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accused and at risk of being charged with a crime. Likewise, helping those who are lacking basic human rights. Helping such helpless innocent beings at risk is an act of benefiting those at risk. Inanimate objects at risk refers to the endangered environment including plants and forests. Since living beings depend on their environment to survive, the protection of the environment is a very important act of benefiting other beings.

**The fifth one is benefitting those afflicted with sorrow or grief.** This includes acts of helping those who are experiencing sorrow, depression and sadness because of the death of or being separated from their parents, partners, children, relatives, or because of financial or material loss etc. You help them by extending your love, being with them, listening to them, giving them a word of inspiration, consoling them, and making them aware of the truth of death and impermanence etc.

**The sixth is benefitting those who are impoverished.** Here there are many ways we help others. For example, we may give people who are poverty stricken the money or material things that they need. We can offer water to those who are thirsty, food to the hungry, shelter to the homeless. We can offer a lift in our car to those people who need help with transportation. All of these actions fit into the category of this way of benefitting.

**The seventh is benefitting those whose livelihood is dependent on you.** For example, as an owner of a large firm you should not treat the employees as your serfs, exploit or abuse them; rather treat them with dignity, respect, kindness and fairness.

**The eighth is benefitting others by adjusting yourself to their wishes and needs.** In order to effectively benefit others, first they must trust you and accept you as their friend. So, as part of cultivating a spirit of friendship, we must understand them and respect their wishes and needs. Without achieving this we cannot fully benefit them even if we are very sincere and wholehearted in wanting to benefit them.

So, to benefit others we sometimes have to put aside our views and needs and go along with others' views and needs.

**The ninth is benefitting those who are on the right path.** There are those who are enriched with the excellent qualities of faith, morality and listening etc. You need to admire these people for their qualities. In that way, you will cause them to further increase their qualities. Then there may be others who are on the right path. If they are slow in learning, you need to be patient and never do or say anything which would discourage them. Rather, you only make positive comments to help them stay motivated and inspired.

Relating to this, let me share with you a story about two of Atisha's disciples, Dromtonpa and Jangchup Rinchen. Jangchup Rinchen was the cook. One day he said to Dromtonpa, 'I really want to practise meditation, but I never get an opportunity because cooking uses most of my time.' Dromtonpa perfectly understood his friend's frustration and wanted to help him. So Dromtonpa said to him, 'Actually, I also have the same sort of problem that I too really want to practise meditation. But most of the time

I am serving my master as a translator.' They became very close friends. Then, Dromtonpa said to his friend one day, 'Actually, I find it more beneficial to serve my master than practising meditation.' This statement hit the nail on the head for Jangchup Rinchen who found it very beneficial, and later he felt that cooking for his master gave him joy rather than being boring. In this story, we find how skilful Dromtonpa was in fostering a close friendship and then guiding his friend.

**The tenth is the alternative way of benefitting those who don't admit their mistakes or who don't accept any other suggestions to correct their mistakes.** There are some people who commit various types of misdeeds. Whether you complain or try to compromise or take any other measurements, it makes no difference. They will not try to change. So, how can you benefit them? Rather than the usual methods, such as scolding or threatening them, engage with them purely out of warm-heartedness and an intention to benefit them.

**The eleventh is benefitting those who can be subdued by using miraculous powers.** To perform this act of benefit, you display miraculous powers, such as showing the consequences of negative actions by taking the offenders to the hell realm or instilling faith in the existence of life before and after death, by narrating stories of past and future lives. This we can't do!

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