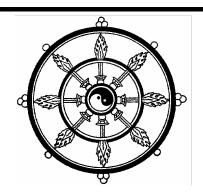
Dharmarakshita's "The Wheel of Sharp Weapons" A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga Translated by Samdup Tsering

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We will do some breathing meditation first. Please choose the most comfortable sitting posture, and fully relax your body. We should also try to remove all distracting thoughts, and try to bring the mind fully inward, not getting distracted by any outer objects. We should direct the mind on the out-going and in-going breath, and maintain our focus by mentally counting the breath as it comes in and goes out.

We must realise that the mind needs to have a break from its continual thought processes. We engage in this meditation practice to bring the mind inward, rather than letting it always be overpowered and preoccupied by numerous thoughts. When the mind is overcrowded by too many thoughts - whether they are good or bad - it becomes restless and stressed, and we feel caught in some problem we cannot see, a conflict that we can't see ourselves getting out of.

Of course we are not saying that we shouldn't have any thoughts. We do have to think about life and make plans for our future, and so on. However, there is a limit to how many thoughts our mind can cope with. We also have to realise that if our mind is always preoccupied with making plans for the future - for example, making plans for the next twenty or thirty years - this can cause us to worry. As a result, fear, insecurity, and anxiety disturb us.

When we have such worry and fear, we cannot enjoy our current situation, even when our situation and living conditions are good. So, sometimes it is better to completely forget about long-term plans and focus instead on the short-term future - say the next ten years, or even less. If you are financially secure enough to pay for food, housing, clothing and so on for the next year, there is no reason to worry. Try to feel good about this, and try to generate some positive way of thinking so that, whatever happens beyond that year, you can enjoy your life right now and in the immediate future.

We should engage in this breathing meditation practice to give ourselves a break from all these thoughts and worries, and rest the mind on the meditation object. Just as we physically need to take time off from work and rest, we should also try to rest mentally, and not think about any issues concerning work or the future, but just strive for rest and peace. We often see people who are fortunate in terms of their financial and living conditions, but seem continually stressed and depressed. In their minds, they have built up a mental habit of worrying they can't stop their minds from worrying.

On the other hand, we have to understand that the

happiness we seek is not something that will just come to us. Also, our suffering will not just disappear if we wait long enough. Rather, we have to understand that the causes for having happiness or not having suffering right now are, to a great extent, in our own hands. We have the potential to create our present happiness and remove the causes of unhappiness.

This is because our states of happiness or unhappiness are related to our attitude or way of thinking. So, we should try to be content with our current situation, and learn how to take advantage of all the good conditions we currently possess. Thus, we can ensure that the money we make from our work, for example, can contribute to our living a satisfying life. You can see good examples of people who are just as good as spending money as they are at making it! They enjoy their life buy good clothes, eat good food, go on holidays - and save any extra money, without any worries. Then, as time goes by, they have something saved.

There are other people, however, who always worry. When they have a job, they worry; when they haven't got a job, they worry. When they've got money, they worry; when they haven't, they worry, and so on. Geshe Doga says there are also some people, even in the Tibetan community, who may be close to dying, yet still worry that they haven't got enough money! If we think too much about the future - something we cannot catch hold of - there will be no end to our worries. You also hear about people who live a non-stop, busy lifestyle. But you do not have to be that busy. Whatever the conditions outside in society, your own peace and happiness is in within your control, within your hands.

Before we begin looking for more pleasure, it is important that we enjoy the happiness and satisfaction we already possess. We may think that the wealth, possessions and friends we currently possess are not good enough, and that we have to go out and look for greater wealth or friends. Such thinking can, in a lot of cases, lead to people breaking up with their current friends. Because of this, they suffer and, in the meantime, may not be able to make any new friends. So, they are in a situation where they have lost their old friend, and can't find any new friends.

People living in Australia are fortunate in terms of the living conditions and freedoms they enjoy here. It is important to appreciate these things and not take them for granted. If you think this way, you can find some satisfaction in appreciating these good living conditions.

Now we'll do the commentary on the text, The Wheel of

Sharp Weapons. Verse 54 reads:

Hum, Hum! Show all your powers, O mighty protector.

Dza, Dza! Tie up this enemy; do not let him loose.

In the first line, the mantra or magic word 'Hum' is repeated to indicate the two types of bodhicitta - conventional and ultimate bodhicitta. The 'mighty protector' refers to the wrathful deity or protector, Yamantaka; the verse says 'show all your powers', which is a prayer to the protector to manifest his miraculous powers, and destroy the two enemies [self-cherishing and self-grasping].

In the next line, the words 'Dza, Dza' also refer to the two types of bodhicitta. Generally, the mantra 'Hum' hasn't got a definite meaning, in the sense that it doesn't symbolise anything specific. Rather, 'Hum' can symbolise many things - the holy mind, exulted wisdom, and so on. But 'Dza' has the meaning 'to bring back, or hook back'. In this context, the author is praying to the protector [Yamantaka], asking him bring back the two enemies, tie them up, and not let them loose.

The third line says:

P'a, P'a! Set us free by your might, O great Lord over Death.

This mantra 'P'a' has different meanings in Tibetan, depending on the context. In this context, the meaning is 'to destroy'. The repetition of this mantra in the third line has the same implication as the mantra repetitions in the previous two lines. The repetition implies the two types of bodhicitta, as well as freeing us from the two enemies, especially the self-cherishing mind.

That's all the teaching for tonight. We are going to chant some mantras. As at the start of the session, could people sit in a meditation posture, relaxing and stabilising the mind inward. Tonight, we'll first chant the Buddha's mantra seven times and then Tara's mantra seven times.

TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA OM TARA TUTTARE TURE SOHA

Transcribed from the tapes by Rita Feldmann Edited by Mary-Lou Considine Edit checked against the tapes by Dianne McDonald Edited Version

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