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meditation, so that you will practise tolerance and patience to ensure your ability to show some resilience and endurance in the face of adverse situations. The practice of patience definitely doesn't mean that you are responsive, while holding the anger within yourself in the form of resentment, which can be very destructive.

We can encourage and motivate ourselves to cultivate a more positive mental attitude, such as being kind, compassionate and extending more love towards those with whom we interact every day. We will be able to recognise the benefit of cultivating and developing a positive mental attitude, which is not only for our own experience of peace and happiness, but also our actions and the impression we give to others – whatever we are saying and doing – will be very pleasing to them. This is how we can strengthen our relationship with others.

We can notice that each negative state of mind, such as anger, produces a different experience and has a different effect. Sometimes strong desire or attachment can also be negative emotions in the sense that they can cause much misery and suffering. The feeling of desire and attachment and its effect can be very different. You will notice that when you experience the emotion of anger, it can be very wild and rough. It will be apparent immediately, so after becoming aware of it, if you acknowledge that it is very harmful and tell yourself that you have to be more careful to ensure that you don't do anything under the influence of this emotion, the anger will suddenly decrease.

When anger arises, the destructive force can be very apparent, but at the same time, it can be easier for us to recognise its shortcomings, and therefore we are able to overcome it more easily. However it is not like that when we experience strong desire and attachment. Desire as an emotion is quite deceptive in that it gives us a rather pleasant feeling, and a notion that fulfilling the desire is a way to bring about happiness. Of course, that's not the case and in fact if desire is not overcome, then in the long run, it can bring more harm to oneself. It is even harder to overcome than anger.

Therefore, we have to try to understand that when we engage in meditation practice, our sole purpose is to counteract the negative states of mind within us, by calming and controlling our mind, because it is said that if we have control over our mind, we are free of the effects of the negative mental afflictions. When we don't have control of our mind and we check who has control, we will notice that our mind is under the control and power of the various mental afflictions such as anger, desire and so forth. We are always overpowered by our mind, and the actions we carry out depend on our state of our mind. It is said that the only way to achieve some sense of freedom and happiness is to gain control over one's mind. The great Sakya Pandita said that achieving self independence is like achieving the state of happiness, whereas not having self independence and being under the control of other force is misery and suffering. Therefore, there is no escape from misery and suffering if our mind is under the control of or overpowered by these mental afflictions.

As part of giving advice to monks for example, the Buddha said that if the monk has a short-tempered nature, then you should offer good food, clothing and a nice shelter. However, if the monk is desirous and lustful, then you should not offer good food, clothing and shelter. What we learn from this is when someone is very angry, if you offer very delicious food or do something to please that person; once that person is mentally pleased or something gives them pleasure, then it will automatically cause the anger to disappear because the food that you offer gives them some mental happiness, which cannot co-exist with the hatred towards you.

There is a difference between someone who understands anger and its shortcomings and also how to counteract it, and someone else who does not understand this. Someone with the understanding can recognise anger when it arises, and also they can apply an antidote to counter it. Whereas a person who doesn't have any knowledge about anger and its detrimental affects, will easily fall prey to anger and won't know how to get out of the clutch of anger.

We can apply different techniques in order to handle various states of mind. For example, in order to challenge the mind of desire, whatever we apply, our approach cannot be gentle. I'd would like to share a story about a younger friend who was very fond of me, who I used to deliberately tease and annoy when he was sleeping peacefully. I would smear his face or do something to wake him up, and my friend would get very upset and angry. This continued, and eventually my friend changed his nature. On the other hand, as mentioned previously, the way to challenge someone with an angry mind is to do something gentle, such as offer food to please someone who is angry with you.

Before we begin our usual breathing meditation, it is important to make ourselves comfortable and to relax physically. If you are familiar with a certain meditation posture, then you can adopt that, such as with two hands in meditative equipoise. It is also important to get rid of all distracting thoughts from the mind, making sure that the mind is calmed down and is fully resting within yourself. In the same way that our body depends on the ground on which to sit, likewise our mind also needs an object on which to rest. The object for this meditation is the breath, so what we will be doing in this meditation is to try to keep the mind on the inhaling and exhaling alone, without letting it wander off to other objects. We will begin the meditation now.

*[Pause for single-pointed meditation]*

We will continue the meditation with the chanting of the Buddha's mantra. As we chant, we simply direct our focus to the sound of the mantra.

*TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA*

That's all for tonight; thank you for coming to this talk.

*Transcribed by Ai Chin Khor  
Edit 1 by Ingrid Leibbrandt  
Edit 2 by Sandup Tsering  
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