
jealousy and so on can be removed by applying the remedies. If we observe the mental continuum, we'll see that a great number of our problems are due to mental unhappiness and this is due to a certain way of thinking, or certain thought processes. These problems can be fixed or removed by training the mind in a different way of thinking because, in most cases, it is our way of thinking which decides whether our mind is happy or unhappy.

The Great Bodhisattva Tongma said that, in brief, the Bodhisattva practice is applying mindfulness and alertness. Then we can know each instant of our mind throughout all our actions. We can find solutions to the problems we face and eliminate them by utilising our minds and developing its knowledge and qualities.

We'll stop here, however if any of you have a question to ask please feel welcome.

Question: Geshela, is the cause of a severe mental illness like schizophrenia or psychosis the same cause as you are talking about here - the harm you've caused to other people's minds in the past?

Answer: There are many causes we can trace back to our past life karma as well as our immediate conditions. The immediate cause of schizophrenia and other insanity can be related to substances like drugs which can have the effect of hallucinations in the mind. Also, an imbalance in the elements which constitute our body can also be a cause of hallucinations. For others it is the result of having lost a close friend. Especially if we cannot come to terms with that separation, and go through long periods of worry, dwelling on the separation, this can sometimes affect the flow of our psychic wind energy. This can bring some mental disorder.

There are some disorders which have a physical cause. Some people can imagine things or have hallucinations in the mind when they have a high fever. They see things, but as soon as the fever goes down, they are normal again.

When Geshe Doga was staying at Kopan monastery in Kathmandu, one of his friends was not well. Some people recommended acupuncture and a close monk friend had a special drug which he said may be effective as a medicine. But he didn't know exactly what it was. Geshe Doga's friend took that medicine and later said that he felt like he was floating in the sky and that there were flowers and a rainbow. His body felt very light and the experience was totally blissful. Later he began to have more hallucinations. He told Geshela that he knew what he was seeing was a total illusion, but that he saw someone put his head into his room and look at him, that he heard voices and things like that. Geshela says that he doesn't know much about these things, but it seems that, for some people, the hallucinations will stay in the mind longer when taking these kind of drugs over long periods of time. This may explain why some people have mental disorders.

Geshe Doga also remembers the case of one Tibetan

business man living in south India. He was very sick, his behaviour was completely mad. People took him to hospital and he wasn't cured. So they asked some monks, including Geshe Doga, to perform a puja. Geshe Doga remembers that the puja went for a long time and that they were all very concerned. Not long after they found out that the man had jumped off a restaurant somewhere in Mysore. There was no serious injury, and the man was saved. Later on they checked him out and found that he had been smoking an intoxicating substance, which was the cause of his madness. The drug overpowers the normal functioning of the mind; so in this way people become or look insane.

That is all for tonight. Now we will chant some Buddha mantras and again sit in a comfortable posture. Try to calm the mind inward by placing the focus of the mind on the sound of the mantra.

TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA

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