

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

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Samdup Tsering

ཅུ་ལམ་རིམ་རྣམས་གྲོལ་ལག་བཅུངས།



15 July 1997

Begin by establishing the bodhicitta motivation; the genuine thought of achieving buddhahood to benefit all beings. We should think that it is to fulfil this ultimate spiritual goal that we study and practise the stages of the path; and that is also why we are training, or calming our mind.

422.317 You will Fulfil all your Wishes Effortlessly

ཅུ་བསམ་པ་འགྲུབ་པ།

We are now up to the seventh benefit of bodhicitta which is that you will fulfil all your wishes effortlessly.

We have immediate short term wishes and goals, as well as long term ones. If we cultivate bodhicitta, all these wishes will be fulfilled effortlessly, almost spontaneously.

How does bodhicitta fulfil all one's wishes? As well as actual bodhicitta, even the cause of bodhicitta, which is love, compassion, and the thought of benefiting other beings, can also fulfil all one's wishes. Having cultivated love and compassion you are always motivated to undertake wholesome or virtuous actions, such as the ten virtuous actions. With love and compassion, and the thought of other beings, you will refrain from causing death because of hatred or anger, and you will refrain from stealing as a result of miserliness.

Through the influence of love and compassion you behave in a positive, beneficial way, rather than engaging in harmful actions. As a benefit of behaving morally, such as by not committing any of the ten non-virtuous actions, you will obtain a better rebirth in future, as a human or godly being. Such good rebirths are the immediate, or short-term goal of this life, and love and compassion are causes to achieve such a higher rebirth, as well as achieving other short term goals such as material wealth, or a sound healthy body.

The bodhicitta mind is essential for the attainment of the ultimate goal - the supreme goal of eliminating unwanted sufferings and misery of all living beings, so that they achieve their desire, happiness.

Contemplating the effect on your actions of this genuine bodhicitta mind, as well as the effect of having love and compassion for other beings, gives a clear notion that love, compassion and bodhicitta can indeed fulfil all one's wishes.

Shantideva's *Bodhisattva's Way Of Life* says, “With this bodhicitta mind, then you create a cause of happiness for an immeasurable number of other beings.”

We should integrate this benefit of bodhicitta into our heart, and into our daily practice. Bodhicitta is a very powerful mind in terms of fulfilling all that we want, and eliminating all that we do not want. It is said that the power of prayers, or very thoughtful words of truth, depends upon the person who speaks or prays. If the speaker is someone of enormous merit, or one who possesses the bodhicitta mind, then their prayers will be effective.

Many of us do the Tara puja often, and we all consider ourselves to be spiritual practitioners. So it is very important for us to know the essential elements of the beginning of our practice, during the middle or the actual session, and at the end. There is nothing more important than the bodhicitta mind, with which we seek to benefit all sentient beings.

If we are doing the Tara puja for a specific person, then at the start of the practice we think of their pain, for which they have aversion and want to be rid of. In this way we generate the motivation that the practice we do is to benefit that person. The reason you pray to Tara or seek her blessings is also to benefit all beings. In the middle, or during the actual session do not forget the purpose of your practice - it is important to maintain your mental focus. At the end of your session try to sustain the bodhicitta in your mind. This means trying to diminish the self-cherishing mind as much as possible, whilst increasing the thought of cherishing other beings. So, you direct your focus onto the bodhicitta mind. At the end of the practice, dedicate it to benefit the specific person, so that they make a swift recovery. You have to see that your daily practice, and the prayers you do, can be more fruitful and beneficial if you incorporate bodhicitta into your motivation for the practice.

Even our own present life is an extremely fortunate one, and very special if we think of practising the bodhicitta mind. With the mind of bodhicitta, within a very short period of time, even less than one minute, we can accumulate enormous merit and remove enormous obscurations. Take for example, properly circumambulating a stupa, such as the one in Tara Institute's front hall, with the mind of bodhicitta. As discussed in the past, you do this by imagining that all the other sentient beings in human form are following you. Then think of rays of light emanating from the Buddha in the centre of the stupa, inviting all the infinite buddhas and bodhisattvas to dissolve into Buddha in the stupa. From that Buddha, rays of light then shine forth to you and all sentient beings. Imagine that through

these rays of light you receive immense blessings from all the buddhas, and the purification of all your negative obscurations, as well as those of all other sentient beings. With such a practice of circumambulation you can create enormous merit, and remove as many obstacles as there are sentient beings. From this point of view, the life which we enjoy now has the potential to accumulate merit, and to remove negativities and obscurations, even in a very short period of time. From this perspective, the life with such enormous potential that we have now, is one that we have never obtained in the past.

You may have heard the story of the pig which was being chased by a dog, and which ran around a stupa by accident. The result was that the merit which the pig created was such that it was born in the land of thirty three gods, the land of the godly beings. Imagine! If we do circumambulations with the proper motivation, the benefit would be far greater than that.

For those who live a very busy life, it is especially important to know how to accumulate merit and purify negativities just through such daily actions as walking or sitting. Then whenever we do those everyday actions, they create merit and purify negativities.

We should try to see all the goodness which we enjoy in life, such as good food and drink, as being the result or fruit of merit which we have created in past. With such an awareness, then we are inspired to create even more merit, by creating more positive actions or virtue.

We have to see that whatever we do gives us an opportunity to practise, and become a reflection of dharma. All the goodness can be seen as a blessing which we receive from the guru Buddha. It is through the kindness of the guru Buddha that we have such a wonderful life. In this way, we can expand the scope of our practice to include everyday actions.

Geshe Doga recommends using the Foundation of All Good Qualities prayer to begin lam rim meditations. It is best to learn it by heart, because that makes it easier in meditation. You can just say it from memory, then contemplate its meaning. The last verse is very good to use as a dedication prayer for any practice that you do.

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

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Note on authentication

The original typescript is prepared by Jenny Molloy from Alan Molloy's original transcript, which has been checked against Damien Busby's notes. Adair Bunnett then checks the typescript against a tape recording, and edits the text, which is finally checked by Alan Molloy.