

>> So, first, slight apologies for being sick. So, I'm just kind of a little sick, so I don't usually go down. Today would be one of those days I would have gone down, if we can have the schedule. So, we're kind of up, but we're kind of semi-up. You know, and I told that to Elle, that what would make her feel better is, "I feel worse than you do," so it always makes you -- we know that will make you feel better. So, we're good. [laughter].. So, now, we've established that.

It's wonderful to be here. It's a complete delight to be here. And we really started The Wisdom School, you know, a whole bunch of us, together, in different phases. You know, Terry was the key person in a certain moment. A gentleman who's no longer here, who's somewhere in Western Massachusetts, right, who met me at a restaurant someplace in Salt Lake City, whose first name is...

>> Alistair.

>> Alistair. Right? It was Alistair, right? It was Alistair, was right. Alistair was kind of -- that was kind of -- actually, Alistair was my first contact. But I really came because of Lawrence and Joy had actually -- they really kind of started the process. You know, they had actually listened to *The Erotic and the Holy*. And Lawrence told me, when we finally got here, I want you to know that I'm the reason you're here, not any of the other people. [laughter].

Okay. There you have it. And it's just a delight, a delight, a delight to talk to him and just so much blessing to Lawrence and Joy and to Gerry, you know, who's always in the room. You know, and just deep honor, you know, and bow. I went with Victoria maybe three, four years ago and said to Gerry, I'd only teach her if he would give me his ordination, which he promptly refused but in the end, did. And we had a wonderful, kind of wild ceremony ordination that we actually recorded, and it was just a beautiful, you know, time. And The Wisdom School has really found its own way.

What I like to do just tonight, is to talk a little bit. And I hope what our semi-coherent sentences, you know, about what we mean by "The Wisdom School;" you know, what this is: kind of how it works; what this is about. And, you know, usually, we start with chanting. I don't think I can quite pull that off now. But, so, we're going to kind of skip a little chanting. And we'll get back to it, maybe tomorrow. We'll just see how the weather goes. You know that particular place when you're sick, where you're not sure if you're going up or down? You're like not sure -- is this, like, over? Or is this, like, you know, the end of the first stages, about to go really bad, you know, by tonight? So, I'm not exactly sure which way it's going, so I'm kind of watching it. You know, just with, you know, some amount of interest, I must say. [laughter].

What do we mean, when we say that The Wisdom School is a Sangha? And it was actually great to see beyond it, in Cristian, who will be here at the next Wisdom School, and they came to our dialogue we did in New York last week. I did it with Stuart Black, and I was really working with the Core Energetics community. It was great. We had a full house. It was a great weekend, and it was hard. And it reminded me of the very first time here. And we were trying to do, for the first time in the Core Energetics world, what I call "The Dharma." All right? The Dharma. All right? And Kristina Kincaid, who will be here at the next Wisdom School, really, organized it, you know, in a really beautiful way and really held the space. Lynn did some insanely great exercises with Christina, in the space, which were beautiful. And there was kind of, I would say, enormous confusion in the first day. Although, it was a great day, kind of underneath the greatness, was confusion. "What's the Dharma? What does that

mean? The body is the Dharma, isn't it?" Well, no, it's not, actually. The body is one source of information. And everything you learn from the body -- everything -- is interpreted through a prism. There's nothing you learn from the body that the body actually tells you directly. Everything you learn from the body is interpreted through a prism of your state of consciousness, your level of consciousness, your psychological prism, your cultural prism. So, [00:03:58\*], right, as we talked about last week, got it half right. He thought the body was important and, you know, the disembodied, really smart, Jewish Freud, kind of disembodied his teaching and [00:04:08\*] got the corrective right, but then, the body became absolute. And so, we need to actually create a framework, through which we interpret the body. And it's how do we understand what the body's telling us? "I had an orgasm." What does that mean? That could mean one of a thousand different things. We could understand in a thousand different ways.

So, the idea that we talked about last week -- and that really begins our conversation this week, is the following sentence, okay? "The human being lives in inescapable frameworks." Every single person in this room has a framework. And that framework is what they interpret reality through. And for most people, even the wisest people, that framework is unconscious. It's not articulated. It's kind of like you're running a company. The company is Your Unique Self Company. But you haven't actually articulated, what are the core values and goals of the company? What are the frameworks, within which the company operates? What's the mission statement? I mean, what are the core, the ten core values of the company? But, actually, they're there. And whether you've articulated them or not, they're absolutely there. Man lives in inescapable frameworks. One of the best lines written in the last hundred years, written by Charles Taylor, in a book called *Sources of the Self*, fucking awesome line, completely true. "Human being lives in an inescapable framework."

That framework is either up-leveled, high, deep, profound, well worked out, matching the most possible information available, right, gathering all the best wisdom, integrating it, in the most deep, possible way. It's both in first person -- it's in your body. It's in second person -- it's in the community. It's in third person -- it matches the best of physics and the best of economics and the best of all the great traditions. It's really -- it's deep. It really matches reality, deeply. It's aligned with reality -- or it's not. For most people, it's not. For most people, it's a combination of "I learned this from my parent; I got that from culture. That came from an early caretaker. This is from my social circle. I picked this up at a New Age seminar. I heard this at a, you know, at a party. And it all kind of weaves -- and I read a couple of books that influenced me greatly." And somehow, that kind of weaves together, inchoately, in a person's mind, and that is their framework. That is a poor excuse for a life. To actually be alive is to have a conscious framework. And that conscious framework matches the most wisdom available on the planet, at this time. Okay?

So, to live in a conscious framework, which is aligned with the most available wisdom on the planet, at this time, that's a Dharma. That's what a Dharma is. That's what Dharma means. Dharma means "I'm most aligned with the most wisdom from the most lines of intelligence that are available at this moment in history." That's what a Dharma is.

So, which means that our Dharma is going to be different than Buddha's Dharma. Because Buddha's Dharma, right, Sequoia? It didn't have, for example, feminism. It didn't exist. If you read the statements that Buddha made about women -- oh my God. They were not happy. Buddha did not think

much of the feminine, just between us. He made the most derisive imaginable statements about the feminine, that you're shocked to read. And the Buddhists just kind of ignore them. And if you challenged them, well, he was enlightened. "He meant something else." Bullshit, he meant something else. He meant exactly what he wrote. That's what he thought. Because in consciousness, at the time that Buddha was writing, consciousness hadn't birthed. The emergence of the feminine had only emerged after the techno-economic base shifted in the world. We were no longer in an Agrarian age, in which the plow ruled. We moved to the Industrial Age, right, so the feminine, right, therefore lost the disadvantage of being weaker, physically and could actually enter the workforce. And about 50 years after that techno-economic base shifted, all of a sudden, feminism was born. Not a coincidence. And patriarchy actually begins at the end of the horticulture age, when we move from the simple farming instrument to the plow. And that's when the feminine began to go down, for a lot of reasons.

But the point is, Buddha didn't know feminism. He had no idea. Buddha was ethno-centric; homophobic, to say the least. And, you know, just didn't think much about, pretty much, all of our values. Pretty much, all of the things we hold dear, Buddha had never thought of or completely would have thought were utterly, totally, wildly ridiculous and stupid -- unenlightened, to say the least. That's a big realization, to get that. And you say that in a Buddhist context, they just want to -- they want to shoot you. Because the Buddha must have known everything. Obviously, he knew everything. He was enlightened. He was -- he was, right? -- he was it. And he had it going on. He must have known everything. Well, no, he didn't. Buddha was developed -- very developed, in a particular line. And that line of development was to actually feel into and actually experience, the non-dual nature of all of reality. That all of reality is one; that the ground of all of reality is consciousness. He was unbelievably good at that. And one of the best people who ever lived. That knowing, that the ground of all reality is consciousness, what later came to be called "Buddha nature." That's a big realization. That's a critically important realization. That's a wonderful realization. That's one piece of the Dharma.

Now, you can have that realization, deeply, and be an asshole. [laughter]. Fully possible. Fully possible. That's really important to understand. That that's one line of intelligence, then I need moral intelligence. I need ethical development. I need psychosexual development. I need -- there's a whole list of things that I need. I need cognitive development. I need emotional intelligence. I need systems intelligence. These are all forms of intelligence.

So, a person can be really emotionally intelligent but have no systems intelligence. I mean, they're really good about, like, you know, between us -- between me and Nance, we can work it out, because we're really emotionally intelligent. We have no idea what's going on in the larger system. And that happens not to apply to us. We're actually both pretty good at systems intelligence. But, you know, some people are really emotionally intelligent. They're not systems intelligent. They just don't see what's happening in the system. You can be really good at physics, and then, the physicist says something about the nature of reality and everyone quotes him, and I think because he's a really good physicist -- Hawking, for example -- that his opinion matters, about things out of physics. I don't give a flying fuck what Hawking has to say, out of a very narrow range of physics. He's an idiot when he talks about other things. "But he's a really smart physicist." Who cares? You get what I'm saying? He's a really good physicist. That's great. So, tell me, about your theory about black holes and I will bow down, in prostration. Tell me what you think about the meaning of life? Not that interested. Because,

actually, you've got no credentials in that and there's lots of reasons to think that you're not well-developed in that.

And, so, Dharma means take the best of physics, the best of legal theory, the best of the great traditions, the best of ethical development, the best of everything we know about everything and try and weave it together, into a coherent vision of the patterns that connect. And the best picture we have available today of the nature of reality -- that's wisdom. That's called "Sophia," wisdom. That's what Wisdom School is. What we want to do at a Wisdom School is, we want to actually enter the Dharma. So, we are servants of the Dharma. The center of the room in the Wisdom School is the Dharma.

Anyone in the room can challenge the Dharma. It's complete democratic. But you can't challenge it because you raise your hand and say, "Oh, that doesn't feel good to me." Who cares? I don't care. It doesn't feel good to you? Be quiet. "Ahh, you've got an interesting creative challenge. You want to show something we missed?" I bow. Complete devotion to -- you're my teacher. All of our teacher. It's democratic. But it's democratic, not in that, "I feel it's funny." Anyone can put any idea into the room, which is -- say something about it; not that "It feels funny." Bring any wisdom you have to bear and we'll weave the Dharma together. So, what we want to do this weekend, is we're going to do the Dharma of pleasure. That's our weekend.

Dharma of Pleasure. What's pleasure about? That's our weekend. Our whole weekend is about pleasure. Okay? And we're going to have a wild weekend, talking about pleasure and exercising pleasure and exercising all the faculties of pleasure. And we're going to want to know the Dharma of Pleasure. So, we want to look at some neuroscience along the way. We're going to look at some psychology along the way. We're going to look at the great traditions along the way. We're going to look at psychosexual issues along the way. We're going to look at cultural issues along the way. But all woven into a Dharma. No lecture. No university lecture. We're going to be weaving a Dharma. It's going to feel like a Dharma. Jeff and Shelly are going to exercise the Dharmic muscles, so whatever we study, Jeff and Shelly will then exercise those Dharmic muscles in our bodies. We'll do exercises -- what does that feel like in the body? What does that mean in the body? What does that mean in a diet? What does that mean in a psychological process?

What we're looking for is a Dharma and a Dharma, particularly this weekend, which is unbelievably exciting, which is going to be one of the only weekends we're probably ever going to do like this -- which you can live in just this Dharma your entire life. And that's not true about Eros. Eros is one piece, which we'll talk about a little tomorrow. Unique Self is a piece. Different Dharmas -- we've done about eight different Dharmas. But this is a Dharma which has a beginning, middle and end, and if you have to pick one Dharma to live in, like, this is it. And if you have nothing else but this Dharma, this Dharma will actually guide you pretty much everywhere.

Now, I expect that this Dharma's is going to become richer. And my full expectations, by the end of this weekend -- and I don't say that facetiously. I don't say it casually. I say it with great reverence, for everyone in the room that I know and don't know. My full expectations, that that Dharma is going to be significantly deeper, by the end of this weekend. And that, what I know about it now; what you know about it now; it's going to shift. It's going to change. And it will change, if everyone in the room shows up. If everyone really just shows up -- completely, utterly, absolutely. Now, you can talk thirty times in the weekend or you can be sitting quietly -- whichever one is fine. But, like, to show up. Be present. Be

in the Dharma. And be willing to bracket -- and there's an unpopular sentence -- bracket your egoic need for the sake of the Dharma. Let go of the small stuff. Don't worry about it. For this weekend, leave your wounds at the door. Don't worry; we'll pick them up a couple of times, just for fun, so you feel okay. Okay, after all? Okay? You know what I mean? I don't want you to feel really bad. Every once in awhile, we'll kind of do a little dip into wounds.

But, basically, basically, we're leaving woundology at the door. We're leaving wounds. Okay, we worked all -- we've talked about it -- we paid a lot of money to talk about it. We've done a lot of mat trips. It's cool. Okay? It's, like, it's cool. It's okay. Okay? So, we're moving into pleasure. Okay? We're moving into kind of the highest vision of ourselves. Now, woundology is unbelievably important, obviously. And, obviously, all the work you've done at something like, for example, a mat trip, is all going to be -- all going to come to bear, because from that place, we can work. So, that's all unbelievably important work, like deep, deep bow. And that's not what we're doing this weekend.

This weekend, we want to paint the highest vision of what a life that makes full internal, radical, coherent sense feels like; a life in pleasure, in which we're able to kind of go through a process of pleasure training. That's what we're going to do this weekend. A process of pleasure training, which is going to actually up-regulate the dopamine receptors in the brain. When you're unable to get pleasure, what's happened is you've down-regulated your dopamine receptors. So, your dopamine receptors only, then, get pleasure, when they get a huge flash flood of a particular kind of pleasure and anything else doesn't give them pleasure. You've got down-regulated dopamine receptors.

So, if you want to know what's going to happen this weekend, you know, with the grace of the Goddess, if all goes as the Goddess wants it to, you know what's going to happen? Is you're going to up-regulate our dopamine receptors. There's going to be an actual neurological process happening inside of us, which shifts the way we experience pleasure and allows us to expand our pleasure realm.

Now, think into this for a second, okay? And I'm going to ask these questions again tomorrow, but just to kind of put it into your space for the night. Think about what your pleasure limit is. Most people have -- it's an idea I've been thinking about a lot, the last two, three weeks. It's kind of a new idea we didn't get to talk about yet. We didn't get to talk about that one yet -- called a "Pleasure Limit." Just think about that, and we're going to do an exercise on it tomorrow. What's a pleasure limit? Most people have a hidden pleasure limit they're unable to actually break. It's like a hidden glass ceiling and there's this ceiling, and you're unaware of it. It's like a pleasure cap. And anything that can blow your pleasure cap off, is really frightening. Anything that can and anyone who can is even more frightening. You generally crucify people like that. There's a historical tradition, crucifying people who blow your pleasure cap off. I would say a big part of Gerry's beautiful teaching was to blow people's pleasure caps off. And that's how, I think, we recognized each other, as brothers in the Dharma. And let's blow our pleasure caps off and actually enable us to actually experience radical pleasure.

But, of course, what we have to do is, we have to radically expand our understanding of what pleasure is. So, we're going to go through seven voices of pleasure; twenty principals of pleasure. [laughter]. Six levels of pleasure, which, by tomorrow, might be seven. No, six. Six, will be six. But what we're going to do is, we're going to actually work through this Dharma and the Dharma's going to work us. So, what I just want to invite you to do is, to work the Dharma, but more importantly, let the Dharma work you. Okay? Like, let it work you. All right? Let it enter you.

Leave the wounds at the door. Leave the contraction behind. There's plenty of time, I promise, Sunday afternoon, to come back to it. It won't go away, unattended, for the weekend. "Oh, my contraction got lost. Where did it go? How can I find it? Where is it? Oh, my God." It will be there. It always is. Okay? But just like, we're just going to kind of leave it at the fucking door. Jesus, it's so boring. And just kind of find our way in, to this expanded space, where we are living pleasure. And, so my promise to you, with the grace of the Goddess, is that, by Sunday at noon, our essential understanding and experience of pleasure will have fundamentally evolved and up-leveled.

Now, watch the resistance to that. Even when I say that, there's a resistance to it. First off, "Who is he to say that?" So, leave that at the door, too, really. That's even more boring. Okay? Just kind of, find your, like, greatest, most gorgeous self -- I mean, every single person in this room, I could learn so much from. We could sit at the feet of any person in this room and learn their wisdom. There's so much wisdom in the room. There's so much depth in the room and there's so much greatness in the room.

So, really, that's going to come with our greatness, and we're going to work this Dharma, and we're going to work the Dharma in Sangha. And that's the second piece. And we started talking about Sangha, here, five years ago, Sangha is a Buddhist word, and Sangha is a critical word. And why don't we just talk about that, for a couple of minutes. Okay? Let's talk about Sangha for a little bit.

So, Spirit shows up in three ways: Buddha, Sangha and Dharma. Or I, we and it. Or **[00:20:49\*]**, **[00:20:54\*]** and Israel. Or first person, second person, third person. Spirit always shows up with three faces. If you don't have three faces of Spirit at play, you're not in Spirit, and you're in some form of radical distortion, in every relationship. It's always first person, second person, third person. Let me give you an example of what I mean by that. And, again, I apologize, if I'm just kind of a little looser tonight than usual. My head's kind of clanging and slightly feverish. But, we're good, okay? [laughter]. We're all good.

So, I spent yesterday morning with two very, very dear friends, and I asked their permission to kind of talk about this, and they'll be delighted. They're great people. Harville and Helen Hendricks, who are, just really great writers on couplehood. They've just done great work and they joined The Center for World Spirituality. We'll actually, hopefully, be doing a summit next year that they're going to come to. And we had just an enormously, challenging, several-hour dialogue. It's about the fifth one we've done. And as such, I was challenging Harville and Helen. What Harville and Helen have basically said is, is that "Couplehood is the nature of reality." That's what it is. It's not that you choose to be in couplehood. **[00:22:16\*]** Couplehood is the way reality functions. And that's true, but partial. See, couplehood or Sangha; connection; community; communion; is one gorgeous expression of Spirit. You with me? But it's not the only expression of Spirit. It's one of three. And, actually, if you make couplehood, or Sangha, the only expression of Spirit, you'll get either a tyrannical couple or a cult; one of the two. Because you're saying, "What's the way Spirit expresses itself? In community or couplet, the only way it can express itself." No. That's one critical way it can express itself. I'm going to come back to in seven minutes. But there's also Buddha.

What's Buddha? Buddha's Unique Self. Buddha's the irreducible Unique Self of every single person in this room, who is self-validating and self-sufficient and has intrinsic rights and dignity and adequacy, fully independent of the Sangha. So, every single person in this room is an infinitely, irreducibly, special, Unique Self, that has full dignity, full rights, full power, independently of the Sangha. That's a

critical idea. Unique Self.

And, then, there's the third Dharma and Dharma is the process. It's the third person. Buddha's the first person, living in me; the unique self that lives, awake, as me. Sangha is second person, us, the "we" space. Dharma is third person and what's third person? It's the process. It's love, unfolding. It's the evolutionary unfolding. It's serving the process. That's Dharma. Okay? Now, you cannot be awake; alive; ecstatic; have a meaningful life; without Buddha, Sangha and Dharma. Buddha means, "I'm an irreducible, Unique Self," meaning, "I am." Here we go: an irreducible, unique expression of the love intelligence and love beauty that is the initiating and animating eros of all that is, that lives in me, as me and through me. That's Buddha.

And that's a big idea. I mean, no state, no government, no community, no church. None of those are necessary, for me to have infinite dignity and adequacy. That gave birth in the world, to what we call "human rights." It's a big deal. That idea didn't exist in the world until the 16th century. The word "self" only appeared in the dictionary the first time in the 16th century. The word "self" didn't exist. Everything was defined by a larger context. You with me? That's Buddha. I'm calling that Buddha. That's "I."

Then, there's Dharma. There's the teaching, and the teaching is the best Dharma, the best wisdom available in the planet at this moment, combining all the lines of intelligence. We talked about that. That's critical. I can't just be "I," "What do I feel?" "What was my experience?" My experience is really important, but my experience is interpreted by all my Dharmas. So, Dharma is critical and interprets my experience. It gives me the best way to understand what's happening inside of me. So, I can't just do the kind of New Age, Human Potential Movement thing. Let me have an experience and then say, "Experience is what it's all about." The experience is interpreted through what -- the Dharma. So, you need the best available Dharma to interpret my experience, and the reason, as we've said before in this room, that the Human Potential Movement and New Age Movement didn't transform America, acts remain peripheral and tangential. It didn't shift what so desperately needed shifting in this country, because people were all about their own experience, but not about the Dharma. So, people had great experiences, but those experiences didn't form a Dharma. They couldn't transform reality. People got obsessively, narcissistically involved, obsessed with, their own experience. "How do I feel right now?" Which is a really important thing to know, but it's one piece. You need a Dharma to interpret your Buddha.

But the way all that really comes to the fore, is in a Sangha. A Sangha means that we come together in an egoless space, as a community, and the Divine is in the center of the room and we are what's called an "Edah." A Edah is the Hebrew word for "community," and it means, literally, witnessing. So, a community is a crucible for witnessing. A community is the crucible in which the best Unique Self of every person shows up. The community is formed by the Unique Self of every individual, poured into the center and uniqueness becomes, not the currency of alienation, but the currency of connection. Every Unique Self is a puzzle piece, and those puzzles' uniqueness is the contours of a puzzle piece and those puzzle pieces, then, fit together in a larger puzzle. So, if every person doesn't bring their infinite, radical uniqueness, there's no puzzle. There's no hole. There's just a heap -- heaps, not holes. You get the difference? A heap -- everyone has kind of rounded their curves to kind of fit in. You get a big heap. A hole is everyone is in their radical uniqueness, which is an infinitely, dignified Buddha, before each

of us must bow. And everyone has authority over themselves. Everyone's fully self-authoring, because they're a unique self. And your uniqueness means you're the only person who can have authority. You're your only self-guru. No one else can be your guru, other than you, because you're a Unique Self, by definition. You're self-authoring. But you're bringing that puzzle piece, Unique Nature, into the Sangha, and, then, every puzzle piece together actually, mystically creates something new. It's what Thomas called "The Body of Christ," borrowing an earlier phrase. It's what Hebraic Mysticism called [00:28:12\*], consciousness. It's what we might call "Evolutionary We-Space." Evolutionary We-Space is what Sangha is. It's an evolutionary We-Space, which every Unique Self is fully present, but then, we're looking for a wisdom that comes out of our presence, that's downloaded through the Dharma. Then, we receive the Dharma; then, we exercise the Dharma. We discuss the Dharma. The Dharma gets deeper, and the Sangha is formed around devotion to the Dharma, that becomes alive in the Sangha, as each Buddha emerges to their full power. That's Buddha, Sangha and Dharma. Those are the three great jewels in Buddhism. It's gorgeous. It doesn't get better. It doesn't get better.

When Buddha, Sangha and Dharma come together, magic happens. That's the mystical formula. You can't do it just with Buddha. You can't do it just with Sangha. You can't do it just with Dharma. So, if anyone says, "I'm not going to show up fully," and kind of holds back their Unique Self -- and Unique Self is just about the way you're present. It's the way you're sitting. It's the way you engage in hallway conversations. It's the way you bring yourself. "Am I lost in my separate-self woundology? Am I bringing the most best, gorgeous, stunning, version of me? The highest version of me, is here, showing up, moving through contractions; expanding. And I'm taking full responsibility for my Buddha, in every second. In every second -- full responsibility for my Buddha." And everyone's in that Unique Self place. From that place, we're receiving Dharma. And from that place, we're coming together, as Sangha, and that is where mystery emerges. That's what a Mystery School is. And a Mystery School, a Wisdom School, is when we come together, in the Dharma and that is really the single most powerful thing that I know of.

So, couplehood -- we're talking to Harville and Helen -- is Sangha. Sangha, couplehood, needs to be defined -- **[Paul, we were talking, Carol\*]** -- by Unique Self. You can't have a couplehood without Unique Self. Unique Self means you've got to have Buddha and the Sangha, and the couple needs to also be serving a Dharma, which is larger than them. So, when you actually make couplehood an idolatry, you get in trouble. Couplehood needs to be serving a Dharma, with each person in the couple being a Buddha. And when you get to a particular moment in your life when you're trying to redefine your couplehood, you can't just look to the couplehood. You got to look to, "Who are we as Buddhas and what's the Dharma that we're serving?" And I can't tell you the amount of people that I've worked with, over the last thirty years, I said, "Why did you guys get together?" "Well, we liked Italian food and dancing." "Really? That's your Dharma?" And that's how people get together. When people get together, their Dharma is, you know, "We like these old movies, Italian food, living in the same neighborhood, same kind of clothes." And that's the Dharma of a couple that falls apart. Because Sangha, which is couplehood, has to serve a Dharma. It's got to serve a Dharma. And it's got to honor the irreducible Buddha of everyone.

So, in this room, the guru is the Sangha. That's the guru. That's what the Indian tradition called "The Guru Function." The Guru Function is all of us together. The next Buddha is a Sangha, we've said here,



many times. And the Sangha has many Buddhas. And my job, in this particular Sangha, is to transmit the Dharma and, then, to receive any and all feedback on the Dharma. The Dharma is democratic. In other words, I've learned more about the Dharma in this room than I have in most other rooms. So, there's been enormously, wonderful conversation, sacred conversation, about the Dharma in this room. But it's different than most workshop rooms. It's the fact that you say something is not interesting in and of itself. That is to say, you have to actually be self-regulating and self-regulating, meaning, think: Does this serve the Dharma? Or is it just something I need to say right now, because I need to say something, and I need to come to someplace where someone would listen to it, and this seemed to be the cheapest way to do it, because therapy is expensive. [laughter]. You know what I mean? Like, no one says shit like that, so I have a fever, okay? [laughter]. But we all know it's true. So, when you've got something to say, be a servant of the Dharma. Be a servant of the Dharma, and we will bow before you. We will kneel in devotion. But bring your best. Bring your best. Think about it, not in a trepidation kind of way, just in a kind of -- you're in your power. Be in your power. Be in your expansion. And we can serve the Dharma from that place.

It's going to be an exciting weekend. You know, again, with the grace of Goddess. I am enormously excited about it. I am hoping that I'm taking an upturn and not a downturn, but pleasure is -- we touched on this about three and a half years ago, here. If you remember, we kind of did a kind of brief foray into it. It's both evolved a lot since then, and we've gotten a lot deeper, as a Sangha. And when I was talking to Jeff and Shelly, we went back and forth, over what the right -- where should we be this weekend. It just feels like this is actually a missing piece of kind of our core. We've done some really key pieces on shadow; on masculine and feminine; on eros; on "wake up, show up, grow up" kind of material; and it seemed like this piece is actually missing. And, so, I really want to kind of fill this piece in, and, of course, it will incorporate, transcend and include everything.

So, everything's going to be there, but within this kind of overarching framework. And, again, we're going to live it, in our bodies -- totally embodied. We're going to live it in our hearts -- our hearts. Because, really, the demarketing characteristic of a Sangha is, "Do we all love each other more, when we're in Sangha, than when we're not?" That's really the whole thing. Do we love each other more? You know, Ram Dass said to me once that, what Neem Karoli Baba said to him when he first met him was, "I don't want the Sangha to love me; I want, by my being here, that they love each other more." And what a beautiful thing to say. You know? It's like, "Wow."

And no one's got, you know, no one's got "The Transmission." You know, I got a certain transmission going on. I have a certain degree of enlightened consciousness that I worked at the last forty years and work with the same issues that everyone works with. That's what we all work with. We all work with the same stuff.

Remember that movie -- a few of us have talked about this in private context. Remember that movie, *A Beautiful Mind*? That great movie. It was a great movie. How many people saw it? It's an awesome movie. So, remember what happened at the end of the movie? So, remember what happens in the movie? It's based on this wonderful, brilliant mathematician who kind of defined a lot of the last fifty years -- essentially goes psychotic, big time. And the movie was so well made, that we're taken into his process of going psychotic. So, we think that those three new figures actually exist. We're sure; we've been completely taken in, because we're in his mind, in this *Beautiful Mind*. Then, we realize, at a

certain point --- whoops, these guys don't exist. But, of course, he doesn't realize that, yet, and by the end of the movie, he's receiving a prize. It might have been the Nobel Prize. I don't remember exactly what was happening, but he's receiving some major prize. He can't quite make it to the ceremony. It's in an auditorium in Princeton. As they walk out of this large theater, and he's been kind of honored, the three people are there. They're right there. You would think they're gone. They're not. The three people are always there. Everyone in this room has their three people. There's not one exception in this room. Ramana Maharsi had his three people. The greatest example of Indian Non-Dual Consciousness had all sorts of issues, trying to work out with his mother. Everybody's got their stuff. And anyone who claims, because they have a degree of enlightenment, the three people aren't there, I wouldn't listen to their Dharma. They're lying. Everybody's got the three people. The point is, at the end of the movie, he's able to say, "Those people aren't me. They're not me. They're always going to be there, until the day I die. They're going to always be at play. But, actually, there's some distance between us. I can nod to them and walk out of the theater." So, I just want to give a deep bow to everyone's three people, a really deep honor, because they're there, and they're painful, and they're complex, and we know about them. And I have my three people, and I deep bow to them.

And, now, we're walking out of the theater, and we're going to create a beautiful vision of an evolutionary attractor, a strange attractor. That's what we're going to create this weekend -- an evolutionary attractor that will actually serve as a memory of our future. This weekend is about actualizing. Actualizing, in the fullness of pleasure, in the fullness of power. And "actualize" is a memory of the future. That's what it is. When you actually bring down the future memory of your highest possible life. We think that we remember the past. No, no, no. You've got to remember the future. When you remember your future, it becomes the evolutionary attractor that invites you to the highest version of yourself.

So, with this, we close, with just one, kind of, principle, that we use always in Wisdom School and we may even see an exercise on this tomorrow. We just have one kind of, if you will, rule. R-U-L-E. That we kind of do kind of seriously and that we really ask everyone really seriously to keep this super serious, which is no gossip. No gossip. No gossip. We're in a gossip-fast. It's hard not to gossip, I know. Gossip is one of those forms of addiction we may talk about tomorrow. But, actually, our commitment, I really want to invite everyone to, and, then, we're just going to go around and finish with one last piece. But our commitment is to actually create this evolutionary we-space. In an evolutionary we-space, everyone's holding the highest version of each other. And it's just no gossip. We just don't talk about each other. There are no, kind of, casual, "It was good; it wasn't good; she said...; he did..." So much of that happens. People generally gossip, according to best statistics, about 36 times a day. Thirty-six times a day, every single day, people say casual little sentences. It's a genuine addiction. So, we'll invite everyone -- that's my only invitation, which is actually, kind of, our one demand that we make of The Wisdom School -- that people really make that commitment, because otherwise, you can't quit the space. And that's the way that we, kind of, step in.

Okay? Until Sunday, noon, no casual gossip about other people. Just seeing people in their utter, wild, wondrous, gorgeousness, as outrageous lovers. And our one line of the Dharma that's defined us for the last year and a half: "We live in a world of outrageous pain;" the only response to outrageous pain is outrageous love. So, this entire weekend is the path of outrageous love. To walk it, as outrageous

lovers. So, we create a gossip-fast, because the only thing we can see in anyone else in this room, is their utter stunning, splendid, gorgeous, outrageous beauty. That's what we see, and we're just blown away by it.

So, from that place, we ask everyone to take about thirty seconds. We'll start with Steve, because it's so awesome to see him and what a great place to start, and just, literally, thirty seconds, because there's a lot of people in the room, just to set your intention. Give us your name and set your intention. Okay? And as people are giving their name, we are the high priests and priestesses in the Temple, and we are in service and devotion. We are receiving that name, as an expression of that outrageous lover's Unique Self.

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So, we've got one more important thing to do, and one Wisdom School. This is not going to happen. It's not going to be this one, because everyone's attention was really awesome. I mean, this is like the one thing you can't do -- is challenge people's attentions. Those are holy, and those are, like -- these are people's intentions. I mean, so, no one, Eric, would have the audacity to, like, critique people's intentions, because they're your intentions. However, I want to offer a challenge to your intentions, which are beautiful, and I bow before each of them, and they're stunning and holy. And Shaun knows the next sentence, and it's absolutely the right next sentence. When we've really become a Sangha, that sentence is just going to flow in the Sangha, and that's how we're going to know it's happened.

So, the intentions are too small. They're too small. They're huge -- they're huge; they're beautiful, but every single person's intention is essentially about their experience and how their experience will give to this group. Now, what can be more beautiful than that, obviously, right? But it's too small. That's not yet a Sangha. A Sangha's intention is to participate in the evolution of love. That's the intention of a Sangha. The Sangha comes together, beyond individuals and with the power of the Sangha, we bring down the Dharma, and the Dharma shifts the actual source code of love's evolution.

And at a place like Wisdom School in Shalom, that is exponentially true, because if you think, that at the University Department in Harvard Religious Studies, they are working on shifting the evolution of love, they're not. They're not. If you think at Oxford, where I did my teaching and study, they're working on the evolution of love, they're not. They're not. But if you think at Spirit Rock, where they're doing fantastic meditation, they're working on the evolution of love, they're not. We have an intention, and our intention is, we're outrageous lovers. And love means something different, in every generation. Love evolves. Love doesn't exist. There's no "love." Love means nothing about itself. Love evolves. The evolution of consciousness is the evolution of love.

So, we live in a world. The world has simplicity. Simplicity goes to complexity; the world gets more and more complex. But the more and more complex it gets, the more and more conscious it gets. A dog is more complex than an amoeba; a dog is more conscious than an amoeba. And, then, it gets more and more complex and more and more conscious, and it wakes up, and into human beings. And, then, love wakes up, and, then, love seeks to evolve.

And so, what we want to do is, we want to not just participate individually. We want to not just have our best Unique Self experience. And we don't even want to have just the best contribution we can have, to this group of forty people in this room. It's too small. We can't bring down the Dharma that

way. I mean that with, like, full heart. It just doesn't work. It's just too small. The Dharma is the source code of reality, and our intention is [00:43:47\*]. That's the intention of a Sangha. For the sake of the uniting of the divine masculine and the divine feminine; the upper waters and the lower waters; Shiva and Skakti; earth and sky -- for the sake of bringing together all the broken hearts and all the broken vessels and all the fragments and weaving them together, into a vision of the patterns that connect and actually change and evolve the source code of love and reality. That's what a Sangha does. That is what a Sangha is. And the Sangha has the power, coming together as a Sangha, to actually evolve love itself.

Luria, great lineage; master in my tradition who lived in Safed, said that, "If one Sangha will come together and truly love each other, and commit itself to the Dharma, love will evolve." One Sangha. That's the difference between this and a university department. It's the difference between this and a great Eastern meditation retreat, where you're trying to retain some measure of liberation from your suffering through enlightenment. The Wisdom School Sangha, in the last five years, the core -- it's not by accident, that when Gerry started Shalom, it was about principles of loving. So, those principals of loving, though, are evolving. We're evolving those principals all the time. So, what we want to do is we want to participate in the evolution of love, and we do that by evolving the Dharma, alive in a Sangha, as each Buddha emerges. That's how the Dharma evolves.

Friends, there is no other place in the world where it's happening. It's not happening in the world. People working on individual pieces, writing books here, writing books there. But we actually have to reclaim the responsibility to actually evolve the source code itself; to actually go into the source code and to evolve it, in our sacred conversation.

Now, if you want to know, why are we the people doing it? Because. That's really the answer, because that's how it worked out. I don't know. I thought, when I went to Oxford, they would be doing it. No one had any idea what I was talking about. They looked at me with the strangest looks at meetings, like...it's weird. You're supposed to be in your department, and you're supposed to be in the particular position that your department has in that field of studies, at that particular time, and you're supposed to write your Doctorate in that structure. To even suggest something massively interdisciplinary is suspect, and to suggest any grand narrative means you're obviously nonacademic, because there are no grand narratives -- that's the grand narrative. It's crazy. And in the classroom Enlightenment Schools, it's about getting your own taste of non-dual reality. Insufficient.

So, we need to reclaim the idea of a Wisdom School. The idea of a Wisdom School -- the idea of a Mystery School, is that we come together as a Sangha. And every single person's intention in this room is obviously valid -- obviously. I mean, you know that we know that, right? But you've got to transcend and include that intention. Transcend -- end the trance. Transcend -- end the trance of your particular intention and include it. Don't leave any of it behind. The Buddha remains, that's the point. The Buddha remains, but when you become a Sangha, the individual intention gets transcended, and the Sangha has the power to evolve love -- to evolve the very source code, the very structures of being.

I was sitting at a place near where Peter lives, with Kathy Brownbeck, who actually very much wanted to be here. She'll be here at the next one. Just, she's having the extra school weekend. Parent weekend is this weekend, so she couldn't come. And I was meeting with her and with Diane, this wonderful woman who is kind of one of the heads of Andover and at Harvard Divinity School. And they said, "We worked at Harvard Divinity School for "X" amount of time, and the issue of, like, how do you recover

a notion of obligation, and no one knows how to do it.” I said, “Really? Well, let me tell you. Here’s the six steps. One, two, three, four, five, six.” And ask Kathy -- you check the story, Peter -- and Dan was like, “Oh my God. That does it. Because that does it. Yep, that does it.”

Yeah, we worked that out, here, at Wisdom School. So, I want you to get that. We worked it out, here, at Wisdom School. The crystallization of those ideas happened here three and a half years ago, four years ago -- right here, in this room. It is, literally, the best data I know of, available in the world today on a recovering, post-modern sense of obligation. We’ll get to it sometime, probably Sunday morning. It’s around where we might hit that place, but it’s got a lot to do with pleasure. But, note, it only happens in a Mystery School, in a Wisdom School radically committed to serving the Dharma, through radically loving each other, through honoring the intention of every Buddha.

But let’s up-level our intention. If I have a desperate plea to you, a desperate plea, it’s take yourselves more seriously. Take yourselves more seriously. This is not a weekend workshop. If you think you fell into a weekend workshop, you’re in the wrong place. This is not a weekend workshop. I mean, who would want to run a weekend workshop? Get a job, really. [laughter]. You know? I mean, what do we want to do? We want to participate in the evolution of love. And Gerry got that when he started Shalom. I mean, right now, it’s about -- the last time I talked to Gerry, he said to me, he’s now holding the pole of being. And that’s great; that’s beautiful. We’re holding, here, the pole of becoming and being together. Gerry downloaded his becoming into this place. The Center for World Spirituality has its vision of becoming. We’re doing, being and becoming together.

We’re not interested in simply sitting and being. We’re interested in ecstatic urgency. Not the urgency of the ego; not the urgency of the contraction; not the urgency of the small self, desperate to make a name for itself, to prove to itself that it exists; but the ecstatic urgency of feeling evolution awaken alive in you and knowing that, actually, evolution itself can awaken in this room to a level of knowing itself; to a level of realization; to a level of deep evolution of the source code of being, becoming itself, through our engagement. I mean, nothing else is worth being alive for. And, so, Luria would say, “Before you come together to study, you set your intention, and his intention always was “[00:50:40\*],” for the sake of the evolution; [00:50:46\*], of a divine masculine and a divine feminine that lives in every Buddha in the Sangha, but lives, more deeply, in the Sangha, together, in the evolutionary we-space.

That’s what we mean by “evolutionary we-space.” Evolutionary we-space means when the Buddha comes, gives up his or her small, separate contraction self, leaves the wounds at the door for this weekend, steps in with the highest version of myself, as full Buddha. Then, we form Sangha, and, then, the Dharma emerges. That’s how it happens. And our intention is not just to be the best Buddha we can; not just to contribute to a room of good Buddhas. But when the good Buddhas come together, that’s what Systems Theory, General Dynamic Theory meant thirty years ago, when it said, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” It’s not just a phase. What General Systems Theory was kind of catching onto is that there’s this thing called a Sangha. And the Sangha is more than a group of Buddhas. The Sangha has its own power. And it’s not enough, not enough to savor pleasure. Don’t buy it. I want your deep mind, wisdom understanding; and all of it, and all of the power of your mind and your knowing, because we need it. And if you sit out, we failed. Because we can’t do it without you, because that’s why you’re here.

And just like, for Diane, where the Goddess kind of conspired. The Goddess conspired -- there's no one extra in this room. There's not one extra person in this room. Every single person in this room was intended to be here, from the Big Bang, itself. There's not one -- this room was a divinely intended room. It never was, is or will be again. This constellation of people, at this moment in time, will never come together again, ever. So, something can be born here that can never be born. And I don't care if I'm sick. Fuck that. We're going to get sick, in the way of a Sangha, coming together to evolve love? Really? How pathetic. [laughter]. And, so, we've got to rise. If we're just here for another Wisdom School, Dharma's not going to move. And I can't move it without -- you can't move it -- without every single one of us holding the intention that we have, which is, we're going to evolve love together and to know that this Sangha has that capacity.

Last sentence. Now, you sometimes think that there's a room in the world that's doing it, so you don't have to. And the older you get, you're just kind of shocked into the realization that the room doesn't exist. You kind of think, "Someplace in the State Department, someone's doing scenario planning." You know, "someplace." I mean they are, but for the wrong scenarios. [laughter]. What we need is not disaster scenario planning; we need scenario planning for the best version of humanity. Actualize is a memory of the future.

My lineage master, who Jeff mentioned, used to say, "When you get up in the morning, the first thing you do is [00:53:54\*], in Aramaic; you remember the future world. Isn't that beautiful? It's like, "Wow." It's the first thing you do. You remember the future world. You remember -- you call into being, the highest version of yourself. And you know what? That takes effort and from the effort, comes ease and grace.

So, I fully expect that everyone in the room, over this weekend, is going to run into some static. I'm going to say something that annoys the hell out of you, or I'm just going to annoy the hell out of you, just by my very presence. I apologize, insincerely. Okay? But I do apologize. [laughter]. But, really -- I mean, seriously, like, anything that I fuck up on, just forgive me in advance, because it's not about that. You understand what I'm saying? That's like, it's just not about that. I'm sure I'll mess this up, and this will annoy you. Who cares? Like, really, who cares? It's like, big deal. So, in advance, I messed up; I'm sorry. I've already apologized. So, just hold it through the weekend. That one was sincere. I'm sure, if I say something that's offensive to you, let it go. Let it go. I'm imperfect. We're all imperfect vessels for the light.

Okay, but let's be in it together. And for me -- I'll tell you for me. For me, I'm going to do this Wisdom School as if I was going to die, Sunday at noon. That's my commitment. I'm in, all the way -- all the way. We're going to bring down the Dharma. And you can only bring down the Dharma if you stake your life on it. Anything less -- the gates stay closed.

So, that's the invitation -- all the way. When you're uncomfortable, stretch through it. And as a Sangha, we stretch; we reach; and all the gates open. They always do. So, deep bow to everyone. Deep bow to the God, in the center of the room. Deep bow to outrageous love, to Jeff and Shelly. We send them energy, as they hold us, in the graceful, gorgeous way they do. Deep bow to Nance, who just holds the whole vessel, here, with so much grace, dignity and fierce love. Deep bow to the Sangha.

Welcome, everyone. Welcome. Amen.

