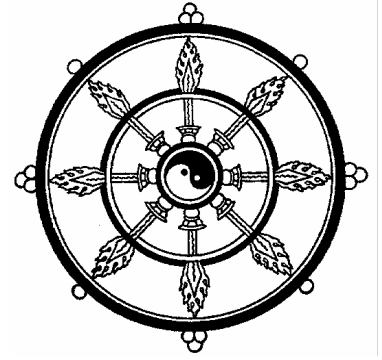


# Dharmarakshita's "The Wheel of Sharp Weapons"

A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Sandup Tsering

འཇིགས་མེད་མཚོ་ཆེན་པོ་འཕྲིན་ལོ་།



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First we will do some breathing meditation. Sit in the meditation posture and make sure that your body is fully relaxed. Just as we can rest physically, if our mind is also at rest, then we can truly experience inner peace and happiness. But, if our body is at rest and our mind is not - if it is bothered by some disturbing thoughts - then we cannot experience inner peace and happiness. It is important to realise that the true peace and happiness we seek is something which is dependent on resting both our mind and our body. Now, as we place our mind at rest, we should try as much as possible to remove all disturbing thoughts, ensuring that there's no external thought influencing our mind, just the mind resting peacefully within.

After we remove all thoughts of external objects and bring the mind inward, there must still be an object for your mind, because your mind cannot exist without having any objects. To a great extent it is the type of object that we hold in our mind that predetermines whether we feel peaceful or not. If we focus on our own breath as the object, on the inhaling and exhaling, we find our mind at peace. Do this breathing meditation in this way, trying to make sure the mind focuses on the breath and is not overcome by any distracting thoughts which arise.

Especially in the beginning, it is better not to make meditation sessions too long, because our mind is not used to focusing on a given object. If our session is too long, instead of making progress in developing single-pointed concentration, our mind would develop a bad habit of being unfocused. It is more effective and more beneficial if we make our sessions very short - for up to a minute, half a minute or just 15 seconds. If, in that moment, you are able to direct the mind single-pointedly on the object so it almost becomes one with the object, if you do the same practice repeatedly, gradually you are able to extend this single-pointed concentration and make real progress.

If we make some progress in developing some peace by calming all the distracting thoughts in our mind, then we are in a very good situation to feel satisfied with the peace and happiness in our life. If on top of doing meditation we can find a very peaceful external environment where there is no disturbances of noise and so on, then we can naturally experience a great sense of peace and tranquillity, since your mind is also very calm. If we consider what we really want in life, it is some sense of peace and satisfaction. If we examine what

causes such peace, having good external conditions is not enough. On top of these conditions, such as having the comfort of good food and drinks, clothes and so on, our mind also must be at peace and satisfied. When we achieve this, then we can find some happiness and meaning in our life. It's important that we integrate a meditation practice that is effective in calming our mind and enhancing peace and happiness.

Continuing with Verse 84 of *The Wheel of Sharp Weapons*. The verse reads:

We lack clairvoyance, yet lie, feigning powers,  
And then when proved wrong, we must bear all  
complaints.

We have little compassion for those who are near us;  
Whenever they blunder, we are quick to lash out.  
Trample him, trample him, dance on the head  
Of this treacherous concept of selfish concern.  
Tear out the heart of this self-centred butcher  
Who slaughters our chance to gain final release.

This verse is talking about how some people lie to others by claiming to have powers or qualities they do not possess, such as clairvoyance to read the mind of others. They are just telling lies in order to acquire something, such as wealth. In reality they have no such powers. If asked specific questions, to see whether they have such powers, then, of course, whatever reply given will be also a lie. Others can then see the lie and discover that the person does not possess any clairvoyant powers. They will disbelieve whatever qualities are claimed, and begin to criticise and disapprove of whatever qualifications the person possesses. The criticism must simply be accepted, because with the lies so evident and obvious, others can no longer be deceived.

The verse also talks about whether or not we have compassion for others, particularly those who are close to us. There is the question of whether we have any concern, sympathetic feelings or care for them. If we define compassion, it is a state of mind which arises in dependence on wanting, or wishing, others to be free from suffering. With compassion, because of the concern or sympathy you have towards others, you cannot bear them to suffer. Naturally you would feel compassion, as you genuinely and sincerely wish others to be free from suffering. When we create actions which cause or bring about unhappiness in others, for instance by using harsh speech, our actions indicate that we lack compassion for others. If we have some sense of consideration of others, and always try to restrain from any actions which can

hurt or harm, that indicates we have compassion and loving and kindness for others.

The instruction here is not to tell lies, not to deceive others, but rather to show them compassion and to be a very good natured person. This is something which, if we can integrate it into our daily actions, can have great benefit to our lives. It can improve our relationship with others and can be very effective in overcoming otherwise unnecessary problems that we have to put up with. As people we are social beings who are part of society. It is important for us to have a friendly, trustworthy, and very faithful relationship with others. We feel bad when no-one places any trust in us, and even worse when we don't feel trusted by those we consider very close friends. The main cause of building trust in our relationships is to always be very honest in our speech and only speak very truthful words. We do not need to explain this further, because we know from our own experience how we cannot trust someone who always lies to others and to us. On the other hand, when someone always tells the truth, we can feel it and always place trust in them, on the ground that their speech is always truthful. Also, often the criticism we receive from others is caused by lying to them, or deceiving them. The practice is to try to focus on correcting our own mistakes, our own faulty actions.

As one master said, when we think of other beings, the minds of most are all under the influence of mental delusions, all under the influence of the self-centred mind. Their attitude is all based on whether there is any advantage, any benefit to themselves. This is something very common, especially in this age of degeneration. If you want to make any progress, then what is most important is trying to focus on your own mind and actions. It is said here that if you trying to develop compassion, that means developing more tolerance towards others, and not easily getting angry, even due to some minor harm you receive from others. It's important to consider what quality you can develop in order to sustain lasting peace and happiness in your mind. Once you do this, then no matter what changes takes place in your life, inwardly you have a very stable mind and way of looking at things. You live your life very honestly, trying as much as possible, to show compassion to others and to helping or benefiting them. In this way, you can live a very stable life. Otherwise, lots of things you view as a source of security in your life, such as your relationships, become a source of problems. This verse is instructing us, particularly in our speech, to always use very honest speech, and in all our actions to bring something positive to others.

As usual, we will finish with the Lord Buddha's mantra. Again, sit in a meditation posture and, after calming all distracting thoughts, focus the mind on the mantra.

*TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA*

*Transcribed from the tapes by Gabrielle Thompson  
Edited by Dianne McDonald  
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Edited Version*

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