

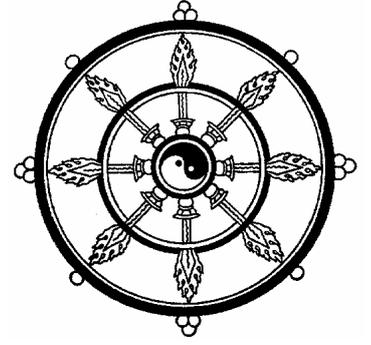
---

# Dharmarakshita's "The Wheel of Sharp Weapons"

A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Sandup Tsering

འཇིགས་མེད་ཀྱི་ལྷོ་མཚོ་ལྷོ་ལོ་ལོ་ལོ་



---

21 February 2001

Let's first do some breathing meditation together. Choose a sitting posture that is most convenient and relaxing, one that includes the main features of the classic sitting posture for meditation.

Before beginning the meditation, you should have some idea or understanding of the meditation practice that you are doing and its benefits. It should be crystal clear in your mind that the meditation practice you are about to do will truly benefit you.

The main benefit of this meditation practice is that it enables you to achieve calm, peace, and tranquillity in the mind. The reason why the focus of this meditation is on one's mind is that, if we do not calm the mind, there is no way we can find the true peace and happiness that we continually seek.

Even at this moment, we are sitting in a very peaceful environment and sitting in a posture that is physically restful. However, even if you outwardly possess every good condition you can think of, if your mind is not calm and is strongly under the influence of a distracting thought, then it is just as if the body is not at rest, because you inwardly feel some burden, disturbance, unease, discomfort.

You can even get to the point where the thought is so strong and overwhelming that your mind not only feels restless, but you can also feel discomfort in the body, in the form of an ache or pain.

So we must give some thought to how we can diminish or reduce such mental distractions. Without reducing unruly thoughts, we can see that it is impossible to find peace and happiness.

Meditation is the most effective means of achieving a calm mind. This is a good motivation for undertaking this meditation practice - having a clear understanding of the benefits that the practice will bring you, as well as a clear understanding of what one is supposed to be doing in the practice. So, after choosing to do a practice, it is very important to give some thought to such issues.

If we investigate using discriminating wisdom, we can see that the main source of the problems and unhappiness we experience is within one's own mind. External conditions are not the main source of the happiness we seek and the suffering we try to avoid. To be more specific, the main source of suffering is in certain ways of thinking. If we have a way of thinking that is always preoccupied with external objects, it can prevent

us from knowing the truth about our situation.

Through meditation practice, we need to break these negative or bad mental habits. If we investigate why such unskilful thinking patterns are always so strongly present within the mind, we can see that we have built up this negative energy over a long time within ourselves. This is the state of mind that brings us unnecessary suffering and which we find difficult to control - the state of mind that never stops wandering after external objects.

This negative energy within the mind is not something solid and physical, like matter. Thus, if we investigate to see whether we possess a counteractive positive energy within the mind, we can see the potential to overcome this negative energy. Instead of considering external factors or conditions as a way to solve our problems, we can recognise a positive force within ourselves and actualise it, by realising that it is a direct remedy to the negative energy that causes the mind to always wander and be influenced by outer distractions.

Meditation practice enables us to change this negative way of thinking into a positive one, through developing more positive energy and realising one's own self-potential.

As a result of our practice, we may also achieve a sense of inner peace and relief from outer distractions. But we can only stabilise this inner peace for a longer time by doing this same practice over and over again, trying to familiarise oneself as much as possible with whatever meditation practice one has chosen. With more meditation practice, one has a more profound realisation of the potential within oneself as one becomes clearer about what one wants in life, what one has to do, what one's life will come to - we come to understand that all of this depends upon the energy or force within oneself.

The immediate benefit of meditation practice is that we have a more positive outlook. Whatever actions or work we do, there is always a good motivation and a feeling of confidence.

Tonight, the meditation we are doing is the breathing meditation, which is said to be especially effective in calming the mind immediately and stabilising it inward.

It is good to do this at the beginning of a teaching. It is very good to get used to the technique of breathing meditation, so that we can also apply the same technique to any other meditation practice we undertake. If, before

---

you do any other practice, you take some time to do this breathing meditation, your mind will become very calm and becomes very conducive to engaging in whatever practice you have chosen.

To begin the breathing meditation, try to remove all distracting thoughts of external objects so that one's mind remains fully within one's being. After we have brought the mind inward, we can begin the actual breathing meditation, focusing the mind on the in- and out-breath and not getting distracted by any other object.

The power of meditation lies in diminishing our mental delusions or afflictive emotions. If someone is doing a meditation retreat or practice in a very quiet place and performing the meditation practice effectively – in terms of overcoming and reducing these mental delusions – then that person can experience a great amount of peace, happiness and joy in that place, and the experience can be very blissful. For that person, the practice that he or she does serves as a supportive friend. If the person is in a very remote, isolated place, there is no suffering from loneliness, even though there are no other friends or people around.

However if, instead of applying the meditation practice to reducing and eradicating mental delusions, the practitioner meditating in a very quiet place lets his or her mind wander outwards to society, to the busy world outside, then this person may even be in danger of going mad.

This reminds us that we always have this continual problem of having or not having friends. But if you think about it, that experience is really related to our way of thinking. With a wrong way of thinking, even if you have many good friends, you may not be satisfied. Inwardly, you still suffer from loneliness, from the feeling of lacking a good, supportive outside friend.

To solve this problem in the long-term, we must change our way of thinking. Otherwise, this problem will continue for the rest of one's life; even if we solve the problem for a week, then next week we may face the same problem.

Thus, the problem of loneliness or feeling we lack friends, is an example of the continual problems we experience. We can solve such problems by modifying or transforming our way of thinking. We can resolve many of our problems by applying our knowledge and experience of transforming our thinking habits. Even if we are not able to completely prevent such problems, at least we can learn how to see our problems as minor and not so urgent.

This is how the meditation practice of thought transformation can benefit us, enabling us to enjoy a sustainable peace and happiness, no matter where, in which country, or with whom we live, or whether we live alone or with others – whatever situation we find ourselves in. This practice has the benefit of ensuring some peace and happiness for us.

From next week onwards, we will begin the commentary on *The Wheel of Sharp Weapons*, which we still haven't

finished.

We'll finish tonight's teaching here with the meditation of chanting Buddha Shakyamuni's mantra. Prepare yourself by choosing the right sitting posture and calming the mind inward. Then, focus the mind on the sound of the mantra that we will now chant.

*TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA*

*Transcribed from tape by Rita Feldman*

*Edited by Mary-Lou Considine*

*Checked by Dianne McDonald*

*Edited Version*

© **Tara Institute**