. So, I lay there, tired! I didn't sleep the whole of last night. I said, 'Oh, God, how am I going to paint my kitchen now? I'm really tired. I talked big to all the guys, and now I am not doing it.' It would be kind of like 'losing face.' [Master laughs.]

I kept thinking like that, and then I just walked out the door. I just went out for some reason. And there was a man passing by me on the street, and he wanted to talk to me and said, 'Do you need a painter?' [Applause] Yes, it happened. So, I said, 'What do you paint?' And he said, 'I paint the walls and all that.' I said, 'Oh, when are you available?' He said, 'Right now.' [Laughter] I said, 'Okay, come in.' And then I showed him the machine and he got it done in no time. So, I finished it before I left. [Applause] In some places you can't just get people like that. Big companies are busy, and it's holiday time and everything. Even if you have money, you cannot pay because people won't just come and work for you when you want. You have to make an appointment, and so on.

But everything just came. Within one week, everyone came: Security, carpet, tile, even though they had threatened me before that it would take months to organize such a place. Even in America it takes time. You have to make an appointment, maybe a week ahead at least. Nothing! I did it all in a few days. And everyone just came running from nowhere. Normally, they are busy, and even there you don't get them like that. But I said, 'Well, I need it done before I leave, so could you make it?'

And they said, 'We'll try.' And then they did try. Everyone came. And everything was done in almost one day's time. The rest was just touch-up and everything else. I'm really grateful, you know. The guy is doing some job, really. Hes is not so bad, you know. Our Mother / Father, Hes takes care of it if we really need it. Sometimes we don't need it, and we just want to be spoiled. And that's also fine. But then we don't have a chance to learn what we can do. If we delegate everything to everyone else, then we also delegate the power. The people who do things for us have more chance to learn and to be more capable. And we, meanwhile, are not left with much.

Actually, that's also true. In a lot of things, I am handicapped because I have a lot of people who do things for me. I don't know how to use a computer. I don't know how to use many things that are a lot of fun: E-mail, the Internet and so on. I don't know anything about them. Because I have people who do them for me. Maybe also I don't have time, but if I did have time, I could do it and I would learn some new things. And I would be more able and have more fun. But even before this time, there were many things I didn't do: I didn't book my own airplane tickets, I didn't take taxis, I didn't know where terminal 'what' is and I didn't know what 'where' is.

So, I missed out on a lot. There were a lot of things I didn't know. Also, I didn't know about driving. And I didn't know how to spend money. Now I know it's fun! [Laughter] It's fun to spend money. Buying things you need and getting them at the time you need them is fun. It feels satisfying. So, I missed out on a lot in life because I was too busy doing all the so-called big things. But it's also good that I learned to do some small things, to get more in touch with life and reality, to truly know how people live their lives and how they feel.

You have no idea how busy I am. It can get quite hectic at times. So, don't look at me sitting here smiling and think nothing's happening in the world. Things are happening all the time. But it doesn't do me any good or do you any good if I sit here crying or complaining.

We just smile it away. Things will go away. And most of the time, we see through it as an illusion and just play along. That's it; it's not so bad. To live alone is not so bad. You can see things more clearly and see through the illusion more clearly. But don't see so clearly that you go and leave me! When you see too clearly, you don't want to do much. So, sometimes God keeps us a little bit in the dark or in the closet, so we continue to do the things we must do before we leave this world. If we see too clearly, there's not much we want to do, and we want to go Home quickly. We might cheat; we might try to tie things up quickly, do everything fast, put everything together and then say good-bye. Good-bye, cruel world!

RECOGNIZING OUR OWN GREATNESS ⁹²

I just hope you remember that whatever happens to you, you are greater than that. There is nothing in this world greater than us. Nothing in the whole universe is greater than ourselves. So, don't let anything, whether good or bad, distract you from knowing yourself, that you are great. You will know it one day. And once you know it, nothing can make you lose it. Nobody can steal it from you – not even death, or the threat of violence, or power or danger – nothing can make you lose that. This is very important. Even though you are great by birth, you are great originally, it's just that you do not know it. And that's why we came here, to know.

There's nothing really that we should do in this world. Once you enter samadhi, the whole world even disappears. We are just the Light. We are just freedom. We are everything that is so beautiful, blissful and blessed. We are not the physical body at all; we don't even exist. The body doesn't even exist. Not even your neighbor's body exists. Not even the whole planet exists. So, let's not worry about what happens to us or to this non-existing body, but find the real thing and be happy. Let's be simple and look forward to the time when we know ourselves as such: As God, as freedom, as the most beautiful, powerful thing that we could be. At that time we are not even 'we.' I don't know how to say it. It's such a beautiful feeling to be enlightened, to know that we are God and we are Light and we are freedom.

So, let's put all our energy into worrying about that. Everything else just comes and goes. Even if today you are beautiful, tomorrow who knows? Anything could happen to this physical body. No one can be sure that at the time of death we remain beautiful, unless you die young in your sleep. A lot of things could happen to us. So, the physical body is not a reliable thing; anything could happen. You drive a car, you walk on the street; even during sleep there can be all kinds of disasters – earthquakes, anything.

So, let us not worry about what happens to us physically. Worry about getting enlightenment: Quicker, deeper, and faster. Every day, that should be our problem. But because we already have the Quan Yin method, there should not be any problem. If we continue practicing, just relaxingly, like a hobby every day for a couple of hours, the result is definite. It's absolute. There is no need to worry about it. Just like when you water the plant and fertilize it, it will grow.

92. International three-day retreat, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., December 16-18, 1998 (Originally in English).

THE REAL MEANING OF LIFE ⁹³

Sometimes we come here with a very, very special choice. But by the time we come here, we've forgotten. So, the special choice that we made in heaven becomes like a hindrance or a burden during our life here. But actually, blessings come in many different ways and disguises. In English they say something like, 'The strongest tree grows in the most unfriendly soil.'

So, we must not concentrate on the choice that we have made, or the so-called disadvantages that we think we have. Because, after all, everything is an illusion anyhow. Concentrate instead on what we want to make out of our life and what we have, instead of what we do not have. There are endless things that we do not have. But there are a lot of things we have that we know, and a lot of things that we have and we also don't know. So, we have a lot more to use.

When I was young, because I was very little, people teased me and I felt very bad. But then later, after a while, I met some other people who loved me because I was small. And I realized that the others were lousy. So actually, everything in this life has a purpose.

Sometimes before we came to this world we have chosen a harder way to practice. We say, 'Okay, I would like to be a shorter person, or a fatter person, or a very exceptionally tall person.' Or, 'I want to be a handicapped person, in order to pay for quicker progress in finding God, or to help other people to find God in the same situation as me, to help those people who are in the same position.' But when we come here, we wear this human's brain, and then we begin to compare ourselves with other people. And we begin to feel complexity; we begin to feel that our choice is too disadvantageous now. But it's just the mind that thinks like that.

We are God, and when we go back to heaven, or when we are really enlightened, it doesn't matter at all what we look like. We don't feel disturbed anymore. The main thing is to be enlightened, deeply enlightened, so that we can find heaven right now and so we know that nothing is really us. Not even the outer beauty or the outer disadvantage is us. They are not us. They are just the clothes we wear.

So, what's important is to be enlightened, not to be anything else. And everything else will come along.

DIVINE LOVE IS THE ONLY TRUE LOVE ⁹⁴

Unconditional love

I thank you for being so kind and so good, for being saints in this needy world. I thank you so much for being so good all these years to yourselves, to the world and to me. Through your kindness, we have done a lot of God's assignments; we have helped our brothers and sisters around the world.

It's not the material things that are important; it is your unconditional love that goes with those gifts and the comfort you have offered to our needy brothers and sisters. And even though we know that they are not truly the 'needies,' it is good to know that we have love

93. International three-day retreat, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., December 16-18, 1998 (Originally in English).

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in such circumstances for such people. We all know that they are all God and God's children, and that no one ever needs anything from anyone, least of all from us.

It's just that they have manifested themselves as such, so that we can manifest our love. And for me to witness such unconditional love is always a great gift and a great privilege. I often think, 'How do I deserve you, such beautiful people?' [Applause] I know we do have, sometimes, a little personality conflict, due to backgrounds and habits. But these are just small things. The personality conflicts or the ego problems, these are just small, superficial things, compared to your greatness and your love, which you are realizing more and more every day.

Realize the true essence of God

And since you have come into the circle of sainthood, you have begun to realize how great a love you are capable of giving, how great you really are inside, and how much greater you can continue to present yourself. And this is all about finding God, finding the kingdom of heaven. It is you who are heaven. It is you who are God. Even if God really exists as a person, He can only work through us to manifest His love. So we are representing that love. We are representing God. So, every time we forget that, we should try to remember again. That's how we become great. That's how we realize God. There is no such thing as a God we can grab, we can hold, we can blame, we can pray to, except as that great love. And the more we manifest that love, the closer we are to Godhood. That is what God realization is all about.

So, some of you ask me, 'What is life?' and 'Where is God?' in the beginning when you haven't completely understood. But I think many of you understand now. There's only one God inside us. All of us are the same one. And it's up to us to choose to show Him out, to present Him to the world and to ourselves, or not. There's no one else who can help us. Because you always think, 'Oh, the Master must be good; the Master must be this and that so that I can follow Him or Her.' No, no, don't follow any Master!

There's no Master. Since we are only one, there's no Master, no disciple. Just the one who walks a little bit in advance, or walks before to show the ones who walk later. But later is all the same. And so there is no other God, except the one that's within you.

That's why in the bible it is said, 'The kingdom of God is within you,' and, 'You are the temple of God, and the holy spirit lives within you.' That's the only truth there is. It doesn't matter how many sermons any Master preaches or how many long lectures we give, there is only one truth: That we have God within us. And it's up to each of us to choose to manifest Him. It's up to you to identify yourself with that source of wisdom, love and greatness. Do not let mundane problems or personality habits hinder you from remembering your true self.

Awaken our own greatness

Every time you love someone unconditionally, every time you reach out from this greatness, it is your true self who reaches out. And every time you do that, you expand your horizons, you expand your self, and you become greater and greater. You don't become greater; you are already great. It's just that you make use of your greatness then.

It's no good if we have a big bank account and never withdraw from it. And then, with time, we might even forget that we have the money. Sometimes now that I have to be

independent, I go to the bank and withdraw some money. I feel so grateful to the teller, the one who gives me the money. Then later I think, 'Wait a minute. It's my money!' [Laughter]

It's the same with us now. Whatever miracle appears in your life, whatever great event occurs to your favor, it's all yours in the beginning, and all yours all the time. But it's because you have forgotten it, you have forgotten how great you are, you have forgotten the treasure within you, that now you're grateful for every little favor that comes your way. It's okay to be grateful, but then remember that you always will have this. And the more you take it out, the more you realize how big a treasure you have.

So, try to exercise this God love, this God power, and then you will realize you are really the Master, you are really God's children. There's nothing else except the glory, except the highest position in the universe, which is yours. Do not thank me; do not thank anyone except yourself for anything that happens in your life. Also, do not even blame anyone for anything bad that happens in your life. Because we are the ones who create all this, good or bad.

But please remember to create good things, so that we manifest Godhood on this planet and make it into heaven. If we think negatively, act negatively or expect the negative, then we will get that. Because we are God, we have the power of calling forth into materialization anything that we want to have. Remember that.

So, try to concentrate more in your meditation, harnessing this power again, so that you can call the whole universe into your command, and make anything possible for yourself and for the ones that you love. There is not much I can do to help you except to tell you this – that you are great. Please try to remember your greatness.

Every time you fail, every time you feel miserable, every time you feel let down or dragged into the cumbersome existence of the material world, try to pick yourself up and tell yourself again: 'This is not real.' The only real thing is positive; the only real thing is God; the only real thing is love. The only real thing is that whatever you want, you will get. And you will get all the good things, because that's what God wants us to have. 'Knock and it shall be opened. Ask and it shall be given unto you.' Do you think God tells lies? Why should He tell you that, if it is not true? Should He tell us that for fun? No, He wouldn't make a joke with our feelings, since He is God. So, we'd better believe it. The thing is, our little faith does not allow us to believe things that are true. That is the only problem.

Always be positive

So, we have to work around the mind and try to control our thinking. Every time you think negatively, just brush it aside and replace it immediately with the counter-thought, the positive one. Suppose you think, 'Oh! I'm going to lose, I'm going to lose this business. I'm going to lose a hundred percent. All the odds are against me. I'm going to lose.' Suppose you think that, then don't think it! Say, 'No, no! I'm going to win. No matter what! I'm going to win.' And even then if you don't win, will it cost you anything? Is it a better choice if you choose the negative and the pessimistic view? So, you might just as well use the positive!

It doesn't cost you anything, and it might gain you something. You might not succeed the first time when you think positively, but we are in the process of training our minds to think positively. So, even if you don't succeed the first time, do not give up. Next time, think positively again and again. At least you train yourself to think positively. And positive thinking always makes us feel good anyhow.

It's been scientifically proven that even if you smile falsely or reluctantly, still the cells in the body produce a happy mood. So, why don't we think with a smile all the time, to command our whole body and being to produce this kind of happy mood for us. And then when a person is happy, he attracts good luck. Everybody knows that. So, let's do that from this day on as a practice. Together with the Quan Yin power to support this positive thinking, we're going somewhere, all right? [Applause]

Do not ever allow yourself to think anything negative again. Even if you have bad, bad, bad experiences repeatedly, do not allow it. But there is one thing: If you repeatedly have bad experiences in one circumstance, do not just stick there and say, 'I'm going to change it into positive.' After the tenth attempt, if it doesn't work, then change the whole thing. Throw it out, the whole situation; make a new one. Positive thinking doesn't mean that you stick in the mud, grow yourself in the wall, and think positive. You are stuck in there, saying, 'I'm going to think positive. I'm going to get out of here. I'm thinking positive.'

If you can't get out of there by thinking positive, knock the wall out and get out of the situation. So, positive means, 'Okay, if this doesn't work, it doesn't mean I'm a failure.' That's all. 'If this situation doesn't work, I'm going to make a new situation for myself; I will not waste my energy in this unfruitful project. I'm going to use my energy and invest it in a more fruitful way, in a more encouraging project, more logically – and it will bring results.'

Because if you keep sticking in one situation, and you keep failing all the time, you will also lose your positive power of thinking. And that's the worst thing you can lose. It's okay to fail once now and again in a project, because sometimes it's not only our fault that things fail. Our associates or other people are also negative; they keep hindering us or affecting our thinking and our way of doing things. But if you keep failing and failing all the time, and you try to work through these people, then you will eventually also think that you are a failure and blame yourself, and lose this positive power. And this is bad.

So, after many attempts, if it doesn't work, you have to know when to stop and change. There's no need to try to move mountains all the time. When you say, 'Oh, Master says I have to think positive. I'm not going to move until this mountain moves,' then you sit there and move the mountain.

You have to know what is necessary to spend your energy on. Because there is also God's will; there are other things to do and nicer projects to spend energy on. We don't have to always stick in the mud, feeling that we have to do something until the end in order to feel successful. That is stubbornness – not positive thinking, but stubbornness.

So, we have to sometimes sit down for a while. If something goes wrong, we have to sit down by ourselves and think, 'Is this fruitful or not? Is it worth continuing?' If it's not, we have to have the courage and the wisdom to stop, and the positive thinking to start anew. And never give up after one failure.

It's also true with relationships. If really you try very hard and it doesn't work, then maybe you should set each other free, and do something more positive for the rest of your time. It does work eventually all the time, but it's up to you to invest your energy and time in one project or another, in one relationship or another.

Meditate easily

But never give up on meditation! Even today if you don't see the Light, tomorrow you will. And even if you don't see the Light, it doesn't mean you do not see the Light. You might be

slow, or maybe you are distracted. You didn't see the Light; maybe you're sleeping while you see the Light. Your wisdom eye sees it, but your mind is not aware of it. There is no one on this planet who is initiated into the Quan Yin method who does not see the Light. That's what I know. [Applause]

There is no such thing as, 'I don't see the Light; I don't hear the Sound.' I do not believe this. It's just some misunderstanding somewhere. You need to try. It's very easy to see the Light. You do not have to make an effort. Once the electric cord is plugged in, there is electricity. It's no problem. Or, you do it just sitting like this or sitting like what. [Master lies back in a humorous pose; audience laughs and applauds.] You can do a head stand while you meditate. I don't care what position. You will, you do see the Light. [Applause] All you need to do is just relax and let God take over. Do not rush Him. Do not keep a watch on Him. 'I have already sat for half an hour, twenty minutes. Where are You?' [Laughter] Because as long as we are still preoccupied with our limited mind power, we do not reach the level beyond the mind. And that is why you miss out on the Light.

Do not preoccupy yourself with anything, not even with waiting for the Light or waiting for the Sound – nothing. It will come. Just put your trust in the Master power, the God power, and say, 'Okay, You do it. I'll just sit here and wait.' [Applause] Don't even bother to say that. Just sit there and remember your enlightened center; that's all there is to do. And occasionally repeat one or two names. If you feel like you don't have enough Light or something, then you probably should wait until you feel your mind is more at rest. Mostly after vigorous exercise, or some diligent work, you can sit down, and you feel better. Because your mind is tired now and your body is also tired, with no struggle within. You just sit there, and you feel good, and the Light will come.

Even if it's not very bright in the beginning, you know there is something there. You know there's something different than the ordinary light, different than the view you normally see. There's something like a screen in front of you, and it feels so empty sometimes, like an empty room. And even if you put your fingers in front, you don't feel it. You thought you opened your eyes, but it's not true. Because when you do anything, you don't see it, and then you know. Even if you don't know, it's all right. You are guaranteed a seat to heaven. Just do your job. [Applause]

All you need is your sincerity, the longing in your heart. God knows everything else. And if He doesn't know, then we don't need to go to heaven, right? Such a God, why would you go to heaven to see such a stupid guy? [Master and audience laugh.] So, if you do believe in God at all, then He knows, right? There's no need to panic, no need to even ask for anything. Jesus said, 'Even before you ask, your Mother / Father already knows.'

So, anything Jesus promised is true, especially for the Quan Yin practitioners. I don't know about other people; I cannot guarantee for everyone. But whoever comes to us here, I can guarantee. [Applause]

THE QUAN YIN METHOD IS AN ETERNAL UNIVERSAL LAW ⁹⁵

It's not that I invented the Quan Yin method; I just know it. This method has existed since the beginning of time, when the universe was first formed. And it will always exist. It is not a method; it is like the way of the universe, a universal law that we must follow if we want to get back to the origin, back to our true self, back to the kingdom of God or our Buddha nature. Just like a science that's very precise or just like two plus two equals four, one

95. International three-day retreat, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., December 16-18, 1998 (Originally in Aulacese).

cannot do anything different to achieve it. If one knows that two plus two equals four, then two plus two equals four. No matter how we speak of it, even if we argue, it's still two plus two equals four. Similarly, in the universe there are some precise laws like that. And whoever knows them is only discovering, not inventing. If we discover them and follow them, the result is very precise.

Of course, there are many different ways to do things: There are faster ways, there are slower ways and there are superior methods. The Quan Yin method is a flawless way, but I discovered it and did not invent it. It belongs to God; it belongs to everyone.

The Quan Yin method works very fast; all kinds of karma from so many past lives is burned immediately. It's impossible for us not to succeed. It's impossible for anyone who follows the Quan Yin method not to become a Buddha. It's impossible, as impossible as taking two candies, placing them next to two other candies and saying that they don't make four. That's impossible. Similarly, in practicing the Quan Yin method, it's impossible not to succeed, not to progress spiritually, not to become enlightened, and that is good.

But there's something strange about this method: You can practice it without believing in it. Just practice; meditate two and a half hours a day and wisdom will naturally appear. Then we understand things ourselves. We're our own Master. Just practice this method and it will come. It's the same as putting the two candies next to the other two candies; there will always be four. It doesn't matter whether we believe the math teacher or not. Even if he says so, it doesn't matter if we believe him. Just put two candies next to two candies and you will get four!

IT TAKES MANY LIFETIMES TO GET A WOMAN'S BODY ⁹⁶

It takes a long time of practicing to have a woman's body. That's why men don't understand why women are sometimes so delicate and care about so many things. They don't care, and they don't understand. Some other time, they will understand.

Actually, the soul is not man or woman. In order to be feminine, it takes a long practice. People have told you women cannot become Buddha, but it's exactly the contrary. Women are nearer to Buddhahood. If you know yourself, if you use your feminine qualities for some higher purpose, you will get there quicker. You have the precision, you have the attention, the delicate feelings, and common sense, so whatever you want, you will get it. That's why men are afraid of women.

We have been trained for many lifetimes in order to get a woman's body, in order to be feminine, and to have all these loving, delicate qualities of a human being. Men are not yet so refined. They have beautiful qualities; they have different things, but they are not so refined. They have not reached the fine point and that's why there are many things they don't understand about women and about life. They are more for the general, bigger picture and women are more for details and see everything. Men can be very blind; the whole 'fridge' is full, but they can't find anything to eat. [Laughter]

Men are not so delicate in their feelings and in their observations about things around them; therefore, they neglect many things. That's what causes pain for the woman and for their relationship – because of their inconsideration. They just don't know. They don't mean to be rude, to be bad, to be so hard, or to be so neglectful; they just don't understand. They need a lot more training in many more lifetimes.

96. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., October 4, 1998 (Originally in English).

So, if anyone tells you women are inferior or cannot become Buddha, that's a most ignorant remark. They don't understand how the universal law works. They do not understand how many lifetimes a human being has to go through, how much training the soul has to undertake, in order to become feminine. That's why they talk like that.

SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE ⁹⁷

You know what? I have to do everything alone now: I wash my clothes, I pay my bills, and I came here alone, so why not you? We have to do things alone sometimes. If other people can help us in any way, it's fine and good. But if we don't have them, we don't have them. It's good to be independent, depending on the situation. Sometimes I'm very, very busy. I cry sometimes, to tell you the truth, because I'm too busy and I have to take care of all the domestic things. I think it's not fair. But it's okay. I cry and then I get up and go back to work. [Master laughs.] It's okay to cry, but then go back to work. There's no escape.

Sometimes it's good to have people help you, but they bring other problems as well. There're always problems. If you work alone, you have problems, and if you have other people to help you, you have problems. The bus can get lost, explode, or... anything.

Yesterday, one man who drives my car lost the cap that you use to close the gas tank, and we drove that way with the tank full of gas. It was dangerous. I smelled gas all the time, and I thought it was because it was a new tank of gas, so I didn't mention anything. After we drove here I still smelled it, so I said, 'What's wrong?' He knew it all the time, but he didn't tell me. He told someone else. Then that person didn't even tell me. So I said, Oh, that's funny. This is a new car, how come it's leaking? So, I asked someone to check it, and they said, 'Master, the gas cap is lost.' I said, 'How do you know?' He said, 'He told, told, told me.' [Laughter] I said, 'Why, why, why didn't you tell, tell, tell me?' He could have killed us. That's the problem.

When you make a mistake, admit it. It's better than making a bigger mistake. But most of us are like that. We try to cover it up and then make a bigger problem. A car can explode. It's dangerous when gas is spilling out of the tank. But God blesses the stupid one like me, the working woman, the busy woman.

Don't dream that more helpers are better

Sometimes we dream, we think, 'If we had ten more persons helping, wouldn't it be nicer?' But it wouldn't. It has some other problems. Like in my house, or the place where I stay, if I stay alone, I have to do a lot of things. I have to clean the house, I have to wash, I have to pay the bills, I have to go and collect and send the mail. Do everything alone, just like you do at home. If I have a maid or an attendant, they do this for me; but then I also don't have privacy. I have to take care of them, too. Then they ask me things and they demand my attention. They don't feel satisfied being neglected. When I'm busy or something like that, I find their faces are longer than usual. [Laughter] When I'm under pressure and I answer questions shorter than normal, then I find their faces get longer. The shorter my answer, the longer their faces, for example. [Laughter] Then that doesn't digest quickly. It takes half a day, or a day or so to calm down the situation, and then everything is peaceful and quiet until the next thing happens. They make a mess or something, and then we have trouble again, just like in your marriages.

97. Group meditation, Florida Center, Florida, U.S.A., October 4, 1998 (Originally in English).

So, just now you asked me to marry. I don't think it's a good idea, but I'll try. [Laughter] I'll try again. Don't worry about it. Whatever you suggest, I'll try it. Or else I won't know if it's good or not. Then I can tell you. It's really not a good idea. I'm just too independent; I'm too busy.

I'm too independent in my thinking. I'm really deep in my thinking, most of the time. I do things, but I do them dividedly, like I do this thing here, and I think of some other things there. At the same time, I have to think of many things. Men, or spouses, they don't like that. Even women, you want your partner all for yourself, your very self, very great self. You don't like that.

I'm too busy. Even before I was busy, I always found something to do, something more useful for other people. I don't know. Maybe I was born that way. Maybe I'm supposed to be that way. I can't change it. It's not a good idea to get married. Can I try again? [Master and audience laugh.]

Yes, a lot of us need to have company, but a lot of us don't. To have company is fun, very nice, and you feel comfortable, you feel not so lonely. But then you have a lot of responsibility for this and that person. They tend to imagine a lot of things. Sometimes you're just under pressure and you say something; and you don't mean anything by it, you don't mean anything bad, but they think it's bad. They imagine it's bad, and then they make a lot of trouble for you. They might not say anything, but their faces are very long, and the atmosphere is very thick, you can cut it with a knife. You just feel choked, and you can't even argue, because there's nothing to argue about, there's not even any reason to fight with each other or to argue verbally. There's nothing. But you just can't breathe. You haven't had this experience? [Audience: Yes.]

To be alone is a rare privilege

So, let me tell you. If you go it alone; you go it alone, and if you have company, you have company. There's no need to try to change things too much. Take it as it is. When you can find company, enjoy it. When you cannot, it's a privilege to be alone, because company you can always find. Really, it's very easy. People are always around us. It's very difficult to be alone.

If God happens to make you to be alone like me, then thank Him. It's a privilege. It's a rare, rare opportunity to be yourself and to go inside and have a look at what you have inside, until nothing's left. You feel free. But then you have to do a lot of things that you hate. Now I hate domestic stuff. I don't really hate it; it's just that you don't have the desire to do that anymore. It's something you grow out of. Like when you were young, you liked toys. When you grow up, you're not satisfied with toys anymore. It's the same with me. I'm not satisfied with domestic work anymore. But it's okay. I try to organize.

Q. *Master, You're not supposed to do all the worldly things.*

M. I'm not supposed to do all the worldly things? But I do them. I have to. There's no choice, sometimes.

Q. *We should be able to help You.*

M. No. Sometimes you want to help but you make more trouble, you show your emotions, and you expect a lot from me. You don't know it now, but you will. You will when you're around me. You expect a lot of things, so many stupid things.

Just yesterday, the man who drives my car asked me, 'Master, should we stop and put some gas in the car now?' He's the driver and he asks me many funny things. I answer with a hand okay signal like this, and he's still not satisfied. He asks so that I have to talk to him. I say, 'Why are you asking me? You're the driver. You do what you have to do.' I couldn't even see the meter whether it was empty or full. I said, 'Okay, then go fill the tank.' He said, 'Oh, no, but we still have enough to make it up to our house. I said 'Then why are you asking me?' Then later he thought about it and he said, 'Okay, but we can't go out tomorrow if we don't fill the tank.'

You see, all these kinds of nonsensical things. I was trying to think of what to do, because the time was so short, where to put you, how to make you comfortable and all that, and he just asked me all these kinds of things. He's the driver. Aren't drivers supposed to know what to do? If I'm not there, doesn't he know what to do? It's not the first time he has driven a car. All of you drive a car better than I do.

You will bother me. Even the things you can do, you'll still want to come around and catch my attention just for the sake of it. There are many things I can't tell you. Suppose I tell you, 'This is nice,' the thing you're doing is correct, is wonderful, then you love it. And if I say, 'No, no, that's wrong. Don't do it again next time,' you won't like it. And I can't not tell you that I'm not satisfied with that. If I tell you, you're not happy. That's the problem; because when you're with me a long time, you know my habits and what I need, and then you think you know everything already. Then you expect that I'll never ever tell you again that you're wrong. Your ego gets hurt, and sometimes it's very difficult to digest things for yourself and for me because I have other things to do besides trying to comfort your emotions and nurse your ego. I have other things to do, but you expect a lot of things from me when you help me. That's what people do.

Expectations of others creates problems

It's the same with a marriage and relationship. We expect the partner to be this, to be that, to do that, to do this, and when they don't act like the one that we like, we're disappointed, get hurt, and want to get out of the relationship. But the relationship is not meant for you to expect the other person to do what you want, but to do what you want yourself, to show what you are, how good you are, how you want to be in that relationship; what kind of person you want to be in that relationship, in the marriage. You want to be a good wife, a super wife, a tolerant one, a faithful one, or what you want to be in your role, not to expect from your husband all the time what he's going to be, how he's going to act toward you, how he's going to talk to you. But that's the problem with marriage. You get it all wrong.

You think, 'Okay, now that I've met him, now that I've met her, my life will change. It will be fantastic. He or she is going to make me happy.' It's not true. You are going to make yourself happy or not in that relationship. But most of the time we expect the other partner to make us happy, to be the one that we like in our picture, and that's the problem. We forget to be what we want to be. We forget to make a schedule for ourselves, make an idealistic kind of agenda for ourselves. And we make an agenda for our partner. We make a kind of appointment, a kind of picture for our partner to fit into. Both expect the same way and that's why things fall apart. We get it all wrong.

In whatever situation we're in, we have to check ourselves only. What are we going to do in this situation? What are we going to be? What do we want to show? Which part of goodness do we want to present to our partner or to the world? It's not that the other partner has to present us anything. Whatever he or she wants to present, that's their

problem. Our problem is just ourselves, always us. But most people, when they are married, or when they have a partner or a friendship, they pay all their attention to the other half, and check it out: 'Oh, he did it wrong.' 'She did it badly.' Or 'She's no good. He's not nice.' You forget that we have to check ourselves, that we are the ones who are important.

Any relationship, any situation is meant for us to learn, not for the other person. The other person is a catalyst only. It's an excuse for us to exercise our power, our imagination about ourselves. That's the problem. That's why marriages often don't work. So, check out your marriage and revise it. It's not about your husband, about your wife, but about yourself, what kind of person you want to be, or to show him or her in this relationship. If he reacts well to it, fine, and if he or she doesn't react well to it, there's not much you can do about it. But just check yourself, if you're still balanced, if you're still on the right track, if you're okay or not okay. If he stays with you, he stays; if he leaves, he leaves. You can't do much. But you cannot put all your attention on him and then lose yourself and forget yourself. The more you pay attention to him or her, the more you go wrong; and the more he or she criticizes. Then it's finito. [Applause]

You just do what you want, what you feel is best for yourself. You're married to him, and now, check the list of what you want to do about yourself: What I'm going to be, what I'm going to offer him, what I'm going to be with him, how I'm going to react. It's about yourself, not about him.

Even if you tried to do a hundred percent, you'd change completely into another person, it still wouldn't work, because he would expect something else. You never know what he or she would expect, because everyone is different anyhow. But the problem is that everyone gets into a friendship, a relationship, a courtship or marriage, trying to check out the other partner, whether he's doing good or bad, or trying to please the partner until you completely lose yourself. Then you feel very resentful, because you've lost yourself, because you're not yourself anymore. You feel bad and leave; or you're kaput, you fight, or you become bitter with each other. You don't change yourself; you don't lose yourself. You do whatever you think is best for you.

Imagine: I'm a faithful wife, that's what I want to be, and that's the best of me. Then be a faithful wife. But meanwhile, he might be faithful, and he might not. Don't get hurt. If he's not faithful like you, and if you still can tolerate it, stay; but if you can't, go. It's up to you. It's yourself that you have to care about and you have to control. Don't try to control the other party, and then you won't be so unhappy.

Be what you want to be, as long as you think it's best for yourself. Maybe it's not the best, but as long as in that situation you think the best is to be like that, to act like that, then do it. You still have to learn to reclaim yourself. You might make mistakes, but it's okay. There's no need to pray. You can pray if you want to. Say, 'Master, let me know what is the best of myself that I want to bring out.' That's it. Your partner sometimes tests you just to make you bring out the best in yourself. Sometimes he or she doesn't know that. You also don't know that you bring out the best in him, if he wants to recognize it that way. Most people just like to criticize the other partner and forget about themselves. When we forget ourselves, we're in trouble. We have to always be centered. It doesn't matter what other people say or do, we have to think of what we want to do.

For a higher purpose, we endure everything

Q. *Master, please do whatever is good for You.*

M. Oh, I can't. [Master laughs.] I know what you want to say, but I'm in a different situation. Anyhow, I'm doing what is good for me. Well, what else can I do? I'm a Master. I have to be responsible for whatever I do, and that's the best for me. That's the highest thing I can imagine about myself. That's what I'm doing, and that's why I do it, even though I suffer and I have trouble. But that doesn't mean it's bad for me. Now you might have misunderstood.

Whatever is best for you doesn't mean it always makes you happy. It might make you happy, and it might not. I mean you have to look at the whole picture like, in the long run in the whole thing, are you really happy with it, with the outcome? You can't say, 'Okay, I came here alone; I had to go by taxi; I got lost and all that; it's terrible.' Yes, it is. It's not pleasant. But it's for a higher purpose. So, I don't mind enduring that. But I can't tell you that being a Master, every day I smile, every day is lovely, and everything goes well. Sometimes I don't sleep for many days. Sometimes I don't eat the whole day or for many days. Sometimes I endure a lot of pressure and headache. But it's for a higher purpose, a higher plan.

Just like when you build your house, during building, you have cement, you have dust, you have a mess, and you have people coming in and out. It's very dirty, messy, and you have to endure it for six months or a year. But when your house is finished, wasn't it worthwhile? You can't build a house without having trouble, without spending money, or without having to endure tests of patience and the demands of the building process. So, I don't mean that when you choose something for the best for yourself you don't suffer. You might. But you have to look at the end result. Look at the whole picture. [Applause]

THE DETACHED HEART OF AN ENLIGHTENED PERSON ⁹⁸

Do you know why I tell you not to use magical power? Even if you have magical power, you must not use it. Why? [Audience: It interferes with the cycle of cause and retribution.] That's not cause for much concern. What else? [Audience: The ego.] Correct! This is very important! Spiritual practitioners can't afford to have this kind of ego, which prevents liberation from the three realms of suffering because the 'individual' still exists and is separated from the universe. It's because we have this 'individualistic' concept that we transmigrate between birth and death. We have 'individual' bodies, which is why we have 'individual' problems, 'individual' karma and 'individual' retribution.

If we don't have this concept of separation, then we are one with the universe, one with all of creation. This is the highest level. Perhaps you still don't understand this level so let me explain it to you briefly. A spiritual practitioner of the highest level doesn't care about any situation; he's not attached to any situation. When he falls ill, he's ill; when he's soaked in the rain, he's soaked; when the wind blows at him, he's blown at. He's not afraid when there's a gale; he doesn't mind when it rains; because all these are merely natural phenomena.

For example, we might not enjoy a gale, but there are places that need wind; we might not be happy when it rains, but farmers need rain for cultivation. Suppose we pray for rain to stay away because it's better for us, but if rain is precisely what the farmers need at some particular place and in certain seasons, then what should happen? Therefore, God can't fulfill all our prayers at the same time; some people pray for rain; some pray for sunshine; some prefer strong wind and some love snow. Some people think that it's beautiful when it

98. Four-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, September 24-27, 1998 (Originally in Chinese).

snows, though there are people who hate it because it's very cold. They can't grow vegetables, they can't earn a living, or it may be bad for their health. If even God cannot fulfill the wishes of every sentient being, why then should we care too much about it?

There was a king in ancient China. One day, warmly clad in a beautiful, thick fur coat, he sat in his palace looking out from the balcony, and exclaimed, 'Wow! It's so beautiful and enchanting when it snows!' He loved it so he kept praying to God to send more snow, while he sat there enjoying the sight. Later, his officials reported to him that many of his subjects had died of cold and hunger, but the king could not understand. He lived in a palace and thought that snow was absolutely beautiful! Most probably, there were heating facilities in the palace, and he was wearing a splendid, heavy fur coat. Of course, he wouldn't understand!

Wisdom in happiness, anger, sorrow and joy

All the happiness, anger, sorrow and joy in this world are lessons for us to learn. Without going through all these emotions, we can't understand the feelings of sentient beings. You see, it rained only last night, but you already find it uncomfortable living in your tents. Already you've begun to panic, pity yourselves and complain a lot. Even though you can see me here, you still complain just because it's a bit uncomfortable and inconvenient on rainy days. Although you can see me, you're still not happy enough to forget the rain. [Master laughs.] Even worse are those people who live in bitterness all their lives, without the least bit of happiness to compensate them or any situation that can make them laugh.

When we're in misery, we should be grateful to God for giving us a chance to develop our compassion. If, even when we're miserable, our compassion still fails to emerge, then we ought to have pity on ourselves. We should introspect on why we're as rigid as stones! When we're happy, our compassion should also emerge, and our thoughts should be with those miserable people. When we're in misery, we should be more compassionate and think about the people who are as miserable as, or more miserable than, we are every day. This is being 'always with God in whatever we do in daily life.' Our compassion is God and our love is God. If we lose our love and compassion, then we're very far away from God. That's what God is; God doesn't have a fixed appearance.

When we meditate, we should observe the inner Light and contemplate the inner Sound, because this Light and Sound contain the supreme compassion and love within. The more we communicate with them, the more compassionate we become. We don't look at the Light because it's very beautiful, or listen to the Sound because it's very attractive. No, no! It's because the compassion and universal love that they contain are a kind of medication that can cure our symptoms of selfishness, arrogance and malevolence. Without this superior medication, there's no cure for our illnesses of greed, anger and ignorance.

However, there are times when we fail to devote sufficient effort to meditation and spiritual cultivation, and God has to send us illnesses, disasters or suffering to compel us to learn faster. Since we don't take the superior medication to cure ourselves, we can only take the inferior medication at such times. For instance, some patients don't like Chinese herbs, so we have to prescribe western medicine for them. And if they don't like western medicine either, and they're seriously ill, then we can only 'cut' or perform surgery on them. Therefore, when a patient isn't very seriously ill, he can take Chinese herbs to recover slowly. But if his condition is grave, sometimes we have to quickly give him western medicine or an injection, which hurts a bit but is more effective. If the illness is really critical, then he will need an operation. Or, he may just die, get rid of this body completely and assume another body.

Therefore, we shouldn't fear suffering; rather, we should worry about not having the stamina to withstand suffering. We should pray that God gives us greater endurance. What's endurance? Endurance is the highest level, which doesn't only call for tolerance without complaint, but also heartfelt gratitude. When we're more elevated, we're not bothered by any situation. Whatever the situation is, we just let it be; it doesn't concern us. At that time, we're absolutely detached from the world. We're not attached to happiness, anger, sorrow or joy, nor are we scared. Just like people of the world, we can also be happy, angry, sad or joyous. But then we do it like spectators, standing on the sidelines observing another person being happy, angry, sad or joyous, instead of merging ourselves in these emotions. We can see it anytime we want, and if we don't want to see it, we can just ignore it. It's similar to watching television – we push the button when we want to watch television, and when we don't, we turn it off. It's also similar to listening to audiotapes. When we want to listen to melancholy music, we play that kind of tape. And when we have had enough of it, we can quickly play another tape.

If we can behave in this way when we're in this world, then all the happiness, anger, sorrow and joy will bring wisdom to us. In this world, we live with other people. Thus, it's impossible to avoid happiness, anger, sorrow and joy, because we have to interact with them. It's just like a mirror that cannot speak. If you're ugly, it shows your ugly appearance; if you're pretty, it shows your pretty face. If you have two horns on your head, it will show you the two horns. If you have long fangs, it surely will reflect them truthfully. It won't put on makeup for you, conceal your fangs or get rid of your horns. It's merely a mirror that always reflects clearly and honestly. It's the same with spiritual practitioners. While living in this world, we will also have happiness, anger, sorrow and joy just like every one else in the world because they are reflections of the situations we experience.

Thus, even though an enlightened being appears externally to have the emotions of joy, anger, sorrow and happiness, in reality, he does not. He's able to change his emotions very quickly. If he wants to laugh, he can do so immediately, or if he wants to, he can cry at once. He's able to switch from weeping to laughing immediately. We don't know if he's upset or happy, because just a short while ago he may have been in tears scolding people, yet at this moment he may be laughing. So, he's very much at ease with his joy, anger, sorrow and happiness. He's not controlled by these emotions, and sometimes he may fake them in order to coordinate with others.

We have heard about the living saint Jigong (an enlightened and unconstrained Buddhist monk who was widely worshipped as a saint after he died) and his great miraculous powers. He was known to be completely at ease inside. However, many people considered him insane and called him 'crazy Ji.' But actually he was faking craziness. Some people seemed to see him eating meat and drinking wine. But the truth is that he was also faking this. That's because basically he had no need to eat or drink, not to mention eating meat and drinking wine! Some people wanted to find proof and snatched the bone he was gnawing, but it turned out to be his bottle gourd. Sometimes he was seen to be sitting and eating meat. But when he turned around, one could only see him reciting the sutras. [Master laughs.] There was no sight of any meat!

Because we sentient beings can't see through the actions of great practitioners and make casual judgments, we transmigrate life after life. Great Masters come; we see nothing special in them. Minor masters come; we also can't differentiate. Some people have followed me for a long time. They have also lived with me for some time. Yet they say that my teachings are the same as those of other people. Those people don't practice and appear to be like me, but in fact there are many differences.

Magical power boosts the ego

Therefore, the conclusion is that we may not use magical power. Where there's magical power, there will definitely be the ego. If we were able to control this universe, the ego would be there. If I said now, 'There shall be no rain. Stop raining!' and the rain stopped immediately, would you not all be very happy, clapping your hands and cheering? From then on, you would come all day long to beg me, 'Master, let it not rain!' Those who like rain would then say, 'Master, let there be rain so it will be more romantic! [Laughter] It will be nice to sit inside listening to the pit-a-pat of the rain. It will be cooler this way.' Then I'd be busy day in and day out dealing with those thoughts in your minds: Asking for the sun one moment, and asking for rain the next. It would be very troublesome. And I myself would also feel very proud. If every time you requested something, I immediately accomplished it right in front of you, my ego would unavoidably grow bigger and bigger.

For a real Master, the ego has completely disappeared. There's no way to bring it back. Therefore, she would not perform those little magical tricks for you. Even though you may lose your faith in her because of that, she wouldn't mind. It's because she wouldn't use those little magical tricks to attract you. She uses great truth instead, great logic to make you understand clearly and know the reason for believing. She won't use those ways like a 'hula-hoop' to entice sentient beings. Many magicians and witches can perform these tricks. You can see them at a circus. Even now in India, some people can do these things. Anything you want to eat, they can materialize out of thin air for you. Those things are like real. For example, one can get oranges even in the Himalayas. When he recites the mantra 'hula-hoop,' an orange materializes for you. Anything you want, he can make appear. However, after seeing this for a while, we will be fed up with it. Knowing that it's nothing, we will become bored.

To materialize those things requires a lot of energy and makes our ego grow so that we can't be liberated; it also wastes our power. Thus, we can't go up to higher realms. That's why we shouldn't use magical power. It's the same with using spiritual power to heal illnesses. Those people waste a lot of energy in order to treat others' illnesses. Their energy is all spent in this mundane world and they can't transcend the three realms. Take, for example, an aircraft. Its fuel capacity and cruising range have all been pre-arranged. But if it doesn't take off, and only moves along the runway, or if it just gets airborne to a low altitude and then cruises around as in an aerial performance, then after a while, it will fall when it runs out of fuel. It won't be able to reach its destination.

It's the same with our lives. The amount of time and the number of breaths for each human are pre-destined. How much time we can use to practice to become a saint is also pre-destined. If we don't make good use of that time and energy to practice diligently to become a saint, then all will be finished for us. As our time is very limited, we have to make haste in our practice. It won't do to say that we can practice at leisure. Slowness just won't do! That's because we don't know how much more fuel we've got. It's better in the case of the aircraft, where the fuel situation can be known. So right now, make haste and fly as far as you can. Don't hang around wasting time. After a while, it will be dark and the road will become invisible. There will be no more fuel. Then we'll be in great danger. At that time, it will be too late for remorse!

It's because of this that I say we may not use magical power. We shouldn't waste our fuel in a performance for others. After a while when we fall down somewhere, no one will look at us. Take, for example, the case of a fallen aircraft. Who would spend a day standing there and looking at it? It's the same with us. When our fuel has been exhausted and our time has come, this corpse of ours will be just lying there, swollen with patches of white

and black. At that time no one will want to look at you. Even your most beloved husband will not be there to hug you the whole day. Or your most beloved wife will also quickly bury your corpse; otherwise, it will stink. Even if in life, you could perform a million magical deeds, like bringing forth the wind and rain, and flying on the clouds and fog, no one would be interested in looking at you after you die!

You should understand why I don't encourage you to use magical power. It's because we wish to be liberated from life and death, never to return to this world again. So, we shouldn't play with magical power here. Whoever you hear is using magical power, that person is being most senseless! You'd better stay away from him; otherwise, you might be affected. Then you might play with 'hula-hoops' and forget about the holy names. Your time and energy will then be wasted meaninglessly.

We have to concentrate our attention on the wisdom eye, to allow the soul to fly up quickly. The quicker the better! If it can't be accomplished today, try again tomorrow. If it's still not possible tomorrow, then try again the day after. Try it every day, just like the newborn birdie, which is not yet able to fly and falls down after trying a little bit. But it keeps practicing every day. After a while, it will be able to fly. It's the same with the giant roc (a legendary bird of ancient China, Arabia, et cetera.). It can't fly immediately after birth, but can eventually fly because it trains itself every day. If a birdie is placed in a cage, it won't be able to fly in the future because it doesn't understand what 'flying' means. Similarly, our soul has the power to fly, but no one has taught us how to do so. Now I've taught you so you have to try every day. You have to practice flying every day. When you practice until you're able to fly, then your soul will be free.

SECRET OF HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT: SAVE TIME AND MONEY, AND BE CLEAN ⁹⁹

If you take some wet tissue and wipe it all over the surface, the hair will stick to the wet tissue in one bunch. Then you can throw it in the dustbin, and your floor will look clean again. When everyone, like in a big family with ten people, comes in the bathroom and combs their hair, this will block the drains. Then you pay for a plumber to come and tear your house apart in order to find some hair. It happens like that. You always have to take care, every time. In the airplane, they teach you to wipe the basin after you use it so the next person doesn't feel disgusted. You do the same thing at home. After use, you wipe it with toilet paper or whatever. Simple. Then have a big cleaning every two or three days, of course, so the next person who comes in doesn't feel like he has to look at your spit, your whatever. Yuck! [Laughter]

Hair looks beautiful on your head, but not in the drain. It blocks everything. I know a guy who always complains about his wife. I said to her, 'Your hair, it's so beautiful.' And he said, 'Oh yeah? Uh-huh, uh-huh.' I said, 'What do you mean by uh-huh, uh-huh?' He said that she blocks all the drains in the house. Every couple of weeks they have to call a plumber. It's so simple. If she'd just wipe after using, I don't think there would be any problem. The hair doesn't fall straight into the drain immediately. It just gets stuck somewhere. If you don't take care immediately, and you rinse it afterward with water, then it runs into the drain, of course. And after a while, it blocks it. But if you clean it immediately, it looks also nice, and you don't have to pay so much money.

99. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., June 21, 1998 (Originally in English).

It's not about the money only, it's the problems; you have to call the plumber, and in meanwhile, your house is flooded and all that. It's not nice. So, you just have to take care. It's easy just to pick up a few hairs after you comb your hair.

TRAINING YOUR CHILDREN TO BE INDEPENDENT ¹⁰⁰

You had better teach your children from a young age to be clean and responsible for their own messes, to clean up after themselves. If everyone cleans, and the house is clean all the time, the mother doesn't have to spend all day in the bathroom or kitchen, cleaning and all that. I think the occidental ways are better. Teach the children to be independent, and they will grow up to be more confident. Many of our oriental children are a little bit weak and too reliant on the parents, on the elder, on the wife, or whoever can do it. This relying spirit is no good. It makes you weak. Do whatever you can do; it's good for you, really.

If you are rich and you have servants later, that's fine. Okay, let them have jobs also. It's good. But it doesn't mean that you cannot do it. You can do it, but then you have a choice. You do it or you don't; it depends on the situation. Not that you always have to rely on everyone to do everything for you. It's no good, really no good, especially if you are just an ordinary citizen. You're not like a big business company owner or director that you are so busy you have to rely on secretaries or people to help you, assistants. If you are just man, wife and a few kids, and you can't manage your life, this is very sad. It makes you weak. The more work we do, it's good for us. It makes us strong. I don't mean 'more' like you work yourself to death. Just that the more variety, the more capabilities, the more things you know, the better for you. You're more independent and more confident. That's the way we should live our lives. We walk tall.

RECOGNIZING OUR OWN GOD NATURE ¹⁰¹

Perplexing questions from ancient times

We have to begin somewhere, and our life began a long time ago, or perhaps it has just begun and we have forgotten where we truly came from. That's the only question that we could not answer, for most of us, for many of us. Everything else, we are clever enough to know. We can learn through books. We can experiment in the laboratory. We can use chemical substances or scientific knowledge to solve, to give an answer. But the only answer that's most puzzling is, 'Where have we come from?' And this is another equally puzzling one, 'Where will we go after this?' Obviously, to many of us, life doesn't end in the coffin. We do know that, but we just cannot prove it. To many of the wise saints since ancient times, these questions are very simple. They do know where they came from, and they do know where they will go. For them, the question of death doesn't have any appeal or any frightening effect, because like the saint in the bible says, 'I die daily.'

What does it mean to die daily? When we withdraw ourselves inward to enter the kingdom of God, that's when we die. We die temporarily, and then we come back to life again. So, resurrection can happen any time during our ordinary life if we follow the process of Jesus, of the ancient saints. Since we die once, or we die daily, we do know there is other life, there are other worlds besides this physical one. Then we are free to roam around the universe; we explore the mysteries of the cosmos. We know that dying is no big deal; and in fact, we know that we don't ever die. We also know that we don't even have a physical body. So strange as it may seem, it is a fact.

100. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., June 21, 1998 (Originally in English).

101. Public lecture, Irvine University, California, U.S.A., June 2, 1998 (Originally in English).

That's why when Jesus was nailed on the cross, He was not afraid, He did not cry. He didn't beg for His life. He didn't run away. He could have done so, but He didn't want to. He didn't have to. He surrendered everything to God's will because He knew where He was going. He knew all the time. He knew that there is no such thing as death or suffering. True suffering occurs when we do not know where we came from and where we will go. Because Jesus knew already, He gave up the quest for physical comfort. He gave up the fear of death and He went because He knew He would always be there, and that it is only the physical body that decays in the mortals' eyes. But in Jesus' wisdom, there was no such thing even as a physical body.

This is very difficult to prove unless we follow the same path as the great Masters have gone through, like Buddha or Jesus. They went on the same path; therefore, they preached the same thing, even though we label them Buddhism or Christianity. We have so much terminology and separate the Truth into two different categories which confuses us. But actually, the Masters always teach basically the same thing. If we cut off the ribbons, the wrapping paper, and the different ways of the Master's individual talent and eloquence of speech, then they are the same. Especially, after we have become enlightened, or have followed the same path and practice the same thing, then we know it is exactly the same because they both go the same way. Suppose all of us come to this auditorium, sit here for a while, then afterward we go out and then describe the same room. There is no difference.

Enlightenment is our natural state

What is it about enlightenment that so many people make a great mystery about, praise so much, and encourage us to go forward to claim it again? It is not enlightenment at all. It is just the Truth. It is just the way it should be; it is the way it is. And if we don't know enlightenment, then we continue suffering so much until we realize that everything else is not important, except to know God. When we begin to want to know God, then God will send someone, a friend, a guide, an experienced brother to show us what to do.

After we know what to do, that's when we are enlightened. We might not be as greatly enlightened immediately as Buddha or Jesus, but we are enlightened somewhat. Then, day by day, we continue with the process, and we become just as great. We will understand what Jesus said to us, like: 'Whatever I do, you can do better, or you can do as well,' and, 'I and my Mother / Father are one.' We will understand that we are all children of God. We will understand that we are the temple of God and only the holy spirit lives within us.

If God lives within us, then what are we? We are God. Well, if this is only the house, and God lives inside, then who else is there? Could it be that we, I and God, live in the same house? He didn't say I and God live in there. He said I and my Mother / Father are one. If I and my Mother / Father are one, how come we don't know Him? If the holy spirit dwells within this temple, and this fleshly body is only the temple, and there's only one person who dwells within, God, then who is there inside? Only one person, only God.

That made me cry sometimes before. I said, 'If I am God, how come I am so humble? How come I'm so weak? How come I'm so small; how come I'm so ignorant? How come I suffer so much? Where is my Home?' And that's when we begin to ask ourselves how to reclaim our glory again. That's when enlightenment begins to inch toward us, or we're crawling toward enlightenment, or maybe we're running, flying, it depends. Some people fly, some people walk, some people go by, maybe train. That's why at the time of so-called initiation,

some people have greater enlightenment, some people have lesser great enlightenment. It's because sometimes we choose to go faster, sometimes we choose to go slower.

How did we choose that? We chose that before we were born. We chose before creation began to play our part in this physical world, or in any part of the cosmos – we spread all over. We were one and then we became many, as God wished it to be. We partake in the grand design of the creation to play in the colorful drama of life. And now, when the time comes that our role is finished, not necessary, or we're tired, then we want to retire, we want to go back Home. Other people, or other souls, will continue our role, will take over, and then we begin to go Home. That's when enlightenment occurs. It is so simple. We are God; we chose to be ignorant in order to play this drama of life, in order for creation to be colorful and lively, to be different, to have fun, and also in order to know what we truly are. In heaven, there is only God, nothing else. We don't know God, because we are God, so we have to be un-Godlike. We chose to come here to be different from God, so that we can have a look and compare and know that we are God.

Enlightenment is the purpose of everyone who comes into this physical universe. Because we want to know God, we have chosen to play this ignorant part so that we truly can recognize God and ourselves. Just like if, in the world, there is only man, we do not know the difference between man and woman. We will not know that we are a man unless there is a woman. Unless there is night, we do not recognize daytime. If we always live in the sunlight, we do not know what darkness is.

That is the answer that I have found myself. But to find out the real meaning of it, to realize the real meaning, each one of us has to search the way to find it for him or herself. It's not by hearing, by listening, by saying, that we know we are God. Even though we believe the bible, at the moment we still don't know we are God, or do we? Do you know you are God? Some of you do, I guess, because you are enlightened. Some of you have studied with other masters, or teachers, and then of course, you realized, to some degree, that you are not just the body; you are not the body at all.

Sometimes, during samadhi, you find your body doesn't exist. You know you exist, but not the body. You don't find any body, you don't find any trace of the physical substance that we call flesh, bones, body, hair, or whatever. It's all Light; it's all God. That's when we truly realize we are God, that only God dwells within this temple; and after all, the temple disappears, too. Only this realization will make us happy, truly happy; otherwise, no matter how many bibles we read, how many other teachers tell us that we are God, we can never believe it. We can never know we are truly the children of God or the kingdom of God is within you.

We read the bible every day; we know the bible by heart; we might be able to recite from the first page to the last sentence, but we still do not know God. We pray every day to God, to the God that we don't even know, to answer our questions, to fulfill our requests, to answer our desires; and all the while we are that. We are that to whom we're praying. Then sometimes we get angry with Hirm because we think Hes doesn't answer us, Hes doesn't fulfill our requests. Only when we know we are God, we don't blame anymore. We don't even need to pray anymore. Whatever we think, we will have; whatever we want, we will get, but we will not want any more.

At that time, we can say, 'The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want,' because we are so fulfilled. It doesn't matter if we drive a Mercedes, we drive a bicycle, or we walk, we are so happy, we are so fulfilled. We are so rich inside that nothing can make us unhappy at all. Even if we are a king, or we are a beggar, we are equally happy in any situation because

we truly know happiness. At that time, happiness is us and that's what enlightenment will bring. It's not a theory that we should listen to, it's the experience, it's knowledge, it's the realization that we must get. Otherwise, we cannot understand many things that we want to understand. Otherwise we will continue to misunderstand each other, also, and suffer a lot, whether in personal relationships, in business dealings, or in the loving connection with God. We will not have the true understanding and the love that is so great that we could forgive our enemies because at that time we will realize there is no enemy.

We read a lot of the bible, like, you have to forgive your enemy, love thy neighbor. But we will never understand why until we truly realize what we are or who we are. Then at that time, there's no need to explain. Love just flows from us. Light just surrounds us; we become that, we become love, we become Light, we become what we always wanted to be, we become what we have always been praying to. We become Godlike.

That's why a Master like Jesus, we worship because He is so Godlike. That's why Buddha, everyone adores Him, because He is so Godlike. He is everything that we imagine a God to be. But that, we can become also. Jesus has told us, and we have to believe Him. He had no reason to tell us a lie. He didn't take money from anyone. He didn't build a church or house at that time, even. He walked, He had no possession, He had no reason to tell lies to any soul on this planet. He told us: Whatever I can do, you can do also. You are all children of God. He said that; we have to believe Him. Now, the only one thing for us to do is to realize what He said, to prove it to ourselves. Because He already promised that, we have to find out 'how', how to realize these promises. This is what enlightenment is all about. Very simple.

Fortunate are those who find the true teachings

Enlightenment is in us already; the kingdom of God is in us. The kingdom of God is at hand. 'At hand' means we can always get it. It's not far, only if we know how. The Masters of old have passed away, but their teachings, their lineage of enlightenment, has always, somewhere, somehow, somewhat survived. It doesn't necessarily survive in Jerusalem; it doesn't necessarily survive in Bodh Gaya, in India. It goes deep into the ground of existence like a river. It goes all over. It branches out. It's hidden away somewhere and then it springs up somewhere else, surprisingly. So, we have to find where that river has sprung up right now, and get to the source of the water of life. Lucky for those who know where the river has emerged after being hidden underground or running to different corners of the planet.

Similar with the teachings of the Masters of the old time. They don't disappear. Whenever we're ready, we will find that river again. Through some friends of ours, an acquaintance, sometimes by a very funny chance, a very strange coincidence, we'll find that river of the teachings again. Sometimes it could be very easy, in the supermarket. Sometimes it's more difficult; we have to go to the Himalayas. Sometimes we just encounter it in the library or in the candy shop, who knows? The ways of working of God are very, very mysterious, but it's always for our benefit. It's not necessary that all of us have to go to the Himalayas or somewhere very, very far away to find enlightenment. God arranges differently for each one of us, according to our desire, according to our sincerity. According to our destiny that is written in the book of the universe, we might meet the chance for enlightenment here or we might meet the chance of enlightenment somewhere else.

I'm also lucky to have encountered the newly sprung-up river and I have also drunk the water of life, which tastes good. I know it tastes good because I've tasted it. So, I've come back to tell you. I can also show you where to get the water, and taste it for yourself.

[Applause] It just happened that I found it first, before you. It could have been you sitting here and telling me. Yes, but as God willed it, He's picked a small woman, easy to transport, [Master and audience laugh.] because small things go a long way. Very easy for me to sneak everywhere, find the river for you. So, do not ask, 'Why me?' I also don't know. [Master laughs.] Just someone has to discover something somehow, somewhere, sometime. It's not necessary that everyone discovers the same thing at the same time. Like Einstein had his theory and he is the one and only. Newton, for example, one person is enough; then he can share his knowledge with the whole world, and the whole world will benefit. It's not necessary that we have two Einsteins or two Newtons. It may be too much if we have two suns, too hot. California is truly hot in summer. Suppose we have two suns, it may be too superfluous, overflowing, so one sun is also enough. Well, here I am. I came from far away to bring you this news, and if you'd like to accept, if you'd like to find out about it, we would be very willing to share it with you – no cost, no charge, no strings attached. [Master laughs.] No before, after and between. That's what it is. Simple. [Applause]

It has been a long time since I've appeared in public like this. I do appear, but within the fellow brothers' circles. I haven't appeared in the real public like this, so I have also lost my eloquence, I guess. But it's so simple. Sometimes I don't feel the need of talking. I have a feeling that you all understand, that you all know, because you are God. I'm sitting here looking at the Gods. That's why I feel so happy. [Master laughs.] I don't need to speak. But, in case you have any questions, I may have the chance to elaborate more for the sake of everyone else. So, feel welcome to ask or maybe share with me your knowledge also.

MC. *It's an honor to have an enlightened Master to whom we can ask questions and get real answers. She is someone that knows the Truth and I, a graduate of Irvine University, am very honored to have such an enlightened Master on our public campus.*

The first question: Master, could You please explain the origins of the Quan Yin method of meditation and how to practice it?

M. As I have mentioned earlier, it comes from God. It comes from God knows when, from time immemorial, since creation began. Since we began to play the drama of life, God has granted us this way to go back to Hirm. That's where it began. And as to how to practice, I'll explain to you, if you're interested, in greater detail later if you stay behind. It needs to be explained more in detail so you will not be confused at home if I'm away. You have to know at one time and forever, then you'll never forget it again. You can do it all yourself at home, whether the teacher is dead, alive, there or here, or never seen again. So, you have to learn carefully. It doesn't take long, maybe a couple of hours to explain everything, but that's for life.

Here we don't have so much time. I just briefly tell you that the Quan Yin method is not a method really; it is the inherent power that is the power of God to prove that we're God. Because we have that God power, at the time of initiation, the Master just helps you to remember it. And remember you will, immediately, and then you'll feel it. You will feel the power; sometimes it shakes you. But later on, you will calm down, because you know you're God. In the beginning, it might be exciting, but later on, 'It's okay, so what? Everyone is God, no big deal.' [Laughter]

Q. *Why is it necessary to erase past karma?*

M. It's not necessary if we want to continue living here. But if we want to go back to where we belong, then we have to pay all the debt, either by suffering or by enlightening medicine. Once we're enlightened, the past karma is erased, but the present karma continues. The future karma is nonexistent, and that's how we can be free to go back to the kingdom of God. What keeps us here is the storage of past karma.

What does it mean by karma? It is a Sanskrit term for cause and effect, for what we call, 'As you sow, so shall you reap,' in the bible. We have been sowing a lot of bad and good deeds since thousands of millenniums, since time began. That's how we continue to exist here, because we keep paying and borrowing, and paying, repaying. All the time, we come back to repay the past debt. So, in order to be clear of this and to be free of bondage, we have to erase the past karma. The only thing that we can do to erase the past karma, once and for all, is enlightenment. Once we're enlightened, the past is gone. Just like you switch on the light, doesn't matter how many thousands of years that darkness has been residing in this room, in one instant, it's gone. There is no other way we can erase the past karma because it's too much. It's too much. That's why enlightenment is very necessary.

Q. *Dear Master, I love You very much. I would like to ask You about animal research. What do You think about it? Do You think animal research is unethical?*

M. You mean for medical purposes, try on animals first? Who is it? [The person who wrote the question does not identify himself in order to clarify Master's questions.] Well, what do you want me to say? You want me to offend the whole medical system, and they kill me? [Laughter] Some say it's necessary to have done research on animals in order to help humankind. If the intention is pure, we have no right to judge anyone. But from the animal's standpoint, it's a very, very unkind thing, an uncompassionate thing, to do. I wish we didn't have to do that. I wish we all would get enlightenment and cure ourselves inside out. [Applause]

Q. *Do I have a soul? If not, how is reincarnation possible?*

M. Well, the bible says you have a soul, so you must have one. [Master laughs.] In reincarnation, it is not the soul that reincarnates actually. The soul lives forever; doesn't die, doesn't live, doesn't reincarnate. It is the experience of life, the integrating process between the physical and the spiritual when we are experimenting in the so-called life here and which attaches to the knowledge of our existence, that reincarnates. And if we do not detach ourselves from this kind of experiment that we call ourselves, we reincarnate. Actually, we don't reincarnate, we don't die, ever. We are just sick; we are just diseased with these incidents, with these disasters that happen to be attached to us. If we don't cut ourselves asunder from that, then of course, we are forever connected with that. The cause and effect keep changing, keep moving, keep adding, keep diminishing; and that's how we say we reincarnate. If we are not enlightened enough, that's it.

Q. *Master, when one wants to express in the work situation but finds that the opportunity gets oppressed, what should be the attitude at work and what should one do? Is ambition in the workplace wrong? I would appreciate Your shedding Light on this matter.*

M. Ah, we go back to real life, working. [Master laughs.] Ambition at work is not wrong; ambition is a must at work. Otherwise, how can you work, how can you progress?

How can you please your boss and yourself? How can you make a profit for your company? That's a duty. It's a duty to be ambitious. To be ambitious doesn't mean we have to step on other people's heads to go forward. Ambitiousness and viciousness or jealousy are different. We can be ambitious, we can improve ourselves all the time without having to suppress other people. If we do feel oppressed to some degree, then we have to find the reason the other person is oppressing us – whether we are not competent enough, whether it's a personality problem, or it's the other person who is too envious of us. If we can, then talk to that person. If we know we are in the right, that person is in the wrong and we talk to that person, if she or he becomes better, forgive her or him. If they don't become better, forgive them anyhow; continue with your work. We can't avoid conflict in this life. That's the fact. Even within personal relationships, sometimes husband and wife also envy each other, if one is too successful. That's the problem with the human brain; it's not with the soul, though, not with the enlightened people. [Applause]

The soul needs spiritual nourishment

Q. *Why does one need to meditate two and half hours each day?*

M. Just like you have to eat two or three hamburgers now and again. [Master and audience laugh.] [Applause] That is, more or less, the portion of food that you eat every day to sustain your body. So, there is a portion of spiritual nourishment that you should take every day in order to become strong again in God, in Godlike qualities. You don't have to, but this is prescribed, the doctor's prescription, fixed amount.

It's more or less; it's not so strict. Besides, we can meditate in sleep as well. We can meditate on the bus, we can meditate on the airplane, meditate in the toilet, excuse me. [Laughter] Yes, yes, we can do so. We can do many jobs at the same time. There is always time to meditate. Cut down on some of the 'unfavorite' television programs, read only the essential things in the newspaper; talk less on the telephone, then you'll have a lot of time; stay in bed a little bit less. Sometimes, we don't sleep, we stay in bed late in the morning, just turning around. [Laughter] That's the time we can meditate very wonderfully. Instead of tossing and turning, you just meditate, concentrate. That's it. Very simple. Instead of thinking all kinds of nonsensical things, you just concentrate. That's where your meditation is. You don't have to sit down and cross legs like the Buddha; you just lie there and concentrate. I'm showing you how to utilize your 'lazy' time, oh, I'm sorry, [Master and audience laugh.] your 'unproductive' time, or some other time in which you scatter your mind all over and you don't do anything. Those times we can gather together and remember God. Very easy. [Applause]

Q. *Do You believe there will be world peace one day?*

M. [Master laughs.] Do you? [Laughter] Maybe in the year 3000! No, there won't be world peace at all, ever, because otherwise, it wouldn't be called the world, it would be called heaven. [Applause]

Q. *Dear Master, thank You for being here. Where does intuition come from? How do we know which decision to make? Sometimes I get so confused. I have two options, and sometimes it's so hard to decide because each choice it comprises makes up my life and I don't really know which one I should do? I want to get to the place where I know exactly which decision I should take.*

M. That takes some time. That's why we must be enlightened. That's why we have to get back the power of wisdom that we have forgotten. We let too many mundane troubles cloud our vision. That's why we are indecisive. We cannot make decisions because we do not know, we are not clear. That's why we have to be clear. The two and half hours that we reserve every day are to clear our mind, to get back to the origin, to be Godlike. Then we will know what to do better. It will be clear. It will be very clear. Meanwhile, if you don't meditate that much, if you don't want to meditate and if you have intuition, that is the remnant of whatever is left over of the so-called Godlike wisdom. It's sometimes clouded by worldly worries and survival efforts, but then, sometimes it's clear. That's what we call intuition. Meanwhile, if you are not so clear, then you just have to take a risk. You have to feel which one is more appropriate or which one has a higher percentage, then just do it. You have to risk. There is no one else to tell us what to do. Pray to God, and just pick one. Or else, you tear two pieces of paper – one left, one right, and then pick one. Either way is risky, so you have to get your own wisdom, your own Master power.

Q. *Dear Master, if I sincerely pray to You, will I be liberated eternally?*

M. I think so, [Master chuckles.] but only one person. Whereas if you get enlightenment yourself, you can take other people with you, too. Like one person enlightened, many generations of your relatives and friends, even your dogs and cats, will be liberated. If you pray to a God person, you get only one ticket if you're really sincere. You don't even know if you're sincere or not. Sometimes it's hard to tell.

Q. *Does hell exist as the bible says?*

M. What do you think? Does it exist? Look at our world, and you know the answer. There's no need to look elsewhere. There is a bad joke, do you want to hear it, about hell? Yes or no? [Audience: Yes!] [Laughter] Don't be mad. There was a girl, eighteen or nineteen, came home, crying to her mother, 'Oh, mommy, I don't want to marry John anymore. I called the wedding off!' The mother said, 'But why honey? You're engaged already. You're going to get married next week. What's the problem?' The girl said: 'I don't like him anymore. He is an atheist. He doesn't even believe in hell.' So, the mother said: 'Don't worry dear, after marriage, he will!' [Laughter and applause.] Bad joke. It's not always true, though.

Why did we come to this world

Q. *Master, why did we fall? Why couldn't we have remained pure consciousness for those who may have never wanted to be incarnated in the first place? I understand karma, but are karma debts and credits a part of the creator's plan? Why did He desire our suffering karma so much?*

M. He doesn't, we do. That's a part of the deal, so that we learn to know the difference between God and un-God, so we can recognize the Light when we come back to the Light again. We go into the darkness deliberately, so that we might know the Light at its full splendor. For those who did not want ever to leave heaven, they did not come here. There are some who never left heaven, that's for sure, some Masters. Some left heaven to come here to teach us. Some have also reincarnated many times and became a Master. We had our choice. We did because we wanted to.

There are many answers to this, but in summary there are two main purposes that we have karma. Number one is that we want to know God, we came here purposely just

to know God. At some time, we lived in heaven, all full of Light, everyone was a saint, everyone was God. Then we said, 'God, what is God?' So, God said to you: 'You are God. God is you. God is that.' 'I don't know what is God.' He said: 'You are like this. It's God.' But the soul did not fully understand, and asked God: 'How can I know God? How can I know myself as God?' God told him, 'Then you have to become different from God, from yourself, first. And when you look back, you will know.' That's why we came here. The purpose of our coming here is to know ourselves better.

The other one is, since creation had not begun, nothing had appeared in this world or any other world, then God made a plan. He wanted creation to spring forth, to come into being, and we joined. We were happy to play every part of the grand design, just for fun. Just to make life more colorful, some knowingly played their part, and for the purpose also that one day they'd become God again. They would know God again.

In order to know God, they had to play many different roles and one role was related to another. Just like in the movies, you have the main character, you have the supporting actors and all that; otherwise, it doesn't work.

So, the karma for us right now feels very heavy and very unreasonable. But at that time, for us, it was no big deal. Because we were God, we didn't see suffering, we didn't know problems; we didn't look at obstructions as anything undesirable. For us, everything was just a play, until we really played, then we felt that suffering. But that's a part of the game, a part of the universal plan. If we don't play our role, we don't exist, nothing is here. I don't sit here. You don't sit there. You're not blonde; I'm not black. What is there then? Everything is just so plain. It's okay. That's why all the perfect Masters say, 'Everything is perfect under the sun.' Jesus said, 'You are all the children of God.' They realize there is nothing to do; everyone is perfect. But we do not realize it yet, so we suffer. We have to realize the same as they do, and then we know why. Then we look at suffering as not suffering. It's still suffering; it still hurts when someone pinches you, but you understand it's just for something. You don't suffer. You do not sink into the suffering, just float on top of it.

- Q. *Dear Master, my wife is here today for initiation. She has been vegetarian for a long time. I tried, but could not. Please tell me why, and how to.*
- M. Maybe your wife should go and learn vegetarian cooking more. The poor husband cannot just eat when it's not tasty. So actually, enlightenment begins here, too [Master points to Her stomach.], not just here. [Master points to the wisdom eye.] [Laughter] When I first met my husband, my ex-husband, he already remarried, I was a vegetarian, he was not. He was a doctor, very practical, very down to earth. He's a Taurus kind; he belongs to the bull in the zodiac of the orient, so he is a double bull. So, he doesn't believe any nonsensical things, but because I cooked very nicely, he ate every day with me and he had nothing against vegetarianism at all. After I left him for 'to save the world kind of idea,' [Master says jokingly.] he gathered all my recipes and cooked for his friends. He always advertised, 'My wife used to do this, my wife used to do that, and all the vegetables are very rich in vitamins.' He cooks exactly like the recipes I left behind.

If even a westerner, a German, a scientific-minded doctor like that, could be a vegetarian, you could be, too. If all the wives cook very tasty meals, you don't miss anything. For example, you eat a bowl of soup, like Chinese soup, you have noodles and some pieces of meat in it. Instead of those meat pieces, you can have like gluten meat, tofu meat, or vegetarian ham meat, everything, all kinds, even fish. Everything

can be made exactly like the non-vegetarian, so it's a matter of skill. The way to enlightenment goes through the stomach, I believe. So, you wives, please take care of your crafty fingers, make it nice and tasty so your husband will be able to eat with you. Women are easier. Truly. Once you believe something, you just eat anything. [Master and audience laugh.] But men, they are more scientific, they are more practical, not too sentimental like a woman. A woman can live by sentiment, affection, emotion, so she believes, then she eats and she doesn't care how it tastes. [Laughter] But men, they're more critical, so they please their taste first, and then enlightenment comes. [Laughter]

- Q. *Master Ching Hai, please explain our relationship spiritually to You. After You die, and one has been initiated, is our flight back Home still guaranteed by Your soul spirit?*
- M. Guaranteed. [Applause] As has been said earlier, we are not the body; we are the spirit. So, when this body goes or comes, there is no difference, no distance between us. And I have told you already, at the time of initiation, the method is explained to you so that you can use it for life. There is nothing that can come between anymore, unless you don't want it and you leave. But the seed is still there for next life.
- Q. *Master, five of my children are already initiated into the Quan Yin method, but I'm quite old. Is enlightenment for everyone? What requirements are needed, or is sincerity the sole criterion?*
- M. Yes, sincerity is enough. But when people are too old, like past a certain age, sometimes the physical body and the memory are not so sharp anymore. Then we might tell them to come back again next time, next life. Or just to practice the convenient method also can help her or him, no need for full initiation. But that is a guarantee only for one person, and initiation guarantees for many generations. That's the difference. By initiation and practicing yourself, you can also become an enlightened Master and help many, many souls, too.
- Q. *Master, why does Christianity as a whole tend not to believe in reincarnation? Does the bible talk about reincarnation?*
- M. It does, but it has been censored. When someone asked Jesus whether He was Elias, whether He was so and so, the past Master before Him – that meant whether He was the reincarnation of those past Masters – He kept quiet. That was a part of the bible that people forgot to censor. Suppose reincarnation did not exist, then Jesus would have said, 'No, no, there is no such thing as a Master coming back. I am me, alone, one time, never again, never before, never after.' He kept quiet, and in those times, quiet means okay, agreement, acceptance. Otherwise, Jesus would have explained, so as not to mislead His disciples. He kept quiet.
- Q. *Dear Master, explain that if one person gets initiated, five of their generations would be saved. How about living family members who eat meat and drink alcohol, will they also be saved?*
- M. They will also be saved, sadly but fortunately. [Master and audience laugh.] That is, if they deliberately do not want liberation, then the Master will not force it upon them, of course, because each one is God. You must remember, each one of us is God. No one can tell God what to do, even another God. How bad he is, how good he is, that's

his own decision, his own path in life to choose. He chose to play this role. He is okay, even if he is bad. That's why the bible says to us, 'Judge not.'

- Q. *Before we become an enlightened Master, we vow to do this and do that for human beings, and we vow to serve them, but say, after we've become an enlightened Master, we change our mind for some reason, because now we have a different outlook. Are we free not to fulfill our vow, or must we fulfill our vows due to the law of karma?*
- M. We're free. We are free to do what we want.
- Q. *Greetings Supreme Master Ching Hai. Please give Your view of earth as a great sentient being whose love assists us in our ascension.*
- M. Everything is made from God. The bible says so. Everything springs from the 'Word,' means the vibration of the universe, and that vibration is God. That is the Quan Yin method. That's what we teach you to tune in to, the vibration of the universe, of the source of all creation. So, even if we are human, are from God, then also is the great earth or everything in the universe. It also has Godlike qualities, but probably in a different form and a different density. So, in that case, the earth is also a great being as you have mentioned. We live here, we live from the earth, of course, we have to respect this great Mother. [Applause]

Pay karma in the dream

- Q. *Do we pay karma in our dreams? How do we pay karma?*
- M. We pay karma in our dreams only if that is the grace of God. Otherwise, most of the time, we have to pay physically, like an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. When initiated, or enlightened, then we live by the grace of God. We don't live so much by the law of karma anymore, except for some already fixed karma, like we have to have some certain karma in order to exist in this life. That karma we have to continue with. But then, it can be erased to a certain extent, it can be lubricated, it can be lessened a lot of degrees, or it can be paid in dreams, only at that time.
- Q. *Master, what happens if a person gets initiated but ends up not being able to meditate the required two and half hours?*
- M. Then he probably stays in the class for a while. [Laughter] Just like you students, what happens if you enroll in a certain class and you don't study well? Then, you stay there. [Master and audience laugh.] Instead of an 'A', you have a 'J'. That's what it is. But you are still nevertheless a college student – you're not primary school or you're not kindergarten kids, anyhow. At least, you are college students, that's no doubt, but just to a lesser degree.
- Q. *I would like to know more about the person You received the Quan Yin from. Is He a reincarnation of Jesus, or are You? Does He or She have a name You can share with us?*
- M. Yes, I've told you in one of the tapes a long time ago. His name is Master Khuda Ji. He's gone back to God.

Jesus never reincarnates, nor any of the other Masters. Reincarnation is only for us – the mortals, the karma-laden people. So, you can say Jesus has reincarnated or you can say Jesus has not. It's not Jesus who reincarnates; it's the Christ power that keeps coming, descending to different persons through God's will to help humankind. So, you can say 'yes,' you can say 'no.' [Applause]

Q. *How do Your teachings relate to religion in general? Do Your teachings enhance our belief in our own religion?*

M. Yes, they do. You know already. I make you understand your religion better, deeper; and if you're enlightened yourself, you become the religion, you become the Truth. You could write another bible, but you don't have to; one bible is enough. You just verify it, you just understand it. That's good already.

Q. *Could You tell us about our dreams?*

M. Dreams are of many kinds, sometimes bad, sometimes good. Sometimes dreams come true, sometimes dreams are just fragments of the daily collection of different information, so it's all a mixed salad. Sometimes dreams are a kind of foretelling of the future or reviewing the past, or some of your deepest desires or your wishes. That's a clairvoyant dream that is a kind of vision. Many of the Quan Yin practitioners or the people who meditate have this kind of related dream, like a vision. They dream, but they are very vivid, in all colors, all Light, splendor and very bright. It's not a dream anymore; it's a vision. They go to heaven and all that. When you meditate and you go to heaven, it's almost like a dream, except you wake up so excited, so electrified, so energized, so full of life and love that you don't know what to do with yourself. You want to hug everyone and kiss them. But don't do that, [Laughter] people will think you're loco, coo coo.

Q. *Do animals and plants have their God?*

M. We have only one God. [Laughter] Same. One Mother / Father for everyone. Jesus said so, 'Look at the lilies of the field, how the Mother / Father takes care of them.' So, it must be the same God. [Laughter] You read the bible, but you ask me so many questions. Everything is in the bible already, no?

Q. *How do I disconnect from past life experiences once and for all?*

M. Past life experiences? I've told you, initiation. At the time of initiation, the stored karma, the Master erases, so you don't have past karma anymore. But you're welcome to pick up some if you want. [Master laughs.] If you want to come back to this life, you're welcome.

Q. *Can You please clarify what You mean when You say we are children of God, and that we're all God. Do You mean to say that worshiping God isn't necessary since we already are?*

M. No. It's necessary. We worship God even more so after we realize who God is, what a loving being that He is, and how near to us He is, nearer than the dearest friend in the whole world, nearer than our own skin. At that time, you really worship God, in the truer sense of worship. At the moment we are just dictating to God, 'Oh, please give me money, oh please give me a wife, please give me a job, please, please, please...' We don't really know God. We are God, but yet, we are not yet God. So,

please get to know Hirm first, and then ask me the question later. After you know Hirm, you tell me.

Q. *How does humanly love play a role in our enlightenment?*

M. Human love? Well, it's nice to be loved whether by humans or by animals. Every time we are loved, doesn't matter by whom, by what, that's God who loves us. It's not human love, it's not motherly love, it's not brotherly love; actually, it's all God's love, divided, minimized, or modified. Everyone who loves us, that's God who loves us. So, there is no harm; it can only help. When someone loves us, when two people are in love together, are enlightened together, it is very helpful, very nice.

Q. *What do You think about the evolution theory? What is its problem?*

M. Gosh, I'm not a scientist. You mean that we came from the monkey and all that stuff? [Master and audience laugh.] We all came from God. There might be some kind of link between man and animals, because sometimes man and animals live together. Sometimes they bred with each other by some hazard, by some chance, so it might be. But humans are a very different race. We don't evolve. We are created in the image of God. That's all there is. God made animals as well. Hes said so in the first chapter, didn't Hes? The first one, the Old Testament, page number 1, it says God created man and all the fruits, the herbs. By the way, Hes mentions vegetarianism there and then. Hes says, 'I created all the fruits and the herbs in the field that are pleasant to the eyes, and good to the taste, they shall be your food.' Hes also said, 'For all the animals, I also created food for each one of them.' Hes didn't say we evolve from animals. Hes said we are the rulers of the kingdom of animals. We are the king of them. So, there is no mixy maxy about evolution. We are human beings; animals are also from God, but they are not human beings.

Q. *To achieve perfect enlightenment that can be achieved in one lifetime, is it possible to do this without going to the Himalayas like You did? Would it take us less than seven years since You are such a perfect, compassionate Master?*

M. You don't have to go to the Himalayas. I've told you already, it was my karma. I had to go there. Your karma is better. You sit here and get enlightenment on the sofa. [Master and audience laugh.] And it could take seven years, could take seven months, it depends on you, depends on your destiny; that is, depends on the choices that you have made yourself before this existence. That I cannot interfere, only you know. You are pleased with yourself, the choice you made before you came here, so don't be in a hurry. Whatever it takes, that's your choice. You and God made the covenant already that you take seven years, that you take seventeen years, you take twenty years, whatever. We live in eternity. No problem about how many years, but enlightenment occurs immediately at the time of initiation. It's just complete enlightenment, sometimes it varies, depends on the people, depends on your diligence, of how in a hurry you are to go Home. You have a car, you can drive fast, you can drive slow. Don't ask me seven years or many years; it doesn't matter. After enlightenment, you get happier and happier every day. You don't bother about how many years. At the time, you don't even consider enlightenment anymore, because you know God, you know happiness. You're just fulfilled, content.

Q. *Can world evil or negative karma be trans-substantiated into good or positive karma through people's use of the violet flame and the golden Light of Mahatma energy?*

- M. The negative energy is necessary for us to realize God. We have chosen to know darkness to enable us to recognize the Light. That's the way we can say we translate the negative into positive; otherwise, negative is negative, positive is positive. There is no way you can say that darkness is Light. But darkness is there to help the Light to shine in darkness so that you know it. I guess what he means is if you meditate and you see the Light, can you neutralize the negative power. Of course, that's what it is. When the Light comes, the darkness disappears. Whether it's a violet flame or a golden flame depends on the level of consciousness. The violet flame is a little bit lower level; the golden flame is higher. You'll know it later when you meditate.
- Q. *Have you traveled beyond heaven and the Light? If so, what is out there? [Master and audience laugh.]*
- M. You want to taste my chocolate and it's not possible, [Laughter and applause.] because it is I who ate it. But I have another piece of chocolate, and you're welcome to try. I can tell you it's sweet, it's chunky, it's juicy; but then you just hear the words, you don't understand it. You have to eat it, eat the chocolate. Get the initiation, meditate, then you'll know. There is nothing impossible, nothing at all impossible for us, humans.

Enlightenment is the key to everything

- Q. *What is the most effective way to remove bad habits from one's life when they feel so much like chains around my feet and hands?*
- M. It's difficult, but if we're enlightened, things will change, and fast. Change very dramatically. That's how the saints are made. That's why it is said in your culture that all the saints have a past and all the sinners have a future. Believe in God, accept the grace of God through diligent practice, through the Light of guidance within yourself, through the God in you. Everything is possible. You can even raise yourself from death to life. You can cure your own diseases, let alone the habits. Terminal diseases, even. Everything is possible in the Light of God. That's why I came to tell you the good news, very good news.
- Q. *What if you are adopted, which family generations are saved biological or adoptive?*
- M. Biological. But adopted are also, because I told you even your dog, your cat, are benefited. You'll see. I'm not kidding you, you'll see your dog enlightened, cat enlightened. They'll change. They will sit next to you. They will meditate with you. [Laughter] Yes. They'll become a saintly cat. They will even become vegetarian. [Laughter and applause.] Yes, read our magazine, there are many true stories in there. Everything you read in there is true. All the witnesses are still alive. You meet the modern saints in those pages. Even cats and dogs, very cute. Quan Yin method! Even your friends and your lover who are not biologically related are benefited by your practice, by your Light, because God's grace is very generous. We cannot imagine, it's incredible!
- Q. *If you become initiated and follow, does that mean you can't kill or exterminate bugs, mice, et cetera, that invade your home? What about pulling weeds? [Laughter]*
- M. Well, in some cases, the termites move out. If you keep your house clean and hygienic, you don't have to kill them. Pulling weeds you can, just recite God's name and do whatever you have to do. You don't kill for violence, you don't kill for hatred,

but you do have to protect your health and your family members if it's absolutely necessary. Otherwise, in many cases, when our initiates meditate, all the pests go away. The bugs and all that don't come near. It's very convenient and economical. Everything leaves us.

Q. *What do You think of divorce?*

M. Bad. Divorce is the last solution of a loving relationship, and it should not happen at all. But it's very difficult for it to work out since men and women are so different. Men are more cool, straightforward, simple; women are more sentimental, more romantic. So, the warlike and the beauty don't often mix well, but there are many ways to reconcile each other. There is marriage counseling, there are books about it, and there is, of course, meditation, that will reconcile a lot of differences. You'll see that both of you will change – more loving, more understanding and less demanding. That is, if you both are in almost similar levels; otherwise, you will still have conflict. But you still love each other. You'll not resort to divorce as much as the other people who do not practice the inner peace. They would do it more; I would not have divorced my husband if I were enlightened at that time. I tell you, he was the best man, he still is; but someone else's best man now. [Master uses a hand gesture to show the relationship has ended.]

After enlightenment, you will learn to appreciate your partner more. A lot of family conflicts have been erased after initiation if husband and wife meditate together. It really helps because you realize you both are God. The love in you will spring forth, will magnify to cover all the differences between the man and the woman. You'll learn to love each other, respect each other as God even. Apart from the physical love, there is another holy love that will bind you to each other, make you more loving, more responsible, and more sensitive to each other's feelings and needs.

Q. *What is the problem when one has a key to enlightenment but fails to make the shift into God consciousness?*

M. In that case, well, maybe you try again later when your time comes. Everyone has his own time. It's okay, no hurry, we have eternity.

Q. *Is it true that beyond the second level, there is no karma anymore? If we live in the world depending on our karma then if we don't have karma anymore, do we still live in the world?*

M. Not having karma means, that after the third level, when you arrive at the 'karma-less' level, you never commit any karma again. But the present karma that makes you exist in this lifetime still continues until your time is up. And whenever your time is up, that means the karma is gone. You don't have to stay here anymore. But when you reach the third level, that means the type of person you are, the state of mind that you are in, will never let you commit any more karma. You will do everything in righteousness, automatically, but it doesn't mean that you die immediately because the present karma still exists. The written karma for this lifetime, how many steps you have to take, how many breaths you have to inhale, how much food you have to eat, how many days you have to live, that's already written, we don't erase that. We could, if we want to, but why? It's just a few more years to live or a few more days. Why hurry? It's the last time anyhow.

Masters only give, never take

Q. *Dear Master, I want to practice and teach meditation but also have an abundance of materialistic things. How can I do that? I don't wish to make a living doing anything other than teaching meditation. Please advise.*

M. Who is that? It's you. Are you teaching right now? And you earn some living from that?

Q. *Yes, but not enough.*

M. Not enough, then, what to do? You have to expand your circle. You asked the wrong person; I don't take money.

Q. *How do You make a living?*

M. I make a life out of living. I design clothes, I paint, I do... I don't know, what else did I do? Jewelry. I do a lot of things.

Q. *So, do You advise that I do things other than teach meditation to make a living?*

M. I would. I would think it's more noble if we teach the way of God free of charge at all times, because it's inherent in each of us. If we could, we should not make a living out of that. But if you're in need of money and people donate to you, it's okay. Take it as God's gift. But I personally don't demand any money. I'm very afraid to take people's money. I just don't feel good, since I was young. And any of the Masters since ancient times have not been allowed to take money even. You're supposed to give, not take. But I guess for just ordinary teachers of different meditation methods, it's no harm. But to be a Master, I think it's better not to take anything. The Buddha took only one meal a day because He didn't work; that was the minimum He could take. But then, He had to do it. At that time He didn't have the means to walk around and earn money at the same time. Besides, He was a monk, and the tradition of monks is to go begging for food. People respect you that way.

In the modern times, if you go begging for food, the police will beg you to go to jail, so I cannot do that. Not that I'm materialistic; to design to earn money to live is not a materialistic viewpoint, it's practical. We live in the modern times, we have to dress decently, presentably, for the modern people, because they don't accept the beggar-look anymore. You can't go on the street and beg. People will take you for homeless. They don't respect you, number one. So, how can you teach them? You have to be decent, be like everyone else. I used to be a monk but at that time, I also earned money. I didn't feel right taking money from people; I earned money from different things. I grew vegetables, I knitted at that time. Because I was alone, I didn't have too many traveling expenses, and I ate one meal a day also. So, making very little money was enough.

But now I've expanded and I have to travel a lot, so I have to earn more money. I resort to different kinds of techniques, like my interior decorating stuff – lamps, lights, sometimes, ceramics, painting, designing clothes; and designing jewelry. These earn me a lot of money worldwide, so I'm able to travel around and live comfortably. I pay every penny for what I take. If even an initiate lends me a car, I'll pay for the petrol, too. I don't take it. I don't want to. I feel I should pay for my own living existence, because I'm able. Even if my disciples give me anything, I don't take unless I really

don't know about it. If I know, I don't take it. I'll give it back. I'll give back the money, the value, or return something else. You feel more comfortable that way. But it's all right if people offer to you and you have no other means and you're too busy teaching to earn a living, then you take it. Take enough for yourself.

Q. *Can I ask You one more question?*

M. Sure.

Q. *So, You are able to run a business and have a spiritual teaching going on at the same time?*

M. Yes, well, that's the way it is right now. I do my spiritual teaching, but in my spare time, I design clothes and jewelry.

The people who help me sell, the people who help to make the clothes and all that, they also get money. Sometimes we have a small restaurant here and there; we also earn money from that. I pay the money to the people who work there. Everything is strictly business.

Q. *Okay, thank You so much.*

M. God bless!

Q. *If there is no physical body, then why did Jesus cry when His best friend John the Baptist was beheaded?*

M. Well, should He have laughed? Should a compassionate Master, all loving, all Godlike, have laughed or been like a stone, indifferent to a best friend like John the Baptist? What do you expect His behavior to have been? What do you expect an enlightened person to be? A stone? Just because He was enlightened, the chemical reaction in His body didn't change. The tears still flow when they are triggered by emotion, and it should be so. He had become so soft, so feminine, so loving, and that is the best of all. It happened to Him; it happens to us. It's very good when you cry when your friend dies. It's very natural; He was very normal and very enlightened.

Q. *It seems that all my paths are being blocked. For this reason, I cannot reach my goals. My past experiences reveal that every time I'm one step toward my goal, something pulls me back and away. What should I do to clear my way?*

M. What kind of path is he talking about? For the sake of the audience. Who is it?

MC. *The person that asked, would you like to raise your hand?*

Q. *[Someone raises the hand.] I didn't write the question but for me it's applicable. I think we constantly encounter obstacles in life that are very frustrating. I think it's just a universal....*

M. Okay, I got it; it means in business and relationships. The only answer is enlightenment. I have no other answer. Enlightenment will guide you; will give you the answer, give you the strength to start all over again, or to overcome difficulties as well as ignore the unnecessary worries about different problems. You will solve them quicker. There are no other things for us to do in life except to get enlightenment first,

and everything else will follow. That's why the bible says to you, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God,' that means get enlightenment, 'and all other things shall be added unto you.' Yes, truly. I earn more money now than when I was not enlightened. When necessary, God will show you the way, even in a physical way. I didn't get enlightenment to earn money, but it just happened; it just happened that everything else became very smooth, unasked for, and that's true.

Q. *How do I live an enlightened life?*

M. Live like you lived before; live with your wife, your kids and your husband; continue to discharge your duties and enjoy your life while enjoying heaven. Nothing changes, except the inside knowledge, the happiness.

Q. *What are the reasons You don't believe in healing other people?*

M. The reason why I don't believe is that they should learn to heal themselves. We should not play God; that's the reason. We stand between God and that patient. Each one has the power to heal himself. God has bestowed sickness upon the patient as a blessing in disguise, so that he may see God. When that person is very sincere, God will appear to him. Otherwise, we have a lot of physical, medical treatments that should be used to take care of the physical things.

And to tamper with people's psychic body and the healing power within them is not very advisable. The karma is not erased by just the touch of hand; it will come back again tenfold later. The person will suffer more and never know God. If you just believe in the healers and forget God, especially the God inside you, you're in more trouble than the sickness. That's what I believe. That's what I know. That's what I share with you. But of course, it's my opinion and my knowledge; it's not necessarily yours. It's not necessarily accepted by you. Just if you come to me and ask me, I have to tell you what I know. But I don't condemn healing or anything like that. If you want to go higher, then you have to stop that. Just like you want to learn to become a doctor, you have to continue with being a doctor, you cannot stop midway and become a nurse and expect to be a doctor at the same time. It's not possible. [Applause]

Q. *Master, why is it necessary to be guided through meditation?*

M. There's no other way. Meditation is just a name; actually, it's the inner reconnection with the God power. Just like why it is necessary to eat three meals a day in order to sustain your body; this is to sustain your spirit. We have to meditate; we have to get recharged by the God power again in order to be free from the shackles of the physical world to be God again, to be master of ourselves.

MC. *Thank You for Your time.*

M. Thank you. [Applause] Thank you very much for your attentiveness, your support, your enlightened atmosphere, your loving smiles, everything. It pleases me very much. And I shall see you in the initiation hall. [Applause] For those who don't take initiation tonight or will consider later, go home and pray; pray to God. Don't forget, pray all the time. Pray any time you can. Pray with your heart until the day you get enlightenment. I'll see you there. [Master points upward.] [Applause]

TUNING INTO THE SOUL'S UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE ¹⁰²

Jesus left us almost two thousand years ago, but His teaching and His spiritual energy still blesses us, and makes many of us saintly and righteous, and reminds us always of God. I just read some of the Master's teaching today, and it's so beautiful! The language of the Masters is the language of love, of poetry and of heaven. I have found that many great Masters speak almost similar languages. I don't mean the same native language but the same kind of expression: Very poetic, very romantic, very noble and very pleasing to the ear, even physically.

We should always speak this kind of language every day. But unfortunately, sometimes we forget. Sometimes we have to deal with each other or with other people in a more aggressive and less romantic way. This is regretful to all of us. When we are intoxicated with love, we become like a poet, a musician, an angel or like a very noble, celestial being. We float in the air; we don't walk. We breathe with the soul, not with the mind. We think with the heart, not with the brain, and we speak with the language of love. Or, we don't even talk. We don't want to sometimes. We just like to sit there and hold hands, like two mannequins!

There is a joke about people who are in love. It says that if you want to know whether any couple is in love, you can observe them. If the couple loves each other, they just sit there, looking into the eyes, holding hands or not holding hands, and don't say anything. They just look into eyes quietly, sitting there together; just being together is already very happy for them. But if you see a couple who sits there, maybe talking a lot in loud voices, or looking in different directions, then you know they are not lovers.

The master Quetzalcoatl also mentioned a lot about silence: 'Be silent so that you can see the Light and hear the inner music or inner voice.' That's what he said. He said do not teach people what you do not understand, because that is empty and without substance. We can repeat the same words as the Masters of the ancient times, but if we do not have the spiritual awakening inside, then our words are empty. So, it might sound the same, but it's not poetically imbued with love, and it's not empowered with the blessing of God. So, those empty words fail to awaken the deepest recesses of our soul, and don't help us to elevate.

That's why the Master tells the people to keep silent, if they do not know. His words, even though from a few thousands years ago, are still as true today. And they are so beautiful! If we speak this kind of language every day to each other, we would never have to experience world war I, world war II or any war at all. If we cannot speak words of wisdom, then we'd better keep silent. The best language is the language of the soul, the inner voice or the inner sound of heaven. That's why whenever we are tired of the world's abuse, when we are tired of the endless struggle for survival, when we are tired of the mental fatigue, and we sit down and do the Quan Yin for a while, we feel tranquil and relieved of the heaviness that had shackled our inner soul. Sometimes we feel very restless because of physical disturbance, the polluted environment or a stressful occupation or profession. And so when we do some tuning in to the inner music, to the inner teaching of God and to the sound inside, we feel immediate peace and rest.

102. Public lecture, Mexico City, Mexico, May 23, 1998 (Originally in English).

Loving our enemy is loving ourselves

If the government, the leaders of this world understood the power of love, they would never make war. They would just use love to destroy their enemies in no time. Just love your enemy, and then they will surrender. They will drop all their weapons and come to you on their knees. That's why Jesus said, 'Love your enemy.' Loving our enemy is loving ourselves. Loving our enemy means bringing peace to ourselves.

CREATING A LOVING AND PEACEFUL PLANET ¹⁰³

Scientific discoveries show us that everything impossible in our thinking is possible in science, in another way, or what is impossible today is possible tomorrow. Hundreds of years ago, we couldn't even dream of flying over here from Formosa or America just in some hours. Now, it is even shorter if you go on the Concorde. The time is even half or one third shorter. From New York to Europe, it takes sometimes eight to ten hours, depending on where. But with the Concorde, it takes four hours. So, this is already proof. Everything around us today is proof that we can do anything if we know how, if we discover the technique.

Similarly, to tune into the universal power to get whatever we want from this great reservoir of energy and possibilities, we just have to know how. All the miracles, all the things that happen in the universe and in this planet come from this great reservoir of power. It's nothing more than that. It's just like the tomato plants or the rose plants, they know what to take from the earth, and what they get is different from what the ginseng root gets. The ginseng needs something else – the same earth, same planet, but the ginseng gets one thing, and the rose gets something else. Depending on what they get, they produce something different, make life colorful, with a lot of varieties, and serve us in different ways.

Similarly, we all are different individuals, but we can all tune into this vast power of the universe in order to take out what we need for ourselves individually. Consequently, we can produce a different kind of life, a different style, a different color, a different beauty, in order to coexist, to decorate this beautiful cosmos in which we live, for ourselves as well as for other people to enjoy. The rose takes some nutrition from the earth, something from the sun, from the rain, a little bit from each, and then produces such a beautiful appearance for itself to feel beautiful, and for us, for other people, to enjoy.

If we tune ourselves into this vast universal power reservoir, we can take out what we want, what suits us, to make a beautiful existence for ourselves, for everyone else to feel good about us, and for us to feel good about ourselves. We come here to be something. The rose comes here to be a rose. The ginseng exists just to be a ginseng, because someone needs the ginseng. We don't need roses all the time. Even though roses are beautiful, sometimes we need ginseng to eat, to enjoy, to feel healthy, to make a medicine out of it. The rose, we use for decoration, to bring love, to attract the love atmosphere in the air. That's why when people love each other, they give roses. Just to symbolize love, we give roses to people or to our loved one, to a boyfriend, girlfriend, wife, husband, mother, father, et cetera. When we give ginseng to people, we wish them good health. We want them to get back their strength.

Everything serves something. We are here for something; we are what we are, because we want to be that way, because God wants us to be that way. But we have to have

103. International seven-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 17, 1998 (Originally in English).

nutrition to exist the way we want to be, the way we should be. The body needs nourishment to exist, in most cases, not all. The soul, the beautiful true being that we are, needs something else to survive, to glow, to bloom, to decorate our life, to fulfill our purpose in this existence or in the whole universal existence. We have to tune into the vast reservoir of energy in order to nourish ourselves, to do what we do, to be what we want to be. Just like the rose needs some fertilizer, good soil, and good care, so it can bloom better, become a nicer flower, fresh, and with a beautiful color, pleasing to the eyes of whomever looks at it. Similarly, we need nutrition for the spirit so that we can bloom in full, so everyone around us feels happy and we feel happy.

That's why we need to practice the Quan Yin method. It's just a name for tuning in with the nourishing power, so that we can exist a hundred percent and flourish as a great being, as a human being. [Applause] Otherwise, we don't exist completely and that's why we are miserable. Same with the roses. If the rose doesn't have what it needs, it'll probably bloom only half or smaller, with the color so miserable, or some worms will eat her. Then it looks so handicapped, so bad, so miserable, not the way that they look right here. These are the cultivated, the cared-for, the fully nourished flowers here. So, they give their best, and that's the way we should be. As the great human beings that we are, we have to bloom in full, with the spirit, with the mind power, and with the body – with the three parts of the body, of which is said, 'the Mother / Father, the son, and the holy ghost.' Missing any of that, we are not fully developed human beings, and we will never be happy and peaceful. It doesn't matter how much peace and happiness we want, doesn't matter how many meetings we arrange with each other to talk about peace, we won't have it.

I'm happy that we have this Center. Of course, it's not the way we wanted because of so many rules and regulations; laws are not always flexible. It's due to the misunderstanding of us human beings, as well as our brothers and sisters, that we have created this system over eons, thousands, millions of years already. So, it'll take a long time to change it. We have to go along with it right now. We don't try to do anything that is against the law or anything that is improper which will not be in agreement with our other brothers and sisters, even though we know our way may be better, is certainly better. But we have to coexist with all other brothers and sisters who have not yet gained the same understanding as we have, who have not tuned in with the power of the universe so soon yet. They pick their own time. We have to coexist cooperatively, in harmony, and be patient, waiting for the time to come. But as you know already, the Center does not exist only in a physical body, it exists in spirit as well.

[Master speaks to a worm: You go somewhere else, or you will get hurt. People will trample upon you. I'm just trying to help you and you struggle so hard.] This brother worm is afraid of me, because I want to put it on the flower. If it stays here, someone will step on it. I only wanted to help it, but it struggled. It even wanted to bite me! This was because it did not understand what I understood. Every being in the universe, if they don't understand you, they sometimes react funny, or fight against you. This is the same in this world – if I tell you to take care of your family nicely, lovingly – if I tell you to endure your job even though you don't like it, to earn a living – if I tell you to abide by the law, even though sometimes the law is too rigid for you to bear, but that is for our own good, as well as for everyone else's.

We cannot do things forcefully and with violence. We cannot. We have to do it slowly, with understanding of the opponents, of our partners, or of the opposite party, with understanding for their point of view. It is not that we give up our principle of understanding or lower our level in order to accompany them. Not that! Our level of understanding, we keep; no one can take it away. Our principle of philosophy and consciousness, we keep;

but we have to take into consideration the feelings, the level of understanding of the person we are dealing with. Like this, we will minimize the harm, the hurt, and the pain for both of us – the opponents or the partners, as well as for ourselves.

It takes a lot of patience, of course. I understand that. I'm one of you. I have to be patient the same way you are. I have to do the same things that you do. I also have to bear a lot, endure a lot, and have to abide by a lot of laws which I wish didn't exist, or existed only for bad people, but not for the good people. Unfortunately, the law sometimes tries to stop the bad people from damaging the world and other people, but also has a rigid effect of also obstructing the good people in doing good work. This is the law of the world.

The laws of the universe, the laws of Truth, are not like that. In fact, there are no laws once we rise above the world of duality, such as this one – like, there's bad, there's good, there's prohibition, there are opponents, and all kinds of opposite philosophies and ways of life. We have a lot of contradictions, a lot of confusion in this world, because we have duality. We have two instead of one. When we rise above duality and become one with the universe, become one with everyone else, become one with ourselves, then there are no such things as I'm better than you, good things, bad things, no condemnation, no ugly, no beauty, no sin, and no virtue. It's not because the sin becomes a virtue or the virtue becomes a sin, but there are no such things that exist in the oneness, where everything exists only in love and harmony. No sin can ever even enter our minds, let alone our actions.

It's not that in those worlds, people can do what they want and then there's no sin or no ugliness. It's just that people don't do it. We just act, think, and speak in beauty, virtues, truth, love, and harmony. That's why. The day will come when we all know this planet of love and beauty. But we have to start somewhere, and we started it already. We started fifteen years ago, and we start another contact point here today in Korea, in Youngdong. I thank you all for the effort put into this Center, in the past, the present, and the future. I wish all the best to this Center and to Korea. Of course, the effect will spread around the world. I thank you very much. [Applause]

COMPLYING WITH GOD'S WILL ¹⁰⁴

You go home and tell everyone not to sit there and pray for Master to come to your place or your country. That can be terrible for me all the time. Just let it be natural. You can come to see me. It's good. Don't always say every time I pass by, 'Oh, Master, come to Au Lac! Master, come to China! Master, come to Hong Kong! Master, come to Thailand. Master...' And in Thailand, there are different provinces! Then, even if I come to Thailand, they say, 'Master, come to Chiangmai! Master, go to Bangkok! Master, go... go, somewhere,' et cetera. They are just demanding the impossible! They just talk; they don't even care how I feel, and how I can make it or not make it. All of this is pulling me apart. Just demanding, demanding and demanding! And I'm really so tired. Sometimes, there are just two or three disciples somewhere, and they don't even come to see me, but just sit there and demand miracles. 'Master, if You come here, then I will know You are the real Buddha!' [Laughter] Yeah! Then, 'I'd never, never, ever follow anyone else, I swear!' Just like that. It's just illusion.

We have a lot of things in this world to do than just see each other. If you want to see me, then come where I'm available. Don't just sit there, demanding me to prove that I'm a Buddha. I've proven enough already! [Master laughs.] And if I'm not the Buddha, then don't

104. International seven-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 12, 1998 (Originally In English).

bother to follow me. No one forces anyone. There's no need for me to go there to prove I am a Buddha or to give you initiation at the exact time, exact place and exact day so that you will know I'm a proven Buddha. It is not possible all the time. There's no need for that kind of outer proof. You know who the Buddha is, don't you? Who? [Audience: You!] No! You. Right! [Master and audience laugh.] You! You! You are the Buddha, and if you don't know that, I cannot prove it to you. I cannot prove it to you; I cannot prove that you are the Buddha. If, after all my effort, you still don't know, then goodbye. Go where you want.

This is ridiculous sometimes, you make me so much trouble. I just go somewhere, and without even having time to develop or to help that place, then someone tries to pull me some other way, because here looks so good. 'Master puts all Her efforts here; they have so much fun here. Why don't we have it in our place?' Things like that. And then I have to make so much effort, just to buy another place somewhere else and try to make it exactly the same, just for the outer satisfaction of your mind. Otherwise, I live in hell! [Master laughs.] I'm sitting somewhere and can't even have peace in my life or accomplish anything.

Sometimes you do things without thinking. Please think before you speak, before you demand, and before you think of what you want from me. It's better to think of what you want from yourself, what you can do for yourself, and not what I can do for you. It doesn't matter how much I can do for you, it's never enough. It's you who have to do it, because you live with yourself every day. You know what you want every day. And whatever you want, it's more in your reach to do it, because you are in control of your destiny and your life, and no one else. Even the Buddha or Christ cannot control it for you.

So, go home, and bring this message to your people. Tell them: 'Leave me alone!' I come when I'm ready, when it is God's will. Don't pull me apart; don't tear me into pieces! I can't do it. I can't live like that, and serve you at the same time. We have only twenty-four hours a day, I told you, and there are only so many things I can accomplish physically, physically speaking. I'm already a very fast worker. I do three, four, sometimes ten jobs at the same time. I work for hundreds of people. I mean, [Master laughs.] the effort of one person is sometimes equal to ten or a hundred people already. I still can never be fast enough. Also the machine sometimes runs out of juice, out of petrol, out of... I don't know what – just runs out.

See, last night, I just had some fun with you, and today, no more voice. Just a little thing like that! Just have some fun. We could have more fun. Why does the voice run out? What for? [Master laughs.] And then, so much dust we made [Master laughs.] causes coughing, running nose, itchy eyes, scratchy throat, things like that. 'What for?' I asked my body. 'What for do you do all these things to me?' 'What's the use for yourself or for anyone?' No! No use, but the body still does it. Still reacts the way it is chemically arranged. So, there is nothing much I can do for you more than I'm already doing. Tell the disciples, your people, your friends, your wife, your kids, whatever, 'Please go on with your life. Meditate. Find your own Buddha.' If we have the time to see each other, we have the opportunity if it is God's blessing, then we will see each other, okay? If not, just do what you have to do, and I will do what I have to do. Don't try to tear each other apart, just for nothing, really. It's not necessary that you have to see me. It is, but if you can see me once in a while, okay. If cannot, too bad! You should be happy that I'm alive already, that you still have hope, that I don't die so soon! Suppose I die, then what? You don't even have hope to see me. So, just hope, but don't demand. Hope, and it is different. I come in my own time, when it is God's will.

Can you imagine, with all the people in every different direction, always praying the same thing, how I feel? Even if I want to, can I even do that? I have the manifestation buddy, b-u-d-d-y. [Master laughs.] Manifestation 'buddy' which runs the errands for me all over the world. But you don't want to see him. My 'buddy' is better than me, more efficient! He can run a million jobs at the same time, go in different places at the same time. Why don't you talk to him, do business with him? I can just be at one place at one time with this physical body, and do one of a few hundred things at one time; cannot do more than that.

I can't even have a home because of all of your demanding in different directions. I can't even have a home. If I have a home, it would be better for you, even. You can always come to see me when I'm there. [Applause] But I can't have a home if everyone wants me in their private home, or even in their hometown, at the same time, or different times.

As soon as I build something up so that everyone can come to see me and stay there as long as they want and see me until their hearts are content, then, someone wants to pull me somewhere else, 'It's better in our hometown! You make an ashram over there exactly like this, in our hometown, yeah?' This is a selfish demand, you understand?

That's why always I just build something up, and then it's ruined – destroyed, damaged, or taken away from us, because your power of thinking is very strong. But it's not good for everyone, including myself, to run around all the time. I cannot see everyone at the same time. If I have a place and I can stay there safely, I can do my office work for you and reply to your letters on time, and then you can also come to me at your own time when your situation allows, or when you want to. I'm always there. Isn't that better? Yes! [Applause] I always beg you not to demand ridiculous things and impossible things. But as human nature, I just tell you this, and I turn around and there's another person, saying, 'Master, come to Au Lac. We will buy land over there!' and things like that. It looks like they don't understand what I'm talking about. Have to repeat it, repeat it, but there's always some new persons come, and then you have to repeat it again and again. So, please help me! You do the job! You tell everyone just to shut up inside, okay? And just do God's will. Whatever God wants, it will be done. Don't always try to run the universe. Don't run my life, run my job for me, by demanding ridiculous things all the time. Even if I want to, can I do that? Can I run around all the time and see everyone as they demand? Cannot! This is a modern time, so we'd better use our modern advantage. We can have airplanes, we can have all kinds of equipment, video, and all that. We can be satisfied meanwhile.

It's better that I have a home, and then I can go sometimes here and there on a fixed schedule. And everyone knows this time Master is not home, okay, we don't go there to see Her. We go to see Her somewhere else if we want to, but at least there is a place so people can come and stay and wait for me, you know. See me whenever they want to see me. It's convenient for you. It's better that I stay still and then all of you can come. If I run around, it's very difficult to catch me. Right? [Audience: Yes!] If I go to Korea, it doesn't coincide with your schedule, your financial situation, or your liking. You might not like to go to Korea at this time, things like that. Or your work doesn't permit you to come at this time, so you come another time. If I'm somewhere fixed or something like that, it would be better.

And of course, I would go out now and again to talk to the world if necessary, if it is God's will. But it would be better if I stay still. That's what I think. But I cannot do it if everyone keeps tearing me in different directions, pulling in different directions. It's very tiring to withstand all this power also, very tiring for me. Just as if I want to stand here still, and everyone is pulling me in different directions, you know what I mean? And I have to always

toss and turn around. Can you imagine that? So, help me to get the message to the people! [Applause]

THE DIFFERENT WORKING SYSTEMS IN THE UNIVERSE ¹⁰⁵

Actually, the system of working in this world is of course boring most of the time. Because of survival, a lot of people have to waste their talents, time and precious freedom in order to earn a living. That's what makes many workers miserable, because they feel they are forced to do it. They are trained to do only one job and they can't change. But the perfect system would be that each one should be able to work the way he or she wants, and not because of the money. But then everyone should be provided enough to survive and with everything else extra, then you do what you want.

In some of the other more advanced societies in the universe, you don't have to work for a living. Everywhere they have like a common kitchen, a common store. Everyone can exchange their labor, exchange their work, their crafts for the goods that they need and even if they don't have any, they can also have something. But if they want extra, they have to strive in different ways, and each one just contributes his talents or his abilities to society. Not for the money, but for the pleasure of it, for the honor of contributing. And money doesn't exist in those societies because they don't need any. You are always provided with whatever you need in such highly developed societies.

People don't need much; they know what they need and mostly just the basics. The rest of the time they spend leisurely developing their own talents, their own hobby or whatever field they choose to develop. That's why the more they are free, the more they are developed. They don't have to worry about the material necessities like in our society. It's an entirely different system and people are happier like that.

Maybe in the future our planet will be in such an environment, maybe in three thousand years [Master and audience laugh.] when everyone is vegetarian and meat would be a kind of naughty break [Master laughs.] where they have a restaurant very far in a remote corner of the planet. You have to take an airplane to go there to eat a meal and come back. [Laughter] If sometimes you want to be naughty. [Master laughs.] Meat restaurants will be rare like we have vegetarian restaurants right now. Right now it's the opposite. In many of the planets, other systems, I've heard that they're more ideal, more ideal than ours. Our system is very physical. Everything is concentrated on survival, money, property, houses and all that. But in the other systems, they don't need that; they are provided. Maybe you don't even need a car to transport yourself around. Maybe you need just a safety belt, or a small apparatus, a button, and you just put it on your body somewhere; you just click and then you go anywhere you want. [Laughter]

Somewhere else you don't even need that; you just ride on the clouds, or a lotus, a blade of grass or whatever. That's more convenient, no pollution needed. [Master and audience laugh.] Our society is very physical, very dense in thinking and in the way we live, very dense. Other planets, their thinking is so noble, so light, if you happen to go there and associate with them, you feel you have not a worry in the world. You feel elated for no reason. You don't even need to meditate to feel elated, you just feel like you're in samadhi all the time. Your mind, your body is light like a cloud. Not that you become like an idiot or [Master laughs.] blank in your mind. It's just that everything becomes so simple, and easy. All thinking is with no effort. Everything you do is just so natural, so spontaneous and so

105. International seven-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 9, 1998 (Originally in English).

loving, that you don't even feel you're doing it; and whatever you do you get satisfaction out of doing it, because you do it with love.

Not like in our system here, where we do it most of the time for survival. That's what makes the job hard. Many people don't like computers but they have to do it, because maybe that's the most available job at the moment, high paying and easy. Then once they have trained in that direction, it's difficult for them to train in another direction. They keep you eight, ten hours every day already; and once you go home, you're exhausted. You have no other alternative. You have no energy to want to change. On weekends you have to do shopping, cook, wash your clothes, wash dishes or go out with your girlfriend.

Thus we ordinary people meditate, so at least we can survive in this world. When you do whatever job you do, at least you have more energy, more inspiration to do it. Otherwise, it's even more boring if you don't meditate; more burdensome. Unless you're totally materialistic. [Master laughs.] You don't feel anything. Just go, come, go, come, eight to five, and then you don't think, you don't feel any burden or any suffering. It's work. Maybe sometimes like a machine. Yes! If we still have some soul, a kind of remembrance of our origin, then working from eight to five will kill us. Many times it kills people but they become dull, they just accept it and they don't want to think anymore. They just go on; that's why many people have to reincarnate – because they can't think in this life anymore, they've devoted more than half of their lifetime to working, earning, survival, necessity. So, they don't have time to think anymore. So, they have to be reborn again, to think. [Master laughs.] And maybe they don't have time to think again in that lifetime, so then they have to be reborn again, again and again. Luckily we don't have to, because at least we have space and time to think about ourselves.

The effectiveness of meditation

That two and half hours that you invest every day, this will work for a long time, for thousands of years, because the time you enter eternity during your meditation, time stops. It's not only two and a half hours. It's thousands of years, eons of evolution, of development. You enter a different time and space zone. Like this you're recharged and you come back renewed. So, you don't have to keep coming back another lifetime to be renewed, or to be yourself, because for every one of us to be born, the purpose is to learn to know yourself again. That's all. If we don't do it this lifetime we have to do it next lifetime and the next and the next. So, if we have time now, two and a half hours, we do it every day. That means already we're doing it for millions of years. Each two and a half hours you put in, do not think it's only two and a half hours and do not think it's too much. Each minute you put in represents a lifetime. Because in eternity there's no such thing as two and a half hours, or one minute. It's always eternity. We're only counting time because when we're trapped in time then we know it's time. Once we're out of the time, there's no time.

The time for meditation is very precious. It's your hundreds of eons of evolution squeezed together. Just like a concentrated chip for the computer. Just a little chip like this contains thousands, sometimes even millions of bits of information. So, it's not the size. It's not the time, it's not the number that we are accustomed to. The time of meditation is a completely different time, different space. So, the more you enter into this timeless, spaceless space [Master laughs.] the better it is for you. The more you know yourself the more you are free.

Outer versus inner world experiences

All knowledge of the medical properties of herbs and the art of meditative exercises, including Tai Chi Chuan or Hatha yoga, originated from a higher level of consciousness. When the yogi is meditating, he sometimes does it naturally by himself. In some level, not the highest level, suddenly the body will move or something like that. That's why you see temple dances and all that. These are all from meditative experiences. Later, people write it down, and then it becomes popular in this physical world. Similarly in music also, the flute, the harp, et cetera, are all from inside. Then people later came back and tried to imitate it just to communicate with each other in the old time, to know each other's level, and also as a souvenir. That's why the outer music amuses people, and heals people, too. Sometimes, when you are tired and you can't even meditate alone, if you listen to some music and meditate at the same time, or leave it on in the background or listen with earphones, then you will feel calm after a few hours; but the Quan Yin will calm you after ten or twenty minutes.

ELEVATING OURSELVES TO THE POSITIVE LEVEL ¹⁰⁶

[A German fellow initiate said to Master: Every day I remember that I found this method. I found You. It's like a miracle. I'm so happy and I feel that everything around me has transformed. My whole family is so loving now, and things that I never thought could happen have come true. And everybody that my mother has ever prayed for have gotten better. It's so fantastic!]

Good! Like attracts like. Because you're better, everything better will come to you. That's why people say to you, 'Think positively!' It's not because you say, 'I think positive and I expect positive,' that the positive things come. It's not. When you are able to think positively, that means you are elevated to the positive level. You are higher already, so the negative cannot touch you, cannot catch up with you. That's why you're happy. And once you're in the positive level, you just attract the positive, of course. If you are in America, you can't be in France; that's very simple. Try to climb to that level. Try all your best. Meditate more; read the holy teachings. Read positive books; read anything that reminds you of your higher nature, of the contact with God. Then you'll be better, more and more every day, and everything will turn out better for you. You'll know without my doing anything, without you doing anything. Of course, you pray sometimes to the Master power for help and if you need it, of course it's always there. But, if you raise yourself to a higher level, you'll have it permanently and you can only come up all the time. The Quan Yin method is a way to bring you up there but it's you who do it, you who want it. You make the effort.

ROMANTICISM ¹⁰⁷

This occasion is very sacred and also very romantic. I like a romantic atmosphere. Romantic doesn't mean only the loving atmosphere between two people, like a man and woman. Romantic is something that is very sacred, very noble, very poetic in the air, which we ourselves generate from within our heart when we feel very loving, very peaceful, very kind, very gentle, and we feel so good about everything, about everyone around us. We walk slowly, we talk gently, we think very, very nobly and poetically. That's what I call a romantic atmosphere. Today we have it.

106. International seven-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 6, 1998 (Originally in English).

107. International seven-day retreat, Youngdong Center, South Korea, May 6, 1998 (Originally in English).

I think in the modern times, we have a lot of advantages, as I told you yesterday. We have airplanes, we have super electronic equipment, so that we can contact each other. We have television, and we have all kinds of conveniences afforded to us so that we can be here in a very short time and stay together and enjoy all this comfort. Even if we're not together, later we can enjoy the memories of this occasion at home through video tapes, television, audio tapes, and songs, as well as our own recording system in our brain. But nevertheless, in the modern times, due to this high technical development, it has somehow destroyed a little, if not a lot, of the romantic atmosphere of the old times, such as the clothes we wear, the way we walk, the way we talk together, the way we think, and the way we write and express our thoughts inside. It's not as poetic and leisurely, romantic like the ancient times. That's what we miss sometimes. That's what I miss a lot of times. And on such occasions, we bring it back.

I don't know whether we've forsaken our poetic nature, our romanticism, inherent inner beauty, or whatever we've done to ourselves, that nowadays most of the time we think more of finances. We think more of material comfort than the care taking of our inside beauty or even our own representation outside of the inner beauty, such as nice clothes, walking with dignity and manners, talking with gentleness and sweetness. It's very difficult for all of us nowadays to talk even in a sweet tone, even if we want to, because everyone else talks in a harsh tone quickly and loudly. Sometimes I myself feel very lost in this world, I don't know how you feel. Not sometimes, often times, especially when I'm in a very poetic and romantic mood and I have to deal with the people who are less romantic or not romantic at all. Then I do feel lost, or that I've lost something that I don't know, lost sadness. I feel kind of out of this world, born in a wrong world.

I guess you feel like that sometimes, don't you? Yes! So, why don't we all try to get that back. Not only during our meditation, but after, before, and all the time that we deal with people. I know it's difficult even for me. You know I write poetry. Even though in the old times when I was younger, maybe my poetry was not all that polished and perfect the way I would have liked it to be, the way I would like it to be now. I did not understand as much as I understand now. But still in my heart I'm a poet, and I like to be like poetry, like a dream, like romance.

But many times I have to face situations where my poet inside runs away from me, because I can't bear the crudeness of the reality outside. Then I have to talk the way other people talk, I have to act the way other people act, and so on. After that I just sit down, feel quiet and sad, feel as if I've lost some part of myself, feel as if I shouldn't have done what I have done, shouldn't have said what I said, because it wasn't me. It wasn't the way I like myself to be. But it's easier for you, perhaps as an individual, a not too famous individual, to try to get back your romantic, soft, gentle and sweet nature, and try to preserve it.

It's better that we preserve our real self, so that we like ourselves better. It doesn't matter if anyone else likes us or not. We have to like ourselves and that is very, very important. Otherwise, you go through life miserably and you're always on the defensive. Anything hurts you. Even though people mean well, you misunderstand. You hurt yourself and you feel low about yourself. That's not very good. So, let's try maybe from today to represent ourselves the way we want whenever possible. Don't let the habits of this world drag us into a different, rude, coarse kind of atmosphere in which we feel uncomfortable, in which we find ourselves very confined, very suffocated, very lost, and most often times, very sad. It is of course more convenient for us a lot of times to run around fast and to talk in a very irresponsible manner. [Master chuckles.] But whenever we can, we should try to go back to the soft side, to the romantic side, like the way we have today. It's very nice to have a romantic atmosphere. Don't you think so? It feels good.

That's why people fall in love. When we are in love we talk softly, we feel elated. But we can create that ourselves, too, every day; create this kind of romantic atmosphere and carry it in our pockets. Carry it around with us. So, when people see you, it's like they see a flower, like they see the sun, like they see the moon. And they also get infected by the romantic atmosphere. It's difficult nowadays to tune in to the poetic atmosphere of the old times. But maybe sometimes we can try, just for a change, just to be away from it all, to be away from the hassle feeling every day, to be away from the rough atmosphere of the world. And feel ourselves again. It wouldn't be bad, would it?

So, next time if you go on retreat, or if you come to see me sometimes, you can put on your beautiful dress, or bring one, at least. It won't hurt to bring one. It doesn't have to be expensive, or colorful, it can be white, can be any color that you like. Just when you put it on you feel soft, you feel gentle, you feel romantic, you feel very, very poetic, feel like a fairy, an angel, feel like you're in the celestial world. That's very good.

A LONGING HEART IS THE KEY TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD ¹⁰⁸

For the initiates, I told you it is the soul, not the body, not the outside. Someone might repeat the holy names all the time but not do the good things that the Master teaches. They don't really respect and want the Lord. But the person who is very pure and innocent, like a farmer, and doesn't deliberately forget the Lord and the holy names longs in his heart for the Master all the time. Even though he might forget, he still remembers and wants the Master.

So, it's not just the holy names that bring you to the kingdom. It's the soul. If the person really wants it, then the Master can do anything. Even without initiation, the Master can take them. They don't need initiation. People with the convenient method can go up to heaven. For people who just see the Master one time and then are praying in their heart at the time of death, the Master comes.

But some initiated people are stubborn. They think that being initiated means they can do what they want. They have to learn their lesson. If they want to go back to transmigration, it's their own choice. The Master doesn't interfere; the Master just helps. This is the problem with many initiates of different traditions, maybe including ours. They rely on the Master power. They think initiation gives them everything. And then they go out and do wrong things. Many of the so-called sects in India and elsewhere do a lot of wrong things to people; people are scared of them. Because they think that if the master initiated them, they can do anything they want and they will never transmigrate. That's wrong!

But there are those who at least try in their hearts. They try their best under the circumstances, within their power. It's not that they have to try their best according to the Lord, or to the Master, but try their best according to their ability and their strength. For the people who don't want to try even when given the opportunity, it means they want the world, not the Lord. And they have to go back to where they want.

It's very difficult alone. That's why we need group meditation. If a person doesn't meditate, if he doesn't repeat the holy names and doesn't eat vegetarian, then he goes on his own. Whenever he is ready, the Master will come back again. But at the time of death, if he still is not ready, if he still doesn't call upon the Master, and he still doesn't care and wants to go back to the world, then he can do that. It depends.

108. Group meditation, London Center, United Kingdom, March 10, 1998 (Originally in English).

Sometimes outwardly people don't meditate very well, but inside their hearts, they do. So, whether a person wants it in his heart is also important. But this is a subtle thing that you cannot always explain in words. You must know it from your heart. For example, if you love a woman, you just love her – you know it in your heart. And she is the only woman you love. You can't explain that, and you can't prove it to anyone. But you know in your heart that she is the only woman. It doesn't matter how many beautiful women are around you, you still love only that one.

That is the same thing with spiritual commitment. It doesn't matter what I say, and it doesn't matter what you say – you know in your heart that you want God or don't want God. And that is the important thing. It's not that you sit so many hours, or you go to so many group meditations. Group meditation only helps you. Suppose you really want God, then group meditation helps you more. It strengthens your faith and makes you sit better. But just because you go to a lot of group meditation doesn't mean you want God. Not necessarily! You might want to see the lady next door, instead of going to see inside. It's like love. You have it or you don't have it. No one can force you to love another woman, no matter how much more beautiful, intelligent or rich she is. You love that one, and that's it. You know it. It's final. [Applause]

It's very simple. I don't want to give you the wrong notion that initiation physically alone will bring you to God, because that would be blasphemy. That would be forcing you to do it. Suppose you want to change your mind afterwards. I can't force you to go to the kingdom of God. It's all by your free will that you come, and it's all by your free will that you stay. And it's by your free will at the last moment of your life to come back to where you belong. In the last moment, if you change your mind and say, 'No, Master, forget it! Bye-bye! I want to go back to see that lady next door.' Then you will go. We are all God, remember!

No one can give you anything that you don't already have or that you don't want. Initiation just awakens your own God power, if you want it. If you don't want it, you can put it aside, just like before, and then continue with your ignorant life, no problem. Initiation is a help, group meditation is a help, vegetarianism is a help, and discipline is a help. They're not the ultimate. They're not the end. They are a means to an end only. Your heart must want it above everything else. Then all these things will help you.

If you don't want God, you can eat vegetarian for a thousand years, you can sit for two thousand years and you can get initiated three thousand times, but you are still nowhere. These are just outer rituals, like people who go and bow to so-and-so. They don't understand; they don't commit. But there are other people who don't look like they meditate well, and they can't even repeat the holy names properly. But God knows. And they know that they want God. It's simple! [Applause]

DON'T LET WORLDLY BEAUTY DISTRACT YOU FROM INNER CONCENTRATION ¹⁰⁹

The reason that we don't use outer aids such as beads, stones, incense, candles or things like that in our spiritual practice is to avoid more attraction to the outward appearance of things in this world. Because everything in this world, although beautiful, attracts our attention, and so we try to minimize that.

We can enjoy the world; we can enjoy all the beauties that God has created for us, but we should know how to say 'When.' At least during meditation, we should forsake all these

109. International four-day retreat, Washington D.C., U.S.A., December 27, 1997 (Originally in English).

things so that we're able to concentrate better inside; because only inward concentration will bring us liberation, happiness and peace.

Of course, after a while, if you reach a higher level of consciousness, even while you're working or doing anything like looking at a flower with concentration, you can still enter samadhi; you can still see the inner world of reality. That's another thing. Some people do get that while other people take a longer time; so be patient.

The reason we have to cut down on all kinds of outer attractions, outer performances and outer use of artifacts in order to remember God is that we're already too attached to the outside world and too outwardly dispatched with our attention. So, we have to always try, anytime we can, to draw it inward. That's why in the old times, many people tried to go to the mountains or into solitude to concentrate and forget more and more the attractions of this world. If we have to, it will help.

You know very well, for example, how even sometimes a beautiful song or a nice performance of poetry will keep ringing in your ears all the time once you hear it and like it. It's okay, if the poetry or song is elevating in nature and makes you feel more spiritually inclined, or helps you in any way. But suppose that the song or poetry is very sad and melancholy: If you try to get rid of it, you just keep going crazy. Because the one you don't like the most keeps coming back into your mind all the time, especially if the singer or reciter has a beautiful voice. It really becomes imprinted in your mind and then it's very difficult to get rid of. And you forget the holy names or the 'five hundred names.' You don't remember any! Then at some point you suddenly remember and say, 'Oh, my God! What am I doing?' Then you try to shake it out of your head and you recite the holy names. That's also good.

That's why even outside music, theater or movies, everything disturbs us. Everything tries to pull us back into this lower world of existence. So, if we don't exert our utmost effort to control the tendencies of the wandering mind, we'll have a hard time entering the highest kingdom of God.

That's why it's very difficult for you to practice in the world. Today you're okay and tomorrow you're not. At lunch you're okay, but by evening you're miserable. Your meditation goes up and down all the time. That's why we have to keep at it every day, or else we'll lose the battle. That's why some people lose the battle, lose it to the ego, lose it to the outer beauty of the illusory world. Some people even lose it just for their titles.

Small business, easy living

If you don't want to have a good position, you can go out and sell tofu. [Laughter] Not in America maybe, but you can sell hot dogs – vegetarian hot dogs. Are you allowed in America to sell hot dogs on the street? [Audience: Yes.] Then why don't you do that? If people know how tasty vegetarian hot dogs are, they will come for more. It's very easy. They sell vegetarian hot dogs in the market, or you can import them from Formosa. One kind of Formosan hot dog is very beautiful. I make sandwiches with it all the time. You can make it with soft American hot dog bread, or take French bread, and slit and butter it. Boil the hot dog; you don't have to grill it. Have a pot of water and always have hot dogs swimming inside. Then pick it out, put it in the slit bread, buttered already, and put some tomato, sliced cucumber, coriander leaves (cilantro), and then some salt, pepper, ketchup, and what else? Mustard and Maggi sauce. Beautiful! You can sell coffee or Coca Cola to go with it. That's beautiful! I made that all the time before, and I liked it very much. You can sell them very cheaply in front of movies, the university or schools. You'll make money in

no time. All you need is very little capital and a small car, and there are a lot of things you can do.

Some people always look for big business, and that's why they are miserable. You can just sell necessary items, the ones that people cannot go without, and sell them in a crowded place with a small budget. That will make more money than a big restaurant, believe me, because you don't have anything to worry about. No big taxes to pay, no personnel, no tablecloths, and things like waiting on people and people sitting there for a long time. At hot dog stands or in places like McDonald's, they come and go, come and go, and they make a lot of money. That is why the McDonald's kinds of restaurants prosper. You can sell things like vegetarian chicken, hamburgers and all that.

Why do you have to cling to fame, name, and a big position? Big businesses have a lot of headaches and stress; they break up your relationships, break up your marriage. Sometimes your children leave you, your wife hates you, because you are always in conferences and doing business, and you don't take care of them, et cetera. This is just a joke, a suggestion, but you have a thousand ideas about what to do. Or you can sell things like woolen scarves in winter in front of a big place. Some people forget them, and when they see the colorful scarves, they will buy one or two. These are cheap and quick. Or sell socks and these kinds of convenient things, like hats that cover the ears. Those kinds of hats, you can make yourself, or buy and sell. In summer, you can sell something else and in winter, you can sell something different, some small things, if it's allowed. That's very simple.

THE METHODS OF SPIRITUAL IMPROVEMENT ¹¹⁰

There are some things I want to share with you, but these things I have told you a lot of times. Some of you seem not to have understood or not to remember so I will try to remind you again about how to sit for a better, peaceful meditation. Number one, you meditate in a group. You do group meditation either in your house or in the Center, the official Center. It is always helpful when you sit together in meditation. Some of you, if you find sitting face to face is stronger or more assuring, then you could do that. And before that, you should wash your face with cool water, then you'll be more awake during meditation. Before or after washing your face, you could walk around for a while, preferably in the fresh air. For many of you, my teachings verbally are still very, very useful, so please try to watch more videos or listen more to the tapes, and put them into practice.

The reason many of you don't have the desired result in meditation is that you do not put my teachings into practice. Many times, I have seen that. For example, I tell you that when you come here, put everything else behind, forget your families for a while, forget everything else for a while. But then the next minute, you come and tell me, 'My kid is like this, my mother is like that, my father is sick, I am sick;' everyone, you bring the whole village here. [Laughter] I mean some of you, not all of you, thank God. But just one or two persons are enough to spread dust around here, make trouble for me, and then in turn I infect you with my temper – the 'lion roar' method.

You have read in the Buddhist bible that the Buddha sometimes used the 'lion roar' method. He was supposed to have used eighty-four thousand methods to teach the disciples, and one of them was the 'lion roar' method. A lot of people keep asking me, 'Master, why don't You use that method on us? You seem to be missing something, like

110. International four-day retreat, Washington D.C., U.S.A., December 26, 1997 (Originally in English).

You teach only one method.’ No, I teach eighty-four thousand methods. And the ‘lion roar’ method, you often experience, so don’t ask me anymore. The Buddhist people think it’s some mysterious method that I don’t teach, and keep asking me all the time. They read too much of the bible, the Buddhist sutra that says ‘lion roar’ method. Didn’t you experience that during all these fifteen years? Yes! You still want some more of that? [Audience: No!] Okay, enough. I don’t want to teach it often, either; it’s energy consuming.

The reason why I talk a lot is not because I like to talk. If you know some of my friends from before, some of my colleagues or some people who studied sometimes with the same teacher or in the same class with me, they know I never talked. And if people tried to talk to me a lot, I would tell them off: ‘This is not the place to talk, especially during eating,’ and all that. Yesterday I saw one of my old ‘fellow practitioners’ and she reminded me that I used to tell people not to talk to me during eating or meetings, unnecessarily. I remember that is true; I didn’t talk. I was a very quiet person. Not only in the family, but in any ashram or in any gathering I kept to myself. She said I used to meditate twenty-four hours. She remembered me, but I did not remember her yesterday. She invited herself to lunch with me [Laughter] and that’s how I came to remember her. But I do remember her now, because she was very lovely. She didn’t talk much, and she was a very good fellow practitioner. After she reminded me, then I remembered. I don’t remember them because I don’t talk or interact too much with them anywhere. I apologized to her for not remembering her, because I really didn’t notice people. I’ve told you also that I don’t notice you so much unless you have worked with me for a long time, and then of course I remember you. I apologize again, sister. You should call me ‘sister’ not ‘Master’ because we used to have the same teacher at one time. I have had many teachers, as I’ve told you.

Be concentrated, one-pointed and respect the Master's teachings

She said to those at lunch that I used to meditate kind of twenty-four hours and I didn’t talk. That is the truth, and this is the way you should be if you want to be like me. If you think I’m your idol, your idealistic woman or practitioner, that is what you should do. There is no secret. You have to be concentrated, one-pointed, and respect the teacher’s teachings as long as you are still with him or her. Suppose one day you think that I am no good, or for any reason you walk out, this is fine. But as long as you’re here, you should be concentrated, one-pointed, and pay attention to what I instruct you to do. Then you will have a good result. If, after you do all this and you don’t have a good result, I don’t blame you if you walk out on me – anytime. But if you don’t put my teachings into practice, you do not pay attention to what I advise you, then if you walk out on me, I will feel sorry for you. And you should feel sorry for yourself because you did not do your homework properly and you missed out on the great opportunity to grow and to achieve what you so much desire to achieve.

If I teach you anything bad at all, you should tell me right away. If you doubt me, ask me; that is correct. These days, some of you have expressed your doubts and your opinions about me, and I have not gotten angry about that. I have explained to you why. Any criticism, I welcome; any doubt, I understand. And after I explain to you and if you still do not believe me and don’t understand, it is all right to go. But if you believe me, and you want to try, then you must try all your best in order to get the best result for yourself. Since you have come already, you spent so much time, effort, money and hope, then you might as well do the best. That is all there is. It’s not that it is a must for me, or if you don’t do it, it is a sin or anything. No. It is a sin to you, yourself; you have wasted your effort and money.

Should you think it is not worth it, then don’t come; don’t bother in the beginning. Spend your time and your energy pursuing something else, someone else that you think will be

more beneficial to you. It is all right, because everyone has affinity to different teachers. Different levels of understanding will meet different people, different teachers. If you meet a bad teacher, that is your own karma, your inner quality that attracts this kind of master. Your inner aspiration doesn't deserve a better master, so don't blame the teacher; blame yourself. Anytime you find some teacher is wrong, you change, and know that was you, who attracted this kind. [Applause]

If obstructions occur during meditation

If you should have any obstructions at home, like you feel some invisible being disturbs you and that you cannot meditate very well, or if you feel restless or agitated, you have two kinds of solutions. You can put on my chanting, music, or teaching tapes, in the background – not at the back of your 'ground,' but in a low volume in front of you. Never put anything behind you because your attention will be pulled backward and it will be more difficult for you to concentrate in the front. It is not that you cannot do it; it is just not favorable for you. Put the tape, television, music, everything, in front – whatever you want to hear anytime, even the telephone, fax machine, anything. If you have to sit in an office, face the machine. In case it rings, it will ring in front of you, and doesn't pull your attention backward. That would make it very difficult to pull it back to the front again. And when you listen on the phone, listen with the right ear. Make it a habit; don't listen with the left ear. Everything that pulls the attention to the left or behind you is not advantageous to you. Remember. That is one thing. Another thing is that you can recite the holy names loudly for as long as necessary, or one hour every day, until the situation improves.

This is another prevention method for you, if you are fearful, sometimes you feel invisible beings around you or behind you, or if you were possessed before you came to me and you're still fearful. You can put my pictures around you like a circle. You have plenty of pictures; they don't have to be big – just small. It's not the size that counts, it is the person. Even with small pictures, just make a circle around you. The Tibetan tradition of the mandala is a leftover from this kind of practice. They always drew a circle. That was the beginning of it when the teacher taught them to sit in a circle with some of the artifacts that the master had blessed and given to them for souvenirs. Full of the master's love and blessing, they just surrounded themselves. Later they got more fanciful. They added all kinds of things – flowers, incense, sand, color, and so forth.

You can do anything else you want as long as you feel good – as long as you feel safe, secure, and protected. Put my pictures around, put flowers as well if you want, incense or whatever, candles also. But don't make too much smoke and then you cough all the time. [Laughter] The incense or smoke from the candles, even though it's romantic and it looks spiritual, many times it can cause irritation. Then you will have a sore throat or some congestion in your chest later. It is a long-term side effect and no good. But if you can tolerate it, it's okay. I don't forbid anything in our practice as long as it makes you feel good. You can even do the beads or recite a rosary, whatever; but then you become too attached to those beads and that habit and you forget to concentrate here. [Master points to Her wisdom eye.] It's difficult to call back again.

Every day we are already attached too much to the outside world. In the morning, we get up, we have to wash our face, clean our teeth, and put on makeup or put on a tie. That is already too materially conscious. In the job, we put our consciousness on money and even when we go home, we still think of money. So, every day we meditate on woman, man, ties, jewelry, make-up, or money already. That's why when we have time for ourselves to meditate, we should put our attention inward. It is not that any master or I, myself, forbid you to do this or do that because we are fanatic, because we are authoritative; it's not true.

We should just forget everything else; just concentrate inside the wisdom center. But when you concentrate, you look right in the front.

When you look right to the front, that is physically speaking; actually, when you look with the wisdom eye, it is inside. Besides, we are not inside, we are not outside; we are not anywhere. It is just a matter of speaking so you know how to do it physically. Otherwise, when you close your eyes and shut your ears, everything else is inside. Then you have no contact with the physical world that much. You will be inside and alone with yourself, and then know yourself, realize yourself again – that you are the spirit, that you are God, that you are the Buddha. That is why all the rosaries, beads, et cetera at that time will be more detrimental, more obstructing, to our concentration. It's not that it is no good. Everything that reminds you of God is good – a picture, a rosary, a cross, a Buddha statue, anything is welcome. Except when you meditate, it is better to put down everything absolutely, because you are the Buddha, you are the cross, you are God. There is no need for any other reminders.

But the mandala is just to protect you when sometimes some of the people, some rare individuals, fear the invisible beings that disturbed them before and the haunted memories that still disturb them, or they fear the darkness. That is why in the old time, they lit a candle to meditate, so that person did not feel fearful. So, sometimes I advise some of you that you can leave the light on, and that is all right. However, it doesn't mean that we have to do it all the time or everyone has to do it. But then, one learns from another and says, 'Oh, I feel good after the candle is on,' and all that, and everyone does it. It just becomes a habit. It should not be that way.

When you sit, you should be alone – no need of any artifacts, no need of candles, no need of flowers, no need of incense. Everything is distracting anyhow. The candle flickers, flickers, flickers; the incense smells and, 'Ahchu!' [Master pretends to sneeze.] [Laughter] And you sit there and think, 'This is frankincense. I don't like it; I like sandalwood better.' [Laughter] You argue with yourself back and forth, and then two hours are gone. Next time, you put some other flower, 'Oh, roses! I'm allergic to roses. I prefer chrysanthemums,' and blah, blah, blah. Then you spend all your time going out to buy chrysanthemums just because the neighbor told you that when he meditated, he put chrysanthemums and it looked like Master came, it felt so good, he meditated better, and so forth.

Blind faith is a detriment; it is detrimental to your practice. Everything everyone tells you, including my speech, you should prove it. You should analyze it, whether it is logical, before you accept it. I think you accept most of my teachings or all of my teachings because they are logical to you; they don't defy your intelligence. They're in accord with your intelligence, with common sense, with the most logical thinking you can think of, and that's why you accept them. Should they not be logical to you, you are free to deny them, or tell me right to my face, write a letter to me, or whatever, and let me try to explain to you if I can. If not, and if you still don't accept them, then that means you think differently. That is okay. We all have different choices to live our lives and different choices of thinking. That is all right with me, but don't waste your time if you already know it is not for you. And if you're here, try all your best to do it, so that you get the best out of your money, your effort, and your time.

You can also massage your wisdom eye with a little oil, or alone. If it's too dry, then with the oil, it goes smoother. It also helps with the wrinkles in some old persons, like me. [Laughter] I don't do it often; I just do it when I put on make-up. If you have difficulty in concentration, you could massage a little with your thumb or with your fingers up to the

wisdom eye, and then you stop right there. [Master points to the area just above and between the eyebrows in the middle of the forehead.] Stop like this, or you just massage it, and then stop afterwards.

Love and practicing

When you come to a retreat or group meditation, it's better not to look around too much. I know I told you if you don't look at women, you are not normal, [Laughter] but that is for that guy only, just to let him know that he is normal. He is single, a bachelor, and, of course when he sees beautiful women he looks. But the less you look, the better for you. Especially when you are already married or have a girlfriend, or have a husband or boyfriend. The less turbulence, the more you can concentrate to work on your relationship, and you will derive much more benefit and happiness from that relationship. It will boost your confidence and your enthusiasm to go on with everything in life, including the practice of spiritual meditation. Just don't indulge in all these physical pleasures too much and then you'll be too tired to sit in meditation, too little time to devote yourself in spiritual practice. That is why everything in moderation is fine.

If you need to go find a boyfriend or girlfriend, if you feel lonely and want someone to talk to, to accompany you everywhere you go, then it's all right. But don't look around anymore. Once you find one, stick with it and work for it because that is how you'll be happy. The more partners you have, the less happy you are, believe me! That is why all the Masters advise you to take only one spouse. It's not because they're jealous of you or tell you anything else. It's not about being moral, even; it is for your own sake that you should be married or only have one partner. Apart from being immoral, of course, it causes harm, hurt and injury emotionally to other people if you're flying around too much, hitting everyone in the heart. It creates unhappiness when you do that – very, very unhappy. You will feel empty.

There is a difference between making love and having sex. I am sorry to have to tell you straight. There's nothing wrong with that, is there? Making love is that you are involved – emotionally, spiritually, bodily, mentally – together, to be one, to be united with your partner, sharing all this love and affection you have. All of your being is involved in it.

Having sex is just satisfying this temporary lust for a while, and then you will feel very empty. Sometimes you will feel very guilty and get sick from it, and get terrible diseases also. Because you do it as a habit, any partner will do, you'll forget to be cautious. And your body resistance is not there to even combat the disease, should it be there, because you're low in moral standards, in emotional fulfillment, low in spiritual guard, and low in mental preparation. Everything is low at the time when you just have casual sex. Your body's weak, your mind is weak, your spirit is weak, and so when you catch a disease, you're finished.

Making love to your partner is different. You feel blissful; you feel loved; you feel affectionate; you feel togetherness; you feel trust. Everything is high: Your emotions are high; your mind is high; your spirit is high; your passion is high. Your love is full. That's why you are a different level being. Nothing can touch you. You're equipped with all resistance. Should any little disease come to you, your body repairs it. It doesn't even come to you, because the whole being is prepared for this supreme act of love, dedication, and unification between two persons. You become like one, so everything is all right. Everything is pure. You don't feel filthy; you don't feel guilty; you don't feel empty afterward. You don't feel exhausted. You might be a little tired but just from happiness. This is not like the exhaustion and the emptiness, the sucked-out feeling, when you abuse

the act of sexuality just for your own satisfaction physically. That's entirely different. That's why we have to be faithful, to work at our relationship, because it will bring us happiness. For us, it is number one, and everything else is number two.

Any precepts that the Masters in the old time gave to us are the ocean of wisdom. They are not restrictions; they are not a controlling method; they are not a dictating kind of statement. They are for our own sake and happiness, and it would be very, very wise to follow. So, if you don't want any trouble, stop looking around too long. You can be polite and friendly, but don't deliberately look for trouble – especially someone else's. If you know it, don't look. Of course, sometimes you don't know and you look, then you have trouble. But that is something else. If you already know, don't start. It is bad enough that you don't know and you start. Then later you have to take care of it. But if you already know that they belong to someone else, you had better never, ever start because you will get into deep trouble.

Once you have someone else already, the past one, you should just put behind you. It doesn't serve you. Normally when we look at the past, it is always better. We forget the bad parts; we only remember the good parts. But the present is the best. When you look after your present situation, your present relationship, it always brings you immediate benefit. If you always look at the past, or the future, it brings you nothing but worry, sorrow, regret, and illusion. So, always look to the present, whether it is in business, in spiritual practice, in retreat, or in personal relationships, because that is the only thing that brings you benefit right now. The past cannot do anything.

We always have illusions about the past – that it is good. It is not good. The problem occurs when you go to retreats, you cannot put down everything the way you should, the way I always ask you to do. That is why you come up to the stage and ask me all kinds of nonsense. I am patient until I burn out. If you ask a very low-level question, you can bring the atmosphere to a lower level, too – throw dirt on everyone. Somehow, we would be all affected, and I have to clear it in a different way. Please forgive me if I use a 'lion roar' method sometimes. I could use another method – the 'tiger roar' method. If it will make any difference to you, I'll change. [Laughter] All right, that is about bettering your meditation.

SOLVING LIFE'S PROBLEMS AND FINDING TRUE HAPPINESS ¹¹¹

Sometimes we have too many choices, and so we don't want to try hard. When we have too many choices or when we think we have alternatives, we compare. We compare with the past, we compare with an illusory mock-up of the future and we make the present miserable. And we can never enjoy life if we continue to do that. So, always remember, if you don't have the thing you like, you'd better like the thing you have. That's how we find happiness in life.

Apart from being spiritual practitioners, we should be contented and satisfied with all kinds of situations. We should also train our minds and tell ourselves to control ourselves because we're the only ones who can be masters of ourselves. Everything I teach you, I've learned from my own mistakes. That's how I became a Master: Mistakes make a Master. Make as many mistakes as you can. It's all right; it's forgivable. But learn from them; don't repeat them. That's wisdom, and that's how you learn. In reality, there's no one who can teach us except ourselves. We have to learn by ourselves, by personal experience and by being wisely vigilant at all times. Every situation, every circumstance is there for us to learn from. God doesn't make you suffer for nothing, except if you want to learn the hard way.

111. International four-day retreat, Washington D.C., U.S.A., December 25, 1997 (Originally in English).

Yesterday, someone asked me whether suffering cleanses karma. Yes, it does. But if we meditate well, and if we learn from our experience, we don't have to suffer. We only suffer when God has to teach us a lesson once, twice or three times, and we still repeat the same mistake over and over again. Then of course, we suffer.

So, just forget the future; forget the past. Learn from the past, but don't cling to it. That's how you'll be happy. Every miserable situation is caused by us or by people around us because most people cling to the past and forget the present. They forget to live. We have to live every moment! Every moment is a miracle, you know. Every moment is something new, something awaiting us, and we have to savor it. We can enjoy every moment, so why do we have to make our lives miserable? It doesn't matter what: Now that we already have wisdom, we should know that nothing can really trouble us too much.

Every situation can be worked out, and everyone can change, as long as you have enough patience and love. Every attack is a kind of cry for attention. Sometimes your family just doesn't know how to tell you that they love you. So, they attack you, they scream at you or do something bad to attract your attention. But make sure you understand. Talk to them and make sure you understand and know how to solve the problem.

There's nothing that can't be solved. You have to try your best. Think during meditation, use your wisdom, write down the solution and try it. You'll feel in your heart what to do. If you meditate enough, everything will be all right in your life.

Meditation is important, but the theoretical teachings are also important. Make sure you at least read or listen to the Master's teachings every day. If you don't feel my teachings are very good, then listen to some other Master. Get the bible or the Buddhist scriptures out, and they can tell you even more. I give you only the five precepts, but the bible has ten commandments so you have a choice. And there's a lot to learn from the past and present Masters. You should keep some theoretical teachings in your mind, to control the mind. That's for the mind only; the soul doesn't need it.

So, each time you encounter a problem, or if you have a bad habit, you should read the teachings of the Master. This will tame your mind to a great extent. You must read or listen to good teachings and noble dharma every day, and not simply sit in meditation. Otherwise, you won't know why you meditate. If you don't know the purpose, you won't get good results. Your heart won't long for it, and your mind won't be peaceful enough to enter samadhi and gain really good wisdom afterwards.

Suppose you do all this and you meditate every day, but you still think you have a bad habit or that you're too attached to this and that. It's all right; don't worry. You've tried your best. At least your conscience is tranquil. You'll grow out of the bad tendency in time. Because some of us have very deep-rooted karma from past lives, we did many so-called undesirable things time after time, life after life so we can't control ourselves anymore.

Just like a horse that keeps going on one path every day: Later on, without the owner, or even blindfolded, he can still go on it. He keeps going on the same road all the time, just like a train that keeps going on the same track; we can't control it. But one day we'll get fed up with our own habitual patterns, and then we'll give them up.

So, don't worry so much. Don't blame yourself too much. Continue to do the best you can do for your own improvement. You can't do anything else except do your best. So, if you do your best, you'll feel good already.

The wondrous utility of sesame oil

When you meditate, don't worry about the energy. You should not pay attention to any part of your body, because when you think like that, you stop the energy. Let it flow freely.

Sit with about one third of your buttocks on a cushion. Then you can sit straight like this. If you sit like this or like that, [Master slumps forward with Her shoulders, from right to left, then leans far back against the chair cushions.] then sometimes the energy doesn't flow correctly. If you sit long, and if you don't sit correctly, the blood circulation cannot flow. Then it causes some blockage in the body, and then it causes pain. Also if it's cold, you must keep yourself warm. Sometimes it is rheumatism. Next time, before you sit, maybe you should put something warm on your back first; keep warm from the shoulder on down. If that doesn't help, you should put on sesame oil. That should help.

HAVING A NOTEPAD HANDY WHILE MEDITATING ¹¹²

You know, sometimes even when I meditate, I think of a problem, too. It was at hand, and sometimes pressing, sometimes very difficult to get rid of. So, what I do is, I write down the problem, before I meditate – this I will have to solve. Have a notebook beside you, or in your pocket – a small one, so it's not heavy, and a pen. This is more practical, concerning your job; because once you write it down, the mind feels better. 'Okay. He is going to take care of it.' It has already lessened the intensity and the pressure. You tell your mind, it eases off. If you know the solution to your problem, write that down, too. That's even better for the mind to calm down. But during meditation, sometimes you have better ideas about how to solve that problem, have some clearer idea about what to do. Then you write it down immediately, because that may be the Master answering you, giving you the solution. So, write it down before you forget. Also once you write it down, you are peaceful. Then you can continue to meditate; and later when you finish your meditation, you can take care of it. So, don't hesitate.

The practice of meditation is not only to become a Master, as I've told you. It benefits you in many ways. It gives you peace of mind, gives you a clearer mind to solve your daily problems. It gives you physical purification so that you become fit and healthy. It is not only to become a Master or to be one with God. The by-products are plenty. Miracles happen, and health is restored. The sickness is removed, and the problem is resolved. So, do more meditation. During meditation, if any ideas come up very clearly to you, write them down. Like this, you can continue to meditate, and the problem is gone.

Define what is right and justice

Actually, in this kind of situation, it is wrong because the lawyer is there to protect the company whenever the situation demands, not always blindly defending the company even when the company is wrong. That is the purpose of having a lawyer anywhere or anytime, not only for a company, but also in the private sector and for any enterprise or any undertaking.

Suppose someone wrongs us, accuses us of something that we have not done, or deprives us of something that we rightfully deserve, then we need a lawyer to defend for us because we do not know much about the law. He is an expert and can argue for us, then we need an attorney. They should be the ones who defend the weak and help ignorant or oppressed people. In cases where a company is wrongly accused and taken

112. International four-day retreat, Washington D.C., U.S.A., December 24, 1997 (Originally in English).

advantage of by the employees or by another company, a lawyer should do his best to defend for that company. Then it is okay; that is the best way to use a lawyer. It is not just to have him there so that you always win, and your company always saves money or takes money from other people. Therefore, it is not the lawyer's fault; it is the company's fault.

A lawyer for any company or any individual should strive to understand all the facts, and then defend for what is right, not defending the client, but defending for justice. Then it doesn't matter. But in most cases, people just make use of a lawyer to win a court case without regard to whether it is right or wrong, and this is no good.

If you are a lawyer or intend to be a lawyer and if you are going to work for any company or any person, you should bear this in mind. If your client is wrong, tell him he is and that you refuse to defend him. Or, you can challenge the policy of the company and say that your profession is to defend what is right and just and you cannot go beyond that. If they fire you, then go do something else, sell tofu or something. [Laughter] I told you yesterday that we don't have to live the life of the rich and famous in order to be human beings. The more we strive for outside richness and fame, the more we are slaves to all kinds of wrongdoing in this world. We should always strive to be righteous and right, and then no matter what we do, we will not fear anything.

Forsake the world in order to gain heaven

You remember the story about Rama in India, when he was nominated to be the future king, he was prepared to be king. Then his father removed him from denomination because the queen became jealous and talked him out of it. So, he was exiled to a very far away country. He was also prepared to go there, and people asked him, 'Are you not sad? Why are you not standing up for your rights?' He said: 'What for? If I am given a kingdom, then I will have to fulfill my obligations and do my duty the best that I can. But if the kingdom is taken away from me, good, then I don't have to do it. I will have a lot more time to meditate, to think of God, and to do something else.' When we look at things that way, we don't feel so confused and do not struggle inside anymore. We don't care, and that is the right attitude for everyone, especially for Quan Yin practitioners.

Before I came to Washington D.C., I had already bought a ticket and so had one of my companions. When we went to the airport, he forgot that his ID Card had a different name on it and he had not brought the new one. The airline would not let him on the plane, and they made so much trouble, so much fuss.

And this is in America where normally people don't check names; I don't know why they did that. I was ready to curse the whole company because it was at the last minute and they told us that we had to go back to get the ID. We were going to be late, and a lot of people were waiting for us here. We couldn't get in touch with them at that time because the telephones and everything had not yet been connected. But then I thought, 'No, don't do that. It may be for something good,' and then I just smiled. It makes you feel peaceful when you forgive people, and when you think that maybe it is God's arrangement for something else better, or for someone's benefit. It might not be for your benefit, but it might be for someone else's benefit. Whatever it is, it is God's arrangement; otherwise, it would not happen. That is what I think all the time. Then suddenly another lady jumped in from nowhere and said, 'You can buy another ticket with this ID card and get a refund on the other ticket.' So, there was no problem and we left on time and arrived on time also.

It is not because of the new ticket or anything, it's just the attitude that makes you feel so good. Before the new arrangement comes, you already feel good; you have already made

peace with God and with the whole world within yourself. This is a very beneficial way for us and we can think that way because we meditate, because we are calm in our hearts and we don't feel hostile toward any situation or any people, let alone someone who has not done us any wrong, like the client of the opposition. So, as a lawyer or any defender of justice, you should remember this.

We should rather do ourselves harm than do someone else harm, except in self-defense, and then you should do what you think is right. But normally, I just let God do what is right; I don't even bother to defend myself. What do we have that is worth defending, after all? Should I defend myself so that I live longer in this body, or that I eat more in the few more days or few more years that I live? Or do I need to defend my fame? Why do I have any fame and how does it serve me? Of course, it is good if our group has a good name, then it is more comfortable for us, and we can do many beneficial things for humankind. But if it doesn't happen that way, it is all right. I have less work to do and you have less brothers and sisters in the same group. They are also our brothers and sisters even if they are outside our group, so it doesn't matter; we don't lose anything.

Uphold the spiritual and let it shine above all

In this world there's nothing more worthwhile than reaching the state of being one with God. Suppose you became the king of the whole world, then what? Would you eat six or more times a day and get fat? You'd have other problems then; you'd have to go get liposuction, or diet and exercise and sweat a lot and it might not even help. And suppose you became president of a country, then what? What else do we have? We still go out empty-handed.

It's okay to work and earn money and strive to be successful as long as we do it as a sport. For example, if we go onto a football field or a basketball court, we have to play the best we know how. But that doesn't mean it's the only thing we should do in this world. That's just by the way. If we don't remember this, then even if we sit for a long time we will not have experiences.

The people who do have experiences also have to remind themselves not to be too proud or too relaxed because there is a lot farther to go. There are always higher levels. There is no end, no 'roof' to our attainment. It's not that you hit the top and then you are finished; that's not so. There is always more happiness, more bliss waiting for us at every step on the way, at each level of consciousness.

So, we always have to continue, and that's what's worth living for; otherwise, even if we live another hundred years, then what? Eat, sleep and watch television; that's it. There's not much to do; sometimes it's very boring here. So actually, when you thank me, I think I deserve it! [Master and audience laugh.] Because I have taught you some ways to pass your time in this boring world. Suppose you did not have meditation: How boring that would be!

And if we cannot balance our lives between the spiritual and the material, we have to quit one or the other. So, the choice is yours. We should choose spiritual progress anytime over material gain, of course, but I would not force you to choose one over the other. I can just tell you of the consequences: Money and fame are very, very strong, powerful tools that maya uses to nip at our spiritual aspirations. So, be careful.

CULTIVATING ONESELF IS NECESSARY BEFORE GOVERNING ONE'S COUNTRY ¹¹³

Most great leaders have spiritual aspirations in their hearts; that's why they're great. If not, they're just politicians, bad ones at best. If they don't have spiritual goals to sustain their souls, they can't even be good politicians. They can't be good at anything.

So, spiritual attainment is the most important thing we have to achieve in this life before we can achieve anything else, be it financial status, fame, name or politics. If we want to lead people, we have to first lead ourselves out of darkness.

Continuous spiritual elevation is the main goal of life

Even in favorable situations we should always try to remind ourselves that God comes first. God is our true self. I'm not here to preach to you that you have to kneel every day to God and worship Him because if there is such a God, He doesn't need us to worship Him anyhow. But remember that He is us. God is us. So, we first have to remember our great self in order to survive, and then get out of the darkness of this world; because in favorable situations and times of physical happiness we tend to forget the most important thing. We forget and then plunge back into suffering and scream and pray to God and so on. But sometimes it's too late; we're already suffering.

So, it's better that we remind ourselves every day, or at least endeavor to try. Before you sit in meditation, try to pray to God in any way that touches your heart. Pray to God, pray to the inner Master, pray to your inner self, pray to Buddha or to whomever you feel is dearest to your heart and say, 'Please help me to remember who I am. Please help me to become more and more enlightened every day.'

That's it; once is enough. If you sincerely pray one time it's enough because you yourself can hear it. If you're not sincere, you can shout the whole day long but you know it won't work because you aren't putting your whole self into the prayer. That's why it won't work. But sometimes prayers do work because when you're already desperate and you know you're really down, you pray and at that time you see the Light. Even if you ordinarily wouldn't see it or if it's difficult for you to see it otherwise, at that time you see it. If not, you can try again. If we fail, we have to stand up and do it again.

Every day we have to renew our strength in God, in our practice, in what's beautiful and in Truth and glory. We can't just sink into this material world with its material comforts and material kind of life forever. We can't because we're not that. We're not that at all, including this body. At the moment, we're aware of it so we still stay here, but in samadhi we don't even remember the body. The body doesn't exist and we know we're not the body at all. At that time we know our true self.

All of us have to endeavor to reach that state of selflessness. Then we'll know what God truly is. At the moment, we only know God as an abstract being. He blesses us, helps us do this and that and answers our prayers so we do already know God to some extent, but that's not enough. It's not enough that every day we pray to God for material comfort and to solve some problem for us and so on; that's not enough. We have to reach the state of being one with God. Then we know we are God, we are the children of God and we are

113. International four-day retreat, Washington D.C., U.S.A., December 23, 1997 (Originally in English).

also God. That's the state that Jesus, Buddha and other Masters have attained and we must endeavor to attain as well.

CLEARLY DISTINGUISH WHAT'S TRUE AND FALSE ¹¹⁴

Don't be misled by a so-called similar teaching; don't be tempted by an easy way, a cheap substitute for enlightenment, cheap happiness, and then mistake that for enlightenment. Don't be mistaken, irresponsible in your behavior and have a lowly way of thinking toward liberation. Liberation means you're liberated from all that, from all that which is bothering you, from all that which is no good, from all that which is not noble, from all that which is not beautiful, which is binding you, suffocating you, and making you feel guilty, making you feel that you're not God-like. All desires make you feel like you're burning, you're passionate, have wanting and lust; lust is different than love, sex is different than offering yourself, celebrating the love between two people, even though the actions may look the same. Don't be mistaken.

Similarly, don't be mistakenly irresponsible, and engage in irrational behavior for liberation. Liberation is not enjoying yourself at the cost of others' suffering. Liberation doesn't mean that you lower yourself at the expense of your noblest being. Liberty has many costs. The people, who go around killing people, they say that is liberty, and also freedom. Freedom doesn't mean you take away other people's freedom. Joy doesn't mean you have to cause other people's suffering.

There's another point about why we have to keep ourselves noble and pure. Because people can see us – the seers, the sages and the pure in heart – can see our aura. If we do something right, if we are God-realized, we are God-loving and one with God, our aura is golden, brilliant. If we do something wrong – if we hurt other people emotionally, physically, mentally or spiritually – our aura is dark. People can see us, so we cannot cheat. That's why we have to keep ourselves beautiful.

REALIZING THE BLESSING OF SELF ACCEPTANCE ¹¹⁵

Why do you have to be so hard on yourself? How do you know that everyone else is better than you? Or even that I am better than you? I am no better than any of you. I just accept myself; I just feel that I am good. Because if God didn't feel good about me, He wouldn't have created me this way. Whatever He does, I am fine. Whatever I am, I am okay. So, feel like that about yourself, or about anyone else. Of course, we have some things we don't like about ourselves. But then again, who are we to judge ourselves even? God said, 'Don't judge,' which doesn't just mean don't judge other people; it also means don't judge yourself.

Try your best. Do whatever makes you feel good. Whatever you can change, if it makes you feel good, then change it. If it doesn't make you feel good to change, then no matter how many people say it, don't change. And if you can't change, even if you know it's good, then don't change. Forgive yourself and enjoy. Enjoy whatever other things you have. And try to ignore the negative things that you feel you don't like about yourself as much as possible.

After all, God made us in all colors and all personalities so that we can live a colorful life. So, accept yourselves; accept your imperfections. There's no need to be perfect. I know

114. Group meditation, Pune, India, November 23, 1997 (Originally in English).

115. International four-day retreat, Bangkok, Thailand, October 23, 1997 (Originally in English).

you don't like my high heels, but I still wear them. It's all right. In the beginning, I didn't feel like wearing this make-up and all that. And then afterwards, I said, 'Oh, why not?' It's no problem! Sometimes I feel comfortable; sometimes I don't feel comfortable. Sometimes I wear things like this, but when I am not with you I wear all kinds of things, like you do. It's also comfortable. Today, I don't really feel like wearing this, but it's okay, too. It serves some purpose. It's all right; no problem.

We should not be too hard on ourselves, because that means we are hard on God. We blame Him for creating us like this. We blame Him for putting us through situations that made us learn some bad habits. We blame Him for not helping us to change them and for the imperfection that we think He created. So, don't worry about it. If He's happy with you, you should be happy with yourself. We are okay, actually.

You come here because you don't feel you're okay. And all I am trying to tell you is that you are okay, all this way, all this while. All the lectures, all the seminars, all the retreats, and all the questions and answers are meant just to drive home one point, which is that you are okay. It doesn't matter what you are; you are very special. Because no one else is like you. That's why you are okay. Take you away, and the world is different. Because there is something missing that is not you. No one else can replace it. So, you must be okay.

All the bricks in a house – some may be smaller, some may be bigger, some may have a hole in the middle, and some may have a stain or a defect somewhere, but they all hold the house together. Take one away, and the house is not the house any more. So, you are okay. And so you are practicing just to accept yourself, just to know that you are God in the end. Or slowly realize that you're perfect in every way. Just like a grain of sand is perfect in every way, you are even more perfect.

Don't worry about everything that you do. Because now you know what's wrong and what's right already, anyhow. And you're trying your best to do it. Everyone knows. The whole universe knows you're trying your best, or else you wouldn't be here. You wouldn't be suffering for your own so-called defects. Everyone knows that. So, it's all right; just accept yourself. Because you're perfect anyhow. Who is there to judge you? 'Let the one who is not guilty cast the first stone.' I am not the one who casts that stone.

THE CREATIVE SOURCE OF OUR REAL BEING ¹¹⁶

I was mostly an introvert when I was young. I didn't talk too much the way I do now – only rarely. I also didn't know what to talk about. Remember I told you how my husband's friends talked to each other about everything for so long and how I always wished I could talk about half that much to my husband? Things would have been more lively that way. But normally I didn't talk. I didn't know what to talk about. I've really changed. I've really changed into a different person. I don't know how, but things have changed.

Even many people who knew me before, from the times when I ran around Indian ashrams, were surprised that I talk so much. When these people read my lectures that you print in the magazines, or when they got some tapes from someone, they were surprised. They said, 'Oh, Jesus! This girl – She talks?' Because when I ran around the Himalayas or different ashrams in India or elsewhere, I rarely talked to people. I didn't even have close friends. I was always very quiet, and very shy toward people, shy toward the public. God has changed me, really. He has changed me completely into a different person. I never

116. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., September 13, 1997 (Originally in English).

talked like this before. I never knew how. I really couldn't talk. I never did. I am surprised myself.

So, this is how God can change us if we just let it be, just put complete trust in the name of Christ, the name of God, or the name of the Buddha. Then everything will be arranged the way it should be. We should just become like kids. Don't forget the child inside you. It is always there, and whenever we call, he comes out. He peeps out. That is the God nature. That is the nature of purity. We shouldn't worry so much. We shouldn't calculate so much – 'If we do this, what will we get in return?' A child doesn't do that. A child never worries about tomorrow.

The bible also says the same thing. Don't worry about tomorrow. It is enough that you take care of today. Consider the lilies in the fields and how they grow! Even the little blades of grass, God takes care of. How would Hes not take care of you? But most of us cannot become childlike in this way. That's why we have a lot of sorrows, a lot of problems. Even if we ourselves can be childlike, but our relatives, our close ones and our loved ones are not childlike, it also can cause us problems, pulling us back into the frigid kind of world in which we sometimes feel suffocated. It is difficult to live together when we are less than childlike.

Being childlike doesn't mean that we don't take responsibility or we don't do what we have to do. It means that we just do it with a very pure joy and without expectations, because knowing God as God is, we should not really worry. Hes made the whole universe in seven days, but what a mess! [Master and audience laugh.] Don't tell Hirm, okay? This is just a bad joke between us. Perhaps Hes should have taken more time. Hes was like a child and too much in a hurry, creating things in a quick fashion. So now we have to fix it a little. It is okay, though.

Actually, Hes did that on purpose because suppose God had made everything too perfect, what would we have to do? We'd be even more bored, with no cinema to watch and no soup to drink. No one would ever be hungry or thirsty; we would have no need to amuse ourselves, no need to do any sculpture, painting or any artwork because everything would already be there, already perfect, and we wouldn't have to do anything.

Yes, everything is already there in the universe. Everything is already perfect. But sometimes we choose to ignore that, we choose to close the curtain between us and the perfection so that we can see some flaws, some mistakes, something imperfect so that we can create something new, or make it into perfection, into the likeness of the original one from God. That is why we are here as humans, or else we don't need to be here, really.

Many times when you enter samadhi, when you enter the childlike state that I have mentioned, the real childlike state when you are like an angel, like God, when you are in the pure joy of existence, when you just exist alone, at that time, we truly know everything is perfect. At that time, everything we wish for can be fulfilled but then we would never wish for anything in that state. You remember those times when you were in samadhi, and you really enjoyed it.

Do without doing

It is true that for people who have wisdom, who meditate, who become childlike, and entrust everything to God, things go just the way the wind blows, just the way the sun rises and sets. There is no need, really, for effort. I think of all the painters, for example, the professional ones, who take days or weeks to paint one painting, yet I do it in a few hours,

sometimes half an hour, depending on the situation. And I have never learned any techniques. I have not even read books about painting, and other people still like them – outside people, that is, not only us.

I didn't even make much effort. And those professional painters can mostly paint only in one style. Sometimes you see someone's exhibition at a gallery, and you see almost the same style from the beginning to the end. It is just the angles that are different.

For example, a person specializes in painting forests with the sun rays penetrating through them, and there is a little pond underneath. Then he does that all the time, maybe from different angles. He cuts the pond into many pieces, and in one painting he puts in the picture of the pieces on the left side, and in another painting, he puts in the pieces from the right, and in yet another one, he puts in the middle part. When I look at one, I don't even need to look at the signature. I know it is his, most of the time. I am not saying that every painter is like that. And it takes him a lot of time to learn to do that, and a lot of time to finish that picture. But most of the painters are like that.

I don't need to do that. I could paint the same thing again but I'd never want to. It's boring enough to paint one already. To repeat it again, I couldn't do that. Imagine spending your whole life painting almost the same thing all the time, and even taking so long, with all your expertise and your experience in the field. That is something I worship. People are really patient; they really have endurance. I couldn't do that. It would bore me to tears. And then these painters cannot get money, too.

But this is all different. That is technique and know-how. And mine is just natural, childlike, and I do it for the pure joy of doing it. I don't even think of making money or pleasing the public. I have no one else in mind at the time and I don't have any idea what I'm going to paint next. I have no fixed idea or subject. I just do it the way I want, the way I feel at that time and it just feels good. Every time I finish one painting, lousy as it looks, I like to look at it for many days, until all the paint naturally dries. And sometimes I go away, but I still miss it. I want to come back and look at. Now I've grown up a little. I don't miss little things anymore. But I used to miss my paintings. Can you believe it? I don't know if all the other painters miss their paintings or not. It might not mean much to you, because you have different ideas about art. Everyone is different, of course. But when I first painted a picture, no matter how lousy it looked to you, it meant something to me because I was so happy when I did it. I did it just for the pure enjoyment of seeing how it came out. So, I didn't exert any effort, really.

Perhaps, sometimes I made an effort. I'll tell you what gives me a headache – when I do some still life pictures, imitations, painting flowers, fruit or things like that, making a copy. At that time, I feel tired. I think, Jesus, no wonder the painters charge a lot of money for them.

Painting fruit is not so bad but flowers are difficult. I thought it was easy: Just put the flower here and it looks easy; I'm going to do that, just for fun. Oh, it wasn't fun. It wasn't as much fun as when I wanted to do my own creation. When I create something, I can do it more freely. I enjoy it more. But when I started on the flowers, I had to finish it. I had to project them, and oh, I couldn't believe it.

I don't know how other painters enjoy painting because if you have to copy something, the inspiration is no longer there. I had to pay attention to minute details of the flowers and still couldn't make them look real. Mine look better, though, because I also put a little revolutionary touch in there somehow. I didn't want to make the picture look exactly like

the flowers but I wanted to express something through the flowers to at least find a little comfort in that inspiration, that motive. Or else, I would say I could never paint like this again. Painting flowers is so difficult. I never knew it was that difficult. When you see Van Gogh or things with sunflowers, don't think that it was an easy job. It looks easy, but it is not. Maybe it is easy for the painters; I don't know, because they are used to copying things.

Now I know why things that are not original make us tired. That is why this world makes us tired, because it is not original. This is the shadow of the real thing and we have to do things according to rules and regulations. That is why it makes us tired. And that is why driving makes me tired, because it is just like copying. I cannot do what I want. I have to do exactly the way it should be done. It is okay now, but that's why I am not talented.

Every time I give a lecture, I can just speak naturally the way I do to you now. That is okay. But if I have to think ahead of time and draft a speech, oh God – I never thought it could be so difficult. I wasn't very bad at essay writing in school. I was always number one. I could write, but I never wanted to, except in school when I was young and forced to do it. I can do it, very easily, and at any time.

If you have to describe something or describe an occasion, then it is okay. But when you have to describe God, and think ahead of time what God looks like, it is not natural anymore. When I was in Europe, how difficult it was for me when I had to draft a speech in German or in French! Especially when I have not spoken the language for a long time, it was like a headache. Even if I have to write in English, I feel so weird. I feel so fake, like it's not real.

Express our creative talents with a childlike heart

Because we were originally the creator, the spark of the creative energy and the divine, so anything that forces us to go by rules and regulations, to draw like some other person, to copy, we do not like it. That is like being a copy machine. So, if we do not have the creative energy flowing out of us, which is more natural and lets us make use of our own creative talents, then we feel tired. That is why all the jobs in this world make us tired, no matter how much money you are offered. I just realized that it is not that you are lazy; it is not that you don't want to work; it is not that you don't want to contribute, but many jobs really drag you down and drain you because you have to do exactly what they say. Sometimes it is really tedious.

I feel very sorry for us sometimes, that we can't be childlike, even though we want to. Sometimes the reality, the world, just wants to drag us back into this very heavy kind of material existence, and we feel very tired. Even though sometimes we work only four hours, part-time, we get tired. At the end of the day, we have kind of used up all our energy. We become more tense, more critical, more stressed. Of course, and then we cannot be so innocent anymore. We have a lot of preconceptions about a lot of things, which sometimes might not be true, and sometimes we know it, but at our cost later on.

Everything hits us in the face and tells us things are not good, things are so hard, money is difficult to earn, and you have to fight, you have to compete, and you have to do this, you have to do that, in order to get ahead. There are many schools that teach you how to be a billionaire in no time, how to earn money without working.

Actually, it is not like that. We don't need to really exert so much effort with the mind; instead, we just try to remember the creative source of our real being, and then we can

create anything. Actually, energy can create subjects and it can even make things materialize. In Tibet there are some kinds of traditions, some kinds of sects, where people teach you how to visualize things. You can visualize anyone you want. You can pick up a guy like that, imagine him, and then make another one. The cloning machine is not necessary. You can do that with your own imagination until that person becomes a reality, and you can even touch him. That's the problem.

But that is not even the highest level yet. That is where all the magic comes from. You can imagine anything you want if you concentrate hard enough. This is just an example. A guru in India sometimes can materialize things and give it to you out of thin air. It is not that he tricks you; he really can do it, or at least produce some ash.

This is really not the super level of consciousness yet we can do that. What more can we do if we can go back to the real, the highest source of creation of all things in the universe – from the small worm to the big sun that warms the whole world, without the energy ever being used up?

So actually, all this know-how is very nice, but why we rely only on that, we'll be in trouble. But some people are successful. They know how to talk and if they don't know what else to rely on, and if they've forgotten God and wisdom, then maybe they should try that.

For us, we can try it if we want to; but we must remember the child inside is the real God. Unless you become pure as a child, you cannot enter the kingdom of God. You remember? That is just a way of saying that we have to rely on God for everything. That is the only thing that can give us everything we want, really. We just naturally encounter something and it brings us joy and benefit. We don't even have to do any kind of work or exert any kind of effort.

So, this is the child that we should become – not the irresponsible one, but the wise child. When we become so wise, we become so pure, because when we know everything, then there is nothing that we should know, nothing we seek to know, and nothing that we want to know. That is why we become so contented, because we feel at least that we know whatever comes is fine, whatever arrives is okay. God will arrange everything. God is the Master in us. God is ourselves, the creative energy that made us in the beginning, and that is part of us, that is us, and that forever will be.

WE HAVE TO KEEP RENEWING OUR CONNECTION WITH GOD ¹¹⁷

After initiation, we still have to renew our connection with God again and again, or else we'll suffer from the illusion of being less than children of God. So, we each have to be reminded again because every day we spend about eighteen to twenty hours in the world, where everyone else in society, even our friends and relatives, remind us that we're mere mortals, that we're weak, we're physical, we're nothing. So, we have to spend at least two-and-a-half hours, one tenth of our time, reminding ourselves, 'No, no, I'm God's child; I'm a spiritual being; I'm great.' That's the time we spend reminding ourselves, counteracting the world's pressure so that we don't let people convince us that we're merely weak human beings; that's why we have to meditate each day. Otherwise once you get initiated, that would be enough; you'd be Buddha: Finished, final.

117. Four-day retreat, London Center, United Kingdom, August 27, 1997 (Originally in English).

RULES OF PLAYING THE GAME ¹¹⁸

Because we are in this world, we have to abide by the rules of the game, no matter who we are. There are no exceptions for anyone. Since this world is the game of maya, any master who comes here has to abide by the rules of the game, or else he is not allowed to come here, to be a master or anything. That's why it makes things difficult. Well, every game is difficult – football, baseball, basketball – they all have their rules. You have to know the rules in order to play correctly; if not, they'll kick you out, no matter who you are.

Sometimes you don't understand. You keep asking me or any teacher, 'Why, if You have so much power, don't You change the world?' Why should I change the world? If I change it, it's no fun anymore; if I change it, there's no struggle for people; if I change it, there's no yearning, no effort made to meet their own greatness, to discover their own mastership. You have to struggle. A professor in the university is not allowed to take the exam for his own son. The son has to learn from ABC and has to use his own effort. The professor can only guide him but cannot learn by heart the lessons for the son, cannot take the exam, cannot pass the exam for him. It's not allowed. It's not good for the son also, even if it were allowed. What for? Why would you take the exam for the son? You'd be the first in the class for the son and he'd still remain stupid, not knowing anything, couldn't even read and write.

So, the wisdom is yours, mastership is yours. You have to discover, you have to struggle, you have to learn and you have to want it. I don't change anything. God doesn't want to change anything because He has free will, and allows everyone to have free will. So, the Master or anyone in a position of power also has to understand this. Every Master understands this.

Inner Light and Sound

In the physical world, we have only physical sound. Like a bird singing, the musical notes from instruments, the noise from cars and all that, strike the ears physically. In the spiritual world, we don't need all these physical instruments in order to make or to hear the Sound. It's not that we need to hear the Sound. We need to elevate ourselves to where the Sound is, or where the Light is. The higher the better. It's not in your mind. The soul has to be elevated out of the body, out of the physical world. Sometimes you are still here, you live in this world, you're doing your work, you hear the Sound and see the Light, and you think you're not in the spiritual world. You are, because the soul is not the body.

The soul exists outside of the body, outside of physical bondage, and merges itself into the spiritual world. That's why you can hear the Sound and see the Light. At that time you exist on both levels – the soul level and the physical level. Most of the time people exist only on the physical level. That's why they don't hear the Sound, they don't see the Light. Normally, we're not physical. That's why we can liberate ourselves out of the physical dimension and then we can hear the spiritual world.

The vibration of words

Every word has a different frequency of vibration, so if you use the word 'love,' even without meaning it, it still gives a very nice vibration and comfortable feeling. It is better than saying 'I hate that cat' or 'I hate apples.' Even if you don't mean it when you say 'hate,' you are already full of hate. [Master and audience laugh.] Just say love. But when

118. Four-day retreat, London Center, United Kingdom, August 26, 1997 (Originally in English).

you say 'I love you' to your beloved individually, that is of course different. Even though the words are the same, the sound and the feeling are different. For example, you call your child 'sweetheart' or 'honey,' and sometimes you also say to other people outside, 'Oh honey, you're lovely!' But that's different from the way you call your own child. Everyone knows that. There is no mix-up about it. The more often you use positive words, the better it is for the world and for yourself. Don't be stingy with love and positive words. Say them at all time.

Don't miss the fun of growing!

It's not that you have to see me every day. No, you don't. You should not. You have to live your life independently. You have to develop your own way of living and your own way of discovering the wisdom of the universe. You have to live. It's risky, make mistakes sometimes; but it's fun. It's growing. If I have to decide everything for you and teach you every little thing every day, you're finished. You'll never grow. It might look peaceful, it might look very easy, simple-like, but it's not the way to grow. So, do not be afraid of mistakes, do not be afraid of responsibility, do not be afraid of experimenting with life. It will help you. It'll help you to have fun, to know yourself.

Do not always ask for a peaceful life, a worry-free life, because that also means no responsibility. No responsibility means no mistakes and no mistakes means no growth. Don't ask always to be with the Master and the Master takes care of everything. That's no fun either. That's boredom. We have to be adventurous also. We have to take initiatives, we have to make decisions ourselves in order to test our wisdom – where we've gone, how we've grown. We can't just rely on the Master for everything. You have to learn to be a master too – at least a master of yourself, your destiny. Of course, it's more risky that way but then it's more exciting. Don't live a boring and dull life. Live your own style, it's fine with me. As long as you keep the precepts, meditate, and grow in compassion and love, nothing can go wrong. You don't harm anyone, but you do experience your life, live your life. Don't be too over-disciplined. Too over-disciplined can kill you. Be flexible.

LIFE'S JOURNEY TO THE TRUTH ¹¹⁹

Sisters and brothers, it is very delicate when we meditate and we have so many problems daily. It's very difficult for us to concentrate on God. Just to think of the name of God, or even to remember that God exists is already very difficult. We tend to forget God when we need God the most. But this is the practice. This is why we have to do it every day, until we overcome our weaknesses, overcome our problems, and remember God every time, in every situation of our life. Until we close our eyes and we see Hirm. It's not that in one minute to the next, you can become united with God right away. After thousands of reincarnations, millions of years of recycling yourself in this world, it is very difficult indeed to reacquire this habit of remembering who we really are.

We are Gods. We are one with God. If we are one with God, that means we are God. At least if we are the children of God, we have the God quality. Any child bears some resemblance to his father, by having the father's DNA and blood type inside. So, we cannot say we are not Gods. If we are not Gods, or we are not the children of God, where do we come from? Dinosaurs? And then where do the dinosaurs come from? They have to be traced back to the origin somehow. But we have forgotten this. Even I forget sometimes, when I am under pressure and suffer. I forget it for your sake, so that I can suffer.

119. Four-day retreat, London Center, United Kingdom, August 24, 1997 (Originally in English).

So, maybe you have forgotten yourself for someone else's sake. Or, that is your sacrifice. You struggle for someone else's benefit. It's all right. But don't lose heart; just continue. The fact that you have come to seek God through initiation, the fact that you have come all the way here, despite the difficulty of your journey, your country, your job, or your family problems, you come and sit here a whole week in this intensive period of time, hoping to find God, that is very, very precious already.

The intention is important, not always the result. God knows! God knows our intention. That is very important. And you know your intention. That's important. The Light and Sound are only the proof that God exists. He exists anyhow, whether we see or don't see. In the bible, it is stated, 'Blessed are those who do not see but believe.' The people who see God, who experience God, they believe. That's easy; their longing is not intense any more. But for the ones who don't see, their longing is the substitution for blessing. As long as we still long for God, we still have the blessing, we have the connection with God, we feel that we have something to work for, something to strive for, to achieve, it's okay.

Don't always sit there and expect an experience. This is the worst experience that you can have. Because the expectation dampens the spontaneity, dampens your carefree spirit, and that in turn sometimes really obstructs the vision. Have you ever experienced that, when you sit in front of the television but you are so wrapped up in some problem you don't even see what's there? Or when you're reading some book – you're reading and reading, and you know the exact words, but you don't understand anything. You read it again and again, and still it doesn't register in your mind what the book or the letters are all about.

So, God is always right there. It's just that we are over-anxious, and also over-burdened with troubles. Be patient. That is the way you have to work through your life. That is your destined mission, to work through problems. That's how you earn your place in heaven, working through them. And if you don't work this life, next time there is double interest. How terrible! That would be worse. It's true. Every time we come back again, the obstacles will be more manifold. That's why people are afraid of reincarnation, not because we have to be a human being again, but just that we have to face many more problems than the last reincarnation, until we work it all out. And really, without the Master's blessing, without Master power, we couldn't make it. With the past karma, the present karma, and the coming karma – ooh! [Master shakes Her head vigorously from side to side.]

Even if you think I don't have problems, I do. Every problem you have, I have – sometimes more intensely, or the problem is more intense. But we have to survive, so I have to pick myself up, and then continue my work. You think it's easy to be a Master. It's not true. I don't know about other masters; you can go ask them. I don't know. But for me, it's not easy. It's not a problem physically. It's an inside problem. You can't point it out, like, 'Oh, it's my children,' or 'It's my work.' I can't even point to what my problem is; it's just there. Sometimes it chokes me. Okay, we all have to struggle, but we can make it. We are making it! We will arrive.

THE OMNIPRESENT TRUE NATURE ¹²⁰

At this very moment, while we're sitting here and talking, we're simultaneously living through all the levels, which we have or have not realized. It's not that we only live the life of a human being here. We become fairies, saints, Gods and Buddhas as well; even ghosts by the way. It's because there are many such levels in the universe.

120. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., July 19, 1997 (Originally in Aulacese).

For example, you're going to have a vegetarian barbecue today. Someone is going to give you a skewer, on which you put a variety of things. A piece of bell pepper over here, a piece of tofu over there, a piece of wheat gluten, a piece of ham, so on and so forth. Then, when you hold the whole skewer up, you will be able to see its entire contents. Everything is in your hand. Human life is the same. In one instant, we're able to embody all nature, and knowledge of every level in the universe. It's just that we don't know this.

It's because now we're living in the world as a human being. We chose our life to be in human form, and therefore, we only close all the other gates in order for us to be able to fulfill the human life at this time. If the other gates were wide open as well, you would know that you are also a fairy, Buddha, God or past, present and future; then you would not be able to fulfill the responsibility, the duty as well as the journey you have chosen to take in this life. Hence, there are no third, fourth and fifth levels at all. Everything is us. The third is us, the fourth is also us, and the second is us as well.

If we want to return to all the things of which we possess such an immense knowledge again, then we should practice the Quan Yin method to regain all this knowledge. The higher the level we practice at, the more we are able to know that we are indeed everything. All beings are one, for that matter. If we choose not to practice, then we only know that we are just a human being who goes to work day and night like walking on a treadmill. We go back home, go to work, to take care of spouse and children and then argue with them, argue with our husband. Then that's all we do without knowing anything else.

Whereas, if we see that the chosen journey of being this human being seems to be a mistake, which makes us bored and we want to know more, then by practicing the Quan Yin method, we'll be able to know more. Our life will naturally become different. [Applause]

What's happened? What made you applaud so noisily? [Audience: Very good.] You understood? Oh God, I had such a poor discourse but you all understood anyway. You're so good indeed. It's true. Actually, I was afraid that you would not understand because this subject is so complicated. It's hard to explain.

For example, now there's a skewer that has everything on it; but while you bite a piece of tofu, you only know the tofu taste. Ah, we're hungry and tofu is our favorite, so we eat the piece of tofu first, and we only know the tofu taste. At that time, we only chose tofu to enjoy just its taste; our mentality, our enjoyment was focused on that piece of tofu.

Although, we have a skewer full of other things, we don't pay attention to them, so we don't know. Not paying attention also means that we don't know, because we just don't pay attention to them. Naturally, we have it all but we either do not pay attention to it or ignore its presence. It's because of our mind. Our whole attention is being focused on a piece of tofu. Since we so enjoy eating it and only think of enjoying its taste first, we inadvertently forget the others. Nevertheless, we know what happened before and after. Similarly, only when you choose to enjoy other tastes will you be able to recall something spontaneously.

Therefore, while living this human life we often think that we have the sixth sense. In retrospect, since childhood we often have had such an experience even before we practiced the Quan Yin method. Sometimes, you've experience that. While sitting in one place, we sometimes intuitively feel that we seem to remember something so unfamiliar. We have never done such a thing before, but we know. Also we think that oh, sometimes we want to do something in the future but we feel frightened all of a sudden. We then call it the sixth sense. The sixth sense told us that we should not engage in such a business.

Sometimes, when we are in the middle of doing something, we think: Oh, this definitely can not be done. We know that instinctively. How could we know it when we haven't done that yet? Many say it's the sixth sense. Others say it comes from our past life experience. Actually, it's not. It's just a talk of the subconscious, a talk of a past life or future life experience.

Actually, there is no past life or future life. There's only human life, which is an infinite and endless chain. It's because we differentiate it into past and future, we chose it to be like that.

In so doing we have isolated and different experiences that are separated, each section. Like our home, we divide it into separate rooms. Actually, it's still our home. Before we subdivided it, it was an open space. Even when all the walls have been removed, it's still an open space anyway. We divide it in order for us to have separate areas to do our own private work.

Similarly, in the eternal life of a human being, of a being not entirely a human being, of a sentient being, there are many sections for that reason also. But, in reality, it is a long and endless chain. As we go through our present life, there is also past and future. It is because there is no time and space. They are just a result of our choosing to become a human being alone, to do the work we wanted to do now. Otherwise, it would be so boring if we were to complete all the past and future work in one life. It would not be like what we wanted originally. What we wanted was to descend to this world at this time just to choose to become a human being only. We will then choose to be a fairy or a Buddha at another stage. Then when we want to choose to become a ghost or demon, we would choose to be it at another time. We would shut the time and space gate to create an isolated area in order for us to become a human being, ghost, demon or fairy.

Actually, the life of every being is a long and endless chain. All is housed in this time frame only, without any past, future and present at all. It is we who chose a certain angle of life to complete the program that we wanted or to experiment with what we like. We like to do it in order to experience it; that's all. [Applause]

Hey, it's very difficult. But, actually, if at the same time we knew that we were also a saint or a Buddha, then we wouldn't be able to fulfill our duty as a human being at all. [Applause] It would be impossible because anything that we work on with our full devotion and energy would be completed with its full taste and depth. But if we already knew that we were God then it would be impossible for us to sit there and cry after being left by a husband. Crying without real passion. [Laughter and applause.]

If we sob without real passion, then we wouldn't be able to feel the suffering of a wife being left by her husband. We wouldn't be able to completely fulfill the role we designed to test ourselves. We try it in order to know how deep the suffering will be. Thus, when someone speaks of the suffering of the one who was left behind, we can understand and express our sympathy toward him/her. We will then try to help resolve their problem for we have already walked the same road before.

If the Buddha would have sat still in one place, He wouldn't have anything to do at all. He wouldn't have had sorrow or worry, and it would still have been considered okay. If we happen to choose such a journey, then it's still all right. There are many people who choose to try all tastes of irony and bitterness just for fun. Because in the long, long life of eternity in the universe, if we didn't choose to try this today and try that tomorrow, then we

would be bored to death. [Laughter] Today we leave the husband, tomorrow he will leave us and that's fun. [Applause and laughter.]

For example, while the Buddha is sitting here, He has chosen to be a human being. At the time He's a human being, if He still thinks that He's the Buddha, then how would He react when His wife leaves Him or when Her husband leaves Her? 'Oh well, all right, someday I'll go and find another husband. It's no big deal, life is so eternal.' Then He looks into the future and says, 'Ah, another wife is coming; she's even better.' Then, He says, 'Oh well, just leave, go away.' And He's no longer sobbing.

Okay, now we should talk about a less complicated subject – actors and actresses, for example. Your favorite actor or Liz Taylor. At the time she played the role of Cleopatra, she must have used all her mental strength, energy, focus and knowledge in order to perform that role well. If, at that moment, she still recalled that she was Liz Taylor, then she would not have been able to play the role well.

It was because the Liz Taylor in Beverly Hills had a husband, and had already left eight husbands, so this one was different. [Laughter] If she recalled the husband who had left her, she would sob her heart out about this sad story of her husband. Then how would she be able to play the role of Cleopatra? When she played the role, she had to be there, she had to be Cleopatra. From that, we should understand right away.

The saints or God are the same. When they have to play the role of a human being, they have to play it right, meaning that it has to be a hundred percent human. Whereas, if they still associate themselves with the sainthood or God, then they will never be able to play the role of a human being. The saints and God are so great with magical power, who couldn't sit there and sob his heart out because his wife had left him. It would never happen. That's it. [Applause]

Therefore, sometimes when I said you are a Buddha, a saint, you did not understand anything at all. It's because you have chosen to forget yourselves. Now you are so bored with being a human being; you haven't learned much. It's no fun to have chosen this path. Since it's not a good choice, you like to go back to being a saint, a Buddha; or you have been a human being for too long, you have tried this kind of life over and over without being able to get out. It's so boring; just think of it. Since there's nothing exciting anymore, we want to go back to being something highly conscious. Then, we should choose the Quan Yin path to follow. [Applause]

LEADING A GODLY LIFE AND BECOMING YOUR OWN GUARDIAN ANGEL ¹²¹

We have to change our way of life, not outside things such as the weather. As long as the majority of people still live a very immoral way of life, it will still be terrible – if not right here, then over there. And we sometimes have to share the collective karma too, even if we didn't do anything. Because when we live in a country, we share that country's karma.

So, the people who don't choose a moral or heavenly way of life can't experience heaven on earth because we are what we choose to do. The law of action and retribution is always perfect everywhere. If we keep to a very lowly way of life and continue with killing and all kinds of physical immorality, then of course we'll get the bad karma that's coming to us. That's no surprise at all because like attracts like. Those lowly vibrations will attract the

121. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., July 8, 1997 (Originally in English).

kind of lowly energy that brings disaster, trouble, unhappiness and chaos. But if we live our life in a very highly developed manner and choose a Godly way of life, then Godly events will pour into our life. That's why, after initiation when you've meditated and cleansed yourself with a vegetarian diet from the outside and heavenly food from the inside, your life will become better and better and better. That's also because like attracts like. You become more heavenly so you attract more heavenly blessings.

Most people who don't aspire spiritually live a lower kind of life. Many choose to live a life of animal standards so they attract all kinds of animal-like or lower energy and this lower energy brings disaster, unhappiness and trouble. Heavenly energy brings happiness, bliss and blessing because it's heaven. And a low or evil level of energy will bring a low quality of life or an evil quality of events into people's lives. Like attracts like so if we want our lives to be in heaven all the time, we have to act like heavenly beings and attract this kind of blessing to us. It's very simple; there's no need to be enlightened to understand this.

Some people always act in a bad manner, and when the consequences come, they blame it on God, saying that He doesn't bless them. They blame everything: They blame the circumstances; they blame other people; they blame their friends or their family. But it's not true. It's they themselves who attract these kinds of disasters because they act in ways that generate disastrous energy. And this disastrous energy in turn, as the law of like attracts like dictates, attracts more disastrous energy until there's enough of this energy to create a disaster. And then disaster surrounds that person in all kinds of forms, through all kinds of events and through all kinds of people.

So, if I request or if any other master requests that you keep the precepts, eat a vegetarian diet, purify your physical being and purify your spiritual and mental being by meditating, by thinking purely, speaking purely and acting purely, it's so that you'll attract all the pure energy and heavenly blessings to yourself. It's not that the Master is strict and controls your life by telling you what to do, like asking you to keep the precepts for anyone else's sake. It's for your own sake because everything you do that's good attracts good things to you, and if you do good all the time more and more good things will always come. And then the more good things that come, the less likely it will be that bad things will come to you because by then you'll be surrounded by a thick wall of good energy. Even if you want to do bad things then, it will be difficult.

Once you begin to be a good person or do good things, it just continues, like the generating of good energy, and that in turn attracts more good energy and then you feel stronger in goodness. And then you do more good, and the more good you do the more the good energy comes. And the more good and more energy bring even more good and more energy. And then you'll be surrounded all the time by a heavenly atmosphere. Then how can disaster ever come near you? You're surrounded. You're protected! There's no need for protecting angels and no need to believe in guardian angels. You guard yourself; you're your own angel.

FENG SHUI: AN ANCIENT CHINESE SCIENCE ¹²²

What you have to do is just keep the place tidy. Tidy up everything. Move all the trailers to the other side, to a lower place. Just move them there. Do you know why? Because our meditation hall is lower than all this garbage, and it makes you feel pressure. Just today I told someone that if you move all this away, you'll have more luck. Because then you'll feel more like, 'Ah! It's spacious.' And when you go out, you won't feel like there's pressure;

122. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., July 5, 1997 (Originally in English).

this isn't good feng shui because if you put the garbage on top of your roof, it blocks all the views and makes you feel narrow, or as though you're being pressed between two blocks and that's not necessary. But when you walk out of the meditation hall and the first thing you see is a toilet above your head, you just don't feel good about it.

If you have this psychological feeling, you don't feel good; you feel heavy, and then you attract heavy kinds of atmospheres that come to you and become bad luck. If you feel good, if you feel happy and relaxed, you'll attract that; like attracts like. You'll attract or create that kind of lively atmosphere and luck, or a feeling of being very happy. Then you'll attract more happiness, more light, more liveliness, a more bright-hearted feeling; and then luck will come. That's what we call 'good luck.' So, good luck or bad luck we make ourselves.

There's nothing superstitious about saying that when you move those things, you'll have more good luck. It's the same principle as in your house with feng shui. This isn't superstition: Feng shui is something like an old science. For example, if you built a house, especially in the old times, it was even more important then. In the old times, sometimes you could build a house on top of an undercurrent of water and you wouldn't even know it. Then, after a while, the outside of your house would collapse, and that would be no good.

So, some people would have to go and measure with whatever they possibly could, to see if there was something dangerous under the ground. Sometimes underneath there could be an iron mine or something like that, which would affect your magnetic field. For example, if some magnetic iron was underneath and if you first slept on the left side then five minutes later, you'd become just like a needle attracted by magnetic iron and sleep on the other side. [Laughter] Then later on, you'd sleep like this, [Master assumes an upside-down position.] and that's not good feng shui.

Feng shui is a science; it's not superstition, if you know about it. It's not like saying that if you put the house that way, God will protect you, but if you put the house this way, God won't protect you. God isn't that way or this way; God is everywhere. For example, if the door of your house faces south, this is good. Everyone knows that. Why is it good? Because the south represents more light so most people, when they sleep, if they face the south, it's good for their health. That's one example of feng shui. It probably just coincides with the movements of the universe. When they move together in harmony, it brings more health, and when you're healthier, you're happier. When you're happier, you attract more luck.

So, in the old times, people emphasized feng shui more because they didn't have equipment to solidify their basements or other things that we have in modern times. They had no equipment so they had to rely on people who either had their third eye or psychic power open and could see water underneath, or who had some kind of psychic ability within them where they could sense that something under a house wouldn't be good for the owner if it was built on top without a protective layer before the basement. So, they just did something. This was nothing like voodoo; there was no need for that. Sometimes they did something just to neutralize a force of nature, and then they blessed the house.

It's okay; if you believe in that, it's good for you. But you'd better find a good feng shui master! Otherwise, I could also become one and just say, 'Hula, hula, hoop,' 'holy names,' or 'meditate.' [Laughter] If the north wind, which is cold and bad, always blows this way, and you face your house this way, then of course you're bound to catch a bad cold a lot of the time. Whenever you open your door, or the wind comes through the door crack, it sometimes gives you a piercing, pulling kind of headache. If you face that way to sleep or

face that way to drink tea all the time, and then if you close the door, you'll feel a piercing draft, like a sharp wind, coming to you. And if you open the door, the bad wind will come in and bring with it all kinds of disasters. It's bad for you, bad for your health, and that's bad feng shui.

'Feng' means wind and 'Shui' means water. In the old times, wind and water were very important to people. Before we had tap water or anything like that, if you had a house, you'd have to have water nearby. So, you'd have to ask a person who knew feng shui. He could sense where the water was because he had a crude instrument. Or, his psychic ability would say, 'Okay, here you can build the house this way, and then dig a well that way and you'll have water.' And so you'd face the house that way because the 'Feng' that would come this way wouldn't be good for you and so on.

So, feng shui is like that. It's just the positioning of a house in accord with the harmony of nature. This became feng shui. Similarly, it's bad feng shui that you've practiced all these years. I suppose that among all of you here there are a lot of voodoo masters, and you know feng shui. Many of the Chinese here studied the I Ching and so on for years before I was even born. And you study feng shui and all the wigwag kinds of signs, but you still don't do anything about it. Even though I haven't studied any feng shui, I know this is no good. You just don't feel good, that's all; a good feeling isn't there. Don't you feel a little pressure when you come in and go out with that crack over there? No, you don't. You always close your eyes and meditate, and leave everything else to Master.

That's why I have to do it all the time. I have to clean the kitchen for you and get mad, and now I have to clear these things off. You should plant some crawling kind of plant, maybe beans or something that you can harvest. And also cover the fence or cut the fence into levels, or change it into a kind of see-through fence. If you don't want people to see, that's fine also, but paint it green or something that goes together, not a different or very contrasting color that's disturbing to the eyes. We're not talking about artistic taste. Whatever is disturbing to your harmonious sense of beauty isn't good feng shui.

The importance of keeping a vegetarian diet

Be careful about what you eat so that you do not contaminate yourself, and make the cells and the brain confused. This will consequently hinder your spiritual progress. It's not that God cares about what we eat, but if we poison our systems with intoxicating things or impure foods such as meat or animal products, then the cells of the body and the brain will also become contaminated and confused. And thus we will not be able to think clearly or sit calmly to find the source of happiness and wisdom.

We have to sit calmly. In both our sitting and daily activities, we must practice to be calmer and to focus more inwardly, so that we can contact the real source of our Godlike quality. From there, we can take care of every daily problem and pain, and make life happier. If we confuse our cells, brain, blood, and sentimental condition, we will also be confused. Then we cannot think straight anymore. When we sit in meditation, we will become very restless and agitated. Even if we sit well in meditation, our vision will be clouded with negative influences from the poisonous things that we have taken into our body. So, it's not that God cares what we eat or I care what you eat, or that if you eat a little meat you go straight to hell. It's not true. It's just that if we want to be Godlike, we must take care that everything we do and everything we eat is pure so that we will become pure also.

Everything you eat here is purely vegetarian and very hygienic, because they use gloves and masks when cooking for you. Even if they carry some bacteria or cold virus, they will

not impart it to you. But when you eat outside in other restaurants, of course, we cannot guarantee this. But you can recite the holy names to purify the food and offer it to God before you eat! This also minimizes a lot of infection for you.

I also do not care what you eat, but whatever you eat will affect your meditation, spiritual practice, mood, temperament, personality and your thinking about value of life. Everything hangs on that also. As long as we are in the material world, every material thing affects us; that's why we must carefully eat pure food – the food that has less karmic burden and less suffering – for our sake. Because animals fear death and cling to life, they suffer a lot. If they are forced to die prematurely for us, of course their fear and hatred are retained in the flesh that we eat. That's why we also become aggressive, agitated, discontented, and sometimes violent, just like how the animals feel before they die.

Plants also have feelings, not really feelings, but reflex reactions, and not that much, either. Their lifespan also is not as long as that of animals. Their fear is not so intense. Besides, they can grow again. You can cut one branch of a tree and it will grow another two or three branches, sometimes. So, if we cut some trees, it's all right, but plant three more. Or if we cut a branch, let it grow three more. It's okay. We don't worship nature. We use nature, but we also protect nature for our own sake. Human beings must always come first. Some very fanatic people say, 'Okay, then we don't eat plants also, because they have life.' I say, 'Okay, then die.' We don't worship fanaticism; we do everything in a middle way and very mild manner, just the same way we behave.

Purify ourselves first

Whatever you do here or anywhere, eventually the benefit will come to you. Whatever we do good to people, we think good about people, the benefit eventually is ours. That's why I ask you to think positive, speak positive, and do positive things. That's the only thing we should do if you want any good out of this life, to balance, to make our life better than before.

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. Remember that. If your mind is filthy, dirty, and you think everything is filthy, dirty, even sex becomes dirty to you. It's a gift from God. If it's no good, God didn't make it. But it must go with love. If you love someone, that is a kind of celebration of the love between you – if you want to celebrate it that way, if you want to express it that way. But don't think anything dirty about it, don't try to abuse people just for the sense of pure control or possessiveness, then abuse the gift of sexual pleasure from God.

If two people love each other when they marry each other, it's their business. And if you marry each other and love each other, nothing is anyone else's business. You can make love to each other or don't make love to each other, it's your business. It's your entire right – the way you try to express yourself, the way you choose to express yourself. We choose to express ourselves in many different ways. If our mind is pure, everything is pure, as long as we don't hurt anyone, as long as we have faith in God that everything God arranges is good for us even though it doesn't look good at the moment.

For example, like this afternoon I asked one of the brothers whether his wife had come back. He said no that she left him for good, but then he has another better one. Of course, he had to suffer a little meanwhile. Sometimes we think it's bad for us, but it's not. I told you that if God takes something away from us, He will give something. We have to have enough mind power, wisdom and the openness of the heart to appreciate when He gives

us something new to experiment with, to have a new adventure, new challenge, new power of creativity.

Don't just sit there and sulk, 'Oh, my last one was better.' It might not have been better. She might not have even liked you. Maybe you feel it was better because it was the past. Every time, everything we think about the past, we cheat ourselves – we think the past was good. I tell you truthfully, living in the present is the best, because the present is all we have. Even if the past was truly beautiful, even if your mind doesn't cheat you in thinking the past was beautiful – like your past wife was better or your past lover better – it's still the past. We don't have it. Cleopatra is gone. So, you might just as well be satisfied with the Mrs. X that you are married to.

Share only the beautiful things with others

Most of the troubles in our lives we make ourselves. We imagine a lot of garbage because we have preconceived ideas about how the situation is and how it should be because of our past experiences. Then we just fix our idea on that and demand that things happen the way it was or the way we think it should be. Then we make our lives miserable. If we'd just be open to new challenges, receive God's gifts every moment – anything with new curiosity and new enthusiasm – and work together with whoever is next to us to bring happiness to each other, then everyone is an angel. Every moment is paradise.

But we have too much garbage. If you have garbage, check yourself and throw it out, don't bring it to the Center and share it with people. We like to share food, love and enlightenment but not garbage. Every time you bring any garbage in this Center, you are doing yourself a great disservice, not to talk about all your brothers and sisters here.

This is a place where you should come to feel love, blessings, togetherness, everything that is positive; because you maybe not have them at home already. You have enough quarreling at home, you have enough negative things at home, you have enough bad thoughts about people at home, you have a lot of suspicion at home.

When you come here, even if you have that, pray to the Master, pray to God, the inner power to cleanse it for you. At least you bring that and share it with people. Do you bring your garbage and share it with your neighbor or whatever at home? No. If you share, you share spring rolls, vegetarian Pho (Au Lac food). You don't bring the garbage from your rest room to the neighbor and say, 'Here it is. Please look at it. Do you ever do that?' [Audience: No!]

The same with mental garbage. Come here and gossip about who is bad and who is good. It's no good for you. Garbage should stay where it belongs. As fast as possible throw it away. Never share it with people. It's no good, why do you share? Most of the things we talk or think about are not true anyhow, because you don't know how karma works. You just see the surface of things, like this guy treats that guy bad. But you don't know that last life he treated him worse even.

I have told you so many thousands of stories to demonstrate, to teach you; but you must learn it, you must digest it, and put it into practice. Don't listen here and let it come out there. Don't just sit here like an idiot, and don't think, don't better yourself. Clean yourself before you clean anyone else.

In my life, I haven't said I am perfect or anything; but I face myself every day without shame. I have nothing that I cannot tell you. So, make your life like that. It's more comfortable for yourself.

There's no need to poke into the neighbors' business and even share their garbage, negative sometimes mostly untruthful information, dragging each other down. What's the use? Suppose really that person is bad, you gossip, you talk to a man and say, 'Oh, he's really bad.' Both of you agree he's bad. So, what's the good for you? Does it make both of you better? [Audience: No.] You share the garbage that he has even if he is bad.

Suppose the neighbor has a lot of garbage, and both of you go to that garbage can and say, 'Look here, this is the neighbor's, these are full of garbage, let's both take it and examine it.' What good does it do for you? Then you take the neighbor's garbage to your house and examine it, and that's all there is. And you know that from beginning already, you don't even need to examine it – it's garbage; and it belongs to the neighbor. You don't even have to talk about it, you don't have to discuss it. It is so plain, so simple that it's garbage. So, leave it where it is. Is that clear to you? [Audience: Yes.] [Applause] You know it is a garbage can, it's full of garbage, and you still poke your nose in it, dig your hand in it, smell it, and smear it. 'Oh, it's really garbage, isn't it?' [Laughter] Isn't that stupid? If any man does that, do you think he is stupid? [Audience: Yes.] But you do that all the time. Don't laugh, isn't that true?

A garbage collector

Sometimes you dig also into my garbage. I've told you that I have a lot of garbage. I have never cheated you. Everything you have, I have. I collect it so that you're clean. I collect it so that your house smells nice. Don't criticize my garbage if I even have it. Don't smell it. Let me take care of it. I'll take care of it in my time. I'll dump it where it belongs, I'll destroy it so that you're clean, beautiful, nice, hygienic and healthy. Don't criticize my garbage. [Applause]

This is the mistake that many of you make. It's okay with me, but there are many things that are not okay with you. For example, you smell like garbage, you look like garbage because you carry it around, and people know you are garbage if you collect it. It's not your job. We have a lot of garbage collectors out there on the streets. You pay them because they are doing their job. Don't do their job, you have better jobs to do. Be happy that someone else collects the garbage for you. Why do you snatch it from them, and even examine whether it is really garbage or not? It is. You know already.

I have never cheated you. I told you I have a lot of karma. That's why I am often sick, I am often in trouble for nothing, I am often in bad shape, bad reputation. Even the people I've helped have turned against me. The things that I do good, people use that against me, personally also – a lot of things. A lot of newspapers write bad things about me which are a hundred percent garbage, not true at all.

So, if you know already I have a lot of garbage, don't come around me, don't come near. Stay away. Keep yourself clean and pure. Even if I am full of garbage, it's okay, it's my problem, it's my job. Don't look. I've never cheated you and said I am always okay. I am not okay.

I am a sacrificed garbage can. Anyone can dump anything into it, and I have to digest it and take care of it. It's very painful sometimes. I don't have to go through it but I do. That's okay with me because I don't look at garbage as garbage. I have the way to digest it, make

it into fertilizer, and turn it into beautiful flowers. But you don't do that, you don't have the means to. You were not born to do it, so just stay away. Leave the garbage to me. Leave the garbage to your own neighbor whoever that is. Keep yourself clean and pure. That's your prime duty. Your duty is not to be born to look into neighbor's garbage or into my garbage. You have enough with your own problems.

Suppose you have done everything to make yourself pure and clean. Then be happy. Be happy that you are now not in war. Why criticize the people who died in the war zone? Be happy that you are not there. Be happy that your hands and legs are still intact, you're living in a peaceful country, and you have enough money to live a decent life. Be happy. Don't criticize the poor people who are uneducated, who are homeless, and all that. Just be happy with what you have and don't criticize people who don't have even that.

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder

But we never know. Most of the things we see are not truthful because it is our mind that sees things, that makes things not clean, that makes things not pure because we are not pure, we are not clean. Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. Remember that. So, whenever you see someone impure, check yourself. Whenever you see someone bad, check yourself. Whenever you see someone dirty, check yourself. If you're really clean and pure, then be happy, be proud, walk your beautiful way, and pray for the ones who are less fortunate or pray for me. I don't need but you can.

There's something that's not okay with you, that is number one. And number two, if you bring all that garbage into the Center, you damage the beauty of this holy place where people come expecting the best, the most uplifting blessing so that they can carry on with their duty, with their heavy laden burden when they go back home. They can deal with problems, with the garbage at their house, so they don't come here to deserve the garbage that you throw around. If ever you have poisonous thoughts in your mind, then pray to God, to the inner Master to cleanse them. Don't blame it on anything else and don't believe in that.

Negative things are never true because God is not negative. How can God create anything negative? Everything negative comes from our devil mind. Everything God created is perfect. We just make everything topsy-turvy, turn everything into bad because we are taught that way, we accept other people as our own opinion. We learn it from other books, say this is no good, that is no good. Then we believe in it, and we make it into no good. So, be careful what you read, be careful what you take into your system and make your own. Be careful what you believe, whether it is really good.

You have to examine it. Examine even everything I say whether it is good for you or not, whether it is logical or not. If not, you just reject it. Really. Just tell me that what I am saying is garbage. You have to examine everything before you take it into your own system and make it become yours. Otherwise, it will be damaging. If you take some garbage, some bad system and you make it into a belief, it becomes yours, it's fixed, it's forever; and you die there, you are trapped there. You cannot be free. Thoughts, systems, conceptions, all these can trap people.

How many families are unhappy because the husband, the wife believe that sex is sinful? Meanwhile, they cannot help it. They are so unhappy, they inhibit each other, and they make their lives hell. Does God want your marriage to become hell like that? Does God want two people who love each other to feel guilty, sinful all the time like that? What for? What does it serve God over there? All these conceptions do a lot of harm to people. I'm

just citing one example. Every other thing you have to examine yourself, I can't just chew all the food and feed it to you. It's no good for you.

You have to be clever. Meditate, polish your wisdom so that you can be more clever. Then you can judge yourself what's good, what's not. But you have to examine carefully, honestly without any judgmental attitude, without any preconceived ideas. So, pure as a child, looking at a flower as it is without judging, 'Oh, this is white. It's not red. It should be pink, I like pink. I don't like red.' Red is okay. Pink is also okay. Okay or not okay is your own mind's problem. Your soul doesn't discriminate.

Pay attention to your life, make it pure and positive

So, we have to be very careful how we live our lives because everything we think generates something. If it's negative, it generates a negative atmosphere. It attracts bad luck to us, to the people around us; and everywhere we go we bring it with us. Like if you carry a bag of poison and it's leaking. Anywhere you go, will that poison you and will it poison anyone who comes near you? It will.

Poisonous thoughts are more poisonous than poisonous films or any substance. Be careful what you think. If it's really no good, discard it right away, recite the holy names, keep yourself centered, purify yourself, enjoy the blessings that God gives you every moment that you are living. Be thankful that you are healthy, you're alive, you have a good place to come and relax, you have good friends like these, and you have a good friend like me. [Applause]

I have never asked you to do anything for me personally. Everything I do for you is free, willingly and lovingly. You always ask me, 'How can we repay You, Master?' Don't. You don't have to repay me anything. Just clean yourself, mind your own business, and let me do mine. That's very simple. Because if you keep looking at my garbage, you cannot improve. If you're looking at the neighbor's garbage, you're doing yourself a disservice. That's all. I don't forbid you to look into the neighbor's garbage or to do anything that you like to do. But you have to think whether it is good for you or not.

Every time you think negative about some people, is that comfortable for yourself? No. Already no good, no need to believe my words, you examine it. Every time you are angry with someone, think bad about them whether true or not, who is the one who is the most uncomfortable? The first, number one, ourselves. Yes. So, very simple.

It's very easy to keep ourselves in control. Just look straight inside, recite the holy names, and pray every time that the Master helps you. Helps you, gives you loving thoughts right now or replaces the bad with the loving ones. That doesn't mean sometimes you don't get angry if rightfully you believe like that. Just express yourself if you really believe like that.

Like if you are angry with that person and tell him the reason. But you have to examine first whether it's true, whether it's logical, and whether it's worth it. If you are angry because he made you angry, tell him. At least, give him a chance to clarify it or clear the air with you. Don't just think and judge that person by your own personal experience, low or high level of consciousness, fix him there, and then go to talk to someone else about him without him even knowing what you are talking about. The third guy is even more helpless. He just sits there listening to all the garbage. He doesn't even know anything about it. Then maybe the third guy talks to the fourth guy. Oh God, then the whole Center is full of garbage.

Sometimes you don't talk about it but you think about it, also no good. You had better pray to God at that moment and say, 'Take away this poison from me,' or else you poison everyone around you; because thoughts, deeds and speech are all the same. They are powerful, especially when we have concentration. It's very tiring when sometimes the karma comes and you have to clash with someone. In the morning you look at yourself, your face looks black. Something poisonous is inside you. Released is some poison that makes you feel very tired, get old quickly, and not look so fresh and young anymore. So, keep yourself pure and positive. It's best for you.

Unless you can't help it – like you have to live together with the person and that person causes trouble, both of you misunderstand – then you have to clear it with each other. But that is not like thinking negative about someone who doesn't even know anything about you, who doesn't even know that you think negative about him, and maybe the thing you think is not true. Even if it is true, you don't know how karma works. You don't know what God has arranged for that or this person, for what purpose. You know nothing.

So, better just shut up. Shut the mind, recite the holy names, and think positive; because you don't lose anything if you think positive. Every time you think negative, you lose. That's all. It's for yourself. It's not that I forbid you or God will punish you. Your life will be much better if you always try to think positive about everyone.

Honesty and trust are the keys to maintaining a marriage

If you have some problem with your close one, then sort it out with him or her alone. You have no right to talk bad about your partner, whether it is true or not, to another person. You violate his personal private privileged honor. And if you love that someone, then it's really bad. You really disgrace him or her by doing that, because sometimes you misunderstand him or her.

Even if it is true, maybe he did not intend to do that. It's his habit, or he thinks doing that is good for you. But then it's no good for you because you don't like it. You have to tell him or her alone because that's where you have to work, you can't work with the third person. If you live together like husband and wife, you have to work things out together. Trying not to gossip about him or her because suppose later he or she heard about that, your relationship would be gone, finished. He or she can not forgive you. The trust is broken.

If you live together as husband and wife, you must have trust in each other, you must know you can turn to him or her in times of trouble, and he or she will protect you, will honor you, will protect your honor; not that he will sell you out at any moment to anyone. And you don't even know who that is, you don't even know what they are talking about, and half of the things are just in their own heads, it might not be true.

It's difficult I know that, but try. That's the only way to do it. I mean there's no other choice anyhow. Any other choice brings you trouble. You can try any other choice you want, but then it will bring you trouble. Then you will find that this is the only choice we have to live with.

We have to live truthfully and just take care of whatever it is – our own business. We have enough problems with ourselves, with our partner, with our children. No need to take care of his or the neighbor's. Don't you think you have enough, or not? I can give you some of mine. Free. I have a lot, left over and to spare.

Whew, talking about garbage. If you really love it that much, come live with me. Be my boyfriend, and then I'll share with you a lot, even voluntarily. You don't even have to ask, I will give it. If you live next to me, you will see it. How can you live next to a person and not see the garbage. Just follow me and then you'll know what garbage really is. Sometimes you will suffer too if you wish to know what suffering is. So, be happy that you are not with me, your life is peaceful and normal.

A really normal life is a blessing, don't fantasize. If you have one partner, one lover, try to work with that person because it is workable. In the long run it will work.

I don't see any marriage as easy, even the so-called happily ever after ones. Have you seen any problem-free marriages or partnerships? No. Today I ate with my primary school teacher. He told me voluntarily that he has been observing since he was young up till now that no marriage is ever trouble-free.

Because he was surprised when he was young why adults were fighting all the time, so he kept observing and checking everyone, every couple that he knows. He has never seen one without rubbing and polishing, then afterwards they are okay. Maybe still not okay, but then they get used to it; they are getting better because they are getting used to it.

A married couple came to a Master and said, 'Oh Master, our marriage is in so much trouble, please help us. Can You tell us that it is really worth it? Should we continue?'

The Master said, 'Don't worry, I guarantee everything will be better in the future. You will feel better soon.'

So, the husband asked, 'Oh how soon could that be?'

He said, 'Maybe ten years, twenty years.'

Then the couple said, 'You mean at that time we will live happily ever after finally? We'll have no more problems, no more quarreling?'

The Master said, 'No, no. It will be the same. It is just that you'll get used to it and then you won't feel so bad.' [Laughter]

It's just habits. Everything you just get used to it, and you don't feel so bad anymore.

Go beyond the habits and represent the qualities of Truth, beauty and goodness

Husbands and wives quarrel also because of the mind. It records all kinds of garbage information and whenever the situation is nearly the same, it puts out the same stuff, husband and wife or partner quarrel again. You know it's almost always the same story, same mistake again. So, even if you quarrel with each other a lot, do know that it's just the mind that is making trouble or the karma.

Karma means the things that have been recorded in the mind. The deeds that you did before, the consequences, the mind records it; and then next time it puts out the same. So, do love each other beyond the mind, beyond the physical contact, beyond the sex, beyond the troubles. You have to love with the love of God, with the enduring kind of love and unconditionally. Then it will last and it will sail over troubled water.

If you keep looking at the trouble in your partner all the time or in yourself, then you just make the problem bigger. Try hard and work together. That doesn't mean you ignore anything that the partner annoys you with or his or her habits. You talk about it. Hate the habit but not the person. Throw away the bad qualities but not the person. Everyone has to have something to work with, that is what we are here for, that's what life is all about. It is difficult but it is not impossible. I, myself, try to be an example of it. So you, yourself, also try to be an example for yourself. Alright. Be happy.

Locate the 'joy spot' and contact the source of happiness

Many scientists have now discovered a kind of 'joy spot' or place of joy inside the brain. They've even located where it is. So, that's what we look through. We say we look forward, but actually when we close our eyes, we look inward. Because at that time, there is no space; there is no front, no back, no left and no right anymore. It is just spacious inside our inner kingdom. So, we look inward and at that time, when we try to locate that so-called 'joy spot' or what we call the wisdom eye, we feel happy. We call it the wisdom eye; the scientists call it a lot of names, such as joy spot or memory center. It's good for us to be affirmed in this way, but actually, we don't need it.

LOVING PEOPLE IN ALL KINDS OF 'WEATHER' ¹²³

Make sure your love is unconditional. Make sure you love people in all kinds of 'weather.' Or else what is the use if we love a person only when he is good or she is nice? When I need the people most that's when they leave me. All the time. So please, I hope you won't be like that. We always have to consider the other party, your companion's situation and mood. Maybe he's in difficulty right now. That's why his mood is not so sweet. Maybe she has so much work to do and so many headaches, so she cannot be so darling like usual. That time is the time when we need to show our most noble quality, the way we want ourselves to be.

It's not that if you are sweet to that person then he will love you more. Maybe he will, maybe he won't. But that is not the point to be good and to be noble. To be good, to be noble is for ourselves because we choose to be that way, we want to keep being that way, and we feel good about it. It's not because, 'Okay, now he needs me more. If I show more sympathy, then our love will be stronger.' It's not even to be considered.

But most of the time we fail the test. When people are in most difficulty, we just leave them, or we are cold and indifferent. 'Oh, you're not nice to me. All right, all right. [Master is making a funny expression.] [Laughter] You'll come and need me soon.' Of course, they will. When they're in a better mood, when everything goes better, of course they'll come around. But then it's too late. Then it is not love anymore. It's just a need for each other. That's different, because you are used to each other and you need each other sometimes out of habit, out of convenience, out of financial security reasons – anything. But it's not true love.

True love always prevails

True love is we stick together in 'thick and thin.' Especially when it's thin, when it's troublesome. Then we should really bridge over the 'troubled water.' That's what they say in English. But most of us fail the test, to ourselves, not to our partners. He might leave you, he might stay with you, because you're nice or not nice. But you fail yourself. You

123. International four-day retreat, Sydney Center, Australia, May 12, 1997 (Originally in English).

leave yourself. You leave the most noble being that you really are. So, we should check up on this to our family members or whomever that is beloved and dear to us. Most of the time in critical situations, we just turn our backs and that is no good.

Of course, we have our anger, our frustrations, because our partners are not as loving as usual, or whomever that is; but he or she is in a different situation. At that time, she or he is in mental suffering. It's just as bad or even worse than physical suffering. Physical suffering you can take a pill or you can have an injection and it stops or at least temporarily stops, and you feel the effect right away; or at least if people are in physical suffering, everyone sympathizes with them.

But when they are in mental anguish, and we pound them more on that, and we turn our backs and become cold and indifferent, that is even more cruel, even worse. That person will be swimming alone in suffering. And especially they trust us as the next of kin, the next person, the one that they think they can rely on in times of need; and then at that time, we just turn around and are snobbish, because they didn't treat us nice so we just want to revenge. That's not the time. You can revenge later, when he's in better shape. Just slap him. [Master and audience laugh.]

Actually, at that time, the person is not his usual self anymore. He was probably under very great pressure that he lost his own control. It's not really lost his own control, but for example, when you are in a hurry, your talk is different. Right? 'Hand me that coat! Quick! Quick! Quick!' Things like that. But normally, you would say: 'Honey, please, can you give me that coat?' [Laughter] Is that not so? [Audience: Yes.] Or when you're in pain – for example stomach pain, heartache or whatever – you scream loudly; and anyone who comes to talk to you, you don't talk in the usual way anymore, because you're in pain.

Similarly, when you are in a mental or psychological pain, you talk also in a very grouchy way, very cross. But that is understandable. So, if we – any so-called loving partner or family member – do not understand even this very least, very basic concept, then we're finished. Then we are really in a bad situation. It's not that the partner will do anything to us. Whether he does anything to us later or not, that is no problem. The problem is us. The problem is we degrade ourselves, that we make less of a being of ourselves than we should be, than we are supposed to be, or that we really are. So, do not make less of a being of yourselves.

Unconditional devotion is really for ourselves

That's the only thing about love, about unconditional devotion. It's not for the other person's benefit. It's for yourselves, because you want to train yourselves. You want to show that you are God. You want to realize God; and the only thing to realize God is to act it out, to know that you can do that, you can be like that. That's why you came here – to prove that you are really God. Because if you sit in heaven all the time, and you say you are God: 'I'm God, I'm God, I'm God,' that is not satisfactory.

That's why you came here, to act out this power of God, this love that is overwhelming inside your bodies. That's why we have to do it. It's not for other people's sake. It's for yourselves to realize who you really are, to realize the great being that is within you. So, go home and take this love with you. Don't bring any complaint about the retreat – the tent was so small, the weather was so cold, and the person next door snored so loud. [Laughter and applause.] Whatever it was, it is over. Take the love back with you.

This life is difficult. We all know. I know. I'm tested every day. If you have any tests and trials with your four, five members of your family, just remember me. I have a thousand times over that number, I'm tested every day, and I'm still here. I look probably weathered, but I'm all right because I know tomorrow I still have to continue. We the practitioner cannot just take our lives and go. We could do that. I assure you we could do that. But we don't, we won't do it. Why? What's the difference, living a few more years here and doing a few more good things, or going right now and enjoying eternity, because we already have that? It will be waiting for us. [Applause] There's no hurry.

I assure you once and for all again here. Even the lousiest of you will go up. [Applause] So now, the only problem is here and now. Whatever we have to do, we finish with love and devotion so that the day we go we don't feel, 'Oh, I should have done better.' Then you regret and come back again. I won't come back with you, not this time. [Master laughs.] I don't like to come back. [Master laughs.]

We always have problems in this life, I tell you; so just accept it and do your best. Do your best all the time, and when someone else is in trouble and he's a little bit 'crispy' with you in his talk, don't mind. Don't set your ego between you two and destroy the love that you want to nourish and make grow. We should build love, not make war. Anywhere – at home, in the grocery store, on the streets, with friends, with neighbors – all the time, try to find a way to make peace, to make the situation better, not worse.

Find ways to make peace

If your partner is already very touchy, very on edge and you turn your back, are cold, and don't talk for a few days, does it make it better for you two? Does it make it better for the one that you love? [Audience: No.] No, definitely not. That's not the way to show love, is it? [Audience: No.] So, always try to find a way to make peace. If your neighbor is already shouting at you and misunderstands or maybe complains about something that you or your dog or cat does, does it make the situation better for you if you shout back at him, hate him, or think he is a very unreasonable fellow? [Audience: No.] No, it doesn't. So, try to understand the other fellow's point of view, situation and feelings as well, because we are not the only ones who have feelings. Maybe at that time we have different opinions, because we see things differently. We have our own feelings, he has his own feelings. Both think they are right. But we have to try to find a way to make a compromise, if we can. If after all we cannot, then at least we did our best and we know we are noble. We know we are good and loving, and that's important.

That's why you want to practice the Quan Yin method. That's the reason why you want to realize the God that's within you. If you want to realize God, the only thing to do is to be God – anytime. Do the things you think God would do. Speak the things you think God would speak in that given moment. That doesn't mean you cannot be angry or you cannot show your feelings or emotional disagreement. No. If they are true feelings, show them. Then tell the other person that's how you feel. You may feel wrong, but that's the way you feel. If they're true at that time, express them. In every given moment, be true to yourself. [Applause]

NO NEED TO HAVE ILLUSIONS ABOUT MASTER'S PHYSICAL BODY ¹²⁴

Again and again, I tell you, I'm a very simple person. There's no need to have illusions about me; I'm just like you. Whatever I have, you have. It's just that you have not

124. International four-day retreat, Sydney Center, Australia, May 10, 1997 (Originally in English).

discovered it completely. That's your problem. But don't make a big deal out of my person; I am just like you, really, I live just the way you do. Don't make it too fantasizing, fairylike, and all kinds of things. Do I have anything different from you? I don't understand why you have illusions about me so much. I have seen quite a few of those so-called masters and all those very big personages. I never felt afraid, nervous or anything; I just felt pleasant and honored to be able to see a person who is supposed to be so kind, and so holy. If they are, then I'm very happy to meet such a person. Just like I am happy to meet many of you, many times, because I suppose you are very holy, very saintly. That's it, no less, no more.

It's just that we don't always have a chance and time to see each other for too long, or have a personal talk because we have to expand. It's our purpose in this group, in our meditation or in our Quan Yin family. It's not to know each other personally, to have a chit-chat, or feel very close, personally tied, but to develop our own mastership, our own wisdom. Therefore, it doesn't matter if I'm close to you personally or not. I'm not here to make a personal acquaintance or friendship with you. It is just to show you that you are the master. I show you the way to find your own mastership. You regain your wisdom. That is our purpose. Therefore, it doesn't matter, even though regrettably we do not have time to have tea or talk friendly together the way two friends should, because we know each other inside. Our purpose is not to gain your confidence or your friendship personally, to make you feel that I'm good, I'm very friendly, that you can approach me, or that I'm approachable. So, don't ever feel hurt, or fantasize that you can talk to me personally or make a friendship personally. That's not necessary. It's not our purpose. It's not the purpose of our life to make a real friendship with anyone, because our friend is God. Our friend is the Master power inside. So, whoever can show us that, is fine. It's good enough already. No need to be attached to any person's physical being. What I mean is, don't fantasize too much and lose touch with reality.

I'm just another woman, and perhaps a little wiser one. The one who has found, regained some of Her wisdom or maybe all of Her wisdom, whatever it is. But She is just another woman, like every other one. That woman can gain the same, and you can gain the same, sooner or later. Maybe already has, maybe going to be, may already has gained half, maybe two-thirds. It's the same. Just because I started the business, everyone just fixed me in that position of a leader. No, I'm just a guide, the one who walks before. But I don't have to always walk before. If you can walk past me, just go.

All this important treatment, I cannot bear. I really cannot. It suffocates me. I'm sorry if it sounds ungrateful, but it really does. I know you don't mean it. I know you mean well, and you respect me, you love me. No need to make so important, fuss and waste a lot of time and energy for me personally. I don't enjoy all that. I enjoy a more relaxed atmosphere. Please know again that I'm very simple. Don't waste your time and energy doing things that I don't even appreciate; I don't even need. I'm a very simple person, believe me. I don't even have time to live a complicated life. I don't even have time to enjoy most of the things that you give me, even if you want to give. I'm lucky if I can sleep, if I can meditate well, if I can have some peace in my heart without people troubling me from outside, from inside. So, peace is the food I need.

Concentrating your awareness

Before enlightenment we are too busy, too muddle-headed. We think of this and that, and we try to do things the wrong way. We don't focus our awareness. That's why we don't know many things. We cannot harness our energy. Yeah, too fast. Then we just discharge our energy, and we're tired at the end of the day. We've achieved nothing. The more you nervously do things, the less you achieve. So, you think you haven't done anything.

After a while, the Master tells you how to harness your energy, how to concentrate your awareness. Then that power helps you to be sharper in everything, to be more alert. You can accomplish more in a shorter time. Then you think after enlightenment, maybe you have more talent. It's not true; you always had it. You just have more attention now to use it, more awareness to bring it into realization.

WE SHOULD PRACTICE AS IF THERE WILL BE NO TOMORROW ¹²⁵

We often hear that this or that person is dead, but we somehow think it won't happen to us. Even though we know it will happen one day, we can't imagine when, how or why it will come. It's funny, but that's how we can continue living. However, if we really understood and realized that we might be dead tomorrow, we would change completely. All our attachments, desires and ambitions would die, and each day we would just prepare for death. Every day when we meditate sincerely, we try to find our self so that when we truly leave the body, we won't get lost and have no Home to go to.

Everyone has the responsibility to maintain the pure atmosphere of the meditation centre

The group meditation center, the retreat, are the places for you to come and reinforce your self-realization and to make up for the sometimes lack of effort in your home due to work or any other things. It's not the place where you come and wink at each other and try to get someone else's – opposite sex or same sex – attention, depending on what kind of tendency you have.

I understand fully your physical, emotional and mental needs. But don't use the Center or the retreats for such kinds of flirtations or this will bounce back on you, because people can smell it and later they'll lose respect for you. Then something will happen. It'll come out that you are not allowed to go on retreats or to group meditations. Then you'll blame that person, you'll blame the Master, you'll blame the headquarters, you'll blame the contact person, or whatever. No one is to blame but yourself. You have to take care that you're pure.

I have nothing against falling in love. I don't like flirting. I don't like people who play with other people's sincere, raw and honest emotions. You're playing with a human being's raw emotions and mental tranquility. You're not just playing with a guy, a fool, a stupid one, an ugly one or one who no one wants. Don't play like that.

Don't rely on your face or your beauty, because God will take it away very soon if you abuse it. If you abuse your physical power to cause suffering to anyone, you will get it very soon. So, be careful. Take care that you're pure and then everything will become nice for you.

Remember, it's not only for Singaporeans. It happens in many Centers. I don't mean everyone is like that; the majority are not. Just sometimes, in some cases; and you forget who you want to be and what you are. So, choose the more noble way of bearing better character. Be representative of more beauty and goodness and then everything just happens naturally.

Falling in love is a very beautiful thing, provided that it's mutual. Don't force people and don't try too hard. The harder you try the more repulsive people will feel, because it's just

125. Group meditation, Singapore Center, Singapore, April 26, 1997 (Originally in English).

like a torch light – you're searching everywhere and people just try to seal themselves from your smell [Laughter] and your searching light. When you're too obvious, you exude a kind of repulsive energy that people just run away from. And whoever comes to you is not sincere because they don't love you. They know. They just want to use this kind of pastime, temporarily, just to abuse you, and then later you have more troubles than you started with. You will be more lonely than when you started.

Take care of your inner beauty and then everything will come. 'Seek you first the kingdom of God and everything will come to you.' If it doesn't come, it's fine. You're liberated. [Laughter and applause.]

Be sincere with yourself and whomever you're dealing with. Don't flirt, don't try to show off your whatever physical appearance. It doesn't last long. You just cause more troubles for yourself in the long term if you try to attract people with your outer appearance, and not with your sincerity and mutual attraction. It's different. Don't forget what you want to be and what a great person you are. You have to represent, outwardly, all the goodness, noble qualities, sincerity; and the people who approach you will be sincere and nice.

Listen to the heavenly message and rely on yourself

Relying on yourself is the best, really, because the Master is inside. Try hard, get in touch with Her, then you'll solve every problem. That's the way of the Masters. That's what the Master is there for. It's not just the physical body. I'm just here as a friend, to tell you what to do, to show you the way that you've forgotten. But it's not me that you should rely on. It's yourself, you have to.

Everyone must rely on themselves. The Buddha said you have to light your own torch, walk your own way. That's the way it is. Just rely on yourself, think hard, go inside, meditate.

While in meditation, try to keep a note pad beside you because a lot of ideas, a lot of answers come and you'll forget later. I tell you, I forget too. Sometimes when I meditate there are a lot of problems or something that I receive, so I note it down. Sometimes I'm lazy, too comfortable to write it down. I think I will remember because it's such an easy and small thing, but I forget completely. Does it happen to you? [Audience: Yes!]

So, [Laughter] get up! Why? Because they are things from heaven. That's why we're stupid. That's why the whole... [Laughter] Don't tell them. Shhh! Just between me and you. They do have a sense of intuition inside, just like this, [Master snaps Her fingers.] when they sleep or when they think hard. But if they do not write it down, they do not take notice of it, or they think it's just a passing thought, they forget.

Three days ago, something came and I forgot all about it. I am still trying to remember and I cannot. This is the inner Master telling you. That's why if we don't notice, we don't go inwards all the time, we forget what we should do in the world, we forget God's will. That's why we err, that's why we make trouble, that's why we cannot solve all our problems. Not that the Master doesn't tell you. Really, we forget. Even just one fleeting thought like that, and we forget immediately after half an hour of getting out of meditation. How would we remember our past life, our glory in heaven, our original Home, our wisdom, our greatness? How? Everything makes us forget in this world. We have forgotten since we were young already.

There is a true story which always touches my heart and always make me want to cry. Sometimes I do cry. It goes like this. There was a four-year old girl who requested to talk with her newly born brother alone in the room without the parents. The parents were very surprised, but consented. So, they stepped outside. Nevertheless, they tried to listen, why the girl wanted to talk to the brother alone, and how could a girl talk to a newly born infant? They just listened, eavesdropped on the kid. This is what they heard. The four-year old girl asked the newly born brother in a very gentle voice, she said, 'Beloved one, please tell me what God feels like. I've begun to forget already.' You see, that's the problem with us.

As always, it makes me want to cry. Can you believe how a kid feels, how lost she feels when the good thing that she has begins to fade away, and she can't control it, she can't get it back. And the more we grow, the more we forget.

We don't suffer that much actually, just when we were young, when we began to forget. That is when it hurts the most. That's why kids, when they go out, they cry. They feel that it's so harsh outside. Apart from their environment it probably hurts their physical being.

The first contact is also the cry of the soul, because inside the womb they are more protected, they are more with God. They have noses, eyes, ears, everything; and they live in the liquid bowl and they don't feel anything. They're not fish but they can swim inside; and they can turn upside-down, inside-out, wrong way and they don't feel anything, because they're blissful inside.

That is when the mind doesn't move. That is when the preconceived ideas, the brainwashing system does not alter our consciousness, so we're still complete in ourselves. We don't need anyone, we don't need company, we don't need friends, we don't need any luxury to feel good. That's why in any situation we just feel good; because we were the soul, we were the Master then, we're still with God.

So, if we try to remember that state of being, we'll feel happy again. At least for a while. At least the one-tenth of our day that we spend in the blissful company of God's purity. Otherwise, we just get more and more burdened with the garbage of this world and that's how we became the way we have become, or the way the people have become. They try to get substitutes – drink, drugs, women, money, power, position, fame – just to substitute for the things they've lost.

So, the people in this world who are greedy, who are vicious, who are ambitious, who are trying to get anything for themselves, who are selfish, are not to be blamed also; they're just desperate. But it happens that they did not create enough merit in the last lives for them to be able to meet a friend, a guide to show them the real way to happiness so they have to find it themselves through all kinds of means and sometimes, stumble and harm themselves. So, we feel sorry for the people of the world, not really hate them, not really blame them for what they are. Just that they're very unlucky.

We are more lucky. Even if we lose all the money, we can earn it again. We can live a simple life. We don't worry that people look upon us as a poor person, no bank account and no Cadillac, whatever. We don't care anymore, because we have the blessing power that has been awakened in us again. So meditate, so we'll feel less and less attached to the fame, name and opinions of the worldly people; so we'll feel happy.

But other people, even if they have the money, they're not happy. Even if they have everything, they're not happy. Sometimes the money and the fame even harm them more than do good. They have money and they play the fool. They get AIDS, they take drugs,

and they harm themselves, physically and mentally. When they're reborn again with such a muddled kind of mind, they will be a lesser being next time.

So, money is not everything if you don't handle it well. I tell you to earn money just to be independent. Also we can share our wealth and our power of earning with other less fortunate people. It's good to be successful but we all know that it's not the goal of our lives. It's different from the money-grabbing people. That makes our mentality very, very disturbed. If we earn money just for the sake of being comfortable and share it with others, it's not uncomfortable at all. If we gain, we feel happy. If we lose, we're not that miserable. We know it's nothing. That's the good thing about meditation – we find ourselves. [Applause]

CHANGING OURSELVES COMPLETELY FROM THE INSIDE OUT ¹²⁶

Sometimes we just change the outside – buy new clothes or different kinds of clothes – and our appearance changes. How much more if we change from inside – every person's thinking, all the ideals and all the ways of focusing attention, everything changes. Of course, we will look different, we will have changed.

It's not the vegetarian diet that makes you more compassionate, it's not the method only that makes you noble. It's the way you devote yourself, it's the direction that you focus your new thinking and new way of life that makes you noble and become a new person. Because if we just learn the method, if we just eat vegetarian, and we do not change our way of thinking, then that doesn't help much. We have to know why we are vegetarian, why we practice meditation; then our whole body, our whole being, our whole brain cells and the cells of the body will understand the purpose. Then we will change completely from the inside out. The conceptions must be clean and then the meditation will bear fruit and the way of life will become an example of goodness, nobility and peace.

What is the use of magical power?

What is the use of us in having magical and psychic power so we can change a sick person into a healthy one, an ugly person into a beautiful one, but inside him still rotten, inside him still sick, inside him still ugly – plagued with all kinds of negative thinking, of ignoble ideals of the harmful kind of wishes unto other people and himself? What is the use if we know tomorrow what will happen to us and we try to avoid it, but just for one thing, and inside we have not changed? Next time the bad karma will also come and we cannot continue all our life avoiding bad things, because what will happen will happen, if we do not change from inside. If we change from inside, then we really will have changed.

Even if sometimes we are able to manage to change our bad luck into good luck all our life, suppose we have psychic power, we can always see the future – like tomorrow something will happen and we try to avoid it by doing this and that. Maybe tomorrow we will have a car accident, then we stay home, we don't drive the car. Or tomorrow someone will kill us at that corner, so we don't go that way, we go another way. Suppose we can manage to avoid accidents and bad luck all our life, how about next life? Next life we might not be human beings again, and we might not be allowed to even use psychic power, or we might not even be in favorable circumstances in which we can exercise our knowledge of psychic power. We might be in hell already. Who's going to help you to avoid the fire of this punishment?

126. Group meditation, Surabaya Center, Indonesia, March 19, 1997 (Originally in English).

The Masters, since ancient times, have always emphasized that we walk in beauty, we walk in virtues, and we walk in Truth. That is the only safeguard for us, because whatever we do affects us right away. Even if we do not understand, even if we try to deny it, even if we try to avoid it, it will come eventually. Unless we forsake everything, renounce the whole world, go into the Himalayas, sit in a cave all alone, then probably nothing will happen to us. Nothing will happen to us this life, but next life it will come, because whatever has not been washed away will always be there.

Suppose you dirty your shirt – there's a fleck on it. Then you try to avoid looking at it, pretend that it didn't happen, pretend that the black spot doesn't exist, and you just put the shirt away. Do you think that it will disappear alone? The same with karma. Even if we try to avoid the outcome of our last life's bad or good deeds and we run away somewhere in a cave and sit there alone, next time we have to come back and pay.

The same with magical or psychic power. It can alter the situation, it can postpone the phenomenon of bad luck just for a while; but it's still there and it will come back later, maybe even stronger.

MAKING MARRIED LIFE SWEET ¹²⁷

Make sure that your wife is the foremost woman in your life, and I'm just your Teacher. Pronto. Please – clear-cut. Make sure she knows you love her the most. Show it, say it every day. Buy her things that she likes; take her to different places. Apart from meditation time, pay attention to her, be attentive, see what she likes the most, and try to do it. Talk lovingly and sweetly all the time then she will know that you've improved, and that you love her even more than before. Then she will be more thankful to me instead of hating me. It's up to you. It's up to you to turn her into my friend or my enemy, you don't blame her. I don't blame her. You have to be tactful.

Be attentive to your spouse

Every woman hates another woman, doesn't matter who she is. [Laughter] As long as her man pays attention to the other woman, doesn't matter if she's a living Buddha, she hates. But then you have to overcome. You let her know, 'This is different. I love you, and more.' You have to show it, not just say it. Show it and be attentive, attend to her needs and her love, make her satisfied in every way. Show her that after you've followed me, you've become an even better husband, a more loving person. Then she will cease the hatred for me and instead, she will be interested and say, 'Oh, this woman is not really taking my husband away from me. She's helping him to become a better husband.' Actually, that's my purpose.

You have to show it in action and speech. Tell her you love her. Buy her jewelry, buy her flowers, take her out to dinner, date her again. Make her feel that she's loved, that she's beautiful, that she's wanted, like the day you first met her. Then no woman will ever hate me again if all of you do this.

The women also. Your husbands hate me because you just neglect them. It's okay to love me but you have to love your husbands more than before – more attentive, more loving, more enduring, more soft, more gentle. Then they will see that my teachings bear fruit – you've become better persons, better family members, more loving. And who can hate me?

127. Group meditation, Surabaya Center, Indonesia, March 17, 1997 (Originally in English).

This is your problem, it is all your fault if your family members hate me. I never blame them. [Applause]

Try to get your families to understand our spiritual group

About group meditation: Many family members, including your wives, your husbands, suspect what you're doing here in the group: 'Why you used to spend time at home and now you spend time in the group? What kind of group is that?'

So, try to invite your family members to come sometimes. Don't force them to come, just tell them that you're proud of them. For example, tell your wife, 'You're so beautiful! I like to show off to the other initiates that I have such a beautiful wife – so good to me! That even cooks vegetarian for me, taking so many inconveniences for herself to buy vegetarian food and cook for me. I'm so proud of you. I'm so grateful. I want to show you off to the other initiates in the Center. Everyone heard me talking about you – that you're so great, you cook vegetarian like that. They're all interested to know you. Would you please come along?'

Then when she comes, and everyone welcomes, she'll see that everyone just meditates and does nothing – no woman and man stuff. Then she will not feel so insecure and worry about what you're doing here.

You have to know what to do. You have to know what to say to people. If you try to convince them and force them to come here, they'll think, 'Oh, he's trying to convert me into that woman's group.' Don't say that. It's different. Say, 'I'm proud of you. You're so beautiful – more and more every day. You're so good, I love you so much, I want to show you to people. Come and have a look. Many people want to know you,' et cetera. For example like that. Then she will come one day. And when she knows it's very harmless here, and also that you've improved so much at home – you're more loving – then who wouldn't want to come and join the initiation, and who would hate me? So, both have to be handled with love, care and intelligence. [Applause]

Do not tell lies. You have to praise her – whatever she or he has – because everyone has some good things. You have to recognize the goodness in your wife or husband. Encourage them to develop more positive qualities instead of just sitting there, doing nothing, and criticizing.

The best, first, is to introduce the non-initiate member, if some difficulty, to other initiate members of the family, and go on an outing together. Don't talk about Master's teachings – nothing. No initiation mentioned, just go until they get used to it and they talk to each other. Then they'll understand. This is the first step, if you have difficulties with non-initiate family members.

Nurture a stable and loving relationship

One more thing. I think, what causes the most trouble is that after initiation you tend to be distant from your family members, especially your wife or husband. Before, maybe more embracing, more loving or more love-making, for example. Now suddenly, no more, nothing – worried about astral feelings, whatever. Should not, should not. If you want to meditate, you had better tell your wife or husband first. Have a very loving hug or talk intimately before, and say, 'Now, I'm going to meditate for one hour or half an hour. But if you really need me, want to see me, or want to come and hug me, please come. Otherwise, I would prefer to meditate in peace.'

Have a good, loving relationship and intimate talk or something like that before, so that your partner feels, 'Okay, he still loves me. She still wants me, just now she's going to have a rest, to reflect in the mental realm so that she becomes better in health and in spirit; or better in concentration for work, for business, whatever.'

You have to explain like that, that it's a kind of a rest time for you. But before that, you make sure that you're loving each other, that she has enough, he has enough, that she feels that he or she still has you. And after meditation, come hug again, talk lovingly and intimately – kind of loving embrace or whatever gesture or talk that makes your partner feel peaceful, loved, beautiful and secure.

Don't just come back from work, wash, wash, wash, eat a few tofu, and now, 'Meditation time. Don't touch me, I'm holy!' [Laughter] Then you never see your partner. First you work all day then you come home and eat, don't talk, because the Master says 'Eating time, don't talk.' [Laughter] 'Now meditation time, and meditation time don't talk. After meditation time, don't waste your energy after meditation, don't talk.' Then later on, it's sleeping time, also, 'Don't talk.' [Laughter]

If I were your wife or your husband, I'd kick you out. [Laughter] Not talking about forbidding group meditation and things like that. You have to be human also – humorous, loving, living and active. Not, after you become initiated, you become like wood, stone, a table or a wooden Buddha. Who likes that kind of Buddha? I don't. Just be normal. Be better than before. That's what I wish. [Applause]

I think all of you understand very well what I mean. Put yourself in that person's situation and you don't have to ask me what to do. Try to be loving, selfless, then you will just know.

DISCOVERING THE SOURCE OF ILLNESS ¹²⁸

The reason why sometimes we are sick and we feel we are weak and defenseless is that in this life sometimes we feel we are very lonely and we feel no one understands us. No one really supports us, I mean supports our ideas, forgives us when we are wrong, and really loves us the way we are. So, we just feel lonely and we just want to shut ourselves in somewhere, then pretend that we are unable to communicate or to do this or that... ah. Don't want to do anything anymore. That's how we get into a kind of let go of everything, let go of our body, our spirit, our joy; let go of the enthusiasm and the positive hope for life and for the future.

It can get that bad in this life if we don't really have good friends or we don't try to find good friends. It can make us very lonely and weak. When the mind is weak, the body looks or feels weak; we don't even want to move. We cannot move because we don't want to move, because our will is not strong. Because we feel bad, we feel rejected, we feel refused, we feel shut out, we feel alone, we feel left out, something like that, then we become weak. It's not the body, it's the mind.

Change our mood and treat ourselves nicely

When God give us some disadvantages, Hes also gives us some advantages. For example, many gays or lesbians are extremely talented artists. So, if you think you have some disadvantages, try to find out what advantages God has given you to balance your life. God does give. Don't dwell on your disadvantages and dampen your spirit. Instead go

128. Group meditation, Paris Center, France, January 26, 1997 (Originally in English).

into your advantages, go into your talents, go into the positive side of life that God granted you, and uplift yourself.

Whenever you feel very depressed and really cannot bear it anymore, you have to treat yourself good. Go into the best coffee shop that you've always liked but always feared to spend money, buy the suit that you've always wanted but you thought was too expensive. Treat yourself nicely at that time because you need it. Just like someone else in time of need – you have to comfort him, give him the best, give him the best support and love, and spoil him. You have to spoil yourself, give yourself the best support when you need it most – like when you're depressed, when you feel you really cannot live anymore, cannot go on anymore. At that time you must treat yourself nicely. If you can afford anything, afford it. You can earn money later again, you can earn your time again, but you have to put yourself together first. You have to stand up first.

I don't say you go out and do shopping every day and spend all the money on the big coffee shop, on the best clothes. But, when you are the most depressed and you can't go on anymore with life, then you cannot afford to economize anymore. You have to spoil yourself, love yourself the most, then you pick up very fast. Yeah, go out and talk to people, treat yourself like a queen, spend money, whatever, to make yourself feel good. At that time only, not every day, if you can afford it. And if you cannot spend a lot of money, then go to somewhere that is not a lot of money but you can also find something that you like. It's not always necessary to go to expensive places to find the things you like. Just some new clothes, some new hairstyle, new perm, everything would make you feel different right away. New makeup. These are not expensive. Same with the men. But sometimes because we get into the habit, like always wearing dark clothes, always wearing a turtleneck, then depressed, just stay there, don't move, don't change. Try something new to take your mind off the depression, that's already something. If normally you always wear black, brown and blue then try white, cream, lighter colors, or pink. Just boost yourself up.

MEDITATING ON THE LIGHT AND SOUND IS OUR ONLY SUPPORT ¹²⁹

Only the inner Light and Sound can help us in any kind of situation in this world. So, for us, in dealing with any kind of karma, any kind of burden from the past, present or future, there's nothing else in this world that we can rely on. The Light and Sound, are the only methods, the only equipment that God bestowed on us when we descended into this world so that we can protect ourselves, so that we can remember the kingdom of God, so that we can resolve any difficulties and obstructions on our way to finding the kingdom of God. Any troubles in this world – be they in your business, in your family circle or in personal love relationships – are there actually just to make trouble for you, just to sidetrack you from the journey back to the kingdom of God. And God knows that beforehand so we're given this equipment, the Light and Sound, so that we can slash them all asunder and then advance further. Without the Light and Sound, we can never make it back Home... never, ever. Just like without an airplane, you can not make it here to Cambodia so fast and trouble-free.

So, any time you have a problem, be it with yourself, with any of your loved ones, with any kind of employment or businesses, or with anything, just sit down and meditate. Then the problem will become clearer to you and you'll know how to solve it, or the problem will just disappear by itself in time. Sometimes we panic, really because the world seems to press upon us for certain things, or at a certain time and certain demand. We panic and say, 'Oh,

129. International seven-day retreat, Raising Center, Cambodia, July 30, 1996 (Originally in English).

my God! I can't make it. I have only one more day or half a day and I just don't want to do something else. I want to do this thing right now and other things just come making demands on me.' But then after we meditate for a while, the world withdraws its demand on us, or the problem just goes somewhere else and then we find we panicked for nothing. So, just keep cool. C-O-O-L. [Laughter] Keep cool, baby, [Master and audience laugh.] and everything will be all right.

Listen to your intuition inside. Sometimes it's difficult. You have to see which is the strongest voice and remain steadfast on that strongest intuition because sometimes you feel like you should do this, continue to do this job, but some other people come and demand that you do another job, and the other people come to tell you that this is better and it's no use now – 'It's going to be no use. You'd better run fast in the other direction and do this, that and that.' But then you feel inside that you should do this, but it makes you feel like you're in a struggle and torn apart from different directions. Then you need to sit down and meditate and listen to your own Buddha voice, the intuitive voice inside, the silent voice that tells you what to do. Or at least stay calm and you can see clearly for yourself which direction is better for you.

I tell you all these things from experience. I'm not telling them to you from a book. Books don't teach us this kind of thing, not too many. And it always works because where else can we run and what else can we use to deal with the world as it is? There's so much overwhelming suffering, so much nonsense, so much pressure on us small creatures, and sometimes we really don't know what to do and it makes us feel very anxious, very restless. Meditating on the Light and on the Sound are the only things we can do in such times of necessity.

SHOWING OUR GOODNESS ¹³⁰

If we use our creative thinking and our creative energy for good purposes, then the world will go up and up and up, in all kinds of developments and all kinds of benefits. If we use them in a lower way, then we also create a very, very big kind of negative force that can destroy humankind or the planet. That's why we have a lot of atom bombs and wars that kill millions of people, a lot of very terrible chemical and germ warfare weapons, which also create a lot of suffering for humankind and other living beings as a whole. Some human beings prefer to use their genius in that way. It's a pity, but the world is like this.

So, it's not that we come here and try to expect that everyone becomes as good as God, or an angel, or ourselves. But our purpose is to show how good we are. That's all and nothing else in return. That's our duty. We always have to show how good we are; that's it, not to wait for other people to show how good they are. Whatever they are, they are. To fulfill our purpose, our duty, and for our own good, we always have to show that we are good. That's the part that we must develop. And that's the only choice we have if we want to go back to the kingdom of God and be God-like, or return to be one with God. If that's our purpose, we must always be good, be noble and disregard how other people choose to represent themselves at any moment in our lives, or our encounters.

Now you understand why the world is like this, because of the choices that people have made and the choices that we made in our past lives, too. Some of the choices we didn't make, by being indecisive, also caused trouble. If we see something good, and we have the urge inside to change, and we don't do it, that also creates bad karma. We also have to partake in the consequences of that, of our indecisiveness, of our weakness, when we

130. International seven-day retreat, Raising Center, Cambodia, July 26, 1996 (Originally in English).

see good things, we see the things that we should defend, that we should change, and we don't, or we did not. So, it's not only our actions that bring consequences. Our inaction also brings consequences. Anything in this world, whatever you think, wherever you walk, you breathe, you turn around, you talk, everything brings some result, bad or good, depending on how you think, how you react, or how you talk.

So, we have to always be good, think good thoughts, and speak good words, so that the consequences in the future will be good, or at least less bad or neutral. That's why we always have to recite the holy names. They sort of remind ourselves of these holy and higher qualities of creation, until we become one with God or go back to the Master's house. We need to be masters of ourselves. That is the place where we can feel eternal happiness. Because we already know ourselves for what we are, we have no need to make trouble and create bad things again. When we have finished our journey, our realization, finished the experimenting process, then we become masters. Then we know everything.

EVERYTHING IS CREATED BY THE MIND – PART 1 ¹³¹

Any time you want to ask yourself a question, you should first ask the question, 'Why am I asking this question?' and 'What's the need for the question?' Anything that you can not solve you should try to change; that's all. You have all the power, all the ability and all the assistance from heaven, the angels and the Masters in the ten directions to help you. There is nothing you can not do, so just make up your mind and say that you want to follow through with the hardship, with the course, with the crazy plan that you have laid down as God but you have to take care of as a human being.

That's the difference between when you were God and you didn't know what it was like to be a human being. You had never been a human being before you came here. So, you laid down all kinds of complicated patterns, all kinds of strategies and projects and you thought you could follow through with them. Of course, you are God so you can do anything you want. But once you come down, you become a commoner, a human being and you have to take all of God's plan and that's why you cry. So, just in case you think you can not do it, then just leave it. Don't hold on to your pride. Make a new plan, something easier, and then follow through with it.

Sometimes we are not successful in some endeavor, and we blame God or blame the Master power, blame our neighbor, blame the boss, but first we have to think what the problem is with us. If you lose your job, you have to think about why it happened; maybe because unconsciously you didn't want that job anymore. If you lose your wife, or if you're unhappy in marriage or your marriage goes on the rocks, you must check inside whether lately you have been neglecting your spousal duties or unconsciously you want to change partners, you wish that your neighbor's wife would become yours, that the two women would exchange houses.

Subconsciously you will manifest this kind of situation for yourself, that maybe suddenly your wife becomes cold, or she becomes more agitated, aggressive and makes much trouble in your marriage. Then if she walks out or if she makes more trouble than you can bear, then you must remember that maybe it's you. If it's not you, then it might be her. There is no God in there. God doesn't care so much what you're doing but He stands by. The God power always stands by in case we want to change our plan, in case we want to

131. International seven-day retreat, Raising Center, Cambodia, July 23, 1996 (Originally in English).

have Hiers assistance because our plan has become too complicated, too troublesome to take care of.

That's why every time we call out for help, help will be there. But help will not come the way you wanted sometimes because the way you wanted is not always good. So, it just comes, whatever it is. Normally a sincere prayer is always answered; it never goes unheard and unnoticed. So, if you lose your job suddenly or your boss is nasty to you, check whether lately you have grown very tired of this job, or unappreciative and wish that you had an easier life, an easier job – the boss is lousy, the job is too much, or anything like that.

You lose it and then you feel, 'Oh, it wasn't that bad. I was just complaining a little bit inside.' But actually our thoughts, our speech and our actions are very powerful. Especially for the Quan Yin practitioner because you're already reconnected with your own Godly power. So, whatever you think, whatever you wish, whatever you say will eventually come into being, come to pass. So, please take care that what you think is only truly what you want. Don't always think nonsense and then later regret it because you're God. You create everything with your thinking.

That's why the Buddhist scriptures say: Everything is created by the mind. It's truly like that. So, try to create a favorable environment for yourself if you don't want to be uncomfortable. Try to create friendliness, peace, harmony and everything smooth for your life with your precepts, with your pure thinking, with your positive desire. So, even if it becomes difficult, you will feel more comfortable.

Most people speak in a very habitual manner like: Someone is clever, if we love him, we might say: 'Oh, he's a little devil,' and we say things like, 'Oh, hell!'; 'What the hell, she's a beautiful girl!' or 'Oh, my life is damn fortunate.' So, we always connect damnation with our luck, our beauty and our happiness, and this is not good for us. It would be more proper if we counted our blessings and blessed every situation that we happened to be in, have left behind, or encountered. Even if it was a thing we didn't like, we should just say: 'Bless you! God bless you!' and then go somewhere else. If a plan is not good then you should just leave it. Realize your mistake and make another plan. Because you are God, you are Buddha, you can create anything you want, absolutely anything, but you must believe it.

The trouble is we've lived in the negative power world too long and our faith has become very thin, worn out with bad experiences that we've created for ourselves. Actually, we create all the bad experiences and all the negative effects for ourselves so that we can struggle. That's the game. But then after some time we get too tired and it's time to pray. Then we get the Quan Yin method and go home. Even then, after we practice the Quan Yin method maybe, we still encounter problems because our mind very habitually creates new problems again. It will say things like: 'What a hell of a woman!' you know, 'What a beautiful woman!' In Au Lac we say things like that too: 'Oh, she is terribly beautiful!' or 'Oh, he is awfully nice!' That's the English saying, 'Awfully nice!' or 'She was terribly beautiful!' or 'He is a hell of a guest!' or host. Oh, it's terrible.

Why not just say 'He is a wonderful fellow' or 'She is such a blessedly beautiful woman' or 'This kid is terrifically intelligent,' not 'He's a devil,' or 'He's a little devil.' Because he is very clever, we call him a little devil or say, 'Oh, he's a clever devil.' These are just some examples of our habits, and so we damn every situation that we encounter, even the happiness and the good fortune that we get. It's no wonder that our life is always a kind of mixed salad. We have a little happiness, and we also have a hell of a lot of problems. Wow, there are a lot of bad words we learn from some of the media, we watch it and think

it's so funny. We don't think there's any harm in it, we repeat the same thing and we imitate them. It's just done in a very innocent spirit. But because we are God originally, everything we think, every word we add we must be careful about, because it's powerful. If it's just idle thinking, then maybe it doesn't take effect so much. But if it's really serious, sincere thinking and a deep rooted desire, then it will come true.

Just because it doesn't come true right away after you wish for a wish, you think it comes from nowhere or it's just like a very coincidental fortune or misfortune. But actually you have created it somehow, somewhere, sometime before or just now and you have forgotten it. I have had experiences like this. So, try always to think good so that everything that comes to you is good, favorable. Even if it isn't good, at least you are always thinking of good, and that's clean and you will feel good that you think good thoughts. At least you don't feel responsible for the bad things that happen to you or to someone else.

Actually, if you just lie half-heartedly, or say something not nice, just idly or absentmindedly, then maybe the effect is not so great. But it could come true. It depends on how powerful you are. That's how witches, black magicians curse people into trouble, or people are possessed and feel ill by any curse or black power. These things happen because witchcraft is just like any other science. It's just black science or white science. It becomes more powerful with time, with practice. It's just like you keep reciting some mantra, and you meditate on one thing and it becomes real, becomes powerful.

Similarly, if you practice negative actions or negative mind power, then you also develop that kind of black power. Because we are God, we are made from God, we are as capable as God of creating absolutely anything whatsoever we want to create. It's like we have created this body, we have created this universe, we have created everything that we need at one time or another, by group power or by individual power. Group power is stronger, of course, and that's why you can see in many of the nations, most of the citizens inside are very much alike in thoughts, in actions and ways of living. So, people say, 'Wow, I'm proud to be American.' There is truly such a thing as American or English or French because of group consciousness.

That's why group meditation is very powerful – if we all think the same thing or have the same goal, then the power will mix together very powerfully. It's not that one person is not powerful but everything in a mass is powerful. Like a drop of ocean water; it truly is ocean water and it truly has all the potential and qualities of ocean water, but it's only a drop. Whoever puts together in the ocean even just a drop like that becomes the ocean. No one can say he is only a drop in the ocean anymore but he is the ocean now. That's how it is with group consciousness and group meditation.

That's why you should make sure when you go to group meditation that your mind is pure and try to go in the same direction as everyone else, the way Master and God want or the way you want. It's not the way Master wants, really, it's the way you want, isn't it? It's you who want to become Buddha. It's you who want to be one with God again; it's you who wants to realize yourself. So, make yourself that which you wish. Change your thoughts, your speech and your actions into those of a God-like being. Set for yourself a high standard: 'Okay, now I want to be God.' Then just do everything that you think is God-like, at every moment of your life, in every minute of your daily activities. That's how you get near to your goal. That's why you meditate, you keep the precepts, you eat vegetarian, you are tolerant, you keep all beings in love and harmony, you try to do your duty and you try to be as good as God, a mini-God even, but better than nothing.

Then one day the drop will become the ocean. Once we enter the ocean we will become the ocean. Sometimes the water is already in the ocean but is separated by a cup or plastic bag. That's our karma, our ego. So, one time, one day the cup will be broken somehow or the plastic bag will have a hole in it. Then the drop will become the ocean. But we should make an effort. It's not that every effort will not bear fruit and not that karma is always there and whatever you do it will be the same. It's not the same, is it? It's not the same because you have decided to change the course of your life now already, so everything has changed.

That's why since your initiation, you are connected back with yourself and you try to live the way of God, and your life has changed. You feel better, more worthwhile, more real, more like the way you want yourself to be; you feel more noble and that's the way it is. That's how we become God, by following our goal, by trying to lift ourselves up to the standard that we want to reach. That's all there is.

If you want to be God and you say: 'I want to be God. I want to be God,' and you recite it like a mantra, it will never take you anywhere. It will only bring you the wanting to be God and nothing else, so you'll want all your life. So, don't want anything, just do it. Do whatever you want to do and don't say, 'I want money. I want money.' Go and earn it. If you keep wanting, wanting, then all you have is want. It's not that you should just force yourself to think positively but you must know why. Everything you think falls back upon you so you have no choice but to think positively, think good about yourself.

So, any time if something really goes wrong, then we must check up on our own inner self whether lately we have been lacking in effort, lagging behind in something, or maybe we don't want that thing anymore until we lose it and then we feel sorry. So, don't let things go so bad and then feel sorry. But even when it's already going bad like that, you can change it.

You are God and are being good, you feel good and noble, and go toward the goal that you want to achieve. Now I want to be God, I want to be good, and I want to be noble, so then just go. Then you will be more and more beautiful each day, because you became what you think, you became what you love. It's like a couple; they look like each other because they love each other. Like the owner looks like the dog because he loves the dog. Then if you love God, of course you will become like God, at least outwardly, and inwardly too, because the inner changes the outer.

People who love and have dogs and cats don't go for plastic surgery to change their appearance. They just change from inside. Their heart just goes into watching their dog every day, loving him, paying attention to him, playing with him, worrying about him, missing him, thinking about him, dreaming about him, and eating with him. They eat chocolate or ice cream together. The owner licks, licks, and then gives the dog a lick; especially children do that; they share candy, ice cream, chocolate, everything. They eat from the same plate, too, cutting a sandwich in two halves and then the dog takes one, and they take one. Anyhow, if we just love a dog or partner and we can come to look like a dog or partner, so much, then if we love God of course we will become beautiful and like God.

Looking like God might not be having our appearance look like God, but the inside will look like God and God will recognize it. We will know we are God because we will feel good and other people will recognize the beautiful God-like appearance in us. But also the appearance outside changes, too. That's why, sometimes immediately after initiation, I hardly recognize some people, they change so much, so beautiful, so young, so

handsome and looking like a child. I can't believe that it's the grumpy person who just came in half an hour earlier, yelling at everyone and doubting everyone. No one could even go near him. After that, he looks like a child, like an angel; and really he becomes so different in his appearance, like he has undergone surgery to change his face; and the way he talks, the way he walks, and his complexion, everything. I don't know how long he can keep it but it is so good after initiation. Many of you too, you change and change and change every day. The more you are diligent in practice the more beautiful you become, men and women alike. Sometimes after a few months you come back and I can not recognize one or two people. If you didn't see a person for a long time, afterwards you see them and say: 'Oh, how did she become so beautiful – younger eyes, more sparkling, the smile has more energy and the skin has become tighter, pink, young and smooth, very different?'

We're originally God, everything we think, every word we utter we must be careful about because it's powerful. If it's just idle thinking, then maybe it doesn't take effect very much. But if it's really serious, sincere thinking and a deep-rooted desire, it will come true. Just because it doesn't come true right away after you wish for something, you think it comes from nowhere or it's just like a very coincidental bit of fortune or misfortune. But actually you've created it somehow, somewhere, sometime before, or just now and you've forgotten it. I've had experiences like this so always try to think good thoughts so that everything that comes to you is good or favorable. Even if it isn't good, at least you're always thinking of good, and that's clean and you'll feel good that you're thinking good thoughts. At least you won't feel responsible for the bad things that happen to you or to someone else.

DILIGENT CHILDREN SCORE HIGH IQS ¹³²

When we help people, we may not be doing them good. Conversely, we could be ruining their sense of independence. Relying on others, they become weak. It is best for us to rely on ourselves.

People in the world are adverse to children working. They think this is abusing children. The truth is, children who work at an early age have high IQs, according to the scientists. Not that we deliberately force children to work, but they have no choice under the circumstances. They are forced into becoming smart, and to fight for their living. When the situation requires, they cannot say that they are children, and they don't know what to do. No one else will think for them, so they have to think for themselves.

Therefore, the homeless and wandering children are always clever, and can do things very fast! Of course, occasionally they might do something bad, but it is only because they have to fight for their existence. They are so smart that they are astute at even stealing. Our children are no match for them. [Laughter] The best they can do is to steal from us. [Master laughs.]

Therefore, you should train your children when they are still young. Let them share in the chores, teach them the value of money, and educate them by giving them rewards – that it is an honor to be able to work well and fast. When they grow up, they will associate the work with glory, the heartwarming feelings, and love and praise of their parents. It will become their habit when they grow up. If they are not trained in childhood, it is impossible to do it when they become adults. It will be too late to train them after they reach thirty –

132. International seven-day retreat, Raising Center, Cambodia, July 21, 1996 (Originally in Chinese).

really impossible. They do not deliberately want to dilly-dally or to be sluggish, but they just can't adapt to it. It is a very slow process rectifying their system from the root.

ALWAYS BE TRUE TO YOURSELF ¹³³

I have to tell you: True love begins with yourself. That's the only truth I can tell you. And don't say you always have to try to please other people. If you please others with an ulcer in your stomach, is that good? Or if you swallow the anger within you, is that good? You're the Buddha as well! Why do you have to pay such a price when it's not necessary? If it's truly, truly necessary and the other person will die without your doing it, then perhaps you can consider whether he's more important than you are. But you don't need to be running around, taking care of people's karma! You have enough of your own.

So, whether it's a marriage, an arrangement, a relationship or a business, make sure you get the best out of it. That's really the way to serve humankind. Because if you aren't happy in your marriage and you always let your partner get the better of you, one day you'll break down or explode, and you'll end up in divorce anyway. Even at that time, it's too late, but better late than never. If it really becomes too unbearable and unreconcilable, just go. Take care of yourself first. Then you can think about whether you should continue or you should start a new life.

Anything is changeable; anything can possibly be rearranged. That's how we learn. If you make a mistake, it's all right; admit it and change it. Don't continue with that mistake and sacrifice for this and that and the other. For example, suppose your marriage isn't happy and your partner always takes advantage of you, and yet you're the only one who's always feeling bitter and abused or beaten up – if you continue like that, what for? Maybe you think you might get a worse partner later, but you never know. You can try it, and if it's worse, you can say, 'Oh, it's worse.' And then you'll know.

In any situation, you must try to take care of yourself so that you get the best. But without taking advantage of other people or trying to walk over people's dead bodies in order to arrive at your desired destination. It's just that you have to be true to yourself in any circumstances. And the other people must also be true to themselves. If they're not, if they try to pretend or if they act hypocritically, that's their problem. At least you'll know where you stand: 'This person can't mix with me so I'd better find another arrangement or wait until he or she changes or becomes true to himself. Then we might talk again.'

It's the same with a partner, a business or anything. You always have to be true to yourself because we're practicing the Truth. If you aren't true to yourself right now, then when will you be? Will you be true to yourself when you go to heaven? There, we don't need to do anything anymore. We're finished with our job then, and there's nothing else to do. So, whatever you want to do, just do it if you have the correct intention. You just have to be true to yourself and your feelings.

THE DEATH OF MARPA'S CHILD – BE AWARE OF THE EPHEMERALITY OF THIS WORLD. HURRY UP AND PRACTICE! ¹³⁴

Recently, several practitioners that I knew passed away, and I also felt a little bit affected. Though I know this is illusory, I felt as if I was lacking something.

133. International seven-day retreat, Raising Center, Cambodia, July 19, 1996 (Originally in English).

134. International retreat, Raising Center, Cambodia, March 27, 1996 (Originally in English).

When death occurred to the child of Marpa, Milarepa's master, he cried so sadly that his disciples flocked around him and asked, 'Master, didn't you say that the world is only an illusion? Why are you crying so brokenheartedly just because your son has died?' Marpa answered them, 'Yes, everything is illusionary, but the death of a child is the greatest illusion of them all!' [Master and audience laugh.] He couldn't bear it.

When the birth or death relates to us or to our relatives and friends, our feelings are involved. Then we realize clearly that the world is indeed ephemeral. The world is truly unreliable. If it is other people's business, we wouldn't be so deeply affected emotionally. We might even talk lightheartedly, 'Well! Never mind! The world is ephemeral; people come and go all the time.' [Master laughs.] We may even console them. However, when it concerns our personal feelings, or when it happens to our relatives or friends, we will have different feelings.

Sometimes, because we, ourselves, cannot perceive the impermanence of the world, God gives us some mishaps, using the so-called shock treatment to awaken us. Only then will we be deeply impressed.

This world is really not a permanent place. Wars, calamities or sorrowful situations also function as an effective but bitter medicine to help us understand what we are here for. Whatever you want to do, then do it quickly; otherwise, time is running out!

Only when our relatives, friends or our loved ones pass away, then we are truly shocked and realize that it could happen to us tomorrow. At that time, we feel we should pursue spiritual practice quickly, and understand our inner self as soon as possible.

MEDITATION BRINGS POSITIVE THOUGHTS TO FRUITION ¹³⁵

Situations can sometimes change because of people's thoughts. Inside, if a person's thoughts change, the situation can change. That's why predicting anything in the future is hardly ever accurate because the future can change with a person's thought patterns. So, don't blame the clairvoyants for talking nonsense or predicting things that don't come true. Sometimes it's like that; things are supposed to be a certain way but then the person changes because they have a strong will, because they've become more moral or because they've repented for their sins and vowed to improve. Then the situation changes immediately. There's no need for God or for anyone to explain the situation. It's really like that.

That's why if you ask me what will happen tomorrow I won't tell you because I don't know! Only someone stupid would tell you what will happen tomorrow. Maybe it's possible for one individual, but only if that individual stays in the same pattern or living standard. If he or she has even one thought of improvement, his or her destiny can change.

This means that destiny is in our hands. So, make sure you control your destiny and bring it into a desired state or living standard. You do control your destiny. Of course, we're influenced by karma; that's why we have to struggle and decide what to do. But we must always keep our mind positive and use the power of meditation to make our positive thoughts come true. If you don't meditate and if you don't have the power of the creative almighty force inside, it doesn't matter how positively you think; the thought won't come true. So, don't listen to people who say, 'Just think positive and everything will be positive.' That's nonsense! Can it happen that way? If I just think that I have money, will I?

135. Group meditation, San Jose Center, California, U.S.A., March 20, 1996 (Originally in English).

Positively, will I have money? Just think! Try, try! You don't have to work! [Laughter] Just think positively that you'll have money, and tell me how much you have! [Laughter]

It can't happen by thinking alone. The back-up power must be strong. Where does this power come from? From the most high. You get it through your meditation; you're recharging then. So, don't just sit there and think; you must meditate, too. Just like thinking about money doesn't help: We must have a bank account, and the account must be full of money, or at least full enough to cover the checks.

USING HISTORY AS A GOOD TEACHER ¹³⁶

Realize your treasure of intelligent wisdom

We can change many things with our spiritual power. Everyone knows that, even some lamas, who don't have to practice very highly, but can still change the weather. We don't have to do that. We just practice and everything changes according to what we want. Maybe that's the best. Since we began practicing the Quan Yin method here in California, I think California now has the most disciples, and because I come here more often, the weather since then has become very good. It may be a coincidence, but it's a nice coincidence. [Applause] So actually, I think it's good. I think everywhere we change. If we practice the Quan Yin method, things will change, I am sure.

There was a story about a master who went to different countries to give lectures. One of the disciples who had the heavenly eye open traced the master's tour on a map. Then he knew where the master was going, and afterwards he checked with the local initiates about where the master had been. So, wherever he went, it was raining, raining, raining. It was a very dry country – like India, which sometimes also doesn't have enough water. But when the master moved anywhere there, the rain came, just exactly like that. It was just like he used the rain to mop his road. It was beautiful.

So, the disciple 'saw' that, and then he checked it out with the local fellow practitioners. And it was exactly like what he saw. Really, the Quan Yin method is fantastic. We cannot describe all the benefits we will derive from this supreme method. Sometimes I wish the whole world would know this, but we have to be patient. If you think I am not a patient person, I think you'd better think again. Because, if I were not patient, I could not bear this. I could not bear that with such a beautiful method and so supreme and so almighty a power, people would just ignore it and live in misery. Every day they beg for a little merit from God or whatever, and they don't even know that they have everything inside.

Sometimes I have to be patient with disciples like you, too. Because it's such a beautiful thing and you don't even bother so much. 'Two and a half hours, what? I don't have time!' You don't make enough use of your treasure. So, if you think I'm not patient, you'd better think again. If I were not patient, I couldn't bear this, really. Real patience is like that. It's not that if I don't scold anyone, that means I have patience. I do have patience. Because sometimes if a person is not initiated and comes to my house for any reason, and if he is behaving the way you sometimes do, I do not scold him. I do not tell him off; I do not make him do anything. I just slowly and nicely tell him all the things to do. For example, if he keeps standing around, I say, 'Oh! Please sit down.' Later, if he stands up again, I say, 'Please, sit down.'

136. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., March 14, 1996 (Originally in English).

But because I care for you, you are my responsibility. So, I just have to hurry up and speed up your recovery. It's just like you care about your children and how they behave. Even a little failure you cannot bear. But with the neighbors, you don't care if they are at the bottom of the class. You don't worry about the neighbor's behavior or his education. But with your children, you care. You scold them, you encourage them, you love them sometimes and then you're strict with them sometimes. You watch every move of your children, but not of the neighbor's. Similarly, whatever you see from me, whether I behave well or am in a bad mood or whatever, this is you. It's just a reflection.

Peaks of civilization and cycles of war

I'll tell you a story about very nice things that happened before, a few thousand years ago. Just to let you know that in the old times people also had very high civilizations, not just now. And then sometimes, according to the research or according to history, our previous ancient civilizations were destroyed somehow by war – perhaps by star wars or planetary wars between each other, or by civil war between brotherhoods. Because every civilization will develop up to a peak, a very high peak. And then if the people in that society do not take care to preserve their inner power to control themselves, and to make wiser use of their scientific knowledge, then there will be trouble. One will compete with another to seize the newest discovery and become a master of the other race, or the other side of the continent or the other planet. And that's why war will begin. And then, when the war is finished, everything's finished.

But that's the trouble with humankind; we never learn. As you see around us right now, many countries still haven't learned this lesson. Every time we go to war, our country becomes bankrupt. It will be in poverty for a long, long time. Everyone knows that; all the leaders of every country know that. But they just go to war for any reason rather than have peace. Sometimes they just want to intimidate other people. But what if the plan goes wrong? Then both sides will misunderstand each other. Small things lead to bigger things, and then there will be an explosion. Then war will start all over again, and then our civilization might be gone, just like the ones that have been discovered recently from the Atlantic dig or ancient Atlantis, or the ancient alien people.

And now we think, 'Oh! How come they were so civilized before?' They must have been, at some time. Maybe they were even more civilized than we are. Even in the bible, there is some recording of the wife of Lot. When she turned around to look, she turned into a pillar of salt. It looks like the effect of an atom bomb or something like that, like a highly chemical weapon, that can 'chemicalize' people. It just burns them into ashes and then looks like salt from over there.

So, there have been a lot of wars before, too. And of course, there have been a lot of discoveries and inventions, maybe far superior to what we have nowadays. So, there is no reason for us to really be proud of what we have right now, or to rely so definitely on these kinds of transient means, like scientific apparatus. But we always do that. Every time we discover something, we think we are great. And then we destroy everything, and we start from ABC again.

I'll read you a story that maybe will illustrate this. This story happened in China. The Chinese people were the first inventors of many kinds of modern-day equipment. Of course, at that time perhaps it was a little bit cruder or in a very elementary form. But then later they developed more and more. Or maybe the European or American people learned from their ideas and then made them even more civilized and refined.

For example, the Chinese people invented firecrackers. And they have been used for New Year's, just to make fun and have fun, and to scare the ghosts away, or to celebrate a very noisy and boisterous occasion, or when they get married or something like that. But mind you, the Chinese use firecrackers for anything. [Audience laughs.] If someone dies, they burn firecrackers. If someone marries, they burn firecrackers. When they feel lousy, they burn firecrackers. When they feel happy, they also burn firecrackers. When they celebrate a birthday, they burn firecrackers. And when they celebrate Ching Hai Day, they also burn firecrackers. [Applause] You have heard them many times, during my birthday or Ching Hai Day. They burn our ears, too, with all kinds of noises; they love it. I've gotten used to it by now, with all the drums and gongs and the firecrackers and things like that.

These firecrackers were invented by the Chinese many thousands of years ago. And they used them for fun. Then there came the Europeans. And they used them to kill. That's how the gun was invented. The first guns were used with the Chinese. Before, the Chinese didn't have guns. The first time the Europeans discovered the firecrackers' explosive powder from the Chinese, they bought it. Then they refined it. They made it become guns, or cannons. And they sold it back to the Chinese. At that time, the first king who possessed the cannons or those explosive substances, became the greatest conqueror of China at that time. So, it's like that. Inventions sometimes are harmless for children, and then other people use them in a more murderous way.

Ice cream was also invented by the Chinese and many other things. That's why before, when the European people first visited China, they were also very astounded and very surprised. It was such a beautiful fairy tale – like kingdom that existed. And, as with every other thing, beauty sometimes attracts the beast and makes a lot of trouble. So, I don't really know what to tell you. If you have a lot of things, like you have beauty, talents, money and all that, then maybe you attract the envy of other people. And sometimes it is the source of your misery or misfortune. So, should I tell you to live in poverty or just to have a simple life and not care about money or things like that? Then life is also not very comfortable for you, especially in America. You can't walk on foot like in the Himalayas. You will be starving because the supermarket is at least three hours away – by car. Everything here is counted by hours!

A robot: A gift to the king

There was a king in China. His name was Chou Mu Wang. Chou Mu Wang was a king about two thousand five hundred years ago, during the warring period. One time, he went hunting. Most kings are bored. They have nothing to do, so they go and kill animals. It's terrible; if they cannot kill humans, then they kill animals. I think they are always training themselves in the art of war. That is a mistake from the beginning. And that's why China has always been, off and on almost all the time during history, always at war with one another or with another neighboring country, or within themselves. Or they go and make war with animals.

So, this king was no exception. He went hunting somewhere in the mountains, where there was a mountain called Yen Shan. And then he came back and went back to his palace. On the way home, there was an offering made for the king. The offering was not in the form of a material gift but in the form of a person. Someone gave him a very well-skilled artisan. His name was Yen Shih. And then Mu Wang, the king, asked the artisan to come to him and asked him, 'What kind of talent do you have?' Yen Shih, the man who was supposed to be the gift for the king, answered him, saying, 'Your Majesty, tell me to do anything, and I will try. Whatever your Majesty wants me to do, I will try it. But I have already invented a machine. It is a robot. I would like to give it to your Majesty to inspect, if you please.'

So, the king, Mu Wang, said to him, 'Of course, of course. Tomorrow, bring it here to me, and I will have a look.' And then of course, the next day Yen Shih brought the machine to the king. And the king was very surprised and asked the artisan, 'Who is following you behind there?' And Yen Shih said, 'That is the machine person I have invented.' See that? It was so good that the king was fooled into thinking that it was another person following him. Even today, robots don't look like that. [Laughter] Not like that yet! Not when we see the 'Close Encounters of the Third Kind' or something like that. It looks like our 'Hoover' vacuum machine in the dining room, but it doesn't look like a person that can fool us. But this person, two thousand five hundred years ago, more or less, had already invented such a 'person.' Of course, on other planets there are inventions like this, and it's very common – I've heard this, but there's no guarantee.

And so this 'person' was so much like a human being that the king was shocked. He kept looking at the robot, and he saw that this person walked, ran, and bowed his head to the king. Like when we go to see the king or a high personage, we bow to pay respect to them. The robot did exactly like everyone else does, exactly like a human being.

Then when the artisan, the inventor, or we can call him now a scientist, when he just touched something at the chin of the robot, the robot began to sing! It had a very beautiful, precise voice. And then when the inventor raised the robot's hand, he began to dance, in very sophisticated and complicated movements, like a great skillful dancer. Not only that, he could do ten thousand and one, all kinds of entertainment activities, exactly like a very skillful, talented, trained person. Whatever you wanted him to do, the robot could do, and with such skill and precision that the king was very shocked and started to believe that he was a real person.

And then one of his very beloved concubines watched with him, and all the other beautiful maidens in the palace also surrounded the robot. And they all watched in amazement. Then after the robot finished his entertainment program, he even winked. [Laughter] He winked, making a kind of flirtatious sign with the beloved concubine of the king. So, then the problems began! The robot was so real that the king was very angry. It's like a boy who winks at a beautiful woman with a motive. So, the king became racked with anger, and he was very jealous. He wanted to kill both of them – Yen Shih, the man who invented it, as well as the robot. He believed that both of them were real.

The invention is 'too real' for the king

Yen Shih, the inventor, was terrified. He immediately kneeled down and said, 'Please, please, no! It's a mistake; he's not real, he's not real; let me prove it first!' And so he took out some of the screws, and immediately the robot dropped dead and could not move anymore. Then Yen Shih slowly took out the arms and legs, stomach and ears and everything. He showed the king that inside it was all machining, not a real person. And then the king also saw inside, that they had obviously painted the wood or metal, into a heart and liver. Everything that was done was just machinery. But it was so exactly like a person that even underneath the skin of the robot there were arteries and veins like the circulation system of a human body.

So, the inventor took everything out. And then he also took out the teeth, the ears, the eyes and everything for the king to examine. And then the king was kind of convinced. He told the inventor to take out the heart of the robot and see what happened. And then the robot just shut up; he could not speak anymore. He told the inventor to take out the liver of the robot. Then the robot could not wink or see anymore. He took out his kidneys, and the

robot could not walk anymore. And the king sighed in relief that after all, it was truly just a robot. His anger subsided, his jealousy disappeared, and he forgave both of them.

But then he shook his head in amazement and wonder, thinking, 'How can you try to replace God? How can you do the work of the creator? Are you in competition with Hirm?' Maybe. But of course, the inventor could not explain or say anything. Perhaps he was a great scientist. So, after that, the king told his subordinates to bring a truck, and then they brought the robot and the inventor back to where they belonged.

Despite all the inventions, is there really anything 'new'?

Also before, the Chinese invented a machine that could go to the clouds. They called it a 'cloud elevator.' Because they would use it to go up to the clouds. It must have been the most primitive form of airplane. It was already fantastic at that time, which was another, different time. It was a different person, different place. And also, another person invented the flying bird machine, which was an airplane too, perhaps. Both inventors were thinking that their invention was already top-class. But no one can even imagine that a person could invent such a 'real' robot that looked just like a human being. So, at that time, the robot was even better than those inventions of before, the flying machine and the cloud elevator. Maybe they had the UFO before, and the airplane. It looks like it, and also even the robot.

But after these two persons who invented the flying machine bird and the cloud elevator heard of this 'person' robot, they began to shut up. They dared not boast about their inventions anymore. So, it must have been in the same warring period.

I heard that at that time, during this warring period of Chinese history, many other funny and strange stories happened, like many strange personages appeared. It seems that they appeared from another planet, like what we call extraterrestrial aliens. Because they had a lot of weapons similar to what we hear nowadays that the aliens used, like the laser weapon – that froze people and made people paralyzed on the spot, or destroyed everything. And at that time, during the warring period of China, they called these people magicians. What they did was just like magic. They could create all kinds of illusionary objects in the air that destroyed the enemy with no other remedy for it. It looks like at that time we already had star wars of some kind, so star wars might not have been fiction at all. It might have been truth, or maybe at least contained some parts of truth in it. Otherwise, how could people of three thousand years ago in a remote area like China – at that time China, America and Europe didn't really have contact – so how could they speak about the same thing?

During that time, they didn't use ordinary weapons. The way they describe them, they were just like guns or laser weapons, and extremely sophisticated and powerful killing methods. At that time, the Chinese described them as great magicians who came from high above, from heaven, like in the book of 'Feng Shen Pang' (Honor List of Deification). It must have been true somehow. This is described in Chinese history; it is not fiction. So, three thousand years ago, we already had what we have today, and it might have even been much better.

Lately, I read some newspapers that said they have already discovered evidence of the atom bomb three thousand years ago. Archaeologists have dug up a site that had been buried under the earth, which was destroyed by an atom bomb. The evidence of radioactive elements still left behind has been tested, and they said it must have been an A-bomb. Maybe the story in the bible about Lot's wife coincides with this A-bomb of three

thousand years ago. So, our planet at one time or another must have been destroyed by us or by a war with other planets, due to some political reason or different system of government. So, perhaps there's nothing new under the sun, and perhaps we should not be at all proud of any physical invention we happen to possess at the moment or we happen to know of. Our ancestors already knew about it, and were much better, much more sophisticated than we are now. But what did they do? What did they use them for? Just to kill or destroy themselves, perhaps by mistake, perhaps by the uncontrollable events of war. So, you see, it's for nothing good. The invention of a killing method or apparatus is never of any use for mankind. Still, we don't learn; we are still warring with each other at this time.

All the heads of state in the world should read about 'The Warring Period of China,' or the 'Feng Shen Pang' (Honor List of Deification), or 'The Three Kingdoms.' Maybe they would learn something. But maybe they'll think, 'Oh! The Chinese again! They have a great imagination.' They probably will not believe that there is some truth in it. When I read 'The Warring Period of China,' there were many fantastic things that are just like what we have nowadays. For example, in 'The Warring Period of China,' it describes something about those highly qualified or wise persons involved in the warring period at that time who used magic to destroy each other. They had a method of receiving news. For example, a person just meditated there or sat in his house or in his mansion or in his cave. And suddenly he heard a strange wind passing by him. And then he let the beginning of the wind pass, and then he caught the wind and listened to the news. What could that be? You can read the story, and you'll know. You'll know if you read it. If you haven't, you'd better read it. It's a fantastic book. It is one of the six Chinese kinds of treasure literatures. And I read them when I was very young. And even at a young age, at six, seven, it was already fascinating to me. I read it day and night until my father chased me out of the fairy business. [Laughter] But then I hid somewhere and continued, or waited until he was gone. Because it was so fascinating. I did not know it was a famous Chinese book of literature. I just loved it. And I read almost all of the Chinese classics, I think all of them. Whatever Chinese classic was very famous, I read them all, when I was very young. By the age of seven, I had finished all the Chinese kingdoms, conquered them all. [Master and audience laugh.] [Applause]

So, you see, history repeats itself again and again. We always say that, but we don't know. And we don't try to control history. Many leaders of nations nowadays still try to make history in the same drastic way and try to write history again with blood.

May all become awakened

I hope one day we all will be awakened to the Truth. Even if we don't practice the Quan Yin method or anything, we should live in peace with each other. Everyone says peace; every government is just screaming at the top of their voice, 'We are for freedom, democracy, for the people and prosperity, liberty and brotherhood, equality, everything, everything!' But look at what they do to their country and their people: It's a laughingstock. I don't know how they can say that and then sleep at night, while they tell white lies or black lies and they don't even feel anything about it. Or perhaps they're so fanatic in their minds that they can't even see their own mistakes. Perhaps they were born with such a quality that it is natural to them, just like it's natural for the fish to swim in the sea or for the bird to fly in the sky. Some people are born killers perhaps, born bad, born negative, born masters of murder and mass murderers. If you kill a person here, you're in trouble. But in the war, they direct guns at thousands and millions of innocent people and children, and no one ever prosecutes anyone. They just say, 'Too bad.' And after all this separation of families and friends, all the damage of property, youth, intelligence, and human life and

treasure, no one says anything. Maybe later there's a little bit of an apology, like 'sorry,' or not even that.

Just like nowadays, people still press Japan to say 'sorry' for world war II, but they still keep their mouth shut. They don't say anything. And for all the people's sorrow and suffering, no one cares. They say they care, but who does care? If they did care, they would have taken care of more of the refugees in the world instead of driving them home mercilessly using all means. If they did care, they would stop war and never start it again. But most of the leaders, why do they start wars? Because it doesn't affect them that much. It doesn't matter how many people die or how much national property has been damaged, they are okay! They still have enough to eat all the time, and they still live in luxury. They still have their limousine, their private airplane, their bodyguards and whatever else until the last minute perhaps, when they lose. Then they take the whole national treasure with them on the private airplane and say, 'Goodbye.' They still survive like a king somewhere else, just without a kingdom, that's all.

Therefore many leaders don't care whether there is war or peace. Because they are not really leaders. They just use the position to amass wealth, power and dictatorship for themselves. That's why we must be very careful in choosing our leaders. Of course, you can never find a perfect one or the one we expect, but at least the best and the least harmful. At least if he cannot do any good, 'Oh! Please, just don't do any bad!' [Master and audience laugh.] 'If you can't protect us, just at least don't kill us!' That's all. So, at least it should be like that. And that's why it doesn't matter what they say; you have to see what they do. Whether it's really good for us to have such and such a president, or such and such a king, you have to know. The president you can change, but a king, you'd better think twice! If you make a revolution, you are the one who first gets your head chopped off. Luckily, nowadays we don't have that many dictator kings.

Before, a king meant God. Nobody could oppose him. Just if your mouth had not yet closed, your head was already gone! You couldn't even say anything or look directly at him. Every time the king rode outside somewhere, you had to kneel on the floor with your head down in the dirt. If you looked up, your head was gone. Before you looked at his face, your head was already somewhere. [Laughter] It was that strict everywhere. And it didn't matter how many people suffered from hunger or starvation or any kind of discomfort. Whether cold and heat or disaster, the king was always well off. So, were his thousands of concubines, wives and eunuchs. They were never in trouble. That's why they didn't know what suffering is.

Lessons of love

You know the famous story about Marie Antoinette? She was born with a golden spoon in her mouth. And when she was told that the people of France were very hungry and had no bread anymore, meaning that they were hungry, she said, 'No bread, then let them eat cake!' [Laughter] If I don't have bread, how can I have cake? But she didn't know about such a situation. She didn't know that bread means everything to the ordinary citizen. Bread means a meal; it means blood. Just like the Chinese say, 'Oh, we don't have any more rice.' That means we are hungry now. We don't have food. Rice is just a saying, symbolic for food, just like bread for the American or European people.

But such a queen like Marie Antoinette, perhaps she had never suffered from hunger and cold. She perhaps never had to walk on an uneven road or to go outside and even have a look at the ordinary life of the citizens. Wherever she went, the people ran away or had to be covered, and she was protected by all her bodyguards. She never saw anything. She

never saw the life of the people. Perhaps she was not a very cold-hearted queen. But because her life was surrounded by too much protection, too many lies and too much luxury, unnecessarily; sometimes the king and the queen didn't even know what they were doing. This is very difficult. And no wonder people always make a revolution against the king and queen and chop them down. It's just to change the rules or the dictation so the people's lives will become more bearable.

Freedom

Because in the old times, you couldn't talk to the king. You couldn't tell him he was wrong. Today you still cannot, but with some presidents you can. At least it's freer than before. It's a little bit different. Before, you could not say anything against the king or the government. You just did what they told you to do. Today you can speak against the government or the president, but you still have to do what they tell you to do. [Laughter] So, there is a difference, a 'speech-freedom.' You can say what you want, but you still must 'do it.' [Master and audience laugh.] It's not much different really, but maybe when people can speak it out, they feel, 'Oh, I am free. At least I can say it.' Let it out and clear the air. So, even if they have to work, they don't feel that they are so suppressed. And that's a problem, too.

Did I tell you the joke about the Russian? One American came to Russia to have a look and visit. And there he saw all the secret police, and the people were scared and didn't smile. That was before; I don't know how it is now. So, the American said, 'What's wrong?' He said to his friend, 'What's that? You dare not say anything. In America, we can criticize the president and government anytime we want. We are free to criticize them anytime, about anything.' So, the Russian friend said, 'Yeah, here we're also free to criticize the American government and its president any time.' [Master and audience laugh.] [Applause]

A hopeful future is in our hands

Some time ago I told you about the UFO that landed in Au Lac. That was about four thousand years ago. And the man was supposed to rescue the Aulacese country at that moment. He was an alien, very small, and he made himself very strong and big. He rode on a fiery horse and flew into the sky. Whenever the horse landed, there was a rounded hollow in the ground. What kind of a horse was that? It must have been a football kind of horse, all rounded like that. So, whatever it was, it didn't look like a horse. Besides, it was an iron horse with fire on both sides, and wherever the fire went it destroyed all the enemies there. They all died. And nothing could go against that horse and the fiery weapon that came from the horse. So, it sounds like modern-day equipment, like fire guns or a UFO.

We always think in our time that we are very civilized, that we have discovered everything and that we know many things. But actually we should read history again and again to be more humble – not to be depressed, but to feel more hopeful. If in the old times, humankind reached such a peak of civilization, then we will be able to do it again in the future. But there is a lesson to learn: That we should not abuse the power of intelligence. Above all, we must train ourselves within to have the stability of ethical conduct, moral standards, noble ideals, love and compassion. Then it doesn't matter what kind of machine we invent, even if it's dangerous. We can turn it into a peaceful apparatus to serve humankind and to help speed up civilization, instead of destroying each other. I hope we learn. [Applause]

THE ESSENCE OF MASTERSHIP – MASTERING YOURSELF AND BECOMING PERFECT ¹³⁷

A Master isn't a perfect person – never is, never will be. You must know that. But a Master is one who can master His or Her mistakes. We can learn from them and vow to make ourselves better each day. Just like being a genius is continuous hard work to maintain, so is mastership, which is all about mastering yourself and nothing else. If anyone else follows you, it's just by the way, just because of your aura. Your true sincerity attracts them from inside. That's why you don't need to talk. You don't even need to tell them anything and they believe you. Mastership is like that.

Don't believe that I was born perfect, I'm perfect at the moment or I'll ever be perfect. No! I'm learning like you. But I've mastered myself. I don't let my mind dictate to me what to do because I know the mind. I make friends with it; we make a deal, saying, 'You do this and I'll do that and we won't bother each other. If you do it well, I'll reward you. I feed you well, don't I?' I tell it, 'I give you anything when you want it.' It's just that now it doesn't want much because it knows it can't get much with me, so it forgets it. Even when it wants to sleep, I say, 'No, get up and work.' Then it has to do it. So, it's gotten used to it after ten years. It says, 'It's no good talking to this girl. She's very stubborn. She just does what she wants, and it's no good arguing.'

That's all there is to being a Master, continuous striving for perfection, for a better, nobler personality – a better ideal not really a personality because when you talk about personality you mean you still want fame and all that. You know you still have ego, wanting to be proud of yourself; it's not true. It's just that you think that whatever you want to do, whatever you think is noble, is highly idealistic, benefits others, is good, then you must try to do it. It doesn't matter what the cost is, you just do it and don't talk. That's the only difference. Otherwise, what's the difference?

If we were to be operated on right now, none of our brains would be much better than the others. Maybe I'm of a little bit higher IQ or you're higher, but that doesn't mean that we're much different. Our brains are the same. Our will power is the same, except that if you exercise to make it grow stronger or not, it's your free will. Most of us abuse our free will in a harmful way, in a retarding way, slowing our progress to higher consciousness.

Don't ask me why we have to strive higher. It's more comfortable to be a noble being, to be a wiser being, than just always being ignorant, sluggish, slow, lazy and a 'couch potato' just lying there and waiting for things to happen. It's better not to worship me, better not to follow me; just follow my example. Worship the result that comes out of my efforts and then do it. Do the same, and then you'll become a Master in no time.

Teach yourself to do what's better than ordinary people, to do the things that other people can't do when it benefits humankind and yourself, to endure what other people can't endure when it benefits people and betters your judgment and wisdom. Do whatever is in your power to know yourself, to discover that your greatest strength is still further to be discovered, that you're nobler than you are at present, that you can do many other things that are a lot of benefit to yourself and other people. Then when you die you'll know. At that time it might be too late to look back and regret, but you'll feel very painful. That's why when most people die they're in agony. They haven't finished the things that they should have done, and their conscience strikes them. Their mind controls the body and the

137. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., March 13, 1996 (Originally in English).

conscience affects the physical being. So, if your conscience doesn't feel well, you feel sick, you feel painful.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING OUR THOUGHTS, SPEECH AND ACTIONS PURE ¹³⁸

There are many ghost stories in China from earlier times; for example, Liao Zhai Zhi Yi (Tales of fox fairies and ghosts, a book of Chinese ghost stories), and so on. Some of the ghost stories are not completely fictional; there is some truth in them. Because the human psyche is funny; it can create a lot of things. That's why people can have psychic power.

It is said that, in Tibet you can practice devotion to a kind of deity. And then one day you will see the deity appear as a real person; you can create it. If you don't have a deity that you already like, you can create one in your mind – as a deity, a monk, a woman and so on. After a long period of practice, these imaginary personages will become real. And each has a reality and a personality of his or her own. And sometimes if you're not powerful enough to control this created apparition, it will even harm you.

Similar to ghost stories, many things happen in our life because of our mind. So, if people say, 'Everything comes from the mind,' it means that our thinking affects our living standards and everything around us. If you think the flu is contagious, you should know that the thought process is even more contagious than that.

But there's no need for harm. Besides reciting the holy names, you can pray to God, meditate and think all the time of the good side of things. You must check your psychological lifestyle as well, such as being too obsessed with some kind of idea. For example, if your body is very healthy, and you live in an environment that is always propagating or encouraging people to have intercourse with the opposite sex, then the cells in the body will sometimes listen to that message.

So, you have to keep your mind at a different level [Master points to the wisdom eye.] and tell the cells the opposite. If you can't do that, then sometimes the bodily demands are greater than your mental ability to control them. And then sometimes you see a ghost appear to you, like a beautiful lady in your dreams or not in your dreams, making more trouble for you. In that case, you should know that this is a psychological apparition. It's not real.

So, in that case, if you want to deal with this kind of ghost, you can ask something that he cannot answer. Anything you think in your head, the ghost will know, because he is you. So, make sure it's something that's puzzling. For example, if the ghost comes again, you can hold a handful of rice in your hand and ask him, 'How many grains are inside?' and surely he can never answer; then he will disappear. In that case, you'll know it's your own psychological apparition that appeared to you because you suppress yourself too much. So, try not to suppress yourself so much. Get married, or do something legal. [Master and audience laugh.] So, you don't have to make trouble for yourself and invite a ghost.

We have to check our thought processes. It's not the action alone that counts; it's the thought inside. For example, sometimes you hug someone, and if you love him or her, they will feel different than when you just hug out of social etiquette, like, 'Yes, hello, how are you?' And the other person freezes. So similarly, with the family relationship or husband and wife, don't think that you can cheat on her and she doesn't know it. She feels

138. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., March 12, 1996 (Originally in English).

it. And there will be turmoil in the family; you just won't know why. You think that she doesn't know anything, that she's become moody these days or she's become lousy. It's not true. Inside, the knowledge is transmitted through space, through time, and is recorded.

Everything is recorded. It's funny how we think that we're alone all the time. We're not alone. Everything is recorded and transmitted. For example, television and radio or CDs – they're nothing, just pieces of metal and plastic with everything recorded on them! How can the ether or God power not be able to record an even finer version than that?

So, we should be aware all the time of the naked visibility of our inner thinking, not to mention our actions, which are coarser and more visible. That's why we must always try to keep our thoughts, speech and actions as pure as we can control them. Because we'll affect the next person.

THE ONLY WAY TO DEVELOP SUPREME WISDOM ¹³⁹

We may be able to renounce the world, but the most difficult thing to renounce is the ego, which is made up of many ideas about what 'I' should be and what others should be according to 'my' opinion. That's where we're stuck and that's why so many people walk in the worldly, mundane life and don't walk along the spiritual path. But this is the way it is. This is the way God or the creator made this world so that it still exists like this. If it were easy for everyone to follow a spiritual Master and become liberated in one lifetime, the physical world wouldn't exist. And the king of illusion, maya, would have nothing to do. He'd be fired. That's why he obtained a promise from God: That he can play all kinds of tricks and do all kinds of magic to weave the tapestry of this physical existence into such a beautiful piece of art that everyone will be mesmerized and get lost in looking at it, and it will be very difficult to turn their attention elsewhere.

The king of the devils, before he became king of the devils or king of illusion, also pursued spiritual practice, just a different kind. He did all kinds of austerities in order to obtain boons or promises from God. That's the difference between a real spiritual practitioner and one who practices for a purpose. That's why when we practice in any kind of spiritual field we can also obtain something according to what we wish for. For example, we can concentrate our mind and read other people's thoughts, see through solid objects and know 'what's happening and where' from very far away. But that's all we have. The supreme knowledge is reserved only for those who practice the Quan Yin method.

I can't explain why this is so. It's just the law; that's just the way it is. Everything has its order and everything has its place in the universe. So, the Quan Yin method is only for those who seek the Truth and the Truth alone, nothing else. Magical power, universal power and all kinds of other privileges in the spiritual field will be granted to those who seek them. It's just like if you come to the king, and the king asks you to take any treasure from him that you want, and then you get lost in the diamonds, rubies or antiquities like his chairs or his table and things like that. But the woman who wants the king alone, she's the one who has everything too, except that instead of wanting only part of the king's treasure, she wants the king. And so she'll also have everything: The whole kingdom belongs to her, including the king. So, that's the clever one; that's the Quan Yin practitioner's position. This is how it is. There are many people who practice, but it's very difficult to find a real one, who truly practices just to gain the supreme knowledge.

139. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, February 21, 1996 (Originally in English).

Karma and habit

Not many people can leave the places they're used to, the people they've befriended or the surroundings they've become accustomed to living in. It's because of this that many people transmigrate again and again back into this world. Because at the time of death, they desire nothing else but to continue doing what they've left behind, to continue living further and making more money, making more friends or having more wives or the like. And whatever you desire at the time of death, you'll get. After you finish your 'death sentence,' you'll come back again. It's very difficult to leave what we're used to.

There's a story about a person who went in search of a stone that could turn everything into gold. They called it a touchstone. If you found that pebble, everything you touched with it would turn to gold.

So, this person who heard about it from someone obtained a secret map of where the pebble was supposed to be and went in search of it. On the beach, there were millions and billions of pebbles that all looked alike, each like every other one. Except that when you touched the real touchstone pebble, it would be warm, while the other stones were all cold.

So, every day he would look for that one pebble. And when a pebble was cold, he'd throw it into the sea so that he wouldn't make the mistake of picking up the same one again. He was very patient. Every day, he picked up a lot of pebbles and felt each one. When it was cold, he'd throw it into the sea, and he kept throwing day after day until one day he found a pebble that was very warm to the touch, but out of habit he also threw it into the sea.

That's the force of karma. Karma means habit: Whatever we keep doing again and again bears consequences, and then we're forced to do it again and again. That's why it's called karma, and that's why people transmigrate all the time.

The cause of transmigration

All these things are very impermanent; even our own life doesn't belong to us. If our life were belonged to us, we could always keep it. But we can't. At any moment, it can be taken away from us without warning, without asking, without any permission from us at all, even without our knowledge, except for Quan Yin practitioners: We know before we die. We know three days, one week, sometimes a month or three months in advance, sometimes longer than that – to prepare everything before we leave this world. Other ordinary people don't know this; they don't know when life will be taken from them. They don't even know when their dearest wife, husband or children will be taken from them or sometimes even be taken together.

So, that's the fate of the pitiful human beings in this world, as well as all other sentient beings; people don't know when they'll die. Even our life doesn't belong to us. Nonetheless, each of us clings to all these impermanent things, and we stop ourselves from many adventures. For example, sometimes we want to do this and that or go here or go there. But because we're so attached to our environment and surroundings we have no courage to start new things or do something more exciting with our life. Instead, we just go day in and day out onto the highway and off of the highway, into the car and out of the house, day in and day out, from the day we're born to the day we die.

Sometimes life is very boring for us, but we have no courage to change it or no initiative to alter the pattern of our existence. Just because we're too accustomed to living the way we are, to staying where we live and to having the people we're used to having around us, we

can't leave them; we can't leave all these things behind. We feel like we're missing something if we don't stay with them, or if we don't stay there. That's the lot of most sentient beings, and that's the reason we keep reincarnating again and again and again. It's just that we always want something that we don't have, and later we just go back to what we had. That's all.

PROTECTING THE NOBLE IDEAL OF THE QUAN YIN MESSENGER ¹⁴⁰

The monkey-monk

A long time ago, there was a monk who became a monkey. When the Buddha came into this world to preach the dharma, the Truth, there were many monks who studied under Him. There were some monks who had already attained sainthood, but many people did not know that. Other monks sometimes made fun of them because some of them didn't look very good and looked a little bit 'funny.' There was one monk who was very, very naughty. Every time he saw one of those monks running down the hill, he'd say to him, 'You look like a monkey running down that hill.' Because he criticized that monk – called him a monkey, for five hundred lifetimes, he had to be born as a monkey.

So, take care, and don't laugh at the monks because between 'monk' and 'monkey,' the only difference is two letters. Anyhow, if you make fun of an ordinary monk, maybe it is all right. But if that monk has already attained sainthood, then you'll be in trouble. You never know which monk has already become a saint or which monk has already attained a very high level of spiritual practice, so you had better take care.

Monks are instruments of God

Especially, the monks that I send to your country according to your request to teach you the dharma, you had better take care not to make fun of them, and not even try to attract them physically. According to Buddhism, if we try to waylay a monk who has been studying under a living Master, it is a very terrible sin. I will read some of the warnings for you. I have sent so many monks abroad and a lot less have come back; and you keep asking me for more.

I can't produce monks. I can only send you what I have, what God has sent me to serve you; and I can only train those who are able. Not every monk is able to memorize the teachings, especially the initiation process. Sometimes they are old, sometimes they are not very literate, and sometimes they are not good at teaching and theory. Maybe they are good at practice; maybe they are able to meditate a lot and have attained a spiritual height, but they are not very able to go out and preach to other people or to repeat the initiation procedure. So, not every monk that comes here can I use for your benefit. Nevertheless, whatever good, intelligent monks I send you at the cost of my inconvenience and finances, even then, you still snatch them. Some of you, not all of you; most of you don't because you are already married, thank God!

When I say 'monk,' I mean 'nun' as well; people snatch both. I don't know why, when there are so many people in the world, people have to snatch the monks and nuns, leaving me handicapped and wasting my time training new people. If there are any new ones at all, because you don't send them to me, you keep them for yourselves. You tightly keep your husbands, sons, daughters and wives, and then at the same time, demand that I send monks and nuns to teach you the dharma if I cannot go myself. Of course, it is difficult for

140. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, February 20, 1996 (Originally in English).

me alone to go everywhere to teach you personally, so the monks and nuns are my ears, my eyes, my hands, and my feet to help me serve you. Nevertheless, sometimes you sever my limbs, my instruments, and make me handicapped. Then you complain that I don't send people to teach you, especially those countries like Au Lac or China, where I cannot personally go due to the political situations prevailing at the moment. Well, I suppose it will be much better in the future for the sentient beings' sake.

These less well-known monks can be more anonymous and go incognito to such lands to help you, but I send a lot out and I get few back. This is very inconvenient. It's a loss of business; if I send out five, I should get back ten. Mostly when people do business, they prosper; they get more interest and income as time goes by. But at the moment, this business looks like it doesn't bring a lot of profit. Well, it does, though. Perhaps I lose one monk and I gain about a hundred people. That's not bad, but then these hundred people cannot be used as monks or nuns; they are lay people. Therefore, it's also inconvenient for me.

I don't have that many monks. Besides, some of them have to help record the videotapes and audiotapes, and print the books and magazines for you. Do you think that all these things come from the sky, or you pick them from the snow or something like that? Do you think the videotapes and audiotapes are good all by themselves? No, they have to edit them and put all the good parts together. Sometimes they just record at random when I walk around, talk nonsense with you, make jokes, or something that is not very necessary for your practice. So, they have to edit them. Moreover, not every monk can edit the videos because of the sophisticated equipment. They have to learn for a long time. They have to have patience, have some idea about artistic setup, and they have to know how to use the machines as well. Therefore, there is a lot of work to do, and I don't have that many people. If you realize the amount of work that I do, you know how very difficult it is for me. Of course, I can have it easier. I don't need videotapes; I don't need audiotapes. I need nothing, and then it's easier. I don't need people.

The anxiety of waiting for initiation

In addition, not all of these monks are angels. They also make trouble for me. They give me headaches and they make mistakes. The things that they should do, they don't; and the things they should not do, they do, et cetera. There are a lot of things that I have to bear, apart from training them; and as soon as I train them right, some people snatch them, for example like that. Then I lose one more hand, one more foot, one more eye and one more ear. The work becomes slower and many sentient beings, who have been very earnestly waiting for initiation, are obstructed. They must wait for a long time, and sometimes it is too long for them. They may die before initiation, you never know; life is ephemeral. They must be vegetarian for three months and who knows what will happen during the three months. Sometimes not only three months and then they get it; they have to wait for eight months or one year. If I don't have enough Quan Yin messengers to send, then they must wait longer, and you know what it's like when you keep waiting for initiation. Many of you must know the longing, the desperation, during the time you wait for initiation, because you know life is ephemeral and you might not get it before you leave this world. The time is so short; you might not have enough time to practice.

The world is in chaos because we do not carry out God's will. We obstruct it with our egos and then we make a lot of trouble for the kingdom of heaven to descend upon earth. I wish that in the future, whenever I send a messenger to you, be it a monk or nun, and even though they are in lay clothes for the sake of convenience in travel and so you don't attach to the form or to the differences, that you respect them the way you respect me. Give them

all the conveniences possible with respect and honor, not spoiling them, not giving them too much food or too much attention. Just give them what they need, whatever they request so that they can serve you better and they will have the encouragement and protection necessary for them to continue to do your work.

I am speaking to you as well as to all the future fellow practitioners. I wish, I request, I beg you to do this because a monk or nun is also born among us. They also have physical beings like you. They have physical bodies with physical needs and physical temptations. It is already very difficult for them to withstand all these temptations. It is difficult enough without you having to make more temptations, taking advantage of the position of going near them, helping them to drive a car, or helping them to cook a little meal. You weaken their resistance, make bad karma for yourself, and hinder a future Master from serving all other suffering sentient beings. I hope you understand for the first time, and for the last time. [Applause]

Protect the sentient beings' precious property

I have not requested at any time, that you become a monk or nun. I have never said anything like this. But should anyone like to dedicate their lives to the service of suffering sentient beings, you should honor, help, and protect them, so that they don't fall down into the pit of temptation. You should never make more trouble. You should never try to satisfy your own temporary lust or desire for physical contact, or even physical love, to pull them down to the lower level of consciousness just to make yourself happy, just to satisfy your selfish desires. I am not talking about whether you create sins from this or not. I am talking about your own conscience. A monk or nun can profit many people spiritually and uplift them out of the suffering of transmigration, from hell even, including your own parents, friends, wives, husbands and children. If you snatch them away for your own self, how many thousands of people suffer, do you know?

Do you ever think of the consequences of your actions because of your selfish desire to satisfy your own physical lust or physical desire? You take away sentient beings' dear, precious property, and you let many thousands of people suffer without Light. You already have the Light; you have already had everything given unto you, and you deprive thousands of others, or maybe even hundreds of thousands, maybe millions, including their deceased relatives and friends, and five, six, seven generations. You deprive them of the guidance of the Master and God. Do you ever think of the consequences? Do you ever feel compassion for these suffering people? I request you to think again about this.

I am not threatening you with karma, sin, hell-fire, and all those things. It doesn't matter what you do, the Buddha is merciful, God is compassionate. He will eventually save you. But you alone, if you have done damage to many thousands of people, it will bear upon your conscience alone; no one else will have to even judge you or tell you anything. You are a future Master, you have a conscience, and since your wisdom has been awakened, you know more clearly than other sentient beings. You know everything about what you should do and what you should not, so there is no one to even judge you but you yourself.

Reminders for the Quan Yin messenger

When I send them out to you, I tell them many things. I tell them not to sleep on your bed because they might pick up your physical vibrations; I tell them not to take anything from you because when you offer, you might not have a very clean intention. They do not know, and then this will affect them. I tell them not to take respect from you, not to let you bow to them because I am afraid that their ego will sprout up and become difficult for them to

control. They fail in different ways: Through ego, through physical temptations and through flattering praises. Everything makes them fail. And you just offer them anything that you should not, most of the time, just to get some selfish personal advantage: Sometimes just so that they will treat you better; sometimes just so that you can have more information than other people; and, sometimes because of physical desires. Whatever it is, it is no good for them and for you.

I tell them many things. But when they go outside, they forget, and also they become weakened, surrounded by all the temptations. I tell them not to wear too beautiful clothes and not to make themselves up too much, both men and women, just because I don't want them to attract trouble for themselves. Nevertheless, some of them do; some of them misunderstand my good intentions. I have said to them: 'I am the main actor. I wear different things; I do different things. You have a different role to play. You don't have to dress the same. You don't have to do the same.' Just like in a movie, the main actor wears one thing, and the supporting actors wear different things. They don't have to wear the same clothes as the main actor, or they don't have to do the same things. Besides, even if I wear beautiful clothes, I know what to do with myself, and they don't. To some degree, I am stronger. But sometimes they misunderstand my good intentions, and sometimes you don't help them and you don't help me. You create more trouble than help, and that is why we have problems.

I would like to take all the world into the Quan Yin family to create heaven as quickly as possible, but there are so many obstructions. Everyone's physical body is already a self-obstruction: Sometimes they get sick, sometimes they get tired, sometimes too much karma, and everything. And if they get more temptations from the outside, then it's very, very difficult.

When the monks and nuns stay here, they have better protection because they live alone. They live together, but do not have much contact with society. They do their jobs like writing stories, printing the magazine, or checking the books and transcriptions, and all that, so they are busy. People don't have much opportunity to be near them for a very long period of time, thus it's easier for them to keep to themselves and to concentrate. But when they go outside alone and have to deal with many hundreds and thousands of people, day in and day out, with the physical nearness, it is very difficult for them. They run into the magnetic fields of other people, which are at times not very pure, not very clean, and full of the pulling tendency, therefore it is very difficult for them to withstand. They sometimes forget to pray to the inner Master, or they are weak themselves and sometimes the past karma comes running back to them. If they forget the Master inside for any moment, they will be in trouble.

It is not only when I send them out that they are lost, but here too. There are times when people come to the Center and create problems, so it is very difficult for us – for me and for the monks and nuns – to do the work that you expect us to do. Yet, we cannot be selfish and shut ourselves in the caves and not worry about your suffering and longing for liberation. We must sacrifice; we must come out and do many things that we don't really wish to do. We have to make fools of ourselves sometimes. We have to lower our tastes in order to be in accord with all sentient beings, to make them feel near, to make them feel very familiar in order to teach them the higher way of life. But in doing this, at times we endanger ourselves. At times the monks and nuns lose their hold on the ideal of monkhood, of renunciation, of the sacrificial spirit, and they fall. It is not entirely their fault; you are also responsible, and me too. But as you know, even God does not force people. God and Buddha can only encourage people and protect them whenever they wish to be. But there are times when sentient beings don't wish protection. They wish to do the things

that their physical bodies and desires are directing them to do, and they refuse help and protection from God. It happens.

Merits of being a monk

Okay, I will read to you some of the praises from the Buddhist sutras about people who are monks; who want to become monks; who let others become monks or encourage people to become monks; who help people to become monks; and who support people who are monks. So that you will know whatever I tell you is the truth. If you don't believe me, you can believe the Buddha.

'Exceedingly great and manifold are the blessings of he who has become a monk. Inconceivable are the blessings of he who has allowed his son, daughter, man-servant or maid-servant to enter the monastic life or has himself become a monk. The blessings of he who has become a monk or allowed others to become a monk far exceed the blessings of he who, by means of the virtue of charity, has possessed wealth for ten lifetimes, or of he who has been born for many thousands of ages among the six realms of the gods.'

Do you hear that? There is more here.

'One may ask why this is so. It is because the virtue which is derived from charity will eventually become exhausted, but the blessings of becoming a monk go beyond the limits of time and have no end. Again, through the virtue of observing the precepts, one may become a sage who possesses the five supernormal powers, rejoices in the realm of God Brahma, or is endowed with extreme wealth. But the blessings of him who has become a monk of the teachings of an enlightened one are beyond conception, and the blessing of the bliss of nirvana is indestructible.

If one were to construct a stupa of the seven precious jewels so high that it'd reach the heaven of the thirty-three gods, the blessings from this would not equal those of becoming a monk. One may ask why this is so. It is because ignorant, unenlightened men could destroy the stupa of the seven precious jewels, but no one could ever destroy the blessings of he who has become a monk. If one desires the dharma of blessings, he must realize that there is no other way than by becoming a monk of the teachings of an enlightened one.

There is no dharma superior to this. It may be likened to a wise physician who heals the eyes of a hundred blind men and returns their sight to them. Or it is like a man who prevents a violent person from tearing out the eyes of a hundred men. Although the virtues of these two are beyond conception, the blessings of he who allows others to become monks or himself becomes a monk are even greater. One may ask why. It is because the first two, when they saved the sight of others, brought forth a worldly blessing only; the happiness had to do with the fleshly eye and material existence. But those who allow others to become monks or themselves become monks by aiding each other will gradually, in the end, attain the eye of supreme wisdom, and the self-nature of this wisdom eye will never be destroyed even until the end of the world. Through the blessing of his virtue, men and gods will rejoice in inexhaustible possessions and in the end will attain the bliss of enlightenment. It is because the dharma of the monk destroys the realm of maya and causes the lineage of the Buddha to increase. It destroys virtueless, evil dharmas, and gives birth to virtuous teachings. It destroys the impurities and gives birth to the supreme work of virtue.

The Buddha has taught that the blessings of becoming a monk are higher than Mount Meru (a very high sacred mountain in India), deeper than the bottom of the sea, and more extensive than the firmament.'

Do you know how big the firmament is, how limitless is the sky? That is the merit of the one who becomes a monk or allows others to become monks. These are the words of the Buddha. I am not trying to tempt you.

The pitch-black pit

'Grave indeed is the fault of him who obstructs or hinders another from becoming a monk. It may be likened to a man who enters a totally dark house in which he can see nothing, who falls into the pitch-black pit of hell. The result of this may be likened to all the rivers emptying into the ocean, thus sins accumulate within his being. It is like the great conflagration, which occurs at the end of a world eon when majestic Mount Meru is reduced to flame and ashes. The man will be totally consumed by the flames of hell. Thus, the blessings of he who allows others to become monks or himself becomes a monk are exceedingly great. He who becomes a monk becomes cleansed through the waters of the sutras (the holy books of the Buddha), and washed away are all the defilement, totally alleviated of the sufferings of birth and death, and he becomes a cause for the bliss of nirvana. Through discipline, he courses within the realm of the pure precepts, through the clear eye of the dharma, he sees the deeds of virtue and non-virtue throughout the entire universe, and through mindfulness, he treads the eightfold noble path of the noble one and arrives at the city of nirvana. He who allows older or younger people to become monks or himself becomes a monk great are his blessings.'

There is more, but I think that should be enough for you. That was the teaching of the Buddha.

It is very difficult to become a monk, especially today with all the material comforts, and we human beings have the very deep tendency to be attached to anything that we are used to. That is one of the great causes why we keep being reborn and reborn in the same world again and again. At the time of dying, we feel reluctant to leave whatever we are accustomed to living with. That is why not many people can leave home and become a monk, except when they have trouble with the family. That is why many Chinese people sometimes have the wrong view: Monks and nuns are those who are very depressed, who do not love this world, who cannot live outside because they have trouble with family members or maybe their lover rejected them. Therefore, they come here or to the temple to become a monk. That may be the case with some of the people but it is not true with many other monks. They became monks because of their distinguished high ideals of sacrifice and service to human beings as well as to attain the supreme wisdom. These are the real monks and nuns and they are the ones that we should protect and venerate as the very precious jewels of the world. They are the 'Light-bearers;' they are the rescuers of those in hell; they are the ones who spread the true teachings among humankind, lighting the torch in the darkness to lead all beings into supreme bliss and eternal happiness. These monks and nuns are hard to find. That is why we must respect, protect and help them, and never for one moment allow ourselves to have a thought of pulling them down or closer to us for our personal benefit or desire.

Be a monk from the heart

Furthermore, all of us, even if we cannot leave home to become monks and nuns, should be monks and nuns in our own homes. We should lessen our desires for material wants

whenever possible; we should curb our tendencies to run after worldly profit, name, and fame for the sake of material enjoyment. We continue to do business but without attachment. We must do it in the spirit of being a provider for ourselves, our family, and society, and not because we do business to gain fame or to gain profit in order to make ourselves a very exceedingly luxurious life.

It depends on our inner conception how we do the work in this world. If our conception is correct, even if we do business or we rule the whole nation, it is still correct and we still can attain enlightenment. But if our conception is not correct, even if we became a monk, we are just a kind of hypocrite – only outside a monk; inside, perhaps a monkey.

The monkey is the mind and the lustful desires keep running all over the place inside of it. That is the monkey we should tame in order to become a true monk. Should we see someone who has attained the merit, the blessing of becoming a true monk, we must thereby help them, protect them, and do everything we can to always keep them in an exalted position for the sake of all sentient beings, including ourselves. To protect the monk means to protect yourself too, because if you attract him, if you make him fall down into the physical desires, then it's not only he who fails but also you. You are the one who falls as well, who creates a lot of heavy obstruction for yourself in the future. Whatever we do for others, we do for ourselves. So, try to remember this. Thank you. [Applause]

MASTER'S WAYS OF REACHING PEOPLE ¹⁴¹

I enjoy the talents that God has granted me for the good cause of mankind. So many people come to me because of the clothing I designed, because my artistic tendency appeals to their artistic tendency – appeals to their love of beauty. Some people come to me through the music because my music appeals to their inner nature, their own ability to produce music or to listen to music. Some people love my paintings so they feel acquainted with me and make an affinity with me and become fellow practitioners.

Therefore, from so many angles of abilities, God has drawn His children to Himself, through my physical instrument – for example like that. There's nothing that's useless. We must know how to use things, and then they become useful.

When I see the people offer things to the Buddha, and then they're reborn again and again with a piece of silk on their bodies or two coins in their hands, I'm afraid. That's why I don't accept your offerings. I would rather you offer it to yourselves and then let me help you take you out of this suffering sea forever. It would be the best thing that you have ever offered to any Buddha, enlightened Master.

But of course, in each yuga (age), Masters use different ways to teach people. At that time, that man only offered two golden coins. If the Buddha did not accept, there would have been nothing else to offer. He didn't know yet (of the supreme teaching) or maybe the Buddha was in a hurry and the man only wanted to offer two golden coins and wanted nothing else to do with the Buddha. What else can you do?

Sometimes people offer me small things, I also accept. I accept their offering merits. Either I take it or not take it, it's the same; and I give them something else so that also creates an affinity without me having to take things from them. We will give them sample booklets or something like that. Then they slowly develop the mind for enlightenment. That would be best for them. That's why we spend our money not only on charity but also on spiritual

141. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, February 17, 1996 (Originally in English).

charity. We print a lot of free booklets and news magazines in case people are interested. That is a gift to mankind that we can give. Better than the material charity we do.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EMBRYO EDUCATION ¹⁴²

To a child you must start from the embryo. During pregnancy, you should say good things to it – positive things. Read books to it. Read a dictionary! Read a few pages a day, then when it is born it will be able to talk to you right away. [Master and audience laugh.] That's right! Its IQ will improve. Sing songs often, good and positive songs; then its IQ will also increase, perhaps by twenty to fifty points.

During pregnancy, if you stimulate the baby's potentials, its nervous system will develop more. When the baby is born, it will be very intelligent – smarter than if you didn't sing or talk to it. I heard that if you put a piece of iron under your pillow, it helps, too. I don't know why, but it seems to work. I just heard about it – you can give it a try. [Laughter] This, I can't guarantee. [Master and audience laugh.] It's just hearsay.

Today's children are very smart. Do you know why? It's because most pregnant women watch television and give the babies lots of information. A baby can absorb such information because its brain has started to develop. Therefore, whatever an expectant mother absorbs, the baby also absorbs. Don't think that just because the baby is separated by some flesh, it can't hear. Because of the intimate relationship between the mother and the baby, you can have a great influence on it. Whatever you eat and think can affect it. You should eat more food that nourishes the brain; food like spinach and other green-leaf vegetables. The baby will be born beautiful and intelligent.

If you want the child to be good-looking, then hang pictures of beautiful, good-looking and moral people everywhere in the house – the baby will be very good-looking. The effect will be there. Whoever you think about, the child will look like that person. Most babies look like the father, [Master and audience laugh.] because you love your husband most! You also dislike him the most! [Master and audience laugh.] Therefore, the child looks more like the father because you think about him everyday. Most babies look more like the father than the mother. This is fine, it's God's arrangement. No matter how the baby looks, the mother always knows it's her child. But, the husband doesn't know for sure. When he sees the baby looks like him, he will be pleased; he will take better care, and love the child more. This is God's arrangement.

Therefore, don't be jealous and say, 'How strange! The babies always look more like my husband than me.' This is only natural.

THE ORIGIN OF THE YELLOW ROBE ¹⁴³

I heard that people who wear yellow clothes have fewer chances of being possessed by the devil. Even if they were possessed, they would become yellow demons, [Laughter] instead of the (yellow) maya king. [The words for yellow and king in Chinese are similarly pronounced.]

No wonder the monks in ancient times always wore yellow clothes. [Laughter] Even the kings wore yellow clothes – they dreaded being possessed! [Laughter] It seems that the color yellow is quite useful in expelling evil. Perhaps the devil absolutely hates yellow

142. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, February 4, 1996 (Originally in Chinese).

143. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, December 31, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

because it is ugly! [Master and audience laugh.] Should you wish to become ugly, then wear yellow clothes. People who are possessed may wear yellow clothes. Also, face south when you meditate, and do the same when you sleep. I mean head to the north and feet to the south. This helps a little bit. In addition to reciting the holy names and meditating, find several persons to help you chant the holy names. After having been purified, then put on yellow clothes. [Master and audience laugh.] I fear that our Center will be full of yellow clothes later. [Master and audience laugh.] Even my eyes will become yellow, including myself!

Wearing yellow and sleeping with your head pointing the north is not good enough; you have to elevate your morality, and especially your wisdom. We should know that within us is the Buddha-heart, the quality of God; it is impossible to have anything diabolical inside. Do you understand? [Audience: Understand.]

However, we tend to forget when we sleep, so the devil will sometimes come to annoy us. Perhaps we had some animosities with him last life. To avoid this, we can wear yellow clothes when we sleep, [Laughter] and face south. However, do this only for a period of time. Otherwise, your family will be horrified, and say: 'My God, he is already wearing yellow clothes, only his head is not shaved yet. What if he were to become a monk?' [Master and audience laugh.] You don't have to do this all the time.

My opinion is that the ancient people wore yellow to expel evil, but the later generations do not properly understand. In some places, the monks wear red; in other places they wear white or blue. It is due to the different traditions in different places. They have forgotten the ancient and original reason.

In olden times, there was originally no monastic tradition, only some spiritual people who grouped together to practice their method – ways to expel the devil, or summon the rain and wind, and so on. Or, they only longed for tranquility, and contact with God. On and on, people who wanted to leave home imitated them by living together to avoid sexual relationships. They thought this was more effective.

Some practicing methods demanded abstinence from sexual relationships, some abstinence from eating meat, some abstinence from taking certain kinds of food or alcohol, some of them wanted to prevent their morality from sinking. Later, when people observed that they got some results by practicing together, they realized the color yellow must have some effect in withstanding carnal influences. Therefore, they also wore yellow. When other people saw that they looked radiant and spiritual this way, they too followed their dress code.

Therefore, since ancient times, the monks always wore yellow clothes. However, when Shakyamuni Buddha came, He told His disciples: 'It is all right, as the customs and traditions in each country are different, wherever you go, follow the people there and wear what they wear.'

From then on, disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha wore different clothes when they went out. In Tibet, their clothes wear red, with only a little yellow on top. [Master laughs.] In China, they wear black, or blue if they are more advanced in their practice. When they become a senior monk, then they can wear the yellow robe.

In fact, the color yellow was only meant for expelling evil. The robe was not something to be awarded to advanced practitioners. Afterwards, people regressed in their practice, but

clung to their clothes instead. They said, 'Hey! Only a senior monk can wear the yellow robe!'

It remains the same in many places. Being a newcomer, you can only wear black. With a little promotion, you can wear brown; further up then you wear blue. So, you went from black to blue! You can wear the yellow robe only when you have reached the status of head monk. When I just began to practice, I met several Buddhist monks and nuns in Germany. I said, 'Your clothes are so beautiful and fresh looking. May I wear some like them for a while?' [Master and audience laugh.]

My female master told me, 'Hey! Don't talk nonsense! [Master and audience laugh.] How can You wear our clothes? Do You know how many years we had to practice before we could wear these clothes?'

I said, 'Oh! I see!' [Laughter] There are many other traditions. For instance, wow! A patched monk's robe made of six strips of cloth is great, while one made of four strips is nothing. Being a female, I can never wear a patched robe in Au Lac. Fortunately, I took vows here in Formosa China and can wear it. [Laughter] One becomes a Master very quickly in Formosa. [Laughter and applause.]

Previously, when I was ordained in Formosa I wore the patched robe. That was why I became a Master so quickly in Formosa. I would never have made it in Au Lac! [Master laughs.] There, females are never allowed to wear the patched robe.

In ancient times there were no such dress codes. Being new monastic disciples, Shakyamuni Buddha told all His monks and nuns to dye their clothes, and that they must not wear white.

Later, many of them went to preach in other countries, and they reported to Shakyamuni Buddha after they came back: 'When we went out wearing yellow clothes, people felt that we were strange, and would not listen to our preaching. Observing our bald heads and yellow clothes, people treated us like monsters, and fled when they saw us.'

Therefore, Shakyamuni Buddha said: 'It is all right, just follow the traditions and customs of that country.'

The truth is, as they practiced longer, so it was no longer important whether they wore yellow or not. They had sufficient power, so there was no need to expel evil with the yellow clothes. Shakyamuni Buddha said that it was not important. As long as they could go out to preach meant they were okay. Any clothes they wore were okay! However, the troublesome thing is, later people kept hanging on to those clothes and forget the essence of spiritual aspects!

WHEN YOU ARE ANGRY ¹⁴⁴

Always keep a peace mind. Whenever someone angers you or you feel anger towards someone, don't put all this anger on that person. Just remember the holy names and try to center yourself as much as you can. If you forget, okay, when you remember, try to be centered again and forget that person.

144. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, December 25, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

As soon as you become centered within yourself, love will flow. Then you will forget. You will think it is a small matter and it's easy to love thy neighbor or love thy enemy. Otherwise, if we keep rushing toward that person with all our anger, then we forget our real self. We project all our energy to that person and then we, the practitioner, having a very good energy, just give it all to them even though with hatred. You've lost everything. You have emptied your pockets. You have thrown it at him just like when I throw candies to you. Do I still have any candies left in my pocket? No.

You have seen my mini-car with the big basket and you have seen me with a lot of big boxes sometimes, but all I do is throw it at everyone that comes near so that in the end I have nothing left. Whether I throw it with anger or with love, I still throw it at them. Of course, when I throw, I throw with love. But similarly, if we throw anger at someone, that is still our capital as well. All our attention, all our energy is thrown at that person and the whole day's meditation or maybe the whole month's is spent; empty pockets. Then you have to start from ABC again. 'Oh Master, please, I can not see anything, all black.' Or maybe you can not hear anything, you become spiritually deaf and blind.

So actually, we cannot afford to be angry. Anytime, try to control, anytime, try to get back our center. Then spend it as you like. Don't be forced to spend by the power of anger, the power of grief or anything like that.

We can always save ourselves if we are centered all the time – self centered, not selfish self-centered, stay always stable in the face of typhoons, hurricanes, et cetera.

It is very difficult to get along with our family members, neighbors and friends sometimes; but it is even more difficult if we don't try to get along. We will lose some of our power, our loving kindness and our enlightenment anytime we hate our neighbors.

Anytime we think negatively about someone we lose some of our self, we lose some of the Light, we lose some of the heavenly happiness that normally belongs to us. So, if we can see clearly all this, we actually cannot afford to hate anyone.

BE CONCENTRATED IN ORDER TO ADAPT TO ALL CHANGES ¹⁴⁵

We live through many changes, upheavals, all the time. But even changes are just small things in the universe, in the whole cosmic consciousness of God or of our real self. Just like here, the light, the fan, the umbrella, me, you, everyone, are all sitting in this room. Whoever comes here, whatever it is, is all in this room. Change or not change, they are all in the universal consciousness. So, we just eat them all and digest them, or we make chapatis out of them. 'Therefore, be forever unchanged and balanced in the face of changes, upheavals, sorrow, or happiness.' That's the way we should be. If we look at it from the whole viewpoint, the picture is like that. Whatever it is, it's inside the universal power. There is no running away from it. We don't care, and if we are God, we care even less. So, be careful. Just remember you are God; you are Buddha. The body is not you. The habits are not you. The bad character is not you. Always remember and then respect yourselves, do the proper things, and concentrate. Lack of concentrating results in many disasters and haphazard events.

145. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, December 24, 1995 (Originally in English).

AVOID TALKING WHEN YOU EAT ¹⁴⁶

During a meal it's better not to talk because if you talk, you don't chew properly. I'm talking about materially, not to mention spiritually. Also, sometimes when you talk, you swallow your food down the wrong channel. Instead of going to your stomach, it goes into your lungs or your nose and causes you trouble. Sometimes you can die from it! So, since ancient times people have said that when you eat, you shouldn't talk.

That's the logical explanation but there's another explanation, which is that most of the time the devil goes through the mouth because it's the widest opening of all and we keep it open most of the time. If there's anything that wants to possess us, it can enter through the mouth very quickly. So, when we eat and open the mouth and talk all the time, the devil will hear it and then go inside with the food. Or it will contaminate our food and make it indigestible for us or make it poisonous or make it do something troublesome when it enters our body.

Sometimes we have an infectious disease and we don't even know it yet. It may have entered but hasn't developed yet in our body so we don't know we have it. If we eat together and talk, we breathe all kinds of germs into the food, and then both people have to inhale and eat the food that's infected by our germs.

So while eating, it's better if we don't talk. If we have to talk, it's better not to talk directly into the food. It's not like you have to crawl on top of the table and talk to each other! Because then, of course, your mouth water and breathing will cause all the germs to go in through the food as well. Maybe we don't see them but they're there.

HOW TO BE BEAUTIFUL ¹⁴⁷

Our beauty comes from inside. Of course, the outside should be neat too, but just looking reasonably good is enough in this aspect! I have promised to teach you how to be a good wife, how to make-up and dress up beautifully in five minutes so you can go out immediately, even to a dinner party. But then I thought again, where should we begin to beautify ourselves? Beauty is not just your face. Most important is the warm feeling between a husband and a wife, the atmosphere of understanding each other, helping each other, and protecting each other.

The outside beauty appearance looks good at first sight, but it will not look good after you look at it for a long time. In cases of illness or accidents, the outside beautiful appearance disappears in a short time. Having only a beautiful appearance but no joy and warmth inside, both husbands and wives cannot bear that after looking at each other for a long time. For instance, some have a half-dead appearance or a face that looks like a kind of reincarnated Buddha – a bitter-melon-face Quan Yin Bodhisattva, et cetera. [Laughter] These people must reflect upon themselves.

Dressing beautifully does not mean wearing expensive clothes, but putting on a smiling face and having a welcoming atmosphere. These are the most beautiful 'garments.' Try putting them on! [Applause] The outside appearance is not very important. Sometimes we think we are not pretty, but be gentle and cordial – always smile when seeing your husband. When the husband is angry, you just smile saying, 'What displeased you? Please tell me!' and comfort him, hug him. He then will be pacified. But if you both get

146. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, December 23, 1995 (Originally in English).

147. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, November 12, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

angry, even God cannot do anything good! Likewise, when a wife is angry, her husband should comfort her with a smile, hug her, and ask her what's wrong. Talk soothingly, then she will calm down. Being a good wife does not only depend on your face. Originally, I was going to teach you how to dress nicely and how to please your husbands. Now I'll forget about that. Not knowing where to start, it is very hard to teach sometimes.

A beautiful appearance will come naturally. Just meditate more and react according to your family situation; don't just depend on your face. But the face is also important, it is part of the criteria of being a good wife. Every morning, your face is the first thing your husband sees when he wakes up. If your face is terrible, he will have bad day-dreams all day in his office. [Laughter] Coming home in the evening, the last face he sees is also yours. If you again give him a long face, he will have even more nightmares all night. We spiritual practitioners should have merciful hearts. [Laughter and applause]

A GURU FOR OUR ERA ¹⁴⁸

I do truly hope that all the nations will come and take our teachings to their people, that all the governments, all the leaders and all the parents will accept this kind of pure teaching into their families, into their nations, into their organizations, and thus make this world become heaven.

And then even if the extraterrestrials come, we won't care. Whether the extraterrestrials come or don't come, they can do nothing to us because we're strong. What can they do to these kinds of folks, who are as pure and innocent as angels and do nothing wrong? If they come, they can only learn from us. If they are bad, they will learn and become good. That's how we fight extraterrestrials, should they be bad. Otherwise, how do you fight them? If they're truly bad like in some of the stories, how do we fight them? We are worse than they are, for example, some of us, so how can we do anything to fight them if we are not as advanced as they are?

Today, someone was talking with me in the back mountain about Nostradamus' predictions about this century, this time of our era when there will be a guru who comes to the world, the savior of the world. And he predicts in his book what that person will be like, and there are all kinds of secret signals, not really secret, open. Even the name is mentioned. They told me it is so obvious, and asked if I knew. I don't know what it is.

The person said that maybe one day all the world will come and try to find this Master that they know is in Miaoli. I don't know whether they can find a Master in Miaoli or not, but the teaching, our teaching, is very good. It has tremendous effects upon the families and nations. Sometimes it is under the table and no one knows that we are doing anything.

CULTIVATING ETHICAL CONCEPTS FROM CHILDHOOD ¹⁴⁹

Let's hope for and teach our children by setting a good example. Let them be courageous and outspoken and honest. That is your duty; you have to set a good example for them.

Children learn very fast, and they learn a lot of bad things in school. Because there are teachers who don't always teach the right thing ethically, and there are classmates who don't always set a good example for our children to follow. Some of our children here I sent to school. But before they went to school, they were much sweeter, better, calmer and

148. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, November 4, 1995 (Originally in English).

149. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, November 3, 1995 (Originally in English).

more obedient. After they went to school for some years, they became different. They didn't listen to their parents like they did before. Sometimes they even fought back with words, or sometimes with gestures, very violently. This is very shocking to know.

Growing juvenile issues

But I cannot stop them from going to school. If I do, then people will say that I don't let the children go to school, and we'll all be in more trouble. But if I let them go to school, we are only one person, and they are in the school all day long. And when they come home, they're busy doing homework, and then they go to sleep. So, the time spent with their parents is less than the time spent with their classmates. That is the problem with the kids today. And when one kid learns something wrong, all the other kids follow. It's very difficult for them not to follow, unless they truly have courage and intelligence. Because if they don't follow all the other kids, the bullies in the school will bully them into following. Or sometimes they shame them into following the wrong thing. Because they say, 'You are not boy enough. Look at you, 'Goodie.' You don't know anything! You don't know about girls, you don't know about drugs, and you don't know about cigarettes. You know nothing! And we know everything. Come on, you don't have any courage. You are a...' They will call the kid 'a rabbit,' or 'a chicken,' and things like that. And so the small boy's pride gets hurt, and then sooner or later he joins in.

So, originally our children are not bad, but when we send them to school they become terrible; they become gangsters. And they can get away with anything, because they are minors. They can't be put in jail, and they can't be electrocuted, so they can't be punished too harshly. Some of the children know this. If you read the newspaper, you know. They even announce it. They say, 'We can do anything, because we are minors. We know we won't go to jail for very long. We know that no one can punish us too harshly. We can get away with anything. Even with murder!' Nowadays, children with guns or knives go to school and threaten the teacher. And even then not many people do anything about it. They get together and become strong, but they are minors. There are always excuses like this.

So, this is a terrible world we are giving our children today. It has a lot of freedom. Children today have a lot of money and time, and a lot of equipment to help them learn. So, they learn quickly, and then they have a lot of free time and freedom. And if you touch them, people say, 'Oh, child abuse!' And you'll be in more trouble. Actually, some parents are scared of their children, because the children come home and beat them, and bully the parents into giving them money and all kinds of things. So, there is even an 'Abused Parents Anonymous,' or something like that. In many countries they have this.

Balancing the world's negativity through spiritual practice

Sometimes the parents are scared of the children because the parents work hard, earn money and wear themselves out in time. They get older, and they get sick from the worry and anxiety of bringing the children up. The children, on the contrary, have nothing to do. Besides eating a lot, they have a motorbike, CDs, cassettes and television. And they learn all kinds of bad things, reading Playboy and things like that. And then they become strong and bad, and negative. So, they scare the parents, because the parents didn't have such experiences when they were young. They don't have the mental preparation to deal with such children in today's society. Many of the parents are very helpless, and they feel very frustrated and threatened. So, sometimes they have to get together and protect themselves from their own blood line, from their own children. The children are supposed to be more obedient, weaker, and protected by the parents. But sometimes the parents

need protection. Children nowadays even sue their parents for money! All kinds of things can happen.

So, if the parents do not think more in advance, like taking the children to Miaoli to learn the Quan Yin method, learn the five precepts and learn how to behave, then later they will regret it very badly. Most of the parents will. So, if some of the people go against me, wondering why I teach this and that and the other, I teach nothing bad here, I teach only what is good for them and for their children. If they all knew how good it is here for their children, they would come quickly and let the children become good persons. Because they will bear the consequences. The parents are the first ones to bear the consequences of bad children and bad education. Of course, I would not dare say that all the children who come here will become like angels. But at least eighty percent will, which minimizes the risk of their becoming irreparable children. At least we have a kind of balance or control for the a hundred percent negativity in this outside world. That's already something! It's better than a hundred percent bad and nothing good inside, nothing to counteract or balance the negativity.

As adults, we are what we were as children. If we learn well in childhood, when we grow up to be adults, we will definitely become good. There is no doubt about that. So, I don't understand why some of the outside people go against me. They should come to me, get the teaching quickly and get their children in, if they want to avoid this trouble in the future. And all the leaders of the countries should bow to this kind of teaching – not bow to me, but to this kind of teaching. That's what I mean. Then it can spread to all the governments, into every country, to all corners of the nations, and make the countries strong, and create world peace without having to talk, without having to resort to guns and violence, H-bombs and G-bombs, and all those kinds of things. I don't know why people don't do that.

Reinforcing education through group meditation

On the one hand, they say they are moral and ethical, and they know what they are doing; they respect spiritual standards, and they respect inside, like 'In God we trust.' But on the other hand, they do not recognize where true goodness lies. To talk about goodness is not enough. We have to have an enforced kind of togetherness, like in a group. And then we have to reinforce it every week or every day, until it becomes second nature. Because we have learned bad things all through our childhood until now. So, if we don't keep cleaning it every day, or at least every week, we have no hope of ever becoming improved at all.

So, the best thing is to teach from childhood. I think the best thing is for every country, government and leader to take our teachings, make them become national, and teach the children from childhood on, and then reinforce the teachings together every week in group meditation and learning by videos. Together we're strong, right?

That's why, when you are in group meditation, you improve. Because when everyone else sits quietly, you cannot not sit. If you want to talk to the person on the left, he has his eyes and his mouth closed, and he is somewhere else. And when you look to the right, that person also has his eyes, his mouth and his ears closed as well. He hears nothing. He doesn't talk to you, he doesn't listen, and he doesn't look at you. So, you have no choice but to sit like a 'goodie' in the middle, force yourself to close your eyes and your mind, and then become a reluctant Buddha! You can become a reluctant Buddha as well. It's better than nothing. A Buddha is a Buddha!

Learning from childhood

If they learn it in childhood, they will know it forever. They will take it to heart. Whatever we learned in childhood, we remember now; we cannot forget. All the incidents from childhood affect us our whole life. That's how many psychiatrists earn their money, because of all the people affected by their childhood circumstances who become disadvantaged, abnormal or very sick, frightened, discouraged or depressed. Most mental illness comes from these childhood impressions. If a child comes from a very happy family, he grows up a different person. If a child comes from a very hard-trained background, he grows up more able than a spoiled child. That's a fact, and everyone has known that for a long time now.

So you see, if our children are trained from childhood with this kind of pure discipline and logical, ethical conduct, then they know. Because their souls at that time are still very pure. Maybe we don't get a hundred percent who become good. Maybe out of a hundred children, we get only about fifty who become good. But that's already very good! Or sixty percent, seventy percent of them become good. Thirty percent of them may be bad, but they cannot be a hundred percent bad. Maybe they are not as good as the other sixty percent or seventy percent, but they minimize their violent tempers. They minimize the inner urge to do bad things in society. They will be affected. So, it is very, very useful, this kind of teaching. Because most of our children in different Centers have become good. So, that's what they told me. That's the feedback that I heard.

So, I am very happy to do this job. Not only for you, but for your children and for their children as well, for future generations. Our teachings are very strong, and the power will still be carried on for the next several hundred years, after I die. [Applause] And after that, it's up to God's will and your children's children's children, whether they are strong enough to carry on our lineage. Otherwise, someone else will stand up, and then another lineage will continue. It's the same lineage, but it will spring up in a different place, that's all. So, I do truly hope that all the nations will come and take our teachings to their countries. All the governments, all the leaders and all the parents will then accept this kind of pure teaching into their families, into their nations and into their organizations, and make this world become heaven.

BE TRUE TO OTHERS AND HONEST WITH OURSELVES ¹⁵⁰

In our daily dealings with friends, relatives and any other people we happen to meet on the street or in our walk of life, we have to put forth our true feelings and our true affections. Everything we do must be true. Otherwise, sooner or later, we'll lose. People will leave us or won't like us the way we expected. Or, we'll lose their business, lose their affection, lose their trust and probably lose them altogether.

That's the purpose of keeping the precepts, so that we'll remember where our limits are. We'll know where to stop. We'll know how we should behave, or at least how to be honest with ourselves. If we're honest with ourselves, other people will sense it. Inside of them is God. Outside, maybe we can cheat them by telling lies or flattering them with all kinds of untrue compliments in order to get something out of them. But inside, the God within them knows. So, we can't cheat them for too long. That's why we must always be honest with ourselves. The precepts are there for that reason, so that we become purer, truer to ourselves and to other people so that we can be successful in every aspect of life.

150. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, October 30, 1995 (Originally in English).

It's not that we're truthful like this only to benefit other people: We're the first to benefit because whatever we give will be returned. But we can't cheat the real inner self of other people; that's a great offense. That's why we must be honest, and we mustn't tell lies.

INNER EXPERIENCES COME WHEN YOU CONCENTRATE ALL THE TIME¹⁵¹

You must know that Light comes in different forms, sometimes in colors, sometimes like daylight. It doesn't necessarily come and shine through with one flash or one beam of Light that wakes you up or startles you. Sometimes moving darkness is also one of the levels of practice. It's not pleasant, but you must start from somewhere. You must pay attention.

Sometimes you will notice that even when you meditate and you sit very stiff, you sit very straight, but the Light doesn't come. Then sometimes you happen to relax, you put your head like this, [Master collapses back in the chair with Her head thrown back] and then the Light comes. Or sometimes you just move your head to one side, and it comes from nowhere. So, you must always pay attention. It is not because you concentrate that the Light comes. To concentrate is good for you, so that you can see the Light; otherwise, it's always there.

If you want to truly see the Light, you must sometimes move the position. Turn away from the traditional crossed-legs; you can even crawl on the floor. Really, put your forehead on the floor, and you will see. Like people kneel and when they are tired, they just fall on the floor on all fours; then they see the Light. Or sometimes you just lean your head over the back of a bench and hang there for a while, then you will see it. You always have to concentrate here (wisdom eye). You don't always have to cross your legs and sit so straight.

Sit straight for a while, and then hang around or kneel on the floor. You know the position when you do the Quan Yin, and when you are tired... It relaxes your body, too. Or you change your seat; sit on the chair, or lie down on the bed after sitting for meditation for a while, and you will see the Light.

The Light comes anytime, because Light is always there after initiation. It is just sometimes we think, 'Oh, I am meditating now; Light comes or not comes? [Laughter] Coming? Supposed to come already!' And you sit there and recite all the time about the Light, instead of concentrating.

Sometimes because you think you must concentrate, that's why you can't concentrate. We can't concentrate with the 'thinking,' and we can't concentrate with the mind. We concentrate when totally all of our body cells, our brainwaves, everything, relax! That's why sometimes in the middle of laughing, in the middle of yawning or in the middle of turning over in bed, you see the Light at that moment – because all your body cells were relaxed. That is the true concentration.

It just happens, not that you are meditating, not that you are reciting the holy names, nothing. So, just pay attention anytime. Anytime, the Master comes; anytime, the Light comes. Just because we don't expect it to come at that moment doesn't mean it comes. Just be careful. That's why we have to meditate all the time, even during walking, sleeping, eating, talking, joking, all the time. We must pay attention inside, all the time.

151. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, October 28, 1995 (Originally in English).

I've told you already. When you come up and see me hanging on a chair like this. [Master hangs Her head over the side of the chair.] I don't look like a saint at all, but I am meditating. I'm not kidding. You try.

A dream is also an experience. It's not only when we sit in meditation, we have the experience. Whenever it comes, in whichever way, just welcome it. It's good for you. As long as our lives changes for the better, we are more loving, wiser, more contented with life and happier, that is the outcome of meditation. No need to measure it by Light and Sound, because they come when you don't even expect them. They come, most of the time, during your sleep.

Whether you remember it when you wake up or not, it was there, I guarantee. If you don't believe me, you tell your wife or your husband to kick you in the middle of the night. Then you will see the leftovers of a thousand stars, a thousand suns or a flash of Light. Then you will know what it was.

When I was studying with some of the Buddhist Zen monks, they told me that: 'You have to sit and meditate like this [Master demonstrates the position of sitting straight, looking at Her nose.] with Your eyes open.' I saw nothing! I only saw my nose and the floor! [Laughter] So, one day I got tired and closed my eyes, then everything came. So, I didn't listen to their nonsense anymore. [Master laughs.] I did my stuff.

I studied with many masters before, because in search of enlightenment, I looked for many masters. One of the Zen masters told me, 'When You meditate, cross Your legs; and the more You cross, the better for You.' So, I squeezed my bottom, and twisted my limbs. It was terrible! Then whenever you didn't close your eyes properly, if you moved, or if you scratched, there was something like, 'Bang!' [Master demonstrates being hit with a stick.] It shook you all over. Nothing (no Light) happened anyway, so I decided to relax. Then all the heavenly beings came. [Master laughs.]

They told me, 'When You go to sleep, You can lie down and meditate, too.' Just like I told you; it is correct. You should lie on the right side when you lie down to meditate, just like the Buddha. No problem, I do that. But when I lay there, meditated, trying with all my might, I saw nothing! When I turned over to sleep, wow! Everything was there! [Master laughs.] So, I wonder whether the traditional position is really good for us or not? You do what you like. Whatever you do, if you see Light, it's okay for you.

I tell you the truth, they told me, 'If You really want to meditate while You sleep, then You have to lie straight, like You lie in a coffin, and also You're not supposed to close Your eyes even.' [Master sighs.] But I tried many hours like this, and saw nothing. I was so tired and my eyes got dry and hurt. So I said, 'Oh, now I will go to sleep.' As I turned over, the Light came. I lay on my right side, supposed to go to sleep, but I couldn't sleep anymore because all the Light came.

So, do whatever you think is proper for yourself. If you want to see the Light, even if you have to crawl on the floor to see the Light, do it! I never tell you that you have to sit cross-legged. You won't fall asleep easily, that's all. But later on, you improve, and you experiment with your own body and mind, and have fun.

Then come and tell me, 'Oh, Master, while I stood up on one leg, I saw Light! I did the flamingo position.' [Laughter] 'Oh, Master, while I was cleaning my ears, I saw the heavenly beings,' or whatever. [Laughter] You tell me all your experiences later. Experiment. Of course, to be safe, first you sit there two and a half hours every day, then

you do anything else you want. But sometimes, if the body demands that you rest, you'll be surprised that when you rest, the Light comes, mostly in your sleep.

You know why you don't see while you meditate, some of you? You think too much! You keep waiting, waiting for things to come. Don't wait. It will come. It cannot run away. It's inside you. You are made of Light. The whole of your being is Light, condensed. So, whenever you realize that, that's the time you're liberated. You are Light and Sound. You are not the tissues that you think you are. Everything is made from Light and Sound. It's different when condensed. [Applause]

CARING FOR YOURSELF WHILE CARING FOR OTHERS ¹⁵²

Whenever you handle patients, please be loving and pray all the time inside by reciting the holy names and praying to Master to help you. Afterwards, wash your hands thoroughly and anytime you can, shake your hands to cut the psychic connection. Then after you go home, wash with lemon and salt and put sandalwood oil or cream on your body to cut any negative connection that might remain.

THE WAY TO A PERFECT FAMILY ¹⁵³

It is not by talking that we love a person. Most people shout very loudly their love – 'love, love, love!' It sounds disgusting. If you truly love a person, people would sense it without seeing you, without hearing from you. If you do not have the duty of being a Master or any great mission that requires you to leave home, you should treat your family well, take care of your relatives and friends, and influence them by love. True love is not shown by word of mouth – not by talking. If you truly love your husband you should learn how to cook well for him and put on makeup to show your beauty to him.

Dress up only for your husband

Being a wife previously, I did not dress up when I went to work during the day. It was truly like that. For whom do you dress up for during the day time? Even if the whole world adoringly stares at you, what benefit would you get? If your husband does not even want to look at you, can you bear it? During the day time it is necessary to protect and nourish your skin by putting on skin cream, et cetera. In the evening when your husband comes back, then you may light up the candles, wear beautiful clothes, and put on makeup for him. It should be like this that you love your husband; it is not by talking.

You do not know how to cook, your body smells awful but you just do not care, and you dress like the head of a gang of beggars everyday; but still you expect your husband to love you. How can he? He is merely a human, too. He has his own shortcomings. He has his preferences, but nothing you can delight him. Still you force him to love you, but even God cannot force him!

I know this kind of situation would be uncomfortable for the husband. He wants to love his wife but he cannot. There is nothing that can make him love her.

Therefore, when we love a person, we should be aware of what he loves the most, and then offer him what he is fond of. Only in this way can you say you love him. It's not by speaking repeatedly day and night, without taking care of yourself and your family.

152. International seven-day retreat, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, October 27, 1995 (Originally in English).

153. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, October 8, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

The house is not cleaned for two or three months. The face is not washed for two months. You dress untidily. Even though you dress up beautifully when you are away from home; but after you come back home, you look like a beggar for your husband. This is because you do not understand the essentials.

If you give much thought to your marriage, it must be happy ones. You don't have to be as pretty as Hsishi (an ancient Viet beauty). Every girl is pretty in some aspects. If you think you are not beautiful, you can learn how a movie star walks, how a beauty sits, and learn how she takes care of herself. Nowadays, you can learn these things by reading books or making a phone call to consult a specialist. You can learn. There is no reason why a wife or husband cannot do house work.

I think it's not a question concerning practice, but you often come over or write letters to ask about family problems which trouble you the most. I understand that if you do not have peace with your family, you would have no way to calm down, you would not be able to enter samadhi when you meditate. Marriage is also connected with practice. That's why it's said, 'Buddha's way cannot be isolated from the mundane way.' I cannot just say because they are mundane things, I will not answer your questions. However, you did not apply what I have told you. All of you said, 'I understand! I understand! I have listened to many boxes of video tapes.' [Laughter] But you always ask the same questions.

Master's wise ways should be applied

The problem is not that Master does not answer you, rather you do not practice what I say. If medicine is prescribed, but you do not take it, then your disease will not be cured. Master has talked and told both husbands and wives; but there are some trivial things you have not yet learned, such as you should brush your teeth for three to five minutes. If you do not know how to brush, ask your dentist. You may brush twice or three times! Brush, then brush again or twice more. Your teeth should be clean by then. Nowadays there are many kinds of mouthwashes, perfumes, soaps, et cetera, which can remove body odor.

You should dress beautifully to look nice. The clothes do not necessarily have to be expensive ones; otherwise, you would not be able to change them everyday. You may make them yourself or buy cheaper ones, colorful ones. If you are lively, whatever clothes you wear would make you look beautiful. It's not necessary that they have to be expensive ones.

Most of the clothes I wear are made here – very cheap. I just buy a piece of cloth, it can be made immediately into a dress. Sometimes I go to buy clothes on sale on the roadside. That colorful skirt I wore two weeks ago was bought in Taipei. It's worth less than a few dozen NT dollars only. The way it's made is also simple. You all said Master was beautiful, but in fact it did not cost much.

Different ways for different occasions

Don't buy dress that are too expensive; otherwise, you cannot change frequently. Be wiser. They are sold cheaply in some places, but they are beautiful. It's good as long as it suits you. If you knew how to match your clothes, you would look better. This wouldn't cost you much. No need to complain that your husband didn't give you much money, so you cannot make yourself beautiful. Only a stupid person would donate money to dress shops. We should donate to ourselves, instead of the bosses of dress shops. [Laughter]

It's the same for men. When you practice, sure you should wear simple clothes – comfortable and loose, which make you feel comfortable when you sit. However, when you go back home or go out with your wife, you should dress fashionably, tidy yourself up, and make yourself look good. Accompanied by a handsome, nice looking man, the wife would be proud. Do you think she would like to go out with a beggar? [Laughter] You want your wife to look beautiful and nice, then how about yourself? You wear worn out sports trousers when you sit in the ashram, and when you take your wife out, you still wear clothes like this.

Practice has its principles. Going out to do worldly things also has its principles. The two cannot be mixed up. Then you complain to me: 'Practice makes me become like this.' You guys really humiliate your Master. You don't know when to advance and when to retreat. You don't know the proper way. You don't know what to do according to the situation. You don't know how to handle an altered situation. That means you do not have wisdom. Master's disciples should not be like this. Don't shame my name. If you are like this, don't tell others that you are the disciple of the 'Ching Hai Wu Shang Shih Supreme Master Ching Hai Zhu.' [Master and audience laugh.] [Applause]

Be dedicated to maintain your marriage

It's not very difficult to obtain something, but it's difficult to keep it. You have to know what to do. You have to pay the price for everything. Is it not so? If you want to have a Benz, you have to pay back the loan for a period of time. The Benz also drinks gasoline like a fish and you need to pay a lot of insurance. You also have to pay a lot of money for the maintenance of the car. If you want to keep a Benz, you have to pay the price. Or you may buy a Yulong or some other model of car.

You became careless after you got married. You did not look after yourself. Then your husband ran away from you and you came crying to me. What's the use of crying to me? You should go to the beauty parlor and cry, then they will help you and tidy you up. [Laughter] They would cut and perm your hair, stretch your skin, cut your eyelids, prop up your nose, and rebuild your ears. These things may help. But what's the use of crying to me? Even if I can summon the wind and rain, I cannot call your husband back. Sometimes when I see you, I also want to find another wife for your husband. [Master and audience laugh.] You yourself are in a mess, but you still force your husband to love you. How can it be possible?

Nowadays both the wife and the husband have to look after themselves. The body has to be clean – bathe frequently, brush your teeth and rinse your mouth carefully. Go to see your dentist or other doctors regularly. See what needs to be fixed and fix it. You have to be neatly dressed. If you dress untidily with clothes that are worn out, your husband would not even want to look at your face. How could he love you? Those girls outside, they are not married. Therefore they put a lot of attention on applying powder, spraying perfume, taking baths, brushing teeth, visiting beauty parlors, et cetera. You have to look after yourself, then your husband will love you. This is the person you were before and this is also the reason why your husband loved you, isn't it?

It is a psychological problem of we human beings. It's the same for both men and women. Having one is not enough because one person only has one quality and is only good in one aspect. For example, if she can cook, then she is not good at cleaning the house. She may know both – how to cook and clean the house, but she may not know how to do other things. Maybe she doesn't know how to put on makeup. Even occasionally going out with her would make you lose face and want to hide her somewhere. When she goes to talk

with others, they would hold their noses because she smells awful. Sometimes when the body smells awful or is dressed untidily, everything is terrible. In addition, if you cannot even cook, then ‘Good-bye!’ [Laughter]

We cannot force others to love us, if we are not worth it. If you failed to be a good husband or wife, you have to think for yourself: ‘Why have I failed? How can I improve? Can I succeed next time? Why couldn't I do well in this aspect?’ If you really cannot, then quit. If you can, then improve yourself; learn diligently until you succeed. It's as simple as that! Why does your husband love another woman? We don't have to hate her. We should go and learn from her whatever advantages she may have. If you know that woman, go and learn what made your husband fond of her, and do the same after going back home; or you may do better than she does. Then your husband would of course not want to leave you. It is because the husbands or wives love us that they married us. Where has that love gone? It is impossible that the love has disappeared completely. It is we who did not take care of the marriage, or we did not pay much attention to it, or did not love the husband or wife, or were too lazy to improve ourselves. Later we realize that it was our fault; but then it is too late.

It's the same in doing worldly things. If we want to succeed, we have to work hard. Understand? Worldly things have to be done in a worldly way rather than in a spiritual way; otherwise, it is taking useless advantage of the spiritual power.

When I was in Africa, I got to know a prince and several princesses. They told me that all the members of the royal family have to learn witchcraft and a lot of magic. They would then be able to know who is bad, who is good, et cetera. They can also make you love them using their magic, which would make you follow him without your awareness. Is there any benefit in using magical power?

Long time ago, when disciples just started to come, I did not have time to teach them. One female disciple's husband left her, so she came to me and cried loudly. She requested me to teach her magic, to make her husband come back and love her. I told her, ‘I don't have such magic. Even if I had, I would not impart it to you. I do not like black magic but I know a lot of white magic. Do you want to learn?’ She said, ‘Yes.’ I said, ‘You should speak a bit softer, put on makeup more beautifully. Occasionally, you should wear new clothes, but not necessarily expensive ones. You should sometimes change your moods; do not always be sweet, graceful or stubborn everyday. You should occasionally change according to the situation.’

This is because men like different kinds and different characteristics of women. It's the same with us, the woman. You cannot like only one characteristic everyday the same – dull, [Laughter] without a change. It seems good but not truly good. Sometimes it is not bad to be a little bad. Have a change!

Variety keeps love fresh

Most men like variety. If you already know this and you also want to keep your husband then keep changing yourself. Otherwise, take a few woman home as wives for your husband. What do you prefer? If you prefer having peace in the family and keeping your husband at home, take a few wives for him because he likes variety and different characteristics for different days. It would be the best if you could play various characters to meet his needs. It's the same for the husband. Then the family would have peace and there would be no need to come to me and cry loudly.

You all have magical power. Keep your body clean and sweet smelling all the time. Rinse your mouth and brush your teeth before you talk. Don't do this: After eating garlic and onion, you go to him and tell him, 'I love you!' [Master and audience laugh.] At that time, no matter how romantic it may be or how many candles you light, it won't help. Those trivial matters may scare him. I was scared previously.

If someone smells awful, I cannot bear it. I would want to vomit and cannot talk with him about anything. My attention would be diverted, and I would always think: 'Why didn't he clean his mouth?' I would keep thinking like this and my mind would not be able to concentrate on him, but only think how to escape from this atmosphere: 'When will he stop talking?' or 'How can I let him know it?', et cetera. All the inspiration would be lost. So, don't blame him for not loving you. How can he love you? He does not even have enough time to try to run away from you! If you were him, you would not like it as well!

But it also depends. Maybe your husband likes that kind of smell, then keep it! [Laughter] You have to clarify this with him! For those people who are at high levels, they will not like that kind of awful smell. Therefore, we have to raise our level, look after ourselves without blaming others. In case someone doesn't like us or your husband or wife runs away from you, we have to ask ourselves: 'Why?' Truly and frankly ask ourselves what mistakes we have made and whether we have achieved what the other party has expected us to achieve. Then we would know the reasons. No need to come and ask Master and request for magic. That's no use! Even if I taught you that kind of magic – like seizing your lover's heart, controlling his mind, making him stay beside you, would you prefer this? Would you love that dull-looking wife or husband who is obsessed with you? He would not truly love you, but would be only bound and lost in you. His mind would become confused. He would start to like what he did not like before. It's also a kind of mental disorder. Would you like this abnormal wife or husband? [Audience: No, we would not like this.]

Therefore, I tell you that magic is useless. We should only convince others with our own qualities, virtues and inner beauty. Externally, we respect ourselves, which would be pleasing to the eyes of others; your voice would melt the hearts of whomever listens to it; or our behavior, action and the manner with which we treat others will touch them. This kind of love will last longer instead of resorting to magic so easily.

I know that family problems trouble you the most, don't they? [Audience: Yes!] Sometimes it makes us feel bad. I know it. For example, you are very loyal people. Especially, after initiation, you want to abide by Master's instructions and sincerely want to take care of your family – loving your wife or husband. But sometimes you cannot bear it; you feel bad, struggle, and feel guilty. I know these are the most troublesome things that bother you. But some wives just stagnate and refuse to improve. She does not look after herself, does not care whether her husband loves her or not, does not care whether she is attractive or not, whether she is lively. She does not express to her husband that she respects and cares about her husband's opinions. She doesn't even care whether her husband loves her or not. Both the husband and the wife are stuck there. The husband, as well as the wife, are like this. Both blame each other and drag each other down. One rots, the other rots more. No one cares about the other. Then it becomes worse and worse until no one wants to look at each other, and finally throws the precepts back to Master and says: 'I feel really bad. I'm sorry, but I have to find another one anyhow.' Sometimes it's useless to find another one. Changing to another doesn't mean things will become better. Later it will be the same. You marry another lady and she will rot as well as the previous one, exactly the same.

Only when you can do small things well then you can attempt to do great things

After marriage few people still try to preserve the marriage – respect each other like a guest, or pay attention to one's behavior and manners, as well as the internal virtues and attractiveness. Most people who annoy each other, stick there and become worse and worse. Life can not be beautiful like this. If you want to be monks, you may come here and rot together, no problem. But if you want to live in society, you have to try to protect your family – offer each other a joyful atmosphere and make life happy. When you are at home, you should look after yourself and look after your husband or wife. Sometimes the husband should remind her, ask her: 'Why haven't you combed your hair lately?' Ask her: 'How long since you last took a bath?' Say it humorously. Remind each other and respect each other.

If we lose our spirit, the marriage will be lost for sure. Both parties cannot attract each other. If we ourselves do not want to live, how can the other party love us? We do not have inner spirit; we do not want to strive; we are not happy inside and do not care about anything. If you do not care about yourself, who else will care about you? Your husband is also a human being, not a piece of wood. All human beings love truth, virtue and beauty. If something is beautiful, for sure he will like to look at it. But if the one at home is so ugly, of course he will look somewhere else. I would do so as well. [Laughter] Then you blame each other. That's no good!

We have to examine ourselves first. If you do not know how to cook, cook according to the recipe! Life is busy for some, that's true. But some are not that busy. The husband goes to earn money, and you stay at home. You may use some of the time each year to learn something. You may tell yourself that within these three months I must learn how to cook. Even though you know nothing about it, you would know after you learn it! I'm sure it would work. I guarantee it! There are many places that teach people how to cook vegetarian meals. Even though you cook meat dishes, you still have to learn. Those who do not want to follow Master's teachings and who are not fellow practitioners would still have to learn if they wanted to cook meat dishes for their husbands. Since you were never taught to cook when you were young, how can you know this automatically?

After learning how to cook, you may continue to learn how to make clothes, how to dance, et cetera. It's not enough just to cross your legs in practice everyday, you should also accompany your husband for leisure activities. What happens after you become a Buddha? Aren't there still things to do? Life still goes on. Is that not so?

Therefore, life must have some variety and vitality. Otherwise, you may also build a cave, lock yourself inside, and die! [Master laughs.] If you want to die, die definitely. If you want to live, live with spirit, interestingly and meaningfully; because we also have to set an example for others. Otherwise, everyone would think that after learning with 'Ching Hai Wu Shang Shih The Supreme Master Ching Hai Zhu,' [Laughter] one becomes good at nothing and even looks worse than before – dressing like the head of a gang of beggars.

After eating what you cooked, he even considers escaping abroad to study. [Laughter] Or you cannot speak even a sentence properly. 'I-do-not-want-to-talk.' But you still have to talk! Do you think I like to come to talk every Sunday? But if I have work to do, I do it well. I have to read and research. Sometimes what I read is not used. It doesn't matter. Sometimes I make use of a book or a story, and it provides leads or extended meanings for other stories. With reference to history and examples, you can understand immediately what I am talking about.

Even though this world is by no means permanent, God has granted us this life and this body. That means He wants us to do something with it. He gave us a husband or a wife, so He wants us to take care of him or her, cooperate with each other, live and learn together, respect each other, learn to be courteous in life. So, we have to do it well. If you cannot even handle a husband or a wife, what else can you do – run for presidency? [Laughter] Too many people run for it. You don't have to try. You will not be able to squeeze in. You don't have much chance. Practitioners like you only know how to cross their legs. It looks awful sitting in the president's office with crossed legs. When state affairs are waiting for you to deal with, you say: 'I haven't finished two and a half hours meditation yet.' [Master and audience laugh.] I have told you that it's okay to run for the presidency or office, but you have to do it well. If you cannot deal with trivial matters, you will not be able to handle great works.

Turn your family into a heaven

Most people own their success in their career to having a secure family. Members of their families have more affection for each other. They are more united and cooperative, and not complicated. Both the husband and wife give a harmonious atmosphere, so they are not easily affected by the trials outside. They are also not easily troubled. When we are happy, we do not mind about others' mistakes as much. We are not concerned or troubled. If we refuse the love from our families, refuse the love from people close to us, then we will not be successful in whatever we do. We will feel so miserable that we cannot bear even ourselves; and of course we cannot bear other people.

The disorders and troubles in society all come from dissonance at home. It is because we don't have good friends who are willing to make sacrifices, to offer sympathy to each other, accept each other, and respect each other. We don't have anyone who truly knows us well and can be a friend for life. Understand?

That was why I said not to turn your home into a hell. Because we live in it, we need to look after it, organize it, repair it, make it look beautiful and turn it into a heaven. It is not out of compassion or brotherly love that we love others. We love others because we want to be comfortable and happy. The more we offer our love to others, the more others will love us. When all the people love each other, how comfortable that will be!

Do not owe others

An enlightened Master only gives and never takes. Once you have received things from others, you become subordinate to them. Is it not true that upon meeting him next time, you will be too self-conscious to handle things properly? When he demands you to do something, you cannot really treat him fairly. You know he is wrong, but you are too self-conscious to scold or refuse him. Therefore, our internal code of ethics guides us against corruption for these reasons. Do not sell ourselves for anything, and do not owe any favors or money to people. Once you are indebted to them for anything, you owe them a favor. Having eaten any food offered by others, you cannot hold your head high anymore.

It is best to earn your own daily bread and take care of yourself independently. Then, we don't have to lower our head upon meeting anyone, and our words will have weight when reasoning with people. Only then can we become a model of Truth, a model of an incorruptible personality. We should be incorruptible even when we are ordinary people, not only when we are government officials. Otherwise, it is hard to rectify the habit when you have already become a government official! If you are corrupt when you are an

ordinary citizen, how can you be honest and clean after you have become an official? Is that not correct? Once you have gotten used to it, you will simply forget blindly!

This is why I told you not to make offerings to any monastic practitioners here. I will confiscate the initiate card of anyone who does so. Although I have repeated the same warning for years, people still commit the same mistake. Should you find something that you think is very good, buy it and bring it here, we will pay you for it. You must not stealthily offer anything to one or two persons to bribe their feelings. I am warning you for the last time. If you stealthily offer anything to anyone, both of you will be asked to leave. Offer him more, if you want to bring greater disaster to him.

I have told you so many times that we lack nothing here. Even if we do lack some worldly items, it is nothing. Many people outside are in greater difficulties than we. Here we have enough to eat, comfortable places to sleep, and everything is very nice. We are not in need of anything. Being spiritual practitioners, our life should be simple in the first place. If we have more, then it is fine. If we have not, it is also okay. Why should you make offerings to particular persons with this and that, buying off their personal feelings? This is really senseless!

Should anyone do these things again, I will simply close the Center. I would rather forbid you to come, than to let you contaminate each other. Do you understand? Here we are not in need of anything!

Before I become a Master, I had even fewer material things than they have now. I had only a few sets of clothes. When I was in the Himalayas, it was very cold; yet I had only two sets of clothes, a stainless steel cup, a spoon, and two pairs of socks. The socks were later worn out and thrown away, so I had only a pair of shoes and two sets of clothes for changing. Sometimes, they could not be dried in time, but I still wore them. And I didn't have need of anything else. It is not important if we lack some material things. Do not spoil our people here! Let them live their own lives freely and naturally. You cannot do like them (leave home), so you come here randomly bribing and contaminating people. Do you think that your few pennies are so great? Do you think that they cannot earn money outside? Do you think that the people here are handicapped, without limbs, and have no ability to earn money? They don't want the money! Therefore, they come here to live a simple life. As you practice more, your spirit will become satisfied, and you will not need those material things. Do not think that material things can nourish you to become fat! Your body may become fat, but your spirit may not be that fertile. Few people can make offerings with a pure intent. When you meet him later, he will demand favors for this and that; he will want a special relationship. He will want you to talk to him and greet him more often, do more things for him, give him information, and expect you not to obstruct him anytime he wants to come in. Don't let these things happen again to make me angry! Understand?

THE GRAVE IS NOT THE TRUE ABODE OF THE DECEASED ¹⁵⁴

When a person dies, be it a king or anyone else, his physical body is eventually consumed by animals, chewed up by insects and then disintegrated with time. Finally, it returns to nature and no one can preserve it. Although the kings of ancient Egypt and other countries tried to preserve their corpses, transforming them into mummies with medicines, these mummified bodies are still very different than their bodies were before death. Except for archaeological research, the mummies serve no purpose.

154. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, September 17, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

Archaeologists often spend considerable amounts of money, manpower and time just to unearth a dead body from two thousand years ago, and then bring it back and put it on display for entertainment. Sometimes people are really strange; they do many curious things. They're always talking about famines, saying that this place needs money and that place needs food, yet they ignore the catastrophes happening everywhere, and instead are concerned about dead bodies and prehistoric animals. In digging up dinosaur fossils and the skeletons of dead humans, they spend a lot of money, risk the lives of many people and expose themselves to the heavy risk of bacterial infection.

In excavating these objects, they sometimes also unearth lethal viruses, and it's impossible to predict such things. When people venture into the primitive jungles for timber, they may also be infected by the germs there. These germs have been concealed in the jungles for millions of years, and have never come into contact with humans and so once humans are infected, there's hardly ever a cure. But people let the germs spread through reckless excavation and tree felling. That's why we have so many incurable diseases today.

There are such terrible things happening! Germs and poisons were placed in some tombs to prevent thieves from stealing the ornaments or jewelry inside. Of course, the jewelry might still be stolen eventually. Perhaps the germs only affected the first few tomb robbers and spared the last one so he managed to get away with the treasure. Still, a lot of harm has been done to the world in this way.

People on this planet do things topsy-turvy. The most important time of human life is when we're alive. So, we ought to take good care of our body, keep it healthy and then do things that benefit society and are good for our life so that we can live happily. Also, we should cherish each other while we're alive instead of making a big fuss when people die, disrupting traffic along an entire street and slaughtering many pigs and cows to entertain guests. This incurs very heavy karma related to killing.

In the earth Treasure Bodhisattva sutra it is said: 'When people slaughter for a deceased person, the dead one will also have to share the burden of retribution. Or, after a baby is born, if people slaughter animals to make offerings to the deities or ghosts, both the mother and child will be exposed to negative influences.' For example, sometimes they might fall ill for no apparent reason. That's because the karma of killing has affected the health of the mother and baby. When a family slaughters to make offerings to the deceased, it also undermines the freedom and reduces the blessed reward of the dead. As a result, they cannot be liberated quickly or be reborn in a higher realm. People often do things with good intentions but end up harming others because they haven't studied the ancient scriptures thoroughly. The ancient sages have imparted much wisdom to us, but we don't listen. We claim that we're Buddhists though we don't understand what the earth Treasure Bodhisattva sutra discusses. If we understood it, we wouldn't even dare to slaughter animals to feed ourselves, not to mention slaughtering them for others.

Also, many people do silly things such as buying a 'good' burial plot for their deceased relatives. They're willing to spend money on anything or to buy any piece of land, and the more expensive the better. Actually, they're trying to make use of the deceased. The parents may be dead, but can still be used to protect the descendants. People buy that piece of expensive land not to let the deceased rest in peace, but to have them bless their descendants; they're very calculating in spending that money. There are people who have spent several millions or more to buy land for building a grave.

The descendants of some families are not well off, yet they exhaust their entire wealth to buy a burial plot. It's still not certain whether their descendants will prosper, but meanwhile they're already starving. Since they spend all their money in this way, of course they can't run their business any more! If instead they made good use of that money in running their business, their family would prosper immediately, and there would be no need to confine the corpses of their relatives in such graves! They're dead already, yet they still need to take care of the later generations of their family! It's regarded as 'filial piety' if you do this. Otherwise, people will blame you for not being good sons and daughters. Isn't this world strange?

First find your way Home while living

When we're alive, if we fail to find the way Home and don't know where our true Home is, no one will take care of us after we die. Suppose a person is walking on the road day and night, but doesn't know where his home is and doesn't know where he should return later; is he not being a bit insane? Most people are doing precisely that, walking incessantly on the road of life, but having no idea where their 'Home' is. When they die, they say they 'go Home' but to which home? If they have no idea when they're alive, how will they know when they're dead? Failing to address this issue when alive, after death they can only cling to their graves, but that's not their real home! Anyway, graves aren't permanent either. When a war or earthquake comes along, the graves will vanish. Where will your 'home' be then?

MANAGING A COUNTRY AND PACIFYING THE WORLD ARE ALSO FORMS OF SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ¹⁵⁵

A wise person does not go to extremes

Outer appearances do not necessarily reflect our inner level; it is most important to know whether our mind is pure and not wavering. Is that right? Therefore, Lao Tzu said: 'Something that is too white will look unclear, and a person who is too virtuous will look flawed.'

We may not be able to detect virtuous persons. Sometimes it is not very good if they go overboard. For instance, many ancient people, because of their blind loyalty to king and country, suffered greatly or even lost their precious lives. Too attached to their reputation of being clean, upright and virtuous, they sometimes went to extremes and hurt themselves without making any contributions to the country or society.

Take Bo Yi and Shu Qi for instance, why did they die of hunger? Only to protect their chaste reputations. Why did Qu Yuan jump into the river? Just to show his loyalty to a fatuous king. If it was a wise king, of course be loyal to him! You should protect him, support him, counsel him, and be loyal to him. However, one is a stupid fool to be faithful to a fatuous king. A loyal fool!

We spiritual practitioners must not go to extremes, or be too rigid. We should be flexible, and judge the situation with our wisdom to decide what to do. Sometimes, if we are too attached to reputation, to some virtuous aspects, or to a certain living style, then we are not really good spiritual practitioners, as we are short of wisdom. Rules, reputation and morals are there to protect people, instead of demanding people to protect them. Do you understand what I mean? [Audience: Understand.]

155. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, September 10, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

Many people were highly esteemed because they were loyal to their king and country, like Bo Yi, Shu Qi and Qu Yuan, but I feel that they were not that good because they had no wisdom. If it is not necessary, we should not harm ourselves, because the king is not the whole society. A fatuous king is not the entire nation and we should not limit our goals in life to him only. They did this perhaps because they regarded themselves too highly. If a stupid king won't listen to you then forsake him. Sometimes, you may also pretend to follow him, do things in his way, and then influence him later. Or, you may do good things in silence; do not present yourself as a very virtuous person. Who can stand you? The king is notorious while you have such a good reputation. Will he like you? [Laughter] Will he listen to you? Will he spare you? Even if he spares you, he will not let you stay near him. Or, even if he lets you stay he won't listen to you. Right?

Therefore, if you want to help the world, save the world, then do not be attached to certain aspects. Simply observe the situation and help in whatever ways you can – in silence.

Guan Zhong, the wise prime minister who benefited his country and the world

Guan Zhong was a famous prime minister of Qi state. He behaved in the same way as the fatuous Qi emperor. He did whatever the king did, and if the king was muddle-headed he was even more befuddled. Guan Zhong did not let the king 'sense' his virtues, or give the impression that he was better than the king. That was exactly how he managed to reign in the country peacefully and successfully, and how he helped the fatuous king to benefit the people.

The people are the most important, not the king. You use him if you can. If you slay him, your reputation will be ruined. Just put him on one side, play with him, and teach him what to do afterwards. He will listen to you after he has confided in you. Besides, he sees that you are just like him – two idiots – [Master and audience laugh.] and takes you as his bosom friend. Because the two were much alike. Understand? When emperor Huan of state Qi drank, prime minister Guan Zhong apparently drank even more. When emperor Huan was dead drunk, it seemed as if the prime minister was in a greater mess. Deep in his heart, he knew the king extremely well. 'One will be ever-victorious when he knows himself and the enemy thoroughly.' Guan Zhong did not have to demonstrate his virtues or talents. He governed the country silently. The king was then not emperor Huan, but Guan Zhong. It was better this way. [Applause.]

Although emperor Huan was on the throne, Guan Zhong was the one who managed the country. Guan Zhong could pacify the world because he was very flexible, and could even make use of the evil people. He accommodated even the senseless, treacherous officials. Bao Shuya failed to do this, so he could not make a good prime minister. Bao Shuya was also a very good man, but too good, and too extreme. He loved the good people dearly. As to the evil persons, wow! He was not contented even if they were killed. [Master and audience laugh.] He would possibly have slain them without blinking his eyes, so he could not rule the country as well as Guan Zhong.

Although Bao Shuya was a loyal and incorruptible chancellor, he did not benefit his country greatly. Guan Zhong messed about with parties, wine, tobacco and sex, just like the king did, but he benefited the country greatly and was the greatest hero.

We can learn something useful by reading history, not just by reading Buddhist scriptures or Master's lectures. If we have wisdom, we can learn from anything. Observe the way other people managed and pacified the country, and we will learn how to do it also. Understand?

Ruling the country and pacifying the world are exactly the same as pursuing spiritual practice to save sentient beings. There is no difference. The ways are the same, the strategies are the same, and the spirit of serving others is the same. If an ordinary prime minister can sacrifice his reputation for the country and people, then he is really loyal to the king and country. This is the only real loyalty. Without Guan Zhong, the state of Qi would have been swallowed up by other states long ago. King Huan could no longer sit on the throne, giving orders, and enjoying wealth and pleasures. Therefore, the really loyal prime minister was Guan Zhong and not those dictating, criticizing, and hurting the king with reproaches. They should do things silently.

Great persons conceal their talents

To manage the country and benefit the people, you should ignore your reputation even. Do not let people know that you are clean and upright, that you have great wisdom and talents to rule the country. Just do the work; do not explain or show off. Sometimes, it is better that way. Revealing too much of yourself to people, they will keep praising you. Sometimes, your morals are not perfect – you score only eight points but they award you twelve points, then you will feel irritated! Everyone is expecting more from you. Then, another person may praise you with fifteen points, while your worth is only half of it and you begin to have troubles. You become very nervous, doing things extremely cautiously and feeling uneasy. Since you are always trying to guard your reputation as expected of you by other people, you have difficulties working.

It is more comfortable to do things casually when people are not expecting much from you. People will think: This is the way he always is, no need to watch him. He is not serious, nothing great, no one wants him. He is filthy and casual, a mundane person, good only at enjoying pleasures; a useless person, just ignore him, don't pay any attention to him. He is not competitive. I am very virtuous and people will surely like me. That fellow is nothing.

In this way, you are free from competition, no one expects anything from you, and can do things smoothly. Do things indiscernibly just like laughing behind a mask, which no one can detect. Have you ever seen those masks, so dull and expressionless, covering everything except the eyes? No one can see you laughing or crying behind the mask. Similarly, while in this world, do not mind what other people think if we really wish to help people.

It is also easy if you really want to secure a good reputation. What you need is to make good advertisements, a good way of presenting yourself. Having paved the way for several years, people will come to know about your goodness. Then, if you wish to run for president, just for instance, it will be very easy. Should you really wish to run for president, make preparations well beforehand as if you have no such intention. You should go and pave the road by socializing with everyone, visiting all the temples, churches and organizations. By and by, people will nominate you. The whole country will see that you are the most virtuous, and rich in the demeanor of a spiritual practitioner. And then you will say, 'Oh, please don't! It is so embarrassing!' [Laughter and applause.] When people insist on nominating you, you will say, 'All right, but it is really embarrassing!' These are false virtues and a false reputation. The truly virtuous and reputable persons are often indiscernible because great persons always have their talents concealed.

Sacrifice your reputation if you really love your country

Lord Wen of Zhou state was more virtuous than the king at his time. That king was really profane and greedy while Lord Wen was very generous. Later, he won the country and the

throne. He could do anything better than the previous king, so people invited him to be the king. If Guan Zhong wanted to be a well reputed person, he could simply seize the throne from emperor Huan of Qi State because emperor Huan was notorious then. However, Guan Zhong did not do it. He did not wish to snatch the throne from others; he just wanted to benefit the country. What he truly loved was the country and not reputation, so he sacrificed his reputation even. For the sake of the country, he pretended to be even more befuddled than the king, so the king would not suspect him. His reputation was no better than that of the king, but that was how he managed to benefit the country.

Destiny gave you this king at that time, so what can you do? You would get a bad name by killing him. If another person stepped on the throne he might not be any better than emperor Huan. Since Guan Zhong had won the king's confidence, he played the tricks accordingly and did his best according to the situation.

Fortunately, the state of Qi had Guan Zhong, so the country was peaceful and later became almost the most powerful among the central states. What good was emperor Huan? He was not worth a cent! His only merit was keeping Guan Zhong, and Guan Zhong's best trick was his ability to use this stupid king. [Laughter and applause.]

Besides using the king, Guan Zhong also used the bad officials by the king's side. He discriminated against no one, and that was how he got his way. He was really good. He was truly superb. It is not bad if we can learn from Guan Zhong in our spiritual practice! He was magnanimous. He was good, but not on the outside. That did not mean that he was not good within, he just did not want people to think too highly of him. He could accommodate anyone, and that was why he could rule the country and pacify the world successfully.

I think Guan Zhong was good! Sometimes, we can learn something from the ancient stories. So, when we comment on a person or want to realize someone, we must have wisdom to profoundly understand what type of person he is, instead of looking only at his outer appearance. We have to check the results of his deeds, of his actions, not only his behaviors. Don't look at his outer appearance, look at his deportment, habits or ways of doing things. Outer looks often fool us; it is better to judge by the results of his deeds.

History did not give much credit to Guan Zhong, nor did his descendants enjoy any benefit from his reputation, power or property. He truly did everything for the people and not for a name in history. Therefore, his descendants enjoyed nothing from his reputation. He did not leave to his descendants any government position, power or financial benefits.

The later people also did not care much about the descendants of the prime minister; no one cared about him. It was because when Guan Zhong was alive the people observed very little virtue in him. All they could see was that he was enjoying pleasures just like the king. The king's name was already blemished, but his name was even worse than the king's. [Master and audience laugh.] Do you understand?

Who could see through his outer mask, read his patriotic heart, and realize his loyalty? People of the world are very blind. Ordinary worldly people were not as good as Guan Zhong was, so they had no common quality that attracted each other. No one was his bosom friend, and no one could understand him. Therefore, people did not love or respect him, thinking he was only a flatterer to the king – patting the king's horse's nose, [Master and audience laugh.] and that he fooled around with the fatuous king for his own status and benefit. No one appreciated his talents in managing the country and pacifying the world, and his truly beautiful, clean, patriotic and loyal heart within.

The golden age of Au Lac

In Au Lac, there was a prime minister who was as badly reputed as Guan Zhong. His name was Tran Thu Do, which is most probably strange to you. He was very famous. Everyone criticized him when he was alive, and history also discredited him. At that time, the king was crowned when very young, so the power naturally went to the prime minister. The prime minister even married the concubine of the former king. When the former king died, he married the concubine, out of love or out of ambition to control the whole court, it was never known.

The fact was he had complete control! As the king was ignorant, the prime minister decided everything. This prime minister was very stubborn so history criticized him as a dictator who threatened the young king and abused the court's power; and there were other accusations. However, if we read history carefully, we know that he was a very great revolutionary and democrat.

Nowadays, if we have a king and a prime minister, we call this a constitutional monarchy. Is that right? In that case, the king has not much power while the prime minister has great control. He was implementing a constitutional monarchy system then, but our Au Lac people were not used to it. To us, the king was the son of heaven. Whatever the king said was right; all the officials could only lower their heads and say, 'Yes Sir! No Sir!' Therefore, we were not used to it, nor were the officials. He had too much power, and decided everything. The young king did not have a say. The king was so young and ignorant, if it were not for this prime minister Au Lac would not have been so peaceful then.

During that period, the country was prosperous in many respects. However, everyone criticized him as a dictator abusing his power and suppressing the king – all the accusations and no credit.

Even history recorded that he was bad. However, at that time, Au Lac was free and prosperous in many respects. If he were to listen to that senseless and ignorant king, how could he have managed the country? The nation would have been finished if he had obeyed the king! Sometimes, even when the king disagreed, the prime minister would still affix the seal. [Master and audience laugh.] He affixed the seal himself, so everyone abhorred him.

The fact is he was really good. If he were bad, and since he had already married the concubine and grasped all the power in his hands, he could simply get rid of the king and sit on the throne! That was a common practice in those days. [Master and audience laugh.] Very popular, especially in China, right? [Audience: Yes.] If the king was rather weak, and you happened to have some power, out you go! Then, the dynasty quickly changes, from sister Li to brother Wang! [Master and audience laugh.]

Therefore, if Thu Do really wanted the throne or the power, he could get it quickly. The king was young, the power was in his hands and he was a powerful chancellor at the time of the former king. The former king had delegated all the power to him so that he could take care of the young king and the administration.

Read history again with wisdom

Thus, we see that Guan Zhong really had no desire for reputation because he discredited himself by behaving the way he did. He still kept the king there while he did everything. People abhorred him. In fact, we can see that he was a very good politician, by observing

the results. Many accounts and comments in history make us – people of the later generations – think that some persons were bad, some persons were good, this one was virtuous, this one was loyal to the king, and that person was patriotic. We really need to read it over again and give it more thought. What actually happened might not be what was recorded in history. Besides, who were the ones writing the history? The officials, and they were only human beings, bearing prejudice, recording accounts with their own shallow wisdom, preconceptions and personal feelings including that of gratitude or resentment. Thus, we should not believe in history so easily; we have to use our wisdom. Should we really want to learn lessons from history, we have to analyze clearly to find out which persons were truly good and worthy for us to learn from.

APPRECIATING THE VALUE OF INITIATION ¹⁵⁶

I'll say something to the new initiates. I don't know what initiation really means to you, but it means a lot to me. It's not that you sit there, listen to the instructions, and still struggle inside about whether I'm worthy for you to accept as your Teacher, or if this initiation is worthy enough for you to accept. It's not like that. It's a once-in-a-million-years' chance. I don't know how much it means to you. But you should know how much I have to do, before and after your initiation.

It's not that you sit there on your backside and still wonder whether you should stay with me or if you should go. If you stay or you go, it's your problem. It's your right and your choice. I have no intention to bind you, to keep you or to do anything at all to you physically, mentally or psychically. I just stand by as a very unconditional friend. Whenever you need me, you can come. Should you decide to go, you can go. If that's all the initiation means to you, it's like you're going shopping. Only your mind is so imperfect that you cannot recognize the difference between a true diamond and glass; therefore, you struggle. But you don't know what it means; you really don't.

At least at the time you die, you will know. You will know what initiation means to you. At that time, no one is around you and no one can accompany you. No money can buy you power. No position can protect you from hell fire. At that time, the Master is the only one who comes to you. Then you will know.

Whatever you do, you should do it wholeheartedly. Then you'll get the sum total result. Otherwise, you get nothing. Even during initiation, if you just sit there and think of your past master, your past Buddha or your past whatever, you will get nothing. And then you ask me why you didn't get it. You wonder why you came here, wonder if this is right or wrong for you.

You will continue to wonder all your life, if you keep doing things the way you do. And no one can ever give you enough answers. Your time is very valuable, as mine is. If your time is not valuable, my time is. I don't have time to run around on a bus and airplane for fun, just to come so that you can see me whenever you want. And then you hang around, go for a stroll and do anything you want. But then you come and complain that you get nothing, that you don't know why you came here, that you don't know why you are sitting here, or why you do this and that and the other. You expect me to do everything for you, but you don't do anything, not even just come here and sit.

We organize everything for you, so it's not even that you have to organize! You do nothing; there's nothing to do. The cooking people also cook for you. And then you don't even take

156. International three-day retreat, Hamburg Center, Germany, August 25-27, 1995 (Originally in English).

that little bit of responsibility. So, what do you think? You think that's going to be okay? You think you will get God's blessing at all this way? And then you think you have everything, but I have to do everything. And some of you still criticize!

In the old times, if you wanted to find a master or even any kind of teacher, do you know what you had to do? Even now if you go to college, you still have to pay. If you don't pay, then your parents pay. If they don't pay directly, they pay taxes to the government and then the government pays for the teacher. And you have to go there and enroll your name and pass exams and all that. It takes a lot of time and trouble.

You keep asking me why I don't go out and lecture and save people in the world. Is it easy to save people? Today at the initiation, the highest God power was already here, present, and it still couldn't touch some of them. Only hell fire can burn. It's so difficult; so hard are some people's hearts that even when they sit in God's presence, in God's power, they don't feel moved.

I'm frightened to think about it. I'm so frightened to think of how hard people can be, that even the power of the most high cannot touch them. That's why the world is as it is. So, don't ask me why there is war, disaster or killing. What can the poor Mr. God do? This power can shatter mountains; it can dry up the ocean or make the whole universe crumble into dust. And yet it doesn't touch some humans' hearts. It's very frightening, what we have become.

Then you always ask me to go here, go there, talk to you, go to stay with you, save your friends, save your family members and do this and that and the other. And if I refuse you, you feel like, 'Why doesn't Master do Her job? Why doesn't She have compassion and love for humankind? They're suffering enough,' and things like that. If I could do it, I would. If Jesus could have done it, He would have finished it. We wouldn't have had to wait until our time. If Jesus could have saved the whole world, He would have done so. If Buddha could have saved the whole world, my turn wouldn't have come and your turn wouldn't have come.

You see how difficult it is? It is because we are too proud and too arrogant. We think we know too many things. We know this sutra, we know that bible, we know all this and that. We learn everything by heart, and then we're so proud of our own stupid knowledge that we think we know everything already. So, whenever someone wants to teach us something new, we refuse. Or we try to find fault, we try to criticize or show other people that we are fantastic, that we know everything or we know better than that person. But we are only harming ourselves and blocking our road to freedom, blocking the road of real knowledge. We're just taking all the advertisements as the real thing and feeling proud about it.

Finding the true Master and the right path

Only when we are really sincere, will God bring us to the most suitable path. There is no question about whether a Master is good or not. There is only the question of whether the student is good or not. As long as we are not yet ready, as long as we are not truly, sincerely seeking the most high, we will encounter all kinds of levels of masters, but not the highest one. So, the question remains with you, until you know that you really are seeking the most high, otherwise you're seeking magical power, or some curiosity. Take your time, and check your own heart. I am sure that you are on the right path. But my surety cannot help you if it is not your surety. If you can trust me, then I can tell you a hundred percent in God's name that you are on the best path. But it's you yourself; you

must trust yourself. Trust your intuition, your wisdom, your sincerity, and then you will know if it is right or not.

TO FIND GOD'S LOVE IS TO FIND THE SOURCE OF ALL HAPPINESS ¹⁵⁷

God has blessed us so much and loved us so much, including myself, Hiers very humble servant. God has blessed me to have the honor to serve you, Hiers children. God has blessed us to always be together in harmony and peace, and then whatever we want or need Hes always gives us without our asking for it.

So, we must always thank God in our hearts that Hes is so good to us, and we must also pray sincerely for those people who are less fortunate than we are. Every time we meditate, we should thank God first, then pray for the less fortunate and then remember God with all sweetness and devotion. And that's our duty: It's very simple, very pure and very effective. Everything else will come along even without our asking.

The more we meditate, the fewer questions we have. And some questions are not even important anymore. After we meditate, we know that nothing is very important; we just feel happy and blissful, and when we're happy and blissful nothing matters. So then we don't think with the mind so much; we don't ask so many garbage questions because we know it's useless.

The more blissful and happy we become, the more we feel intoxicated inside and then we don't really have any more questions, we don't care. Even if we don't know too much about the newest movie stars or the latest techniques or inventions or buildings in the world, we're still not affected by anything. We're just happy with the love from God alone. That's the purpose of our life, to find this love. Then we'll be satisfied.

Without this love from God, we feel miserable and we continue to be more and more miserable all the time. Then we keep wanting and wanting and greedily taking and taking, and we consume all kinds of harmful drugs and sometimes alcohol and other things in order to make ourselves happy. But then we become worse; we get into more trouble because we don't have true happiness.

That's why we must meditate on God, but even if we cannot do that the Master power always gives us someone, some messenger to guide us and help us remember how to meditate correctly on God. Otherwise, if we meditate on money or on a girlfriend or boyfriend, it's also meditation but it has a different, bad effect.

Many people meditate on different things. For example, the businessman meditates on his enterprise, the politician meditates on his reputation and career and the womanizer meditates on beautiful girls. So, each is a different object of concentration. We all have concentration already. The only thing we need to do is change the object of our concentration. Instead of meditating on ephemeral things like money or fame or the fleeting pleasures of this world, we should just switch to meditating on God and then everything else will come along.

I didn't come to God for money or fame but because I was so concentrated on God, Hes gave me everything. And that's the proof of my concentration; that's the proof of my devotion to God, and the proof for you or anyone else you know: 'Seek you first the kingdom of God, and everything else shall be added onto you.' When we only want God

157. Group meditation, Munich Center, Germany, August 18, 1995 (Originally in English and German).

and nothing else, everything else belongs to us. That's definitely, a hundred percent true. I'm living proof! I'm always happy because God always looks after me and never leaves me wanting for anything that I really think I need or I don't have.

As we meditate more and more, we finally come to know that we don't need anything, but even if we don't need anything God will see to it that we have every necessary thing in life. And the thing is, as you meditate along day by day, you also notice this miracle. Every day is a miracle for us. We're happier and happier and more and more loving every day. That's the best gift from God, that we're happier and more loving every day. And if Hes gives us financial blessings, that's all right, too. If Hes gives us a loving relationship as a blessing, that's okay. If Hes gives us a house or more cars, we accept them!

Everything that comes as God's gift is all right. We don't say, 'God, I don't want material things; that's not what I want.' If Hes gives us anything, it's all right. We can share and share and share with everyone else. And this is okay. That's how the world will become paradise. If everyone shares with each other, everyone will become happier, and then no one will want to steal from their neighbor or hurt their neighbor or do anything else because everyone will be happy. That's the future vision of our planet, and that's what we should always strive to achieve.

One day it will be so. Let's pray for that. And if it is not so, at least the world of our own environment will be peaceful, happy and harmonious. Our world and our planet – with our husbands, our wives, our neighbors and our children – will at least always be blissful, happy and harmonious. That's the world that's important to us because our world is the most important foundation. Without our world, the big world or even the entire universe doesn't exist. Without just one brick in the wall of this room, the wall could not exist. The wall stands because of many bricks put together so every brick is important. Similarly, our small world, our small unit of family or friends or neighbors is very important. That's why if every one of us takes care of our small world, the big world will become peaceful on its own.

ACCEPTING WHATEVER SITUATIONS COME TO YOU AND FACING YOUR PROBLEMS ¹⁵⁸

When you go home, take care of your family members. Even though your bugging husbands and wives are fit to throw away; [Master and audience laugh.] but since you have already accepted him or her in the first place, better continue. Because sometimes we think if we change partners, married to another wife or husband, then we will feel very, very much better. But it is not always true. And in the later research, people say that ninety three percent American men, if they have to do it again, they marry the same wife. So, it's good news for you, the American people. And other countries, France, or European country, or maybe other countries, about sixty percent, seventy percent husbands said the same thing. No country is less than fifty percent, anyhow. So, the majority of men love the same women, even though they have divorced and have a high hope to make it better with another one. But then after they think it over or they tried, they would prefer to marry the same woman.

When we marry with someone, it takes a long time and a great deal of effort to adjust to each other, is that not so? And then first, the honeymoon is sweet and honey and then later it is scrubbing and it was painful and then later, both of you grow up and get used to

158. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, July 15, 1995 (Originally in English).

each other. And it takes a long time and effort. So, it's a pity that now you forsake it and, then, start it all over again, wow! It's the same procedure and same thing.

I accept whatever God sends at that moment and take it for the best. Somebody is the best if we have no one else to compare to, right? So, the more we have the opportunity to compare, our partner or whatever the person we are acquainted to, the more we have the reason to complain, and the more confusion, more chaos arise. So, it is better we stick to the 'tried' and trusted. And in that case we have less problems, less expectations, and more time to relax and meditate. And whatever problem there is, be sure that if you change the partner, there would be the same at least or even more, you have experienced this or not? Do not talk about husband or wife, if you work outside, with many colleagues or many bosses and, then, you will know what I mean too, right? He has these but he doesn't have the other things. These are always the problem in this world. So, I think, you and I [Master and audience laugh.] better learn to accept the things as they come and try to act accordingly, you know what I mean? That's why sometimes you come here and you feel like you want to complain about some of the organization or some of the misunderstandings or things like that. You want to correct them, but if you correct these, later another thing comes. So, you have never really a life without a problem. [Master and audience laugh.]

Save our energy and concentrate on spiritual practice

So however, we just have to count on God and good luck in order to survive in this world. Otherwise, there is no amount of intelligence and wisdom that can cope with the maya of this world. Just because we happened to lose our way and pass by this illusionary maya world, so we get punishment for this. We are actually innocent. We just pass by here. And then we get a spell cast upon us and then we are confused. That's why we better find the way to go Home quickly. [Master laughs.] The later, the worse; the darker it becomes; the worse the situation will be, understand? So, anything else like troublesome husband and wives, except when it's extremely, too unbearable, like violence and threatening to your mind and life, then you must consider leaving, and go somewhere else. Otherwise, if just personalities, habits and opinions are differences then I think we just try to ignore, try to solve it as much as possible or ignore it in order so that we can concentrate more and then we go Home quicker. Otherwise, there will be a lot of wasted time for us here, adjusting somebody's habit and personalities while we could advance quicker and quicker, if we concentrate adjusting ourselves in the spiritual practice. Is that not so? So, you and I both must remember the important issues and the less important matters so that we can sort out what is the most important. We do it first and we pay more attention to that. I don't mean to interfere in your personal decision or relationship. It's just through experiences and with good intention, I tell you that changing environment and relationships don't always change our luck in life.

FORSAKING EVERYTHING AND THEN YOU WILL HAVE EVERYTHING

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Most of the Masters always tell us that if we forsake everything, then we will have everything. In the bible, it's also said, 'Whoever holds on to dear life,' like holding onto their life, 'will lose it. But whoever forsakes it will attain eternal life.' Likewise, if we do not really feel attached or attach ourselves to any possession, fame or name in this world, then everything really comes to us. But once we are enslaved for anything in this world at all,

159. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, July 12, 1995 (Originally in English).

then we'll be forever running after it, and we'll become exhausted, taxing our mental abilities. All kinds of trouble will come our way, and we won't necessarily attain anything.

It is truly like that. I speak from my own experience, too. Once we seek only the kingdom of God, we truly have everything. Even when we don't want, it just comes from nowhere; they force their way to us. Sometimes we don't want to, but we just have to accept it. It is very difficult also, very difficult to reject sometimes. We are very strict here, which is good for me. Otherwise, gifts would be laying all over everywhere. Before, I said, 'Don't accept gifts!' but then people threw them there and ran away. And then, poor me! I had to collect them together and give to someone else. So, what is the use? Because I don't really need anything.

It's funny! Like the bible says, 'The one who has, will have more; the one who doesn't have anything, will have less.' But that doesn't mean that if you don't have anything, you'll have even less. It's just that when you don't have anything, then you mostly want: You want and keep wanting. And the wanting energy acts just like a wall, stopping everything from coming to you. Similarly, we have to be sincere in our spiritual practice but not greedy and not like materialistic spiritualists.

Everything will come naturally. We may pray, but with sincerity, not with greed and demand. There is a very, very slight difference! If you can know the difference between desire and the yearning or longing for liberation, longing for wisdom and longing to know the Truth – between yearning to know the Truth and greedy desire, there is a very slight difference.

If we don't balance ourselves well, we will step on one side or another. It's good when we step on the other side, of more spiritual yearning. Then that day we meditate very well. But we don't have to pray every day like that, only when we can't make it. [Master gestures toward the wisdom eye.] Sometimes when it's black, or when things look dark and gray, then you pray earnestly to the Master, and it happens. It always happens. Before I took over this 'business,' very rarely did I see that the Master didn't answer. The inner Master rarely refuses your prayer. When the Master did refuse, it meant that request might be no good for me. Later, I would find out. Sometimes the Master takes away something from us, and then we feel very miserable. We think, 'Master doesn't care; Master knows I like it, so why does She take away?' But it's not true. Later, you'll be so happy that She got rid of it for you. It is like that.

I cannot guarantee you that if you pray to the Master, the Master will give you a good husband or a good wife, a beautiful and very faithful one, and then you'll be happy. No! The price is very great. The work is very hard. If you want, you may have, and then work for it. But don't always say, 'Master, please help me!' Master cannot interfere in such problems, because there is karma. There is the karma of every person who joins together as husband and wife, as father and mother and children and so on. There is karma. And depending on what kind of karma you have, your relationship will be sweet or sour.

If you don't want it altogether, that's okay, too. Master can annihilate that; it is quicker. It's quicker to get rid of than to sustain later. But most of us are born with a fixed karma, and before we are born, we are willing to join with such-and-such person in order to strengthen our physical, spiritual and mental power, in order to continue the work in this world. So, we are very willing to do that.

But many people are not willing, so they run away and become monks and nuns, or do some volunteer work by spending their time, youth and energy on a more meaningful

purpose in life. That also will level the karma away. These are people who are stronger and do not need support, beside them or behind them. They can go it all alone. But many people find life very lonely and meaningless, so they need someone to share their ups and downs, the ins and outs and troubles of life.

That's all right; both are all right. The one who lives alone strengthens himself or herself with works, with sacrifice and with other pursuits in life. And the ones who live with company strengthen each other by each other's strength, too. So, both will be strengthened somewhat in different ways. God will always make up for the short of supply. So life will never be made too miserable or unbearable for us, if we have an inner supply of the Master power. We meditate, and we really do not desire much of this life. The days go by easier; we do everything with less attachment and we look at other people with less desire.

That is the very good thing about practicing inner power. One day, the desire is lost completely. We feel so happy inside and so fulfilled that unless other people need us, we don't go looking for trouble. We don't even go looking for help, like saying, 'Wow! You look miserable. I'll help you.' No, no! We're just okay. Whether we help or don't help, talk or don't talk, teach or don't teach, we're okay; because we have become completely whole and fulfilled within ourselves. We don't need any external stimulation, motive, goal to reach, compassion to boast about or love to carry on the shoulder. Nothing!

ADVANCE BODY-CONTOURING ¹⁶⁰

It's funny. When we practice the Quan Yin method, sometimes our shapes change. Some fat people became slimmer; some skinny people become rounder – not fat, but fulfilled, more filled out.

Many things like this happen. And sometimes it happens right after initiation. So, the person who comes in and the person who comes out, you hardly recognize. Myself, I don't recognize! After initiation, he looks totally different, like another person: More lovable, and closer, like a long-time friend. It's very funny; I've noticed this many times.

So, sometimes people think, 'How come Master doesn't know me? I just came to say hallo to Her a few days ago, and now it looks like She doesn't remember.' I do remember, but just a different person! You change; the chemical substances in the body change, too. We renew our tissues and our cells. And the structure of our thinking becomes different, even though you might not notice it because here you don't have the opportunity to use it. But when you go home, or if the opportunity arises for you to solve the same problem, you will see that so many fresh ideas have developed overnight. And then you know what has happened to you.

THE PURPOSE OF MEDITATION – REALIZING YOURSELF AND ATTAINING BLISS ¹⁶¹

Actually, when we're very happy, it's very difficult to meditate. And when we're very miserable, it's also very difficult to meditate! That's why we always try to strike a balance in between, so we don't feel such extremes that we forget that the real happiness is inside. Truly, it is!

160. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, July 11, 1995 (Originally in English).

161. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, June 19, 1995 (Originally in English).

It doesn't matter how much we love someone, or how much someone loves us. One day or another, he or she will disappoint us. And then it hurts. Maybe we misunderstand, or maybe it's true. But it hurts. Even with our children or husband, if we truly want them to love us, we have to be like a slave twenty-four hours a day to their every wish. Then they'll be happy, and then they might stick with us. But even then it's just maybe.

Sometimes children also make trouble for their parents because they misunderstand their parents, or they want their parents to be with them all the time and give them all of their time. But sometimes, if the parents can't satisfy them, they just don't care. So, even children sometimes cause a lot of pain for their parents. And sometimes a husband and wife cause pain for each other because of too many expectations or even just normal expectations.

Still, they're not always easy to fulfill. Like today someone loves you and then you expect tomorrow he will be the same or maybe even better. But then something happens tomorrow. And then he's cranky and moody, and he doesn't want to talk to you. It may not be your fault. But then you say, 'If you don't care about me, why should I care about you?' And then you both say it, and then you separate or at least feel bad about each other. And then it takes many days before you reconcile with each other again, or maybe never. Sometimes even just small things make people fall apart, and it hurts a lot. It's not that it doesn't hurt. If it didn't hurt, it would be okay. But it does hurt.

Actually, if we truly rely on the inner happiness, then everything will come. Then we'll never be disappointed or have to rely on anyone. If someone comes, it's okay, or if they don't come, it's okay. We don't feel so hurt or pained inside.

So, all the pain, sorrow and misery come not from the outside, not from other people. They come from our inner ignorance. We expect too much from everyone and everything, and then we're disappointed. So, the only source of happiness is inside. Whenever you meditate, try to get in touch with that source. For your sake, for your own happiness, contentment, satisfaction, you must always try to get in touch with that joyful center which is inside all of you. That is where the Master power is. That is where every miracle in the universe can manifest. That's all loving kindness, that's where all loving kindness is born. That's where all the virtues, beauty and the Truth laying dormant there for you to discover.

Otherwise, sooner or later we all die and go where, who cares? At least when we're living, we must live a very worthwhile human life. We should be happy and be able to carry on our life in a joyful way. Because that befits our dignity as a human being, as the 'top ten' of all the animals in this world. We're the top of physical creation. We don't know if we're the top of the universe yet. Maybe not, but at least here, we're the top of creation. So, we must carry on our life as dignified as a human being should be, and not be fearful of everything and stupid and in misery, especially when we have the treasure inside that we can always use.

That's the only purpose of meditation: That you know yourself and know what true happiness is, not because the Master says so and you have to obey the Master. You obey the Master because it's good for you, but you must know why. You must know it's for you, not for the Master. The Master doesn't care. I don't care. If you don't meditate, you don't meditate. It's your life. I can't control you, and I don't want to. If you control someone else, you're bound to him or her. Just like the policeman with a criminal, they're both handcuffed. The policeman has to take care of the prisoner.

I don't want to be in that position. So, whatever I tell you is good for you, and if what you hear is logical and you know it, then carry on. Not because I force you or anything like that. It's an honor, it's a privilege, and it's the best fortune of our life to be able to know such a secret. It's not being forced, it's not a bargain, and it's not an obligation. It's the best of all privileges, the best of all luck, in thousands or millions of lifetimes, that we're being so easily shown such a door to liberate ourselves of all misery. So, work on it. That's all there is to it. [Applause]

Sometimes, if I work until very late, sometimes until twelve o'clock or one, two o'clock, I still meditate before I sleep. I always long to meditate apart from all of my obligations and duties. I never feel like I shouldn't meditate, or that meditation is terrible. Never! It's a joy, a source of relaxation, a way of recharging, even physically.

That's not talking about becoming a Buddha or anything. If you don't meditate during one day, you can never recover from the whole day's exhaustion and all kinds of mental bombardment of society's negativity. So, don't complain to me if you're tired, if you're all this and that and the other. If you don't meditate enough, that's it. That's the price you pay. In the beginning, maybe you're unsettled. But the more you meditate, the more you feel like that's it, that's the only method. Now even if someone gave you one million dollars to change the Master or change the method, you wouldn't do it. You never would. Because you just know it; you can't lie. You can't lie and say that this not the method for you. Even if your meditation is lousy, you know it's only your fault. [Master and audience laugh.] You honestly know that.

And then when it comes to deep down in your introspection: The Quan Yin method is the only way, right? That's it, full stop, finished, no argument, no 'but,' 'however' or 'nevertheless.' That's it. That's the feeling we have in our heart, and that's what we know. And that's the only thing that's sure. So, if you know that, then you know it. I don't have to tell you.

The source of eternal happiness

The only source of happiness is inside. So, whenever you meditate, try to get in touch with that source. It's only one little center inside the so-called brain. It's there, physically inside the brain. Every little nerve and center is responsible for something in our being – psychologically, emotionally and physically. And another one is spiritually responsible for our enlightenment and eternal happiness. There is a little center, almost in the middle of the brain physically. From here [Master points to the middle of Her forehead.] and here (the top of the head) go inward into two-thirds of the head. The wisdom eye center must be there, really inside.

So, when you look with the wisdom eye, it means you are trying to make contact with that center. Even just sometimes, when you make contact there, in just a matter of seconds you immediately feel different. There is a flash of Light and then you feel elated for a long time. Of course, you cannot always get in touch with that center, or you are not consciously always in touch with that center. But keep practicing. Practice makes the Master. That's what we do. I am still doing it. I need my happiness to 'deal' with all of you! I will die if I don't have this joyful energy to give me something every day to carry on with my work.

You cannot always keep on giving. You will be depleted if you give with the ego or the physical strength of an ordinary human being. Then you will come down in your spiritual practice, and you will become bad and sour. And that's how many so-called gurus became

bad, sour and degraded after some time. Perhaps in the beginning they were very pure, very holy and very saintly. But because the method of their practice was not correct and was not directing them toward this forever giving, eternally content center, [Master gestures toward the wisdom eye center.] they gave everything they had, with all the best intentions, and then they crumbled. They succumbed to all kinds of traps and temptations, like the pressures of society and every circumstance around them.

But these people are very pitiful. If they are such people, we feel more sorry for them. Because they haven't been able to stand themselves, and they have been forced to run. That's why they failed. And that's why I always emphasize to you that you must meditate. Not so that you become good disciples, no, but to save yourselves.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE FINAL JUDGMENT ¹⁶²

Actually, whomever we love and feel very close to, we will be with that person after we die. Even ordinary people will have that experience. For example, when you die, and you don't practice the Quan Yin method even, and if during life you don't do any bad things so as to agonize your conscience, then after you die you will see your relatives and friends. Those who are good, in good relation with and who are also good like you, may be with you for a short while and then each has to go back into life and finish their mission or fulfill the things that they have not finished or learn something new, accordingly. So, don't worry, if you really like me, we can be together. [Applause] And even if we have to come back again we can come back together, if you want. [Applause] In the late discovery there is a doctor, a psychologist. He wanted to cure a person so he used hypnotism to cure that person of some kind of illness and then accidentally he found out that as he regressed that person into past life, you know, he found out that most of the patients tell him the same thing, like they have regressed into the last life and then they came to the point where they died before and then they run through the tunnel and then they saw the Light and then they saw the beams of Light, and so on. And then like the judge, not really judging him, just telling him or her what he did wrong in their life and maybe he should correct it and mend their ways next time and things like that; and if they did something wrong in their life it must be a terrible experience like going through hell because they will experience the victim's feeling at that time. That's what we call hell. When you are terrorized or agonized by another person that is terrible, so the one who causes such feeling to other people during a lifetime has to experience that victim's feeling after he leaves this life and he can not run away. You know. Those people who sit there, let him see it like in the movies but the feeling is very real. So, it depends on how terrible the deeds we have done in this life, as to whether we will experience such a very, very terrible feeling at the time of dying. You're dead after leaving this life. There is always a period of rest in between.

And during this period we experience those agonizing feelings that we have caused to other people, and because this is so terrible and if we have done too much wrong and too many terrible deeds, then our suffering seems like it's going on forever, forever because the time of suffering is always long, and the time of happiness is always short. So, during that intermediate period they suffer a lot if they do terrible things in life. That's what we call hell or punishment. And now that doctor found most of his patients, almost all of them, telling him the same thing like that. And even if the people do bad or good deeds they also will see their relatives and friends afterwards, who come and greet them in the same levels. And then after they have finished with their retribution or with their reflection upon what good deeds or bad things they have done in life, they finish with that judgment, their own judgment, really – nobody judges them even though the three lovely beings sitting

162. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, June 12, 1995 (Originally in English).

there, they just kind of guide them or teach them or are very understanding. It's just we, we judge ourselves because of our feelings, because whatever we do to others will come back to us in the same way, even more magnified; because it's we ourselves who know all that, who know in detail how we did it to other people, so the suffering is manifold. So, after going through all of this suffering or rewarding period between death and the afterlife they come back to this life again, doing something else or doing the same thing if they have not satisfactorily finished before they die. If they have, they learn different new things or they continue with their last preoccupation if they want to.

Mostly after that they will, mostly the relatives and friends, they get together and come back again. They try to arrange that, for example, mother and son come back again and stay together, or husband and wife, sister and brother, and so on, but in different roles, unfortunately or fortunately. That's why you've sometimes heard perhaps mother and son and sometimes as husband and wife even, because there is no such thing as bad things or good things in heaven. Everything is just a learning experience but, by the nature of the experiences, there must be good and bad accordingly. Bad experiences give you a bad feeling, and good experiences give you a good feeling; otherwise there can be no experience; if every experience is the same, good or bad, flat, no feeling, no emotion, no suffering, nothing, then there is no distinction between the experiences, and therefore you can not grow by knowledge and knowing that this is bad, it hurts; this is good, it brings happiness. You understand what I mean? There is really no judgment. No pinpoint finger saying, 'You bad person, you good person.' It's not like that. Just by the nature of your choice, the wisdom inside you tells you to select what is more beneficial, what is more happy for other people and yourself; and if you don't make a good judgment like that during your life, then you have to experience that the bad thing you have done is really hurtful, so you have to experience the hurtful feeling in order to know next time, don't do that again because that is a bad choice. You see? That's how we learn life after life to have good choices, to have a really wise selection of actions. Therefore, reap the reward here and in the afterlife. Um? So, if you are doing the good things that I have told you, then surely, we will be together again, because by nature of the experience and the choice, whatever is good will stick together. Things like that. You know what I mean? Okay. And if you make a good choice in this life I'm sure we'll be together. Um? Longer.

If you make a bad choice perhaps we'll have to be separated for some time until you truly realize that is a bad choice and you learn, you are finished with that experience, then you be allowed. And that has been proven, been proven by hypnotism from some of the doctors who have accidentally found out this reincarnation stuff which many people do not believe, accept, or understand. Anyhow, for the initiated we don't have to be reincarnated like that and we don't have to rest in between and go through judgment and things like that if we have truly followed the precepts and instruction to try to meditate as best as we can, and try to be as good as we can, and make the right choice all the time, then of course we, even if we have to go through judgment, there is nothing to say, only good things. But we don't have to. The Master will take care of all this. Already it's a different section now. You see what I mean? [Applause] So, I just tell you this to let you know that even ordinary people, we'll get together again. So, how much more it would be for us the same brothers and sisters of blue blooded lineage. [Master laughs and audience applauds.] We're from noble, noble lineage. We, of course, we will stay together.

METHODS OF HEALING ILLNESSES ¹⁶³

There is a method that heals all illnesses; that is, meditation and loving others, two simple things only. If we just sit there every day worrying about this and that illness, we get sicker and sicker, feeling worse and worse as we practice. Some modern scientists have stated that we should not find an excuse to stay home just because we suffer from a little cold or flu. It is not necessary! Just go out and work. If necessary, take some medicine, wear more clothes to keep warm, and then continue with your work. In this way your system will improve as you force yourself to resist your sickness.

Help other people if you have time. Help your neighbors or orphans and widows. Observe their needs and render help accordingly. Don't spend time worrying about your own feelings; because, the more you worry, the more exhausted and sick you get. It is good for us to think of others. Should we die while we are caring about other people, it is also a great honor. Is this not so? I have told you many stories; you should practice their principles in your daily lives.

ENLIGHTENMENT AND MEDITATION – THE KEYS TO BECOMING 'DISASTER-PROOF' ¹⁶⁴

The best protection for us is the Quan Yin method, and the more we meditate the more 'proof' we are – fat-proof, skinny-proof, water-proof, fire-proof because we're protected by this inner power. Otherwise, what else can I tell you? There are so many crazy things in this world such as pollution and all kinds of things that we can never stop. Even if we could be successful in stopping humankind from destroying the world, the law of karma sometimes destroys the world anyway by flood, earthquake or all kinds of other disasters.

Each time we hear in the news that environmental protectionists are protesting human pollution and deforestation and so on, we think it's already terrible. But every year, disastrous fires burn many, many thousands of acres of land and timber. So, humans and God, each and together, destroy the land, the forests and the environment, and where would we run to if God decided to destroy our planet, for example? One by one, where would we go?

Just stopping human beings is already very difficult. For instance, many ignorant people sneak behind the law and destroy forests, land and rivers, contaminating the sea and water everywhere. So, it's good that we have environmental protection from different organizations trying to guard the earth. That's fine and good, but even if we succeed in stopping all this damage, there's nothing we can do when God decides our time is up or that the forest's time is up. So, it's very difficult.

Therefore, the best thing we can do is to 'proof' ourselves with our inner power of protection. That way, wherever we go – heaven, hell or earth – we're safe; we're at peace within ourselves. Otherwise, disasters are not only man-made. Most of the time they're God-made or karma-made like 'made in karma.' [Master and audience laugh.] Disasters can be made from karma. If it's made in Formosa, we can stop it. If it's made in the United States, we can do something; we can write to congress or sue the president or something. But if it's made in heaven or 'made in karma,' then forget it. The only thing we can do is repent, mend our way of life and meditate to get more inner power protection and wisdom.

163. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, June 11, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

164. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, June 10, 1995 (Originally in English).

That's the only way we're safe. And if we have to leave this world, we're happy. It's fine; we'll go to a better one for sure – that I promise you. [Applause]

Genetic engineering – God sent or what?

Lately, many scientific horrors have occurred, like experiments mixing human species with animals. And the result is half-animal, half-human, or sometimes half-fish, half-human. It's possible! Nowadays, people are so advanced in science that they can sometimes use it for perverted purposes, or for perverted ideas that they think are correct. In the name of science and research, sometimes people do many crazy things.

For example, with DNA and all kinds of things, they can create a human out of a dead body, or preserve your DNA to make a double of yourself, in case you die and no one inherits your treasure, or make a duplicate out of you without you knowing it. Well, I don't know any more what they are going to do now. So, I think the best approach is that we protect ourselves with the inner power. That's the best thing. Otherwise, what else can I tell you? So many things in this world are very crazy, like contamination, pollution and all kinds of other things.

A SAINTLY MIND EXPECTS NOTHING IN RETURN ¹⁶⁵

The retreat is over, so I think I'll let you go to sleep, you know, normal time. You don't have to meditate so long. You may go back to your tent and meditate longer, until you want to sleep. And in the daytime you may rest or meditate as you please, and follow the schedule here, like four to seven and six to nine. Normally, you follow what is here. Sometimes summer and winter there is a slight difference in the schedule. So, you're free, but try to meditate as much as you can; and don't gossip too much. If you have to talk then talk about God, something beneficial, something that vibrates positively in the air and contributes to the harmony of the world as well as to your spiritual progress and those of your neighbors. Whatever we speak, we'll give a vibration, and accordingly what we say, good or bad, will affect upon us again.

There are still many around. You'll stay a long time? Your family is okay? I told you if you have no obligations, family, children, job or any other duty, especially the family, the children, and the job.... If you have work to do, you must tell your boss before you leave or before you stay or whatever. You don't just go like this. Place yourself in other people's positions and then act accordingly. Don't be selfish and make a bad name for yourself and for our group.

Do good things expecting nothing in return

We have to do good things in this world, not because we will have a good result, good karma. That is only for children, for the beginning, for the beginner of practice. Then they still need awards, merit, punishment, all these praises and blame. But as we go to a higher dimension, a higher level of consciousness, we forget all this. We do whatever to benefit other people and whatever is righteous according to our conscience. Not to expect anything at all in return.

If we look at the history of the world, not everyone who does the righteous things, not every act of kindness will be rewarded with the same level of goodness. For example, you look around, Jesus. All His life He tried to do good and be a good example of Godly

165. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, June 6, 1995 (Originally in English).

qualities, but he Had no fantastic reward in return. At least, I mean, when He was alive. And Buddha, He has done a great deal for the world and for His disciples. But He had a lot of slander, blame and curses, sometimes, even close to assassination. Gandhi, for example. He strived to do good for his people and his country. And to bring peace among religious believers in India, and what did he get in the end? A bullet. And many other people like Kennedy of America, Abraham Lincoln, et cetera, et cetera. All these good people. They sincerely tried to bring justice to the world and peace to human beings. But they all got a very tragic retribution for the good that they had done to the world. Politically speaking even, not only in religion. Like in Formosa here. Formosa is one of the founders of the United Nations fifty years ago. And now what do they get? They are kicked out of the United Nations, in preference to the communism, which the whole world says is bad, and has to be eliminated, et cetera, for example, blah, blah, blah, you know what I mean? So, not everything that we do good will get the good things in return. So, don't expect me to promise you that if you keep the precepts, if you eat vegetarian, I will give you all the power of protection so that your life will be smooth and have no problems, everyone loves you, no enemies, no sickness, no accidents, no diseases, no undesired accidents or anything like that. Understand? You keep the precepts, you do good things because it is the only way to be a human, be a worthy human being. Understand?

Surpass praises and blame

And moreover, if we want to step beyond human life to become a saintly being, beneficial to the whole universe, that is the meaning of being a righteous person. That's the purpose – the only purpose. As long as you practice goodness and kindness, there will be always a negative power that tries to attack you, that tries to make you stray from your purpose and go in a different direction, sidetrack you. So, it takes a lot of determination and principles to control ourselves, to check our way, to check our lives, so that we always go in the right direction without regret, without complaining when we don't have any good result out of this. Even I myself don't always have the correct result, and righteous result awarded to me. For one of the awards, or one of the praises I get a hundred slanders in return. You know what I mean? Just because you don't know about them doesn't mean they don't exist. Just because I don't care about them doesn't mean they don't exist. We do not take praise and blame very literally, very seriously. Therefore, we are not very affected by them. Doesn't mean I always get praises and smooth operation and cooperation from everyone. Even among disciples, there is no such thing as an easy way for a Master at all. In fact, it's a way of great sacrifice and inner sufferings. Most of the people do not know. But still, despite all this obstruction and ungratefulness of mankind we continue to do good. We still continue to improve ourselves to do what is right, because it is right. Do you understand now? [Applause] Because it is the challenge of this world that we always keep the way of God, we always keep the commandments of conscience. That's how we rise above all differences and all the praise and the blame to be a noble being.

Being a noble being is the only way

Even though to be a noble being is a very difficult position and also very difficult to achieve, that's the only way. Or do we want to always sink into the lower existence, the lower thinking, the violent way of living or a very, very ignorant quality. Should we do that? [Audience: Of course, not.] Right. You're right. So, that is the only choice, to walk forward doesn't matter how difficult, to fly upward doesn't matter how far, how high. We just have to try again and again and again, until there is nothing but goodness that resides within us, until we recognize nothing but the kingdom of God within ourselves. What is the kingdom of God? It is not the palace that is shining with gold, silver, diamonds, rubies and all kinds of precious stones. It is the purity, the loving kindness, the compassion, the peace of mind.

That is the kingdom of God. If we carry this kingdom of God within us, then wherever we go we always feel that we are in heaven. So, there is no need to yearn for the life beyond and to shun the opportunities to serve our brothers and sisters here on earth while we are still living. If we have already attained heaven within, whether we live or we die, it is ours. No one can take it away. But if we do not attain this, then even if we go to heaven, the outer environment of heaven may not even penetrate inside our darkened souls, and we still carry with us hatred, jealousy, bad, negative thinking, within our hearts. Then heaven is just another place in the universe for us, the same as everywhere because we have not changed ourselves.

Having peace within us, everywhere is heaven

So, if we change, the situation changes. If we have heaven within us, peace within us, then everywhere is heaven, everywhere is peace. That's the purpose of being good, trying to do good, trying to be good, because that's the only choice. Unless we want to stay in hell forever. Well, then I don't know. That's very easy to do. To go to hell we don't have to try. There's no need for effort. It's the most easy way. Most crowded place. So, I think it is better to go to heaven. Less crowded. More quiet. More room. More space. Everyone goes to hell, so why not we go to heaven? Just like in the cities, they are too crowded already. Why should we go there? So, if we want peace and quiet and tranquility, we go to the countryside. There's more room, more space, the land is cheap and we are in a very green surrounding. It's good for our health and spirit, et cetera.

The same, huh? So, I think we are very wise if we choose to go to heaven. Takes a lot of effort, maybe. [Applause] It takes a lot of effort now, but if you want to try again later or next life, it's even harder. It adds up more garbage, more bad qualities, and more habits. It's difficult to clean. Now maybe we are already in the thousandth incarnation and if we come back again, a thousand and one, you know, and we come back again a thousand and two. Each life we accumulate more garbage and more bad habits. Then it's more difficult to kick off the habits. Right? So, however hard it is, try this time, try one time.

Pull out deep rooted habits and hardness

You may think that you are already very clean and pure but I tell you, be careful. Don't think because we are vegetarian, because we keep the precepts, we are clean and pure. Not yet, not so easy. Watch yourself next time. Watch every moment, just one day. Spend one day watching yourself. See how you react in different situations. Watch carefully, then you'll know what I mean. Like some people they will come to me and they want to become monks and nuns, for example. I tell them no, you don't need. I don't want to tell them that they are not up to it. But I just tell them no need. Because even when they are with me, talking to me.... For example, if a boy were talking to me, and then he hears a voice of another female coming to my room or coming to my place, immediately he brushes his hair. He doesn't know it even. I know it. You know what I mean? Or a girl, talking to me and then hearing a voice, only hearing the voices of approaching boys, one boy or two boys, doesn't matter whom. Immediately she also adjusts her dress, strokes her hair. [Laughter] Not the way we causally do it sometimes when the wind blows. In my office there's no wind, for example.

And many things that we ourselves do not notice, very, very trivial matters, very deep rooted and subtle habits that we don't know we have. You know what I mean? And many other things like love, compassion and sensitivity to the suffering of other people, we don't have, too. For example, sometimes I watch movies with the monks and nuns, so-called monks and nuns here, huh? And many things in the film, sometimes about the war,

sometimes about spiritual matters or sometimes about the things that are very touching in this world, like war, death, suffering and things like that. These things make me cry, or sometimes I am very shocked and very deeply touched. But to some monks and nuns, they just laugh away. Maybe they are at a higher level than me. No emotion. I have more astral feeling or what? [Laughter]

But because I know it is a film, I don't see the film; I see the suffering behind, what they want to convey in the film. You know what I mean? It's not that I cry because the film person dies, I know that it is a film. I don't cry because that actor dies or loses an arm or a leg. But I am touched because of the suffering of this world which they try to portray on the film, which is very, very, very true.

But I saw some of my monks and nuns, they sit around and they just laugh because of some other incident in the film. I cannot laugh. Of course, I am the one that laughs a lot. You know that. It's not that I don't know how to laugh, but in such a situation, I cannot laugh at all, and then I can sense some of them are so insensitive. So insensitive.

So, these are the very subtle habits and subtle hardness that we have accumulated during many lifetimes and we don't even realize it.

Be honest to yourself

So, make sure that you check out whatever undesired, deep rooted habit that you don't want to carry around with you. If you're comfortable with them it's okay with me. It's your garbage and not mine. But what I mean is that if we are truly honest within ourselves and want to improve and want to train our sensitivity to the suffering and to the happiness of others as well as to our own purity and well being, then we must always be vigilant. Always, always pay attention, otherwise it is easy to just pass the day, pass two days, pass three days, pass the whole life, in self indulgence, in bad habits and not get into a higher level of consciousness, not be able to understand a deeper meaning of spiritual life. You understand? And then we blame others, blame God, blame the method and blame the Master, blame everything. That doesn't help us. It is not true, I tell you. It is not true.

You can blame me, you can blame the method if you want, but that doesn't help you at all. It doesn't help you to get better. The best is for you to be honest with yourself and always be watchful of our deep rooted habits, and very undesirable affects that they have upon us. Always be careful.

I just told you a few examples. But there are a lot. I cannot even remember here. And of course, I don't want to bring all the garbage to you. I trust that you are very intelligent and wise enough by now, to take from these examples some indications, enough so that you can check out yourself, other habits or other deep rooted karma that I did not mention. But you will recognize next time around, when you see them, when you sense them and when you watch them grow or creep into your life when you're not noticing. There are so many things. I cannot even remember and I cannot even tell you all. But you know, hmm, many small things.

Okay. From today you can go to sleep around nine, continue to meditate in your tent, then get up around three and meditate until seven, et cetera. Then in the daytime you rest, help around or cleaning. Try to concentrate all the time when you are working, and not to gossip and talk nonsense. Of course, no one will scold you or do anything, but since you are here you should profit from the free time and the environment and the atmosphere of the Center to better your spiritual practice, understand?

In walking, sleeping, talking, sitting, laying down, always try to be concentrated on the wisdom center. In that way you speedily progress and then you will feel that. And the more you progress, the more encouraged you will feel and then the more you practice. It's a pity that we already have the method and we don't use it.

It is very conducive here for you to practice your meditation, no one disturbs you so much. Is that not so? So, try to profit from it. Try to profit from the time you are here. That is all I have to tell you. Good night. [Applause] Thank you.

REVEALING THE SECRET OF THE ANCIENT PYRAMIDS IN EGYPT ¹⁶⁶

Today, I take you to Egypt [Applause] to see the pyramids. Have you seen them before? No? What a pity! Neither have I. [Laughter] Now, we will go there together. The pyramids are nothing special! Just like a temple. Do you know that? Triangular on all four sides, this is what I heard! Sometimes, we can visit the place with our souls, and save the air tickets. Has anyone tried going this way? Yes! However, we can go to even further places. The pyramids are nothing!

Their name is pyramid (means 'golden symbol tower' in Chinese), but they are actually made of stones. If we go to the Amitabha Buddha's world, or the world of the Medicine Buddha, or the heavenly kingdom, we will see the real golden pyramids. Is that not so? They are more beautiful, in brilliant gold, real gold! Furthermore, the gold there is different from the gold here, which is so hard and not that bright. In our world, gold and diamonds are the brightest, but in the superior worlds, the gold and diamonds there are more brilliant, and radiate light!

Great architecture ahead of the times

All right, we are now going to Egypt to have some fun. Do not go to heaven, because it is too far. And here it is very hot, why do I take you to Egypt? It's because it is even hotter there. [Master and audience laugh.] In that case, you won't complain any more here. When you come back later, you will say, 'Wow! Miaoli is really great. Marvelous! There are still trees, and a little breeze.' There are not even trees in Egypt. Do you know that? It seems there are no trees near the pyramids, so it is even hotter.

Okay, now, let us try going there. Use your wisdom eye to look over there. In the desert, everywhere is sand and rocks. They built several pyramids in the middle of the desert. I don't know why they are called the 'golden symbol,' there is no trace of gold, only rocks. However, they cannot be bought with real gold. Even in this modern era we still have to shake our heads in admiration when observing the way they were built!

Near the pyramids, there are many tombs of the kings, queens, and princes. Naturally, the atmosphere is very scary at night. Nevertheless, some people love to take adventures in that place at night. Why? Normally, there are hardly any people in the daytime. Of course, there are some tourists, but they just walk about and then leave. Very few people venture inside. There is almost no one there at night. Of course, there are some guards outside. No one can go in at night. They lock the door when the sun goes down. Even tourists are not allowed to go in. However, some people love to go in at night. You have to apply for entry if you wish to go in at night. Under special circumstances, they will let you in.

166. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, June 4, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

One night, a man ventured inside. He wanted to find out why people would build such a grand but empty structure, and leave it unused. Initially, they thought the pyramids were the tombs of the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt, but they could not find any coffins or mummies inside. They are all empty. In the pyramid, there is only a box that looks like a coffin, made of stone, also empty, without even a cover on top. Above the so-called main hall, there is an empty chamber, with another empty room above that. It is empty from there all the way to the top. They kept the space empty to minimize the pressure. Can you imagine if it were all stones on top? The pyramid is very gigantic, surely it could not bear the weight for so long if it were all stone on top. They were built perfectly and given consideration to every aspect, so the pyramids are still standing after so many ages have gone by, while many civilizations or non-civilizations have changed.

Our ancestors were extraterrestrial scientists

Their building technique was extremely superb. Capable of building such structures, they must have been a highly intelligent race. Nowadays, many scientists and archaeologists have discovered that our ancestors were extremely civilized and clever. Perhaps they were scientists from extraterrestrial planets.

Besides the pyramids, there are many other things that were buried in ancient times, and discovered only recently. They prove that our ancestors were extremely and exceedingly intelligent. I don't know why they would have children like us, not intelligent at all, who try to come to Miaoli on Sundays to buy a little wisdom. Here we give it away free of charge. It is possible to buy it and take home, but it is still useless if you do not use it. Think of some ways to use it.

I have given you the 'Instruction Manual of Wisdom,' some of you! I will give to whoever wants it, and not to those who don't want. However, it was very difficult to get the 'Instruction Manual of Wisdom' in ancient times. Not as simple as just come and write down your name and then receive it immediately. This is like buying ready-made clothing, try it on immediately and then take it home.

The pyramids were not built to be used as tombs. They found out later that this was not the purpose. I think they built the pyramids for spiritual practice. Just now I told you it was very difficult to get the 'Instruction Manual of Wisdom' in ancient times. This is one of the reasons why they built the pyramids. It was because spiritual practice was very difficult in olden times for fear of being discovered by others.

Where can you sit when holding a group meditation in the desert? [Master and audience laugh.] Do you understand? Even with the guards around, everyone can still see you. It is better here, with all these trees! In the empty desert, you roast to death by sitting there in the daytime, and freeze to death at night. The temperature in the desert is extremely hot in the daytime, and extremely cold at night. Two extremes. That was why they built the pyramids. They are very, very quiet inside. It was very difficult for people to locate the entrance later. Hundreds of years have gone by! Many people are still looking for the entrance, but have failed.

The hidden entrance is difficult to find

Once, a king made a very firm decision to find the entrance. He said, 'Strange! It was built like that, but no one can go in. What does it mean?' He gathered hundreds and thousands of laborers, spent much money and effort, mobilized a great group of workers, stone excavation experts. Someone like me, specialized in breaking rocks. [Laughter] They

pushed and hit for a long time, but found no trace of the entrance. They were built so perfectly that the entrance was tightly fitted into the wall, invisible, as if it were only a wall. No one noticed the entrance was there.

They worked so laboriously and sincerely that perhaps the ghosts or deities inside, or God, helped them. Suddenly, a piece of rock fell down, from the inside, not because of their striking efforts outside. It fell from inside by itself! So, they started digging from that spot, and found an entrance.

Going inside, they were very disappointed because it was empty, nothing. Every room was empty. In the biggest chamber in the center, there was an empty box like a coffin. They were bewildered. How could someone spend so much effort, labour, money and time to build such a grand structure that contained nothing? Why were they so wasteful?

Later, going in from that door, they found another door. It was highly concealed, I mean very difficult to find. They built doors as if there were none. But, slowly they noticed and found the door. There were a dozen doors after that door before they reached the so-called main hall. There was nothing inside, and no one knew why. They found no treasure, no coffins, no mummies, no living person, no dead person, nothing.

There was a man, probably an Englishman who also practiced spiritually. He had been to India and practiced meditation. He also knew what searching for the self-nature within is, so he thought he could do it! He went inside alone at night, carrying a flashlight and a coat.

The pyramid protects practitioners of the true path

He was not allowed to enter at first, but finally got the approval because he persisted in applying repeatedly! He went in there to find out why the pyramid was built this way. He eventually found out, and I knew it, too.

Since the place was intended for spiritual practice, naturally it was empty. What furniture would be required if it was built for people to meditate? Take our main hall for instance, is there any furniture? No, only the sun umbrellas, and they were not here before, only recently we have them. The only furniture we have are these trees intended to give shade or for you to lean on. The rooms are empty. As it turns out, in old times, spiritual practitioners were afraid of being chased by people. In those times, they have to practice this method in secret because if their practice was revealed, their life would be in grave danger. It is still dangerous now, not to mention in ancient times. It was dangerous two thousand years ago, and when Shakyamuni Buddha was alive.

Many people always threaten the so-called true spiritual practitioners. It is perfectly all right if you do not practice the true method, everyone praises you. If you practice the real path, you are finished. You have to start to cover and protect yourself – camouflage. You must be ordinary. Otherwise, people can sense it, and trouble you.

Since ancient times, it has been always like this, not only today. That was why they built the pyramids in such a concealed way. The entrance was known only to their own people. They were very spacious inside, and completely empty. Of course, there was nothing! They were built for people to meditate inside, for initiation, et cetera, without being seen by outsiders.

Shall we move the pyramid over here? [Master laughs.] Then we don't need guards anymore. [Applause] What? Do you think I can do it? No kidding! Even if we build a pyramid here today, the demolition machine will come to tear it down.

When that man entered the pyramid that night, he meditated there and discovered this secret. Actually, he did not need to meditate in there to find out. Looking at the empty rooms, we can understand. A real place of spiritual practice is only for people to meditate. There won't be anything inside, at the most a Buddha statue or the Buddha's photograph. They used the Buddha's statue before, but now perhaps it is faster to take photographs, or use a portrait. It was empty because people needed to sit in there, about the same as our place here.

Midnight terror in the pyramid

That man had a very terrible experience in the pyramid. He said he dared not go again! He had the courage to venture inside, because he was very sincere in seeking the Truth. He wanted the answer to why the ancient people would build this kind of empty yet grand structure. It has nothing inside, yet was very mysterious, even the entrance was a secret.

In the pyramid, he meditated with a method he had learned in India. As he sat there, nothing happened at first. Gradually, he felt that the owners of the tombs near the pyramid had all come to greet him. They all came to give him a not very cordial greeting, but it was a terribly frightening atmosphere. They threatened him, nevertheless, he maintained his composure. He knew something would happen even before he came.

Another person had ventured into the pyramid before him. Having returned home, that person revealed in his diary that he had discovered the truth. However, his life would be in danger if he revealed it, because society could not possibly understand him – this was what he wrote in his diary.

This second adventurer was mentally prepared! Although he was prepared, the extremely terrible and ugly faces he saw, and these lonely souls and wandering ghosts almost crushed him! Fortunately, being a practitioner he had some idea about what to do. He strived to keep himself in samadhi. Suddenly, all the ugly ghosts fled, and stopped threatening, oppressing, or trying to kill him. They all vanished suddenly, and he didn't know why. Then he saw two brilliant beings come radiating Light. It was because of the two of them that the ugly ghosts fled. Later, the two beings taught him a great deal while he was in there. They advised him not to seek the Truth anymore, because it is very difficult. They said, 'You will encounter many trials, and you will surely regret it.'

Finally, the man said, 'I will not regret it. What else can I ask for except the Truth? This world is very strange to me now! I am living in this world, but I can ask for nothing. Nothing in the world can satisfy me. Nothing excites and attracts me anymore, except the quest for Truth. I want nothing. I fear nothing. I will die sooner or later. It is all right if I die for Truth.'

Tested in quest of the Truth

Later, the two so-called inner Masters, the superior Masters within, touched by his determination, finally agreed. They asked him to lie on the stone – actually he should lie in the coffin like a dead man, and then they would take his soul out, just like a dead man, and come back after a while. Never mind, it is all right to lie on the stone. He saw his astral body going out while his physical body lay still.

It was dark in the pyramid, darker than the nights here. There was nothing inside, sealed on all sides, leaving only a ventilation hole leading to the top. The ventilation hole in the pyramid clearly shows that it is not a tomb, dead people don't need it! It must have been a place for people to live or stay in temporarily. Otherwise, there would not be a vent, illogical! It was very dark inside, darker than blackness, so it was very horrible. The longer he sat, the more frightened he became. He could see the lonely wandering ghosts coming to annoy him even though it's very dark. They only fled when the two so-called superior masters arrived later.

They told the man to lie down, and started to help him. Suddenly, his soul exited, and he saw his very ugly body lying there motionless. His eyes could not see, his ears could not hear, nothing was functional, except the heart throbbing automatically. It was just as if he was a dead person. Then he realized what death really is.

After that, the two Masters took him to visit a dying old man. They introduced this old man as a life long Truth aspirant. However, the old man claimed that he had found nothing, only temptations, desires, fame and wealth, nothing else, no Truth. He persuaded the young man not to search any more! 'Don't be cheated! There is no Truth in the world. All are lies. You can never find it!' However, the young man didn't listen, and still wanted to go on searching.

Following the instructions of enlightened Masters is most difficult

That was only meant to test him! Finally, the two enlightened Masters said, 'Okay, if you are determined, we will take you to another place to 'show you the Truth,' meaning initiation!'

Travelling with the soul, not the body, he could feel being taken to different chambers. There was a secret chamber beneath the pyramid. The two enlightened Masters told him not to look back, just follow them, absolutely refrain from looking back.

The result was, he followed for a while and then wondered. Why is there no door? Where is the original secret door? He could not resist any longer and looked back. Suddenly, everything was severed! The two Masters were gone, and he had returned to his body. He could still hear the faint and distant voices of his two Masters: 'Why didn't you listen to us? What for did you want to find the secret door made of stone? The most important thing is to find the secret door within that liberates you from the transmigration of life and death. Now it is too late! Good bye!' Then, they were gone.

Should you think I am too strict, try your luck in the pyramid, if you can refrain from looking back. Remember! In case you really go there and meet the two Masters, do not look back. We humans are always seeking superficial things. We are curious. We look at this and that, asking, 'What is this? What is that?'

Master taught you not to touch them, but you insist on touching them. Is that not so? If I ask you to touch it, then you refuse. This is why we progress very slowly. Even when Master tells us the moral guidelines, and secret method of spiritual practice, we will think: 'Uh huh! Why does She have to talk so much?' We know very well that they are good for us, but we still resist sometimes. Do you understand? When we eventually run into trouble, and become aware of the bad consequence, it is already too late!

The two Masters had forsaken him, and didn't teach him anymore. He passed the first test of the ghosts. On the second test, the old man tried to persuade him to go back. He

observed that the old man was struggling in great agony. His search for the Truth was so painful, but still he failed to find it on his dying day. The young man did not lose his faith. On the third occasion, he was only told not to look for that door, yet he turned around to look.

There are many similar stories. We also have some fairy tales from ancient China. A man went to the Peng Lai Fairy Island and married a goddess. They lived a happy life together. The goddess told him which doors could be opened and gave him the keys. Only the seventh or eighth door was forbidden. Yet, he still opened the door, and dropped back down to the worldly level. After going home, he could never find Fairy Island again.

Many people pursue spiritual practice, but very few attain the Truth. Or, they have attained half, one third, two thirds, but not the whole. It is all because they cannot control their mundane ideas and habits.

Sometimes, we have already climbed a great height up the hill, two thirds up the hill. We tell ourselves: Do not look back, or you will be frightened, and you will fall! It's true, but we are curious. We think: 'What does it matter if I take a look? I used to look very often. Why can't I look today?' Very often it is different from today. The result of taking a glance is panic, and then you fall down! After falling down, it is very difficult to start all over again. You can; it's not totally impossible, but much of our courage, spirit and energy have been exhausted. It is very difficult for us to climb again later. Is that not so?

POWER AND FINANCE – STRIVING TO EARN MONEY IS A DUTY, NOT A SIN ¹⁶⁷

What you should detach is the attachment for power and fame, not to be detached from money and fame.

The thing is that we had better strive, strive to have a better life all the time, not because we are materialists but because life should have joy and abundance in all things and in all aspects. We do not have to give power and finance to the negative class of people. You understand what I mean? If, for example, the good people don't strive to make income for themselves or to have some power within a society then all the power and the finance go to the negative power, all the bad people. They will in turn control the good people and the good people can do nothing; can not even spread goodness. So to me, to earn money, to make a business, to strive in your life to earn a good standard of living for your family, yourself and your country is a duty, not a sin.

I do not encourage my people to stay in poverty, and to give all the power and finance to the negative system that has no morals, to people who have no morals, who have no responsibility, no feeling, and who have no sense of sharing with other people. For example, we who are practicing moral standards, if we have money we always share with other people. We help people in disasters, we help the victims, we help the refugees, we help the poor, we help the needy, we help the sick and the orphans and things like that. So, it's very good to have money, very good. It's not capitalism. It's the power of finance that we must have and also the power, sometimes, of social activities.

If you are a politician, you should stay in politics and be a good politician and fight for your country and for the standard of living of other people. If you are a businessman, you must be a successful one. Always strive to be successful. Earn as much money as God gives

167. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, June 3, 1995 (Originally in English).

you and then you can share. Money is very easy to use. If you don't have it then you can say, 'Oh well, I don't care about money. I'm a practitioner. Money for me is untouchable.' You can not do that, you know? Can not have such an attitude like, you don't have then you're lazy to achieve and then you say, 'Oh, no, I don't care. I renounce everything.' It's not true.

In the old times, the so-called practitioners, they always renounced many things. It's okay. You can do that for a while. But I don't think you should do it all the time. No? Well, I think you can, why not? Everyone becomes monks, we eat the air [Laughter] and drink the dew in the morning and afternoon. That's it. What do we need? Actually, the practitioners don't need so much. What we eat is just vegetables and what we wear doesn't have to be always beautiful, truly. We don't really care for outside appearances, we really don't.

Sometimes, I put some make-up on, wear some clothes, and after three or four days, I'm so happy just to go next to the river and wear nothing, just be alone and be natural. Sometimes, the make-up and the clothes make you feel tired. The outer requirement of beauty and decency sometimes makes you tired if you are not used to it. Especially, for the practitioners, we just like to feel natural. Sometimes we even feel that having no hair, no clothes, and things like that would be very, very relaxing. But if we want to do it for the sake of beautifying the world or to work in the society, it's also okay.

So, for us, the so-called practitioners, we really don't need material comfort. We really don't. And that's why it's easy for us sometimes to think, 'Oh no, why should I earn money? I don't really need anything anymore.' It's a very easy way out. But when we come to think about it, if we still live in this world, many people depend on us, our family, our children, our parents, relatives, and friends. Sometimes they need our help. If we are not in a position to help them, who will? Because only very rarely do people in this world want to help the poor and needy.

Truly the people in this world very rarely would give anything, even in ordinary circumstances. So, that is the way of working of the negative power, to make the people become greedy and grasping. Whatever they have is mine, mine, mine. They never let go. Even when they have more than enough, more than they can ever count, more than they can ever recognize how much they have, they still want more. No one else can have it. Therefore, if the so-called good persons, positive people, like the practitioners of moral standards, the practitioners of the way, the Tao, the Truth, don't have money, who will help those needy people? That's it. That's the difference. That's why we need to earn money and make good business. Not because we need it but because in this world we can make use of this useful equipment, money, power or political standpoint, then we can help the people.

Make the best use of power to work for God

For example, if I am a president of the United States – if, huh? [Laughter] Then I would have taken in all the refugees a long time ago. The Au Lac people, the Cubans, the Haitians, the Chechnyans and the Bosnians, whatever. Then I would tell my people how to take care of them. I would tell you. [Applause] You would. Even if each one of us just take one of or two persons, that'd be fine and we'd take care in no time. It's just because we are not allowed to do that even. We don't mind any of us, any country, all of us, the practitioners, my fellow practitioners. I believe all of you, if I'd say one word, 'Please take care of this person or this family,' everyone of you in Korea, in China, in Au Lac, in Formosa, in America, in France, in England, anywhere, you would immediately do that. Is that not so? [Audience: Yes.] [Applause] And then we'd have no problem, really. Instead of

feeding them in the camps, we would give them the money to start their businesses or training and then they'd be on their feet in no time. Later, they'd help other refugees. Then the world would have no more problems, right? Yes, really no problem.

That's one issue, the refugees. Another issue is abortion. We don't have to kill babies. I have written to the United Nations and other countries and said that we don't have to do that. We can create a special social care system, let these children be born and then give them to those who have no child. At the moment, there are so many difficulties in adoption, so much red tape and bureaucracy. Many childless couples long to have children, not one but two, three, four adoptions; and any race, they like it. So, why are we killing this rare species?

I think as long as we go on like this, we are killing ourselves. Later, it's we, the human species, who become a rare species that must be protected. Now birds, many jungle creatures like lions, tigers already have become rare species. Later, human beings will become even rarer, because now no one can have two children, for example, in many countries. It's forbidden to have more than one child or more than two children, et cetera. And any other children have to be wasted. Kill them. This doesn't have to be, right! We can just exchange. You don't have children, I have too many, you take some. Very easy. Why not? That's two issues. Now, at the moment the world's two worst issues are refugees and abortion. I think it's very easy.

Suppose I am the president of some powerful country. I just want to tell you one example like that so that you know that social power and financial power are not to be renounced, as long as you live in this world. Not because we want them. Just because we don't want them, we have to have them. [Applause] If we give these powers to the people who want them, they always abuse them. Just because they want them so much, they will always abuse them whenever they get them. Just because we don't want them, so we can use them in a very fair, peaceful, and useful manner for the whole world. You understand what I mean?

So, the problem is that many of the so-called practitioners, they like to renounce. It's the easy way out. Like for me, it's also easy not to have to teach people or not to have to receive you here, having problems, et cetera. I do know. What shall I do? I don't always take the easy way out. You see what I mean? For example, I'm your Teacher. I don't have to work. No, I don't. I don't really because I don't eat that much. So, wherever I want to go, I say, 'Look, if you want to invite me, give me a ticket, give me a hotel, give me this and that.' You'd do it immediately, right? [Audience: Yes!]

Master sets an example, practicing what She teaches

Well, I don't take that easy and cheap way out, I do it myself. I earn my own money and I do it myself. Whatever really, really, truly I need, then I ask you, but just small things. For example, like a disaster somewhere. 'Please go and check for me because I'm in another country now, I cannot go there. Go and have a look and if there is anything we can do, alright. Or if you can help them, help them. Or if you don't have enough finances or manpower, we will help you.' It's always like that, right? It's actually asking you to help yourselves, to help your people, also to demonstrate your loving power and the wisdom that you have acquired through your daily meditation. That is all I ever ask of you.

I never ask you to do anything for myself, even though I could do that anytime. Is that not so? So, whatever I do, it's just like a teaching for you. I don't always tell you, 'You do this, do that.' You just look at my actions and that's enough lessons already. There's no need to

teach you anything really. It's just because you come here now and again so you expect me to tell you things, talk to you about stories, and explain to you this and that. But actually, you don't need to ask me to say anything. I don't even need to tell you anything. Everything I do is just what I teach you. Everything I teach you, I do.

It's very easy to say, 'Oh, I'm a Master. Why do I have to do work? I don't touch money. I'm pure. I'm above all things. I never touch money – let it contaminate me or pollute me.' I can do that. All excuses are welcome. Most of the so-called gurus mesmerize the whole congregation of their so-called disciples, and tell them whatever they want, and they do anything. But I don't do that.

Whatever I teach you is really good and pure, and good for you, good for the society. And whatever I do is what I teach. What I teach I do, right? [Audience: Yes.] [Applause] I just want to tell you that even I myself can have it easy. I don't. Just because I believe that I must have the power and the finance to help the world, not to take the power and finance of the world for myself. I have to give them the power and the finance they need, not that I take the power and the finance from them, for my own personal benefit and glory. So, in that case, I work for my ideals and beliefs. That's why I also ask you to do the same, if you can and if you want to. Only if you want to, because I believe there is logic; but of course you don't have to do anything. If you believe the same ideal and you think it's logical then you do it. I just want to explain to you why, why we cannot shun money, why we cannot despise political positions, because they are good tools, they are good instruments to work for God, to work for the betterment of the world at large. Understand now? [Applause]

Many people think because I'm a Master, why do I still make money and all this? Of course, I know they say that, but because they're ignorant, because they're stupid. Otherwise, they can see why I do it. I don't have to. If I were to take just a hundred dollars from each of you, I'd become a billionaire in one day. No problem. I don't have to work. [Applause] So, because I am not a materialist, because I don't care for position and money, that's why I work. Not the opposite. If it were the opposite, if I cared for position and money, I'd always control you. I'd make each of you give me some money every month. Everyone would be willing to do it, is that not so? [Audience: Yes.] [Applause] You'd give more than that, not just a hundred dollars. Even if I took one dollar from each person, that's all, from all my followers, in one day I'd collect millions of dollars, understand or not? One day only. [Applause] And everyday everyone would give me one dollar only. What would I have? Do you know?

Okay. Now. If anyone asks you why I make money, you already know why. Just because it's the right thing to do. It's the correct way to live our life honestly, earning our money with the sweat and labor of our own talent and our own endeavor. We put our labor, our talent, our work, our time into the production and then we can earn the money and then we can give it away. If I really want money, oh, this is the stupid way to do. This is a stupid way for a Master who has millions of followers, to go and paint a picture for many days and blind Her eyes with oil colors or to cut materials to make clothes and then go all over the world to advertise in such a stupid way. You know what I mean? It's a stupid way. Most of the masters in the world never work. They don't have to, only me. I'm the most stupid one.

So, truly, if they think I am materialistic and want money and position, they're stupid. The people who think like that really misunderstand very, very, badly. Is that not so? Just in Formosa would be enough. I want everyone to give me one day one dollar. Formosa would be enough, I don't need all you foreigners. I don't. I can buy hundreds of Rolls-Royces. I could build a paradise for myself anywhere I want in no time. I can buy, no need to build, building takes too long. Who does that? Masters don't build houses. Can not

touch these material things, right? I don't even need to touch money, just tell the disciples buy me a house or buy me a palace over there. Immediately, it would be done. No need to stay in Formosa, in Sweden, in Switzerland, in France. Any castle I fancy, I'd have it right away. Is that not so? Don't have to talk about foreign disciples, Formosa's enough, for example, yeah!

So, it is stupid that I go and try to make money this way and then people think I will make money from you. This is a stupid way. If I'd try to make money from you then I'd just put it here. I don't have to go around the world like that, doing all kinds of things. So now, you know. If you still have any doubts in your minds, cut them out. It's no good for you, it will make cancer inside, a lump. It's very, very bad for your health, for your spiritual health.

The world is upside down. All the masters who don't work, who don't do anything, their disciples just offer to them anything and they praise them, 'Oh, holy, holy, holy man. Never touch money, no material, nothing.' It's not true. It could be. But this is just one of the ways, it's not the only way. It's not all the masters who like to do that. It's not all the people who don't touch money, who just sit there and let people feed them, who are holy. It's not that way. But actually, I think I'm doing the things a little bit stupid in people's eyes, because all the masters don't do that. The disciples feed them enough, really. Why do they have to work and do anything? But I want to give you a good example of all perfection development. You don't only develop a moral standard and wisdom but you also make use of that moral standard and wisdom in daily life. Express it.

Use your talents to beautify the world

If you have talent and wisdom, then you can do all things. You have to beautify the world and make money for yourself. Take care of your own living so you don't burden other people. And if you have really good moral standards, then of course you have compassion and love for all the needy and desperate beings. And of course, you would lend a helping hand to anyone, regardless of race, color, creed, beliefs, and religious system, even your own enemies. So, that's how we know. That's how other people know that we truly have wisdom and moral standards. Otherwise, how do they know? And how do they teach themselves? You tell everyone to do good things, to have wisdom, and then you yourself don't show anything.

Just like an English teacher. If you never speak English, you never write English, and you keep telling all the students, 'You must yourself speak English. From today, whenever you see me that is when you learn from me. And then you just speak English by yourself because everyone knows how to speak English.' But the teacher never shows any examples, never speaks even ABC, never writes down any English words, never speaks any words. So, how do the students know that he is an English teacher at all. Maybe he's even deaf and dumb – can't speak anything. Maybe he can not even read nor write. So, a teacher is not only as good as his word but must be as good as his actions. Is that not so? [Applause]

At least you understand me. Many of the people in the world they don't know. They think the opposite. If I sit here pretty and you all come with flowers, food, everything around me, and bow to me really flat on the floor, things like that, then I am a holy person. Because I don't do anything, I don't touch money, that's when I am holy. Really useless holy, yes. [Laughter] And the people who strive to do good for the world, with their own hands and efforts and work hard for it, then many people scold or criticize them, thinking they are materialistic and they want power and things like that. Power, I have enough already. Materials I could have anytime; don't say one day. Just one hour, one minute is enough.

Just the time for people to take to put the money in, that's all. Each person one dollar I have enough to live my many lifetimes of reincarnations. Not only one life. I put money in the Swiss bank and then when I reincarnate again as the next Tulku (a high Tibetan lama), living Buddha, Rinpoche (another Tibetan term for a high lama), whatever, [Laughter] I know where my money is. Other reincarnated lamas supposedly know their last lives, so they know everything that belongs to them from the umbrella to the beads. They are supposed to, no? You know, huh? Okay. It's very nice that I just put money in the Swiss bank, and if I remember that account number, it will help me a lot. [Laughter]

Don't let the negative power control you

We must work. God has sent us here with equal opportunity, power and talent. So, if we don't grasp the finances and the power from the world then all the negativity will grasp it. We are under their control. The negative power wins, and then we can't do anything, we can't complain and say that God doesn't help us. God does, God sends us here, sends you here and even gives you opportunity to study like everyone else, the same as the negative power. This is just like a competition, you know what I mean? Both have opportunity, talent, and ability to take the same thing.

So, if you renounce it, of course, then the negative power will take it. They said, 'Sorry, we don't want it.' And then in this world, if we have no power, no money, what will we become? Beggars, of course. That everyone can be, but mind you, nowadays, even beggars cannot survive. Many governments don't like beggars, you see, even if you want to beg. If you renounce everything that doesn't mean you are safe. You got it. Many put beggars in a home and you are not free to do anything that you want. You can't have this and you can't have that and you have to do many things not according to your will. And in the home you must eat meat and you cannot eat vegetarian, et cetera, et cetera. So, what do you do?

So, it's not that you renounce everything then the negative power will leave you alone or will give you peace. It's not true. Fight. You have no choice really. Take away your wrong conception about money and fame. What you should detach is the attachment for power and fame, not to be detached from money and fame. You know what I mean? The desire for it, that's what you should renounce, not the money and the fame, just the desire. [Applause] Now so many people who practice spiritually have this wrong conception. So now, you should not have this kind of wrong conception any longer since I have already taught you and showed you why logically. Not that I force you to believe me talking nonsense, but it's really logical. Is that not so? Okay. Now you know.

Renounce the desire not the world itself

So, don't laugh at our brothers and sisters who are in parliament or who are in congress. They are doing their jobs. They're doing fine. Many of our brothers and sisters are in high political positions, as well as very famous and successful businessmen. I never tell them to get out of them. If they get out, I even say, 'Why, are you crazy?' Yeah! Some of our brothers and sisters, just after initiation, renounce. Don't become congressmen anymore, don't run anymore, and don't do anything. I say, 'What do you want to do now? I don't need such a useless person around me. I have too many already. [Laughter]

We renounce the desire for the world, not renounce the world itself. Because the world is a part of us, a part of our relatives and friends, brothers and sisters, so we can't renounce the world. That is the wrong word. We renounce the desire for anything in this world, that's all we must renounce. Then you do anything you want. Earn as much money as you can,

be in as high a position as possible, and use your power and finance to help the needy people. That's the right thing to do.

LOVE ME AND HELP ME ¹⁶⁸

An intense love alone is no good for anyone

You always throw your love at me, and squeeze me and confine me with your love. You don't know what that feels like. You never do. Wow! Maybe something close would be like you are not in love with someone but that someone is extremely, intensely in love with you. And he pursues you, he chases you, and he spies on you anywhere. That's the way you make me feel. I am sorry, unfortunately, that is what it is. If it sounds very bad, forgive me; but it is true sometimes. I feel: Oh, oh, help, help! I need space. You do love me that's for sure, definitely, no need insurance for that.

But your love is so intense, sometimes it kills me. Yes, truly. I cannot work with you if you carry your love around on your shoulders like that, without diffusing it, without controlling it. Just like you have a very good radio or television, but you don't control the volume to adjust for your hearing ability and your space as well as those of the neighbors. You know? And it becomes a disturbance, an annoyance instead of a pleasure. But never mind, I will keep telling you like this all the time, until the day I die. And then you will keep doing what you do and loving me the way you do, just till the day you die. And we both try very hard to accommodate each other. Well, that is the way it is.

I never saw anyone in the world like you, I mean, like you the disciples; it's terrifying. It really takes nerves and energy to withstand all this loving energy directed to you at all times and from all directions. This tremendous amount of energy makes you unbalanced, unnerved, if you are not stable enough, if you are not strong enough; and you know I am only so small. Talking about kung fu, I am the Master. You beat me all the time with your love. Oh, God! And how can you deal with that if someone hates you? It's too easy, right? It is easy, because they don't want to see you, you don't want to see them, and both of us are in peace. But when someone loves you with such intensity of fire of the first love, of the last love, of the forever, lasting, sickening love, oh God, you are killed on the spot. And that is what I have to work through. You know, it takes a tremendous amount of resistance, strong power, whatever it is, I don't know.

I often feel shattered. When I come home, I say: 'No, last time I see them. Last time, last time.' But when I see you again, my heart always softens. And then I shed a few tears and then I say: 'Okay, I'll see you again tomorrow.' [Applause] And that's where my trouble begins and it begins all the time. It always begins anew.

Put your love in the right direction

Why can you not just work with me like ordinary colleagues or something like that? Then we can accomplish a lot, a lot of things; save a lot of time, money, energy; and can help the world much, much better. Instead, you hinder my work many times. But I cannot blame you, I cannot scold you because you love me. That's the problem. It's just that you cannot handle your love, and you don't put it in the right direction. With such a tremendous amount of loving energy, you could do anything. If you didn't only direct it at one point, at me, and waste it, and choke me with it, then we could do everything.

168. Group meditation, New York Center, U.S.A., April 16, 1995 (Originally in English).

The reason why I can do it is the same reason why you can do it, because we are wise people, we have reclaimed our original wisdom. Apart from being busy and bound with work, we know how to escape. You know, there is an escape exit. We go and get our supply everyday, every time we want. Therefore, we become wise or we come back to the wise nature of our inborn understanding. So, we can do anything we want; but only if you can control your emotions, even to me – your so-called best friend, best, beloved, beautiful idol. [Applause]

It's just that you cannot control yourselves. You are so tense when you are around me. Any excuse will do just to get next to me. Any excuse will do just to talk to me and to explain to me all your nonsense excuses. I don't know why. If you want to help me, just do it. Be blind to my presence, blind to anyone else around you; then and only then can you help me. And you can accomplish everything that I want you to do and everything that you ever wanted to do. But you don't do that. None of you can do that up to now. That's the reason why you cannot help me. That's the reason why I have to get some outside professionals sometimes and have to endure also their obstinate personalities. Of course, they have their talent and they have their professional use.... Well, I have to do it.

At least they are not so tense when they are around me. And they don't trouble me. They don't bug me so much. They don't make excuses to come next to me. They even completely ignore me. And that's best for me. But I wished you could do the job they did or they do, because I know you'd do much better, with even more love and devotion and artistic talent and wisdom. But you hinder yourself, you stop all your flow of energy and talent just because you are so intense in your love for me.

For anyone, such an intense love is no good, no good for the recipient as well as for the one who projects this love. No good for both. It takes a tremendous amount to project something like that and it takes a tremendous amount to reject something like that. So, both are in a battlefield. You know, it's very difficult, especially when I have to work, when I have to deal with mundane things. That is, mundane things are what we have to do in the worldly way. And you can't at the same time be explaining or taking care of this emotional matter.

But you don't know any space and time. You are above space and time. Anywhere I am, any time I am there, you go berserk, you go crazy. So, that's the problem with us! It's a pity though. And I hope you will grow day by day and that we can work together, we can help the world better.

To be one with the Buddha is to be free from love and hatred

When you work, it should be purely work. Dedicate yourself to that job, just like the first one you do and the last one you'll ever do on earth again. Even Master's presence should not disturb you. Then you are perfect. That's why in the Zen tradition, they say: If the Buddha comes, kill the Buddha. Yeah! If the devil comes, kill the devil. Kill them both. Yes! Then you are free. Because if you are still attached to the Buddha, you are not free. I am sorry to say that. Because you are not yet the Buddha. You still love the Buddha. You are not one with the Buddha. If you are already one with the Buddha, you don't know if you love or you hate. You don't even smell the difference between you and the Buddha. You don't even detect the presence of another Buddha apart from your own Buddha. You know what I mean? There is no difference then.

You can't just stay and stare in the mirror all the time and love yourself. You do? You do that? Oh, sometimes we do that. When we makeup or put on some clothes, we just watch

a little bit. But that is different, different from when you intensely project your love into the mirror, into your own image and love yourself. That is sickening. So, that is the same, the same thing, when you love a Buddha that way. That is your own image in the mirror and you project all your energy there and forget about everything else you could do.

But that is the beginning, you know, first love. When you begin to love, it's always intense like that. But I hope you'll grow up quickly and work in our marriage for the children. It's the same in the marriage, right? You know that very well. You first love each other, right, the love is very intense. You can't get away from each other, you can't bear to live without each other for one minute, or something like that. But later even though the love is still there, you must be more realistic, more practical. You must build a house together, you must build a life together. And then later, you have to leave for the sake of your offspring. That's the way we have to do.

Even though the love is still there, you just can't sit there and hold each other's hands all the time, like in the honeymoon time, even though the honeymoon memory is still fresh and you still love each other the way you did the first time. But you know you are secure now. You have each other and you know it. So, it's okay to control the love energy in order to channel it into a more positive, more practical, more realistic way in order to protect each other and help each other to grow, and to help the children to grow.

The world is our children. We are the married people. We cannot stay in the honeymoon all the time, but we must work for our children's sake, the younger brothers and sisters, the younger souls, the ignorant, the unblessed, the poor, the poor in the soul and in the material. We cannot always hold each other's hands and look into each other's eyes, expressing our love. We know we love each other. What is the big deal having to show it all the time? Is it right?

The greatest love is to sacrifice for other people

Don't you know I love you? [Applause] And you think I don't know you love me? You think I am so kaput? Stupid? So, why don't just be casual? I know you love me all the time. No one needs to tell me that, okay? But show your love by action, by your sacrifice. Sacrifice that love for something greater than personal satisfaction. Is that understandable to you? [Applause]

There is nothing greater than the love for a Master, between a Master and disciple. Nothing greater, according to the bible and the scriptures of all religions. But I tell you, there is one thing greater than that: To sacrifice that love for other people. Understand? [Applause] Otherwise, I don't have to do anything, too. I can just sit and enjoy your love and let you smother me, feed me, massage me, or let you show your devotion. But we have to do something more meaningful than just expressing our love.

You bug me more than you help. Yeah, I just feel the intense heat, even when you don't say anything at all, even when you don't truly try to physically go near me, but you try in your head. And the psychic power from your energy is really strong and disturbing because it's not pure. At that time, it's not pure love. It's pure possessing, pure demanding. And that's very uncomfortable. So, make sure you understand what true love is.

True love, you don't feel burdened. The true love makes people feel very light all the time, and not obliged, not burdened. That's why you always want to see me and I don't always want to see you; I am sorry to say, because my love is very light, unconditional, carefree, no binding. But your love is intense, heavy sometimes, or too forceful and demanding my

attention, my return of your love. And that is not true love. You understand what I mean? [Applause]

The perfect help

I cannot explain to you in detail how you did it, but you know very well what you did and how. Just like sometimes you try to help me, it's for sure that you try to help. But for that, you want me to know that you've helped me, you want that excuse as a ticket to go near, and then to explain to me that you don't have any motive. Just to go near and say: 'I have no motive. I really don't want to get near You, it's just I am here.' Or something like that. It's very difficult to explain to you the way it feels at that time. But I guess you understand, no?

Anytime you help me, don't try to make an excuse to go near or to project your intensive demand at me, then it is perfect. Then it's a true help, unconditional and praiseworthy. Otherwise, forget it. [Applause] You know what it's like when someone loves you and wants to possess you, and then you don't want that person. But he always hangs around, sticks around, and makes you feel so obliged. And sometimes you don't want to hurt him, but sometimes you can't bear it. You just don't know what to do. You know what I mean? That's the way you put me sometimes – in that situation, and I just don't know how to explain but I hope you understand.

So, make sure that every time you help someone including me, be pure, impersonal, unconditional. Just pure dedication to that work because it needs to be done. [Applause] Otherwise, the little help that we offer will cause so much damage in the flowing energy, obstruction in the flow of the energy, obstacle between the smooth relationship, stain in the perfect love.

Make sure there is no motive in your action, no demanding of any kind, even love, even recognition, even praise, nothing. You work as if you are the only one who knows that you're working, not even God knows. That is perfect work. Okay? [Applause] And you will never give anyone pressure in that fashion of doing. You see, maybe you love me because that is the way I do things. I don't seek anything. I just do it because I do it. Simple as that. Because I don't do anything else at that moment, I just do that. I don't even need to ask why.

SUPREME MASTER CHING HAI'S NEW YEAR WISHES FOR 1995 ¹⁶⁹

Many people misunderstand the meaning of the New Year and other festivals. On every grand occasion or New Year, we should spend more effort to reflect and introspect on ourselves, how we can serve the world better, contribute more to our relatives and friends or the country. The occasion is not to be used every time as an excuse for making merry, instead we should refine our coarse behaviour and speech. Of course, everyone is aware of this. I just take this opportunity to remind you. You don't have to listen if you have done so. If you have not done this, or have forgotten to do so, then you ought to be reminded!

Develop an elegant demeanor

I have said everything before. The important thing is that you have to put the teachings into action, then it will be fine! Of course, we should progress in the New Year. Instead of getting 'older' every year, we should be 'stronger' spiritually and wiser. Then we deserve to be called 'elder,' the older the better. For instance, if we did something last year that we or

169. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, January 29, 1995 (Originally in Chinese).

others disliked, then we ought to rectify it in the New Year with our best effort! Improve our behaviour and speech, becoming more beautiful.

In real life, it is hard to avoid having some moments when we overreact, but do not let this quality cling to us in ordinary times. Do you understand? Of course, it is different when you have to react. For instance, just now you are angry with that person because he made you mad. Or, there are times when we cannot suppress our temper. At those times other people can forgive you. Aware of our wrong behaviour later, we should apologize or improve ourselves, then we may be forgiven.

However, we must not let this quality develop to the extent that we are using it even at normal times. This is different from speaking harshly when we are angry. We can find out later. Anyway, this is provoked by the situation, and is different from having a rude personality. It is totally another thing if we are rude even when joking or chatting with people, and irritating them. That is our bad quality. If we observe such a quality in ourselves, improve it and do not let people feel uncomfortable each time they think of us. The bad memory will jump into their mind each time they think of our name. Subsequently, we undermine our friendships, the atmosphere at home and our essential business.

The Master is not telling you to speak in a flattering manner wherever you go, for instance, praising others with words not from your heart, or just doing it to win others' feelings or to delight them, when we are thinking the other way at heart. We should speak according to our heart. The oneness of outer actions and inner thoughts is 'Zen.' Otherwise, we are hypocrites. It is true that we should behave naturally, but politeness and nobleness are also essential. Observing our refined behaviour, even the people with no elegance would feel ashamed of their attitude.

A new person in the New Year

The New Year gives us a chance to become a new person. If we did well last year, we should be even better in the New Year. If not, then we improve in the New Year, the more the better.

Many people misunderstand the meaning of the New Year and other festivals. On every grand occasion or New Year, we should spend more effort to reflect and introspect on ourselves, how we can serve the world better, contribute more to our relatives and friends or the country. The occasion is not to be used every time as an excuse for making merry, instead we should be refining our coarse behaviour and speech, right? Of course, everyone is aware of this. I just take this opportunity to remind you. You don't have to listen if you have done this. If you have not done this, or have forgotten to do so, then you ought to be reminded!

We have to set a good example for the world in every aspect, including the relief missions, spiritual practice, handling friendships and the relationship between Master and disciples. Only when absolutely necessary, then we use stern methods. Is it not better if we can treat each other in a refined and noble manner? The creation of heaven should start from here!

People in high positions in particular, should care more about their qualities. As an official, one should be honest and upright. A government servant must work diligently for the nation, sacrifice for the well-being of her people. Spiritual practitioners or the liaison persons for Master, et cetera, should also mind the manner and quality in their acts and speech, sacrifice for others instead of enjoying personal comfort. Parents, they should take

care of their children of course, make them comfortable, but not spoil them badly. Children, naturally they should be filial and obedient to their parents and elders.

The teachers should fulfil their responsibilities, provide moral and ethical lessons for the students. The basic ABC lessons, that everyone can teach, are not enough. The greatest responsibility of a teacher is to teach the children about ethics, the superior qualities. This also applies to the parents. Just feeding and dressing the children are not enough. If everyone fulfills their responsibilities – the parents protect their children well, the children are filial – the world would be in great peace, beginning with the family. Then, all the natural disasters and war calamities would diminish.

Leading a nation to stability

Wars and natural disaster are not always caused by geographical complications, but generated from the atmosphere of the world. When human beings treat each other unjustly and with hostility, an irritating and vicious warlike ambience is generated, and from this many disasters and wars are created.

Of recent, more disasters have been happening on earth. This is a reminder from God that we should go back to our original qualities of Truth, virtue and beauty, instead of being intoxicated in negativity. We humans have two kinds of power, one is positive, the other negative. The positive one gives us and others comfort and bliss. This is the quality we should always maintain and develop further. If we were to be stuck in the negative sphere, the world would become more and more chaotic.

Suppose the whole nation becomes vegetarian. Because of the gentle atmosphere, due to no killing karma, naturally, there would be no disasters, and life would be comfortable and healthy, the country would be rich and strong. Being physically healthy, our mental would also be full of energy. Many wise ideas would emerge benefiting the country and the people. If this is the case with all countries, the world would be peaceful. There is virtually no need for all the conferences that consume so much champagne and steak, without rendering much peace to the world. Perhaps, there is peace today, but not tomorrow. Peace is restored here, but war breaks out in another country the next day. Therefore, the world is not to be managed by empty talks. Instead, each person should put into practice the lessons they have learnt.

Until now, Singapore is the only government I know that advocates vegetarianism to her people. Of course, it is rare to find such a government that treats a problem from the root and not the fruit. Perhaps there are other governments advocating the same, but I am not aware. Singapore seems to be the only government being so clever to care about the ethics and health of her people. I hope other governments will follow their example.

Everyone is our teacher

We say that with the guidance of a virtuous and enlightened friend, our life will improve and become more noble. Our fellow practitioners can be that virtuous and enlightened friend, a very good friend. Even the non-initiated people outside can be our teachers sometimes, reminding us of some beautiful things. For instance, observing them doing good deeds or speaking some good things, our heart will become more open. Even if we saw them doing bad deeds, at least we can learn a lesson and refrain from doing the same!

That was why the ancient sages said, 'In the company of three people, there will be one who can be my teacher.' I would say all three of them are our teachers. Each person living in this world has their particular obligation and mission. If we are close or related to a certain person, definitely he has a mission concerning us. It might be good or bad, but he is responsible for giving us a lesson. So, please keep your eyes and ears open, detect what God is trying to teach us through that person close to us. However, we should use what we have learnt, and not keep reciting it like a parrot or a tape recorder, which is useless of course.

Recently, I have often asked you to help do, or organize disaster relief work. Of course, we are trying to help them because of our compassion, and our uneasiness when seeing others in a suffering condition. However, we are not doing it only for the victims. Participating in the relief work, we are also helping to develop our own compassion, fulfil our obligation, and learn how to respond to a situation.

Distributing the rice is not all there is. In the affected area, you will come across people whose emotions, feelings and urgent living needs are similar to yours. You might have to face the problems they are facing also. After talking to them, you can find out more about the inner needs of the individual. Then, you are tested on how you react and how you comfort them, counsel them, help them overcome the problems in their life. That is your lesson to learn. Without putting it into practice, it is useless listening to my words for years, because you have not experienced it in benefiting others. Okay, I have said that much, so I won't say any more. I wish everyone a happy and successful New Year, achieving early enlightenment and liberation.

THE SUFFERING OF THIS WORLD COMES FROM IGNORANCE ¹⁷⁰

Passing through the gate of illusion

Many people expect that the enlightened persons or to be enlightened, that being must be something extraordinary, must be perhaps seven feet tall or have feet like this or hand like that. Because we read the sutras, the Buddhist bible, it described that the Buddha had such and such marks, like His feet link together like the duck [Laughter] or His leg look like the deer's leg and His eyes look like a cow's eyes, things like that. [Laughter] And they try to make the Buddha beautiful. But if you put all these together, it makes a funny Buddha, you know? [Master laughs.]

They don't realize that perhaps in the old time, these kinds of animals are the best symbols of beauty and a noble character. That's why the one who love the Buddha try to convey to others that He's so beautiful, like the way He walks like the king of goose and His chest like the lion and such and such things. But when you put all these animal parts together you don't know what kind of Buddha that is.

Now this is the outside only, and the inside of us, each one is the same. I think all of you know that. But how same, and how can we know that? This is a difficult question. Even though it's very easy but it is difficult, because we have forgotten it. That's all. We have forgotten completely what we really are. And we are busy with chasing our dream everyday and trying to fulfill our immediate desires and we forget, we forget what we really are and where we come from. Just to tell... you know forgetful we can be, I'll tell you a true story of myself.

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I went to Australia, I think two or three years ago, also due to invitation first time and we supposed to have three lectures in different cities. The first lecture went on all right, no problem. The second lecture also all right. I was on time. The third lecture I was late! The only reason is not traffic. It's not that I slept. It's not that I have no car or nothing. The only reason is that I forgot. I forgot that I have the lecture that evening.

I keep doing my things, like the room is a little bit untidy so I keep tidying it up and then I try to move things here and there like it's my house. Perhaps it balances my busy schedule, give me something to do. Perhaps so or perhaps I'm a perfectionist. Whenever I see something it's not in order, I try to put in order. But that was to the extent that I forget that I had the lecture that evening.

I forget until half an hour after the beginning time. And then some nervous disciples run in, broke in, kind of crashing in and said, 'Master, where are You?' And then I said, 'Why, I'm here.' Really cool. They said, 'Master, You suppose to be in the lecture hall.' I said, 'What! What lecture hall?' I've really completely forgotten. I guess no one as terrible as me, but perhaps we do forget sometimes. You do, or not?

Sometimes you are engrossed in some other business and you forget the main purpose of your goal that day. Did that happen to you sometimes? It does, huh, okay. And of course, I have to rush and apologize to the people. I feel really terrible and I promise to God that if Hes made me lecture again, Hes must put alarm clock for me. So, from then on I always put alarm clock everywhere, and whenever the lecture I set it on everywhere so that I will remember in case I forget. How can you forget a lecture? Oh! I even don't understand that. But that's what I did.

So now, if we are here too long, one life, two lives, hundred lives, then of course we forget even more what the purpose of our coming here. Some of the people sometimes they die temporarily, for like a few minutes or twenty minutes even. Clinically dead, declared dead by the doctor, stop breathing, no pulse, et cetera. But then after they came back, they told many stories of the other life beyond and then they also remember why they came here for, what for they came to the earth. But many of them, most of them forget immediately what they have seen in heaven or what they suppose to do in this life. They know that they have seen, the purpose of their life, but when they came back here, they came back to this life again, they forgot. They just know that they know, but they don't know what.

The Chinese have a saying that before we are born into this world again, the king of nether world would give us some soup, kind of hot drink, maybe chocolate or something. [Laughter] That is supposed to make us forget completely our past life and start anew. Many of us promise that we come here, if we are given the chance again to be human being, we would do this, do that, and others. And we will go and practice the meditation and so on, and then we get enlightenment and we dedicate all our life and energy to serve mankind, et cetera, et cetera.

And we really meant it well. But because of this soup, this 'forget me soup,' everyone forgets. So, the only thing for us to remember again is that we must open the gate of secret knowledge. Without that gate open, we can never, ever peep beyond this world and the only thing we know is this material existence and all is suffering, joy and temporarily other things, and we would forever identify ourselves with this physical appearance and suffering with it.

The suffering of this world comes from ignorance

But why? Why must we remember the purpose of our coming here? Not because we have promised to do so, but because if we don't remember, we must come back again and again and again until we remember... until we fulfilled our mission in this planet and then we can go to higher existence or remember our original great position in heaven or in nirvana. The suffering of this world is not due to only the war. The war is not the catastrophe. It's not the lack of food and all these, but the suffering of this world comes from ignorance. Because we don't know our mission, our purpose, we mistaken the playground for home and overstay our due and sometimes suffer the cold, danger outside the house.

But even then the Buddhas, God almighty always try to look for us, for the lost children, for the ones who love to play and forget to go Home. Therefore, the Buddhas sometimes come down and endure the suffering of the human existence, endure the humiliation of the petty physical life in order to find the lost children, to bring them back to safety before it's too late. Because any house, doesn't matter how solid it built, one day it must be demolished by itself or by some other elements or some causes or have to rebuild a new one because it's too old. This world is a big house, very beautiful, very solid house, but it's not a permanent house.

That's why the Buddhas, the saints, like Jesus, Mohammed, et cetera, they came down to us, extend their blessing to us. We walk one step, they walk hundred thousand steps to receive us and forgive our mistakes, cleanse our past unwholesome actions, and teach us the new kind of life, new beginning, or better speaking, and lead us back to the original way of life, the way we must live, the way we should carry out our life.

The destructive power of negative information

Because up to now, all the cells in our body, all the nerves in our system listened only to almost negative orders from our information center. That's why we have war. That's why we have assassination. That's why we have competition at the cost of other people's jobs or business, or wife or husband, because we do not have a positive information in our brain center to order our body to do good things. And the people who are good in this world are also sometimes, or often overwhelmed also by the negative, by the negative influence in the society, also become shaky in their faith, became weaker in their goodness, and sometimes eventually also give in to the negative power.

So, when we have only negative information in our brain, then of course we can only give out negative information or negative orders, and the cells in the body, the nerves in the system also can follow only the negative orders and then do negative things. That's why we have no peace in the world. That's why even up to now brothers are still killing each other. Even parents are killing their children for pleasure, for privacy, for individual freedom, 'pro-choice,' et cetera. Not because they are bad, not because all these war makers, all these parents are bad. Or the husband who killed the wife or the wife killed the husband or the brother killing each other, not because they are bad, just because their brain are fed only with negative information, only with negative ideas and that's what they carry out. Whatever the brain order, the cells complied, the cells have to do it, the body must function. And that's why we sink deeper and deeper into depression and that's why our world is almost any time in danger of disappearing, from our own making.

So, the only thing to help us now is very logical, is that to feed us with positive information to change our information stream. Everyday we must receive good information, positive

information, constructive information, enlightened, wise informations, and then from the brain they will direct the cells, the nervous system and everything will do only good, only peaceful, only wise, only constructive positive things, and that's how we save the world. Otherwise, it doesn't matter how much peace talks, how much money we spend on the arms, on the army, still we don't have secure feeling. Look, one day this country just finish the war, shake hands with each other. Okay. We start anew. And the next morning, we heard that the other country broke out in war. And then the United Nations run over there and that's not yet finished, the other one, the other country makes war with the other country over there and then over here, over everywhere.

Enlightenment brings wonders to the world

And it's already nearly twenty-first century and we suppose to be civilized, peaceful, loving, helping each other. And for all the technical inventions, for all the wealth that we have discovered from the mother earth and from the universe, we could live a kingly life, all of us. Instead, we still have poverty, war, suffering, just because we don't have enough positive information to feed our brain and our whole system with. That's all there is about enlightenment. Enlightenment is a way of positive life. It's a way of tapping into positive power, which is already existing within us. Because in the universe there are two kinds of power, we call yin and yang. Everyone knows. Now we are living almost in yin, no positive, no yang, because we did not open that resource.

This world is a negative world. So, it is obvious that we have plenty of yin everywhere. And the negative or the yin is easily accessed. It is more accessible to everyone, except when we are wise enough to turn also into the positive department and draw there from, something for us for everyday supply. Then we are balanced. Then we can do wonders to the world. And of course, there will be no more war, no more suffering. That's why we said earlier that the suffering in this world is not due to any individual or nations. It's due to the ignorance of us, the earth people.

Enlightenment is nothing new and nothing that we have to beg for, nothing mysterious. It's just a positive power that we have within ourselves, laying, sleeping, unused up to now. So, if someone reminds you where to look into or how to use it, and that is called enlightenment, and that's why it can be immediate. Because if you have something in your pocket or here, you can take it out right away. It's no need to go to supermarket to buy it. That's why it's immediate. As long as you want to accept it, it will be right there and I will show it to you, that it is immediate and you can use it right away and you can see your life improved right away in the first days.

Some people feel like they are born again, right at the time of initiation. They are so joyful. They could just go on the street and kiss everyone. Of course, I advise them not to do that, especially in Singapore. It's just a way of expressing their joy. And from then on, their lives become as light as feather. They work without burden. They take care of the family with love and not with so much struggling. Most of family members are often struggling with each other, also due to ignorance. So, many people after enlightenment they find their family become heaven. And if everyone's like that, every family like that, then we don't need to go to heaven. Our planet will be preserved and then because due to our positive power, we can also elevate the vibration of the earth and make it become heaven-like.

The difference between heaven and earth

The only difference between heaven and this earth is the vibration, the frequency. The frequency of heaven is fast but smooth. The frequency of the physical world such as our

earth is gross, is rough, uneven. That's why sometimes we have disasters earthquake and all kind of eventful weather. Of course, we can say it from weather forecast: 'Oh, the wind in northeast, it winds,' something like that, and causes all these and that. But it is all together also due to the vibration of the whole planet, and atmosphere around it. In heaven, they don't have it, they don't have typhoon, they don't have earthquake, they don't even have earth, they don't even have wind. Everything is different. And the heavenly beings, their vibration is also different, because they are different. They have their vibration different, therefore heaven is different. So, if our vibration is different, our life become different, even if we stay here. Of course, we cannot change the whole planet into heaven, if the people of the earth are practicing only in a small number. But if the whole planet or maybe even half of us practice in such a way, then the vibration of the earth will also change, then other half also will be benefitted without having to do anything. Just like in one family, the father and mother go to work, and the whole family can also benefit from his or their parents' salary. No need for the children also go to work. They can, later, when they want to, when they grow up, as a duty to society, not because of necessities. And of course, the more money they earn, the better for the family.

Similarly, the more people practice into heavenly kind of life, and the more elevated our earth will become. At that time then, our house here is safe. Otherwise, it's not safe. As long as the frequency is so gross, rough, then it's bound to happen that one day it will break apart or explode. We learn that the finer the thing, the more invisible the thing, the more enduring. Similarly, our earth is too gross, too heavy, so it's bound to happen sometimes that it will destroy itself, if we do not destroy it before that with our atom bombs, with our environmental abuse, with our ignorance of the protection of the atmosphere around the earth.

We sometime poison ourselves with too much chemical, poison our earth, poison the water, and so it's bound to happen that it cannot last. Has no need to be a clairvoyant person or predicting well like Nostradamus or something to say that, the world is not everlasting. We can predict it ourselves. If we look around our neighborhood and see how we treated our planet and how wars have damaged each and every corner of the world, now and again.

The story of the red goblin and the green goblin

There is a story about two devils who live in a mountain. Actually, they are not devils, they are kind of demigod, demigod or ghost perhaps, perhaps half angel and half goblin-like. And they live together, two. One is green and the other is red. Just like the green light and red light outside. Green is for peaceful, smooth going. Red is for war, stop, obstruction. But both of them live together happily ever after, [Master laughs.] before, ever before, together in the mountain and with no problem, no anxiety, no desire, nothing.

They live for long... many many hundred of years already. And often when they have nothing to do, they sat on top of the mountain and look down into the world below them, the world of humankind. And they saw all the business and the people, walking up and down and all that. And then they saw the world is always changing. So, the green said to the red, 'You see, we live here many hundreds of years already and our life never changes, everyday the same thing. But the world below, the world of human being, everyday changes. How come?' And the red said, 'Oh, yes, you're right, very interesting, their life is more interesting.' But the green said, 'How come, how come their life is so changing all the time?' And then the red thought for a while and say, 'Oh, it must be because they always fight with each other. Because they build a building, beautiful and big and next day they fight and demolish it. And then they build another one and then have

war and destroy again and that's why the world always has something to do. That's why the world is always changing. So now, if our world here, the two of us, too peaceful, too boring, I think we have to start fighting with each other.' That's what the red thinks.

And the green said, 'No! No fighting. We are good friends, we've been friends for many hundred of years. How can we fight each other?' But the red said, 'If we don't fight, then we can't have any change. Our life will be always going on like this and it's boring and we don't make any progress, so let's fight!' So, the green said, 'No, no, no, no! I can not do it. No, we are friends.' But the red insisted and said, 'From today you are my enemy. That's it.' Declared war right there and then. So then he left. He didn't live with the green anymore. He moved to the other side of the mountain and sat there alone, prepare for war. And the green also stayed there in that corner of the mountain, felt so lonely and miserable. He missed the other goblin. So, he was feeling very miserable.

And you know the goblin, the kind of demiangel, they have magical power. Apart from being able to fly, making things appear by themselves, seeing very far, hearing very far, they also have long nose which can stretch to no limit. So, the green goblin sat there one day and feeling very bored and suddenly he noticed in the world of humans below that something shining, flashing, shining all the time. So, he was curious and he used his nose. [Laughter] He makes his nose long. He said, 'Grow longer, grow longer, grow longer,' and then the nose kept growing long, long, long and then pierce into the world below where the shining and flashing is happening.

The shining and flashing came from the clothes of the princess of that city and it happened that the servants were hanging her clothes outside to air them and her clothes have gold flakes and also some jewelry studded with diamond, rubies, and et cetera, et cetera. So, it's glittering in the sun. That's why it were shining and flashing. So now, the servants say to each other, 'Oh, her clothes is so beautiful, but so many. Now we don't have enough bamboo pole to hang. What to do?'

At that moment the nose of the goblin just arrived on time. [Laughter] Did you hear this story before? [Audience: No.] No! Oh! I'm glad. [Laughter] So, and then the servants thought, 'Oh, we have a long bamboo enough to hang the rest of the clothes on it.' So, they put the rest of the clothes of the princess on this green pole and then happily went inside. Ah, to eat some chapati.

So now, the green goblin suddenly felt so heavy on his nose. So, he was scared. He immediately pull his nose back to the normal size and there come all a bundle of glittering clothes at his feet. And he was thinking, 'Ah, oh, it must be a lucky day.' So, he tries it on and beautifully it looks. So, he was proud marching around himself alone.

And it happened that the red came over. He wanted to start a fight, to progress. But then the green said, 'Look here! I have some new clothes, beautiful, and I save some for you, half of them for you.' And the red was looking with contempt and said, 'Look, I don't wear these kind of ridiculous things, only crazy people do, like you.' He wants to start a fight, so he talks every nonsense. But the green is always green, so he's very cool; so he doesn't pick on it. So, he says, 'Okay, okay, fine. If you don't wear them, it does no harm. Leave them there. It's all right.' So, the red doesn't know what else to do, so he went home.

But actually, he was very very jealous of the green and so he tried to get some clothes for himself. So now, he also puts his nose very long down into the palace and waiting for some clothes to be hung on. But it happens that the samurai, at that time there practicing sword together and when they saw such a long thing coming, they said to each other,

'What's that?' And the other said, 'Ah, it must be the new invention of the enemy trying to attack us. Let's kill it first.' 'Oh, okay.' Then 'pa' [Master imitates the sound of cutting.] with the sword. And so suddenly the red feels such sharp pain and immediately he pulls back his nose to the normal size. And then here it bleeds and then he cries and cries so much.

And then the green heard his crying and came over and said, 'What happen, what happen?' And the red was so embarrassed and angry and can not say what the truth was and so he said, 'Leave me alone' 'And you don't bother me.' And so the green said, 'No, I don't bother you, I try to help you. It's bleeding. Look here. I know the medicine. I put it on. It will stop right away and your nose will become beautiful like before. Otherwise, you will have a big scar, a big hole there and then it will be very ugly. I just want to take care of you.'

And so the red after all feels touched and said, 'All right, all right.' And then he cried his heart out, 'Ah, it's really hurt. Please quickly, quickly help me. Make it better, quickly.' And then from then on of course they make peace together because he had enough with fighting. He thought, fighting is no good. He learned the lesson of peace. From then on they wear nice clothes and drink tea together everyday, and no more war.

Only enlightenment can awaken the true self

But our world has not learned this lesson of love and it is a sad affair. So now, instead of always writing on the newspaper, criticizing the government of this and that country, scolding this and that dictator, or telling the army what to do, because it has not been any use up to now.... so instead of doing all these, or apart from doing all these, still, we have to find the way out for ourselves before it's too late. And the only way out is the so-called enlightenment. And an enlightenment is only getting back the positive information that we badly lack. And it's right there. Because it's already there, it's just that we didn't use it. When we are born into this world, everyone must take care of the immediate needs, such as cold, hunger, environmental infection, et cetera, et cetera. Therefore the immediate reaction from birth or since childhood is all these material comfort, all these physical need. That is why we don't have the chance to remember the positive information that we must have in order to survive, in order to be wise and to fulfill our duty better in this world.

You see why we forget? You see why we don't have it? You see why we have it but we don't use it? Just because immediately this world overwhelms us with physical threat. So, the immediate reaction from us is that to protect ourself, the body, feeding, drinking, clothing it, building house, buying more blankets, and getting a big car so that we can move around, building a big road so that we can drive the car on, et cetera, et cetera. All these physical necessities immediately from birth overwhelmed us and take all our time up and that's why it became a habit to us to preoccupy ourselves with physical needs alone, and that's why we forget further and further, more and more about our other positive side of nature. And that's the only secret. Does it make sense to you? [Audience: Yes.]

So now, I have in brief and in logic explained to you or reminded you what is truly enlightenment. And there's no mystery about it, just the positive side of our nature. And we have both inside. Up to now we only use the negative, because the necessities of this negative world force us to always have to lean on the negative side to survive. And then, the more we do it, the more we forget the other side. That's all. But that is the thing that we should not do. Because without the positive we can't even take care of the negative well. Without the driver, you know what I mean, the car doesn't matter how good you take care, it will not move and it will move all wrong way around, killing people if it does. So now, the

driver must wake up. Wake him up and tell him to drive the car, drive properly. And that is all there is for enlightenment.

The Quan Yin method benefits all beings

Q. *Master, I understand there is a method called the 'convenient method.' Is it the same as the Quan Yin method?*

M. Not exactly, but it offers you also a taste of enlightenment. And you can continue to practice that every day without such a strict regulation as a pure vegetarian diet or two and a half hours a day, things like that. You can meditate half an hour everyday or one hour apart, or twenty minutes, whatever you like, and eat the vegetarian diet as conveniently as your position or your situation allows. So, that's why we call it 'convenient method.'

And you also have enlightenment. But, it's a small kind of vehicle, you can only liberate yourself alone. And the Quan Yin method will liberate many of your relatives and friends, up to seven or even nine generations, the people you don't even know, your ancestors, et cetera, and your next generation, your grand, grandchildren not yet born, et cetera. Because of the blood link, they will also be free.

Q. *Master, when I am the host and I have to take some friends out for lunch or dinner and they are not vegetarians, should I order all vegetarian dishes to eat as I am the only vegetarian?*

M. No, no, you order what the guests want to eat. We don't impose our life style on other people and impede their freedom. It's their choice. Okay? If you ask them if they want to try vegetarian, also fine, if they agree, if they are happy with it. Just tell them once in a while you try it to see if you like it. If they don't, then you don't do it.

Q. *Master, please advise me how to access the first level of the kingdom of God, or what I must do to start.*

M. The first level only? Your aim is so low. [Laughter] Why don't you go to the fifth at least, with me? There, it's almost empty because no one goes there, plenty of room there. Singapore is tight. We go there for a change. A lot of palaces, and no traffic lights, no jam. [Master laughs.]

The first level is nothing to aim for, brothers. There are only astral beings who live there. Only small heaven and hell. There is only magical power, small healing ability, small clairvoyant talent. That's all there is. And you may live there hundreds or thousands of years, but you come back here again. And who knows where you will be, and what you'll become. So, why go to the first level? First level is as unsafe as this world. Yeah. Don't aim to go there. That's only the A. The ABC of everything. We started from there, but we don't stop there.

Q. *Master, the first precept is no killing. If a snake enters my house, should I kill it in order to protect my family?*

M. You don't have snakes in Singapore, don't give me trouble. [Laughter and applause.] You don't even have enough land for people to live. Where can this poor snake reside? But anyhow you don't have to kill, you can give him a bag... a cloth bag and he will happily crawl into it. And you set him outside somewhere else, in the bush or

something, and he will be happy. But if you must, of course, you can do it. But then, you pay. You can do anything you want in this world, just you must pay. Not in monetary way, it is in karma. See?

You kill him and later you'll probably be wounded somewhere or have severe headaches or your arm suddenly gone paralysis, anything like that. You pay, maybe temporarily or maybe in a long term. It depends on how great the things that you have done, how much you took from the physical treasure of the Lord of this creation. The more you take, the more you pay. The less you take, the less you pay. That's why I advise the vegetarian diet, because it's the less expensive.

You know even though vegetables also have life, but it doesn't cost so much karma, doesn't burden you too much. You see? Not that vegetables you don't pay. I don't mean the market price, I mean to the Lord of creation. The Lord of creation is below the almighty God. But if you can not, if you didn't pay it to the Lord of creation, you can not go to the almighty. That's the problem.

An enlightened Master has the key of enlightenment

Q. *Master, can You explain the initiation of the Quan Yin method?*

M. Initiation is a kind of invisible opening wisdom ceremony. No flowers, no incense, no prostration, no Buddha statues, no church, nothing. Only you and your own positive original power. Now when you sit there all alone, then I will point to your soul where to go, in order to get back the positive and negative together, understand? Now you are separated because you are always leaning onto the negative side for survival. Now when you sit alone there and ready, willing to go back, I just pull you back. But no action involved. These things are abstract, are the wonderful things of the invisible power. There is no doing of anything. Do without doing.

I don't have to be there even. I don't have to even know your name, your address, your age, your profession. I don't have to know you; I mean physically. Inside I know. Therefore, the initiation is just like you sit there and get back your positive side. You know, like out of balance, that you always lean on the negative. Now, come back and then you're balanced. That's it. And then you know that you are enlightened because you saw the Light, you received the teaching from heaven through melody.

It's not by 'Singlish,' it's not by Chinese. It's wordless words, silent sounds. This will make you wiser, and more and more realize that you are great, and you are the Master of the House. Yeah! That's the initiation. But no words can describe that, because I would not talk to you at that time. I might not even be present, because you will be along with the whole universe then. You know? That's how you know yourself. It's difficult to try to understand now. If you don't, just go for initiation then you'll understand.

Q. *Master, after enlightenment, can we still get sick?*

M. Sure. Look here I have a flu, thanks to some of the friends who gave it to me. And I was weak because I overwork a lot of the time, because of the many disciples and demands from the world. So, of course, my body is like yours, or your body is like his, yeah? If you are weak in resistance, overwork, overwork your car, then it will stop. It gets sick. That's the same. The car will get sick whether it is Benz or it's a Cadillac. It sometimes gets sick, but that's the normal thing.

Why should we avoid sickness? It's no big deal. If I wasn't sick in these days, I could not have enjoyed two days in bed. So, that's a bonus. It's not bad. And all the people love me so much, 'Wow' while I am sick. They feel... a concern, you know? That's enjoyment also. Okay? No problem to be sick. The Buddha was sick, was He not? Sure, sickness is no big deal.

Q. *Master, why are there so many religions in this world?*

M. There is only one really. Different names, yeah! If you don't believe me, you take time, study all the religions together, compare them all, and then you'll know what I mean. Just because people don't study other religions, which is also good, fine.

Be concentrated on your religion if you know one religion; it's enough. Because it's similar in other religions: Tell people to do good, don't kill, don't steal, worship God or Buddha. No religion teaches people to do bad things. Or stay here forever, and eat and drink and die here. All religions tell you 'be a good person here and find heaven while you can,' right? And everything else is just bla, bla, bla, you know, bureaucracy and detail. [Applause]

Q. *Master, You talked about knowing the way Home. Where is this Home? Where is heaven and hell?*

M. Here. Everything is here. But if you don't know, everything is everywhere. Everywhere is hell, everywhere is heaven. If you know, then it's heaven, if you don't know, it's hell. That's it, simple. [Applause]

Q. *Master, will I be able to find my dead relatives and communicate with them if I practice the Quan Yin meditation?*

M. Dead relatives? Oh, sure, sure. But I am afraid maybe you don't like to go there. Some of your people are difficult to get in touch with. If you want to go such place, you need a Master. Otherwise, you will be in danger. So, it's not always good to see dead relatives. Now you practice the Quan Yin method, and some of your relatives, dead relatives will be immediately released from whatever suffering they have. If they are already in heaven, they will go to a higher level of heaven. If they suffer light punishment, they can go immediately, quick. If it's too heavy, then we have to negotiate. Then the Master must negotiate or has to suffer for that person. But it won't be too long. For example, if those people have to suffer for thousands of years, the Master wouldn't have to suffer for thousands of years. Just maybe a few hours, or sometimes a few seconds, sometimes a few minutes, sometimes prolonged but not a big deal sickness, things like that.

So, it's not always ideal to see your dead relatives. It's better to see live relatives. Love them, serve them, and encourage them before they are dead. [Applause] But you can see them, you can see them. Many of our practitioners see their dead relatives and friends coming to thank them that due to them, they are liberated. That is no big deal, no big deal.

Q. *Master, one of the five precepts is refraining from sexual misconduct. How does this apply to singles?*

M. Oh! What we mean is that you should be faithful to each other. But in the case of some of the other religious orders, they may, due to their tradition, have many wives.

If they already had them before initiation, then that doesn't mean they have to separate and take only one. But in the general case we tell people to refrain from having too many ties, because if you have one wife, I think you suffer enough. Oh, sorry. [Laughter] I mean... I am sorry. Don't kill me please. What I mean is the suffering in affairs of the heart are very heavy for the wife or the husband to bear. And that you don't want to cause to other people, let alone your beloved friends, or the mother or father of your children.

So, that's why we say refrain from having another affair if you are already married. But if you already have before initiation, just keep it like that. And better don't let the other to know each other. Minimize the suffering. The less suffering the better, because it will affect you also. You will have a bad conscience and guilty feelings. How can you meditate in peace? When you meditate you want to think about God. All you think about is the second or the third wife. Yeah! How she wanted to beat you last night because you came late, et cetera, et cetera. Or you bought better clothes for the other one et cetera, et cetera. Aiya! So many troubles. It hurts. That's why. That is called sexual misconduct.

But in the case of people who are not yet married, of course in the modern time, I can not tell people don't, don't, don't do that, you know. Yeah! Then try to be faithful to each other, yeah? It's good for the heart, good for your moral and good for the mutual trust between each other and especially good for your health, you know nowadays. You read newspapers more than I do. The letters spelled very big. Should I say more? More and more people die from AIDS each day, so take care of yourself.

Q. *Master, is it necessary to have a quiet environment to pursue spiritual practice?*

M. Yes. In the beginning yes, but later no. Later, sometimes we need. That's why sometimes we organize a retreat for one week or two weeks or four days, three days. Every year at a different time, so people have a chance to have a peaceful, quiet, only practicing meditation environment. But otherwise, you must go out into the society. Bringing the Light and blessing into our brothers and sisters. You can not always hide yourself in the mountain and become a selfish Buddha. [Laughter]

Q. *Master, will dreams of future events come true? Can we change the future?*

M. Yes, sometimes we can. If we are strong enough, and if you want to be strong enough, meditate, get your Buddha power out, then you can change anything. Otherwise, the future will change you.

The way to minimize one's sexual desire

Q. *Master, can You please advise me as to how I should control my monstrous sexual appetite? I need God's grace.*

M. This...? I don't have experience. You know what? There are many remedies. But most people when they ate too much meat and drink the wine and all that, it will excite more of their passion. We already have enough so-called animal passion within us, so we do many things like the animals do. This we can not control.

Because we inherit the animal quality while we live in this kingdom, part of it, because of this body. So now, if we want to control that, we must minimize the intake of intoxicants and exciting food, things like that. There are foods for sexual

empowerment. The people look for that. Some people like that. So, the old kings, they always eat special kinds of foods, because they have so many wives.

There are many foods to control the sexual drive. The first stage is vegetarian diet, pure vegetarian diet – no eggs, no fish, et cetera, and no liquor, alcohol, no intoxicating things. Many things we, the ordinary people, pay high prices for, mostly are poison. And I am always wondering why people spend a lot of their money to poison themselves. But anyhow that's their private choice and free will.

So, if you ask me how to minimize your sexual energy, there are many things to do. You switch to vegetarian diet, eat a kind of simple, not too much oily and excitement spice and things like that. And then drink plenty of cool water. No champagne, champagne is the worse thing, reserved only for wedding days. You know uh! I don't know. I heard about that. I don't know. They said like that.

But the most simple is to be busy, doing something meaningful, helping other people; and then you forget your own problem. I don't know how you have time to think about this drive even. You know, if you stay up all night long, reading like me, I think your sex drive will drive itself away, [Laughter and applause.] because sex drives are scared, scared of the work.

Do something. There is so much suffering in this world, do some volunteer work in your spare time. Feel the suffering of your fellow beings. Merge yourself in the sacrifice and the joy, the pure joy of serving all of them. Bring happiness, bring noble happiness to other people. That will bring noble happiness to you, too.

You have read so much bad, maybe porno information. Now don't read it any more. Switch to holy books. Read the bible, read the Buddhist sutras, read the Koran, read whatever information you have on holy life, okay? Hinduism books, anything you want, yoga exercise, holy saints' teachings, so much to read.

- Q. *Master, if the Quan Yin method can help me avoid reincarnation, how about my karma in my past lives?*
- M. Oh, I burn it. I throw it in the dust-bin and set fire to it and finish. Okay? You know where karma comes from? Comes from your reactions. Actions and reactions, of course. But where does it come from? It is stored in your subconsciousness. There is a button. I just push it and it's gone. It's like your computer or your record player. You can play it, you can record it, or you can erase it. Just know how.
- Q. *Master, usually how long does it take to get enlightenment? May I know what does it depend on?*
- M. Oh, depends on many things. First, it depends on the proper meditation method. And it depends on your teacher, whether that person is capable to lead you to enlightenment. Never mind talking about long or short. If you get a good teacher, you get immediate enlightenment. If you don't get a good teacher, I don't know how long, very, very long, many lifetimes. And also enlightenment depends on your sincerity, if you want it or not. If you do want it, you get it immediately. If you don't want it, it doesn't matter how much you pretend, how long you sit there, until your bottom falls off, [Laughter] you don't have anything.

Initiation is the inner transmission of dharma

Q. *Master, will there be someone to guide us in the Quan Yin meditation in Singapore in the initial stages?*

M. Yes. I will leave a few monks or nuns here for you. Actually, Quan Yin messengers. They don't look like monks. They look like me. They are ordinary like you. I will leave some of the people who have practice for a long time, who know the initial stages of practice, for you. Besides, you can always write to me. Nowadays, we have a fax machine. Don't worry. And the inner connection is always there, a hundred percent, never broken. So, that is the best guidance.

And then later on, you don't have to rely on anyone, because you will get the answers from the inside, quickly and you know it. And the Teacher will know where you are, what you are doing, and what kind of danger you are in, or what practice you need. From inside, teach from inside, not from the verbal.

Verbal is just ordinary thing, like we talk to each other, you know, have fun. Talk about some old stories to encourage you to practice, things like that. But verbal instruction is never a perfect teaching. The perfect teaching you can only find from inside, and that is between Master and disciple individually, for each one different inside. Even if you sit next to each other, you don't know what level he is or what the Master transmitted to him inside. All different, okay? Depends on each level.

Q. *Master, when we are praying to God or Jesus, could we also worship Quan Yin Bodhisattva in the temple?*

M. Why not? The more, the better, I think. [Master laughs.] That's what we think. You do what you want as long as you are happy. If that accords you enlightenment, so much the better. If not, you must go for the Quan Yin method. The real worship comes when you see God, Jesus, Quan Yin, face to face and worship at their feet right there. And you feel so much different than when you bow to the Buddha, the wooden statue.

When you bow to the wooden statue, he says nothing to you, he can not answer your question. But when you bow to the real Buddha inside while you meditate or while you're sleeping and go to heaven, that is the time of your real worship and you will feel entirely different. You will feel you're not of this world. You will feel you are the Buddha then. That's the real worship. Worship anyone you like, but make sure you see them. [Applause]

Q. *Master, will meditation lead us to getting possessed by the devil?*

M. It depends, depends. If you meditate at random without a teacher, or you choose a wrong way to do it, or you deliberately meditate but break the precepts, eating wrong food or harming other people, then the counter effect will fall upon you, and that's when you allow the so-called devil to come in to destroy you and trouble you. That is only the negative side of all the nature.

When we don't want to lean, we don't stand stably, and we keep like this, then it will pull you back to the negative side again. And at that time, it's stronger, it's harder because it lost you last time, like tightening the grip more; and it's difficult for you to struggle out.

So, that's why I don't want to just take a lot of so-called disciples, so that I am famous and have a big group of followers. You must keep the precepts. You must eat a vegetarian diet. Understand? Purify yourself while meditating, so you don't have side effects, you don't have trouble.

And I am responsible for whatever happens to you, if you keep the precepts and follow the instruction. So, nothing can happen to you. But if you don't, even God can not help you. Okay.

Q. *Master, I am a sinner. Can I be enlightened?*

M. Oh, who is not the sinner, please raise your hands. [Laughter and applause.] The sinner, please raise your hands. Me, also included. Don't worry, don't worry. No one is a sinner. We're just ignorant. We have not been taught the way of the saint. We have been only taught to survive in this world, how to eat, how to clothe, how to look after this physical vehicle. That's all we have been taught up to now. All the education also leads to that end, so you can have a good job, right? We have not been taught the wise way, the holy way. So, now it's the time. No problem. We did things we don't know. How can we be sinners? If the child is not taught and he makes mistakes, how can he be blamed? Blame God. Uh! He didn't send you a Teacher soon enough, His fault. [Laughter and applause.]

Q. *Master, I want to donate my life to others. What do You suggest?*

M. Yes, sure. If people want to accept you, [Laughter] we can donate our service, while we are living. Well, everyone is donating their lives anyhow. They work for the society. They work for their family. This is a kind of donation. Some people donate more. They work for more groups, serving more people voluntarily, or without much payment. And that's perhaps what you mean. Do what you feel like and what you are capable of. There is a lot of work to do in this world. Never enough people to do it.

Restore our heavenly quality

Q. *Master, if we enjoy living so much on this earth, why do we have to try so hard to go to heaven?*

M. Oh, then please don't try. Who told you to try hard? [Master laughs.] Only the people who want to go, should go. If you enjoy this world so much, it's good for you, good luck; and I hope you enjoy it long, [Laughter] because one never knows, one never knows what tomorrow brings. That's the problem.

If we can always enjoy in this world, if I can put a stamp to guarantee that you'll never suffer, ever in this world, and you'll continue to enjoy all your life, and next life, next life, then please don't consider heaven. But no one can guarantee you that. You see it for yourself. All the kings, all the glorious hierarchy, the kings and queens, where are they now? They have enjoyed more than you did, more than you'll ever dream of. Where are they now? What do they do now? Where are their enjoyments? You know the answers.

Q. *Master, You say we are all God's children and there is only one God. So, why do we have different colors and different races? Every one is not equal, just like You and me.*

M. Look at the flowers, you want them only one color? Pink, finish. Is that what you call beauty? Pink, one color, one and only. We have many colors, that's why it's fun, Okay? You like it. That's why you choose to be born in that color. But now you don't understand. Get enlightenment, and then you'll understand why. But you are also right. The question is also correct because the higher dimensions don't have difference, no difference between male and female, no different colors. There is only pure awareness, pure wisdom, not even such a visible form.

Q. *Master, how can we get immediate enlightenment and eternal liberation if we are anxious and have to work to make money?*

M. [Master speaks to the MC.] You know it. You tell him.

MC. *Meditate two and a half hours a day.*

M. He doesn't know yet. Don't scare him. Enlightenment is the most incredible thing that ever happens to your existence. It will lighten every burden that you have to carry every day. It will get rid of all the obstacles in your way. It will carry you when you are down and sick. It will bless you whenever you are in trouble and danger. And you will feel like, you are always in the love of Mother, so you don't worry. The worry and anxiety you have now, is just because you don't have enlightenment, it's not the opposite, okay? So, if you want to get rid of this suffering, get enlightenment.

Q. *Master, why do good people suffer so much in this world?*

M. How do you know if they are good? Do you know them personally? Sometimes you don't. Good and bad is only in our level of understanding. The record of their lives, of their existence is so long. Sometimes they are good, sometimes they are bad. You can never check-up enough. Anything that happens has a reason. And don't worry.

Q. *Master, is there any explanation why some people are born less fortunate than others?*

M. Because of karma. Some people they do good deeds, they give a lot of charity to other people, and then when they are reborn again, they are rich and fortunate. And if the other people never give to anyone else when they are in suffering and in need, then when they are born again, they probably don't have much fortune.

Q. *Are You a human being or a fairy? [Laughter]*

M. What do you think? Who am I? Who am I? Who am I? What do you think? You think I am a human, raise your hands. You think I am a fairy, raise your hands. No one. Yeah, both are correct. An 'A' for both! Okay! We are both. We are both human beings and God. It's just that most of the time for most of the people they only recognize their human side of existence. They only identify with the physical function and forget their Godly side of nature. That's all.

You and I are equal. We are both fairy and human beings. That's it. Are you satisfied? [Applause] But the only difference between you and I is that I know and you perhaps don't know, or are not sure of your fairy nature. That's the only difference.

Q. *Master, can those who have mental depression practice meditation?*

M. If they understand what I have mentioned today, if they understand the teaching, they're capable of understanding, then they can; because sometimes mental disturbance comes only from depression, too much pressure from society. A form of trying to avoid problems, trying to escape the burden of society. It's not exactly a sickness. So, it's temporary and they can stand up again, of course, and faster through meditation.

MC. *Thank You, Master. Shall we take this opportunity to put our hands together to thank Master.*

M. Oh, no need. I thank you all for your loving attention, and for your trust and your love and your friendship. [Applause] And I wish you all the best things. I wish your country all the best things, and develop more and more, stronger and stronger, and more and more respect by the whole world and the universe. And I wish you most of all enlightenment, if not sooner, then later. Okay. [Applause]

GOOD DEEDS HAVE HAPPY RESULTS ¹⁷¹

Help others is helping yourself. It's a pity that not all people in the world know this. That's why in the New Year's day, we made an awarding ceremony, so to remind the people of this country (Formosa) and of the world the noble action of charity, because only being charitable and loving can one rescue oneself from misery in the later life to come. If one has not met a Master to be liberated in one life time, one must be reborn again, and it is better to be reborn in a plentiful environment with not so much suffering in lacking of comfort like food, clothings, houses, shelters and every other necessity of life.

Therefore, I encourage other people to practice charity, not because I need them to help me to help others, but it is for themselves because they need them! Because they never know whether next life they have enough merit to live such a comfortable life again like they do in Formosa now, so it's better they continue to sow the good deeds. That is if they don't see any Master.

When one sees the Master, whether one does good deeds or not good deeds, one still practices meditation and the merit is enough to liberate you, we don't have to come back again to enjoy good or bad life, so no problem. [Applause]

NEW YEAR, NEW PERSON! ¹⁷²

I hope you have a good, new, fresh start and begin a new you. Tell your mind what to do, and then your mind will order the cells in your body what to do, because this is just like you have been doing since your birth. You tell yourself to brush your teeth, then the cells in the hand move, and the muscles of the arm move the way the mind has ordered.

Similarly, now you can begin to order your body and mind to do what you want, but according to the highest standards, then it will listen. The body is yours, the mind is yours, the brain is yours, and it's up to you to give them information and orders.

The reason why we couldn't do anything before, or we were failures is because we didn't give enough orders to the brain as to what to do, and the brain could not tell the cells what

171. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, January 5, 1995 (Originally in English).

172. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, January 3, 1995 (Originally in English).

to do. So, it continued to order in the old way – sleep, drink, eat, produce children, work and die.

Now we can do all that; it's not that we eliminate any of that; but we can do more useful things than just sleeping all the time or eating, and then finish our life. Otherwise, we spend all our time in nonsense activities, when it can be used for better things that are more satisfactory for us, more useful for society, and more fun.

Above all, wherever you go, try to have fun; and don't repeat the same mistakes all the time. It's very boring. People can forgive us, but not every time. They can forgive us, but they cannot be interested in us when we make the same mistakes all the time. So, we should try not to make the same mistakes all the time. If people have told you already they don't like that, then don't do it twice; that should be more than enough. You should always remember that. If you don't remember, write it down: 'Don't do this again!' Or write the opposite.

For example, instead of saying, 'Don't walk north,' say 'Walk south.' Be more positive, if you can. Instead of saying, 'Don't talk too loudly,' say 'Talk quietly, talk gently, or talk in a lower voice.' Then repeat it to yourself a few times. See if you can do it. If not, repeat it again, and try not to always bore people with the same mistakes.

Whatever you like to do, when you think it benefits yourself and others, try to do it this year. Make a list of what you want to do and do it. Admit your mistakes and apologize if you do wrong. If you don't do wrong, you don't have to apologize; just forget it. There's no need to argue too much; it wastes your and other people's time. If you can, explain it; if they don't believe you, forget it. It's no big deal.

Try to meditate more, of course. All the time – walking, sitting, sleeping, working, on your break hours and everywhere, try to always concentrate on your wisdom center, and recite the protective names; this will help you a lot.

There's no need to always sit and see visions. If you improve, you will see everywhere that you have improved. Your love, your intelligence, your creative ability, your integration with people, your understanding of all other things – that is when you progress. There's no need to sit there and wait for the Light all the time. Maybe the Light comes, but then you don't see it; you are busy snoring. Or the Sound comes when you're snoring, but it's so loud that you cannot compare with it.

The world will continue to exist if we meditate more. Try to generate positive energy without even thinking of doing that. Do without doing; that's the best way.

A BENEVOLENT GOVERNMENT BEGETS A BRIGHT FUTURE ¹⁷³

[The content of Master's lecture, as a politician with great perspectives, transcends the narrow national and sovereign standpoints. Based on the benefits of mankind and the elevation of spirituality, it points out the good and the bad, and the attainments and mistakes of political aspects. Anyone who reads this lecture carefully can achieve noble political and moral ideas: If one puts them into practice in his position at work, then his nation, his people and even the whole world will benefit immeasurably!]

173. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., October 29, 1994 (Originally in English).

Good people often get involved

Yesterday I was searched all over at the airport. They made me stand facing the wall, like those criminals in the television. Did you see those on television? Yeah! When they tell you drop the gun and put your hands on the wall like that. Why do they have to do that? You have to face the wall and put your hands on it; you have to do it in a certain position. You can't just stand facing the wall like Boddhi Dharma or sitting. You cannot cross legs and face the wall like Boddhi Dharma. Don't have illusion, you have to face the wall, put your hands on the wall like that. You know, and the officials search you from behind, not in front. [Audience: Is that the tradition in America, the custom?] Oh, if it's the custom, I don't think it's a very beautiful one, but, the police will preserve it, for some certain reasons.

I don't smell of drugs, do I? No? People told me that when you project something, you know, project some atmosphere, then you will attract the people who will think of you in a certain way, but I don't think I projected a 'drug' atmosphere. Nevertheless, the policeman 'smelled' drugs. I don't know where from, and they searched me all over, and drilled me for one and a half hours, and turned my luggage upside down. Not that I had so much luggage; I had only one hand-carry luggage. And I told them I'd stay only four days or so, maximum two weeks, so I have only a few pairs of clothes, and some socks, and underwear, of course. [Laughter]

They asked me, 'What do You have in your luggage?' I said, 'Clothes, underwear, socks and medical records.' He said, 'Why do You take medical records with you?' I said, 'Because I am sick.' He said I wouldn't take my medical records with me if I were staying here only for few days or two weeks. I said, 'Well, my doctor told me I should take them with me just in case. Because my allergies have come up anytime since the last few months, and he has not found the reason for it yet, so I have to take them. I have a X-ray of the lungs, so the doctor tells me I have to take it everywhere in case, because he can't find any reason.' So, I suspect this is karma, but I don't think the police official understands about the karma. So, I was very sparing with my words.

Anyhow, he was worried that I came here to take money from the American people, take donations. I said I never take donations, not only in America, but anywhere for myself, so don't worry. But it was difficult to convince him.

Do people put drugs in their socks? So, I had to take my socks out, have a look. I took socks out, but they still wanted to look at my sole. [Master laughs.] I wonder how can you put drugs under your sole? Can that be possible? I said to the officer, 'I am sorry about the trouble I caused you, but I didn't know that I smelt of drugs, because we are too far away from all these things, we are vegetarians.' He said the reason why, because I went to Bangkok, to Thailand, and people coming out of Thailand normally bring something more than just gifts. That's what they told me. I said, 'We are too far away from it, that's why we don't know, we don't know what Thailand will do. We are vegetarians, we don't take any drugs or alcohol, we are not supposed to have cigarettes even. We don't do these kinds of things, we don't know, we don't notice all this.'

Even then, so much trouble every time I want to come to see you. And then, you always ask me why I don't come to see you, and the Thailand people also asked me why don't I come to see them. So, everywhere in the world now we have a lot of trouble. We are not to blame the officers in the airport. I just tell you, that for the minority people's bad deeds, the majority people have to bear the ugly consequences. We are the last people the police should search for anything like drugs, but it happens that they mostly search the good people. [Laughter]

And I thought I came quietly, I came for conference here, concerning the Au Lac refugees' issue, so just by the way I came to see you, because since I am already here. I have to confess, I didn't come exclusively to see you. That doesn't mean I don't like you, but I don't like the search at the airport anytime. It's not the first time that they search me. It's not the first time they search our people, and I guess they search everyone when they feel suspicious. But, I think if I were a police officer I would not search a person like me. I wear white clothes, white shoes, white umbrella, white hat. I don't think the drug people would do that. They would be more anonymous, right? They wouldn't stand out like that, and because of my clothes, three people recognized me at the airport already, just when I stepped out of the airplane.

So, how a drug dealer would do this kind of stupid thing, to stick out like a sore thumb in the crowd of the airport, right? They would wear something more ordinary. Well, I guess I could wear something more ordinary, but I don't have any ordinary clothes. I only have these few. This is convenient for going to the 'White' House as well as going to the 'black' market. [Master and audience laugh.] It's very convenient because it looks good and dignified. I don't like to show my behind and my front too clearly; not at every occasion. So, I prefer clothes which cover something of my 'nothing to hide body.' But I feel more comfortable that way, and I don't like too many colors. Occasionally I do, but normally I like simple colors. One color or two colors the most. The clothes you wear really affect you and also show how you feel inside. So normally I feel blank, [Master laughs.] white, whitewashed. So, that's the way I wear. I don't think any drug dealer would be so stupid as to make him or herself stand out, right? And so brightly, inviting like that.

Experiencing the pressure refugees undergo

But nevertheless, this experience gives me a very good realization about the Au Lac refugees' feeling, and about many people in similar situations – how they would feel if they are persecuted or watched over every move in their daily lives. And because even I came here as an invitation from the State Department. I had an invitation and I could show it out to the policeman, but I was afraid that would make more trouble because they would ask me, 'What for? How do You know this person? Why? What do You do?' And then I'd have to tell more history of my life and the refugees and that would take a longer time. Besides, I did not ask the State Department whether I could disclose my coming. I guess there would be no problem. Probably they wouldn't mind, but I didn't want to say things that may not be very public. I don't know, I didn't think I should.

What I mean is, I came with the invitation of the State Department, and I am a legal person, very protected. Especially, I am not a very unknown person, and even then the police searched and asked too many questions. I can feel the threatening atmosphere. They only do their duty, this is not to blame them! Even that, you can feel the shuddering atmosphere. How would it be for the people without protection, without any secure background and without anyone who they can rely on.

Like the Au Lac refugees, who were sent back to Au Lac and sometimes interrogated every week or everyday, or watched over for every move, and sometimes beaten up by the police weekly. Some of the letters I received are like that. It is very sad, very sad for them, and very sad for the government of Au Lac that they could not control every province of their country and let some of the local guards take control of the lives of the innocent people. Maybe the central government is not always aware of that, even then it is a sad affair that the central government cannot control the local governments, understand? That is if we make an excuse for the central government. I do not know if they work together. I cannot say what I don't know. So, I cannot say for sure that the central

government orders all these intimidating actions to frighten the people, to oppress the people who have no defense.

So actually, the world is crazy. In every corner, there is something happening, and the only reliable source for us is the spiritual strength that we derive from our practice and from our faith which has been proved to us that it is efficient. Up to now, any of you who have practiced diligently since the day of initiation would have experienced this protective power which comes from the almighty. And it is also within ourselves, because God dwells within you, Buddha nature is inside you. Every religious scripture would mention that. The religious scriptures are the experiences of the ancient practicing enlightened persons. So, even if they were thousand years before, we can also verify now by our own inner spiritual attainment. Whatever it said in the bible, we can understand clearly since we have practiced the Quan Yin method.

Only by attaining enlightenment can one truly understand religious scriptures

Yesterday, I went to a Chinese restaurant, as an invitation of our disciples, because they also wanted me to meet some people in Washington D.C., some VIP's, perhaps, according to society. So then, we were talking about spiritual practice and how similar the different religions can be in some aspects. One of our fellow practitioners who was with me is a Jew. 'Enlightened Jew' he calls himself after initiation. And then we talked about the tradition of the Jews and how we have read many stories that are very much similar to our Quan Yin practitioners' experiences. And when you read those stories you will understand right away what the enlightened rabbis were talking about.

So, there is really no Jewish religion or no Buddhist religion, it's just the experiences of the spiritual practitioners throughout the ages and then different religions they call them different names or different groups. For example, we have many meditation associations, so you put my name on it for identification, 'Supreme Master Ching Hai Meditation Associations.' Actually, 'Supreme Master' is our family name, our Christian name, [Laughter] and 'Ching Hai' is also not my name, it's the name of 'the ocean of love.' But since we all came from this ocean of love, we can claim ourselves Ching Hai number one, number two, number three, number one thousand and one. [Master laughs.] So, that's just the symbolic name for the almighty loving power. My name is different, but I won't disclose it to you. National top secret. [Master laughs.] Actually, any name is just the name of the body, that's the vestment that we wear. Just like Christian Dior or Max Factor make-up and things like that, or the name of the clothing. But it's not the real person who wears it.

In the Jewish tradition they have a prayer shawl, which is very sacred to them. I read in the Jewish practicing story, one of the persons went somewhere and encountered a group of ghosts in the ghost city. And in the ghost city they also pray, do all kinds of things like people, but they pray in the reverse way. Instead of praying to God, they pray to the devil. And so that person who was a Jewish follower, he used the prayer shawl to dispel all this evil. And he was thinking it might help but did not help according to this story, because the shawl is not a sacred object unless a person transmits his spiritual power into it, unless that person who wears the shawl was the real powerful practitioner. Merely following the Jewish tradition and wearing the shawl doesn't empower you and less for the shawl.

Maybe in the old times a real Jewish enlightened person could use his shawl or her shawl to dispel evil influence because he used that everyday to meditate. Just like when you do the Quan Yin method you use it to cover yourself, or sometimes it's cold you cover your head with the shawl to keep warm. Meanwhile you do meditation, and then, by your spiritual power, the shawl will be empowered somewhat, or has some influence because

when you use it, your power extends out and expands to the shawl. It's not because the shawl itself, not because you are Jewish, or not because you are a Ching Hai follower, and then your shawl will have power. Not if you don't practice, understand? Even if now you call yourself Ching Hai follower, maybe you have a shawl, but if you don't practice everyday even yourself won't have power, never mind your shawl or your beads or your whatever.

Sometimes the people come to a spiritual person or a priest or monk to ask for blessing, then the monk will put their hands on the head of that person for exorcism perhaps or for blessing sometimes, but it's not the hand of the person or not because he is a priest that he has power, it is because he practices. He has a certain connection with the almighty power, therefore when he places his hand on people's heads, his power will be transmitted through the hand, to that person. Otherwise, if you just wear a priest's robe and you do nothing then you don't have that power, understand? So, it's not the robe, it's not the shawl, it's not the appearance, it is the inner achievement of spiritual practice.

And by the way, when we were talking about that, we were also discussing about different religious, leftover traditions, and it is just exactly like what we're doing, like in the old times people when they practiced they had fear of persecution, just like in Au Lac now. It often happens, it even happens now in the full view of international law, never mind the old times when we didn't have law at all. So, people had to use some kind of secret sign to recognize each other.

As you know very well in some countries they discriminate between religions. For example in some Moslem countries you cannot practice other religions or at least not openly. In some more tolerant Moslem countries you can go to your own temple, but not to let the Moslem people come in. Or when I go to Malaysia to preach, the government or the police say we must write under our poster that Moslems are not allowed to come in our lecture. It is not me who forbids them, it's the government law that we have to write that – not for Moslems. But at least we can come in and preach to other people who are not Moslems and that is already very tolerant. But in some other countries you cannot have open lecture, you can only do in a temple or church belonging to your own affiliation. But that is already good. Maybe in some other countries you're not even allowed to bring anything in.

Even now in Au Lac, for example at this very moment our disciples are persecuted everyday in different forms, so this is very difficult for them to gather and do group meditation the way you do. And if I go back to Au Lac now I don't think I'm allowed to see them the way I see you now, so easily and free like this. So, even though the policemen search me at the airport but at least I can see you, after the search is all over and cannot find anything that I couldn't find in the beginning. [Master laughs.]

But there is a difference between a duty policeman and the kind of oppressive regime that search people everywhere and do everything to make people scared and feel insecure. That's different. Even though the police will search you at the airport when they do their duty, when they doubt you, but this is still a free country. You're free to pursue your religion and your speech, and you can even criticize the president without going to jail. In Au Lac you can't even say anything. You cannot say even good things, never mind bad things about the government.

Because last time I went to Cambodia some of the Au Lac people came over from the border. Only some because not every can come, just a few. And then they told me about the situation in Au Lac, that they are still threatened and watched over, and sometimes interrogated and oppressed everyday. So, it's very difficult for them to gather and do group

meditation. And even for initiation, they have to do it in such a secret way. That's why sometimes it causes so much trouble for some contact persons in Au Lac. Because the people misunderstand them that they don't inform them long in advance if there's an initiation. How can they inform them? Sometimes they don't have telephone, sometimes they could not even see them, and it has to be done quickly and discreetly so as not to provoke the attention of the police and the government. Or sometimes it's not easy to inform other people who want initiation, and many Au Lac people misunderstand, like they're kept out of information and things like that. But this is not true. They should realize more.

The Au Lac people who go to Au Lac should tell them more about the difficult situation, and tell them to keep quiet and don't make more trouble than they already have. They should wait for their turn. If they couldn't do it this time, they should wait for next time. In Au Lac communication is not that easy. So, these persecutions still go on in near the twentieth-first century. So, that's why in the old times people must use a kind of secret sign to communicate with each other to let the fellow initiates know that they belong to the same group. So, they devised many different methods to greet each other.

For example Jesus, when He broke the bread and said the prayer in a certain way, then the disciples immediately recognized it is the Master. You remember in the bible, yes? It did say so. Sometime after His resurrection people were not sure whether it was Him and then He broke the bread maybe in some way and gave to some people doing some certain blessing or praying style that people would recognize is the Master. Similarly, in Jewish tradition they have many different ways to recognize each other. For example the prayer shawl. And in India there are certain religious sects from Sikh religion, they also have to cover their heads with cloth when they come into a Sikh temple. But nowadays it's only symbolic. They do not understand the significance of it. So, sometimes they don't have a shawl, so they just put a handkerchief on the head like that. So, what is the use, the symbolic? Without this you couldn't go in the temple. [Laughter] You put a handkerchief. You have something on top of your head that's fine. Or the Jewish they wear a small hat on their hair. Maybe just for recognition.

Religious superstitions cause wars

And all religions are reduced into some form of ritual or another, and even further and further away from the original meaning. Even now while I'm still alive, people still make a religion out of me already. One of our disciples, the just mentioned Jew, he has a wife. She's so pious, she is so diligent in the practice. And then she went to a bible study group in order to know everything in the bible and then to explain to the people about our teaching. And then when some of the teachers in the class asked her what religion she belongs to, she put Ching Hai. [Master and audience laugh.] Can you believe that? Of all sincerity, she did it. Well, she said, 'I cannot tell a lie.' [Master and audience laugh.] I said you don't have to lie but I'm not your religion. I'm just your Teacher, to make you know your religion better, to make you a better Jew, a better Catholic, a better Buddhist. So, you can state what kind of religion you're born with. If you're Buddhist, you say you're Buddhist, but you are an enlightened Buddhist. It's different from the unenlightened Buddhist, that's all.

And the enlightened Buddhist is the original Buddhist, the one who follows the true teaching of the Buddha and who also became enlightened like the Buddha, because the Buddha said, 'I am the one who is enlightened, you will be enlightened, you will be the Buddha.' And the real Buddhist is the one who found the Buddha nature inside. And the other Buddhists, also Buddhists, they call themselves Buddhists, we can't forbid that, but

they have not found their own Buddhist nature inside. That's all. So, no need to say I am your religion. There are so many religions already. We don't want to confuse the world by making another one. And then people will fight each other. That I'm afraid. But later, after our generation dies, we never know what they make out of us. They will build a big temple for me and put my bronze statue inside, a larger than life statue, and then call themselves Ching Haiism. You never know. The dead cannot talk. After we die, we just leave it.

So, sometimes I'm thinking any Master who comes to this world has also good and bad sides. They brought people enlightenment and leave people to realize their own wisdom. This is fine. But after the Master dies, it is inevitable that the teachings will be left behind and then the people will commercialize all these left-over teachings and make religion out of it. Religion is fine, but they will make commercialized items out of it, out of the teachings, and just build big buildings and take people's donations in the name of the Master and do anything with it. Make a hierarchy out of it and control people, manipulate people's way of thinking, way of life, and building an empire out of an empty shell of the left-over teachings of which they understand nothing at all. And even blindly leading people into superstitions, and blood thirsty religious wars sometimes. And this is a very sad side of any of the Master's arrivals in this world.

We hope it won't be so in the future. We hope that the people will be more and more enlightened each time, each day, and then we will have no more of this kind of maya phenomena, illusion. But up to now, the king of delusion has been very successful in making the wholesale out of every Master's teaching. Therefore, we have so many religions in the world, and so many wars. Many of them are religious wars, the Moslems in Bosnia, the Serbs, for example the Ireland bloody war for many years, and Iran war. Many middle-east crises are fuelled by religious wars and even now still continues in different countries, in different parts of the world. A part of the wars are often religious, or religious behind-the-scenes-influence. Often like that. And it is a very sad affair for our world, huh? Religion is supposed to bring happiness and harmony for the people, but it does the opposite.

And very sad still, that sometimes the policies of the world also side with this, and make a miserable institution concerning religions. For example some of our monks and nuns in the refugee camps, we were supposed to take them out on September of this year, but then the United States immigration wouldn't recognize them. They said we are not a real Buddhist tradition, therefore these are not monks and nuns. And I don't really truly know what a real Buddhist tradition is. Apart from if you hit the wooden fish everyday and chanting some of the left-over Buddhist scriptures, I don't know what else the real Buddhist tradition monks and nuns would do that we don't do. In fact, we do more than what the Buddhists traditionally do. We do charitable work, we keep the precepts, true precepts, and we meditate. We worship the Buddha nature inside and we are enlightened. So, I don't know what a categorized Buddhist monk should be. If our monks are not monks, then I don't know if anyone else is a monk at all. Nevertheless, we already did all the procedures and we already paid the tickets for them, all ready to move. And the lawyers already cleared their case, that it is okay. Still, there is a block somewhere. So, they'd rather send these innocent people go home to be persecuted by their so-called ex-opponents.

Communism causes the world to regress

Suddenly the world forgets communism and everything is okay. As far as economic benefit is concerned, human beings' lives are just a joke in political stage of the world. I hope this situation will change. I hope all the governments will become more spiritual. Otherwise, the

consequences are not predictable, because 'as you sow so shall you reap.' If we support the devil, the devil is all we will get. If we know it's wrong and we will not make an effort to correct it then we will get the wrong end out of it as well. It's not these pitiful refugees or monks' and nuns' problem, it's a problem of the world. When our morals are descended, degraded and reduced into a small crumple in the name of economics, this is very sad. We will bring misfortune upon ourselves even though the present situation may look rosy. Even though nobody will know what we're doing, but God knows. That's the problem.

To cheat ourselves is the worst crime that we could ever commit to ourselves and to anyone else. Because that shows the nature of our ignorance, the lowliness of our spiritual level of understanding. We are not politicians so we don't talk about communism or other idealisms in a political sense. But in a spiritual sense and in the civilization sense, the idea of communism is not good for the world, because it shows no respect for family values, for motherhood or spiritual heritage of mankind. That's why religion is not allowed in any communist country. Religion is regarded the enemy of communists.

We have tried very hard to climb up the ladder of civilization up to now. That's why now we know how to respect each other, we know how to live a harmonious life in family, we know to respect our parents, our father and mother. But in a communist system a son can kill parents without being made to feel guilty, can persecute his own children without any sense of remorse, of repentance. This is a spiritual and civilization degrading sign of mankind. And this is a kind of thousands of years backward in evolution. It brings us back to the animal standard of consciousness in which we do not recognize any value of social order. We just eat, sleep, and take care of the body. And whoever does not agree with that, we can kill and persecute. That is the animal standard, not human standard.

And communism has been successful in bringing this standard into our present civilization. They destroy any spiritual values and social order and family loving relationship. They destroy all this. And this is very terrible situation for mankind to fall into. It's a very wrong decision to accept communism in any country. That's why when communism came to Russia, Russia kaput. Came to China, China fell into darkness. Came to Poland, Poland is out of order. Came to East Germany, East Germany is in a poverty slump compared to West Germany, the way I saw it. Even to get a toilet roll is a hard task. Have to stand all day long and all empty shelves. All the shops are empty and people don't smile. When I went to Russia, went to East Germany, people don't smile. People don't talk to you, don't talk to each other. There is a darkened shadow cast all over the country.

And everywhere the communism controls, there is no progress for that country. There's only poverty, suspicion, oppression and spiritual deprivation. So, you can see that for yourself. And I think all the governments of the world have seen that for themselves. Nevertheless, through weakness or through, I don't know, ignorance, they choose to support some of the communist countries. It's all right to try to have peace in the world and try a softer effort maybe to bring the communists into understanding. It's all right. But not too soon, not too soon as to sacrifice the lives of the innocent people or their psychological well-being. Psychological well-being and mental stability of the people is even more important than their physical well-being. In such a controlling and manipulating country, peoples' psychological security is at stake. No one feels good, no one can sleep very well. They all look very haggard, poor and depleted, because their spiritual well-being, their psychological security is threatened daily. It's not the food only that counts.

It's not for food that the Au Lac people flee their country, because I told you many times, for five thousand years no one did that. Even Au Lac had invasions from China or from France, and they had poverty also before. No one would say that the Au Lac people have

been rich all these five thousand years, suddenly become poor now, that they have to fly out of the country due to economical reasons. Even children will know, will not accept this.

So, all this is not only political things, it's the spiritual well-being of the people of Au Lac and elsewhere, concerning communism. But some of the governments do not try, do not want to recognize this fact, and just drive the people home because they have planned to do so. Even though it is a mistake, even though it is no good, they still want to carry out.

All right, let's pray that this situation will become better. We pray that God will bestow love on these people, and that it will smooth out the situation so the forced repatriated people will not experience so much suffering anymore. Since they don't want to reverse their order, what else can we do? We cannot make war with governments since we are nonviolent people. We only practice spiritually and pray for peace of the world.

I just want you to know that the situation is not ideal, and sometimes, even though the people who say they are against communism do not realize the importance of their saying and do not carry it into the practice. 'Words are cheap, actions are more important.' It's very difficult for me as a spiritual practitioner to take care of these so-called mundane situations, mundane issues, without having to be affected by political environment and people. I have tried my best to make the governments who are concerned to understand the spiritual issues of refugees, not the political and economical issues alone. But it's difficult, difficult, difficult. Because governments are made up of many different parts of the great system. It is not only one or two persons, yeah? And I do also understand the difficulty of governments in talking together, in governing their own machine.

It's just like in Au Lac, even though the central government might not want the returnees to be persecuted, nevertheless the local government will carry this violent practice all the same. And that's what makes the refugees afraid to go home. And that's what makes the Hong Kong government face difficulties when they try to drive the people home. In Hong Kong they were beaten to go home, and in Au Lac, they were beaten when they were home. Too frightened to stay behind and to go home. So, in both sides they were beaten, threatened, and they are caught in between. That's the situation of the people in camps.

Yesterday when we were discussing the problem, of course, the government representatives are very defensive. They blame it on everything. I also understand their point of view. I understand their position that they want to clear out of this and they don't want to carry on any further; maybe tired, maybe want to make a move, maybe promotion, maybe... anything, different policy.

And they told me that only five percent of the people who came back home would be persecuted perhaps. But I said that five percent is a lot, it means at least ten of thousands of people. There shouldn't be anyone. Even just one person persecuted, it should not be. Because for that person it's terrible. For us it's no problem, we talk in percentages and numbers. But for the individual who has to endure this suffering it's a hell.

And according to international law, it's not lawful. It's against their own commitment to their international refugee agreement in Geneva, that they vowed to protect all the political refugee or religious refugees. And now the CPA programme, even though it sounds logical to them, and maybe no one wants to argue about this, but still it's against their convention, International Peace Treaty and refugee convention.

Nevertheless, when people want to enforce something, if they have government backup it's difficult for anyone to intervene, let alone those like us. But we will try our best to protect these people. We still do.

Politics and spirituality are inseparable

The situation of the world is crazy. Many of the governments are not based on spiritual understanding, but based on power and political motivation. This is what brings the world into trouble. If all the governments' people tried to practice enlightenment, more true enlightenment, not just verbal prayer and traditional rituals, then I think we'd have a better world. Yeah? We'd have better governments. I think in the future they will do. We pray that they do.

Then every government personnel is a Buddha, is an angel, a saint, and then we will take care of the world in a saintly way, according to religious standard and not according to economical standard or political standard. Then we will be fine. Then we will truly have a government, not just political figures who try to secure their position or to control, to take over the power and control the people. It's very difficult to separate the political issue from the spiritual issue.

What I have told you is not to blame any government. They only try their best, for what they know. Considering economical and political pressure, they think it's the best. But because lack of spiritual indication, inside direction, many times they make mistakes which could be avoided, that's all, that's what I mean. That's why all the government personnel should be enlightened before they become government instruments. That's a difficult thing to achieve. An enlightened government is very difficult to achieve. In the old times we had, but in the modern times we rarely see any.

Well, I have to add that for example the United States government, along with the CPA programme, like forced people, orderly departure with force, if necessary tear gas as well, is welcomed. That is orderly departure, with tear gas and force; voluntary repatriation with tear gas and policemen, afterward. So, apart from this programme, the United States government and some of European governments also have an aid programme to aid the refugees who return to Au Lac, with jobs and financial help. Well, this is very fine, this is a very good intention. From our part the question is, I told the people yesterday, the question is whether the Au Lac government does what the United Nations expects them to do or what we expect them to do. Like to treat the returnees with respect and human rights, that's the only question. And apparently, the Au Lac government doesn't do that. Well, at least, not in every case.

So even then, they admit that five percent are persecuted. Well, that's a reduced size. Five percent is a lot. Let's see, in case if five percent is an accurate figure, but I doubt it. But for any representative of the United Nations or government to admit that, it's already a lot for them, for their honesty. Let's say in case five percent is accurate, how many people will be maltreated? Five over a hundred. For millions of people who return to Au Lac, thousands of them are persecuted. Alright? Thousands. That does not include our present disciples in Au Lac who are persecuted due to religious belief and spiritual practice.

If our Au Lac disciples have some kind of revolution, counter the government, then they can persecute them. But nothing, they only eat vegetarian, keep the nonviolence precept. They cannot even kill the communists, you know? Because they only practice nonviolence. So, what is the reason to persecute them? So, let's not talk about religion. We accept that the communists are anti-religious. That we know. So, I never campaign for this religious

issue actually. I campaign for the whole, you know. And now let's say five thousands of Au Lac repatriated people are persecuted. Isn't that a lot? Or not? Now, recently the United States government sent a lot of troops to Haiti, fifteen thousand strong, to restore democracy in that country. Just because there is a record that about three thousands of the Haitian people were persecuted in different ways. Three thousands only! Fifteen thousand strong United States soldiers were dispatched in Haitian soil, in a matter of no time with a cost of millions, billions of dollars, in a few hours. According to the report, the Haitian military spent about five millions or something for their entire army operation. The same amount, the United States government spent in a few hours, for military issue. So now, for three thousand cases of persecution, the United States government are willing to spend billions of dollars and risk Americans' lives to restore freedom and nonviolence in Haiti, but turn blind eyes on five thousands or more persecution cases to the refugees issue. So, what is that? It confuses us, huh?

Not that I don't like president Clinton. Yesterday I told the people president Clinton is the best president for the United States, at the moment. And in the next election, I hope he stays there. Really, he is very good. You know, he tried the soft... many people don't agree with the lift of embargo in Au Lac, but I think he has tried his best, because he thinks thirty years of threatening force hasn't change the communists' attitude, so he tried a softer effect. Maybe it will teach them a lesson. And he thinks, maybe bringing a lot of money inside, then the government will change. Money changes people. That is a money policy, and we cannot blame him for that. If nothing else works, he has to try the other one. Even if he makes mistakes, it is allowed. And we don't know if it is a mistake yet. Maybe it's good.

Well, I also have to admit that Au Lac changed for the better, now. It's freer than before. Even people from one province can go to another province without having harassment and having to obtain a visa, an internal visa. Before, when you went from one city to the next, or one district to the next, you'd have to obtain permission, and why, the reason why you have to go there and how long you will stay there. And you are only allowed limited time. But now, people can travel freely. Even travel outside the country if you can afford it, and you have people to guarantee you. That's very good already.

I really have to praise the Au Lac government for this minimal effort to democracy. But still, there's a lot of violence and brutal treatment of the people still going on in the country and I hope the government will step further, move faster to learn from democracy, to learn from the unconditional help that the international body offers to Au Lac.

So, along with the repatriation programme, the United States government as well as other governments have also financed the people who have returned. That is very good. And yesterday I have talked to many of them who came to the Au Lac and do some training programme there for the Au Lac refugee as well as the local people. What they do is, for one Au Lac refugee returned, maybe two locals who benefit in the same programme. You know? So, that is also good. I have to praise this effort.

A good government brings happiness to the people

And I also tell them I hope the Au Lac government learns from this unconditional help, and speeds up with their democracy, and stops controlling and treating people with violence. Then, even though if they retain the communist label, we will approve them, we will praise them, we will work with them. We don't mind what kind of label people use as long as they are morally acceptable and they bring benefit, freedom, happiness to the people under its

rule. Then it's fine. Is that not so? We aren't against the label, we're against the actions, only.

If the Au Lac government always boasts of 'democratic country,' 'government of the people,' 'freedom of religion,' they say, 'everything is free,' 'even religion is free' – why do they persecute my disciples and confiscate all our books and tapes, and forbid them to gather together to practice? Just because I say the communists are no good, that's no grounds to persecute my people. If the communists are good, I will say they are good. It's just the true speaking things. I am anti-communist as long as the communists are no good. As long as communists don't bring happiness and prosperity to people and freedom to people, I will always be anti-communist. But when they bring all these necessary things to the country, I will not be anti-communist anymore. I will say communists are good.

So, it's up to them to prove it. It's not up to me. I cannot change my speech as far as the truth is concerned. I will always speak the truth. If the communists are good, as they are improving a little bit now, I also praise their improvement. But it's not enough! They have to change their policy. They have to be more spiritual, more enlightened, more moral, more clean for the country to grow and for the people to be happy and free. They have to practice freedom, not just talk about freedom. Not to advertise for freedom, but have to practice it, to give people true freedom. Then I will be also pro-communist. [Master laughs.]

If communists are truly so good, we will praise them, we will cooperate with them. But up to now it hasn't been that good. It only brings disaster, and makes people homeless, makes millions of people become beggars in a strange land, where they are also brutally oppressed! That should bring shame on the government, that her subjects are brutally treated in another foreign land. This is no honor for any country to have that kind of event, right? If the police in Hong Kong beats the Au Lac refugees in Hong Kong's soil, that is a shame for the Au Lac government at home, because she couldn't take care of her people, and let her children wander out and become beggars, and subject to cruelty under foreign people's hands. This is a shame. How can I praise the communist government if they allow this thing to happen? [Applause]

So, that's no excuse for them to persecute my followers at all. Let alone non-followers, and beating them up and persecuting them, when they already returned home, when they already surrendered, with nothing more to rely on, when the free world turned their backs on them already. They have already kind of fallen from the horse. Any gentleman would not beat a person who has already fallen on his knees, right? So, it is below the Au Lac government's dignity to beat up the surrendered opponent. This is below any person's dignity, never mind a national government. So, this is what I criticize. This is what I say is 'no good.' And if a good government should accept my good advice, and change it, then it will be good. [Applause] Otherwise, they just show their own lowliness, pettiness and revengeful attitude, and low spiritual understanding, and no manners.

So, there's nothing to talk about when some people don't have manners, and don't have a sense of self-correction, and always revenge and take advantage of the weakness of the people who have nothing else to defend for themselves. Even the free world already turned them down and if the communist regime keeps treating people like that, how can I have respect for them? How can I say they are good? If they want me to respect them, they must be worth it, they must prove it. Instead of shutting my mouth up, or shutting my disciples' mouths up, they should prove their own worthiness and then we will shut up. I don't even want to talk bad about people, what for? You know what I mean? It's no good for me. I don't like it. I like to talk about happy things, enlightened things, about Light, about peace, about enjoyment. They waste my time.

Now that's the reason why they persecute our disciples, because we are religious. They don't like religion. Besides, I say communists are no good. I speak truthfully and that's against communist rule. Maybe they don't like truth. That's the only sign that they don't like the truth. Because what I say is the truth. If I tell lies, they can persecute me, but I say the truth. And if they persecute me, that means they persecute the truth, that means they love lying. [Applause] And if a government who represents falsity, then it is not a true government. So, that's why we cannot work with them, we cannot talk to them. That's why they don't like us, because they are the opposite of the truth. If they change and if they accept their failures, then we can tell that they represent the truth, but otherwise, we cannot.

Maintaining an objective and unbiased judgement

So, where were we before? Oh, president Clinton? Okay, I do not blame him for what he did. I still think he's a very good president because he boosts the American economy and he handles foreign affairs very well and he's a very loving person. He really tries to save Americans' lives. That's why he doesn't always jump into foreign wars, to get the praise that he's a national hero. Most American people love cowboy style. [Laughter] Bang, bang and here you are, kill them. If they're not with us, kill them.

But president Clinton is more prudent, a prudent president. But when it comes to a real decision, he can make it. I knew he would. That's why before I always told you that he's okay. Not only today right? Yes. Because I know he's a genuine person, he is very good for America. I have more sympathy with him. I don't have sympathy with presidents, not often, but I think because many people scold him and criticize him, that's why he wins my sympathy, because I know he is not that bad.

Well, he probably had affairs with women that I don't know. I cannot tell you that it's true. But he is not too good at defending for himself. That's why he tumbles into a lot of problems. But let's face it, maybe he's too handsome and many women like him. Sometimes when a woman likes a man and a man rejects her, she will cause trouble, also. Not necessary that he likes her that he causes trouble. Maybe he did not like her. Sometimes it's like that. You know what I mean? And rejection makes a woman feel very wounded and hurt, and she turns around and makes trouble.

In a recent time there was a monk in Italy who was accused for having affair with a woman, and the monk kept quiet because according to monastery rules he doesn't publicize his followers' confessions and affairs. And afterward, after a long time, maybe twenty or thirty years, the woman confessed that it was a false accusation because she loved the monk and the monk did not love her, and therefore, she turned around and blackened his name. But because of the monastery vow, the monk did not open his mouth, and kept quiet. Because something confidential concerning other peoples' honor and confession, the monk could not open his mouth.

You know what I mean? If someone confesses to the monk, the murder or something that he has done, the monk cannot tell it out to the police. If the monk knows a secret of a follower, he cannot tell it to the police, even if to save his life or to save his honor. So, twenty years or thirty years later on, the woman finally uncovered the secret that it was her who had love for the monk and was rejected by him, and she was angry, and turned around and harmed him in this accusation. But the monk kept quiet.

So, who knows? Sometime later, maybe these one or two women will confess to us that it was the other way around. Yes. Even if he had these things in the past, he doesn't have it

now. The present is important. 'Every saint has a past, every sinner has a future.' So, we can only see what's the present situation, what the present offers to your country at that moment. That is more valuable than what he has done in the past.

Besides, it's difficult to prove all this, they have no proof of anything; about what he has done. He's not good at defending, he needs a lot of lawyers, I think. Oh, we have plenty, we can offer to him free of charge. We have enlightened lawyers who know better, who can talk better, in an enlightened and fair manner.

But never mind, he has to do it for himself, has to learn to defend himself. Nevertheless, I think he's a good president, politically speaking, economically speaking and human right speaking. And I think because of the lifting of the embargo Au Lac has become better, economically as well as manipulation is concerned. It has become better, freer. And who knows? In the future, it might become even a more democratic country, and true democracy probably will return in the very near future. We can pray for that.

The Haiti operation, everyone praises Mr. Carter. I praise him, too. He's brave, eloquent, and very, very tactful, very good. He is also a very peaceful president which the American people did not appreciate while he was in office. Too bad. You still don't know with president Clinton. So, try to learn the lesson. Now, everyone praises former president Carter. I do praise him also. But we forget, the main focus is president Clinton. He uses the strong arm tactic but at the same time, allows Mr. Carter to come with the soft tactic, to save a lot of lives, especially American soldiers' lives. And this is brilliant. People think Mr. Carter gets the credit, but if Mr. Clinton didn't use force, to threaten and to intimidate the ex-government, the military government of Haiti, I don't think Mr. Carter would have success. Because soft approach has been used for many years already on Haiti, and it did not work. So, they needed some strong force, to intimidate them. And that's how the peace talks can succeed.

So actually, the main credit goes to president Clinton. He knows how to use both: Soft and hard, tough and tender, see? And he is very humble as well, because when he does that, the credit goes to Carter. But he doesn't mind, see? As long as people have peace, democracy and as long as his goal is achieved in a peaceful manner without losing Americans' lives, he goes for it. Otherwise, he could just do it himself. Fifteen thousand strong Americans will win, win the Haitian poor soldiers who are very limited in number and poorly equipped, already depleted with the embargo. Surely, they'd win in the end. But he wanted peace, he wanted to save lives.

Only a humane government can earn its people's faith

Let's hope that in the future Au Lac will learn better. Only the Au Lac government has to change, not the Hong Kong government or not the Au Lac refugees' attitude. They cannot change them when they know that their comrades have come home and got persecuted or beaten up, or discriminated against or interrogated or watched over every day, every move. And then of course, they are frightened to go home. If the Au Lac government changed, they would all go home. They would have no excuse even to protest, or go on hunger strike or commit suicide. It is because the Au Lac government gives them the excuse, and then the free world just forces upon them to accept the repatriation, and both sides force the refugees. Therefore, they're sometimes so tense that they commit suicide or protest. And that's why we try to help them, because they are so desperate.

THE WORLD IS A STAGE FOR OUR PLAY ¹⁷⁴

In the very beginning, we were with God; we were one with the essence of the highest Buddha. At that time, there was nothing to do in the universe. It was empty like an ocean of love, so pure and tranquil, without any movement, or anything interesting. Therefore, when God or the creator suggested that we have some activities and add some excitement to the universe, we all agreed with joy. Thereafter, we shared in part of God's creative work. Each one of us has to do something and has to play a role. We each cast our own character. That is why there are so many different colors of skin, different temperaments and even different shortcomings. Thus, we created the universe. We created different planets, different nations and different people.

When we came down, we brought some tools or toys along with us, such as our characters and the roles. Since we created them, we also need to destroy them in order to rest and then to create new ones. Suppose you had created a bad character, perhaps a hot tempered or murderous one, even though it was your role, it was not meant to be played forever, because the roles in the play still have limitations. You may play it for a hundred years at most, or you may murder a few people, so as to carry out the drama, thus making the universe have activities, have the virtuous, the evil and transmigration. But you cannot continue to kill people like this or be so hot tempered. At the end, you still need to eliminate this character.

The character you created is only for you to come down and play with for fun. After the play is over, this tool or this malevolent character has to be eliminated. How do you eliminate it? You have to try your best to overcome this character. It was created for you to play with, but because it is defective you have to destroy it. This has to be done by no one but yourself. You will have to destroy and dissolve this character completely by yourself in order to reclaim your original quality, which has no discrimination of good or bad. Do you understand what I mean? Otherwise, you carry this character with you as you transmigrate through the universe, contaminating yourself and others as well. Unless it is cleansed off, you cannot recover your original self that existed before the creation, and before the drama was set on the stage.

In case you have not eliminated the qualities before you die, then you cannot return to where you came from. Because before we came down here, we did not have these toys, such characters and temperaments. At that time, we were in an ocean of love and purity; we were just as loving, as perfect and as almighty as God. In order to have some fun, to carry out the drama, and to make the universe more interesting and diversified, we played our roles as different characters, like the performers in a drama.

Originally, we were the children of God and we were with God. Later, we wanted to have some fun so we signed a contract with God. We all supported Hiers plan of creation and agreed to follow it. Subsequently, according to the plan, we created Africa, Europe and the Americas to be this way, and Formosa, Cambodia, Thailand... to be that way; each one being unique and beautiful in its own way. But the trouble is, sometimes we overplayed our roles; we forgot to wash off our stage makeup or to remove our masks, and we continued on with the play. We forgot the will of God and couldn't stop playing. That is why this worldly game is no longer fun and it gets worse as we go along.

Now, those who are tired of playing and wish to rest must eliminate all those characters borrowed from the second realm, for such characters do not exist above the second realm,

174. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, October 25, 1994 (Originally in Chinese).

not even our brain, the computer within us exists. These tools are not needed up there; without karma, there is no need of temperament, no need to have good or bad. It was originally quite uneventful! Now, if we want to go Home, we must dissolve all these tools and characters; we must destroy all these qualities that we have borrowed, before we can become our original self again. Do you understand what I mean? You continue to play because you have been here for so long that you have forgotten.

If you want to go back now, you must follow the Master and listen to the Master's instructions. You must eliminate all those borrowed and defective tools. There must be no more greed, anger and obsessions, no more alcohol, no more meat... no more malevolent qualities. If you still cannot let go of these, then you have to stay here. Why is that? Because these tools and qualities belong down here, and if we are still attached to these, then we have to stay here with our tools. We can go up only after we have let go of them.

It is like if we were to visit the president at the presidential palace, we have to leave our luggage or guns at the gate. If you don't want to leave your weapons, your baggage and other junk with the security guard, then you will not be allowed to go inside to see the president. Similarly, if we still indulge in greed, hatred, obsession, fame, gain and other vicious qualities that are unfitting up there, then we will not be allowed to see the king of the universe.

When we came down here to have fun together, some people chose the roles that had the worse qualities, while some others chose those that had higher positions. In fact, only in this world we have the good and the bad, we see others as virtuous or evil, superior or inferior. When we picked our roles before we came down, no one intentionally chose anything. It was like God put out a big pile of different qualities, the good, the bad, the greedy, the angry, the obsessed, the irritable, the benign, et cetera, for us to pick one to wear, just like costumes. No one complained that his position was not what he wanted, that he wanted to be the king and not the policeman, et cetera. At that time, no one had such ideas at all.

When we were up there, all things were equal. We were not impressed by fame or gain, we did not care about being poor or unfortunate, or worse yet, having a poor figure. We and God agreed to create a universe in which there should be a variety of different people, animals, flowers, trees, et cetera. Besides, we were all willing to come down here to each play a role, choose a character in the creative plan. But after the role was over, the character was supposed to be eliminated and not left to roam around the universe. For the universe can only be an ocean of love, nothing but simplicity and purity.

At the end, if we were still unable to learn our lessons, or unable to fight, conquer, and destroy the character, then we had to keep it in our bag; just like when you keep leftover money in your pocket. If we come down again another time, we will have to choose another tool or another character before we can come here.

No one was born into this world exactly perfect. From birth until a certain stage at least, we have to be imperfect, which means that we must have a lot of junky qualities. So, the last time, if you did not eliminate that character, now this time you have to come down with another lousy character, that becomes two to make things more difficult for you. And if you do not eliminate both characters this time, then next time around, you'll have three. Your qualities will become worse and worse, with more and more shortcomings. If all three are not eliminated, later you'll have four, or five, or six, or seven, or eight... and you'll end up in a mess indeed! [Master and audience laugh.] Therefore, we say that some people are really bad and have a lot of shortcomings, because life after life, they did not practice and

learn their lessons well; instead of eliminating their rotten qualities, they accumulate more bad qualities each time they came down. In addition to that, they even contaminated themselves further by imitating their neighbors.

Therefore, the faster we advance in our self-cultivation the better off we are! You must persevere and try to eliminate any undesirable qualities that you may have; otherwise, there is no guarantee that it'll be any better the next time! [Master laughs.] The baggage might be too heavy to carry! When we came down the first time, we jumped down with empty bags. Now we try to go back up, wow! We have so many tools, habits and burdens, and all are unnecessary baggage. We have become used to working with them, that is why we hang onto them so dearly. We have developed a serious attachment to them and that is troublesome.

The negative qualities we have are also a type of obsession; we are immediately liberated if we can let them go. Therefore, it is said, 'Let go of the butcher knife, be a Buddha instantly.' Aside from the butcher knife, the same applies to anything that binds us in this world. So, if you want to go 'Home,' then practice diligently.

THE ENIGMA OF YIN AND YANG ¹⁷⁵

Why would most people like to have a boyfriend or a girlfriend? It is because he or she lacks the yin (feminine aspect) or yang (masculine aspect). We are born with the desire to find God. Before we succeed, we take whatever is most convenient. Therefore, we seek boyfriends or girlfriends, or get married, et cetera. When in love, each person gives the other either yin or yang. So, the two of them are very happy, very much at ease and contented. Therefore, when you are really in love, wow! You are so happy, because you give naturally, and then you have the yin and yang naturally. God arranges them to flow between you. However, people tend to forget later, and become unnatural. When in love longer, they expect from each other! They have been so happy in love because the Yin and yang energies have been replenishing each other naturally. Suddenly, one day, they will get used to this kind of feeling, thinking it is because of the other person that they are so happy, not realizing that God is charging them naturally. When you are not thinking, God flows this energy to the two of you simultaneously and naturally supplements you. This is being given naturally when you are not thinking, so the two of you are happy.

As you start to think, then we say 'missing,' missing the other person. We think we are happy because of that person. Then, we begin to have attachment, and want to bind him to our sides, wishing to retain this happiness forever, just like when freshly in love. As we start thinking in this way, the energy is transformed into a limited one. We think it is from the other person instead of from God, so the energy is suddenly severed, understand? The power of our thoughts is so strong that anything would come true accordingly. So, as your thought emerges, the system is disconnected. The two persons then rely on each other, because they feel they are lacking something! They will keep searching. Unable to get contentment, they would capture, bind and cling to each other, and sink deeper in agony together.

Originally, they were two persons, now they stick together as if they have transformed into one, but still with two egos. [Master and audience laugh.] Do you understand? The energies stick together, but not the egos! [Master and audience laugh.] And then the problem starts right here. Each of us originally have our own energy and ego, controlling our own life, and being our own master. Before knowing the other person, we were always

175. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, October 10, 1994 (Originally in Chinese).

our own master! 'Today, I will watch television, eat a certain vegetarian dish and I myself want to eat it, without caring about anyone.' As the two get together and become one later, they supplement each other, and are happy together. However, their egos have not become one. Both of them are not accustomed to having two egos, and would only follow their individual ego. She wants to go swimming, while he prefers watching television. The two heads simply won't coordinate, and it could be very troublesome. Both of them want to be the boss, though not deliberately. They have forgotten that all their capital is now in the same investment, but with two bosses. [Master and audience laugh.] Do you understand what I mean? [Audience: Understand!] Then, the two bosses start quarrelling, as both want to take charge.

So, you see, this is where marriage failures start. The quarrels carry on, not contented with the love, the two egos try to become the only boss, destroying or suppressing the other one. As both of them are doing the same, there are struggles and agonies. Love vanishes, followed by the energy also vanishing. The plug to the greatest energy supply from God is disconnected. Now, they can only rely on themselves. Their vitality is limited, so they feel it is diminishing. They start blaming one another: 'You don't love me anymore!' Then, they would pick faults with each other. 'Why are you becoming like this?' They never saw any faults before, when they were abundant in vitality and bliss. Even when his hair turned white, it would not be noticed, [Master and audience laugh.] not even when the floor is covered with fallen hair. [Master and audience laugh.] They simply sweep the floor while singing, 'La-la-la...' [Master and audience laugh.] 'The hair is beautiful, I love you...' Now, they can't stand seeing one single hair on the pillow. They are picking faults, here, there and everywhere. It is because they are no longer happy, not contented, also because of the two egos. The two bosses are fighting for control. Since both of them want to take charge, surely one of them has to be eliminated!

As a new spiritual practitioner, our greatest fear is being attracted to some heretical paths. Heretical paths, meaning side tracks, not necessarily those inscribing mantras, or reciting hu-la-hop. This is not definite. Heretical path simply means not the path that we want to walk on. New practitioners are not steady enough to resist the allure of lust and passion. Then we will become weaker, and forget to get the vitality from God. We are finished when we depend on the other feeble person to render us happiness. Once overpowered, our spiritual practice would stop dead, not an inch of further progress.

That was why ancient people advised practitioners to become monks. Having become a monk, you better don't look at girls anymore. There is an Indian saying: 'Even the girl is seventy years old, teeth all gone, [Master and audience laugh.] hair all gone, dying on her bed, still don't look at her.' [Master and audience laugh.] They were frightened to such extent, understand? It is because they fear that the new practitioners cannot steady their mind. Once abducted, their affinity with God is severed. Without the connection, he would think the other person can give him happiness. Therefore, their vitality is getting less, because they rely on each other. Observing that you are relying on someone else, God would say, 'Okay! You don't need me anymore! Good bye!' This is a natural and automatic system, understand? You get what you asked for. So, the bible says: 'If you pray to God, and find your kingdom of God within, all will be added unto you.' If all you asked for is that tiny petty drop, then it is all you will get. This is the way with the automatic system. This is why people in the world cannot find God. They recite so many scriptures each day, but they can see no one. Whatever they prayed for is not answered, understand? They are either relying on people, or on those inscribed or typewritten words. What can God do about it?

When we are in love with someone, our vitality would be united with that of the other party, not detachable. Not detachable but with two heads. When the two heads are heading for different directions, there is big trouble, causing quarrels and arguments, understand? Now, do you understand why there are quarrels? Think about it and you can understand. Both of them want to be the boss. Sometimes, it is not intentional, not deliberate, just a habit. We were used to being single. From our birth until now, twenty or thirty years old, we always walk alone, making our own decisions, deciding when we will eat, and when to go to the toilet. [Laughter] Oh! That is still negotiable! [Master and audience laugh.] But, negotiation won't work in most cases. Each one sternly maintains their self-righteousness. Sometimes, this may not be deliberate, only a habit, not realizing that they should also consider the other party. Therefore, most marriage and love would be broken at a certain stage. We really cannot blame the people outside for being in love today, but not anymore on tomorrow, getting married today, and getting divorced next year.... They simply do not understand the mental state and this kind of system.

When two persons are in love, they replenish each other. One providing the Yin energy, the other providing the yang. Sigh! It is so healing, [Master and audience laugh.] so delightful, and so you get addicted, understand? It's because humans also represent God, they are equipped with a power generator similar to that of God! Therefore, when that person loves you, it resembles God loving you, so you are very happy. If the two of you love each other, well, both of you are fully charged, right? You may have observed that people in love look like idiots, care about nothing. [Master and audience laugh.] The most painful moment is when they are forsaken, or when the love has just been cut off. It is as if the vitality is lost, the electric current is abruptly disconnected, so it is very painful. This is why people love to be in love, because of the happiness. Actually, the happiness is not due to that person, but due to fact that the vitalizing energy was replenished.

We won't be disappointed if we go for the most mighty power generator in the very beginning, which is everlasting for our use. It is all right for us to fall in love after we have steadied our pace! It is all right to have a mate. I am just afraid that we might not want any at that time. It is all right to have one or have none. It is only more troublesome if you have one more ego. [Master and audience laugh.] Otherwise, you have only one ego, save the trouble of two egos. Sleeping at night, one of you want to leave the windows open, the other wants them closed. One prefers to have the light on, the other wants them switched off. Even trifles could cause a quarrel, right? It will be even worse after you have a baby. One wishes the child would behave this way, the other one wants the other way. One teaches the child this, the other teaches another thing. No one would give in, and both think they are right, because they are both Gods. I am sorry! [Master and audience laugh.]

Actually, the other half of our soul is not to be found in this world. Only when we have found our true self, then we have truly found the other half of our soul. Therefore, even when we were successful in marriage, wealthy, abundant in anything in this world, we still feel like we are lacking something! It is because one person could not have sufficient energy to revitalize another person, unless we understand where the vitalities of both parties really come from. Then, we don't have to worry about our supply being cut off. It might be simple to say, but difficult to understand. At least, you should have an idea about this, and then do your best to practice diligently each day. Our willpower will get stronger, and anything we wish for will come true. That is the time when we possess the almighty, invisible miracle power. Then, there is no need to recite any mantra. Simply think about it and you will have everything.

The profundity of body, speech and mind

You think that body, speech and mind are separate from each other, don't you? In fact, body, speech and mind are different forms of the same material. Therefore, our thoughts are the same as our actions. That is why we have to examine our thoughts, actions and words. Sometimes we feel that it does not matter when we merely think of something, which we will not actually do. Of course, it is better this way. However, we have in fact violated the precepts. Do you understand what I mean? It is because our actions originate from our thoughts. Isn't it so?

For example, sometimes you go to buy vegetables, because in your mind you want to do so. Of course, there is a difference between the thought and the act of buying vegetables. Nonetheless, the thought can still work. That is why there is so much trouble in our world! Too many people have bad thoughts, and then the atmosphere becomes not too good. So as we practice spiritually, we must be frank with ourselves. It is not that when nobody knows what we do, it will be fine. We ourselves know. We ourselves are one of the beings linking the whole universe. We and the creation are one. Therefore, if we know, the creation knows. [Master and audience laugh.] It's terrible, isn't it? [Audience: Yes.]

Let's not talk about creation, since that is not so easy to prove, but some people have magical powers, the ability to see beyond the physical world, or read people's minds. They know, they look at us and then they know what is on our minds. Those with supernatural vision can take a look at us and know whom we love. When two people are sitting next to each other, although there is a space between them, if they are in love, their energy will merge. [Laughter] Anyone can see it clearly. It's like there are invisible hands, which stretch out and hold each other. [Laughter] Then everybody can tell. Therefore, we cannot say that our thoughts do not matter.

Of course, we have only started our spiritual practice, and we cannot completely control our actions, speech and thoughts as much as we want to. However, when a bad thought enters our mind, we immediately cut it out. Then it is not so bad. We know at once that this is wrong, and we stop it. We use other ways to control it, to suppress it. We recite the Buddha's name or use our willpower to chase it away. This is also a form of spiritual practice. It is the spirit of striving to become better. However, it is not that there is a difference between our thoughts and actions. There is no difference! Body, speech and mind are one. Do not think that body and mind are different. Everything comes from the mind. It is because of our strong desire that we have this body. If we did not have such a strong desire, we would not have this body. That is why many people who practice to control their mind can make their bodies invisible. Even though they are in front of us, we cannot see them.

Sometimes our physical bodies don't exist, it's not that we truly don't exist! You go and ask someone who has lost his arm or leg about how he feels. He feels that he still has his arm. It's just that he can't use it. If we can see from a different level, we can still see the shape of an arm, an obscure form seems to be there. That is why people feel that their bodies still exist after they die. Some souls of the dead people still run around, being confused, and making trouble. It's because to him, his body still exists. Therefore, all is created by the mind. What is in our minds affects our bodies or our actions.

In fact, there really is no body. If there were bodies, spiritual practitioners would not be able to make themselves invisible. Do you understand? They cannot make their bodies disappear, or become invisible. You know, some people who practice yoga can bury themselves in the ground or in a coffin for one or two months without any problem. Their

rates of respiration become very low, just like there isn't any. The cells in their bodies, the pores in their skin can breathe, so they can live on. In fact, our bodies are also controlled by a kind of subconsciousness. Like the heart, some people can control it and make it stop beating, and they won't die. Don't think that we will die when our hearts stop beating. Many people lay on their deathbeds in the hospital and their hearts stop beating. Doctors may announce that they are dead, but then a few days or a few hours later, they came back to life again. They then tell stories about heaven. Right? Some talk about hell, but not too many people describe that. [Master laughs.] Perhaps they are too frightened that they dare not talk about it when they returned. [Master laughs.]

These stories kind of console us. They let us know that truly we do not need this body to live. We can continue to live without this body. However, our souls have to understand, to be educated, to be shown the direction, before we die. Otherwise, when we lose this body later, our souls would still be puzzled and run around everywhere. They still feel that they have a body – the astral body still exists. We still want to grow vegetables, to eat a meal, to look for a wife..., but we can not find one, and we can not do anything. Then we do not feel satisfied, and suffer greatly in our minds. This is how ghosts and devils come about. If we already understand clearly when we are still living in this world, and we cut off all those desires, then when we die we will know immediately as Master comes. We will go together, having no confused concepts, having nothing to relish, having nothing to be scared of, and having no question at all. At that time we understand everything, because we already understood when we are alive.

That is why I said yesterday that practicing magical powers is useless. Still you often ask, 'Why can't we practice to gain magical powers? Why can't we cure people's illnesses, and on and on?' Sure you can! But magical power is not the ultimate way. Do you understand? If you use magical powers, you will forget to find inwardly the Truth. Many people cure others' illnesses, and then they are well liked by people. However, those who cure people's illnesses cannot give them the gift of eternal liberation. Curing an illness makes a physical body well, and that is all. Do you understand? Then everybody relies on that person, saying, 'Oh! I'll see him next time when I am ill.' Whatever illness he has, he can get cured this way. He never thinks to look within because he was not tested or taught a lesson. Some people only look within and find God when they are suffering from illnesses.

GUIDING OUR CHILDREN FROM YOUNG ¹⁷⁶

Have you seen this movie for children called 'Pinocchio,' about a wooden puppet? A childless old man carves a wooden puppet to amuse himself. It turns out to be so pretty that he says to himself, 'How nice if it would become a real child!' A fairy coincidentally appears and grants his wish. Gradually, the puppet is transformed into a child.

The fairy also tells the puppet that it should behave well, be obedient, be willing to learn, do good deeds, contribute himself unconditionally, and be moral, et cetera. Perhaps he even had to meditate. [Master laughs.] Only then could it become a real child. 'Otherwise,' she said, 'a bad child is just like a wooden puppet.' Do you understand? These tales are not simply tales. There are some implicit inner teachings about spiritual practice in them.

Take 'Aladdin and His Magic Lamp' for instance. Have you watched that one? [Audience: Yes!] Aladdin was only a beggar in the first place. He became a prince because he pursued spiritual practice. The lamp within him was polished and shined. His closed mind accumulated through many lifetimes, and his bad memories were released. So, he had

176. Group meditation, Hsihu Center, Miaoli, Formosa, October 9, 1994 (Originally in Chinese).

many magical powers, just like the genie in the lamp. That means our mind has been opened at that time. After enlightenment, our brain becomes more efficient, so we can do many things. For instance, I can design clothing, lanterns and paint paintings. Those are the magical powers that I didn't have before. [Applause] But, these are nothing great! I am just giving you some examples. After enlightenment, we can comprehend many things.

Nevertheless, as I have explained before, it is possible only if you truly want it. You won't be enlightened simply by someone forcing you to come and get the initiation. This is not the way! Therefore, any teacher would say, 'Rely on yourself!' Not that you don't need a teacher, but that you must be truly sincere. Otherwise, even if you stayed here clinging to the Master for several hundred years, you'd still be the same! You cannot become a prince as long as you are clinging to your preconceptions, your habits and your quality of a beggar. Just like the beggar, Aladdin, he could have become a prince, if it were not for his persistent fault of telling lies. He still wanted to cheat his lover, and subsequently was punished. Only then the demon was able to get hold of his weakness, understand? Eventually, he was exposed to everyone as being a dishonest beggar.

This resembles very much the situation of our spiritual practice. If we are enlightened but truly not realizing why we are enlightened and why it is like that, we will definitely run into trouble again. The demon will return. This is what the demon does, waits to test us. So, don't blame the demon. It is no use blaming the demon since it is our own fault. If we are good, no harm could come to us, doesn't matter how many demons come. Like in the story, even if the demon existed, but, at that time, Aladdin still had his shining lamp which he could polish every day. He could command the magical power of the lamp to protect him and do many things for him. Later, because he lied, he didn't keep the precepts well, exposing a flaw, a hole for the demon to penetrate, the demon grabbed his weak point, and was able to harm him and take his lamp away. That lamp represents our inner wisdom, our virtues and inner self.

The princess he married is our soul! Do you understand? Having found our soul, our own master, no other girl is more beautiful, nothing on earth is more precious. Only when we have found our own master then we are completely contented. Otherwise, all the things in the world mean nothing to us. For instance, the beggar had become a prince and owned everything. Yet, he still longed to marry the princess. He did not want any other girl on earth. He wanted only the princess. The princess symbolizes our soul, our inner self that cannot be replaced.

Sometimes, you can find some valuable teachings when watching the television. Therefore, before showing a cartoon to the children, watch it yourself beforehand and understand it well. Sometimes you have to explain it to the children. Don't think that the children cannot understand. They can, if you explain it to them. I have played with many children and found that they are just like adults. I respect them very much. Sometimes I am so shocked that I dare not treat them too casually. They are really smart, often surprising the adults. This reminds us that they also have a soul, a Buddha within. We should not recklessly remark that they are only kids. Of course, every child is different. However, should we know how to teach them, they would all behave well. If we don't know how to treat them, they observe our weakness and start being mischievous. Once their mischief becomes a habit, it is difficult to change them.

If you do not teach them well and put them on the virtuous path while they are small, it will be too late to correct them afterwards. However, to educate them, and show them a sacred and correct path, we ourselves must understand perfectly. Is that not so? Parents are the initial teachers, the most important teachers. They raise the children from when

they are small; the initial stage is the most vital. Therefore, parents are the best teachers of children. If they are not guided to the right path then, how can we do it later? They will have already travelled a long way, too far away to be pulled back.

So, we ourselves must be clear about the path we are walking on before we can guide our children. What you have taught them, the books you let them read, the friends you advised them to have, and the conditions and background that you provided for their growth, will eventually be reflected in the result. He is born carrying the genes of past lives. If you do not help him to improve from childhood, guiding him to a better direction, later he will act according to his previous genes. He will be exactly as he was before. Doesn't matter how many hundred times he was born, he remains the same type of person, or even worse. Because his genes are bad, he attracts bad things, and he becomes worse and worse.

We should start bending him when he is small, as if shaping a bonsai, a miniature Japanese potted tree, right? They start bending and shaping it just as it begins to grow. Bind it with ropes, let it grow the way they want it to grow. Now, for a tree like this one, [Master is pointing to a tall tree nearby.] can you tie it up? Can you shape it to grow that way? Not anymore! It is too rigid now to be bound or bent. When it was very young and flexible, you could have shaped it like the bonsai. Otherwise, it naturally grows in its own way and at its own speed, unable to control any more. Do you understand? Therefore, it is very vital for parents to take good care of the children. At the same time, you should be serious in learning, in getting enlightenment, really understand the teachings and morals. Only when you are enlightened can you help the children, guide them to a correct and better direction. [Applause]

We can still change after growing up, but a special type of teacher is required. These teachers were not so badly needed when we were small. It was all right giving them second hand teachings when they were small. However, when they have grown up, first hand teachings are necessary, which is seeking an enlightened Master. Having found a good enlightened Master, having learned well and trained well, you can carry on teaching the children. Even after the death of the Master, the children can still grow up well under your enlightened teaching and correct concepts. Therefore, God gives us children also to remind us to behave like a teacher. We have to perfect ourselves, because a child is waiting for you to help and guide him. God entrusts a child – a new soul in your hands, demanding you to take care of him, polish him, and create a prototype. So, don't complain about having children! They are your lessons to learn how to be a teacher.

So, God gives us children to train our latent talent of being a teacher. You have to know everything if you have a child, understand? The more you know, the wiser your child will become, and more definite his direction. Most parents in the world do not know much. They themselves are not steady, are unclear about their direction, morally not stable, and not wise enough. This is why we grew up and became so wishy-washy, undecided about our direction, and find it so difficult to start spiritual practice now. If you had been immersed in an atmosphere of spiritual practice from childhood, learned meditation and moral teachings, you would learn very fast from Master here, right? You might not even need Master! Your parents teaching you would have been sufficient.

Sigh! This is why the whole world continues to be so wishy-washy, fighting only for wealth and fame, virtually without thinking. They do not realize only spiritual food can satisfy us the most. Everyone is still greedy and sinking, because they are not satisfied with anything. They are not satisfied with the highest position, the greatest wealth. All because they have not experienced the vital essence.

Now, if more of us, the adults, would practice spiritually, increasing in number, truly and accurately got in contact with our inner nature, understand morals and wisdom, our children would grow up in a splendid way. Should the whole nation pursue spiritual practice, all the children would become saints, saints from childhood. Subsequently, the whole world would be in peace, virtually no need for any weapons. Everything would develop prosperously and naturally. For instance, I have never learned painting, fashion design or jewelry design, yet I can do it now if I wish to. I can earn money to help the needy people. I have more than enough to spend! On the contrary, worldly people sometimes have to work very hard and yet cannot earn enough, right? They cannot even save themselves, let alone saving money to help others. You see, there is such a drastic difference!

So, you see. Only our true wisdom is the most reliable, not the worldly position or wealth, nor the earthly beauty or talents. However, it is easy to talk. People have grown too old and mature to change easily. Even then, hard to change doesn't mean impossible to change. It is still possible even if we do it slowly.

COLORING OUR LIFE ¹⁷⁷

I read in the newspapers today that life a hundred years ago was very terrible for people. They didn't have it so clean like today. And they didn't have it so convenient like this, really! At that time, I think the cars were drawn by horses. And sometimes in the winter, it was very cold. And they kept the horses next to their houses, or in the buildings. And all the smell, you know, they had to share together. Because of the manufactories' smoke and environmental contamination, the people's health were a little bit endangered. That's why in the old times, people died younger than now, because the environment was so filthy and contaminated by all kinds of hazardous substances from the manufactories and the chemical waste from all these big companies.

Actually, only a hundred years, and we, humanity, have made a big step of progress in all kinds of aspects. But they said even before we had cars, they had a lot of road accidents, more road accidents than we have now with cars. I could hardly believe it. But it could be true, because they said sometimes the horses, they broke loose and then they killed thousands. And sometimes they just ran around on the road and kicked people also. Today we have car accidents also. But even at that time, they did have road accidents with horses. That is one of the main reasons.

But even then nowadays still many sicknesses kill people, kill about eighteen millions a year – different diseases. Because some of us also do not take precautions to guard our precious body which has been given by God to do some mission on earth for some purpose, also to realize our almighty power. Something's like we smoke too much, we drink too much, we eat too much flesh and invite all these bacteria from the flesh into our systems, et cetera. All these killing factors make our lives miserable, a miserable time.

Live a better life

Actually, we could live a better life if we organized more, if we appreciated our body more. If we ate just nutritious food for our body, and not ate because of the taste, and ate just a reasonable amount, then of course, our health would not be so much endangered. You see, most of the vegetarian people, they become healthier. Is that not so? [Audience: Yes.] Many of you became healthier after taking initiation and switching onto a vegetarian diet. Is

177. Group meditation, Singapore Center, Singapore, September 29, 1994 (Originally in English).

that not so? [Audience: Yes.] Actually, the hospitals are full of meat-eating people, [Laughter] no problem. We can see the proof there.

Not because the vegetarian diet is healthy in itself only, but because the vibration is very harmonious to our body. Whereby the vibrations of the animals are not that harmonious, not so peaceful. Actually, it is very easy, not difficult to live a simple and healthy life. There is no need so much for medicine, no need so much injection. Many of us harm ourselves because we bring poisonous substances into our bodies. Otherwise, if we know how to live a simple, nutritious, healthy life, we really don't need doctors so much. And the doctor can have more holidays and both of us stay healthy.

You see, I work hard, I am very small, and I don't really take so much nutrition or I don't have time to consider so much. But still being a vegetarian saves me a lot of sickness, saves a lot of money for the doctors. Otherwise, if I have to keep going to the doctor all the time, it would be troublesome. I go to the doctor sometimes, but minor things. Compared to you, I go very little. Compared to the people outside, for my size. [Laughter] You have to consider my size also. Yes, I am blessed by God and Buddha to do my job.

And sometimes, if I don't do my job, I also will get sick, because the energy is built up inside and not let out. Therefore, you don't worry about hard work. You should work and spend your energy, because in our body, there are about seven chakras which can draw in the energy from the universe. They are just like a battery, automatically charged by universal power. That's why we can run our machine all the time. And when we meditate, this power is even in more abundance. So, the more we give, the more it comes in. It will never stop. So, we don't worry. Don't worry about karma and helping people, or taking karma and all that. If people need help, you help.

It's only when we try to interfere with the people's mind, like try to control them, or try to tell them to do what we want them to do for a selfish purpose, then we create karma. Otherwise, if we love people and we want to help them in their time of need, even if we truly get karma from them, it doesn't matter. Understand? It doesn't matter at all, because we should sacrifice for each other. We should live with each other in love and don't mind the karma.

Just like today, occasionally you have a buffet like this, it's also very good. You can eat different food, and you see how tasty it is, and maybe you try to ask them how to cook it. Or you buy some books, cookbooks, Indian cookbook, Chinese cookbook, vegetarian and then you can cook tasty dishes for your family, keep them healthy, and also introduce them to a vegetarian diet. Most of the people like to eat vegetarian. It's just that they cannot find tasty food. And then they cannot eat it. They cannot survive if everyday they eat salad and soya sauce. [Laughter] Yeah? You know what I mean? So, if sometimes our family members don't want to eat vegetarian food, we have to check-up whether our cooking talent is up-to-date. If something is wrong with our cooking technique, we can improve it by asking a neighbor, learning from the big restaurant, or learning from the people giving courses, dish courses. It's very easy.

Always try to live your life with the most fulfilling program, yeah? Never idle your lifetime. Just do everything you want. Try to learn new things. Be outgoing. Be social. Be friendly, be loving to all the people and learn everything from each other. There is no need to sit there and feel miserable about your life, about your misfortune. There is no such misfortune in this life.

We always must keep positive energy because even if you think positive, even just thinking positive, if you can see your body, you will see each positive thinking will change the pattern of your aura, change your outlook, and change your energy inside. It becomes more overflowing and healthy. But if you think negative, just think anything negative or bad or miserable, and then your pattern changes immediately. Any psychic person can see this. That's why some people can read your mind because when you come in, they can see your aura.

They can see the pattern change in your energy counterpart of your body. Energy counterpart is the shape of energy which looks like the shape of your real organ. For example, your heart is like this. Suppose someone took your heart away, and that heart place is empty. But still it has the shape of your heart in it – something there. That is the energy counterpart of the heart. Sometimes this energy counterpart has problems, not the real heart; and so they have to fix it. So, you are the best doctor for yourself if you think positive.

Make use of our inborn advantage

Live a healthy life, and simple. Simple living and high thinking. Always think positive. Even just thinking, changes your pattern of living, changes your day, and changes your fortune. So, always try to keep being positive. Then a lot of accidents, a lot of illnesses can be avoided. It's very difficult if you are a kind of doctor or nurse, or sometimes social worker to be positive all the time, because people will come to you with their sicknesses, their problems, their very low thinking and depressive energy. But for ordinary people, you can always keep up your positive energy. Always think that God is around you, Masters from the ten directions are always protecting you. Because it is true. It is true.

We are not left alone in this world to do all things ourselves. We are always protected by angels, everyone of us, and always guarded by Master's spirit, even though we don't see them. Even if you don't believe in angels and spirit, you must believe there is a God who exists. Otherwise, we wouldn't exist. You know what I mean? We cannot run away from this God. So, don't worry. Every problem will solve itself in time. Even if it doesn't, we live in this world for only a very short span, we can bear it. Okay? Because we have real hope in heaven which we'll go back to later. Each one of us will go back again sooner or later, when we leave this world. This is not really a real problem.

Most of the problems are our own making, because we think negative, we act negative, and we let the negative influence from people affect us. Sometimes if you go to see the doctor, they will tell you that some of the diseases are self-made. Not because you want the disease only, but you are run down in resistance. For example, like allergies. Sometimes you never get them. But only when you're run down, you are depressed, you are overworked, you are exhausted, then the allergies will come. You eat the same food everyday, have no allergies. But one day, you have them. It's because at that time, probably your resistance is very low. Your defense system broke down temporarily or something like that. Whereas if you think positively, the disease also will go quickly. Because sometimes the defense system is so run down already, it's like broken down, it's very difficult to fix it. At that time, then it's too bad. Either we live or we die.

So, try to take care of your system and don't let it break down. Try to take care of your system by acting positive, thinking positive, talking positive. That is very simple. Even just thinking positive is already a tremendous help to you. Some people think if you think and you don't do it, then it's all right. But it's really not all right. When you think of killing someone, you actually also do it.

In India, there was a king who tried it. One day he came out and approached a man on the street. And he was thinking that he was going to kill that man. He was thinking only that. Then he asked that man to come up and to tell the king what he felt at that moment about the king. And he told him that he could speak honestly, because it was only an experiment. Also he should not be afraid that the king would kill him if he told his honest feelings. So, the king encouraged the man to think, to tell him what he thought of the king when he first saw the king. Because at that time, the king was thinking he wanted to kill the man, the man said, 'I just want to strangle you.' Yes, exactly the same moment that the king wanted to kill him, the man also felt he wanted to come and strangle the king. Probably self-defense system.

Because the soul is omnipresent, the soul is part of God, it has the omnipresent quality. Therefore, if we think about someone, they know it; we talk about someone, they know it; whether they are present or not. That's why we should not talk badly, we should not talk bad about people behind their backs, we should not run down people behind their backs, we should not do anything bad behind someone's back; because they will know. Normally, people say God knows, but that person will also know, even though you don't tell him. That's why many crimes, sometimes, they do them in the dark; but they will surface sooner or later. It's because of the omnipresent quality of the soul. Even if that person doesn't know, many invisible beings will know. The ghosts will know and sometimes the ghosts will tell.

Yeah, sometimes you read in the newspaper or see on the television that ghosts manifest themselves occasionally and make trouble. It is because they have seen something, they know something that we don't know, we don't see. If they don't have the body, they have more intelligence, more freedom. When we have the body, we have also an advantage, that the body protects us from many of the negative effects and a lot of negative knowing. If we don't have this body, then we will know too much, know too much through the brain, like we will know who is going to kill us. That person thinks very bad about us and that person is going to do something bad. We will know too much all day long and then our mind will be bombarded with all kinds of negative seeing, feelings and knowing of the world. Even though our soul knows, but if our brain doesn't know, then we don't suffer so much. You understand? Yes, yes. Therefore, we have this body to protect us from this negative atmosphere of the world.

But nevertheless, when we have this body, we also have the disadvantage of not knowing many things that the angels know and the other people who don't have the body know. So, we have good and bad. But nevertheless, we can have both. We can make use of this physical body to shield ourselves from the negative influence. But we can also learn to leave it when we want to, through the process, the technique of meditation. We can go out of this physical prison and then learn something of the paranature quality, like we go to heaven, go to different dimensions to learn a higher wisdom. And then when we come back, we can make use of that to serve ourselves, our families, our nation and our world. Understand? So, the people who don't have the body have less advantage than us. But only if we can make use of this life, make use of both the physical dimension and the beyond-physical dimension, then we have both advantages.

We are above the angels and better than all those disembodied spirits. We have more advantages. So, try to take care of your life. Make use of your physical greatness. Even though the body is a very troublesome instrument, it is also excellent. Excellent. Actually, when you practice very hard, sometimes you don't feel the body. Is that not so? You have this experience? Yeah, you feel very light, right? Yes. Like you are driving but it's not you who's driving, someone else. No effort. That's how we achieve the effortlessness in the

physical dimension. Then we can do many things in a lighter way, and we don't feel so exhausted any more. The more we meditate, the better we feel, and the faster we work, and no problem.

And you must also try to pass on the news to our fellow beings to rescue them from their misery. Try to comfort them and bring them the good news that they could be lighter, greater, happier in their lives if they practice the age-old wisdom, getting in contact with the kingdom of God within themselves, with the Buddha nature within themselves. Then they don't feel so miserable and worn-out, or blocked and feeling lonely in this world. That's the only cure for humanity. Otherwise, everyone will tell you that the end of the world is coming. [Laughter] But so what? Even if the end of the world comes, we have security. We already know where we are going so then we don't fear. We will have many other worlds to live on.

It looks like so many disasters are coming to the world, huh? But I don't feel like the world is going to end so quickly. Maybe it will end in some parts, maybe have a great destruction for different people. But the virtuous people, the blameless persons will be preserved for the next generation. And with the help of the positive energy from you during your meditation, during the group gatherings, during your silent prayer time, our world is preserved to a greater degree than we might have hoped for. And that's why I hope that you'll spread more good news to people. Adding more water into the pool so that many people can swim in it. Yeah?

Live a fulfilling, positive, happy and learning life

Even if you have to sacrifice a little bit of personal taste or maybe your vegetarian wife cooks so lousy, but try to swallow it, [Laughter] for the sake of humanity. But the wife should improve the cooking, or maybe the husband. Why not? Why should the wife always be the one who cooks? You don't know men have more cooking talent than women. [Laughter] [Audience: Yes.] Yes, only they don't try. [Applause] I have eaten food from many men, they cooked very, very well; and you know all the biggest chefs in the biggest hotels are men, huh? Right? [Audience: Yes.] Very rarely we hear of a big women chef, right? So, maybe men should have a try. Surprise your wife, and don't complain to me that 'my wife won't cook for me, so I cannot meditate.' [Laughter] It's nonsense. There is nothing we should say we cannot do. Is that not so? If it's a big thing, maybe you have an excuse. But cooking, washing, you try, you learn and have fun with it. Okay?

And we should make use of every minute of our life to live a fulfilling, positive, happy and learning life. There is nothing boring about this life, really. Nothing is boring. You try to look for books. There are many books you can read. Read anything that you like as long as it doesn't damage your spirit, doesn't pull you out of the righteous path, doesn't make you stray away from the righteous life, doesn't make you become evil. Then every book you can read. Newspapers, everything can give you information. You select what you read, of course, yeah? You can read anything to enhance your worldly knowledge. And then meditate to deepen your knowledge in heaven, so you have both knowledge in the world and knowledge in heaven. How can you get bored?

I sometimes don't have even enough time. Of course, I am busy doing spiritual work. But then I am also busy doing some charitable work. And then for that I am very busy. But still I have to make time. I read books and things like that. How can you get bored? There are so many things in this world you can amuse yourself with, I mean, intellectually. Also you can do sports if you need. Go swimming, or learn something. Make your life happy,

healthy and very useful. There is no need to sit there and say, 'My life is boring, my life is miserable.' This is nonsense.

You do it to yourself. Is that right? [Audience: Yes.] Before I came here, I was reading, and I struggled for every minute. [Laughter] I kept reading and looking at the watch, because I wanted to read until the last minute before I came here. Of course, my duty I have to do. I have to fulfill my duty as a Teacher, as a good friend. But I also make my life not miserable, by not only working. I also go swimming sometimes, if I have time. It doesn't take half an hour. Instead of sitting there idling and thinking something negative, you go swimming, yeah? Also good for your work, for example, or go walking, or take the children go out and play. Teach them to swim or teach them something that you like. Share with them your life and teach them to be intelligent. The children, you should not leave them to play with children. Children should learn with adults. That's how they grow up. And actually, we should not have too many children if we can not individually take care of them. You should devote your life to children, one child at a time. You should always be there for them and with them. Then they will grow up very quick, become very intelligent, and become very useful persons in the society. Then they will save you a lot of headaches. They will be very good, very brave. So, of course, it's very tiring to play with children, but you will learn to play with them. And they will learn from you. You learn patience and love from them – unconditional love. And then they will learn from your wisdom, your intelligence, your way of life.

So, make yourself a shining example by learning yourself. Read books, learn new hobbies, be healthy, sportive, live a simple life, be truthful, be virtuous. Then the children cannot help but grow up the same way as you are. So, there are a lot of things to do in this world, really. Also hobby-wise. Don't come to me and tell me that you are bored, you are miserable. I don't accept this. You know I don't accept it. You should not be irritable. You should not be miserable. You should not be bored. There is no such thing in the practitioners' dictionary. Because you should be more intelligent, have more energy, and then you have more ideas. You should even be more active and more energetic. Is that not so? You don't feel better afterwards? [Audience: Yes.] So, if any person comes to you and tells that they are miserable, you know they don't meditate either, for sure. And you can tell them, 'Go and sit more and then you will feel better.'

Meditate more and then outwardly we can be more social. Learn from each and everyone. Sometimes the questions you ask in your mind are answered by the neighbor or by the one who sits next to you. You have to feel. Sometimes you ask a question, and if you are not sure the Master has answered for you inside, you have to look for sometimes the answer outside. Sometimes suddenly you feel the person next door wants to talk to you. If it is so clear, then it is an indication that you should listen. And that is the answer for you. And sometimes you suddenly borrow a book, and then the answer is there. Or sometimes you listen to the tape, and then it just comes out that sentence for you. All right? If you can't be so intuitively clear about what the Master answers you inside, you try to look for answers outside. Okay? But it's all right if you make mistakes. It's okay. Don't do them again next time. Don't worry. All right?

Make yourself a shining example

So, I hope you enjoy the food. And then try to remember the taste also, and go home and cook the same for the husband, or wife, children. In that way they won't complain that the vegetarian diet is so difficult. If everyone eats the food like today, they would never complain. Is that not so? [Audience: Yes.] I told you already the time when I was still married to the German doctor, huh? All my neighbors came to eat vegetarian food. One

day, my ex-husband felt sorry for the neighbors, that I was always cooking vegetarian. So that day, he bought some cold fish, already cooked, ready-made. He also bought some cold meat or something like that; and he put a lot there, a lot on one side. And I as usual cooked vegetarian food for both of us, the German doctor and myself.

But all the people came to the vegetarian side to eat. So, all of us were hungry because I didn't cook enough. I only cooked for two. I believed that the German doctor was right, [Laughter] and so I thought all the neighbors would come and eat all the food that he bought. So, I only cooked a little bit for two. But everyone came to eat vegetarian food because it was so tasty. And they are engineers, lawyers, doctors, because we had similar neighbors. We lived in a very posh area, where only these kinds of rich people, so-called rich people live. They are not kind of average citizens; they are a little bit higher class. So, even they said to me, 'Wow, if vegetarian food is so good like this, we'd eat everyday.' That's why they didn't want meat. I said, 'Why don't you go and eat the fish and meat over there. The doctor bought it for you.' They said, 'No, we don't come for meat and fish. We have them everyday. We want your vegetarian food.'

So from then on, I cooked only vegetarian food whenever I invited the neighbors. And when they invited me, they also cooked vegetarian food. So, because we ate vegetarian food, all the neighbors became vegetarian. At least partially. And when I went to my in-laws, they also cooked vegetarian food for me, and gave me opportunities to try different dishes. They also thought they were very delicious.

So, one person makes a lot of difference. If you truly believe in your goodness, in what you are doing, you will influence other people. But if you don't believe, they will influence you. They'll try to make a strong person out of your personality. Whatever you believe is good, stick to it and don't let other people make you waver, because the good example in this world is rare. So, make yourself a good example. Try your best in everything so that people will know that because you practice, you become better. Then you really are being useful, being useful for society. That's how you prove. That's how you help other people. That's how we rescue the world from the great destruction that may be coming.

For what I see, I don't need to be a prophet. I don't need to cast prophecies. I don't need to be a clairvoyant to see the future. None of us have to be. We can see that our world can encounter great destruction because of a lot of self-destructive drugs and weapons, the way we live our lives, and the way we infect each other. It could be the end of the world. There is no doubt about it. Or we can see our neighbor, how we affect their life? How one person who has AIDS can affect hundreds of thousands of people just by contacting or by careless actions somewhere.

Just like in France, some doctor just gave a patient an infected blood transfusion. And hundreds of people caught this disease, innocently by doing nothing. Even though they were all careful, they didn't go anywhere, and they didn't do any bad things themselves, they just caught the disease. This is not fair. You know what I mean? So, in that case it is terrible. And then those hundred people might spread out to a hundred more. And then hundreds become thousands, thousands become millions. Every year, millions of people die of all kinds of nonsense. So, we don't need to ask the prophet whether the world will end. If we continue the life-style that most people live today, we might have to believe that the world will end. Understand?

So, it's our duty to rescue people if we love this planet, if we think it's a beautiful place, which it is. Takes billions, trillions of years to make one until it is beautiful like today, so beautiful like this. So, we have to also make a contribution. If we can, we fix it. Of course,

after all, we've tried our best and still the end of the world comes, then let it be. But if we can fix it, we do it. All right? So, spread the good news and let the people go back to the natural way of life, the righteous way of life, that is, being vegetarian, being virtuous, keeping the precepts, and living a simple life and positive thinking. Then our world will be no problem, and we will probably live a few more thousand years in a better condition.

There are two choices now – one is total destruction, another is go ahead with progress in all ways of life, including spiritual. And the future is in our hands, really. There are no aliens who can do anything about it. There is no God who punishes us. There is no Buddha who blesses us. It's only ourselves. We have to make a choice, because that's how we grow – by making good choices.

Year 2000 – The dream

Actually, in the future, if we get over this year 2000 apocalypse crisis, we will be able to develop further in the future. And I can probably imagine that the people in the future after year 2000 won't have to work so hard. We will have a different system, a wiser system, and people will probably work for hobby only. And we probably won't need money. Everyone will produce what we have and then we share with each other. Will be better. But that is what I imagine. I hope it will come true. I think it might.

At the moment, we work a lot for nothing. We work a lot, we earn little, and waste a lot of our time which we could use for more intelligent practices. Because actually, if a man has more time, he can contribute more also. In his relaxed time, he can produce, he can learn, he can train himself in another way of work, and he can use his intelligence for his hobby developing. And sometimes people put more energy in their hobby and then it produces better results.

I think everyone should work only half a day. That should be enough. And the other half day should be used for hobbies, whatever they like to develop or their own invention, their own research. Hobbies don't always mean useless speaking or football, or anything like that. Anything done voluntarily under their own will and intelligence is called a hobby. But a hobby can be very productive and helpful to society. Maybe in the future, we can go to that.

OVERPOPULATION IS NOT THE MAIN CAUSE OF STARVATION! ¹⁷⁸

Lately, we have been talking about the United Nations' conference about the hunger of the world, remember? Now, I have good news for you that now the scientists have found some way to make the harvest grow many times more than before. They already found some before, but now they found something even better. So, accordingly we can feed about ten billions of people, not only six billions like they calculated last time; double in a hundred years even, over a hundred years. So then, during a hundred years we might find something even better, or we can go to Mars to plant potatoes or go to Mercury to plant rice. [Master laughs.] If our planet people are being vegetarian, the way environmentalists suggest and it's justly so, and that the scientists find the way to grow more abundantly the crops for us, then I think we can 'sing,' no problem, we can sit pretty.

Actually, if we just are kind to each other, live a very clean and pure life, there shouldn't be any problem. They shouldn't worry about killing the children inside the mother's womb just to prevent hunger. This is not a very appropriate thing to do. Even though, according to

178. Group meditation, Bangkok Center, Thailand, September 18, 1994 (Originally in English).

some of the spiritual Masters and according to what I know, sometimes the spirit does not come inside the body of the fetus until the baby is born. But still the body belongs to a spirit and he is going to come down, and it is very sad to have no body to come into. Sometimes the spirit comes in already within the pregnancy, sometimes the spirit comes after the pregnancy, like in my case.

According to my mother, I came after, one day later. I am always late in everything, decided from childhood. [Laughter] You know, that is why I am always late now. You have to forgive me, I was born like that, born lazy, born late. Somebody asked me before, when I was born whether the Light was all over the body, the room. I said, 'No, I was born very normal, no Light.' It is true, but one day later the room was blazed with Light; because it came late. According to my parents, I was born no crying and eyes just opened all day long; never blinked and never shut the eyes. So, the parents felt very strange! What kind of child is this? But my father said that the next evening, about six o'clock when it began to darken outside, and then suddenly the whole room, especially the bed I lay in was very, very bright. And they were thinking, 'How come the Light comes somewhere from the street?' Because we live next to a small path, walking path, and they were looking whether somebody put a shining light through the window. 'Nobody there! But the Light was there about fifteen minutes,' they said. And after the Light was out, they then remembered, 'Oh, it is dark!' And they began to light the lamps in the house. Because it had been shining for fifteen minutes, so they did not light the lamps. And until the Lights went off and they realized it was dark. And nobody was shining any light outside, no lamps on the walkway outside. So therefore, the body was not functioning properly, the eyes just kept open and could not cry, and after that I think I cried very loud. [Master laughs.] I think I was very frightened to come down here. I tried to delay as much as possible until God kicked me down. He said, 'Here just go,' and no more choice. Yes, probably, I saw from heaven – hunger, AIDS, gems stolen, [Master laughs.] wars, so much chaos. What for come here? No fun. But probably, a promise is a promise. Once you promise you have to do it, and so here I am trying to do my job with you until time is up.

So, it is said, not every case of abortion is involved in killing a fully conscious person. That's definite. But we never know, the doctor never knows who is a fully conscious person inside, who is not yet fully conscious. You see, they cannot see that kind of Light and besides the child inside doesn't always radiate Light. Yes, so therefore, abortion is not recommended. It's not very good for human development and it is against our conscience, and it will punish us the whole life when we think about that.

In India there was a woman saint. Her name I think Ananda Maye, something like that. She said that at the time of her birth there was no physical connection with her mother. That is probably the same case that the spirit comes late, comes after the baby is born. Lately, I read a book from a woman. She was supposed to be dead and then a few days later she came back to life. She reported seeing this kind of process of the birth, like: Sometimes the spirit comes in before, sometimes the spirit comes in during pregnancy, sometimes the spirit comes at the time of conception, or sometimes later. That is also a coincidence, different people in different corners of the world affirm the same thing. She was shown the process of creation, some part of it, and everything she says I know it is true. It's not a kind of made-up story to sell the book, it is a true story. And at first she didn't even want to tell it. She told it only nineteen years later, reluctantly, because she found it very difficult to express what she saw in heaven into the human language and was afraid that people might not believe her also. But nowadays there are many people, who die and come back to life telling the same, very similar stories to this woman – sometimes shorter, sometimes longer and sometimes a different aspect, but very similar.

Some of these experiences, our disciples during meditation, they also know, because they die temporarily. And that is why some of the saints say, 'I die daily, I die many times a day.' That is the meaning. Once we meditate and we leave the body that is the same as when we die, except that the connection between the spirit and the body is permanent or temporary severed.

So actually, the world overpopulation is not the real cause for starvation. I have read a very good article about this and I cut it from the newspaper, I have told them to print it on the magazine for your perusal, for your information this time. Okay, you can read it and you can have your own comment on it and you will know.

It's a very good article, very nice. It's from Bangkok Post, I think. It's about the Cairo conference, about the population growth of the world whether it is related to hunger or not. No doubt that it is related to hunger also, but it is not the absolute cause, it's not the main cause, and it's not the only cause. And that can be avoided by fair distribution of food to different corners of the world instead of amassing possessions on some useless... and cannot serve anybody and even costs other peoples' lives, sometimes, due to possessions.

Reading newspapers is also my job. It is not really fun, I don't like it, but sometimes it's good for you to find some information to give you hope, and also give you evidence, examples of what I've been talking about. It's good for you to have a concrete example and evidence. Some good papers are also very informative, but sometimes the papers, they use their influence to do bad things and this we should avoid to read.

In the article, it is stated that most of the poor people have very little possessions of the world; and the rich people... they have put how many percent of the rich people, and how many percent of the poor people. And like the richest, one fifth of the world, control eighty three or eighty five percent of the world's property; and the poorest one fifth, control only one point four percent; and then they blame the poor people for making hunger because too many children and things like that.

Now I think you can, you are able to discern what's the great difference between the rich and the poor, and what really causes the starvation of our fellow beings. The gap is so wide, eighty three percent versus one point four percent. So, it's alright to have possessions but we must know what to do with them. Possessions are harmless, but if we are possessed by them, it becomes harmful for ourselves and for the people who are tempted and who are involved in our property. That's why many families are divided or kill each other, because of property inheritance and the arguments between who inherited what. Many times it causes the loss of lives. Is that not so? And causes war between nations, and causes war between tribes, causes hatred between people, because of the mishandling of the property. Not that property itself is bad. You know what I mean?

THE METHOD THAT CAN CLEANSE GENERATIONS OF GENETIC TRACES ¹⁷⁹

Human beings have continued to do many bad things since time immemorial. So, it's very difficult to erase bad references from within the DNA, and sometimes we're born into a body that's imprinted by much good and bad information, which we've helplessly inherited. We can't do anything about it except that if we meditate, we can cleanse it and erase it so

179. Group meditation, Bangkok Center, Thailand, September 14, 1994 (Originally in English).

that it leaves no trace. If we erase something every day, no trace of this negativity will be left within our cells. Then we can do good things.

That's why even though you have the Buddha nature and you have God within you, you still have to fight with these imprints of the DNA in your cells. That's why you work slowly; that's why you're bad and that's why you do negative things sometimes even against your own will. So, even if we want to do good, without meditation or without God's power to cleanse these imprints of the cells' DNA, we can't do much.

That's why the world is like this. That's why many people want to do good but can't struggle against these negative traces, which are already born before we even come into this body. They're already there. Now you understand why you must meditate and be vegetarian so that you don't have more of the negative traces adding to your own already bad DNA. You have enough of the bad; there's no need for extra.

Even if you can't meditate for very long, that's also DNA. You probably got a body that never meditated in the last life. Maybe from your great, great, great grandparents down, no one ever meditated in your family. Also, sometimes you can't be born into the proper family because they always take pills nowadays, and have abortions and so on. So, you have to jump into any family, and then you get bad DNA. It's too bad. That's the bad news, but the good news is that we can erase it by meditating on the Light and Sound.

So, that's why we're here. Believe me, I don't tell you anything that's superstitious, and I don't tell you to worship me, to give me money, or anything. This is solely for your own good and for the good of the world.

EVERYTHING IS CREATED BY THE MIND – PART 2 ¹⁸⁰

Our thinking is very important so we should take care that our thoughts are always good; it's better this way because thinking is the material for the physical appearance of all things in the universe. If it's too strong it will materialize right away, if it's not strong enough it will take some time to materialize, and if it takes too long we will forget it. We'll think it happened independently, that it had nothing to do with our thinking, but actually it was because of our thinking that it happened. That is what's meant by karma: 'As you sow so shall you reap.'

THE PERFECT BEINGS FROM HEAVEN ¹⁸¹

All of us are great beings from heaven. All of the human beings born in this world are great heavenly beings, and the most courageous. Because if we were not great, we would not be courageous, we'd never have enough guts to come down to this world. We never could come, we'd never dare come.

That's why if one of us here does something good for mankind, then all the heavenly beings rejoice and praise and have so much respect. And the more we can do this, the more respect we earn in heaven. Even though sometimes we have trouble by doing good to mankind and we probably have persecution from our fellow beings and other obstacles in this world, but that is just only temporary. Truly the universe rejoices in every good deed and loving kindness we can send to our fellow beings. And if we already are given enough

180. Group meditation, Bangkok Center, Thailand, September 11, 1994 (Originally in English).

181. Group meditation, Bangkok Center, Thailand, September 10, 1994 (Originally in English).

equipment, enough opportunities to do good to mankind and we don't do it, then it is really a case to feel very sorrowful about.

Before we came here we came with the high ideal, with the best intention, with the good heart and a mighty determination to help and to improve ourselves spiritually, even also by helping people in this world. But when we came here, most of us forgot and we prefer to sleep, eat, and go around playing. We prefer to take care of our own interests and sometimes forget what's our purpose before we came here, why we came here. It is also good that we forget, it's good. And then we do not feel very sorry for ourselves because we'd like to go back there; it's better in heaven than here.

But if we meditate, then unconsciously our soul will remember. Then we don't have to feel too much suffering because we live in this very confined, very unhappy surrounding. And then we feel more settled down, not attached to the world but settle down in the world. And then we know that we have to finish our mission. And then whether we realize or not, inside we will, the soul will understand that we have to accomplish our mission on earth and then we will go back Home very soon.

There is a story of a woman. She died, went to heaven, and came back to this world. And in between time she was shown a lot of heavenly places and the intelligence of the universe and the purpose of creation and she was shown great beings like Jesus or maybe a part of God's representative. Or she thought it was Jesus, because nobody knows what Jesus looked like. [Master laughs.] Because that being had love and a great Light around Him, so she thought it was Jesus Christ.

Now after she saw all this, she just felt she was at Home, of course, and she felt very happy and loved and she never wanted to go back to this world again. But then the heavenly beings told her that her time is not yet up so she has to go back. She said she didn't want to but then the heavenly beings showed her her mission, what she has to do later in the world to help. And then she agreed to come. But then the heavenly beings told her that after she has seen her mission, they will erase the memory, so when she comes back again to her physical life she will not remember anything about what she has to do. And then she truly forgot.

But when she came back here and she saw her ugly body lying there and she said, 'Uohhh, I don't want to come into it.' [Master and audience laugh.] And when she came back in, she felt so tight and so confined and so locked up inside herself. She felt so miserable she cried. And it took a long, long time, many months before she became settled down with her body again. And then, she remembered the being told her that she has a mission on earth, but she didn't remember anything about that mission. And after thinking too long time, she thought it's good that she doesn't remember. Because God knows if she remembers, then she will try to do it very quickly so that it's done and then she will go back to the heaven. [Master laughs.] Yeah, and she will not do it correctly. She will not do it properly. She will just try to finish it, it doesn't matter in what fashion, then she can be free.

Most of us are also covered up, God doesn't let us know. Even though after meditation, after initiation we are only shown a little bit, so that at least we have just a little bit comfort to carry on in this world, and not to feel too proud of our heavenly quality.

And also most of the time when you meditate, your soul goes out of the body but you don't feel the difference between going and coming, because the Master power tries to lubricate it. The Master power makes the transition between the physical world and the spiritual

world smooth, so that you don't feel the sickness of having to come back into these small boxes after being so free and roaming the whole universe at will. But most of the people when they die, or when they nearly die and they come back again, they feel the terrible difference between the spiritual and the physical world. Therefore they suffer a lot. They suffer like that woman who came back to this world and she suffered for many months from depression.

Therefore, many times while meditating, we went outside of the body, but sometimes we feel like we don't know that. And we come back we feel like oh something... Sometimes we feel like we have come back from somewhere but the transition was not so great and it doesn't disturb our ordinary life too much. Otherwise, if everyday, you know, too much of the differences, sometimes you cannot bear it. Because if we remember how beautiful, how relaxed, how loved we are in heaven, we'd never want one more second or one millionth of the second, we'd never want to stay here.

Many heavenly beings never want to come here. They don't have courage. For example, you are staying in a beautiful place like this, so clean and nice. If you had to go into a filthy... like a place where people put the waste water and garbage and things like that, and lock yourself in there everyday, would you like it? A small place, a small confined space with a lot of filth and garbage everyday like this, could you like, would you like? This is what happens to a spiritual being from heaven when they come down and take the confinement of this body.

Some come because they want to develop this planet into a more beautiful place. Yeah, because you remember when you read the history of the planet, the planet was not like this before. It was like a big dense jungle and nobody lived. And it was not comfortable and not beautiful. And because this planet is connected with heavenly plan of existence therefore we have to work together. And because we are also heavenly beings connected with other heavenly beings, so whatever we do here affects them also. A spirit if it's too high it's not affected, the lower a little bit affected. Therefore, if we do something good, oh, they are very joyful and very happy. If we do something damaging to the world and then affect the universe, they are very worried and also very disturbed. That's why every of us have some so-called 'guardian angels,' who are supposed to help us to do our mission in this world. And then depends on what kind of job we do, we will have more angels or less angels, stronger angel or just ordinary angel, et cetera.

The Indian people have a tradition to respect everyone they meet. Perhaps because in their mythological stories they were told that all the human beings here are spiritual, are great, wise beings from heaven. And sometimes when we meditate we also can see that. But sometimes we are covered so we don't think too much, so we don't feel too much homesick. [Master laughs.] So, some of them when they meditate they can visit their home, at least have a look and come back here to work again. And other people they forget, they don't miss their Home. They just want to stay here all the time. God gives them enough money, enough instruments to work for this world, but then they use the money, they use the instruments to enjoy, they forget. [Master laughs.] These people are very difficult to get liberation.

And that's why since ancient time there are always Masters and spiritual friends. They also sacrifice, they come here and wake up the people of the world, but it's difficult. Once they come here they forget everything from heaven. And sometimes the Master feels very sorry for these brothers and sisters. And sometimes the Master wants to run day and night just to keep calling them, waking them, and bring them back to their spiritual glory, because they suffer too much.

Due to their ignorance they forget their origin, they forget their noble purpose in this world, and they forget that whatever they are given in this world are only instruments so they can fulfill their task. But then they forget and then they are entrapped into these beautiful instruments or situations, and then they get bound here. They cannot go Home. Sometimes it takes a long time until they wake up. Meanwhile all the spiritual beings in heaven are feeling sorry for them, want to help them, want to pull them up, but it's sometimes difficult. So, it's good that you wake up. [Master laughs.] It's good that you realize that you are not the physical body of this world, that you have a Home in heaven.

Actually, we should treat all our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters like all spiritual brothers and sisters. Because actually, that's all we are, that's what we are. Before we came here we made a covenant with each other saying, 'Oh! You be my parents, you be my son, you be my sister, you be my teacher, you be my friend and all that.' Everyone comes together to help each other to achieve the purpose of their mission and also to achieve a higher position in the spiritual world. It's not that because of a higher position that we come here. Just that we have been courageous, we want to try, we want to take the challenge. And then of course, the greater the challenge, the greater our spiritual understanding and growth. And then we become, of course, a higher spiritual being through our knowledge and labor that we have offered to the universe. And then heavenly beings, of course, respect us more and then give us more, even higher responsibilities.

For example, if you are born in a rich family and then if you don't work, if your parents spoiled you too much and didn't let you go out and learn and work in different jobs to have experience of your growth, of your talents and your intelligence and your physical power, then you just hang around in the house and eating, sleeping, doing something, but do not have the experience and the capability of a grown up and mature person. And then even your parents cannot entrust you with their great possessions. So like, if the parents go away and then maybe you inherit the possessions because you are the only one. But then you don't know how to manage the business and then you let the business fall apart and then you become poor also. That's why God let us come here, to study and to strengthen our abilities. The more we work, the more we try to help other people, the more we grow.

The most important in this world, regardless whatever our mission, is love one another, love each other. If we do not do that then we lack a lot of things. And whatever job we do we have to do it wholeheartedly. Moreover, we still have to help our fellow beings in whatever way we can, make them happy, make them feel loved. And whenever the situation needs our love to show it, we have to show our love and we have to show some actions, speech and thoughts always in loving kindness. That's the best for our spiritual growth and best for our fellow beings.

Many children if they don't have enough love from the parents or family when they were very young, they grow up not a very loving person. Sometimes become very bad persons. And then that in turn will affect other people that they contact. And so the reactions, the influence is very big not only personal. So, sometimes we see a group or families, their personalities are very similar, the whole family. Or a group or a tribe, they have their own character and personality. Or larger, a nation, they have their own character, whether they are very loving or they are very fierce.

Of course, there are always good and bad persons in any group. But, the outstanding major character is sometimes very distinguished from one group to another or from one country to the next. And sometimes when you meet one or two persons in a country, if that one or two persons don't treat you nice or there is something bad happens between you, then you will always have a bad impression about the whole country. And if that

experience keeps repeating too many times, then you will think that the whole country is no good, you can never change your attitude, never change your bad impression toward that country. But if you meet one or two nice persons and then a few more nice persons in that country and then it doesn't matter what happened, you still tend to think that country is nice or the people of that country are nice.

So, that happens also for religious things. Sometimes in the group only a few persons do something wrong or cause misunderstanding, and then the whole group are affected by this and are being persecuted for the things a few people do. So actually, we have to be careful how we act in everyday life because it's not we alone that get the full scale of responsibility of what we do or what we say or what we think, but we might affect other people.

Actually, our thinking is very important, we should take care that our thinking is always good, it's better, because thinking is the material for the physical appearance of all things in this universe. If it's too strong it will materialize right away, if it's not strong enough it takes some time to materialize. And if it takes too long we forget it. We think it happened alone, it had nothing to do with our thinking, but actually, it's from our thinking that it happened. That's what is meant by karma: 'As you sow so shall you reap.'

Be careful that our thinking is always pure, because many people can read our minds even. Most of the time people are protected from other people, so they don't know who is thinking what; it's better for them. But sometimes some people have this ability to read our minds, and the heavenly beings can read our minds. We are an open book to the whole universe, so be careful. So, whenever we think something bad, better cut it out right away. Otherwise, very embarrassing. Also because of our thoughts, we create good atmosphere or bad atmosphere for this world and the next. If our thoughts are very strong, then one individual thinking can make things happen, can make things good or bad happen. If not too strong, then a group of people who think the same thing will make things happen.

That's why we see, as mentioned before, sometimes a group of people or a tribe of people have very similar traits of personalities or have similar things that happened to them or similar things that happened to their country. That's collective karma, because the same minds attract the same things. That's why in our practice we are advised to keep our body, speech and actions pure, so we can keep at first our personal atmosphere pure and we can create also a pure atmosphere for the world in which we live and for the heaven, for the universe also.

So, the more people practice like this, the purer the world will become or at least it's balanced, it's not too bad that nobody can breathe and nobody can stay inside. That's how we can fulfill our mission on earth to bless this world. So, do you see how important it is to keep our speech and mind and actions pure? We have to help also with social work. Whatever we can do to help lessen the suffering, that is the most noble work which will not only be recognized in this world, but also praised by heaven.

That's why when you give someone who needs it, needs the love or needs some material comfort, at that time you feel very good. Why do you feel good? Because at that time you are one with heaven. You're doing heavenly work. You're doing the correct work and you're truly representing heaven in doing all this charitable work. Maybe these people also are spiritual beings. They sacrifice themselves, they're born poor so that you can learn the lesson of love. That's why all the Masters from ancient times advise us that when we give something, we do good to someone, we should not be proud. We might feel good, okay, but we should be thankful that we have had the opportunity to do it.

There was a very famous book published recently in America, in which a person who died went to heaven and she was shown many different functions of the human beings in this world. In one of the things she was shown was a man, dirty, drunken, old and lonely who was kind of sleeping in the corner of the street. And then the heavenly being asked her if she knows who he is. And from heaven, she looked down, she said, 'Why, it's a drunken, stupid man.' Because he really looked drunk, stupid and ugly and dirty and filthy and old and worthless.

But the heavenly beings revealed to her his real identity after that. And then she knew that this person was a very great heavenly being, respected by all heaven. He sacrificed his time on the earth existence to help his friend. His friend is a lawyer, is about a block away on the same street. And the lawyer is always doing some good work for poor people and for the injustice in the country. But every time he saw this drunken man he's determined to do more, otherwise he forgets or he slackens in his efforts.

But both of them have forgotten their promise with each other, to help each other before they came to earth. Because they were good friends in heaven and that's how they help each other. But of course, the lawyer will get all the glory and credit and the drunk gets all the cursing and all the despite from the people. And knowing and not knowing both of them are doing their job very well until the time comes, then they go back to heaven. And being a drunk man just laying there, [Master laughs.] just always reminding his friend to try to fight for the poor, for the desperate people, the homeless and the like...

THE WAY TO SAVE THE WORLD FROM DOOMSDAY ¹⁸²

Be a savior to the world

I feel much more relaxed in Japan this time. [Applause] You have been initiated for a longer time now! You have also practiced and meditated diligently, purifying yourself. This is very helpful to the atmosphere of Japan. We are helping the world in this way, so I say you are the saviors of the world. In this world, many of our brothers and sisters have forgotten their original duties, forgotten their Buddha nature, the quality of God. Instead, they have done many harmful things to the world, to the universe. If everyone were doing so, and doing nothing to counter balance, our world would be in great calamity. Many mishaps have already happened, but more disastrous ones are yet to come. Until now, these calamities are affecting mostly one country or part of a country. Should everybody keep on disregarding spiritual practice as before and doing bad deeds instead, neglecting other people's life and feelings, and ignoring human rights, greater disasters will happen, even affecting the whole globe. Without using miracle powers, we can see into the future. We can know it without using miracle powers, because it is logical, it is cause and effect.

Many of the so-called clairvoyants and prophets anticipated that many grave disasters would simultaneously happen in the world. In different countries and different ages, different people have had the same vision. Those people could really see into the future, they were not remarking casually. There have been such persons in many countries in all ages. They were not rare. However, perhaps we are practicing well. Our practitioners are in many countries, setting up big group meditation centers. Grouping together, our power is very strong. So, I think the world can still be saved. If we sincerely pray for something together, or practice together, we can generate an enormous atmosphere of peace, and it will have a great effect.

182. Group gathering at the Narita International Airport, Tokyo, Japan, September 8, 1994 (Originally in Chinese).

It is not limited to that specific place. For example, there is no river in your land, but there are rivers in other places. The water in the rivers and seas would be evaporated to become steam, and then become rain. Subsequently, your land will also be affected. Another example: You may have run into trouble today on the road or in a certain place, you may have had a car accident or another accident. Then, you met two very compassionate people who cared and helped you, making you feel loved, safe and very comfortable. Later, you left when everything was alright, or after spending a week in the hospital and that loving feeling was still affecting you. Whomever you saw thereafter, or in a conference with many people, you would be very loving and patient to them and then, those who you treated compassionately would continue spreading the love outward, also treating others with love. And then, those whom they had lovingly treated would again spread this love to more people. The transmission would go on and on, just like a drop of oil, spreading outward continuously.

The pure land exists if the mind is serene

Similarly, if a person has sufficient time to practice, he would be serene within and then, his serene attitude and atmosphere would further influence the people he sees, the neighbors and people around him. Upon seeing him, the people would be affected by his aura and become peaceful. They would think, 'Oh! This is right! We ought to be peaceful and loving!' As the influence spreads out, many people would be affected. Therefore, our spiritual practice is truly beneficial. This is simply logical, nothing esoteric or beyond comprehension.

Many undesirable things happen in the world because the people are not happy and lacking love. For instance, we often read some remarks in the psychological books or in the newspapers: Most of the more troublesome and violently inclined persons are those mistreated or neglected in childhood. Without receiving any love, they grew up in a bad mood and developed a negative personality. This is the cause for most of them. Now, our meditation centers are providing places where people can rest and calm down. Sensing the tranquility, they know this place is safe. No one would annoy them, abuse them, so they become more peaceful and calm at heart. Subsequently, they are no longer afraid or nervous, or feeling dangerous. Besides, we can also teach them to communicate with their almighty power within themselves. Gradually, they realize their real greatness, and improve. They would definitely feel increasingly serene and peaceful. That was exactly what happened to you! [Applause]

So, you see! Spiritual practice is very logical! You can understand by logical reasoning. These places of spiritual practice are necessary for people to introspect and seek their peaceful corner within. This is why your lives are getting better as you practice. You are feeling increasingly more intelligent, realizing more, you are more relaxed, it's easier to forgive others, and you are more compassionate. Previously, you didn't know the way to nurture yourself, so you felt uncomfortable, weak in both body and mind.

Miraculous effect of Quan Yin: Rejuvenation

In heaven above, they heal with Light instead of with medicine. I think, perhaps we will also heal illness with similar Light in the future. There are also some illnesses which can be affected by Sound, say like music. This method we are practicing include the Light and the Sound. Many agonies and pressure minimize naturally, and eventually disappear. We are originally highly intelligent beings. However, in this world, we are excessively oppressed, and have no time to rest. Even when we find time to rest, we don't know the proper way. Outings and activities simply tire us even more after spending much money.

We just feel even more uncomfortable. Now, we have the time to practice, and the power of Light and Sound that heals all illnesses, and we also have wisdom. In serenity, we can find our original wisdom, so it is simply natural that we are becoming better and better.

Ordinary people, after being loaded with heavy work, go for a rest by the seaside or in the mountains for a while, if they can afford it. Then they feel refreshed and are ready to carry on with their work. However, it is much better that we have a brief rest each day than taking a week off after a long time. Our two and a half hours' meditation is our everyday rest. Besides resting, we are also saving our life! The Light and the Sound purifies our mentality and bodily cells, et cetera. Therefore, the more we practice, the younger and more comfortable we feel. Most illnesses disappear.

I have read in a magazine lately that they are using a special Sound to heal cancer. Have you read that? They have started experimenting on it, and it seems to be effective. Having read this news, I felt that our 'contemplating on the Sound' is really the best. Many fellow initiates, having practiced the Quan Yin method, have gotten rid of their cancer unknowingly! However, this is only a natural bonus effect. We do not practice for healing. In another sense, we are also practicing for healing! Our illness of ignorance is the worst, from which many other illnesses are born.

Ignorance creates all kinds of illnesses

For instance, being ignorant, we would enjoy all kinds of pleasures, eating meat, consuming alcohol or even drugs. We think these will bring us pleasure, while in reality, we are ruined both physically and mentally. This is a result of our ignorance, understand? We ignorantly take drugs and poisons, and become ill. We suffer from disordered liver, lungs and heart, cancer and everything, all because of our illness of ignorance. Originally, God sent us here to bless the world, so the world would evolve, become more beautiful, as if in heaven. The outcome is, after we have entered this 'tool' (the human body) we abuse it instead of using it to implement God's will. We destroyed this tool given by God, so we are feeling very uncomfortable.

Master is teaching you to do the right thing, to find the proper way of using your 'tool,' and to remember your mission. Otherwise, each of us would come to this world and then get lost in material enjoyment, fond of this, fond of that, fond of this tool. Instead of using this tool to beautify the world, we are indulged in the tool, intoxicated. Of course, the world is hopeless in this way. There must be someone like us reminding people of their original mission, to remember and understand that they must not be indulged and get lost in this world, destroying the world, together with themselves. Therefore, spiritual practice is our obligation.

When an ordinary person is very ill, he will be sent to the hospital, not only for the medication, but also for a rest. His body will then generate a resisting energy to cure the disease. Usually, after taking medicine we feel heavier and sleepy. The purpose is to let us rest more so our body would yield resisting power. We are cured naturally, and medicine is not the only effective substance. Therefore, even though we are not sick, we rest every day, taking the heavenly prescription – the internal Light and Sound, in a dosage of several hundred liters each day, [Master laughs.] of course we feel better! We have rest and we have the medication, naturally we are healthy and sound, physically and mentally. Therefore, the more we practice, the more we feel that it is hard to quit. We simply enjoy it more and more, like a kid unable to quit drinking milk.

Most people have some problem or another, either physically or mentally. We might be a little too late starting now, but it is better than never. If we have our own kids, hurry and give them this ‘medicine,’ so they have no need to take that much when they grow up. Look at the hospitals in the world, they are full of patients eating a lot of meat and drinking alcohol. They are not poor people, right? They are rich people, experts in food and wine, ending up in the hospitals. Also, they recover very slowly, even when their illness is a minor one. On the contrary, those vegetarians who lead a simple life like us can recover from illness very soon, if not immediately. Besides, there won't be any side effects after taking medicine, no adverse reaction. If we practiced only very recently, our systems may not have adjusted or improved so fast. We cannot change fast enough at the initial stage of our practice, should the illness be too heavy. Therefore, we are occasionally sick. If we were not practicing, the situation would be even worse.

The Light and Sound are vital spiritual food for our soul

This Light and Sound is the medicine and food for our body's body and soul. It changes and renews our body's cells. Therefore, you may observe that good practitioners look younger, at least younger than before. If you see them again after a long time, their skin is more shiny and tender, as if reliving their youth. If our life is not a hustling and nervous one, the change would be even more apparent. It is good enough for us to practice for two and a half hours each day! We can live on. At least the pressure would not be too heavy, to the extent of half alive and half dead. [Master laughs.] Not that I need you to practice, but that you truly need to practice. I will also try my best travelling around, reminding people of the benefits of spiritual practice. With respect to the resolution to practice diligently or not, it is your own right and obligation to decide. Truly, I cannot urge you, drag you, pull you, or do anything. All I can say is: The more you practice, the more you will enjoy it, feeling the benefits, feeling very comfortable, feeling physical changes, feeling not the same any more. Really, when I come back to see you after a few years. Wow! You are so healthy! Very different from the first time we met. [Laughter and applause.] You applaud because you understand, is that right?

Our physical body is affected by the spiritual body and our mentality. If our spiritual body and mentality are satisfied with taking the spiritual food, our physical body would also change to become prettier. If we are mentally heavy, unhappy, our physical body would also look tired and frustrated. Then, we are restless and distressed.

Here is a very logical example: Don't you look very pretty when you are happy or in love? Or, when your family is warm, comfortable and peaceful, you look cheerful, pretty and bright. When we are worrying about our job, obstructed in business, if our lover runs away, et cetera, or we lose in gambling, our faces will always show it. Sometimes, people would say, ‘I am so mad I could die, I am annoyed to death, I am missing my lover...!’ Understand? He is not dead yet, but he looks very much so! These are only the worldly distress, not to mention our spiritual body if we fail to let it rest and nourish it each day. The Light and Sound is our spiritual food. Without nourishment, our spiritual body would wither and become frustrated, upset, and then inevitably affect our physical body.

The crisis on earth

The several years between 1994 to 1996 or 1997 is the most sensitive period of our earth. Many incidents have happened. In the last few centuries, we have done so much harm to our planet. Sometimes the actions looked like we were helping the world, or making the world progress, but the price is too high! We human beings are too ignorant. Just for earning money quickly in our business, we disregarded the future consequence. So now,

we better slow down and consider our situation, and that of our next generation and the background of the world. We have destroyed too much! For instance, we may cut down trees, but we should plant two trees with every one we cut! We can retrieve used materials for recycling, then it is all right! We may also change our meat diet to a vegetarian one, because meat-eating has used up most of the resources on earth.

Each year, many forests are destroyed just for raising livestock. To raise the animals and provide beef for our consumption, forests and jungles equivalent to the area of England is being felled each year. Raising cattle consumes a lot of water, forage, time, and land and the land cannot be used again. After the trees are felled and the earth is trampled by the animals, you have to wait fifty years to plant things again. Also, with the trees gone, the exposed rich soils are washed away by the heavy rain. Erosion is out of control, and the land becomes barren and dry. There will be a chain reaction of one affecting the other, and the destruction is not limited, but in many aspects. Pure water sources are used for animals to drink and take a bath, leaving only the filthy water for us, and in insufficient quantity, too.

We have abused technology and damaged the protection layer of the earth's atmosphere. This has also affected our planet, earth is getting hotter. It is hot and there is no rain, and no shading trees. Without rain, trees cannot grow, without trees, there is less rain. Therefore, the climate is becoming hotter and changing unpredictably. All these end up affecting our body, affecting our children, our business, our mentality and other aspects, and eventually affecting the moral state of our earth. Without sufficient food, prices would soar, many people could not afford it. Business would be bad which would result in bankruptcy. Broke people would go robbing, or become homeless, and do evil deeds. They would even harm themselves and their families.

The disaster extends to our descendants

You would be the first victim if there were nothing to eat. Very soon, the whole world would be in hunger. The consequence has already affected the children, affected them morally. Therefore, the United Nations and many countries are getting together, resolving to kill the children, the infants. Yes! To have abortion. As the number of people is increasing, and food is insufficient, they want to kill people now. To say it bluntly, they are killing people for food. However, this is really happening. They kill infants, they kill children. It is because they sense the danger; food is getting less and the population is on the rise. They do not change their way of living – to be vegetarian, refrain from cutting trees any more, and to plant them instead; stop raising livestock, but plant crops instead. On the contrary, they are slaughtering children. Therefore, you can see that the influence is like an iron chain, continuously affecting another and another. You can't say, 'Eating meat is my business,' it affects the whole world, affects the next generation, and your innocent children. You can see this is terrible, the damage is so enormous. Now, do you still ask why Master wants you to be vegetarian?

We have to solve this problem from the root. We water the plants at the roots, not on the leaves. Yes, the more we eat meat, the more we have to produce meat. Raising animals requires vast land area and plenty of water for the grass to grow. The more trees we cut, the less water we get; and then the water is used for the animals and people are left without. Without water, we cannot plant crops, so we have less fresh produce. When the supply drops, they'll be more expensive. When the population is soaring and food production is decreasing, wars are inevitable. There will be more violence like robbery and killing – just for eating, just for food. Finally, they think of murdering – murdering the children to save their own skin.

Previously, nobody ever even thought of abortion, but now they try to legalize and publicize it. I feel that the United Nations and many other countries ought to think in a more logical manner, and find a more effective and correct method, instead of just killing children. If the situation persists, it is not enough no matter how many lives you kill. Many people have prophesied in the future there are some countries that need to eat human flesh to survive. They have reached the stage of eating the meat of dead people. However, there is a way to change the future, but not if they continue in this way.

Act now to change the future

We can change, change our world. We can save our world, instead of killing others for our own survival. We should rebuild our way of life – live a moral life, be a vegetarian, cultivate ourself mentally and physically and there will be immediate results. Our world will be changed at once! If everybody is planting trees instead of cutting them down, then we would be saved very soon. Within ten years, the world would never be the same, without any problem. Truly there is hope, but only with the cooperation of everyone.

For example, you disciples listen to what I say and you will further influence other people you know. However, if that land does not belong to us, we cannot demand the landowner to plant trees! He ought to realize the gains and losses. This news should be propagated to the whole world for everyone to know. They have to believe, and they have to think in a more logical way. Everybody has to be united to save the world. Otherwise, there is no point worrying about doomsday. We are killing each other already before doomsday arrives. Since the beginning of creation, we have never heard that wars are for killing children! It means that our moral standard has been degraded to its lowest point.

Nowadays, if you have killed a person, the judge, the police would arrest you and put you in jail. You have to compensate for the lost life with your own life. However, they are now trying to legalize the massacre, and no one seems to think this is immoral. This is really incredible! I hope the United Nations and the participating countries will keep their minds clearly awake. Otherwise, it is really terrible to put the future of our next generation and the whole world in their hands, and let them decide for us! Do you understand? If they are not enlightened, and incapable of logical thinking, you could imagine how serious the situation is! When there is a cause, there is an effect. God is not going to stand on one side watching them decide the life and death of the people, the children of God. God definitely would not allow it.

We often accuse others, 'He kills, he is a murderer!' Everybody would scold him, hate him. We are also disgusted by wars, killing. However, murder has now become a natural course, and the murdered victims are babies, infants. This is truly horrible! It is different if it has to be done due to compelling situations. However, they are now doing it openly, without any urgent reason; just because the food rations are insufficient. The babies have to be killed simply to ensure the adults' food ration. I hope abortion is not legalized. Try our best to think of a way, and don't let this happen.

We can write to them, in about the same content of my speech today. Each of us may accordingly write to the United Nations, to the president of the United States, and the relevant nations. Request them to find another solution, instead of employing this undesirable method! Perhaps they will listen to our advice, perhaps not. I hope they will listen. Otherwise, even if we kill all the children to save the adults from starving, the retribution of the karma incurred would be even worse. It is strange! I don't know what the people of the world are thinking. They cannot solve even such a simple problem. I am sure most of the politicians know about the statistics from the books researching the gains and

losses of a meat diet versus a vegetarian diet. They have more opportunities to read these books. They are wealthy, and they have people to inform them, submitting the material to them. They should know better than us. They are obliged to manage the country and work for the people, they should know about these facts. It is so simple, just encourage the people to be vegetarians, and they themselves should also change to a vegetarian diet. The world will soon be saved this way, not to mention going to heaven through spiritual practice, and the incurred merits!

Everyone is responsible for saving the earth

If a vegetarian diet can save the world, then everyone just sacrifices a little. The political and religious figures have great influence and authority over the people. They are free to use any means. They have television, radio and everything. They can talk about anything at any time. They should talk about good things, propagating a vegetarian diet, and environmental protection. This is the right thing to do for ourselves and our next generation. Is that right? It is very convenient for the major political and religious groups to do so.

We have received many warnings lately. There are natural disasters and earthquakes everywhere. Furthermore, we are terrorized by killing among humankind. Humans are powerful. They could be the Buddha or they could be a demon. As a Buddha, they could save the whole world. As a demon, they could destroy the whole world. Until now, we have been afflicted with many problems. Some mentally unbalanced people have created wars, or invented some bombs, much of which destroy the wealth of the world and people's lives. Sometimes we think a bomb is nothing, to destroy a city is nothing, et cetera. So much money and effort is required to build a city. If the city is destroyed, the economy of the nation is affected, and pressured. Rebuilding the city entails great pressure. It is a tremendous burden to the economy of the nation. So, there are natural disasters, earthquakes, typhoons, bombs, and strange diseases. Don't say the whole world is destroyed. It is extremely disastrous if only one third or a part of the globe is affected. The situation will deteriorate with a chain reaction.

Therefore, I hope the people of the world will wake up quickly. I wish you would spread the message to everybody, telling them to save this earth together. Otherwise, what should we do? Heaven only accommodates the virtuous people. If the earth does not exist anymore, where do all the not-so-good people go? Therefore, we must spend some effort for the less desirable people.

This planet earth is very precious. Should God wish to punish it, destroy it, there is nothing we can do but to comply with His will. However, if it still can be saved, then we should save it. It's because this world is a very good school, where many souls can come to learn and grow.

THERE IS NO EGO, REALLY! ¹⁸³

[Audience: Master, could You speak a little bit about the fact that our ego gets in the way of our close relationship with the God within? How to get rid of it?]

183. Group meditation, Honolulu Center, Hawaii, U.S.A., September 6, 1994 (Originally in English).

Ego comes from the effect of the environment

There is no ego, really; just the environmental effect. When we were young, we did something wrong, we got punished, and when we did something good, we got praised and sometimes overdue praise, and then we learn to manage to show off because we get praise and get candies, something like that. And then later on when we grow up, we are in the school and then we learn that the brilliant one, or those who know how to go about socially and get the advantage; the same thing we learn again – how to be on top, how to talk smoothly, how to do things that please people, even though sometimes these things are not very honestly done, just to win the praise.

That's how we get into the habits, to manage things the way we want so that we get the spotlight. And that is what we call the ego. There is no ego to begin with. And then we are so used to with failure and success, we are proud of ourselves. We think, 'Ah! I have accomplished this, and I have done that. I out did him, I tricked them, and things like that.' And then we get prouder and prouder, and that is the so-called ego.

Habit is the information collected by the mind

Actually, it is all habit. We are not born with the ego. That's why I told you that the environment is very important to the individuals. Two persons with the same level of intelligence if brought up in different environments will react differently to the same situation that they are confronted with because of the habit they acquired, because the things they learned during their childhood and their lives. So, there is no ego really. Now we try to deal with the habit only.

For example, now you want to meditate, but you're so used to with running around – at seven o'clock you go to coffee and eight o'clock you go dancing and now I tell you to sit here. Miserable thing, and don't even see God sometimes, not always, yeah? Some lucky fellows see God all the time, and take it for granted, and some sit there, the bottom nearly falls off and don't see anything! So of course, these things will make you feel unhappy. And then it is difficult for you to believe that there is such thing as God, and that Hes is even loving at all. If Hes is loving, why doesn't Hes come to me, why Hes comes to the neighbors?

Because you tend to learn as you grow up to compare things the way the worldly people do. They teach you: The neighbor is better than you, his car is more expensive. Why God gives to him but not gives to me, things like that? And then this is the so-called ego, the argumentative mind, that they collected from the influence of the society. So now, we have to do is that go contrary to that. Every time we think some nonsense, we say, 'Okay, that's just your habit. I don't believe in your garbage.' And then just do your work, don't listen to the mind, and slowly you will get used to it.

Forgive yourself and try to change

The people who are pure in the heart, they are more simple. They get to God quickly, because they don't have too many thinkings and too many comparisons, too many studies to overcome. The more intellectual people, or sometimes the more accomplished people, they are more complicated, because they have to be in this kind of field to succeed, for example like that. Therefore, they become habitual to thinking, analyzing pro and con and success and failure – 'If I sit in meditation, what do I get from God? Do I get anything at all? Is that worth it? You know, time is money.' [Laughter] and things like that, sometimes.

And then subconsciously, we obstruct ourselves the way to heaven. That's what we call ego. Actually, there is none.

For example, many children who grew up in a battered home, grow up to become criminals. They were not loved as a child. They grew up don't love anybody. They only know violence. They only know force, using muscle force or whatever force they can get to win the enemy, to become a stronger guy. Most of them are unloved, and then it's very difficult for them to change that. Then you would say that's their ego. Actually, I would say it's just a habit. When we say 'habit,' it's easier to understand, and also seems easier to reach and to correct, than to say 'ego.' It sounds so frightening, like an entity or something like that, that we have to fight with. It's not that difficult.

Even brushing the teeth, many people don't brush three times a day because they don't have the habit, and they can't bother to change. I didn't brush three times a day when I was young, but when I grew up I understand it hurts my teeth, and I want to be beautiful. [Laughter] Then I start to realize the importance of this habit, brushing the teeth after a meal, and I do it along. That's it, just a habit. A habit, okay?! So, forgive yourself and try to change.

Tests are of your own choosing

[Audience: When we come to this earth do we choose our parents?] Yeah! You did! You did everything. Everything you are in you chose, but you forgot then you reject it.

You know, sometimes we reject, not you, but I mean us, we, and then we complain about our situations. Actually, we have chosen to be sometimes in the hard situation. Even accidents, even violent happenings to us, these are our choice to challenge us to grow. The harder the situation, the stronger the soul will be, supposed to.

But sometimes we choose the task too big, perhaps, and then we fail, and then we don't like it. Yes, and that's how. Okay! Therefore, I told you really everything is good for us. But there is never an end to the paradoxes of the universe, you know what I mean?! And then that comes to the case and you will ask me, 'Then Master, why would You cry with the suffering of the people?' But that's what makes us human.

One thing we know, that suffering is good for us. Yeah! One thing I know, that the doctor's injection is good for my allergy; but another thing, I am afraid of it. I say, 'Please!' I just really want to stop it. You know what I mean? Stupid! I was never like that before. But sometimes I am like that. So what! It's my weakness. I know that and I'm not afraid to tell you.

It's the same with your spiritual issue and the situation you choose to be born in, in this world. You know it. You want it. But when it comes to the actual facing of these problems and these trials and these tests, you are afraid.

I'm the one who came to the doctor myself. I went right through the door and I wanted something. Because you know... I took all the medicines, sweet ones, you know sugar coated; and it never helped. So, I already expected he probably would give me a shot or something. Because people told me, such allergy, if you take medicine, it doesn't help, it goes all over the body like that, it is likely a hundred percent that the doctor will give you a shot. Otherwise, it will not clear; and I already knew it. But knowing that and facing the needle are different things. [Master laughs.] And when she comes behind you, you know you can't even see it, that's the worse thing. [Laughter] You don't know what she is doing

there, whether she misses it and she does it again. Sometimes it's like that. They are worse you know. The nurse sometimes they put in there. 'Oh! Sorry honey. I have to do it again.' [Laughter] Oh, that's when you don't believe that God really exists. [Laughter] Ah, never mind, never mind. But luckily God is very big hearted; Hes doesn't mind our weakness. Yeah! It's alright. But still I don't like the needle. I never liked it. When I was young, my father always forced it on me. I don't like it, but I still have to go. I know there is no choice, right! No choice, even when we don't like it.

The same before we were born, we chose our environments, our parents, our trials, our tests, our examinations, the friends we will be with, the situation we will be in. But then, when it's too much, we cry. Okay! Fine. It's alright you can cry, you can pray; and help will be there, to help you to overcome this weakness; or to go quickly, to comfort your soul a little bit to go through the test.

Just like you have to go to get a shot from the doctor, but the nurse will hold your hand or things like that; or your parents, your daughter, your father, your mother will say, 'Honey it's alright honey. I'll take you to the movies later.' [Laughter] And things like that, you know what I mean? But the shot you still have to have it. But still you feel better, with the love ones next to you. Alright! That's why when you go to the hospital, many people go to see you. It doesn't ease your pain, it doesn't lessen your sorrow; but you feel comforted with the flowers, with the get-well cards, with a lot of friends and loved ones smiling and loving you. You feel comforted. Is that right? Okay. Yeah!

That's why we pray, yeah! That's why we meditate also. It will lessen the pain of our test and it makes us pass with flying colors. Okay!

Rely on yourself

We don't learn for the other people to know. We learn so that we know and that we can bless the world silently by our inner glory and inner love. Just like every other science you know and study, you have to develop yourself. That's why the Buddha said: 'Rely on yourself and no one else.' Of course, He said that to see the Buddha is very rare, the greatest blessing, that in a hundred thousand eons you wouldn't have one. Not once in a life time but once in many life times you would see a Buddha. Probably the Buddha is in front of you but you don't see, that's the difference. Many people see, but they don't stare, they don't see anything. They probably look but they don't see. They hear but they don't listen, they don't understand.

And Jesus also said: 'No one comes to the Mother / Father except through me.' But nevertheless, He didn't say that: 'Now you have seen me, you go home to sleep, and surely you'll go to heaven.' No, right? He tells you: 'Self-cultivation, love your Mother / Father, love my commandments, pray in a closet, love your neighbor.' Wow, it's a lot of work. It's not that He said: 'Okay, now that you have seen me, Jesus, you'll surely go to heaven.' No! He didn't say that. A lot of work He told us to do. Even to His relatives, you remember? He said, 'Who is my relative? Who is my mother? Who is my sister? Only the ones who do the will of the Mother / Father are my relatives, my mother, my sister.' He said: 'Oh, I have no relatives except you.' You know, He meant those who do the will of the Mother / Father, who love their neighbors, and who keep the commandments, who love the Mother / Father with all the heart, the soul and mind, et cetera. Remember?

Even Jesus, before He became the world spiritual leader, He had to go into the closet, and meditate and pray. And He had to undergo the humility of baptism, even though if He knew He was the son of God, He wouldn't have to do that. He still has to go through everything

like us, to show us that when we are a human being, we must work. And He tells His disciples to go out and spread the gospel. He said: 'Whatever I tell in secret, you go and preach on the house tops. But don't give pearls to the swine.' Is it not so? Yeah, He also said that not every one could accept His teachings.

Come to the world to learn love and service

Mostly, at any period of time of our earth, the people who truly love God are very rare. There are also different levels of God as well, and different levels of our beings. And as long as we are in this world and we do not learn to understand the issue of spirituality, then even though we go to heaven, because the love of the Mother / Father is immense... Yes, He will not discriminate. Really, you love Him, fine. You don't love Him, He loves you. But still, then we go up there and we have not developed; we're still the way we were before, a selfish, stupid angel.... Oh! Not all the angels are good, that's why they have to come here and do this physical raiment. In order to study, to learn how to love others, how to do service instead of just sitting there and enjoying the bliss of heaven all the time.

And now we are given the opportunity to study in this school of life. If we do not take this opportunity and learn well, then we will be very regretful in heaven. No one else will tell you anything. You, yourself, look back at your life. At that time it will be very clear to you, like a mirror. And then you will feel very, very sorry, that you were so weak, that you were so lazy, that you were so attached to the material things that the Mother / Father gave you, only as a tool so that you could progress.

Instead, you cling to these tools and forget the mission, forget what you are here for. That's why many souls are wandering around in transmigration. They are earthbound because they are so much attached to this world. Even though the gate of heaven is always open, we don't want to go back.

God is powerful, almighty. There is nothing that He can not do. It's just that we don't have enough power of sincerity. That's why many of our prayers are not answered and we think God is not there. Ah, that is the trouble. Poor God is blamed for everything. All these wars, disasters, hunger and all these things, we just blame it on God, or the hierarchy of heaven that doesn't help us. Truly it's our choice, the choice of the people who go against the will of heaven and the law of the universe. These people will make wars and listen to the negative force in nature which we call Satan or Devil. They are always there. That's how the negative world, this world, stays in balance. In the heavenly world, there's no need for this negative force to exist.

Self judgement

In heaven, there is no good, no bad, and people sometimes do not think of sins the way we do. They don't condemn you.

So, at the time of death sometimes it's you who condemns yourself. You will be very regretful that you did not do the best, that you shouldn't have done the other way. You know you should have, but you did not do. That's what will torment you after your death. And that's what people call 'hell.' There is no God who stays there and passes judgment. It's just at the time of death, you'll be shown the low level. That is if we did not practice any true repentance, and if we did not truly lead a virtuous life the way it has to be. Then we will be shown a kind of, like movies, but so fast. The whole lifetime goes by in just a split second. You will see everything, but you understand. Even at such a quick speed, you understand everything that you have done, what is wrong, what is right. You know

everything and then at that time you will cry. You will know that you have done wrong. You will not be given the opportunity again. Or for a very, very long time because there are so many awaiting to come to be human beings. So, you are a long way on the waiting list, because you've already been given the opportunity. That is the so-called eternal hell or eternal condemnation. But of course, nothing is really eternal. It's just that for an unhappy situation or feelings, it seems a long, long time. And when we are happy, the time goes so fast. Because our sins are not eternally committed, our grief will not be eternally carried out. It's just that we feel it's so long. We feel so regretful that we have been given the opportunity to do good, to improve our knowledge about the creation, about our Mother / Father, how everything functions, how we should learn to love one another, and we did not take that opportunity. That's the problem. That will make us feel very, very sorry.

I wish that it wouldn't happen to you. I am sure it will not because you have been diligent in your search for the Truth, for your own original abode and for God. Of course, in this situation, sometimes our mind is weak, the body is also weak. Sometimes we want to meditate a long time but the body's so weak, the flesh is so weak, and the will also weakens with the flesh. Therefore, we have to study again and again. Make firm. Start again: 'Today I failed. I didn't meditate very well. Tomorrow, next day I'll make more effort.' Always try to strive for better, better will, so that we can progress in spirit. And we'll become a stronger and wiser person in heaven.

It's not that everyone is the same in heaven. Even though God is just and fair, He loves all His children the same way. But nevertheless, because we do not strive ourselves, therefore we just stay there. Just like children in the school, some are intelligent, some are diligent, some just go out and play, fool with girls or do other things, drugs and things like that. According to the circumstances, when they are too weak to resist, and too rebellious to listen to the parents, then they harm themselves and cause a lot of trouble for themselves. Of course, the parents will be affected and be miserable. But the most suffering person is themselves.

Overcome unfavorable situations

Similarly, when we come down to this world we are given all the tools, equipment and circumstances with which we can thrive and try to overcome the situation, overcome the hatred that is bred by the circumstances. Sometimes we are put into unfavorable conditions, to see how we can love our enemies. But we often fail to love our enemies. We often give into our flesh desires and also the temptations of the surroundings to hate our enemy, just the way we were taught, just the way we're used to, not the way of heaven.

So, sometimes we will fail, sometimes we'll succeed. And the more successful we are, of course the higher the position in the hierarchy of the universe. And we will be given more opportunities in the heavenly system to do better work, more interesting work and more universal work, that we can develop immense talent that we never knew we had, even in the wildest imagination. We will be given leading roles in heaven, like teaching a lot of heavenly beings, and things like that. Or when we go to this earth, we will become like Master / Teachers of spirituality or some special position, leading mankind into the kingdom of God.

Take hold of the opportunity in the world

Otherwise, we don't have this opportunity if we're slack in this world, the only time we are in school. Do not think that you always are given the opportunity and come back again. Not always, not always. It is the generations, the DNA that stay behind. The information

from that DNA, these desires and all this energy of the desires, that stay behind, that reincarnate. Not you the soul, the person, understand? There are so many souls waiting to go into this school. I don't have the space for you to always stay behind. You can do that, but you wait a long time. And meanwhile you suffer and suffer from your own sorrow. The love of heaven is there but you will feel very sorry for the things you have missed. Yes, you wish you could have done it again, you would have done it better, and you will do it better.

But then when you are given the opportunity again, you forget. That's the problem. That's why sometimes we have to come back to relearn, if we truly are good and merit that, or have a good opportunity to go down. For example, to come down here, you have to exchange it for something. For example, there is a mission for someone to come down and help the world. And then you say, 'Okay, I'll join. Please can I join? I do anything, anything, anything. I promise, promise, promise. I won't be like the last time. Really no, no, no.' [Laughter] All right. So of course, heaven is always a trusting company. They give you a next job. But when you go down there instead of helping that person and that group to better the world, you do something else. Maybe even against them because you become forgetful of what you had promised before you took birth in this world – all of us, all of us.

That's why you see the Buddha, thirty years before He became enlightened; Jesus also. You know what I mean? Not that they are born immediately and say, 'I am the Buddha. I have to go and help the world.' They forget. So, there are so many pushing opportunities from heaven, like disasters would appear before you, or someone else edging you from behind or pushing you, or some situation happens that you suddenly will feel awakened. Or some friend will come along, some beggars on the street even, reminding you of the ephemeral nature of this world. These beggars are also angels.

Sometimes the suffering is there to awaken us. Some people come to do some great mission. Some people come to do a small mission in order to earn the merit of being a human. They can be in school and earn the merit so that they can advance in heaven and have another opportunity perhaps to advance again.

Remember the promise you made in heaven

I have often told you that the Au Lac refugees, they are there of their own will. They want it to be like that, so that they can awaken the conscience of the world about how terrible the refugees' situation can be; how war can affect people and many nations, not only one, for example like that; and to give the people who helped them, who gave them shelter, food, support and sympathy, the merit of love. You know what I mean?

When we love someone, we love ourselves. We really boost our glory. It's not that we help anyone, we help ourselves. Please remember this whenever you do something good. It is the will of heaven. It's good for you. You should do more good, be more loving, try to strive inside, use your wisdom. Don't be a sheep in the crowd. You have already stepped out of the crowd. You already have done much better. You understand? Trying to remember more of the promise that you made to the Mother / Father and the heavenly hierarchy before you came. That's why you came here!

You will remember through meditation, through contemplation on the wisdom from the Light and the Sound, who you are and what you're supposed to do to advance yourself. Because you are in contact with the supreme wisdom again, and you remember what is your mission and what you're supposed to do. That's why you always change for the better, because you remember the heavenly being that you are. That's why you change.

You become better and better. You become more angel, more heavenly like. That's all your work. All right?

Of course, the Master and the heavenly beings always stand by and help us. But if you don't do it yourselves, it doesn't matter how much help, it's no good. We have to do it ourselves first. And then the heavenly beings will help us. The Master power always helps us.

VEGETARIANISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ¹⁸⁴

We deplete the earth because we raise cattle and animals. Actually, this is another way we can contribute to our planet. You know all this; you read more books than I ever can imagine – about vegetarianism, about how to save our world, about environmental love and all kinds of things. And the vegetarian diet is the answer to all of these questions. Our earth is collapsing because we eat too much meat. Actually, we have to put it that way. Roughly speaking, it's like that. You read the newspapers more than I do; you watch television more than I ever do. I don't watch television.

But you know that every minute, every year, we cut down forests as big as England just to raise animals. So, how many rain forests have been destroyed? This changes the atmosphere and changes the rain. That's why our planet is heating up, and many places are having problems with floods and drought for long periods, even in America.

So, if we want to save the planet, if we want to preach environmental care, we should be vegetarian. There's no other thing to do. And that is just a small thing compared to all the vaccinations and all the pure water used for meat and things like that. You know better than I do. I don't want to preach to you about the things that you already read in newspapers and magazines and watch on television every day. I am just reminding you of a small portion of it. But the harmful effects of the meat diet are larger than life, not only that – to so many things, and harmful to ourselves.

To be a messenger of God's gospel

The world always changes according to the mental expectation and the life attitude of the people of this planet. It changes sometimes, so the best thing is we look up to God. And now we already have the connection with God, it's all right for us whether we come or we go, whether we stay or we go back to Hirm. It's all right, at least we don't fear. We have no fear, but we have to also sometimes pray for God's grace for our brothers and sisters in case they still can be saved in some ways. And please, God, please hasten it, yeah, the means for them. Yes... you can do is pray for the whole world because looks like we are going to have trouble as predicted by many of the clairvoyant people in the world, including your Americans, you know, famous the Dixson, Cayce. You know, huh? So, you'd better pray and meditate.

We don't have too much time. We never have too much time. I hope you believe in what I say. I wish you do. And whatever we can save, we save. Whatever is damaged, well, that will be God's will.

Our world has been through a lot of upheaval, you know, changing. This is inevitable. There is no need to say if we are superstitious and thinking that the world will end, or something like that. We don't have to believe it. We don't have to. It will happen one day or

184. Group meditation, Honolulu Center, Hawaii, U.S.A., September 3, 1994 (Originally in English).

another, right? Or it doesn't have to end. It's sometimes destroyed in some parts, and it will inconvenience a lot of people, and destroy a lot of people's lives and property. This is not something that's superstitious.

And you also try to work in your community, spreading the gospel, telling them that only God can save them. God saves us doesn't mean that God always will protect our house or protect our body, but He will save us afterward, after all the ephemeral things have gone. He saves us eternally. We will be there eternally.

PENETRATING THE TUNNEL BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH ¹⁸⁵

Meditate sincerely. Always pray before, so that you can cut through the thin veil, the thin curtain that separates us – the illusion of world, from the knowledge of the Truth. It's only very thin. So thin like smoke. If you pierce that curtain, you know many things, you know everything. If you do not, you remain forever ignorant. That's the only difference between a sage and a common ignorant person. Only a very thin curtain.

In the bible it is also said, 'The road to heaven is so thin like a razor's blade.' It's the separation between heaven and earth. Some Indian sutras, some Indian bibles say, 'The difference between the knowledgeable and the ignorant is one hair apart... So thin!'

It is true like that, like the curtain that you see when you meditate. You saw that it was so thin and so fragile that you could penetrate it anytime, but it's difficult. Sometime you see it and then it disappears. You can not concentrate there. Try, keep doing it. Just like the man who dug the mountain, made a tunnel out of it. Saved his life, saved the life and conscience of the son of the enemy, as well as saved the lives of many other innocent people. The story might be true or not, but it's similar to our meditation practice. We have to penetrate the tunnel between life and death. Save ourselves, save many people.

Become a vegetarian in all aspects – The meaning of non-violence

Garson, the Zen master of Japan, taught his disciple like this: Many people, they go against the killing, because they say they want to save all sentient beings including animals and ants. 'Okay, that's fine,' the master said. 'it is correct. We should protect animals and even insects. But, those people who talk about vegetarianism and protecting animals and insects, et cetera, they kill other things. For example, they kill time, and they kill their property, they kill the economy of the world. They kill political issues, political goodness, for example.' And this we can see anywhere. There's no need to prove it.

Also he says, 'Above all this, a person who always talks and preaches idealism, or religious issues without enlightenment, without offering people real enlightenment, these people, they kill religions.' In this case, in this book it says, these people who talk without enlightenment, who talk without offering enlightenment, they kill Buddhism. He's a Buddhist monk, so he can only talk about Buddhism.

So, there are many kinds of killing. The story is that short, but we can make it long, we can stretch it. If a person kills his own time and kills other people's time by always talking nonsense, by talking long time on telephone, and by always engaging others in senseless talk or senseless actions, or doing many things that are not necessary for the body, speech or spirit and not necessary for anyone, and sometimes even harmful, these people are also killing.

185. Group meditation, Austin Center, Texas, U.S.A., August 14, 1994 (Originally in English).

And many people kill the economy of the world, too. For example, sometimes they have a lot of food. They grow too much and they have a big harvest. And then because of wanting to keep the price up, they throw everything in the sea. Not even feed it to the animals, or not even giving it to the poor people. Just to keep the money, the prices up. And this is nonsense. Everyone who grows vegetables or food always prays to God to have a good harvest, and then when they have it, God gives it to them to share, they throw it away. And then they complain again. 'How come God is not fair?' Next time, no more harvest. 'Ah, why no water, no rain?' Understand?

Just like in Texas, they make a big lake just to raise fish. And they take a lot of water from Austin, from the underground water because of that. For example, this is also killing people. If the earth cannot produce quickly enough, if there's not enough rain, all the people here die. Not enough water, and no trees will grow, no harvest, no food, and children will die. For example, I wouldn't say you do that, but maybe one or two still continue with this way.

So, in that case, eating vegetarian is not that much help, because you also burden your body and then you cannot be clear in your mind and then you meditate without result. And then you go and bother me. Because you cannot listen to what I say, you cannot understand, and you cannot be one with me inside, then you doubt my teaching, for example. And then you also, by the way, take other people into your doubt with you. Some people who are still weak and who need you to help, then you take them out, because you yourself are not stable enough. Therefore, vegetarianism is not only eating tofu and avoiding meat and fish, but 'ahimsa,' meaning non-violence, includes a lot of aspects, as the master Garson just mentioned.

Bring about peace by meditating inside

I do not need to explore further. You probably will understand. There are many kinds of killing. If a person who practices inner tranquility but brings noisiness everywhere he goes, he's also a killer, because he kills the tranquil atmosphere wherever he goes. He makes people nervous. He makes people feel uneasy going around with him. He makes people not want to see him. So, doesn't matter how much cabbage and tofu he stuffs into his throat, it makes no difference. He remains an animal. You know what I mean? Because a real person, a real human being, brings peace and happiness everywhere he goes. That is a real human being.

There's no need to talk about Buddha's land or kingdom of God or anything else before we can find our own peacefulness inside. We have to bring it everywhere. We have to cultivate it within, so that everywhere we go, we represent that. We are the peace, we are the kingdom of God, we are the angel, we are the Buddha. There's no need to always aim to another Buddha's land, while here making a mess in this planet; the only one that you live in at the moment and the only one that you can rely on for food, for guidance, for support, in order for you to develop. So, we have no right to make trouble anywhere we go. We just can bring peace, offerings and sacrifice. That's the way of a practitioner. There's no need to go anywhere and tell people you are vegetarian and that you meditate. What is the use if you don't meditate inside, if you are not a vegetarian inside? You know what I mean?

It's alright. I allow you time to change, but not too long. Not two, three, four years. Two, three months enough! You expect your children as young as that to know everything you say, to obey everything you order. Right? 'And you, you should understand quickly, be genius, be first in the class.' And to do the housework the way you want. And to be just like

a grown-up. But you yourself, so old, and cannot change in a few months. So, how can you teach your children? If you're like that, better just forget it. Just better kneel to your children, and say, 'I'm sorry I have scolded you.' You're not worthy. We have to be something before we can talk to other people. If not, it's empty talk, nobody will listen. Even though they might listen, but inside they feel this is not true.

Heavens and hells are all created by the mind

There is also another Japanese Zen. He's a Zen monk. He lives in a temple. And there was a samurai came to visit him. You know samurai? The one who practices sword. He came to visit him, and he asked the master, 'Can you tell me really there is hell and heaven?' And master said, 'Yes, there are heavens, there are hells.' And the samurai didn't believe him. 'Can you prove it to me? You have to prove it, otherwise how can I believe you?' The master said, 'What for do I prove it to you?' He said, 'If you don't prove to me, then I don't believe you.'

And the master started to scold him. He said, 'Look at you. Who are you to threaten me like this? Ah! Your face looks like a weak and dirty beggar outside there, and you think I'm scared of you. And you can convince me that you are samurai? Your face, it looks so ugly, so lousy. And you look so weak. Ah! You think you can scare me?' And the samurai, took the sword out saying, 'I will prove it to you.' So, the master smiled and said, 'Okay, you can open the door of hell now if you want.' And then the samurai just shook up. He realized the master wanted to teach him by this. So, he put back the sword inside. And the master smiled again, and said, 'Here you open the gate to heaven.' So.... [Applause]

This story, I guess some or many of you already know, but just for an example. Yes! That heaven and hell, we decide. Understand? Whenever we go anywhere we bring happiness and peacefulness and harmony to other people, that's when we create heaven. And when we go everywhere and make people agitated, make people angry or don't want to see us, or create disturbance and inharmony, that is the time when we create hell. That's very easy.

So, every time, everyday, check up your own inner kingdom, which way you open. There are two sides of us always, the yin and the yang, the positive and the negative. We have to be in between, always in balance. Otherwise, if we tip too much to the negative, then all our actions, thoughts and speech will be negative. If we tip too much to the positive, we also will be out of balance. Because we still live in this world, we have to be practical also. We can't just everyday, twenty-four hours, close the eyes and be in samadhi, even when driving car. [Laughter] That I don't recommend.

Be vegetarian in speech, thought and action

So many kinds of vegetarians, you must understand. There is a saying in Au Lac. They say that the vegetarian in the heart is the best. Why do they say that? It is because our actions, speech and thoughts must be together, uniform, we don't just eat vegetarian only. That's only the action wise. And then when we talk, we talk like having scissors or a stone and cutting everywhere; that is not vegetarian talk.

If we say we eat vegetarian, but our thoughts are very violent and sharp, and do not care about other people's feelings, and always being selfish, always trying to get everything for ourselves first, at any cost, at the cost of other people's convenience or feelings, then it's no good. No good for us, no good for the family, and then at large, it's no good for the nation and for the world.

That's why the Chinese people say, 'First we have to cultivate our own self, the big self, the wisdom, and then we can take care of the family, and then we can take care of the nation, and then we can pacify the whole planet.' And that is quite true.

But most people, they just want to pacify the planet. You know, leap frog, quick, quick! Otherwise, 'Oh, take care of ourselves? That I know already.' 'Take care of my family? Oh, my wife can do it.' 'Take care of the nation? Oh, well president Clinton does it. I take care of the whole world the best.' That's what they think. It would be better we begin from ourselves.

EVEN GREAT MASTERS RESPECT THE RULES OF THIS WORLD ¹⁸⁶

You always ask me why can't I just beat the devils and kick them out, and then set free the whole world or set free the disciples, at least cook all their karma into curry, and finish with it? Why is there left-over karma for this life? Sometimes disciples also experience a little suffering and sickness. But it's already much better than before, because you're cleansing your house every day with meditation and the vegetarian 'broom stick.' Is that not so? People always clean house with the broom stick. It's made from the trees. Or, when you eat cabbage or things like that, you get a lot of fiber and that cleanses your system also. That makes you more healthy each day. That's why all of you look younger than before initiation. No need for the beauty salon, right? No, not really.

So, the reason why any Master cannot completely erase the karma of the disciples or the karma of this world or interfere in any kind of unfavorable circumstance is because both have to respect the rules of this playing field. Just like both opposite parties in a football field have to respect the same rules. We can talk together, but we cannot break them just because someone belongs to our group. When he kicks someone else he should not kick, we cannot do anything about it. He has to be out. It doesn't mean that because he is our friend, we can cover him. And when the opposite group wins or does something right, we can't kick them or annihilate them just because they are the opposite enemy group.

So similarly, in this world there two groups playing. One is positive – our side – and the other one is negative, or the so-called enemy side. It always makes trouble for us and makes obstacles and everything. But we owe them something from before. We live in this world, and we have inter-connection with them in many lifetimes. So, we cannot now forget what we have done to them, or what our friends have done to them in the past and just cover our friends up, and treat the opposite unjustly or in an unfair way.

Therefore, it's not that we don't have power. It's not that the Master cannot do anything. The Master can change the whole universe, but we have to be fair. Otherwise, we are not worthy to be a saint or to be saintly practitioners. That's why you see sometimes that many Masters are very patient. Like Shakyamuni Buddha: He could go to any Buddha's land or do anything He wanted. He could take care of disciples' karma. He could make people become Arahat overnight. But He could not change the karma of His birthplace when it had war and conflict with the neighboring country, just because He didn't want to treat people or other beings unfairly. But that also costs Him His reputation. Many people, including His disciples at that time, were losing faith in Him and thinking that He could not do anything. Even His own clan members were being harmed; they were going to be chopped away and He could do nothing about it. He went there and talked to them only; that's the only thing He did. He tried to convince them of the harmful effects of war and of

186. Group meditation, San Jose Center, California, U.S.A., July 16, 1994 (Originally in English).

the retribution circle of karma. But they did not listen. The karma power was too strong that pulled them together, and they clasped together and died together.

The Buddha could not intervene because He was a fair player. Similar to Jesus Christ, He had many magical powers, according to legend. So, He must have been able to or could have been able to save Himself. But He did not. He let it be. Milarepa of Tibet also knew that he was going to die from poison. In fact, he said to the woman: 'You first go and take the price of poisoning me from that person first. And then I will drink it. Otherwise, if I drink it, I will die and he might not give you the money.'

So, they all know before they died. Shakyamuni Buddha also knew that He was going to die. He already said: 'Three months from now, I will go to the great nirvana.' It meant leave the world. And then He hoped that Ananda would tell Him, 'Please don't die.' But Ananda was probably thinking too much of something else, or he was hungry, thinking of chapatti, and he couldn't hear what the Buddha said at that time. So, the Buddha hinted three times, but Ananda said nothing. He was probably thinking of chapati more; when you go begging once a day only, it's difficult to keep your mind centered away from the chapati. So, he did not ask the Buddha to remain in this world. And after that, the Buddha was fed up. He said, 'Okay, three months later I'll be gone from this world.' And then Ananda woke up from his chapati dream, and he was crying: 'Oh, please don't go!' But it was too late. When the Buddha asks three times and you don't answer, that's fixed. And because maya, the king of illusion, always stayed around Buddha, when Ananda did not answer, the king of illusion said: 'See? No one wants You! So You have to go.'

The Buddha said: 'All right.' He knew it. But He still went. He could have waited for another time when Ananda had fully eaten and was well meditated and had a clear mind. And then He would ask this question. And Ananda probably would know what to say: 'Oh, please Master, don't go!' But He chose the wrong time, perhaps because He should have gone anyhow. Just like Milarepa or just like Jesus Christ, He knew before He went. He said, 'This is the last time you'll see me. After tomorrow, or in a while you will not see me anymore.' He knew that. And He even told His disciples that the one who dipped the bread in that sauce, that such-and-such was the one who would sell Him for, perhaps, two hundred dollars.

So, these so-called Masters of the world, they know everything; they know what they are doing. But sometimes they play along with whatever it is, because this world has already come into being and they cannot annihilate it. Many people want to stay; the whole population of this world clings to this planet and doesn't want to let go. So, even the Buddha will not destroy it. Even God will not destroy it. If the karma is not so heavy, if it's still balanced, then the planet will still exist. But if the planet exists, there is give-and-take of the karma, and it will never finish. So, today they kill him, and another day his children will kill them and then their children will kill his children and so on and so on, until this group of people wake up by themselves and realize the uselessness of this forever unending evil circle. Then, they stop revenging and they stay still, and then everything will become different.

Otherwise, the people of this world keep playing and playing and playing all the time and they never stop. So, when the Buddha comes here, the Buddha has to also respect the rules of play here. Otherwise, Buddha cannot come in the first place. Even God cannot come here. For example, if any president wants to join a football team, even if he is the president of the United States and he is respected by the whole world, can he join it without going through any rules of the football team? Can he kick around anything he

wants? No! They will refuse him outright; it's not just because he is a president that he can just go into any football field and then kick the ball around.

Similarly, this world is a playing field of the sentient beings of this planet, and of this kind of level of consciousness. And so this world is the playing field of the planet dwellers, like human beings or animals, or ghosts and goblins, those who stay around the planet invisibly. So, even if God wants to come here and persuade some of Hiers children to come Home or try to find those who want to come Home with Hirm, Hes has to respect the rules here.

For example, if the president likes some of the football players and maybe he wants to be the friend of the football star, the only way to go onto the field and to befriend this person is to become also a football player, at least occasionally or pretendingly. So, he has to learn the rules and respect them. Then finally, or slowly and gradually, he befriends the football star. Then he can talk to him, help him or love him, or shower his attention on him or his love for him. Otherwise, he cannot just come in because he is the president. Even if he owns the whole football field, he cannot come in like that. Even the owner of the field cannot come in; even the biggest millionaire of the world cannot just enter the football field and mess around.

VEGETARIANISM IS THE BEST POLICY ¹⁸⁷

This world doesn't belong to us. It does, but many people don't like to share. Actually, this world belongs to everyone, including the animals. That's why we follow the vegetarian policy; because this world has come into existence due to the force of thinking power of all the beings on this planet that exist. We want this place, so it exists, including the animals. But when we came into this world, we thought it belonged to us.

Everyone thought it belonged to them. Therefore, we started to get rid of the other 'aliens;' for instance, the red got rid of the white and the white got rid of the black. And then the black and the white and the yellow got rid of the animals.

We have forgotten that we are the co-owners, not the sole owners of this world. That is why we should not kill animals, we should not eat them and of course we especially should not kill any other beings. But in the name of sometimes politics, national love or religion, we kill. And we justify our killing with many glorious excuses. This is not the right thing, because we kill today and the next life we're being killed. Therefore, war always continues in our world. We always wonder why, but there is nothing to wonder. When we sow something, we reap the fruits thereof. Even the bible says so: 'As you sow, so shall you reap.'

For those of us who have no suffering from the effects of war or any other conflicts, it means we have not sown the seeds of violence. If we continue to keep it that way, even if we do not practice any meditation, even if we do not worship God in an official or 'registered' way, then we will be born again as a safe, secure and healthy human being, because we do not have the seed of damage, war or violence. Actually, I feel everyone has their own wisdom inside already. So, maybe we remind each other, but there's no need to teach or talk too much.

Since we are next to the vegetarian house, [Master is referring to the Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association Vegetarian House in San Jose.] we can also

187. Group gathering at the San Jose Vegetarian House, California, U.S.A., June 30, 1994 (Originally in English).

remember the vegetarian policy. Why is it the best policy? Because if we can remind each other not to kill animals, then of course how could we kill human beings? War would eliminate itself from the root. That is the principle. And I think we have hope! Because lately even in America, it is in fashion to be vegetarian. I know the daughter of the owner of one of the biggest hotels in Taipei. He has cancer. The whole family knows that, and he knows that. The whole family also knows that he should not eat meat. The doctor tells him he should not eat meat. It's funny: How come now that he has cancer, he can't eat meat? He shouldn't have eaten meat in the beginning! Anyhow, maybe what I've taught is right. So now, he knows that he shouldn't eat meat and the doctor prescribed him a 'less meat' diet, but he cannot bear to go without. And he suffers but he still eats beef steak or whatever he likes.

So, it's not that easy for people to be vegetarian just because he or she worries about health. I don't believe that. There must be something inside; it's the deepest seed of the soul of the spirit that reminds that person, talking from within: 'This is better for you. This is more harmonious. It's more peaceful for the world, and you contribute to the peace of this world by following this vegetarian policy.' So, the person listens to that quiet voice.

It's not about health. I have many friends who are not vegetarian, and I have never, ever forced, pushed or dropped any hint that they should follow me or eat a vegetarian diet. It's not true – never! My love for people is always unconditional, because I feel that only unconditional love is the most noble. It doesn't matter for what reason or what purpose; only unconditional love is acceptable to my heart. [Applause] So, I don't mean to say bad things about non-vegetarian people. That's not true; I'm just stating the facts. I have many good friends who are also non-vegetarian. I have never tried, nor would I ever think of trying to change their way of life! Some of my friends ask me 'Why?' I say, 'Well, it's your life. It's your soul. It's your way of living. You are responsible for whatever you want to be. I am not responsible.'

So, you do what you want. Whatever comes from your heart, is good. I don't need to influence you because you alone are God. You have God inside you, as I do. There is no need to tell you what to do except when you ask me what is best for you. Then, I will tell you. But if you don't ask me, I will not tell you anything. That's very simple.

Whatever we do is our own responsibility. There is no need to blame anyone or to look up to someone for the answer, actually not. Even to look up to a guru or a Master would be an obstruction to our progress. If you come to a Master and listen to anything, it's because you already have it. You already know about it. You probably need a confirmation, just so that you are stronger in your decisions. Because when two people agree, things tend to come into being more quickly and more affirmatively, that's all. Otherwise, if you are not ready for it, if you want to play and fool around in this world for a longer time, even if I try to influence you, it's no good. I can never do it; even God cannot do it.

That's why Buddha and Jesus never tried hard. Everyone praises them and says, 'Wow, they really tried hard to change the world and to cleanse the atmosphere of the world!' But they never tried. They just did it because it happened to be so and because people came to them and asked them. The opportunity arose and the situation was favorable. So, they just talked, or they told people what they asked or whatever they wanted to hear or whatever they already knew and just wanted affirmative support for; that's all. They never tried. Buddha never tried to change the world. Jesus never tried to change the people's consciousness. The people wanted to change themselves, and when people want to change, they change.

Just like the American people now: They change. They want to be vegetarian, they meditate and they've learned a lot of things. That's because they want it and because now they're ready. They have built their country. They have built the foundation of the institution of free America. Now they are free. Their hands are free, and their minds are relaxed. They can pursue the original motive of their life, of their journey to America. They came here because of the spiritual, so finally they will do it, that's all.

So, we just enjoy life! Be a good boy and good girl and try to be vegetarian if we can. Lead a good life, and enjoy whatever God gives us. We own the house. We own the world! We think about, we create this world, but with the power of thinking. [Master points to the wisdom eye.] Therefore, we enjoy it. But try to share and not to damage our common property.

Anyone who doubts the power of thinking should remember the people with magical powers. One person in America even made the statue of liberty disappear for five minutes. That's the power of thinking! You can disintegrate or dissolve the material substance of matter back to its original source before it came into being. Just like us, before we came into existence, where were we? We were at the original source. We were at the House of the substance. We are in the factory of the future-making. So, that's why people can learn the art of invisibility, the art of flying or the art of materializing things and dematerializing things.

So, it's very easy. But these things are still in the level of thinking and intellect. There are higher levels beyond thinking, beyond the existence of the mind, before the thinking process and thinking power came into being. That is the higher level: The level of God, the level of the almighty, the original House of all beings, including our soul and all the souls of all beings. That's the level we can reach with the method of the Light and Sound we have learned from the ancient Masters. This is the higher level. We can even, using this original power, arise above all material existence, all cause and effect. That's how we become free; that's how we can transcend karma. And that's the only thing that is worth pursuing.

All living creatures are equal

From ancient times until now, the Asian people, especially the Chinese and Aulacese, think turtles are very sacred animals because they live very long. And sometimes they understand things, so the people dare not kill these animals.

Of course, there is some truth in this. Just like before, Aulacese fishermen worshipped dolphins and friendly whales. Because sometimes during storms and dangerous situations like typhoons, a whale or a dolphin would help them guide their boat and even push the boat back to safety. Sometimes they pushed the human beings who were drowning in the water back out of the water. Therefore, animals such as this were never killed. And if one happened to die accidentally or if its death was known, the fishermen or those people who swam in the sea for that reason would make a tomb for the whale or the dolphin and worship it day and night.

So, there are some animals that are extremely intelligent. There is no doubt, and we know it, too. Even pigs or house pets are known for their qualities of faithfulness, loyalty, friendliness and helpfulness in times of trouble. Many of your newspapers print articles about miracles done by animals. For example, a dog rescues children from a burning house or a pig runs many miles to get aid for his owner, even though a moment later the owner might cut his throat. Or a horse stays with the tomb of his master until the horse's

death, and never eats anything. Or a dog will never leave the tomb of his master, et cetera. There are a great many things like this.

So, it is not odd that humans sometimes think that animals are better than themselves. It could be true, in some aspects. After all, all beings are created by God anyhow, so why couldn't they have the God spark inside them as we do? Just because they're in a different form and use a different language doesn't mean they are in any way less worthy than we are. African people may be black and speak an African language, but that by no means says they are less worthy than the white Americans or yellow Asians.

THE ESSENCE OF NON-VIOLENCE ¹⁸⁸

The precept of non-violence is a reminder for us to always try to avoid harming other living beings' lives as much as we possibly can; so that we don't intentionally harm them or have the intention of violence in our hearts.

Wanting to kill and accidentally killing are two different things. Killing and 'killing' are different: It's not the killing that's bad; it's our conscience wanting to kill that's bad. It's bad for us, not for the killed. So, keeping the non-violence precept is good for you, not for any other being. Because if we lose a physical body, we can get it back again; so those who kill are the ones who become damaged, not those who are killed.

Thus the precept of non-violence is actually meant to remind us to keep a very compassionate, loving heart. We don't want to harm things intentionally because our intention is what kills. It kills those things and also kills us, which is very bad.

TOLERANCE AND SACRIFICE ¹⁸⁹

All the Masters in the past, present or future will try to demonstrate to us the good qualities of a true human being. They try to teach by example not only by talking, and they try to teach us to always be loving, tolerant and always put other people's advantage before our own benefit. That's why when Shakyamuni Buddha was a king, even though He had the highest position in the society, the most respected position, and He had the most power in the country, and He commanded the loving heart of all His subjects, He still sacrificed all this to preserve the lives and peace for His people in His country. Not only for His country alone but also for the uncle's country, because if the two countries fought each other then both countries would have damage in people's properties and lives. That's why He tried to avoid it, avoid the war, not that He was afraid of the other country.

Some people always ask me, the Au Lac people, they ask me whether I should fight the communists or I am pro-communist. They think because I help the Au Lac refugees, I should hate the communists and go over there and kill them, get the gun and shoot them. I tell them I help the refugees because they need help, because some of them are afraid to go back home (go back to Au Lac) so they commit suicide. They die in here and Hong Kong, et cetera. Because their lives are in danger, I have to help them.

But if I save some refugees' lives and go kill another person's life, then what is the meaning? Also, if we make war in Au Lac then many people will die, the good people and the bad people. And I say doesn't matter who dies, they are all brothers, same countrymen.

188. Group meditation, New York Center, U.S.A., June 20, 1994 (Originally in English).

189. Public lecture, Bangkok, Thailand, June 7, 1994 (Originally in English).

So, I say to them doesn't matter how bad a government, sooner or later that government will die, will change. The time will come. I think it's better to change people's hearts than to kill them, and I am trying to change the people by teaching them good things, a moral standard and teaching them to find their own wisdom. And if more Au Lac people are wise and moral and good, then even bad government has to change into good government, right? It is better than killing each other, because if you kill a person, his heart is not changed. He will reincarnate again and make even more trouble for you, because he is stronger in his determination. It's just like you put money in the bank, the longer the time the more interest.

So, most of the people do not know the best way of destroying the enemy. Just destroy their evil hearts and then they'll be destroyed forever, not destroy their bodies. Besides, sometimes we have made bad karma, good karma with each other. And they come back to revenge and then we come back to revenge. It is always the devil's circle going on. So, in this story the Shakyamuni Buddha wants to help us to understand, to be tolerant and to sacrifice ourselves for the sake of other people; it's the best way.

In this respect, we can see that Jesus Christ was also Bodhisattva, a saint, very clearly. Because many of His disciples wanted to go against the government and save Him, but He said, 'Don't do that.' At that time, He had a lot of followers, many people believed Him, many people could die for Him, but He did not use this power to make bloodshed.

Actually, everything will take care of itself in time. But meanwhile, we try our best to make life better. But always try to avoid violence. That is the lesson of all these Shakyamuni Buddha's stories, that we have to surrender to God's will, to be tolerant and be patient. When the time comes, everything will change.

WHEN YOU TEACH YOU SHOULD BE A RESPONSIBLE TEACHER ¹⁹⁰

The convenient method should not be casually imparted to children and adults

The convenient method should not be taught randomly to young children. There are many children in school and sometimes, their teachers just casually teach them to sit and meditate. Sometimes no one is around the children, so if they (the children) see some visions of different levels during meditation, they may be shocked, or they may not understand. The way you teach is different from the way I teach, and your power is only second-hand.

The children may not really be frightened, but then again, you don't know anything about their karma. Being new to the meditation, they may have bad experiences. Children are like us. Their souls, their karmas and their reactions are identical to ours. So, you should not teach them meditation when they are too young. Therefore, only children of six years old and above are allowed to learn a little, and when they are older than twelve, they are allowed to learn more. If their parent is not an initiate, they can only be initiated when they have reached sixteen years of age. Only those above sixteen or eighteen years old are allowed to be initiated. Do you understand? [Audience: Yes] I teach whom I should teach. It's not necessary to teach young children at random.

You should not casually become a teacher just because you love to teach. You don't know how to teach and will not know about the children when they go home because you are not

190. International seven-day retreat, Taipei Center, Formosa, May 27, 1994 (Originally in Chinese).

there to supervise them. It is different if they were taught by the Master. I will be responsible for them if I teach them; I will go with them wherever they go. [Applause]

Children do not understand much. Their souls are identical to adults', but they do not know how to react. Sometimes they do not know how to react to their inner experiences. For instance, when you are meditating, some of you are heavier in karma, so you have inferior experiences. Sometimes during meditation you may see something which makes you uneasy and you write to ask the Master or pray to the inner Master for help; and the Master will come to help! But the children do not know what to do.

Do you think that children can have very good experiences when they just begin to learn to meditate? They are similar to you. The good children will, naturally, perceive superior and beautiful worlds; while the relatively not-so-good children, whose karmas are heavy, will see the dark worlds and, sometimes, experience something unpleasant. What if they get possessed? Will you be responsible for them? You just teach anyone randomly. I did not tell you to teach the convenient method to the children. I say this for the last time: You can't just do what you like to do, as being a teacher. It is easy to teach children, and they will do anything they are taught. However, this should not be the way.

Some time ago, I had replied in a letter – perhaps, in the news magazine – that the convenient method should not casually be taught to children. It is all right if he is your child, because if something happens to him or if there is something that he does not understand, then you can ask me; you can stay with him and take care of him. But if you are teaching other people's children, they may leave the following year. Or they may go to another school the following year and you don't know what will happen to him later. So, you can't do this. I do understand that you all love teaching people; you love to be a teacher. However, when you are a teacher, you have to take the responsibility. You should not be a teacher just for the sake of the 'teacher' status only. Our convenient method is not an external method; it involves communication with the inner power. Therefore, you must not be careless in guiding people when you have no power. Do you understand?

We all know very well. For instance, if I were teaching you an ordinary method like the so-called masters are teaching – '... Shakyamuni Buddha... bla bla bla...' – simply reciting the scriptures, would you be still following me? Why do you follow me? [Audience: Because You are different.] Right! Not the same. We communicate from within. I am teaching you from within – not the superficial teachings. I am not, randomly, reciting some scriptures to you, anybody can do that! Do you understand? [Audience: Yes.] You cannot do the same thing as I do just because you observe me doing it; you should not. I don't even teach children the convenient method. I, myself, very rarely do so... unless it is for some very special situation. First, because he does not know what to do when he goes home. Second, after he goes home, he will teach his parents. [Laughter] Then, his parents will teach their friends, and their friends will teach their children. Then, their friends' children will go and teach their friends' children. That friend's children will then teach their friends' friends' children. The power disappears! Everybody gets possessed and gets into a mess. Do you understand? [Audience: Yes.]

Don't do things just because you want to do them. You should not do things so casually. You may have good intentions, but if you don't understand the reason, the consequence may be harmful to other people. Do you understand? [Audience: Yes.] Therefore, many people who have learned randomly get possessed. This will not happen if they learn from us. Do you understand? [Audience: Yes.] Because the people outside are disorganized. They just learn at random. They cross their legs like this, place their hands like that, put their head this way, and then 'meditate.' What kind of meditation is that? There is nothing,

no power at all that supports them, no elevation whatsoever of their internal level, and they have no inner experience. They are not cleansed of any of their karma. It is useless for them to sit for a thousand years! You all know it very clearly.

Only an enlightened Master has the power of imparting the method and protection

Originally, even the convenient method is an esoteric method. Why is it an esoteric method? Because it must be imparted by a Master for one to get in touch with the inner power. Outsiders do not know why this person is meditating differently from that person, or why the teachings of this Master are different from that master's. This is the esoteric method... not that we have anything esoteric. Even if I were to write and publish a book openly teaching the outside people how to meditate, and they learn the method through reading the book, it still would not be effective. Do you understand? [Audience: Yes.] The two of them – Master and disciple – must communicate with each other and consent mutually – I agree to teach and you agree to learn. This is the esoteric method, only the two of us – Master and disciple – know. It is not simply teaching people to sit like this. This would be selling it cheaply.

I have never said that you can teach the convenient method to children, have I? [Audience: No.] Then, why is that teacher doing it so casually? Not doing what he should do, and doing what he should not do... I am referring to the convenient method. Do you understand? You can teach people the other things: To perform charities, to keep the five precepts, to be vegetarian, not to smoke nor drink alcohol, et cetera. These are good things which can be taught to others. You can teach others the external morals, things beneficial to the stability of our world, but not matters concerning the inner power. This is a profound matter! This is not buying and selling, not simply repeating a sentence! This is concerning the convenient method which you should not even teach ordinary people at random. Do you understand?

We should see whether that person is kind-hearted or longing for the Truth before we teach him. Do you understand? [Audience: Yes.] A vicious person will be possessed if you teach him this method because he has too much karma inside. For instance, that person is extremely vicious, and he does not repent nor become a good person; after you teach him this convenient method, he will have an internal struggle. This method is the best, the most beautiful, the most virtuous and the most compassionate; it belongs to the yang (positive) force. He is deep in the yin (negative) force. Mixing these yang and yin forces together, that person will struggle internally. Do you understand? He will be possessed and have conflict within himself, a change will occur in him. Therefore, you should not just teach anyone at random. If our method could be for anyone, then I would have already made it wherever I went. And I would have no need to teach you to become vegetarian, keep the five precepts, perform charities, be a good person, meditate every day, and always study Master's teachings. There are certain rules in teaching anything, and because we are teaching the incredible power of the universe, of course, there are rules, too. You must be careful because you don't know how to use it. For instance, the atomic bomb is not meant to be a plaything for children. Can we let an ordinary person use it? Even a general or a scientist whose work is not related to it is not allowed to use it. Do you understand?

You must be careful in handling matters concerning the internal states of consciousness. With regard to external knowledge, one can learn to be a physician, a doctor, a professor, a musician or anything one wants; but you should not use the same criterion for something that concerns the internal states of consciousness. It is fine if you have the Master power inside; but you should just let it be if you do not have it! If you do not have it yet, then do not act rashly. Understand? [Audience: Yes.]

When you go out to represent me to perform the initiation, remember that it is always the Master who is performing the initiation, not you. However, we still have to select the right person to be sent out. It is not really selecting, but training him for a while, and teaching him how to do it. He cannot just teach anyone at random. This applies, also, to the outer aspect which also requires some training. He must be able to talk fluently and know how to answer people's questions.

Handle worldly matters with your own wisdom

However, there are certain things that you can handle by yourself. For instance, recently, you all know that Master is concerned about helping the refugees. In this case, you can do anything that you feel is best to try to achieve this objective. It is not necessary for everyone of you to wait for my instructions, to ask Master this and that. Do you understand this? There are thousands, tens of thousands and millions of you. If everyone of you has to ask me what to do, then when can you all finish asking me? You all have the inner Master in you, ask it. Meditate well, and then ask it. Try your best to help with those administrative works. Do you understand? For instance, if you know the president, then talk to him directly. Why do you still have to ask me? [Laughter and applause.]

WHATEVER WE HAVE IS FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHERS ¹⁹¹

I wasn't born with any gold, so I won't go out of this world with any gold. Whatever I have is yours and belongs to the world, just like taking it from here and giving it there. It's the same for every one of us. We take water from the river, put it in a water tank, and the water tank will distribute it to the whole village or town. We should live our lives just like the water tank. Whatever we have is for distribution to others. We are only the receivers. Therefore, I may have a lot of money but I never feel that I have any. It's very relaxing this way. You don't worry because you already don't consider that it's yours, so whether it is there or not there doesn't matter.

True giving

If you give someone something, give it and forget it. Don't ever regret it, because if you give it and regret it, you lose the business. You also lose the money and the merit and waste your time. So, it's better to just give it and forget about it. That's why Jesus says, 'If you give someone something from the left hand, don't let the right hand know it.' Also, the Buddha says that when you give and it's just like you aren't giving, that is true giving. He means that when you give, don't be attached to the giving. Give just like you never gave anything, just like it never happened. That is true giving, to give without attachment. Otherwise, we still think we are great if we give something. We think we are better than another person because we are in a position of power if we give to him. That's why I always tell you, whatever you do, you must understand that it is for yourself, really, not for the one who receives. That is better, because that means you give for your own growth in compassion and loving kindness.

The great fearless spirit – Make big goals for ourselves

All I want is to teach you to be a great person, and you don't want it; you just want to be small. You have to expect big! And then, whatever left over, maybe it's enough. If you expect small, nothing there left. You have to expect yourself to be a president, and then maybe left over, you are at least a minister or something. Otherwise, if you expect yourself

191. International seven-day retreat, Taipei Center, Formosa, May 23, 1994 (Originally in English).

to be a chief of the police and then maybe you end up to be a taxi driver, or just a small sergeant in the army. You understand? [Audience: Yes, Master.] Make a big goal, and if you can not do it, you don't lose anything.

Always kneeling around and expecting crumbs, and then? Beg for food. If you want to live your life like that I'm sorry for you, but I don't want to accept you. You have to represent me, represent the lofty idea of fearlessness. You don't have to fear me, you must love me only. Respect me but not fear. Fear is terrible. Fear paralyzes you, you can not do anything when you fear, understand? [Audience: Yes.]

But you know I won't kill you, you know I'm not terrible, so what is the reason for fear? The more you do like this, the more I have to pick on you, make you stand up, make you realize that you are terrible. You are too weak. You are harming yourself. Some Centers are dragging around and having troubles and division, because you are too weak. All of you can not do anything. I appoint you to be my representative there and you don't use your power. You don't know how to act. You run around with everybody else's idea. Democracy is not like that. Democracy means we respect everybody; but the intelligent one must also make a choice, and the one who has authority must exercise it for the sake of everybody. Not that we use our authority to harm anybody, to do anything bad for the group but if it is something right, you have to make a firm stand, and make people understand.

Of course, the contact person is not a boss over there, but if something you cannot solve, you can always write to me. Do not just give in to everybody, everybody just wants to be the boss; of course, everybody is like that, anywhere. But you can not have too many things, with too many persons and too many ideas – sometimes garbage ideas, and then you still respect it and want to use it. And then it's a big ruin. Ah. [Master sighs...] I have asked you to come up in case you... I wanted you to help me with something. But when I see this kind of attitude, I don't know if you can really help me. I've already lost my inspiration.

Normally, when somebody has been a contact person, then I would not change it, because mostly people are the same. Just to contact people... But when you're on the job for too long time, then you must learn also from experience – how to carry out the job more efficiently. Not just hang around there and have a name printed on the book and doing nothing.

If somebody is good in practice, he is not too good in social relations. And when he is very good in meditation he has no eloquence, or sometimes not a kind of public personality. So, there are always problems. It's alright when we only meditate, like the old times, and don't worry about other peoples' suffering and need. But when we have to do some also social service, then we really need talented person, not just a good practitioner.

Develop our many talents

All of you have good qualities; that is no doubt. Some are very sweet, some are very quick, some are very enthusiastic, some are very kind-hearted, some are very devoted to a good cause. Every of you have something that perhaps I don't have. Or perhaps every of you have something more than I have. But because you don't have everything, you just have one thing, or two things. That's why it is difficult for me to make use, that's why we need so many, and only one Master. Or we try very hard to make use of whatever we have, okay? But sometimes you make more trouble for me than help. But nevertheless we just... because I respect you as practitioners not as social workers or heroes or revolutionists or

anything like that. Therefore, we still have to put up with each other, otherwise it is very difficult that you can help me in anyway at all.

That's why many things I do, I do it alone. And many things I do, most of you don't know. Only a few next to me know. And some people who have anything to do with that know; otherwise, most of the disciples don't know what I'm doing. You only know something. Yeah maybe, Costa Rica knows a corner, America knows another corner, or France knows another corner. But in the whole, you can not know everything. Even then, sometimes you make more trouble than help, but I hope you learn day by day at least to progress yourself. Even if my work fails at least you don't fail yourself, and you will develop further. Actually, a contact person must be a very good one. But up till now we just chose the first one. Like, for example, he was the first one who campaigned, and nobody else, or the one who introduced the Quan Yin method to that group, or to that village, or to that country, and okay we also picked him.

Or sometimes I pick some good one, if there is one. Do not have an illusion that good people are all over places, and that every Master's disciples is a good person. He is good, yes good, meaning good heart, yeah, good mind, and very pure and clean, fine; but it doesn't mean he is good in everything. He is good for himself, yeah, at least. At least when he does things for himself and then he can not do it, then he prays to Master and then he can do it, fine, then at least he can help himself. But he does not always possess the capacity to deal with the international environment, and people, and this is the problem why many of my humanitarian work has been delayed because I'm working almost alone. It's not that you don't want to help me. All of you want to help me. I believe, sincerely you all want to help me, but I also sincerely don't know how to use you. [Laughter]

When I go on lecture or when I go group meditation, at that time you can do, you can talk to people, you can tell them to come; but that's about all, not much else you can do. Or when I tell you to go rescue some of a disaster area, okay. 'Here is three hundred thousand dollars. You go and buy goods.' Yeah, then you can go buy, and buy very cheap. That's very good. You know where to buy cheap things. Because maybe you do shopping everyday. That you know better than I do, yeah, sure, yes. If I go probably I buy more expensive things. I don't know where is the wholesale, but you know everywhere, especially the wholesale. Probably you know better – these kinds of things – and then you are very quick, efficient and very, very loving... lovingly do. That I appreciate.

Utilizing our opened wisdom properly to serve the world

But then this, there are so many things I don't know how to ask you for your help. Like the refugee problem, really. If I ask you to come to Hong Kong and meditate, to do meditation, to protest, then you do right away. There is nothing I ask that you don't do. That I know. I appreciate that, but you have to learn also, to have your own initiative, to decide what is good, for that moment. You see, it might not be good tomorrow again. So, you have to be decisive and use your wisdom that is already opened. Otherwise, you already opened your wisdom but you always listen to your habit.

Like, 'Oh, last year I didn't do that,' or 'my mother never did that,' or, you know, 'I never see anybody do that.' And then you don't do it. You know what I mean? That's why we learn so slowly. You have no daring initiative. Even though your wisdom tells you to do this, you say, 'Oh, my mother will scold me. My mother will tell you not do that,' or 'I've never seen anybody do this before, I can not do it!' This is your habit, thinking. And that's why we have to meditate more and analyze more; using the mind, instead of letting the mind use you. You have to tell your mind, 'That is different now.'

You have to reprogram your thinking and reorganize your reaction. Otherwise, you have wisdom, you have blessing from Master, you have power to act for success, but you always step back and worry. Because of your habit, you think you cannot do that. Some of our disciples are still like that. For example, last time Hong Kong... everybody wrote a humanitarian letter, to send to Hong Kong government, but the Hong Kong didn't write. Said, 'Oh, no! No, we can not offend Hong Kong government.' Things like that. They are brainwashed by some of the false information that some of the political people want to spread around to get the support from the people, so that they can get together and abuse the handful of the Au Lac refugees, because just want to get rid of them. And so even the disciples, they also go with the strong. You know, and suppress the weak.

Because actually, if we take care of the Au Lac refugees issues we go against seventy four nations and other dozens sympathetic nations. We go nearly against the whole world. And the rest are only like communist countries which do not count already, or under developed countries, have no idea what's happening, or isolated tribes and all that. So, it does not count anymore. So, actually when we do this, we go against the whole world, nearly the whole world. Therefore, nobody wants to do it. That's for sure. But why should we worry, why should we be afraid of the whole world if we are right? We are only afraid of one person even if we are wrong. But if we are right, even the whole universe, we are not afraid. Is that not so? [Audience: Yes!] Otherwise, what is the use of talking big, and being Bodhisattvas, and this saint and that sage, what is the use?

Extraterrestrials suffering on earth

I have read one story about the aliens, extraterrestrials, the good ones, who have been mistakenly captured by some of the powerful nations; sometimes in America. And then they froze them. They did not kill them, just took their blood out and froze them. Because they wanted to extract some information for technical advancement, and these people don't speak. These aliens don't speak. So, they froze them... so like that, in this case you are not dead and you're not alive. You know, you hang around in the frozen atmosphere and you can't let your soul go out of the body because you are not yet dead, officially, or your time has not come. So, they just hang around in this frozen feeling. And they know full well that the injection will make them suffer but they still undergo, quietly, in order to keep the secret of the universe.

Because they believe that the human kind of this earth are not yet sufficiently sophisticated, not yet sufficiently virtuous enough, to handle this technical information. Giving it to them, they might do harm to themselves and to the universe. So, they have to keep quiet. So, the earth people punish them, freeze them alive. So, they can not move, but they cannot die. So, this kind of situation, fine, okay, this is the part of the ignorant earth people... and then a part of the aliens is even worse. They do nothing about it. They just beg the earth people release their brothers and sisters and the information is very difficult to come through, first, second, they say they can not break the vow of non-interference of this world.

Master lectures the extraterrestrials

'I catch hold of any of you, I'll 'beat' you, and scold you and make you kneel all day long until you go rescue your brothers.' I am here, helpless because I don't have UFO, I don't have machine gun which can freeze people for one or two minutes, I can have nothing of this technique. Therefore, I can not rescue your brothers.

And here you send a message saying that if we know, we may be able to rescue your brothers and sisters. Everything you could do it, because I say you have everything! You have UFO, you have gun, not shooting people dead but to freeze people in space for one or two minutes, then you can take your brothers out. Instead, you let them suffer there and then you even send messages to say maybe if I know, or She knows, or everyone else knows about this message maybe one day we can help your brothers and sisters.

We have enough work to do in this world and you help nothing, and you want us even to help your brothers and sisters. I'd willingly help them, because I feel so much suffering when I read that. You know, when I read the extraterrestrial people suffer, I suffer, too. But I say why don't you do something, you know? This is not interference. If you come here, invade our earth or shoot other people or do something, then they would say interference, and then you swear you didn't interfere. That I understand, fine. But your brothers and sisters who suffer so much, for years and you do nothing about it. And you say you fear of the law of karma and non-interference and all that. And your brothers and sisters suffering there, and then you talk big and you do this and that and protecting the earth and all that kind of...

I said it is bad enough that the world people, because of ignorance, they don't know it, therefore they harm your brothers and sisters. But you are the ones who know, you should do better, you shouldn't let your brothers and sisters suffer in the hands of the ignorant! Suppose the tiger takes hold of my brother. Okay, I don't kill the tiger because of my vow of non-violence, fine, but I can make the tiger faint for two minutes and take my brother out... I can not sit there and reason to the tiger, look here the five precepts, look the vegetarian diet the Master Ching Hai tells everybody to keep, et cetera. How can you reason with a tiger, you understand? The world people are very, very ignorant, therefore they do that kind of thing. Now you already know they are ignorant and you reason with them, until when, and let your brothers and sisters suffer. I cannot believe it!

Compassion is different from weakness

In the beginning, I thought maybe they would come and help us also, but when I see this kind of stupidity I say you should go home and learn something more before you come here and try to help us. I think you should help yourself first, know what is interference and what is the flexibility of spirit in order to work in different situations and different circumstances, right? Not interfering doesn't mean you can not help your brothers and sisters out. If they help them they don't have to touch anybody. They just do it technically or using intelligence. They can do it, they know everything, they know where their brothers and sisters are, I don't. What is the use of letting me know this? Okay, I come and talk to president Clinton about it, or what? What happens if he doesn't listen to me, right?

And the president Clinton, for example only, can not even interfere with the armies rule. They have their own set of rules, they have their secret work. Even many presidents don't know what they are doing. Nobody is supposed to know. And not every president has the perfect security clearance, that allows them to come inside military base. Ordinary people can not come in, only the perfectly screened, that oh he's good, he had no background with CIA, no FBI, no KGB or whatever is that, or nothing – no drugs, no alcohol, no blah, blah, blah, blah or maybe vegetarian and meditation two and a half hour, I don't know. Completely clean, then can go inside the... not all the presidents have this clearance. They have different levels of clearance, you see.

So you see, this is weakness, this is not compassion, it is not honor that you keep your promise, but stupidity and weakness in this case. You cannot kneel there and beg the tiger

to have compassion with your brothers and sisters, just do something about it! Don't have to harm the tiger, but if you can rescue your brother without harming the tiger, it's so much better. But even if you have to sacrifice one or two tigers to help your human brothers then do it, for God's sake. Even if you have karma for yourself, so what, for example like that. Suppose that's what they believe. If we think that, okay, never mind, if the tiger eats my brothers and they will go to the Buddha's land, then it's fine with me, you know? But don't go around, boast around that because we are non-violent people we can not do anything to the tiger. So, can you please do it? Asking somebody else to do things that you do not want to do when you are in a much better position and have more equipped ability to do it, this is stupidity and weakness.

Protect human rights

Why do I talk about this? What was it before? Oh yes, the Hong Kong disciples. And so, I was so sad. I didn't say anything. I just asked a few representing ones. I didn't ask all of them yet. But I thought they worked together all the time, they should know what the trend is. And sometimes when I talk to other people also, they also have the tendency to think that the government is right. How can it be right when it uses violence against unarmed and harmless people? It is not according to human amnesty and human rights, it is against international law to even detain people in such kind of prison – like conditions.

But the people in prison, they have even their own bed. They don't have that terrible condition, not cramped and crowded; one bed small like this and two persons, and all square. Everything, eat there, sleep there, anything else is there, children and... all together in a small bed. And then upstairs there is another one or two beds and upstairs is a metal sheet of roofing and not trees and nothing around. The prisoners, they have a better condition; they have library, they have workshop, they can earn money in the prison. Yeah, they have volleyball, football courts and tennis ball courts and television sets and everything! Except those that are very badly dangerous, then they put them in a cell and cuff them. Otherwise, most of the prisoners are free. At least in the prison they are free. Not like the Au Lac refugees, they have nowhere to go and nothing to do, and nothing to play with and cannot work even. So, this is even already against human law.

But we don't blame that because we expect that every country does its best. We can not expect to the highest standard, but at least do the best. Okay, so maybe that's the only thing Hong Kong can do, or other countries can do, use their best. Oh fine, we accept that, but to use violence on the people for no reason, that people never react, even police say they don't react. This is not twentieth century standard. This is not human standard. This is lower to animal standard already. That even kicking and beating children and women while they are still bleeding and fainting with the gas. It was not tear gas only, it was mace. It was sprayed right into the face of the people. Many children now are still blind. Women and children still cannot see. Now, over one month after the attack, many people still cannot see clearly. Their vision is damaged....

Dangerous to mankind

Do you think it's okay? It doesn't matter if the Au Lac refugees suffer, I'm not talking about the suffering. It's obvious already. Even children can see it. I'm talking about human standard. Hong Kong human standard, it's so low! That they should feel sorry for themselves. That they should feel alarmed. That they should be shocked... at their own conscience! So minimum! You understand what I mean now? It's not the suffering that we're talking about anymore. It is the low, low level of humanitarian... of humanity, that the Hong Kong people carry with them. That they can just stand by and watch women and

children suffering and still agree with it. You understand what I mean now? It's alarmingly shocking and dangerous to human kind at large. Because if they treat the refugees like that, they can treat anyone like that, anytime, in similar circumstances, or when they have a chance to do. Understand now? And we can be infested with this kind of spirit if we just stand by, agree, or watch it, or just do nothing about it, or don't awaken ourselves, or don't warn ourselves of being infested. This is terrible!

Everlasting loving compassion

I tell you the truth. Even if the Au Lac people die, even if they kill all the refugees, it is not the refugees who are the ones being harmed. It is the Hong Kong people, who harm their conscience. Their standard of virtues has sunk so low, that's how, what for do we live as a human being if we don't have this human standard? You understand what I mean? The suffering of the refugees, or their death, is not that important, is not as important as a human standard of conscience and compassion and loving compassion. You understand now? Because life is short. Live or die, it is not that important. The important is the everlasting loving compassion. And if we've lost that, nothing we can do. So, it's not only that I'm fighting for Au Lac refugees' life. Because to me life and death is not that much matter. Also I fight for the human compassion standard, to raise it up, to awaken everybody: 'Wake up, you cannot do that, you cannot lower yourself, lower and lower. Keeping like this you'll go to hell, you'll make Hong Kong become hell, you'll make the world become hell.' You understand? So, this is the greatest mistake of human kind: To think that to treat somebody else inhumanly, that it's right. They think that it's the refugees who are being harmed; it's them who are being harmed! Because life, you can have it again. But this human conscience and compassion, when you've lost it, difficult to get it back. You know? And then you can infect the neighbor with it, infest the children with it, and make every of your friends, your neighbors, learn about it... even infest our disciples. Let them stop there, freeze there, and don't move, don't do nothing for the refugees. Until I came along. Until when all of us came and then meditated, then the Hong Kong disciples turned around, they understood better.

But they, some of them understood before that, because I had told them, you know, it's not the Au Lac refugees' problem anymore. Of course, it is their problem, but that is only a catalyst, ah, is that right? Yeah, a symptom of the main problem of the human conscience. You see, we have to be afraid of losing our conscience. It's not only the Aulacese's problem. They can die, and they may have another life again. But our loving conscience... difficult to find. Because if we lower ourselves to animal standard, we will be born as animal. Then we've lost our human life. And those we kill come back again as humans, maybe better. You understand what I mean? So, it's not the ones who are killed that are the victims. The one who kills is the victim of himself. But most people don't know that. So, I want to let you know. I want to make people know this. I worry about the Au Lac refugees' suffering and life, that's for sure. I do. But I even more worry about the human standard... our life, the atmosphere of our life. If it has become like this, and it becomes more like this, then it becomes hell here. You know? Nobody loves anybody, and 'When you come to touch my house, I kill you.' You know what I mean? 'This is my garden, my house. Nobody is allowed to come in, nobody touches my food, nobody comes near me, or I'll kill you'. Everybody will do like that. Yeah? That's what they do to the refugees, because the refugees come to Hong Kong. Hong Kong is their land: 'If you come, I'll kill you. I have the right to do anything to you, because you come to my property.' Understand? That's the only thing it is.

So low! So worthless a reason to kill, or to inflict suffering. Worthless! This is only a kind of ... this boils down to territory rights, territory competition. So then, we become like dogs

and cats and mice and any kind of animals, because animals they protect their territory. Even birds. Did you see any birds in your garden? Each one has one corner of the garden. If the other one comes in, he will poke him to death. At least, poke him to bleeding. I saw that when I had a garden. So, when I fed the birds I had to stand guard as a police, because a big bird would come and pick on the small birds, and the small birds dared not come to eat. I said, 'It's my food, okay? My food, my garden, alright? All of you have the right to eat, but not to fight.' But they didn't listen to me, of course. They pretended not to understand German. So, I had to stand there, like a guard, you know, like guardian police. And then I'd shoo all the big ones out first, let all the small ones eat. And then, when the small ones were all satisfied and flew away, and then I'd come inside and let the big ones be kings of the day. That always happens. Even my garden, my food, and they lord over it, and don't let anyone else come to eat.

All land belongs to God

This is the same thing. Hong Kong, Formosa, United States, England: All are God's land. Before we came the land was already there. Before queen Elizabeth or king Henry, or whatever, the land was already there. Who made the land for the English people? Who made the land for Hong Kong people? Nobody, only God made it. God gave it to us, everything! And they say, 'This is mine, this is mine, everything is mine. You cannot touch it, you cannot come near and I'll shoot you.' You see, that's what it is. It boils down to animal instinct. And then, people are proud of it. Can you see how low we have become, hmm? We're just like animals. Like the birds in my garden, like the dogs in my yard, like the cats. The dogs have their territory, competition, you know, they mark it by their urine, yeah. [Laughter] And human beings mark it with their... other thing, probably human toilet, yeah. You know, they make a territory, they mark it. Dogs mark it with urine, but man marks it with something else. Quite similar. Actually, just marking a frontier.

Okay, you mark your frontier is alright. But when somebody else needs it, you lend him for a while. Because it's all God's, it's not yours. Everybody says, 'In God we trust.' Even they print it on the money. But it's not in God they trust, it's in the money that they print it on that they trust. Things like that. And everybody says, 'We are Christian. We love our neighbors. We take care of our brothers and sisters because all beings are born equal in God's name.' They say things like that, but they don't do anything that is according to their understanding. So now, you see, huh? If you are my disciples, so-called disciples, no, fellow practitioners, brothers and sisters, and you don't do the things I do – you are afraid to offend the worldly power and you're not afraid to offend God's power – then you are in trouble. Then no one else in this world that people can rely on to carry out justice, to fulfill the righteousness, so that everyone can enjoy a peaceful and normal life. You understand what I mean? It's very dangerous when somebody infests someone else with their low level of thinking and consciousness. So beware, take care that you're not infected. Even as good as our Hong Kong disciples, some of them also wavered, you see, and are afraid, and think with the big body of the world and Hong Kong, instead of thinking in the righteous way, and siding with the weak and the poor.

An enlightened living Master is better than scriptures

God says: 'Blessed are the poor and the weak, because the kingdom of God is theirs.' We read many things, we know all the bibles, we know all the Baghavad Gita, the Buddha and dharma sutras, and bla, bla, bla, but we don't do anything accordingly; then it's useless, huh? That's why sometimes we need a Teacher, a living one, not a dead one. Dead ones, we have too many already. They left so many books, but the books don't help you anything. You read it, and you forget it. You can memorize it, but then you don't do

anything with it. You don't understand the deep meaning of it. Until a Teacher, the living Teacher, comes and shakes you out of your slumber, and points to you the direction, and the things that you should ponder, and things you should do, you see? It needs a force of a power, of a living being, to point things out for us. Can you see? There's no more question about why we need a living Master and not a dead one, huh? No more. Because all of you already old enough. Some of you have grey hair already. And still you cannot think that straight, huh?

If I did not point it out to you... I don't mean I'm so great, but probably I'm clear. I'm a little bit clearer than you, sometimes. So when I say it to you, you understand right away. If I don't say it, even though you read the same thing as I read, but you don't understand it. You might even understand it, but you don't realize it, and then you cannot make use of it, understand? Even if I keep talking to you time after time and the same things again and again, still I have to repeat again and again, until you fully understand and digest it, and make it become your own property. See, then you're strong and then you can do things like I do, and you don't need me anymore. But why, why do I have to repeat all the time? Because you still listen to your habit, and forget to use your righteous wisdom, that's all. You have it, but you don't use it, then how can... what is the use, huh? Right? The wisdom I transmitted to you is the same as mine. It's no different. But why you don't do the things like I do? Because you don't use it the same way I do. You don't use it enough you're not strong enough to use all this.

It is still a great virtue to acknowledge and rectify our faults

Just like a young boy is not old enough to know how to use the inheritance of his father. Even though his father gives to him as much as he gives to the older brothers, but he looks at the money and then he plays games with it, or he throws around and makes games with other children. He looks at diamond, and he thinks it's kind of a toy, you understand? And his beautiful father's furniture, maybe he brings it out and you know, makes a toy out of it. Things like that, you know what I mean? So, it's as much as you can use your wisdom, then you have it. If you don't, it's just like every other people outside. They have it, but they don't have it. See, they don't use it, okay?

Okay, we have to go down now. Anybody have a personal contact with the White House? No? Okay, I don't suppose so. Yeah? [Somebody mentioned writing to congressmen.] Yeah, fine. That's good, okay. Writing is different. You can write, but sometimes personal relations are even stronger, yeah? We can write. I write to many different presidents but nobody bothers to answer me. Well, some of them do, but it's not that, not much fruitful, when it comes to action. They can be polite to you, they like you, they love you, but they don't take active measures about what you want them to do. They, even our disciples, like Hong Kong, I ask them to write only letters to express our disgust about their inhuman treatment, and they don't want to write it. You know what I mean? Even our disciples; so how can I blame outside people, huh? But of course, afterwards they changed. They know, and they changed their minds, but because I told them. Because they are my disciples, they understand quickly. Even if they make mistakes, immediately they understand, that's fine. That's the best thing about you. You make mistakes, but at least, when somebody says something right, you know right away. You change. But other people, they make mistakes, but when you talk to them they don't know about it, they don't care about it, and they don't change. That's the only difference between you and the non-disciples. Nothing more big deal. Okay? [Master laughs.]

You make same mistakes but at least you have a Master, a Teacher, a good friend like me, tell you. And then you realize immediately. But outside people, they don't have a

Teacher, they don't have a friend, they don't have a good Master maybe, to tell them what to do. So, they make mistakes. Or sometimes because their wisdom is not open, tell them, they don't understand. They don't want to hear, and they don't think they make mistakes. Just like today when we were in the park, there was a man who was drunk, and made a lot of noise and fuss, see? And our disciple tried to talk to him about wisdom and five precepts and not drinking alcohol and things like that. Do you think it was useful? [Audience: No use.] Yeah, he heard nothing, he continued to shout. You know what I mean? Yeah? So, it's good that you don't drink alcohol, and... You know now, huh? When you saw it today, he came to teach you a lesson, that the Master Ching Hai is correct when She tells you not to drink alcohol.

DEALING WITH FAME AND FORTUNE REQUIRES SPIRITUAL PRACTICE ¹⁹²

In this world it isn't difficult to attain power, fame and fortune as long as we strive a little harder, act a little more cleverly and shrewdly, know how to scheme and have a little ambition. But what's difficult is to control this power and put it to good use. If we don't control our fame, fortune and power they'll hurt us, our friends, our relatives, our countries and the whole world.

Thus, fame and fortune are indeed very terrible, not because those who are famous and wealthy are terrible, or because fame and fortune in themselves are terrible but because those who can't handle their fame and fortune and can't use it properly are terrible. Most people are too greedy and ambitious, never being satisfied no matter how much they possess. So, in order to gain fame and fortune and maintain their power, they unscrupulously use any means necessary and dare to do anything. So, we say that fame and fortune are terrible because most people don't know how to handle it. Instead of using it they're used by it.

If we know how to make use of fame and fortune, however, no problems will arise. For instance, in history many so-called Masters have become emperors or officials who've taken charge of very important tasks in their societies, yet there were no problems. Only when fame and fortune come into the hands of laypeople, into the hands of those who have little morality but big ambition does it become very dangerous.

SELECTING VIRTUOUS AND TALENTED PEOPLE ¹⁹³

People should search for genius, not rely only on the government and the politicians. The actual voting, election should be recommended by the people. The people really should select who are the ones and make a list, and then all the people can approve it or not approve it. It could begin in school already. The teacher and the parents should know the tendencies of the students, who is good for what and select from there. The people should select their own candidates. And then the selected candidates should not have to pay any money from themselves. If he has money, he can pay; if he doesn't have money, the people should support him. In that case, the talented and virtuous people do not have to have the money to serve their country.

But I think it's difficult. The people of the whole planet must rise in consciousness in order to be able to do this. Most of us do not care who is elected, who is not elected. Many people don't even read newspapers. Some watch television. But I have discovered that

192. International seven-day retreat, Taipei Center, Formosa, May 22, 1994 (Originally in Chinese).

193. Group meditation, Seoul Center, South Korea, April 16, 1994 (Originally in English).

sometimes television is controlled by the government, and newspapers are freer. So, we can read newspapers and watch television both. I have discovered many times there's a lot of news printed in the newspaper but not allowed to be broadcasted on television.

Most of us, we do not really care. Then we cry when something happens – something bad has been done by government. And we accept it, whatever sometimes the government does for us. But most of us do not really participate very actively inside, with the government and with the deciding factors of our country. So, sometimes most of the people don't even know: 'How come that congressman is there? Okay, then we'll vote for him.' We don't care where he has come from, don't care why he is running. If he runs, then it's okay. Maybe he's good-looking, he talks nice, then we vote for him. That's it. This is decided not really by all the people, but just by a group of people. Maybe labor party, democratic party, free party or not-free party, they decide it for you. Many people don't join any party. They don't even care who is in what party. Then they cry, blame the government, blame God, blame everything, blame the weather, when something is wrong with the government, or the government is wrong.

Therefore, we cannot blame only the politicians. We have to blame ourselves too because we don't really care for our country. We don't really care for the planet. We just let it be. Whoever has the money, whoever has the way to run for elections, let them run and then we just vote because there are only two or three. It's not too much choice, so we just vote for one and hope for the best. Sometimes we vote also because we have to vote. Some people don't vote or vote blank, nothing inside. It also may be correct because they don't think any of them are worth it. Maybe they are right. But then someone has to be there. So, the most voted person wins the election. In many of the countries, they always complain afterward that the election was not fair, the cheating, and blah, blah, blah. Sometimes people think we don't need a government. Actually, if we all practiced virtues and wisdom, no need of a government, no need for police, no need for an army. Saves a lot of money and a lot of paperwork. But as it is, maybe there is still a need for a government.

MAINTAINING BALANCE IN DAILY LIFE ¹⁹⁴

Truly, we have to devote more time to spiritual practice while in this world, but we should also try to make our lives more comfortable and fun. Recently, I converted a cave that had served as a cow pen into a cozy living room. I cleaned it up, and then covered the ground with a few straw mats and a carpet – all very inexpensive materials. An ordinary carpet costs little, and it makes you feel snug and warm. Then, with a few cushions, you can meditate there. This is not a luxury. We can make any place beautiful as long as we know how to decorate it. That cave was dark, dry and dirty, and had originally been used for rearing cattle. But it was converted into a beautiful place; that is a way to balance your life.

If we act as a teacher instructing people about the Truth from morning till night, and do not find balance in life, our brains will complain. For me, this kind of work is an excellent hobby. [Master and audience laugh.] An attendant once said to me, 'Master, You've overworked Yourself and gone without sleep the last few days. You must be exhausted. Why are You spending the whole night on building that fireplace?' So, I told her, 'You don't understand. If I didn't do this, I might go mad!' [Master and audience laugh.] This is a way to find equilibrium in life.

194. Three-day retreat, Shatin Center, Hong Kong, April 1-4, 1994 (Originally in Chinese).

The attendant had thought that Master would be physically exhausted after working day in and day out, and should spend the next seventy-two hours in bed to make up for lost sleep. But I said, 'Doing these things gives me a respite. I can't stay in bed the whole day and night. This is a break for me for it brings a change into my life.' When I do the work that I like, it means I'm resting. Otherwise, I'd be devoting all my time to making others happy, and leaving none to pursue my own interests. The two are different.

Although I work to make you, others, refugees and needy people happy, and I too am very happy, it's in response to requests and circumstances. I have no control over the work, nor do I have any say in the matter. For example, when someone asks for two kilos of rice, I have to bring them to him. In this kind of situation, I can't act as I wish for it's done to meet the requests of sentient beings. This is different from being your own master and making your own plans and designs to suit yourself.

So, I still have to find a balance in my life. Otherwise, my mind will be unhappy. It's not I or the soul that's unhappy, but the mind. It will not be accustomed to it. So, I told the attendant, 'This is the way I rest. You don't have to worry.' She thought that I had already worked quite a few days and nights at a stretch. Besides traveling overseas to deliver lectures, I had rushed to help the refugees in the Philippines. So, why did I stay up the whole night building a fireplace in a cave when I was so tired? She felt pity for me. [Master and audience laugh.] I said, 'No, that's the way I rest. Otherwise, I can't go on.' Then I asked her, 'If you were required to sit the whole day without doing anything, not even your laundry, and food were brought before you, would you be able to stand it?' She said, 'No, I wouldn't.' Of course, not; she would still want to wash her own clothes and handle some of her own personal matters.

I'm no different. I can't devote all of my time to others, without having some interests of my own. When it's something that interests me, I can go without sleep at night and use my time as I like. In this way, you won't be affected because I save the day for you. I am here whenever you need me. Should any emergency arise, or any urgent papers arrive, I can deal with them immediately. I only make use of the intervals between events, or do my own work while waiting or by sacrificing my sleep. At those times when I do not have specific public-interest work to do or documents to read, I do my own personal work in order to maintain mental balance.

Don't ask me why I'm attached to these material things. No, it's not attachment! I have built things at Centers in a number of countries. But I do not live in any of those places. These designs and creative works are all left there and not reserved for me. Of course, things like the paintings that I have drawn, I can take with me. But I don't really take them with me; rather, I send them to the Miaoli Center for the residents to keep in a special room so they won't be damaged, and copies can be made for everyone to appreciate. If I carry those paintings around with me, I can't take good care of them because I'm always tied down by other things. I'm only responsible for painting them. After taking a few looks at them, I leave them in the care of the residents. I can't look at my own paintings for long so sometimes I miss them. When I was abroad previously, sometimes I would think of returning to Formosa to take a look at those paintings. [Master laughs.] But those were just passing thoughts; getting to look at them or not doesn't really matter. So, even though painting is my hobby, it's you who get the benefits. You can collect my paintings; whereas I myself can't collect anything.

But unlike the paintings, the artwork in the cave cannot be moved to Formosa for the residents to preserve. [Master and audience laugh.] Some things can be moved, and others can't. Those that are stationary are left in their original place for everyone to

appreciate. I create these things not for the sake of possession or preservation, but to fulfill my desire to create. Sometimes it's a form of relaxation. It's the same with all my hobbies; they're only for maintaining balance in my life so I am able to continue to serve all people. Thus I converted the cave not because I liked it, and I won't be staying here long. Besides, I can't transport it anywhere I go.

While practicing diligently in this world, if you do not also try to find balance in life or enjoy a little of the colorful world, then once you go up to heaven, you might think, 'Why is it that after following Master in spiritual practice, I have no idea what the mortal world is like?' Then you may blame me, and quietly and secretly run back down here. You can't hold me responsible then. [Master and audience laugh.]

BECOMING CURED OF SAINTLY SICKNESS ¹⁹⁵

You are mature and very intelligent. Your IQ is very high. [Laughter] And you know many things that I don't know so why should I tell you everything? I can only tell you one thing: You have to become livelier. And whatever you want to do, do it! Whatever is fun for you, do it, as long as you don't hurt other people. So, if you want to get to know a movie star, then chase him! If you want to see the president, write to him.

If what you want has anything to do with political or social change in the world, it's a little bit difficult. But concerning your own ambition or your own fun, it's not that difficult, really. Just do it with all your sincerity and all your wish to succeed, and then you'll get it. Most of the time, we're miserable because we can't succeed in what we want to do and because we have fear. Sometimes you love a person but you say, 'Oh, he's too handsome for me.' Who knows? Maybe you're too beautiful for him! You never know. I don't encourage you to chase around with boys. But you see, that's what makes our lives miserable: We don't believe in ourselves, and we don't try.

It's very easy. For example, when I was very young, I looked up to those who worked in television or who owned television or radio stations, like they were god or second to god. But now I know it's nothing; I could do it. I could make one; I could even buy one. It's very easy and no big deal. Because if you don't find out how people run or operate a station, you think they're god. But it's no big deal.

When I was in high school, I lived next to the Saigon radio station. It was a big one. I was next to it every day. And I didn't know anything about it so I worshipped all the singers who came up and down, in and out, and all the personalities who passed around or next to my house, going inside that big massive godlike station. And I just sat around and dreamt that maybe one day I would sing or recite a poem in there; I just dreamt about it. And I never thought it would happen.

But sometimes the people in the radio station would have some kind of competition, like you would write a poem or answer some question and then they gave you a prize. So, I tried and I won! Just once, but I never thought I could win. I thought it was too far-fetched for me. But actually, I only tried it once, and I won.

Afterwards, I changed to another district and didn't have anything to do with the radio station anymore. I stayed there maybe only one or two years, but that was long enough. I could have gone inside and talked to the people and told them that I wanted to sing or recite a poem. I recited very well, so why didn't I do it? Because no one told me the way

195. Group meditation, Los Angeles Center, California, U.S.A., March 9, 1994 (Originally in English).

I'm telling you to do it. [Applause] Of course, it's no big deal that I didn't become a singer. I would eventually, anyhow. But I lived all those years there, standing around the station not doing anything that I wanted to do. I could have, and I'd have had fun meanwhile. But maybe God didn't want me to so it's also fine.

What I mean is that you should just do it. I don't think all of you will become masters anyhow so why not have fun! [Laughter] Maybe God wanted me to become a Master so He's 'prevented' me, prevented the world's most talented singer and artist at the time. [Applause] But nothing prevents you from doing what you want and fulfilling your dreams. Have fun 'the last time!' Actually, I also have to try to have fun. I try all kinds of things to keep myself here. Otherwise, there's nothing to keep me here so what can I do?

People keep asking me all the time, 'Why do You put make-up on? Why do You wear beautiful dresses?' and things like that. Before I became the Supreme Master, the Master Ching Hai, I was just like this. [Master points to Her 'ordinary' clothing.] And then for a long time I wasn't like this. And now I've become like this again. So, it's kind of puzzling for me also, but it's nothing puzzling. Just like when an old person becomes old, he becomes like a child again. So, maybe that's happening with me.

It's very simple. It's just like the story I told you about with the king who would go out and play the fool in the dirt, in the commons and sometimes in a dirty restaurant or dirty street. He would walk alone with only a few attendants, just because he wanted to be free: Free from glory, free from security, free from the fear of walking on the street as a king. You know what I mean: Just to be free. So, I wanted to be free from sainthood. And now I'm liberated! [Applause] I was sick; I had meditational sickness or Master sickness. Well, it let people know that I was a Master. But I'm free now; the sickness is probably gone.

So, sometimes we practice for some time and become sick. That's what we call 'saintly sickness.' But you have to cure yourself. Whatever trace of sainthood you wear around your face or your nose or your ankles, or that you hide in your heart – you should cure it, one by one, slowly or quickly, it's up to you. Just now I remembered a story to explain this to you once and for all. Because everyone loves to know why I wear clothes like this instead of asking me how I became an enlightened Master. They keep asking me many questions and finally they have to say, 'Wow, I have just one question, but I dare not ask you; can I...' And finally, the cat is out of the bag: 'Why do You wear this?' So, it's like that.

In Tibet, there are many people who practice flying. How do they do it? It's just like in China where they practice chin kung (a kind of Chinese martial art, that trains practitioners to become very light). You can fly, you can jump onto the roof, very high or very far. People still do this form of practice in China. Sometimes you see kung fu that's not real. But it represents the truth from the olden times when people could still fly.

Nowadays, some people in Tibet can still fly; due to the difficult situation in Tibet they have no cars. They have only mountains with freezing snow all year round sometimes. So, they have to go a very long way without much food or many restaurants or anything in between. They have to take very small packets of things. Sometimes they don't even have horses, or they just have what they call a yak (a large, long-haired, dark brown Himalayan ox). And then they have to go with what there is. They can't be too long; sometimes they have to go quickly for some urgent matter. So, they have to practice this kind of flying. And some people practice so hard that they can never land on the ground again. They always remain flying in the air. You can read the books of madam Alexandra David-Neel about this. It's all the truth, but I have to refer to her so that you know I'm not speaking nonsense. You'll know that people write about it and you'll have proof.

So, what happens to these people when they fly all the time in the air is that they have to come down sometimes, I mean at least for the toilet or to take a bath. [Laughter] After flying too long, they smell, too! So, they have to come down sometimes. They have to put a lot of heavy metal iron chains around their bodies so that they can control and balance their take-offs and landings. That's what they do.

So, some time if you go to Tibet and look up into the sky, you'll see something like that. And you'll think they're torturing themselves by chaining their bodies and so on. But that's what they have to do. If they fly too high and they're too light, they have to make themselves heavier so they can land on the ground and stay on the ground as long as they want. Otherwise, they'll just fly in the air all the time.

Similarly, when we first practice spirituality, after some time we become a saint or a Buddha and say, 'Oh, I don't believe that; I don't look at that. I don't talk to that person; I don't wear those kinds of clothes.' That's when your sickness is the most serious. [Laughter] Then, after some time, you're too saintly, and you have to cure yourself. You have to pull yourself down to the ground again, in order to integrate into the society and do something about your knowledge, your sainthood or your wisdom. Because many people need you; you can't just lie around in nirvana all the time. It's also no good for you while you're here. If I were always in nirvana, I wouldn't care about anything; I'd just stay in nirvana all the time. I mean as a state of being, not that I'd have to fly to the sky. But then I'd have nothing to do with you, and I'd never understand how you suffer. I wouldn't know anything about your mentality. I wouldn't know anything. I wouldn't understand your suffering or your love, your hate, your failures or your virtues. I wouldn't understand anything because I'd be too saintly, too pure: P-U-R-E. [Laughter and applause.]

So, these are the chains. It doesn't matter what color. They're only dirt: Yellow dirt, blue dirt, white dirt – so why bother? Those people who criticize me are saints; that's why. They're in the hospital of sainthood. So as soon as they come out, they'll recognize. They'll be normal again and we can talk to them. So, don't worry; being too saintly is also no good. We're out of touch with reality, and then we can become imbalanced. Just like the people in Tibet who always fly in the sky and can never come down for the rest room. Just make sure that if they don't have chains on, don't pass under them. [Laughter] You might be in trouble. Changing your clothes is not always convenient in that kind of cold climate and altitude. Don't say I didn't warn you!

Turning our burdens into joy

Sometimes we can turn problems into joy, turn nuisances or burdens into beauty. For example, I normally wouldn't have this outfit. [Master indicates the vest and skirt ensemble She is wearing.] And I didn't think of making a new one since I had already designed so many the last time, and I haven't worn or even tried them all on yet. But someone, I don't know who, slipped this jacket inside my room. I think it was one of our ex-nuns, who wanted to show the sincerity of her repentance for leaving me alone in the desert with the flowers. So, she probably went out and bought this vest and threw it inside my window one day. But when I saw it, I said, 'Oh, my God! How can I wear this?' [Master and audience laugh.] Because she only bought this, so what did that mean? Can I wear it like this (the vest only) to go to group meditation? I can't. Maybe I might do it one day and shock you all out of your shoes. But I don't have that inspiration yet so be prepared.

So, I kept thinking, 'What can I do with it?' Because I didn't have any clothes to go with it. Most of my clothes are conservative, just a tunic and white trousers; that's it. Then a jacket

to cover the ‘must-cover’ places, [Master jokes.] so that people think I'm a moral, ethical and very good practitioner, very enlightened and so on.

So now, I didn't have any clothes to wear with this kind of vest. And I couldn't wear it alone. But first of all, I couldn't throw it away because it was already there. Second, it was too small; I wouldn't know who to give it to since I'm the smallest size in our group – maybe the ‘biggest,’ but also the smallest. So, it just became like a burden and was lying around for some time. And then I said, ‘Okay, we can make clothes to go with it, and then make use of it.’ And the result is that today it's very pleasing to your eyes, but it was a burden before. So, we can turn a burden into a joy, and not just for me alone; all of you can enjoy it.

THE REAL HEAVEN IS WITHIN US ¹⁹⁶

We should always remember we have heaven inside and that never goes away, never ever. Whenever we forget, try to remember again; pull yourself inward again; and then you feel such a peace, tranquility and comfort.

That, no one can ever take away from you. That is the real heaven, not to run away above the stars the way I sang to you last night. That is only for the non-initiates, or the not-very-high-level practitioners.

In the beginning we have to tempt them with some kind of cakes or something so they'll say, ‘Wow, I have heaven. Ya, sure, there are heavens,’ but like every other place, nirvana heaven is not for you to reside in permanently. It's not a private property. Nothing in the universe should be a private property or permanent residence, thing like that; because that is no good. Then you get stuck there. Even if you have a beautiful nirvana, you'll get stuck there all the time. What a boring Buddha! Attached to nirvana.

BEAUTIFYING THE WORLD WITH LOVE ¹⁹⁷

In such a happy atmosphere of the New Year, we should not forget the less fortunate people. We should use our love, devotional spirit and spirit of care for each other to beautify this world and let our world become more and more meaningful, more and more beautiful.

Spread the loving atmosphere on our planet

This evening a journalist asked me, ‘What is the purpose of Your going everywhere and helping people?’ I said there is only one true purpose: To make the world a better place. We help a nation or person not because we think that money or the material side is very important, or that without our help they would die. Even if they died, it would not be very important because those of us who practice spiritually or who believe in Buddha know there is reincarnation. If one's body is gone, one could get another body. We help others not because we worry about material things, but because symbolically we want to show that there is love, mutual concern and unconditional sacrifice in this world. We want to raise the energy of this world in a spiritual way, to spread the loving atmosphere on our planet. When there is unconditional love among neighbors, our world becomes better and better. This is the true purpose and true meaning of charity.

196. Group meditation, Bangkok Center, Thailand, January 2, 1994 (Originally in English).

197. Group meditation, Bangkok Center, Thailand, January 1, 1994 (Originally in English and Chinese).

Love is the most precious thing in the whole universe, not only in this world. So, many of the celestial or extraterrestrial beings are attracted by the atmosphere of love on our planet. They recognize that love is the most beautiful thing in the universe. Even though some of the planets are highly developed in technology, they lack this emotion, this true love among one another. Sometimes their beings even come here to observe and learn.

That's why we have to protect our loving atmosphere, because that's all we have. We are not as developed or civilized as other planets. But at least we have something that is the most beautiful in the universe, and that is love. We have to protect and preserve this loving atmosphere so that we can share it with other planets in the future. [Applause]

Let go of your small self and you will be a Master

Everyone of you should be a Master. I have shown you how to become a Master; not that you be my disciples forever. The world needs Masters, not disciples. So, you'd better grow up. You go out and talk to people about the happy way of life, and see whoever has affinity with you, they will come to you. Then we will give them initiation like you wish. Then you'll have more fellow initiates and your country will be better as you want. I cannot always physically be there. But if you let the Master power use your body, then you also become a Master. Yes, you become a Master by talking to people, by answering their questions, by letting the wisdom from the most high flow to you. Once you leave your ego and your personal profit, gain, and glory, then you will speak; but not you, the Mother / Father, the Buddha inside, God inside will speak to us. So, just be the instrument, and then every one of you is a Master. No one is not a Master. We came from the Master kingdom and we'll go back to the Master kingdom. So, the earlier you realize this, the better.

I teach you because I want you to become the Master, not my disciples, that's very tiring for me. [Master laughs.] So you do it, okay? Whatever you ask of me, you do it. Because I and you are one. There is no difference. When you talk to people, try not to think that you are doing it, and pray to the Master power inside. Then you will be very surprised that you talk in wisdom, in beauty, and in a virtue that you never knew before. That's the way to be a Master. I also don't know anything. I just talk because the Master talks. That's why you call me a Master. Just copy heaven. Very easy. Very easy to be a Master. Just let go of your small self, and then you'll be big. Very simple. So, try to do what you ask of me, live for other people, help other people, sacrifice yourself; then many of your countrymen will come to you. You have to talk to more people; not to force them, but just introduce to them and let them have a choice. And then the more people you talk to, the more people who have affinity with you will come. For example, if you talk to only one person and that one goes away, then you'll feel disappointed. But if you talk to ten persons, maybe one leaves, one stays behind. You see? So, you have to talk to more people anywhere you go, and maybe carry the booklets, or carry your wisdom and your Master with you. Then you will always be helpful to your countrymen.



Initiation into the Quan Yin method of meditation

Supreme Master Ching Hai initiates sincere people longing to know the Truth into the Quan Yin method of meditation. The Chinese characters 'Quan Yin' mean contemplation of the Sound vibration. The method includes meditation on both the inner Light and the inner Sound. These inner experiences have been repeatedly described in the spiritual literature of all the world's religions since ancient times.

For example, the Christian bible says, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' This Word is the inner Sound. It has also been called the Logos, Shabd, Tao, Sound stream, Naam, or the celestial music. Master Ching Hai says, 'It vibrates within all life and sustains the whole universe. This inner melody can heal all wounds, fulfill all desires, and quench all worldly thirst. It is all powerful and all love. It is because we are made of this Sound, that contact with it brings peace and contentment to our hearts. After listening to this Sound, our whole being changes, and our entire outlook on life is greatly altered for the better.'

The inner Light, the Light of God, is the same Light referred to in the word 'enlightenment.' Its intensity can range from a subtle glow to the brilliance of many millions of suns. It is through the inner Light and Sound that we come to know God.

The initiation into the Quan Yin method is not an esoteric ritual or a ceremony for entering a new religion. During the initiation, specific instruction in meditation on the inner Light and inner Sound is given, and Master Ching Hai provides the 'spiritual transmission.' This first taste of divine presence is given in silence. Master Ching Hai need not be physically present in order to open this 'door' for us. The transmission is an essential part of the method. The techniques themselves will bring little benefit without the grace of the Master.

Because we may hear the inner Sound and see the inner Light immediately upon initiation, this event is sometimes referred to as 'sudden' or 'immediate enlightenment.'

Master Ching Hai accepts people from all backgrounds and religious affiliations for initiation. We do not have to change our present religion or system of beliefs. We will not be asked to join any organization, or participate in any way that does not suit our current life style.

However, we will be asked to become a vegetarian. A lifetime commitment to the vegetarian diet is a necessary prerequisite for receiving initiation.

The initiation is offered free of charge.

Daily practice of the Quan Yin method of meditation, and the keeping of the five precepts are our only requirements after initiation. The precepts are guidelines that help us to neither harm ourselves nor any other living being. These practices will deepen and strengthen our initial enlightenment experience, and allow us to eventually attain the

highest levels of awakening or Godhood for ourselves. Without daily practice, we will almost certainly forget our enlightenment and return to a normal level of consciousness.

Master Ching Hai's goal is to teach us to be self-sufficient. Therefore, She teaches a method that can be practiced by everyone, by themselves, without props or paraphernalia of any kind. She is not looking for followers, worshippers, or disciples, or to establishing an organization with a dues paying membership. She will not accept money, prostrations, or gifts from us, so we do not need to offer these to Her.

She will accept our sincerity in daily life and meditational practice to progress ourselves to sainthood.

The five precepts

1. Refrain from taking the life of sentient beings. *
2. Refrain from speaking what is not true.
3. Refrain from taking what is not ours.
4. Refrain from sexual misconduct.
5. Refrain from using intoxicants. **

* This precept requires strict adherence to a vegan or lacto-vegetarian diet. No meat, fish, poultry, or eggs (fertilized or non-fertilized).

** This includes avoiding all poisons of any kind, such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling, pornography, and excessively violent films or literature.



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P.O. Box 9 Hsihu Hsiang, Miaoli Hsien, Formosa (Taiwan 36899).

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The Birds in My Life

Following *The Dogs in My Life*, Supreme Master Ching Hai wrote another book entitled, *The Birds in My Life*, for the twenty-three beloved winged members of Her household. In this beautifully illustrated book, each feathered creature is described in a biography lovingly composed by Master, together with pictures from the bird's daily life and captions with 'bird talk.'

Each of these beautiful birds comes from a different background and has an interesting and unique personality. Some of their stories will move us into tears, while others may make us smile. Their cute mannerisms have brought much joy and laughter to Master. Hidden inside these tiny creatures are highly developed and loving souls. Master said that She has often been touched by the expressions and actions of the birds, and even inspired by them. She hopes that all of us will understand other living beings such as birds, and love and respect them as equals.

The Noble Wilds

With a rhythmic, meditative tone, the words of *The Noble Wilds* flow gracefully along the pages, complemented by the luminous photos of God's creations in nature. Turning the pages, one is transported to Amoura, the place where the lady lives and is visited by cherished beings of the wild. The lady is none other than Supreme Master Ching Hai, and *The Noble Wilds* is yet another of Her simple but deeply touching gifts. Written, photographed and compiled personally by Master, this precious gem opens the door to a world of unique beauty. Here, the reader can witness firsthand the noble spirit and dedication of our co-inhabitants whose homes are under the open sky the swan, the goose, the squirrel, the beaver and even a tiny garden snail. Although generally shy of humans, these animals allow themselves to be photographed, and indeed can even be seen eagerly approaching the lady's gentle offering of favorite foods. The love conveyed is unlike any other full of dignity and grace, yet as deep and enduring as the eternal. All books are printed by soy ink for environmental protection. Such ink is not only nontoxic but also very helpful for environment of the mother earth, which is a good example of 'time to act.'

Through these books, we will understand how deeply our animal friends can feel and how intelligent they can be. They are absolutely loyal to partners, friends and human caretakers. They can be very sensitive and tender in expressing their love, and when they lose a loved one, they suffer the same sadness as humans do. That's why Master Ching Hai says, 'If humans could love each other that much, peace and happiness would be ours forever.' These three hundred pages of wonderful pictures and stories will lead us to a world populated by beautiful birds and help us understand their lives, their deep emotions and thoughts.

Read *The Dogs in My Life*, *The Birds in My Life* and *The Noble Wilds*, and fall in love with some of the most special beings on earth. *The Dogs in My Life*, *The Birds in My Life* and *The Noble Wilds* are also available online at: www.amazon.com/dp/9866895084/ ; www.amazon.com/dp/9866895149/ and www.amazon.com/Noble-Wilds-Supreme-Master-Ching/dp/9868415233.

These books are beautiful gifts for yourselves and your loved ones. Have them delivered as soon as possible to our doors and begin experiencing God's love and blessing flowing on every page!

Celestial Art

Celestial Art is a distinguished volume in which the author interprets artistic creation from a spiritual perspective to reflect Truth, virtue, and the beauty of heaven. As readers are invited into the boundless world of Supreme Master Ching Hai's celestial art and uplifted through its resonance with the divine, they will be profoundly touched by the deep emotions of a poet, the subtle touches of a painter, the unique ideas of a designer, and the romantic heart of a musician. Above all, one is blessedly introduced to the wisdom and compassion of a great spiritual Teacher.

Supreme Master Ching Hai personally named this book *Celestial Art*, to bring the beauty of heaven to this world. The works of art collected in this book symbolize a noble way of living in real practice.

As a collection of Supreme Master Ching Hai's creative works of art throughout the years, this book is presented in exquisite color photographs and simple yet profound comments

by the author Herself. She speaks of the natural process behind Her creativity and Her source of inspiration, revealing for readers an appreciation of the true meaning of Her works. She also shares ways to help us develop our own creative talents. Although Supreme Master Ching Hai never received formal training in the arts, She is gifted with refined creative ability. Many of Her works, inspired by spontaneous intuition, are natural, expressive, and tenderly graced with divine love: 'If we can find our Truth, virtue, and beauty again, then the material world will become more meaningful to us and the world will be more beautiful. We can find the Truth in this illusionary world because we can always track down the real thing by following its shadow.' says Supreme Master Ching Hai.

About the author Supreme Master Ching Hai

Supreme Master Ching Hai is a world-renowned spiritual Teacher, artist, and humanitarian, whose loving assistance extends beyond all cultural boundaries. Born in central Au Lac (Vietnam), Supreme Master Ching Hai studied in Europe and worked there for the Red Cross. She soon realized that suffering exists in all corners of the globe, and Her yearning to find a remedy became the foremost goal in Her life. She was happily married at the time to a German physician, and although it was a difficult decision for both of them, Her husband agreed to a separation. She then embarked on a journey in search of spiritual enlightenment. Eventually, in the Himalayas in India, She received from a true Master the divine transmission of the inner Light and Sound, which She later called the Quan Yin method. After a period of diligent practice, She attained the great enlightenment.

Soon after Her return from the Himalayas, at the earnest request of those around Her, Supreme Master Ching Hai shared the Quan Yin method with others, encouraging them to look within to find their own divine greatness. Before long, invitations arrived from the Americas, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Africa for Supreme Master Ching Hai to give lectures.

Supreme Master Ching Hai's compassionate heart has also been reflected in Her meticulous care for the less fortunate in different circumstances. The funding generated from Her artistic creations has enabled the support of Her mission of comforting God's children in times of need.

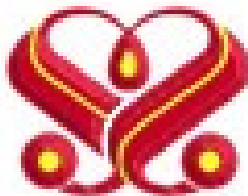
More recently, Supreme Master Ching Hai has authored books that have become number one international best-sellers, namely '*The Dogs in My Life*,' '*The Birds in My Life*,' and '*The Noble Wilds*.' These volumes reveal many insights into the deep emotions and thoughts of our treasured animal co-inhabitants, highlighting their gracious spirit and unconditional love.

Wishing to acknowledge others for their actions and influence toward developments of goodness in the world, Supreme Master Ching Hai founded the Shining World Leadership Award in March 2006. Since then, She has also established other prestigious awards, such as Shining World Compassion Award, Shining World Hero and Heroine Awards, Shining World Honesty Award, Shining World Protection Award, Shining World Intelligence Award, and Shining World Invention Award. This honor is bestowed on individuals, nations, and organizations – such as the second President of the Republic of Slovenia, Dr. Janez Drnovšek, Dr. Jane Goodall, and Save the Children – whose exemplary works have significantly contributed to the harmony, beauty, and sustainability of our earth.

Supreme Master Ching Hai is among notable pioneers in our society today who wisely and courageously express concern about climate change. In fact, for more than twenty years, She has talked about preserving the environment. She catapulted the Alternative Living

and SOS global warming campaigns to promote a benevolent lifestyle without animal products. 'Be Veg, Go Green, Save The Planet' is now a well-known motto that originated from Supreme Master Ching Hai.

In our era, Supreme Master Ching Hai is truly a selflessly dedicated individual, tirelessly helping world citizens create a bright future for our beloved planet.



Benefits of a vegan diet and harms of meat consumption

Benefits of a vegan diet	Harms of meat consumption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower blood pressure. • Lower cholesterol levels. • Reduce Type 2 diabetes. • Prevent stroke conditions. • Reverse atherosclerosis. • Reduce heart disease risk by 50%. • Reduce heart surgery risk by 80%. • Prevent many forms of cancer. • Stronger immune system. • Increase life expectancy up to fifteen years. • Higher IQ. • Conserves up to 70% clean water. • Saves 80% of the cleared Amazonian rainforest from animal grazing. • Free up 3,433 billion hectares of land. • Free up 760 million tons of grain every year (half the world's grain supply). • Consumes 1/3 less fossil fuels of those used for meat production. • Reduces pollution from untreated animal waste. • Maintains cleaner air. • Saves 4.5 tons of emissions per United States household per year. • Stop 80% of global warming. <p>Plus more...</p>	<p><i>Some diseases related to meat consumption production</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swine flu • Blue tongue disease • E.coli • Salmonella • Bird flu • Mad cow disease and pig's disease (PMWS) • Listeriosis • Shellfish poisoning • Pre-eclampsia <p><i>Some of the costs of meat eating</i></p> <p><i>Heart disease</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 17 million lives lost globally each year. • Cost of cardiovascular disease is at least USD1 trillion a year. <p><i>Cancer</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 1 million new colon cancer patients diagnosed each year. • More than 600,000 colon cancer-related mortalities annually. • In the United States alone, colon cancer treatment costs about USD6.5 billion. • Millions of people are newly diagnosed with other meat-related cancers every year. <p><i>Diabetes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 246 million people are affected worldwide. • An estimated USD174 billion spent each year on treatment. <p><i>Obesity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worldwide 1.6 billion adults are overweight with 400 million more who are obese. • Costs USD93 billion each year for medical expenses in the United States alone. • At least 2.6 million people die annually from problems related to being overweight or obese. <p><i>Environmental</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use up to 70% of clean water. • Pollute most of the water bodies. • Deforest the lungs of the earth. • Uses up to 43% of the world's cereal. • Uses up to 85% of the world's soy. • Cause world hunger and wars. • 80% cause of global warming. <p><i>Some of the costs of milk consumption</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breast, prostate and testicular cancer from hormones present in milk. • Listeria and Crohn's disease. • Hormones and saturated fat leads to osteoporosis, obesity, diabetes and heart disease. • Linked to higher incidences of multiple sclerosis. • Classified as a major allergen. Lactose intolerance.



Alternative living

Change our life
Change our heart
Change our diet



No more killing
Be healthy and loving

Examples of nutritious, life saving food:

Foods	Protein concentration (% by weight)
Tofu (from soya).	16%
Gluten (from flour).	70%
Corn.	13%
Rice.	8.6%
Soy beans, kidney beans, chick peas, lentils, et cetera.	10 – 35%
Almonds, walnuts, cashews, hazel nuts, pine nuts, et cetera.	14 – 30%
Pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, et cetera.	18 – 24%

- Concentrated multi-vitamin tables / capsules are also a good source of vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants.
- Fruits and vegetables are full of vitamins, minerals and anti-oxidants and contain high-quality fiber for maintaining good health and a long life.
- The recommended daily allowance: 50 grams of protein (average adult).
- Calcium from vegetables is more absorbable than from cow's milk.

- To diminish the real threat of a worldwide pandemic from bird flu;
- To avoid the danger of mad cow disease (BSE) and pig disease (PMWS), et cetera; and
- To stop the continuing gruesome sacrifice of billions of our sweet domestic animals, marine life and feathered friends daily.

It's wise to change to a vegetarian diet for good:

- It's health;
- It's economy;
- It's ecology;
- It's compassion;
- It's peace; and
- It's noble.

For more information, visit our websites: www.Godsdirectcontact.org / www.SupremeMasterTV.com.



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Africa	Intelsat 10 (68.5°E) KU Band & Intelsat 10 (68.5°E) C Band
Australia & New Zealand	Optus D2 (152°E)
Europe	Eurobird (28.5°E); Hotbird (13°E) & Astra 1 (19.2°E)
Middle East & North Africa	Eurobird 2 (25.5°E) & Hotbird 6 (13°E)
North America	Galaxy 19 (97°W)
South America	Hispasat (30°W) & Intelsat 907 (27.5°W)
United Kingdom and Ireland	Sky Channel 835