

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

Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Samdup Tsering

༄༅ ལམ་རིམ་རྣམ་གྲོལ་ལག་བཅུངས།



6 July 1999

Cultivate the bodhicitta motivation by thinking strongly about your desire to achieve complete enlightenment for the sake of all beings, and at the same time generate the strong intention to put into practice whatever you have learned in the lam rim teachings.

In daily life it is so important to personally cultivate a positive state of mind while, as much as possible getting rid of negative states of mind. If we turn our mind inward, we see that the most precious thing we have is the positive state of mind we have cultivated.

We can recognise these positive states of mind as precious for several reasons.

1. They are precious because they are rare.
2. They are rare because they are not easy to generate.
3. They are not easy to generate because:
  - our mind is not familiar with positive states of mind, and developing this familiarity requires effort
  - it is very rare to get any assistance from outside.

On the other hand negative states of mind:

1. [Are not precious or rare]
2. Can arise almost spontaneously
3. They require virtually no effort to generate from our own side because:
  - The negative mind is an habitual state of mind.
  - A negative mind is not only easier to generate because of internal factors but also externally there are more external causes to make this negative state of mind arise.

Understanding this shows us the preciousness of this positive state of mind. It also shows us why we must make a great deal of effort on a regular basis to have some success in producing this state of mind.

Meditation sessions begin with cultivating the proper motivation. Therefore when we engage in meditation we should not immediately direct our attention to the meditation object. Rather we should first establish the proper motivation by making some effort to transform the mind.

## 422.331.12 Perfection Of Morality (continued)

To continue with the lam rim teachings: of the three types of morality we have finished the first two which are the Morality Of Refraining From Non-Virtues and the Morality Of Gaining Virtuous Actions.

## 422.331.123 The Morality Of Helping Other Beings

སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་དོན་བྱེད་པའི་ཚུལ་གྱིས།

The third [category of the Perfection Of Morality] is the Morality Of Helping Other Beings which we introduced in the last teaching. In the text there is a list of eleven ways in which we benefit other beings.

Sometimes when the teachings are translated from Tibetan into English there are some terms that cannot be directly translated word by word from the original language. In the English version the meaning is explained [as part of the translation] and there is no need to explain it further. [The eleven means are]

1. Helping those who toil, and those who suffer
2. Working for the sake of those blind to the right methods
3. Working for the sake of people by benefiting them
4. Working for the sake of those threatened by danger
5. Working for the sake of those afflicted with miseries
6. Working for the sake of the deserted
7. Working for the sake of the homeless
8. Working for the sake of those without like-minded people
9. Working for the sake of those on the right path
10. Working for the sake of those on the wrong path
11. Working for the sake of [all these people] through miracles

Of these eleven ways of benefiting others we are capable of putting the first ten into practice. The last one, working to benefit others through miracles, requires the power of miracles, which you do not have.

In short, any actions that we perform through our three doors of body, speech and mind out of the motivation of bodhicitta, serves as an action to benefit other beings. We do this by maintaining our vows of individual liberation or, if we do not possess these vows, by preventing any of the ten non-virtues, or performing any action associated with the six Perfections.

If we practise this morality, which mainly means preventing the cause of harm to any beings, then we shall have no difficulty in obtaining a better future rebirth in the human or godly realms. It is important to understand the benefit and importance of this practice of morality from our own side, and put it into practice regardless of views, thoughts or actions of others.

## 422.33.13 Perfection of Patience

བརྗོད་པའི་སྲོལ་ཚུལ།

---

Patience is described as a state of mind which is not disturbed or influenced as a result of being harmed by others, or by experiencing suffering.

From this we can understand that we are exhibiting patience when our mind remains at peace and is not influenced when we are harmed by others, or when we experience any problems. Patience does not just mean not directly retaliating or responding to others. Normally we say someone is very tolerant if they do not reply to another who says very harmful words. In fact this may not necessarily be tolerance. They may not outwardly show it, but inwardly they might be boiling over with anger and hatred.

Practising patience emphasises the importance of the mind. You are practising patience if your mind remains calm, peaceful and undisturbed when someone speaks harshly to you, or when someone shows you a dark face or when someone does something to harm you or to bring unhappiness to your mind. If in these circumstances you are mentally undisturbed by that harm, then this is patience. From this point of view you can see the benefits of practising patience.

If we give some thought to its advantages then we can become encouraged to practise patience. H.H. the Dalai Lama is renowned throughout the world for his message and patience for enemies. His Holiness says, 'The practice of patience is the most effective means of solving problems.' It is also the most effective means of preserving inner peace and happiness. We need to understand that people who always practise patience and tolerance see more benefits in this practice than in reacting and retaliating.

We have to understand what the practice of patience means to us, especially in daily life. We should practice patience with those closest to us - our friends, parents relatives etc. These people are our objects of patience. Try to see that the time to practise patience is when they appear to be causing us problems, with abusive speech or harmful actions. We must consider our response. If we do not control ourselves, we may lose our temper and react to them with harsh speech or a harmful action. If that happens we become disturbed, and lose our mental peace and happiness. Not only that but we must also consider the outcome of those retaliatory actions. We need to think carefully about the best response in that situation. What is the most beneficial? It is obvious. The most beneficial is to practise patience and tolerance. This is no great surprise, and we realise why H.H. the Dalai Lama can even practise patience and tolerance towards enemies. We shall return to this topic later.

At a personal level we can see how, if we do not practise patience we then lose our inner peace and happiness. Without this we cannot even enjoy good food and drink or any of the other good outward conditions.

The opposite to patience, is anger, and when that occupies our mind, we can see how we lose our normal sense of judgement and discrimination. Shantideva said, 'Someone whose mind is controlled by anger cannot discriminate between what is beneficial or harmful for himself or herself'. So we can understand how our efforts to help someone who is under the influence of

anger are fruitless and futile. Here it is important to consider our own inner continuum and focus on the shortcomings of any anger that we possess, then learn about the benefits of patience, trying to develop our own practice of patience. To make progress in our spiritual practice we must focus on our own inner selves. We should try to stop directing our knowledge at others, in an attempt to improve them by talking of their problems of anger and short temper. It is not right to do this when you have the same problems yourself.

Try to understand that when we say patience is a very effective means of safeguarding mental peace and happiness we are referring to our own mental peace and happiness. Anger destroys that, and brings personal disturbance and instability.

The more we develop our understanding of the shortcomings of anger in the context of our own experiences, the more sympathetic we shall be to others who are experiencing it. From our own experience, we can understand that someone who is showing great anger to us is experiencing great suffering. Generally a normal person will feel compassion rather than anger if they see another person suffering. Whereas an ill-natured person who feels hatred will rejoice and be happy on seeing their suffering.

However in general if we truly recognise the suffering which other people undergo, then we shall feel sympathy. If that person is completely controlled by anger and harms us, then if we can understand their suffering, it becomes possible to feel sympathy for them.

It is also important to reflect on the difference between the person who has an angry nature, and the one who is tolerant and patient. If we had a choice which would we like to become: the one with strong anger or the one without the angry nature?

---

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

---

© *Tara Institute*

**Note on authentication**

The original typescript is prepared by Kathi Melnic 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.