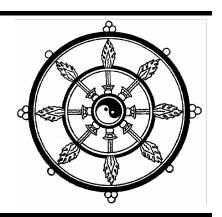
Dharmarakshita's "The Wheel of Sharp Weapons" A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga Translated by Samdup Tsering

७७ तें ह्वें र लर्केन क पर्वे र लें।





Let us first do a breathing meditation together. Sit in a comfortable position and relax every part of your body. We do this meditation to focus the mind within. We benefit from this by achieving more effective results in whatever we do. When the mind is not fully focussed on an action, then the activity becomes weak and ineffective.

The mind usually lacks focus because it is scattered all over the place towards many different objects. We usually direct only a part of our mental energy to the actions we perform, so we produce an ineffective result. That is why we do this meditation practice – to bring the entire energy and focus of the mind together, rather than it always being scattered. With this in mind, we can start the meditation by first removing all these distracting thoughts and let the mind just inwardly settle with no external object to distract it. We direct our focus to the incoming and outgoing breath, singlepointedly and with a clear, alert mind.

Whatever we achieve in this meditation training is applicable to our everyday life situations and in all our activities. Meditation practice is a mental discipline, a training practice in which we have to make sure that we keep the mind focussed on a given object. When we can rest the mind on its chosen object, we will find the meditation practice relaxing and beneficial.

When we direct our minds fully towards other activities, like studying, we will find that it is easier to do and needs less effort, whether it is for ten minutes or half an hour. We will not only learn from the study, but we will also be able to retain the knowledge longer. It is beneficial to make a habit of concentrating all our energies onto our present activity. Then whatever we do will be easier to achieve and be more fruitful.

Our goals and successes in life don't just depend on external factors. We have to realise that the most important factor in bringing about peace and happiness is to use the unique potential within our own bodies and minds. Using our good physical potential will ensure a sound healthy body and, likewise, using the good potential of our minds will ensure more peace and happiness. We will find ourselves more relaxed and joyful if we take advantage of the potential of mind and body. If we are happy and satisfied, then it doesn't matter whether we are rich or poor, what activities we are doing or the magnitude of our actions.

When we talk about our mental potential we are talking about understanding that, within us, there is something very positive, which ensures the good health of our body and mind. It is important to think positively about our life and our situation. Whether we are religious practitioners or not, whether we lead a mundane life or not, we have to enjoy life, keep a healthy body and always try to keep our minds relaxed and happy. If there is a problem, then we try to remove it.

But many of our problems are due to a certain way of thinking, a particular perception of our life situation. We need to think about the sorts of problems we have in this materially well developed Relationships are one area where many people suffer a lot, either from losing a partner or not finding a partner. This is a serious problem for a lot of people. It is important to ask how serious is this problem, and to know about problems that exist in other parts of the world, for example, what many people in the third world go through. Because Geshe Doga doesn't speak English properly, he might face problems in going out and making a living in this society. But you could almost guarantee that anyone in this country who goes out and works will not find a problem in finding food and drink. This basic problem is almost completely removed. Furthermore, this environment is clean and the living facilities are good. If we could put aside our personal emotional conflicts, we would see that our living situation is wonderful. But when we're involved in our personal inner problems, its as if these fortunate circumstances and the opportunities they present, just don't exist for us. So, judge your own situation. Is it fortunate or not?

Geshe Doga knows what the Tibetan people went through when they all first escaped from Chinese occupied Tibet to India. Many people left behind their husbands, wives, parents, friends and possessions. When they arrived in India, they struggled with a shocking change of climate, as well as finding a place to live and day to day living requirements. Geshe Doga remembers that there were some who lost hope and even committed suicide. But there were many others who, even though they thought the situation was bad, knew it could be worse. They adapted to the situation, thinking more optimistically and positively.

Gehse Doga remembers the story of one man from Amdo in the northern part of Tibet. He was almost penniless, but found a couple of rupees and bought a couple of kilos of wholemeal flour, made some bread to sell and made a little profit. He did this again and then opened up a small shop and then a restaurant. He even became

a regular donor to the monastery, and later became a rich businessman. Likewise, we can realise that whatever hindrances we find in our activities, worldly or spiritual, it is crucial that we don't lose hope, that we don't lose courage and that we don't worry our mind too much about it. We can achieve what we want if we can keep the mind positive and free from too much concern and worry. We can then be sure of finding more happiness and fewer problems, of keeping our inner peace. You don't have to be a spiritual person to have this kind of positive outlook on life. We know we can keep in good physical health, likewise our mental health can be good by keeping the mind positive, calm and relaxed. At the same time, try to help others to enjoy a healthy state of mind and body. In this way our lives are meaningful and enjoyable, as well as contributing to the happiness of others, especially those close to you.

We will now finish with chanting the Buddha's mantra, making sure that we choose a relaxing sitting posture. Try to draw the mind within and then use the mantra to focus the mind.

TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA

Transcribed from the tapes by Jenny Brooks Edited by Cynthia Kareena Edit checked against the tapes by Richard Garward Edited Version

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