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

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## 12 May 1999

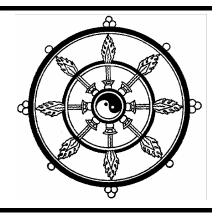
As usual we will first do some breathing meditation. Try to choose a sitting position that is the most comfortable for you. We should then check our mind and try to see if there are any negative states of mind or mental delusions. If we find any, then we should try to understand that these are the main source of all our problems in life. However, we should also remember that we are fortunate in having this wonderful gift of human life, as well as good living conditions and the freedom and opportunity to do whatever we want with our life.

Yet despite all the favorable conditions we have, there are still moments of unhappiness and sadness, and problems that confront us in life. Understand that all these problems are caused by our negative states of mind. There is no other cause. When these negative states arise we cannot recognise or enjoy the wonderful happiness and conditions we now possess. We do this meditation practice to challenge and completely defeat our negative states of mind so they have no influence over us anymore.

Negative states of mind do not arise without causes or conditions. The main cause of an unstable or disturbed mind is an external object of distraction. As we meditate, we should try to get rid of all distracting objects and let the mind abide within. With the mind fully stabilised inward, we can start the breathing meditation, with all attention on the incoming and outgoing breath. It is important to focus the mind on the meditation object. The way we focus our mind is not the same way in which we look at an object with our eyes. In meditation we focus the mind on the object so there is no gap between the mind and the object.

Meditation is also a means to transform our mind. It can also get rid of any unwanted states of mind that bring us suffering and unhappiness. Examples are be anger and hatred which no-one wants because of the suffering and unhappiness they bring to our lives. By meditating, we can get rid of anger and replace it with a different state of mind.

To practice meditation, we need to understand how, for example, anger arises. What are the main factors that bring anger into our mind? The main factor is not an external object, but rather the way that object appears to our mind. For example, when we are angry, an object may appear to us as unpleasant and unsatisfactory. As the object already appears unpleasant to us, there is the possibility of further exaggerating its unpleasantness in



our mind. When we have anger or hatred in our mind we can't find happiness. There can be no moment of peace or happiness.

We meditate to change our perceptions of an object or person. We need to try and see the object in the opposite way to how it appears to our mind. Instead of thinking of it as unattractive and unpleasant, we need to try and see its more pleasant and attractive sides. At least we need to directly challenge the anger, or to think of another object or person that has a pleasant or positive appeal to our mind. Or we can think of any object or person that won't cause anger in our mind. If we train in this way, we will find it possible to transform our mind and get rid of our angry mind.

Another unwanted mind can be desire or attachment, some which can bring us great harm. Similarly, to overcome this negative state of mind, we have to engage in meditation. We have to train our mind to the kind of thinking that doesn't induce any emotions of desire and attachment. In the case of desire, we see the person or object of desire as having pleasant and attractive qualities. To overcome this desire we need to train our mind to understand the opposite side of the person or object by thinking about their ugly and unattractive qualities. By doing this, we can diminish or remove the desires. Another method is to think of any object or person that is not a cause for desire. This can help free our mind from disturbing desire or attachment.

We need to understand that all the negative states of mind and mental delusions that bring us unhappiness, and disturb our mind, are our enemies. However, within us we do have the weapons to defeat all these enemies. In order to overcome desire, we need to develop nonattachment. We need to remember that we do have a mind of non-attachment, even when we experience strong attachment.

Within us there is the potential to produce the mind of non-attachment. If we could produce this, then we could no longer have any attachment. Likewise, we also possess the mind of non-anger. This is why we can be successful in overcoming and eliminating all the delusions in our mind. The Buddhist philosophy is that our minds are fundamentally pure, without any delusions or negatives. Therefore it is possible for us to purify all delusions.

Delusions that arise in our mind temporary and due to certain causes and conditions. If we make an effort to develop the positive qualities of the mind, we can keep developing them until we manifest the true intrinsic nature of our mind. In Buddhist philosophy, when we have attained that state of mind, pure and devoid of any delusion, then we have attained enlightenment and the state of Buddhahood. This is the final manifestation of the fundamental nature of the mind, the ultimate or real beauty of our self.

Now, a clarification on the so called 'meditation on ugliness', which is the remedy to overcome desire or attachment to another person. In theory, this is easy to understand and if this meditation is practised on the desire object, it is impossible to have any desire for that object. However, in practice, when we experience strong attachment and desire, we will find this practice extremely difficult. The person is just too attractive and too appealing to our mind. There is no doubt about this, the feeling can be very strong. But this doesn't mean that we can't practice the meditation, and it should still relate to the person we most desire.

We can also think of our body to do this meditation on ugliness. We don't necessarily have to think that our body is ugly or smelly. We just realistically look at how our bodies are made up. When we meditate, we can visualise all our body parts, including the internal parts. Think about the real things that make up our body on the inside and on the outside. As we understand, we gain knowledge and our mind is occupied with that knowledge. This can be very effective in reducing and overcoming desire for the body.

Now to continue with the teaching on the text, 'The Wheel of Sharp Weapons'.

Capture him, capture him

Fierce Yamantaka, summon this enemy and bring him forth now

The next two lines read:

Better him, better him,

Rip out the heart of grasping for ego and our love for ourself

Twice saying the phrase 'better him' implies two types of bodhicitta, i.e. conventional bodhicitta and ultimate bodhicitta. The line 'rip out the heart of grasping for ego and our love for ourself', refers to both the self-grasping ('grasping for ego') and the self-cherishing mind ('love for ourself'). These two minds are like the master and servant, the self-grasping mind like the master, and the self-cherishing mind like the servant. However, it is said that both the master and the servant are equal in terms of deceiving or harming ourselves or others. This prayer strikes at the heart of both the enemies of self-grasping and self-cherishing, so inwardly we can sustain some peace.

Now we will chant the Buddha's mantra seven times. Please sit in the meditation posture you chose at the beginning, and also try to make sure your mind is not distracted by any kind of outer objects but is just resting inside yourself. When we chant the mantra we must try to fully focus on the mantra.

TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA

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