
of body speech and mind that we should adopt and those we should avoid. The actions we should avoid are mainly the 10 non-virtuous or unwholesome actions, which are:

- three of body (killing, stealing and sexual misconduct)
- four of speech (lying, divisive speech, harsh speech and idle gossip)
- three of mind (ill-will, covetousness and wrong view).

As part of our spiritual practice, we should avoid these actions. Instead, the actions we should adopt are the 10 virtuous actions, which means refraining from the 10 non-virtuous actions. We should also study texts that show us which right actions to adopt and which wrong actions to abandon. This will enable us to generate strong conviction in what these texts are saying, so that we will regard those texts as objects worthy of our respect.

The next part of the verse states the reason why ordinary beings adopt non-virtuous or negative actions, which they are supposed to abandon, and why they criticise texts written by distinguished spiritual masters – texts that they should respect. The reason why our actions normally contradict the teachings is as stated:

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.

That's all for tonight's teaching. Does anyone have a question?

Question: When the text uses words like 'tear out the heart', isn't this very aggressive and violent and cause anger to arise?

Answer: Geshe-la agrees that the words "Tear out the heart..." are violent and, as you said, can generate anger. But anger towards whom?

The words "Tear out the heart of this self-centred butcher..." in this context mean to 'kill' the self-cherishing mind. Even the root text uses the Sanskrit word '*mara*', which also means to kill. To this day, Indian people use the word *mara* to mean 'hit'. In a dispute, people say this word if they want to taunt you rather than hit you. So it means 'hit' as well as means 'kill'.

The use of the words is metaphorical. If you are fighting an enemy, you talk about striking at the enemy and finishing them off, or killing them off. Some people might use the term 'beat them up'. These are all words you use when you want to challenge an enemy. Here, the enemy is the self-cherishing mind and the main weapons you need to use to challenge this enemy are the two types of bodhicitta mind: the conventional bodhi mind and the ultimate bodhi mind.

The term 'conventional bodhi mind' refers to the altruistic mind of enlightenment, or bodhicitta, which is a fully developed sense of universal compassion and loving kindness. When such a mind of loving kindness

and compassion is generated, it fills one's mind, so that there is no place for the self-cherishing mind to dwell. So generating loving kindness and compassion means that you get rid of the self-cherishing mind.

The ultimate bodhi mind or bodhicitta is the wisdom that realises the emptiness of inherent existence of all phenomena. This wisdom is said to be the most powerful force for combatting the ignorance of self-grasping. Just as the conventional bodhicitta mind is the most powerful force to combat with the self-cherishing mind, the wisdom of selflessness or emptiness is the most powerful antidote to the ignorance of self-grasping.

The difference between having a self-cherishing mind and feeling love and compassion for other beings is that the self-cherishing mind is only concerned about oneself and doesn't consider any other beings. Whereas, when you have the love and compassion for other beings, you naturally think of their needs; with such a mind, you naturally begin to share your goodness with other beings. So there is a huge difference between these two attitudes.

It is said that the teachings and practice of generating love and compassion are the essence or heart of the Great Vehicle of Buddhism, or Mahayana path.

That's all for tonight. We will now chant the Buddha's mantra. Could people again sit in the meditation posture, and try to rest both mind and body. As we begin the chanting, we will focus the mind on the sound of the mantra.

TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA

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