

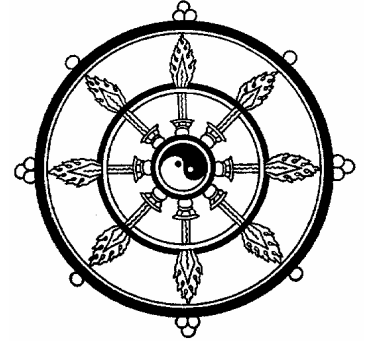
---

# Dharmarakshita's "The Wheel of Sharp Weapons"

A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Sandup Tsering

ཕྱུ་སྒྲུང་མཚོན་ཆ་འཁོར་ལོ།



24 March 1999

---

Can we do a breathing meditation first? Just make your sitting posture comfortable and relax.

It is important that we have the correct motivation for doing this meditation practice. The best way of generating such a good motivation is to think that you are doing this meditation not for your own self, but to benefit all other beings. The immediate goal might be to calm one's own mind and bring about personal inner peace and happiness. However you must be aware that the reason why you want to find this peace, happiness and inner stability is so that you can benefit others.

With this motivation you then begin the meditation. The first thing is to settle the mind inwardly by overcoming all outgoing thoughts of external objects. Try to rest the mind inwardly without any objects of focus for little while.

Then you begin the actual breathing meditation. Having brought the mind inward, you do not want it to be distracted and disturbed by any objects, thoughts or concerns. Therefore you direct your mind onto the incoming and outgoing breath with single-pointed concentration.

The fact that meditation practice can help us to rest our mind shows that is a very beneficial practice, which we should do on a regular basis. If our mind is not resting then it is always running here and there. Various thoughts would then fill our mind without any control or check.

If we examine those unchecked, uncontrolled thoughts that arise in our mind then we can see that these thoughts are the real source of all the worst types of problems that we confront in our everyday life. These unchecked thoughts are the source of problems in our relationships with others, and we know how much these problems can affect our life. They can be so disturbing, yet the cause of the problem is not something real or tangible. Rather it is something based on some kind of suspicion or misconception within our mind.

Of course no one wants to experience any problems at all. Rather we want everything to go very smoothly in our relationships with others. Also, such good relationships are essential for many of us to live a stable, happy life. For happiness and peace in our life we are all dependent upon each other.

So in this way we can understand how beneficial this meditation practice is, because through it we can rest the mind in the sense of stabilising the mind inwardly. When it is inwardly stabilised and at rest then all we find within us is just peace and happiness. There is nothing within us that bothers or concerns or worries us. Then in most circumstances, there are no other causes to worry us.

It is important not only for our own peace and happiness, but for the sake of other beings, to extend the sense of peace

and happiness to the outside world. It is very important to first stabilise one's own mind so that it is at peace and rest, because if it is not, then let alone benefiting others, one cannot even benefit oneself.

We have try to understand that pleasant, beautiful things are not always things that we can see with our eyes. In fact we can also observe the internal beauty we see in the person who always shows every kindness and compassion to others, and who always has a very humane nature. When we are near that person we can feel their good qualities. In fact these are the external indications of the good heart that he or she has generated within their mind.

As Geshe Doga always emphasises in his teachings, everyone must recognise that each person has a two natures, or potentials. You can call them good and bad, or positive and negative or creative and destructive natures or potentials. We have to try to understand more about the advantages for our own life if we express more of this positive or good human nature or potential. On the other hand, we also have to try to understand the shortcomings and loss that utilising the negative, destructive force or potential brings to our life.

If we examine, the main hindrance to utilising more of the positive qualities within us is our uncontrolled thoughts. All the very negative unskilful and harmful actions that we undertake in our life, which can result in suffering to us and to others, are driven by these negative mental attitudes and thoughts.

Therefore we can see how, if we want to see any changes to our life in terms of being a better, wiser person, we need to look at the actions we do in our life, making sure that they are very productive in the sense of bringing peace and joy to our life, as well as those with whom you live and interact.

The best spiritual practice is thought transformation, or mind training. This is making a consistent effort in trying to getting rid of all negative thoughts and ways of thinking, trying always to cultivate a positive state of mind, and a positive way of thinking. For example, try to show more concern for the needs of others, especially those with whom you are living. Try to value and understand them, try to develop some kind of caring thought towards others. This can be a true cause of peace and happiness in one's life and that of others.

As part of mind training we should try to get into the habit of checking our mind every day when we wake up, trying to ensure that there is nothing about which our mind is worrying. This means trying at least for that moment to forget all problems and disturbing thoughts, and thinking that this a time for peace, and not to be preoccupied with work. So you try to cultivate some peace, tranquillity and a

---

sense of joy in the mind. Try also to cultivate that thought of doing some positive things in the coming day.

If you have these kind of positive reflections in the mind, it will have some positive impact on the actions of the coming day. This is mind training because we need to do it over and over again to maintain this practice. Only then we can achieve a result in terms of achieving some positive change in our mind. Why? Because the nature of our mind is that it is very flexible, and it can be adapted to any type of mental attitude. So we have to maintain the continuity of our practice, otherwise if you break the continuity then it is hard to see yourself making any progress.

With respect to *The Wheel of Sharp Weapons*, in the preceding teachings we finished at the point where the text says that one has now recognised that the real enemy is the self-cherishing mind or attitude. In the next verse, the author of the text, the famous teacher Dharmarakshita, calls upon one of his principal meditational deities, Yamantaka, to destroy this enemy of the self-cherishing attitude.

To quote from the text:

And so Yamantaka, spin round with great power  
The wheel of sharp weapons of good actions now.

This verse is praying that may this self-cherishing mind now be completely destroyed.

The hand gestures of the deity represent the sword and the arrow. We can take this sword and arrow as an example of weapons, which we have discussed earlier in the teachings on *The Wheel of Sharp Weapons*. However the actual weapons used are three in number. They are the two types of truth, conventional truth and ultimate truth, and the third one, which is the union of these two truths, which is the means and the wisdom in the path. With these three weapons, the two truths and the union of the two truths you may, like Yamantaka, completely destroy the ultimate enemy, which is this self-cherishing mind,

Here the two truths refer to the two types of bodhicitta, conventional bodhicitta and the ultimate bodhicitta. Conventional bodhicitta is the altruistic mind, which aspires to full enlightenment in order to benefit all sentient beings. It is the mind that is based on generating loving kindness and compassion for all beings. Conventional bodhicitta is regarded as a skilful means that can counteract this self-cherishing mind.

Ultimate bodhicitta refers to the wisdom that realises the ultimate truth of reality. It is said that the root cause of this self-cherishing attitude is a misconception in the form of self-grasping. So therefore without uprooting that misconception that is cause of this self-grasping, this self-cherishing mind cannot be overcome and removed. Therefore in addition to a conventional bodhicitta mind, we need to cultivate this ultimate bodhicitta mind.

Furthermore in order to fully remove both the self-cherishing attitude and self-grasping, then it is said that it is necessary to apply both skilful means and wisdom together. It is said that skilful means alone is just a means without wisdom, and wisdom without a means is not a complete remedy to overcome all the faults that result from self-cherishing and self-grasping. The reason why the union of the skilful means of conventional bodhicitta and the wisdom of the ultimate bodhicitta must be applied to purify all faults is the same as needing both method and knowledge to complete mundane tasks, like building a

house.

So the three weapons of the text can be also refer to the means, the method and the union of the means and method.

To extend our knowledge, ultimate means and wisdom can also be explained in terms of the true accumulation of merit and the wisdom to reach full enlightenment or the state of Buddhahood. Conventional bodhicitta corresponds to the accumulation of merit, and ultimate bodhicitta, or wisdom and is the accumulation of wisdom.

By combining these two together then we can reach the state of buddhahood. The end result of this full enlightenment or the state of buddhahood, is the achievement of the form body of the buddha, which is perfect and has no faults. The main cause of this can be traced to the accumulation of merit, or the conventional bodhicitta, or the skilful means that we apply during our time on the path.

At the time we achieve full enlightenment our mind reaches the state of the omniscient mind of a buddha, the Dharmakaya or the truth body. The cause for this can be traced back to the accumulation of wisdom, or the ultimate bodhicitta, which we realised while on the path. However the final result of this state of Buddhahood depends upon not just merit and wisdom, but the combination of both. When we achieve the form body of Buddha, even though its main cause is skilful means and the accumulation of merit, it also depends upon the accumulation of wisdom. Likewise a buddha's truth body depends upon skilful means or the accumulation of merit. Therefore while we are on the path we have to practise both method and wisdom, and the union of both method and wisdom.

There is in this tantra mention of the union body that you achieve on the path. When we reach the ultimate state of buddhahood then we reach a state where our mind and body and speech pervade the same limit of space. In other words, wherever the enlightened being's body pervades then enlightened being's mind also pervades. Wherever an enlightened mind pervades, so too the enlightened being's speech and body also pervades. This tells us something about the result. During the causal time of the union, the cause is the union of the means and wisdom together, for all the aspects of the qualities of enlightened beings.

Even if what we have just discussed here is not directly related to these teachings, we mentioned it so as to give some idea of how you can broaden your spiritual knowledge. The reason why it is important to have this broad knowledge of the Dharma is so that you can eventually reflect on the entire spiritual path, on the spiritual teaching about the path, and on the results. You can do this based on just a few Dharma words, or based on just a single meditation.

We will now stop here, and as usual so we do the Buddha's mantra seven times. For reciting this mantra, once again try to adopt the meditation posture making sure that your body is relaxed, and the mind is calmed inwardly. Then ensure that the mind is focused on the sound of the mantra.

TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA

*Transcribed from the tapes by Gaye Lewis Radcliffe  
Edited by Adair Bunnett  
Edited Version*

---

