

Study Group - “Liberation *in the Palm of Your Hand*”

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Samdup Tsering

ལྷོ་ལམ་རིམ་རྒྱུ་ལ་ལག་བཅུང་ས།



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We should generate a genuine thought to seek enlightenment for the benefit of all living beings. Then think “To achieve this state of complete enlightenment I am listening to, and practising these stages of the path or Lam Rim.”

Having finished identifying the mental delusions and their causes, the next subject is the disadvantages of mental delusions.

422.221.14: Disadvantages of Mental Delusions

ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་ཉེས་དམིགས།

If we are totally ignorant of the drawbacks of mental delusions, then far from seeing them as something to be counteracted, we see delusions such as desire as a very positive and pleasant state of mind.

As it is very difficult to root out mental delusions, the best advice is to firstly target the mental delusions which are most personally destructive, and which cause immediate harm to us. Then as a result we shall experience more ease and happiness within.

Generally speaking our mind has the full potential to possess true peace and happiness. However due to other factors and conditions we are unable to ripen this potential. Even if we do experience some happiness and peace its duration is only momentary. Think of a moment where you are in a very joyful state of mind but in the next moment you experience very unpleasant feelings. If we examine we find that it is delusions that have brought about this change. In fact this loss of peace and happiness in the mind is an indication that delusions have arisen in our mind.

Benefits of Being Aware of the Disadvantages of Delusions

Although we are talking of an abstract thing in our mind when we talk of delusions, that state of mind can also be seen in our outer behaviour. When any form of delusion overpowers our mind we feel totally deprived of inner happiness and become very vulnerable to outer factors and conditions. We become very emotionally temperamental and become easily upset or very angry.

There are many benefits in having a very good knowledge of how the mental delusions which we generate in our mind affect our experience and choice of actions. The main one is gaining more control over our thoughts and deeds, as well as becoming more knowledgeable and skilled in dealing with outside people.

As mentioned before, when delusions occupy the minds

of another person, these delusions also have the same effect. This person will become very vulnerable and can be easily hurt. Without knowing this, then even the slightest wrong-doing to your friend can cause them great mental suffering.

Therefore it is most important, that when that friend is under the influence of delusions, to make a special effort to restrain your own speech and actions. Do not say much, or if you do, then only say something to help them. You have to see that at this time your friend is most in need of your help, and does not need any further cause of trouble from you. With this understanding we learn to be more kind, tolerant and helpful to other beings whose minds are very disturbed, and such knowledge can benefit both ourselves and others.

Other Drawbacks of Delusions

The Lam Rim commentary mentions some other drawbacks of delusions.

- When delusion arises in the mind it becomes non-virtuous. For instance as a result of the influence of desire in the mind you might commit non-virtuous actions of sexual misconduct, or lying and so forth. Under the influence of anger you might even commit an act of murder.
- The text says that delusions turn the object of your mind to an unwholesome or a perverted object. Due to delusions, instead of being kind and helpful to the people with whom you have relationships, we cause harm to them. The various objects which our mind sees are in actuality objects deserving our love, and compassion, instead they become a cause for developing more delusions. Even when practising meditation whenever delusions arise you immediately lose the object of your meditation.
- Whenever we generate delusions we strengthen the potency of the seed of that delusion. Each moment that we let delusion arise in our mind makes the root of that delusion firmer. It makes that delusion arise continuously, without any break. If it is not counteracted then it becomes easier for that same delusion to continuously arise in the future. Without challenging delusions there is no break in their continuity.
- Furthermore it says that delusions are a cause to create actions which are despised by noble and holy beings. As a result of those non-virtuous actions we then have to suffer in this life and future lives. If for example we steal something out of desire, the

immediate result which will be seen in this lifetime is to face the death penalty or be physically punished.

- Also it is said the delusions increase the time needed to reach liberation and the state of complete enlightenment, for in order to reach both the state of liberation and complete enlightenment one needs to abandon delusions.
- The text also says that delusions are the cause for a decrease in our virtuous actions because, if for instance out of delusion we commit the action of killing, it is a cause for the deterioration of our own good nature.
- Delusions are also the cause of destroying our good nature and conduct. It is possible that someone who is very good natured can become very ill-natured due to the influence of delusions over their personality.
- Delusions also decrease the practice of pure moral ethics.
- They are a cause of bringing disrepute. Because of delusions one might engage in arguments or disputes with others and so develop a bad reputation.
- The text also says that all the wealth and respect gained from others is affected by delusions.

Next week we shall explain the meaning of some quotations about the faults of delusions.

Headings with outline numbering are derived from the Text. Headings without outline numbering are derived from Geshe Doga's commentary.

Edit methodology

The initial transcript is prepared from Alan Molloy's notes. These are checked with Damien Busby's notes by Alan Molloy and any differences noted.

Adair Bunnett then compares her notes against the typed transcript and prepares this edited version.

Edited version checked by Alan Molloy

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