



refines the gold in fire. The point of refining gold in fire is to get rid of impurities that might be present in the gold. Likewise analytical meditation is for the purpose of getting rid of impurities that might be present there. Here one has to reflect again and again on the harmful nature of the root delusions, the secondary delusions, and the black karmas that are accumulated through the power of these delusions. By reflecting on their disadvantages again and again - how they keep one in cyclic existence, how they constantly cause suffering and misery, how they always beat one down into suffering and so forth, then the mind will naturally let go of these mental delusions. and arise in a pure state. For example by reflecting again and again on the disadvantages of anger, one naturally lets go of anger because the more deeply one understands the disadvantages of anger, the more naturally the mind lets go of anger. In order to refine the mind in such a way one needs to do this analytical meditation of reflecting on the shortcomings of the delusions, and the karma they generate.

By reflecting again and again on the different points of the Lam Rim - the precious human rebirth, its great potential and its rarity, its impermanence, then reflecting on the sufferings of the lower realms, on the qualities of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and the characteristics of black and white karma, and the qualities of bodhicitta - the mind becomes more and more refined and suitable for change.

It is as if these meditations are the moisture that softens up the mind, making it flexible and workable. Therefore analytical meditation is a very important as preparation for the attainment of single-pointed concentration. By practising these analytical meditations again and again, the mind becomes ripe for the attainment of single-pointed concentration, and that's why the analytical meditations are significant. By meditating in this manner, one establishes conducive internal mental conditions for the attainment of calm abiding.

The reason why one finds it difficult to attain calm abiding is because one does not have the conducive internal conditions, and the disruptive internal conditions are very strong. By doing these different analytical meditations, one is able to train the mind in the conducive mental states that facilitate the attainment of calm abiding. Then, of course, calm abiding is needed in order to change the mind at its most profound level. One needs to attain calm abiding in order to achieve a very profound change of mind, but calm abiding will not happen if the mind has not already been trained before in these different virtuous mental states. The main adverse conditions for the attainment of calm abiding are mental excitement and mental dullness, and we will talk a little bit about these two next time. Then one arrives at the main part of the Lam Rim. But for tonight we can stop here and have some questions.

*Question: Could you please explain what calm abiding is?*

Answer: Calm abiding is a single-pointed concentration that is held by the bliss of mental and physical pliancy with which one can focus on any object according to one's wishes, for however long one wants. It is attained by going through the nine stages of calm abiding. Just

having a single-pointed mind by itself does not mean that one has single-pointed concentration. For the attainment of single-pointed concentration, one needs to also have an absence of mental sinking or mental dullness, for example. Just because one abides single-pointedly does not mean that one has overcome the subtle mental dullness.

When one attains calm abiding, then the mind and the body are pervaded by a certain type of bliss that arises from physical and mental flexibility. The sequence is that first one attains what is called mental pliancy, which is (tape turned over here) a state that induces physical pliancy, which then induces the pliancy of the psychic energies, which then in turn induces the bliss of physical pliancy which then in turn induces the bliss of mental pliancy. At this time then the body becomes very light, and one doesn't have, for example, any more these problems of aching knees, aching back and so forth. The body gets this feeling of being very light, refined, flexible and supple, and the same also applies to the mind. Then because of this suppleness the mind can abide single-pointedly on the object. There is not the heaviness and distraction that one is currently experiencing.

At the present time when one tries to meditate the mind is very unwieldy. It is very heavy and very easily distracted to different objects. When one attains calm abiding then one experiences this physical and mental suppleness and the bliss that arises out of that suppleness. Being aware of these benefits of calm abiding is also important. Ultimately the mind, while being very supple is also single-pointed and immovable like a mountain.

*Question: Can you give an example of the school of thought that thinks it's a hindrance to practice analytical meditation prior to the attainment of single-pointed meditation?*

Answer: There are many. We have already been through the different views before. Of course it is a bit of a cliché but, there are for example certain ascetic yogis who assert that analytical meditation is useless, and that the real practice is single-pointed meditation. On the other hand there are scholars who assert the opposite. They say that the real meditation is analytical meditation and not the single-pointed meditation. Sometimes one finds there are two camps. We have already been through how one facilitates the other and the reasons why both are needed.

*Question: Is it possible to actually do a meditation without having done some sort of analysis?*

Answer: Yes, it is possible to meditate without initially engaging in an analytical process, but it won't be beneficial. As we have already said, in order to have a good effective meditation one needs to follow the three steps of listening, contemplation and meditation. As Shakyas Pandita said, those who want to meditate without listening, for example, are like an armless person trying to climb a mountain. Of course one can meditate without first engaging in analytical processes, but it won't be very effective.

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If one likes, one can meditate on attachment. One can just visualise the object of attachment and reflect on the different qualities of the object of attachment, making it very nice in one's mind. The more one creates this fiction about the object, then the greater the attachment for the object becomes. So that is possible. That would be an analytical meditation on attachment.

If one, for example, just meditates on calming the mind, without reflecting on the different disadvantages of the delusions, then one arrives at the situation where even though one can calm the mind temporarily, anger, for example, arises again very quickly and easily. Why? Because one has not really engaged in any analytical meditation on the disadvantages of anger. One has not really created any counter-positive to anger and that's why, even though one meditates, one is in a situation where the delusions arise again and again. As long as one can see, for example, some benefit in the delusion or some attractive quality in the object, then the attachment will arise again and again no matter how long one meditates. In order to counteract the arising of attachment, one needs to engage in analytical meditation regarding the actual nature of the object.

As was explained at the beginning, turn the mind inwards and then place it single-pointedly on the mantra.

*TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA*

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