

Tibet Oral History Project

**Interview #13C, Part 2 – Jangchup Palmo, Naljorma
May 12, 2014**

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INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

1. Interview Number: #13C, Part 2
2. Interviewee: Jangchup Palmo, Naljorma
3. Age: 71
4. Date of Birth: 1943
5. Sex: Female
6. Birthplace: Namru
7. Province: Utsang
8. Year of leaving Tibet:
9. Date of Interview: May 12, 2014
10. Place of Interview: Private residence, Eugene, Oregon, USA
11. Length of Interview: 1 hr 36 min
12. Interviewer: Marcella Adamski
13. Interpreter: Anonymous
14. Videographer: Tony Sondag
15. Translator: Tenzin Yangchen

Biographical Information:

Naljorma Jangchup Palmo shares her dedication to religious practice. At the age of 13 she and her family received special teachings called Lamday ‘Path and its Fruit’ from the Sakya Gongma Rinpoche. She learned about cause and effect and the need for compassion. Realizing that she was unable to rid herself of hatred, she devoted herself to the Rinpoche and the Buddha dharma in order gain compassion and enlightenment in this lifetime. She gives an explanation of the *ngondro* ‘preliminary teachings’ that she received and their importance.

Naljorma Jangchup Palmo performed prostrations around Mt. Kailash at age 17 and underwent great physical difficulties on the journey. The full-body prostrations were done to purify oneself and she focused on her intentions to overcome the hardships involved. She describes the ritual of *chod* and her experience of practicing at one hundred cemeteries as her teacher instructed.

Naljorma Jangchup Palmo later married and had seven children, but continued her spiritual practice and was able to utilize what she had gained from her earlier efforts in her daily life. She founded a Peace Center to help others cultivate the kindness of the mind. She believes that with strong effort, a good teacher and meditation, anyone can develop their Buddhist nature. She explains that understanding the nature of one’s mind will release one from suffering. In this way she has not suffered from old age or illness because she does not associate herself with it.

Topics Discussed:

Buddhist beliefs.

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Interview #13C, Part 2

Interviewee: Jangchup Palmo, Naljorma

Age: 71, Sex: Female

Interviewer: Marcella Adamski

Interview Date: May 12, 2014

[NOTE: Interviewee is in poor health and may suffer from some memory loss.]

[NOTE: This interview is a continuation of the first interview with Naljorma Jangchup Palmo conducted in Oregon on July 7, 2013. The first interview is archived as “#13C, Part 1.”]

Question: Please tell us your name.

00:00:11

Interviewee #13C: Jangchup Palmo.

Q: Palmo-*la*, we finished our last interview with you on July 7, 2013 and today May 11 [12], 2014 we're continuing the second half of your interview.

#13C: Hmm.

Q: We ended our interview with your describing how you decided to spend time in a cave in the Himalayas near Mount Kailash praying for a heart that could forgive the Chinese.

#13C: Yes, that is correct.

Q: You told us that you had met a teacher from Kham who instructed you to direct your attention towards compassion in your heart.

#13C: That is very much it.

Q: That's very much it.

#13C: Yeah.

Q: Can you remember, even though it was a long time ago, what kind of thoughts or feelings you had about the Chinese right after your escape? What feelings were in your heart that you later wanted to change?

00:03:25

#13C: Initially of course, anyone would feel unhappy.

[The Chinese] destroyed the people, His Holiness [the Dalai Lama] had to leave and everybody went through trouble. It was for me and for others and [we] felt the suffering that this was not good. Anyone would think about the suffering inflicted.

Q: Palmo-*la*, what did Zogchen Pema Rinzin ask? What kind of prayers did he suggest that you say?

#13C: First [he] gave the *ngondro* ‘preliminary practice.’

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...which is a set of practice that entails or involves purification and transformation of the body, speech and mind, which is within the context of Vajrayana Buddhism.

Q: Would it be possible for you to share what those are right now for people who don't know?

#13C: It is that which goes before all other practices.

Q: Yes.

#13C: The difficulty of finding the freedoms and advantages, the impermanence of life and the principle of cause and effect; since people do not know about these, the lama teaches these practices which are called *ngondro*.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: There are two kinds of preliminary. There's the outer preliminary and the inner preliminary. When we talk about outer preliminary that entails contemplating, reflecting on the facts of life, right? Here, the first contemplation that one sort of engages or incorporates as part of your training is reflecting on the preciousness and the advantages of having been born as human beings, and then immediately following that we reflect on even though very precious and very rare you have been born as human, but it is impermanent that we go through change and that death is part of life.

Then following that even though we die our mind doesn't die. So there is a separation, a distinction made between physical body and the mental experience. So physically we die but mentally we don't die. Therefore, it is important to be ethical, to be responsible for our body, speech and mind. Here, we contemplate on karma. On the third contemplation we focus on the infallibility of law of cause and effect. Then finally on the fourth contemplation, then you reflect on that as long as we're not free from this conditional existence basically our psychological or our habitual pattern, basically from our conceptual mind or if we're not free from this mind. Therefore, we'll be born again and again.

You see, meaning that if we don't attain enlightenment, that we don't put an end to this confusion, we'll be born again and again. Therefore, we reflect on the suffering, suffering nature of this existence. In Tibetan we call it *khorma*, *khorma* meaning vicious cycle. So here, there are three kinds of suffering that we talk about, that we experience. That is suffering, all pervasive suffering, suffering of change and then suffering upon suffering. And so here, in the preliminary

practice, the *ngondro* practice, on the outer *ngondro* practice then we meditate on the four thoughts again and again as part of the training that she received from Zogchen Pema Rinzin.

Q: Was this the first time you had these trainings or did you have them when you were growing up as a young girl?

#13C: [I] did from a young age. At around the age of 13 before Tibet was occupied, my parents received the Lamday ‘Path and its Fruit’ [system of contemplative and meditative practice of the Sakya tradition] from the Sakya Gongma Rinpoche and all the children received it, too. [Sakya Gongma Rinpoche] taught the *ngondro* and [I] received it. However, being a child, one did not contemplate, “Oh, such is the principle of cause and effect.” One did not; for it was the mind of a child.

00:09:26

[My] parents sponsored the event [of the *lamday* teaching].

Q: *Ama-la* ‘respectful term for mother,’ so this great suffering, the loss of your parents and your siblings and your injuries made you want to find a way not to suffer and these teachings became helpful to you? Is that why you practiced them so much?

00:11:03

#13C: That [teachings] helped a great deal because in addition to the principle of cause and effect...[I] said that...[not discernible] spoke about it. In addition to that the *ngondro* practice involves doing 100,000 prostrations and such. The lama commented upon the principle of cause and effect and to abandon negative actions and adopt positive actions, to be compassionate. These were described in great length.

When I contemplated on it, [I realized] there was hatred in me. Otherwise, I could follow everything that the lama taught except for releasing hatred from my mind. There was hatred and arrogance, hatred in my mind. It is not just me but similar for everyone. I thought again and again, “Oh, this is not good. How can [I] give release to this? I am never going to remain here but shall run away.”

However, [I] thought about seeking revenge and not just running away alone or to His Holiness. I did not think that way. Since there was so much hatred, I asked the lama—I had not met His Holiness then—I sought refuge in the lama...[not discernible]. “Do you want to practice the dharma authentically? How do you want to practice by going to the mountains?” [I] replied, “I really do wish to practice the dharma authentically.” “If you wish to practice the dharma authentically, you should not feel hatred, instead feel compassion. [You] must be able to interchange these two. Otherwise, there is no use doing any practice,” [the lama] said.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: As I was receiving this training, teaching from this teacher, he emphasized again and again about how important intention and motivation is. So the question that he would pose would be something like, “Is your intention genuine?” That is, if you truly want to get rid of suffering and the cause of suffering and that was a question he would ask and then he would say...then I would say, “Yes, of course.” And then he would say, “In that case,

then you would need to work with your attitude.” Your attitude, of course is understandable as a human being. You know we go through all these upheavals of emotion, particularly having experienced what I have experienced, all the loss and disappointments but suffering in themselves have no objective. It’s very much our aversion to, you see that would further escalate or make the suffering worse than what you actually have to experience.

So my teacher said that “You need to work with your attitude.” That means I’ll have to transform this actual aversion into compassion. Compassion here meaning thinking of other suffering more important than what I’ve experienced. So that exchange needs to take place because the root cause of this frustration and anger and aversion is too much of “Why I have to go through this?” There’s too much of, you know, “I.” It’s the main culprit or the ...[not discernible] in the first place. So do you want to continue this or do you want to do something to work out or make a change, a difference? So here my teacher emphasized that I work on developing the practice of exchanging oneself with others...so...very much on compassion. You know, he said compassion is, of course the essence of enlightenment or transformation. In this case this aversion that she was feeling, aversion and the hatred and anger that she was feeling...that I was feeling.

Q: Yes, yes, yes. Can you please, *ama-la*, share an example of how you would do that in your mind? What would you have to think “I am suffering but the Chinese are suffering?” Do you understand? How do you exchange so that this “I” is no longer the number one issue?

00:17:13

#13C: I did according to my situation. [I] only had the determination of practicing the dharma authentically, not to practice gradually, but to practice in such a way as to attain enlightenment in this very life. [I] had that kind of thought, which is due to the benevolence of the lama. My suffering, the suffering of the mind, the suffering caused by the enemy along the journey...When the lama gave such teachings, I resolved not to cause harm to anyone in this life but to practice the dharma authentically. Initially, in order to...[not discernible] I performed full body-length prostrations at the mountain, and apprised the lama, “Now I shall practice the dharma. I shall remain in a cave and practice the dharma authentically.”

[Question is repeated.]

#13C: That is what I did initially. During this practice the most important for me...When the physical body became tired, [I] did not care however much exhaustion [I] felt because in my mind [I] felt compassion for [the Chinese] there and was determined to practice the dharma authentically. The prostrations took 17 days. However much exhausted [I] felt on account of the prostrations I dedicated an equal amount to the Chinese, “May they benefit from it. May I not have bad thoughts.” I prayed like this. If [I] did not remember to pray for deliverance from bad thoughts, it crept into [my] mind at times.

So [I] prayed and prostrated, prayed and prostrated day and night. You would laugh at the way [I] prostrated. You would not believe [I] was human from the way I prostrated because it rained and snowed on Mt. Kailash and there was water that turned into ice. [I] lay on it doing prostrations. You do this [touches joined palms on forehead], like this [touches joined palms near neck], like this [touches joined palms on chest] and prostrate

like this. [I] was completely wet as everything was water and ice. All these [touches thighs] were frozen. Undergoing such suffering brought happiness for [I] believed, “My negative actions will be cleansed.”

I have had negative thoughts by believing the Chinese were bad and [I] prayed, “May these negative thoughts be cleansed. May the Chinese have happiness.” [I] prayed like this again and again. [I] thought about it again and again. In the night [I] slept right there on Mt. Kailash. Had [the interview team] seen this, I think it was a beautiful sight. I accomplished such hardships. After overcoming each hardship [I] thought about all the enemies there and transformed [them] into friends. [I] felt love arising within. Then when [I] was prostrating...

Q: What was the reason for the love arising?

00:21:04

#13C: The reason was what the lama taught. The lama taught this, “[While prostrating] imagine [your] father on the right shoulder. Not just one’s father but all males. Imagine [your] mother on the left shoulder. Imagine all mothers on the left.” When prostrating...you know everyone has fathers...I continue to prostrate in the mind. [To interpreter] Okay, translate this first.

Q: What’s the reason for prostrating, the reason for feeling compassion for the Chinese who has caused so much suffering?

#13C: [I] mentioned the lama having spoken about the reason. One must cleanse one’s negative actions...

Q: The main reason for undergoing suffering is because of the principle of cause and effect?

#13C: Yes, it is because of the principle of cause and effect. In order to cleanse it...when we practice the *ngondro*, practices the dharma authentically...*ngondro* is...[not discernible] not only for me but for everyone. It contains such purposes. When the reason is commented upon, that is the outcome. It was not as if I was told, “You must prostrate for this cause.”

Q: You spoke earlier that one suffers because of *dhagzin* ‘ego-clinging,’ right? The main cause of your suffering is *dhagzin*. What is the reason for the transformation, the reason for feeling compassion for the Chinese because it is natural to be agitated and angry towards one that causes you suffering?

00:22:44

#13C: That is what [I] said—that the reason for not feeling so is because of the Buddha’s dharma. The dharma changed my mind. The dharma tamed my mind. This must be understood. When we say that someone is a *choepa* ‘dharma practitioner’—the lama was of course a *choepa*—it is the dharma that has tamed the mind. When the dharma tames the mind, one becomes a *boddhichitta* ‘enlightened mind.’

[Interpreter to interviewer]: I think as we go through this process of training, then these practices processes you. Thereby, it softens you through these contemplations. So here I don't particularly visualize the Chinese or those that put us harm on us because if you objectively specify this particular people, then there'll be escalation of many emotions, you see. But here I try to universalize, you see the suffering not only those that caused us harm but then beings out of the ignorance, you see creating so many negative karma. And I myself and the Tibetans, we also may have accumulated some negative deeds in the past life as a result we're going through this process.

So my heart sort of opened up. So that experience helped me to open up to see the reality of suffering that all beings, you see whether we are the victims and they are the ones propagating, we're all in the same boat. We're all in samsara. And so the wish is to really free ourselves from samsara. So having that intention in mind, you know, of this vast attitude of thinking about the suffering of all sentient beings. You see, this is part of the training we were introduced to cultivate that kind of altruistic intention for the benefit of all sentient beings. So not particularly of the Chinese but all sentient beings, you see, under the influence of ignorance and negative emotions. Hence, negative karma and suffering are a result.

So it wasn't specific to Chinese or this particular group or that particular situation but really you try to universalize the suffering. So I think that's the Buddha therapeutic approach, is that you don't work, you see on a problem or a negativity. First you try to cultivate positive emotion, you see, try to generate altruistic intention. And then you look at negative positively, so to speak. So you sort of expand your vision or your heart, you see. You make it bigger to accommodate everyone. So it's not just one particular situation and so as a result of this training it processed me. So in that then all the other sort of ills or difficulties were purified as this practice continued.

Q: Yes, I see. By having a wider vision your heart is not caught in a single emotion, which can then grab you...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes.

Q: ...and hold you...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes.

Q: ...and lock you.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, because then you can have many kind of, like I said, judgments and question "Why this, why me?" You try to objectify, you know, any particular experience but here as part of the training, they would hold, you see, the universality of the suffering, you see, basically samsara. And then if you genuinely want to overcome it then you have to develop loving kindness and compassion for all sentient beings because we're all in the same boat so to speak.

Q: Very useful, *ama-la*. When you were learning this, is this primarily still in Tibet or maybe later on in the other experiences in the cave? Were there teachers that came to help you or were

you reading Tibetan texts? How were you keeping your mind open and learning more? What kind of effort was needed?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: And also I think earlier she mentioned...earlier she also mentioned something about prostrations.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Yes.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: She said that was a part of the practice.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Prostrations.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Prostrations, yes. Physical prostrations.

00:28:12

#13C: [I] did the prostrations. Actually, I knew the dharma and was carrying scriptures with me. However, we had already received the *ngondro*, which the lama had taught and [I] knew it. I spoke earlier about receiving teachings from the Sakya Rinpoche. Along with the prostrations, one must chant the refuge prayer. One must accomplish these a hundred thousand times. What is the refuge prayer? The Rinpoche explained it. One must orally recite the refuge prayer:

<i>Lamala kyabsu chiwo</i>	I take refuge in the lama
<i>Sangayla kyabsu chiwo</i>	I take refuge in the Buddha
<i>Choela kyabsu chiwo</i>	I take refuge in the dharma
<i>Gedunla kyabsu chiwo</i>	I take refuge in the sangha

<i>Lamala kyabso chiwo</i>	I take refuge in the lama
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<i>Choela kyabsu chiwo</i>	I take refuge in the dharma
<i>[Gedunla kyabsu chiwo]</i>	<i>[I take refuge in the sangha]</i>

One must chant so [while doing the prostrations]. These two must be completed together a hundred thousand times. It will be too much to narrate about my struggle and concentration while practicing the dharma on Mount Kailash. It will take years to recount that experience. It is too much to recount unless we experience the whole thing again.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So basically, enlightenment or some kind of a [not discernible] for freedom is not experienced through mere sort of comfort or just simply sitting and doing a few recitation and meditation. It requires a tremendous amount of determination, discipline and effort, you see. She says it's something that cannot be...you know, I cannot emphasize enough about the importance of basically hard work and dedication. The hard work here refers to the discipline of putting effort and going about for the transformation to take place. So it's not just simply wishing and praying but day and night, weeks, months, years of effort, you see, if you truly want to see a change.

So, you know, as I reflect, you know, the times and effort and energy that I put into, you see, something that the ordinary mind cannot comprehend, you see but that has brought this, some amount of peace and freedom that I experienced as a result of the hard work and the effort I put in, be it like the prostrations, you see. The temperature, you know was freezing cold and there was a small pavement that I would do the prostrations on. There would be rocks and there would be maybe four or five, four feet, sometimes three feet of snow that I would walk on—do the prostrations. So all kinds of hardships that she endured as part of the practice along with of course, months and years of sitting, you see.

#13C: It took 17 days, 17 days and nights.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Like when I was doing the prostrations, it took me 17 days to go around this particular sacred mountain called Mount Kailash. I did the full-length extended prostrations. Basically you throw yourself on the floor for the full-length prostration. That took me 17 days just to complete the prostration and here in this particular practice...

#13C: [I] was carrying food on the back. [I] would take it to a distance, leave it in an empty area, return and do the prostrations. [I] did full body-length prostration until [I] reached the pack [of food] and then repeat the process.

00:32:49

It was snowing heavily. One must prostrate on this [gestures off camera] part of Mount Kailash and [I] was wet and freezing all over due to the slush. Yet [I] struggled on and in [my] mind focused on compassion and dedication.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So for me more hardship and more difficulties I encountered, more effortless it became because of the attitude of compassion, you know, of seeing and feeling the suffering of sentient beings, you see. Though they long to be happy, yet out of ignorance, you know they are doing the very thing that would result in suffering. So my heart sort of went out to all sentient beings, feeling their future pain if you like, you see, that as a result of knowing what they're doing to themselves and others and their causing so much suffering. So my heart really went out to all sentient beings and so that led me to continue without any kind of tiredness or weariness, you see. And so, you know, if you think about it physically there was lot of hardship, no doubt, you know, the temperature and the hardship, you see of doing the prostrations in all this snow and the rocks and all of that physically, you know, but because my heart, the power of practice, the power of compassion...

#13C: [I] was 17 years old then.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...is more powerful than yourself...attitude. So that really helped to work through this process of training.

Q: Were there prayers...for people who don't understand what the act of prostration is about, *ama-la*, could you please just tell us simply what does that mean to be prostrating and what kind of prayer are you saying as you do it for those not familiar with it?

#13C: There is only the prostration that one does. However...

Q: For those who are watching this and do not understand...

00:35:38

#13C: Yes, that is right. Prostrations purify the results of negative deeds of the body, speech and mind. The obscuring mind and three poisons are present in all of us humans. The five poisons are the non-virtuous acts of the body, non-virtuous acts of the speech and non-virtuous acts of the mind. Lying on the ground [while prostrating] purifies all the sins of the obscuring mind and five poisons. Besides, while prostrating you pray and visualize that your father is on the right [shoulder] and mother on the left [shoulder]. You would have seen someone prostrating. Hence, when the body is on the ground one must believe that the obscuring mind and five poisons are purified.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: The cause of suffering in Buddhism is very much to do with ignorance and its effect, the negative emotion. So here we talk about five negative emotions being the contributing factors. As you do the prostration, you touch five points of your body on the ground, the forehead, two hands and two knees, and yes, that would amount to five points. So as you come down, you imagine that you are bringing down the five negative emotions on the ground and so here, because we're in the path of Mahayana, so a greater vehicle, the emphasis is very much on cultivating the altruistic intention for the benefit of all sentient beings. So you're not doing the prostration for your sake alone but for all sentient beings.

So here you visualize, as you're doing the prostrations, all the male on your right hand side, you see all the males, your father on your right and all the males, and all the females on your left. You're sort of leading them, you see, towards enlightenment, towards the purification of these negative emotions. So you lead them and as you recite the refuge and Boddhichitta prayer, you see, like, "I go for refuge to the Buddha, dharma and sangha until enlightenment. May I be able to purify all the negative emotions and cultivate the enlightenment thought. That I'm doing it for the sake of all sentient beings, you see, and you lead them on the way and then those that causes harm and those that you have difficulty with, you put them in the front because they are the objects of our compassion.

They deserve the most important seat if you like because they are the ones that are going through difficulties more than anyone. And so you also view them as...so they are visualized in front of you and then your father on your right and mother on the left and then you do that in the presence of Buddhas and Boddhisattvas, you see. So Buddhas and Boddhisattvas are sort of like the audience, if you like. You know, you're sort of leading the orchestra. You're kind of the, I don't know, the master of ceremony or something; you are sort of leading them as you do this practice towards enlightenment so that all beings purify and cause of suffering and cultivate the cause of happiness, which is compassion and kindness.

00:39:24

#13C: [To interpreter] Please enquire if I can ask a question.

Q: Oh!

#13C: I am talking about the practices followed by a Buddhist. You would also have your religious practices. Do you believe in the suffering of distress as a result of ignorance? If so, how do you purify the obscure mind and the five poisons?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Just out of curiosity for those of us that are non-believers or those who don't follow this particular set of practice, who do we...Normally when we go through difficulties, you know suffering our tendency is to blame, you see, find someone being the cause of suffering and so we label, you know, our husband or wife or someone being the cause of suffering or for that matter like in Buddhism, you know, we sort of say, it's not the person but this emotion, this negative emotion, you see. It's not the place but ignorance and negative emotion being the cause of suffering. So those of us that are watching this, who do you, you know, consider being the cause of whatever difficulty you're going through? Do you blame it on...where do you...you know, what I'm saying?

Q: Yes. Well, because of my own practice over the years, small practice—but I'm aware that my suffering comes from my mind and then it's my mind that I need to have first compassion for because it needs training and it needs...it needs wisdom. So I go to the Buddha, the sangha and the dharma for wisdom. That has been the most useful thing to me personally. I cannot speak for other people, but I do know other people look for comfort in therapy, maybe just general prayers or bad things like substance abuse or something like that. But for myself, that's why I'm so happy and honored to have this work and why I wanted to come back and see *ama-la* because I realize that she has wisdom acquired through suffering and transcended it without ignoring it, that I wanted to share her ideas for myself, being a little greedy to understand, but also to share them with everybody that we can reach.

00:43:38

#13C: Thank you. I guessed you must be a practicing Buddhist as you have a great connection with the Dalai Lama. [You] are following the advice of the Dalai Lama. The dharma contains esoteric teachings that one does not share at once. However, you are like a disciple of the Dalai Lama and hence, our belief is similar. Therefore, I feel at ease to speak at length today. Otherwise, I do not talk about my spiritual experiences like others, but [I] spend my time reciting the *mani* 'mantra of Avalokiteshvara' and chanting melodiously. One must follow this and revealing the esoteric teachings is meaningless.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: As part of - what you call - you call it *samaya*, *samaya* meaning part of a pledge to her practice and to her path, it's often you don't share your experience, particularly your spiritual experiences and so, you know, at times when I'm asked to share, then I'm rather reluctant because it is the advice from my teacher and also...

Q: I understand.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...and also it is stated in the text that often we don't sort of...Cause then there might be a tendency to get little bit arrogant as a result or "I've accomplished this; I've done this; you see, I'm such and such." That evil can creep in. It is a danger. So often master would advise that you don't share unless the student—that you know for a long time. You see that they're matured and that therefore such advice, such experience, can be expressed or shared

unless you see that. So from her experience and also this is sort of her nature to not get into detail of the practice.

Q: I understand.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Now as we talk about *ngondro* then we're going into the inner *ngondro*. It comes to a point when she's little bit alert and mindful, "Should I share this or not?" But because you on one hand seem to be familiar with the practice and teaching and also blessing of His Holiness, you see, I'll share little bit of what I know.

Q: I see. Thank you. I understand that. I understand and I respect that. I do try to...feels very little, but I do try to meditate every day and I do go every year on a retreat, maybe a month-long silent retreat, a Buddhist retreat.

#13C: Oh, good!

Q: You like that idea. I like it very much. Thank you.

#13C: That is very good.

Q: *Ama-la*, that is a question I had. If I can ask this and it is in respect, respectfully given what you've just said to me about her not wanting to share too many private things about her practice but how, when you say it takes much work and dedication and diligence to achieve...it doesn't happen easily, you must work at it. How do you think people can work at it who're not in the Himalayas, who haven't endured suffering from the Chinese, who go to work every day, who have jobs, who have families? How can they be diligent? How can they train their mind without having to have had these traumatic experiences and still be making progress on the path?

00:48:58

#13C: It was not exclusively that [enduring suffering] that brought progress to us while in our hometown. You must receive spiritual instructions from your lama and understand that having taken birth, death is inevitable, and understand that since death is inevitable one must practice the dharma and cultivate virtuous action. Who should one seek guidance from? One must understand and approach a lama, approach an esteemed lama according to your convenience who will teach the dharma and guide, "One must practice this way. This is the way to eliminate negative actions. This is the way to cultivate virtuous actions." Thus the lama will instruct.

Meditate for short periods. Meditate for short periods like a week by joining a retreat. Once you join a retreat, the lama will impart instructions, "Practice this today or what did you do today?" "I practiced this today," [you] inform the lama. "How has it been? Practice this tomorrow," the teacher will teach like this.

Once one receives these teachings in the retreat from the teacher, one will progress gradually. One will continue to make progress under the lama's guidance. This is similar to the spiritual hardships we have undergone. Hence, one's negative actions will be similarly

purified. One will feel the same compassion and kindness. Then one will continue to make progress.

Q: The common people have not endured difficulties under the Chinese, the common people. When they have not endured any difficulties, wouldn't it be hard to achieve realization?

#13C: It is not difficult to achieve realization. They...difficulties? What? You mean difficulties for the people that are left behind in Tibet?

Q: Not those in Tibet, but the common people here that have jobs and wives and children. They cannot live in caves and have not endured difficulties under the Chinese. You endured difficulties, and likewise underwent a lot of hardships, received many teachings and overcame numerous hardships. For them to overcome hardships or live in caves, they have jobs, wives and children. So how can they achieve realization?

00:51:47

#13C: They must practice kindness. It is the [training of the] mind. It is said that there is no other Buddha but the mind. The hardships that we endured are also [part of training of] the mind. The mind suffers, the mind creates, the mind...everybody possesses a similar mind. Hence, there is no other Buddha but the mind. So one must be kind hearted, deliberate on love and cultivate compassion. Peace—we have organized a Peace Center because believing that not everyone was aware...Establishing a Peace Center and by joining the Peace Center, it will bring about kindness, peace and the best in people.

People's dharma is cultivating love and kindness. Hence, we established it. With a hectic lifestyle there is not anything else one can do. Since there is no other means we have established this. It is not right to talk about it but we have done what can be done in terms of helping people. If a genuine Peace Center can be established and should the center develop, everybody will join that will result in people practicing righteousness and noble conduct.

It is said that there is no Buddha but the mind and hence, if this mind can transform positively, that is the Buddha. One becomes enlightened, which is the objective. That is why this is very important...[not discernible] It is not just for the Buddhists. The Peace Center is for cultivating kindness of the mind. One must have kindness of the mind. Hence, any person can join it. It can be anybody. Any person can join it from any religion. If one works for peace by practicing kindness, that is it. That is the dharma of the people. Which is why this was established, right?

Q: It seems the question wasn't understood. [Your] answer was close to it. The question is like this. For instance, you have endured difficulties, but they have not endured difficulties like you did. When [they] have not undergone difficulties, in order to achieve results from the practice...

00:54:43

#13C: I achieved results in that manner. Not every lama achieves results that way.

Q: How can one find the moral strength to continue to make an effort because they have not undergone difficulties like you did?

#13C: I explained that. I explained that. One will gain moral strength by receiving teachings if there is a teacher.

Q: Experiencing the suffering of *khōrwa* ‘samsara, the vicious cycle of existence’ anywhere is the same, right?

#13C: It is the same. That is it. [I] think I made a mistake when I spoke about the Peace Center. So [I] am sorry.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: There was a misunderstanding or miscommunication about the particular question that you had. So the essence of what *ama-la* is saying is that we all have our own share of suffering, you see. We all experience *dhukha*, frustrations when our desired goal is not met, you see. So when those wishes are not fulfilled, then we are disappointed. When we lose our loved ones, then we have a sense of feeling of having lost, you know, something very dear and near. So suffering is very much part of this existence. It doesn’t matter whether refugees experiencing the loss of, you know, country or general people in the West or in the modern world experiencing the loss of a job or loss of a relationship; a loss is still a loss.

So we all are subject to this upheaval, this emotion. Even though we experience this loss, one shouldn’t take it as a punishment or some kind of a, you know, bad news if you like but rather accept it as part of life, you see, part of being human as we go through these changes and that is inevitable that you will experience various ups and downs. So it’s not surprising, you see, but one must never give up the journey. More importantly we have this marvelous mind. She is referring to Buddha mind; you see, that’s bigger than this life, meaning that we all are potential Buddhas. One who recognizes that potential—enlightenment is there regardless of all the changes we experience.

What doesn’t change is this spirit of enlightenment that is in all of us. And so for that we have to exercise, you see. We’re in a place where we can exercise these practices and teachings and so, of course, one can go to retreat and come to a place like what *ama-la* envisioned, a Peace Center to learn, to understand and so we can cultivate this potential that’s in all of us.

Often we talk about Buddha nature in Buddhism. There are two kinds of Buddha nature, the inherent Buddha nature that is in all of us and there’s the cultivatable Buddha nature, you see, that few selective people have the opportunity. You know when you talk about selective here we’re referring to those with all the faculty intact, those who can read, write, who can understand, comprehend, you see—basically being born as a precious human birth in favorable circumstances, you see. So we have a wonderful opportunity to cultivate this potential and so we must work hard and not give up, you see, and try to exercise in cultivating or generating this positive emotion, thereby you can overcome, you see, all the difficulties. So consistency...Consistency of that commitment in the path seems to be an important element.

Q: And then?

00:59:51

#13C: Ask a question.

[Interpreter explains to interviewee what he just said to interviewer.]

#13C: That is correct.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...and training of the mind.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: ...training of the mind, very important.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: It's the essence of the heart of Buddha's teachings.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: That's important for people to know. So they have to make effort to train the mind and find opportunities to train the mind, yes?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, yes.

Q: It won't happen automatically. You have to apply yourself.

#13C: Yes. That is it. One must make an effort and that is called diligence. One must make an effort. In the case of our prostrations, this was possible because of the effort put in. The prostrations would not have happened automatically. Hence, one must make an effort. It is the same; one must make an effort.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Very much joyous effort is needed.

Q: Yes, joyous effort.

#13C: Yes.

Q: Happy effort.

#13C: Yes.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: And diligence...

Q: And diligence.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...to continue to work with this habit, this attitude. Otherwise, if it was easy then we all will be enlightened by now, you know. Otherwise, the experience of bliss would come automatically, you see, had she was just sitting and doing nothing. So the amount of time she put in for her practice like doing the prostration.

[Discontinuity in interview]

Q: *Ama-la*, how did you take what you learned, you know in your deep meditation and prostrations around Mount Kailash, and then how did it get transferred into your family life—you're married, you had children, you're a mother, a housewife? How did it then get activated or how did it get lived in an ordinary life because you are obviously, had time to do prostrations or to meditate in caves at that point?

[Interviewer to interpreter]: So is there anyway that she could share with people who are housewives and working people, you know, how did she continue to deepen her practice when she achieved more ordinary life or lived a more ordinary life?

01:02:51

#13C: That is a good question. That is very good. The reason why [I] did that was because at the age of 16...I reached Mount Kailash at the age of 16.

At the age of 16 there were no children, nothing. [I] had no association with anyone, not even one person and had a deep aversion for the *khorwa*.

Q: And then?

#13C: Then from 16 to 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24...how many years is it until the age of 24? That is eight years. I lived at Mount Kailash for 8-9 years.

[I] meditated in a cave and practiced in cemeteries. Do you know *chod* 'spiritual practice based on the Prajnaparamita'?

Q: I've heard of it.

#13C: What I did?

[Interpreter to interviewee]: No, she says she's heard of the word *chod*.

Q: Tell us what it is.

01:04:37

#13C: This is how *chod* is practiced. One must visit a cemetery. After [I] had circumambulated Mount Kailash and completed the prostrations, [I] had given up *dhagzin*. One must visit a cemetery to practice the *chod*. The *chod* is present in the *ngondro*.

Q: One must cut off the *dhagzin*.

#13C: Yes?

Q: One must cut off the *dhagzin*

#13C: Yes, cut off the *dhagzin*. While giving instruction in *lamay naljor* 'guru yoga' the *chod* is taught, that one must practice it. One must follow the lama's instructions. What is to be done is that the *chod* is a part of the *ngondro* and one must memorize it. The

requirements are a *damaru* ‘ritual instrument’ [indicates holding instrument in right hand] and a bell [indicates holding in left hand] and a *mikang lingbu* ‘human thighbone trumpet.’ All of these are needed. Where does one go carrying all these things? One went to a cemetery in the middle of the night.

There is a huge cemetery at Mount Kailash called Dachom Ngagyay Cemetery that is the cemetery of 500 *dachompa* ‘foe destroyers.’ It is a huge cemetery. Then there is the cemetery called Silwatsel Dhutoe—huge cemeteries. The bodies of everyone that expired used to be brought there. One visited this cemetery in the night, slept there, woke up and practiced *chod* doing...[not discernible]. Then slept there. One must visit a hundred cemeteries.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So *chod*, when you talk about *chod*, *chod* is a Tibetan word, could have layers of meaning. But basically it’s cutting away all attachments, attachment to body, attachment to, you know, any kind of association that we find comfort with, you find kind of at home. So we have to get rid of all that attachment because suffering comes from association, you see. So we’ve to be very much be open to this naked state of experience, meaning being able to abide in a state of spaciousness where there’s no sense of the subject or the object, you see.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Oh, it’s hard.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So we have to cut away all of that.

#13C: One must cultivate *yang* ‘melody.’

01:07:44

[Interviewee chants a ritual melody.]

That is how one must recite. The words are extremely [profound].

[Interpreter to interviewer]: It has a very deep and profound meaning as you recite these prayers and practices. Of course, here in the beginning we pay supplication to perfection of wisdom, you see, unborn, unabiding. So we pay salutation or homage to that mother, you see, basically...into the wisdom. And so, you know, in the practice you offer everything, basically your body...offer generously to all sentient beings, you see, whoever needs, you know and wants us, you see, you offer, basically everything. So she would spend, you know, nights and days, and for weeks inside a hundred cemeteries that she visited...

#13C: Not just that but having heard that in Taiwan...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...cemeteries because in those cemeteries you’re provoked, you see, and out of fear you want to control, basically yourself, you see. So then here you get an opportunity, you see, to work with yourself, you see to how you can minimize and how you can eradicate the grasping tendency that we...

[Interviewer to interpreter]: ...of aversion...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...aversion that may arise as a result. And so, you know, the cemeteries are not like the West, you see. The West—cemeteries are very beautiful, very pleasant, you know, flowers and everything is nicely put in a casket but in the East, particularly in Tibet in the high Himalaya, you know, you see a lot of...

[Interviewer to interpreter]: ...remains.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...leftovers.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: From the sky burials?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Sky burial...

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Sky burials. Yeah, I know.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, yes, and so then those were the places, you know she would go alone...

[Interviewer to interpreter]: In Tibet?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: In Tibet, yes, and she had visited over hundred cemeteries in different places. She would spend nights, and by night practice...

01:10:23

#13C: One must...[not discernible] and visit a hundred cemeteries, which is part of the spiritual instructions given by the lama. It was obligatory and must be accomplished.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: It's also a part of this tradition, the *chod*, you see.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: It's part of the spiritual meditative tradition.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Within the context of *chod* practice.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Within the *chod*. C-H-U-T?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: C-H-O-D.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: ...O-D? Okay. Yeah, I've heard of it. Okay, *chod* practice.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: That seems to be one of her main practice.

01:10:56

#13C: I forgot to tell her [interviewer] about this. In Taiwan...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: And also since coming to the West, she would also go visit the cemeteries here, do the practice as well as in Taiwan, you know when she visited Taiwan.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Yes.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: She'd go to cemeteries.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: ...cemeteries there.

#13C: Cemeteries in Taiwan are incredible. An entire mountain is a cemetery. [I] practiced *chod* at a hundred cemeteries. They asked to be taught the *chod*. There were two of them and so the three of us visited a hundred cemeteries to practice *chod*.

Q: Was that recent or a long time ago?

#13C: Two or three years ago.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Perhaps four years ago.

#13C: Perhaps four years.

Q: We were talking, *ama-la*, or I was trying to understand *chod*, which is the cutting away of all attachments: body, home—because suffering comes from association. Then how does a woman who becomes a mother and a wife with a home, family, how can she continue this practice and still be dedicated to this?

01:12:51

#13C: I did not let the practice diminish because it is the nature of mind. It is in the mind. If there is no regression in the mind, the meaning of *chod* remains the same. That is the meaning of *chod*.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: If you understand the nature of the mind, you see, then you understand the nature of everything. So therefore, there's no conflict; there's no separation between this or that, you see. One is...

[Interviewer to interpreter]: I see. You're still...whatever wisdom you have it applies everywhere.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Everywhere.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Everywhere, with children, with husband, with family...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, because it's the same mind.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: It's the same mind...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Same mind, yes.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: And you can watch the mind.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Be attached or let it go and you know the difference when you are...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, yes.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: ...operating in which way.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, and also I think partly because her foundation was very stable from early on.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: From when you were a child.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Yes, and as a result she had that kind of a trust and confidence in the view of how to have that kind of perspective, you see, unlike us.

01:14:05

#13C: It is very beneficial to all sentient beings.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Unlike us, you see. It's like in the teaching...an analogy of a house. If a house foundation is not good, then any moment with the rise of different circumstance, situation, then you can go to and fro and it's never really steady and ongoing. Whereas a practitioner like herself when her foundation is very strong early on, then no matter what situation, circumstance rises, the mind is very much at ease and comfort, you see, because she has a trust and confidence in who she is.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Yes, yes, that is not the typical one. It's a wisdom of her...who she is.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, because, see the moment you think you're a mother, you think you're wife. Then you're split into so many different, you see...

[Interviewer to interpreter]: I get it.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: And so then you have to defend all of that, you know, territory. You see, so you split unnecessary and you're scattered and as a result you've a tendency to get tired, exhausted, you see, but for practitioners they know, you see, who they are. So when you know yourself, then you're more secure; you're more grounded, you see, you're not perturbed by rising of various situation, circumstances, you see, because you know yourself.

The more and more you know yourself, the more and more secure and as a result she can flow, you see, very freely and spontaneously without needing to feel, you know, "I need to fit the role of mother or wife." So as a result she finds no...In essence what *ama-la* is saying is that when you know your mind, I'm elaborating, this I must confess here. Because when you know your mind, *ama-la* said, then you're secure.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: When you know your mind. So...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...you're protected.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: The task is to come to understand your mind. You must...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: How it functions.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: How it functions...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...and it's nature.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: ...and it's nature. The mind is number one.

01:16:11

#13C: Yes, it is. The mind is number one.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: When you talk about *chod*, you know, it's very much about understanding the mind. You see, how it functions, how they manifest.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Then it doesn't run you.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, then you become the boss.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Then you become the boss. Yes, you understand it.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: The sense of independence. So you're not dependent on situation, circumstances.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Or on how your mind automatically reacts. You can train it to react differently. Is that what you're saying?

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, yes.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: With practice and practice.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, yes, so it becomes part of our nature. ...no effort is required. It becomes effortless. You know, other day I was asking *ama-la*, "How come you have all the energy?" and she says, "I love what I do." You see, so therefore, it's effortless. You see when the love is unconditional, then energy comes, you see, it's amazing like, you know, these talks that she's had, and you know, at first she's a little bit tired and then when she appears in a stage or in any situation, circumstance, she's immediately present.

01:17:34

#13C: The *chod* that I...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Because it's coming from love, you see unconditional love...

#13C: The *chod* that I practice...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...never tired.

#13C: ...I overcame the hardships alone and practiced *chod*. These days there are *chod* practitioners that teach and take 20-30 people to practice *chod*. You know those...[not discernible]. Mine is not like that. I practice *chod* by myself—putting effort on [overcoming] *dhagzin* though I can practice with many other people but [I] do not.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: I could continue a long time but I don't feel it would be fair to *ama-la*. She's very kind. I guess the last question...and if it would be...if you feel it would be appropriate, *ama-la* has an illness now and I'm wondering if she could also speak to so many people who have to deal with the body and the old age and suffering that comes from illness, something that would be helpful for...that she has found helpful from the dharma that helps her. Maybe a lot of it's been covered already, but is there something that she could help us, use her wisdom to address around suffering that comes from physical illness and old age?

01:20:21

#13C: One must understand the nature of mind so as not to fall under the power [of suffering]. It is the mind that accomplishes this. The mind is constant until one's death. Actually, analyzing the nature of mind...I have not experienced the suffering of old age. I do not associate with old age in particular. Then I have not experienced the suffering of illness. It has been given the name of a very grave illness, but I have no apprehension of the illness.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: She says, again it all comes down to understanding the nature of mind. When you know the nature of mind, then you don't associate with your body; you don't associate with your illness; you don't associate any of that because those are not you, you see, because those change all the time. So how can you associate something that's changing all the time? And so because of her training she has associated herself with something that doesn't change, that is the nature of mind.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Yes.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So I said because I've come to understand this, I've come to have trust in this practice and therefore, have, you know, if I were to say that she has the confidence in her view, you see, in that...

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Confidence...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, confidence in the view. View here refers to understanding the nature of reality, nature of the mind, then you're free, you're at peace. So personally she says, "I don't know about others but personally, that's where I find solace; that's where I find my refuge, you see, in the view, you see, in understanding the nature of mind, nature of reality." So therefore, she doesn't associate all this illness, even old age she says, "I don't feel old. I don't look at that." Which has a concept, you know, which has...

Q: That sounds like a beautiful place to end because it's full of wisdom and I am...perhaps... *Ama-la*, thank you. I think that I was saying that is a beautiful place to end because it leaves us with the blessings of your wisdom, which I will take with me personally and share with many people. So thank you.

01:22:58

#13C: [To interpreter] Did you talk about...[not discernible]?

[Interpreter to interviewee]: Yes, briefly.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Unless there is anything else she wants to add—absolutely...

#13C: There is suffering on account of illness...[not discernible]

[Interpreter to interviewer]: She says, if you don't understand the nature of mind, then when you hear—in such as—like “I've been diagnosed with cancer.” Then it's a life threatening illness, you know, ordinarily people have all kinds of experiences.”

#13C: I am not suffering at all.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: They feel guilty; they feel fearful, you know, they are upset; they're angry; they get into the tendency of depression. [She says,] “You see this is what I was told that people go through, you see, as a result of being diagnosed with such an illness but I, on another hand...”

I remember personally, you know, when we were in the hospital when the doctor—after the tests, you know, the biopsy and everything, you know, we're told that she has fourth stage—this particular illness, cancer. *Ama-la* just laughed. She just laughed joyfully saying, “Ahh...it's so true.”

You see, you know, just as Buddha said everything is impermanent; everything changes. This is just another fact of life, you see. Nothing to be kind of, what you call, surprised about. She says, “Oh, this is so true.” You know, she just laughed. There was a kind of, you know, joyful acceptance, you see of this illness but at the same time...

01:24:32

#13C: Really, I was happy.

[I] was happy [and prayed], “May no other person suffer this illness. May I take on their [suffering] by this illness.”

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So she says, “May I be...” This is the difference between practitioners. You see, what they do with difficulty is that they give a meaning to difficulty, you see. So the meaning that she gave is “May I be able to take on the suffering [of those] that are going through like me,” you see.

#13C: May I take it on.

That made me happy.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: As a result I was happy because now I can take their suffering because I know what it's like...to go through this.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Same thing, same place but different mind.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: With her mind.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Yes, because here she's not rejecting, you see not denying, you know, but accepting and giving it a meaning, you see, and therefore, you're able to transcend. You make the difficulty into something very beautiful.

[Interviewer to interpreter]: Yes.

01:25:50

#13C: When they looked...they, the doctors looked inside me. What the doctors said after the examination was, the doctors said it was like this...therefore, all the doctors said, "You are different." I should not be talking like this but it will be nice...[I] should not talk like this, but you should interview my doctor. She has been many years—[I] do not know how many—around cancer patients and you should interview, "How is she? Is she like the others or not?" Please conduct an interview and then one will understand the dharma.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: The reason why I'm saying this is not to boast about my experience but rather the profundity of this path that I've been very blessed and very fortunate to come across in this life that it gave her such independence, such freedom of the mind.

#13C: [Ask the doctor,] "Is she fearful or not? Is she apprehensive or not?"

[Interpreter to interviewer]: And that if you train your mind in this way, then definitely there's a power of transformation to takes place.

01:27:19

#13C: The doctor knows what I am like.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: And that if you want further affirmation, then you should interview her doctor to see what practice can do to a person. You see, to restraining...you know, that even doctors and caregivers, they're surprised, you know, the stage of cancer that she's had. You see ordinarily you would be given high dose of this painkiller, that painkiller, but she doesn't, *ama-la* doesn't resort to any of that.

#13C: You should interview the doctor...

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So it's something good to investigate to study why a person can endure such hardship...

#13C: [I] have consulted three doctors. [I] have consulted an oncologist. Another doctor is one that sees whether cancer drugs have harmful effects...No, no there were three oncologists that [I] consulted, but the main doctor is Dr. [?]. She's the one that treated me. Interview the three of them to ask, "Does [she] suffer that she has cancer? Does [she] suffer that she is aging? [Does she] suffer when she is sick?" You ask these questions to understand. That is required.

What is the other one? The suffering of illness and then the... suffering of death, right? I have explained to her [interviewer] already that I do not have the suffering of death because I am happy to be sick. It is said, "How joyful it is to be sick and how joyful to die!"

[Interpreter to interviewer]: You see, basically you open your heart unconditionally to whatever experience you're going through. You welcome them, you see. It's like if you're restless, enjoy the restlessness. If you're stressed, enjoy that stress. If you're sick, enjoy the sickness.

01:29:36

#13C: [You] will know whether I am suffering by asking the doctors.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: So then you're free, she says because trouble comes from aversion, fighting, controlling.

#13C: Ask if [I] suffered even for a day.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: And she says, "Oh, it'll be good to investigate." It'll be good to study, you know, the effect of this practice on people like herself and others that are going through that. How through this training, you see, through this practice can have, you know, such impact or effect on almost physiological level, you see, that she doesn't need to resort to any kind of illnesses...The medicines like painkiller and all of that, you see, and that these three doctors that are taking care of her, you see...

I know this because when we go in, I to serve as translator. They are surprised, you know how come she doesn't need to take all this? Even though it's part of their job to prescribe these medicines, you see, its part of the medicine practice, the medical practice to give this medicine, the painkiller and all of that. *Ama-la* says, "I don't need to take any of these painkillers."

At the stage where she's at, you see—fourth stage, the cancer has spread to the brain and to the bone and to the eyes and to everywhere, you see, but her response, you know, there's no complaint whatsoever about any discomfort or any pain or any...you know, none whatsoever. I think it's because of the spaciousness, you see, of the mind, you see that's able to pervade, you see all, you see.

01:31:22

#13C: It is not because of me but the blessing of the dharma.

Hence, it is important to talk about it a little bit. Had I not benefitted so much, it would be meaningless to waste time.

Q: Exactly.

#13C: I am very happy that you have brought up these questions to me.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...I've experienced it and there's a way out of it.

Q: There is a way.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: ...that there's a way. And also I'm very happy that these questions are brought up.

Q: Oh, good.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Therefore, I can address.

Q: Yes.

01:32:18

#13C: There is no suffering on account of sickness. There is no suffering on account of death. There is no suffering on account of aging. Should one understand the nature of mind, understand the meaning clearly, there will be no suffering at all.

It is like this. If you continue to practice the dharma well...How many members are there in your family? I have seven children and the children's father. The seven, eight or nine family members all live together. All the children...there are none that indulge in...or drink alcohol and such. There are two...[not discernible]. Therefore, everyone [respectfully] calls [me], "*Ama-la*." I have not done anything but be compassionate and all the family members love it. The children hold [me] in high regard almost like I was a lama. It is the blessing of the dharma and nothing else.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: Not only that, but also your relationship is transformed, you see, with your loved ones. And also, that are also distant relationship—I also transform it as a result of having transformed your perception, your mind, you see. In fact, in Tibetan there's a word called *nangwa*. *Nangwa* means perception, so once your perception is transformed then you're experience is transformed.

Not only experience but also, appearance is also transformed. Appearance is also transformed as a result of having transformed your perception and so as a result of having worked and therefore transformed her perception, then her relationship with her children; you see, is also transformed to where now they see her not as a mother but now like a lama.

#13C: They prostrate like [I was] a lama.

[Interpreter to interviewer]: The kids now prostrate to her and even the father, you know, almost regard, now look at her as a teacher, almost in that light. You see, so all this is transformed as a result of having worked with your mind, worked with your perception. Everything is healed, you see. All the relations are healed. You see and as a result the kids also, you know, are very kind and compassionate, you see. So then they can make a difference. So really if you work with your mind, then you're really working with everyone, in a way. You're also taking care of everyone.

#13C: It would be good for you to practice the dharma well. I have spoken everything that there is to say. It would be good for you to practice the dharma well. Such are the benefits.

Q: Yes, thank you.

#13C: That is all from me.

Q: That's all? Okay. *Ama-la*, thank you.

#13C: Thank you. Thank you.

Q: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW