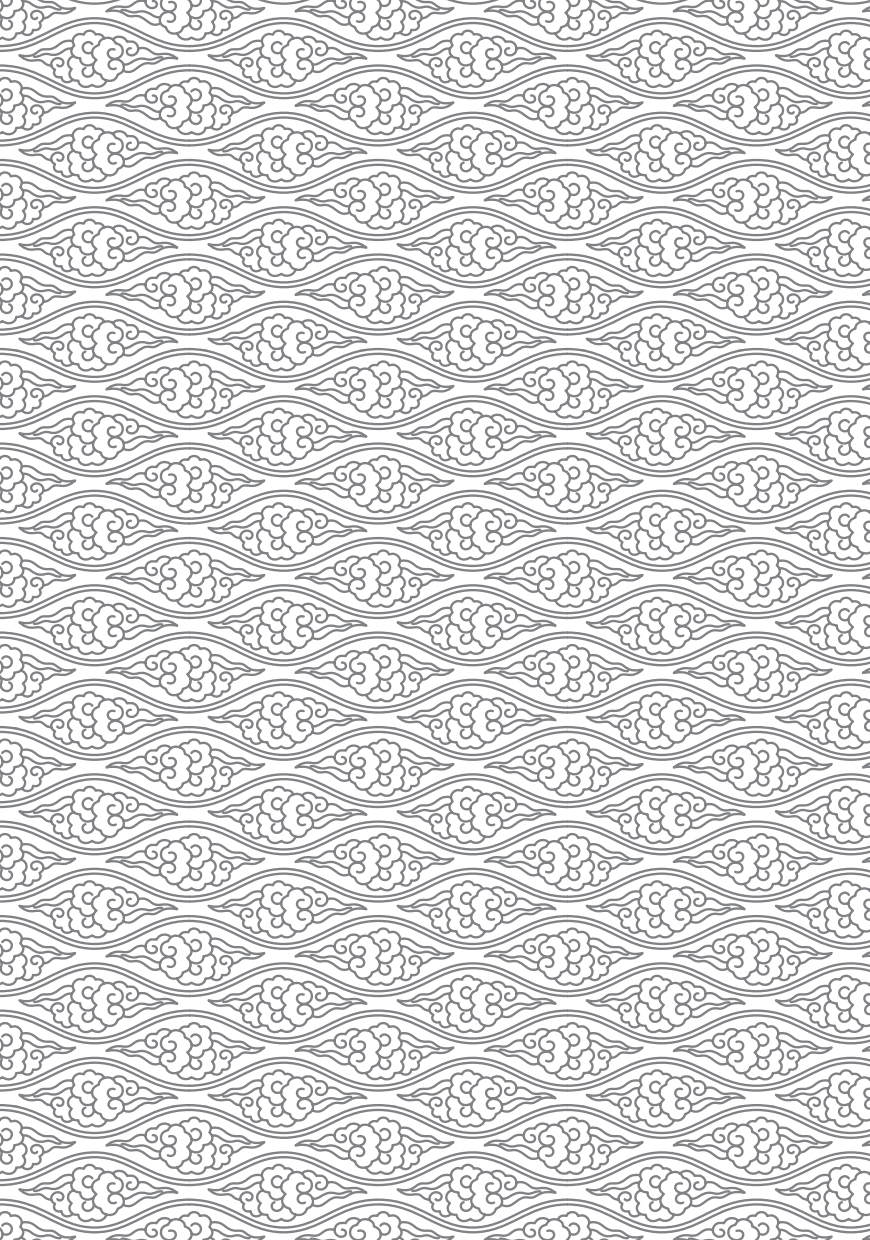
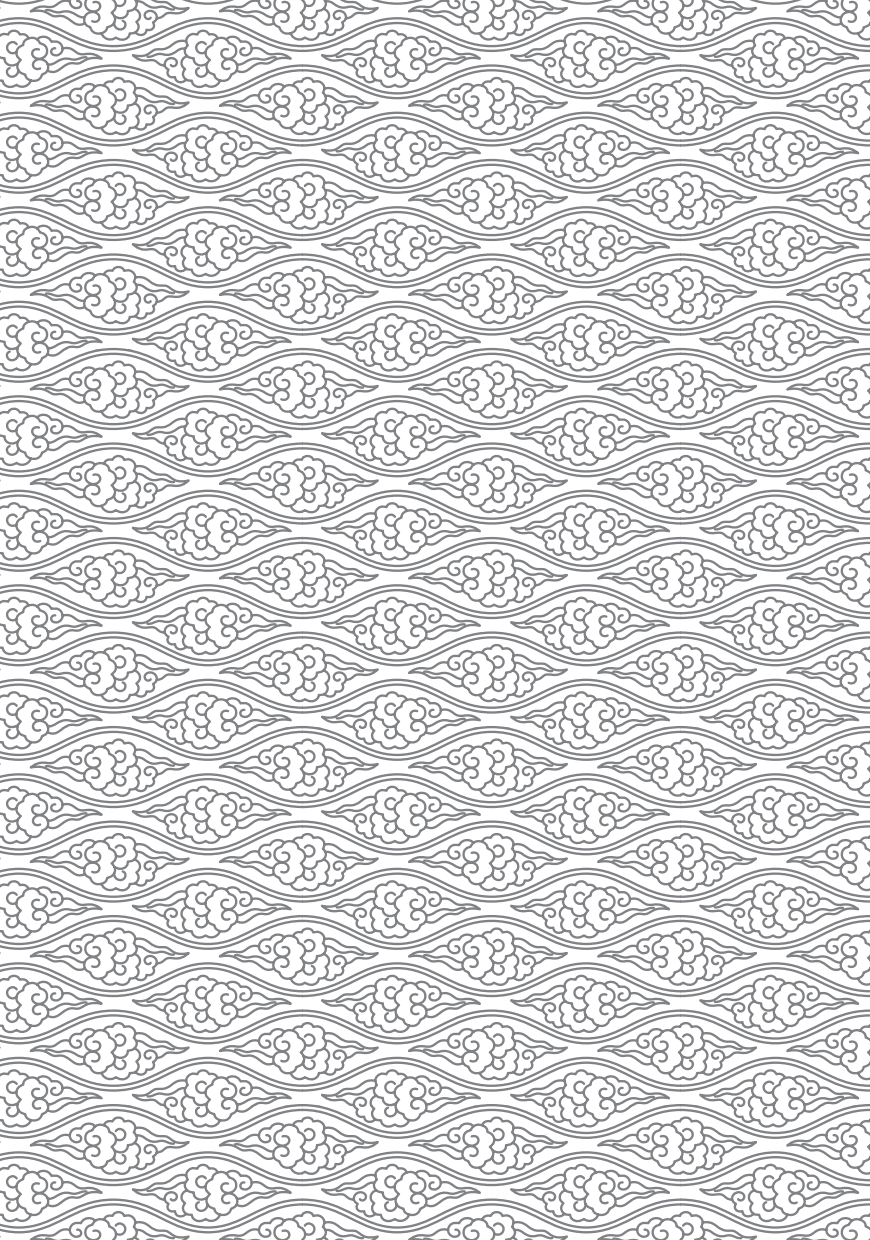




LIVING IN HARMONY

KHENSUR RINPOCHE
LAMA LHUNDRUP RIGSEL





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HARMONY

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Amitabha
Buddhist Centre
阿彌陀佛佛教中心



DEDICATION



Through the merit created by preparing, reading, thinking about and sharing this book with others, may all teachers of the Dharma live long and healthy lives, may the Dharma spread throughout the infinite reaches of space and may all sentient beings quickly attain enlightenment.

May the merit created also be dedicated to the quick return of the unmistakable reincarnation of Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup Rigsel. May all favourable conditions for the successful completion of the stupas to be built in his memory arise immediately.

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Ng Swee Kim
Publications Group
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30 May 2014

FOREWORD

◇ KHEN RINPOCHE GESHE CHONYI ◇

Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup was highly respected for his decades of dedicated and selfless service as abbot of Kopan Monastery and Khachoe Gyakyil Nunnery.

He was revered for his perfect devotion to his heart guru, Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche, his scholarship and knowledge of Buddhist philosophy and his deep understanding of the teachings of the Buddha as presented in the graduated stages of the path to enlightenment, the lam-rim.

Among his many students, he was well loved for his kindness, wisdom, compassion and, in particular, his empathy for and

insightful understanding of the challenges we faced in our efforts to practise the Dharma.

This can be seen from the teachings presented in this slim volume here. Khensur Rinpoche had the unique ability to show ordinary people like ourselves how to bridge the divide between the Dharma—showing us its relevance and importance to leading a meaningful and happy life—and integrating it into our daily lives.

His teachings are down-to-earth, practical, accessible and deceptively simple. But if we can follow his advice well, it promises a most profound transformation in ourselves for the better. In essence, by learning to overcome our negative emotions and to cherish others instead of ourselves, we will be able to benefit our family, our colleagues, our community, our city, our country and ultimately, the whole world and everyone in it.

Therefore I pray that whoever reads and studies this book will be free of all hindrances in putting Khensur Rinpoche's precious advice into action at once!

22nd June 2014
Singapore



◇ IT IS HARD ◇
TO BE A GOOD PERSON

It is necessary to be a good person but it is not easy.

Why is it like that?

Because we have in our mind ignorance, attachment and anger. Therefore it is difficult for us to be a good person.

We have attachment especially when we see nice things, “Oh, I want this. Oh, I need that.”

The things we like, if we get it, we are happy. With things we can't get, we are unhappy.

Since our mind is controlled by ignorance, attachment and anger, we face difficulties all the time. Therefore we need to change!

We call these things the three poisons. If we take poison, we die. In the same way, the arising of these three poisons in our mind destroys the peace and happiness in our mind, especially our everlasting happiness.

**Everything is destroyed by the three poisons,
so they are very harmful and dangerous.**

Therefore it is very important that these three poisons are kicked out. This is our job in this lifetime.

STOPPING ATTACHMENT

We then pose a question, “How do we stop attachment?”

It is not easy to stop attachment right away because we are so deeply habituated with it all the time. But we can stop attachment. It is possible.

When we have strong attachment to something, we look at it. What we see and what we believe—does it really and truly exist or not? Check up!

Like this flower. You really like this flower. Nice smell. Looks good. You pay money for it. Then you have strong attachment. But the moment you bring it home, slowly it has a less good smell. Slowly it has a bad smell. Then it becomes ugly and dirty on the table.

But originally you wanted the nice-smelling and good-looking flower, didn't you?

In the same way, whatever you believe, attraction to beauty begins like that. Thinking in this way, very strong attachment becomes less attachment. Then slowly, slowly you can transform attachment.

Another example. You like a friend. You really like this person so there's strong attachment there. Then suddenly you lose that object. You

become upset, unhappy. You cannot sleep at night, thinking, thinking ... just wasting time. You get upset. But nothing is resolved. Only all the time you stay unhappy because of strong attachment, so attachment brings only suffering. This is how attachment is dangerous for us.

With attachment, suffering comes.

Without attachment, even if the person is beautiful, there is no suffering. Also the stronger attachment is, the easier to bring unhappiness. When one is very unhappy, it can easily bring about anger. If you get angry, then it is more dangerous than attachment.

DANGER OF ANGER

Anger destroys you, your family, your friend, everything. It is very dangerous so it is very important that we control our own anger.

So how do we control anger?

We have to think that anger has no good qualities. It brings suffering, destroys peace. It brings lots of suffering continuously. It brings big problems. You can see how much problem anger can bring so it has no good qualities. It brings only suffering and problems. You can see that. Then you know through this that anger is dangerous.

Just like someone says, “This is a bowl of nice food,” but if the nice food is poisoned and given to you, you wouldn’t want to eat it. Because if you eat poison, you will die. So you are scared. You don’t want to eat poisoned food. Therefore you cannot get angry. Otherwise it is dangerous.

If someone loves you, you feel happy. So why do you not also love that person? If you love that person, automatically, you feel happy and that person will also be happy.

Therefore day by day, love people, respect them—your family, your loved ones. Then you make peace and joy.

You go to work together with other people. Also love them, respect them and be kind to them. Talk nicely to them. Have a good attitude towards them.

Day by day you practise. Then your life becomes better and better because you have less and less anger, less and less attachment. Then your life becomes more peaceful and joyful. This is very important, practising day by day.

THE SELFISH MIND

Also there is another problem: thinking of yourself as being very important and higher than others. Like pride thinking, “I am better than you.”

That thinking also brings problems. You get upset easily. Therefore that also needs

to change because that comes from the self-cherishing selfish mind.

The selfish mind brings only suffering and problems.

Therefore you have to change this mind. Others are numberless. You yourself are just one single person.

So which one is more important, you or others? Others are numberless. They can fill the sky. So who comes first?

Whether one believes in the Dharma or not, just talking generally, numberless beings are more important than one single person. This is believed by everyone, isn't it?

Therefore others are very important, more important than you. Everything—your food and clothing—comes from them. Even your body, your knowledge, everything comes from them.

Therefore it is very important to care for them, care for their needs. Because they are so kind, we cannot be selfish any more.

Keep thinking, thinking, thinking like this every day. Then change your selfish attitude and cherish others instead.

THE KINDNESS OF OTHERS

How much do you want yourself to be a beautiful person, a peaceful person, a happy person? So to be happy, change your selfish attitude and begin to cherish others as they are far more important than you.

Because whatever we need, we need others. Without their help, we cannot do many things.

**The many things we have
are dependent on others.
Food, clothing, simple things.
We are dependent on others.**

Therefore others are very important. Remembering their kindness—mother, father, sister or brother—everyone is important to you. You have to remember their kindness. Strongly remember this by thinking, thinking, thinking about their kindness, including the family, other people in the country and the whole universe. They are all inter-dependent.

A PEACEFUL HAPPY LIFE

“My peace comes from everywhere. Therefore every living being has shown great kindness to me.” You must think, think, think and remember their kindness. Then you become less selfish, less angry. There is less attachment.

Stop thinking that you yourself are important, that you are more important than others. Change this attitude. Then your life will become more useful, more joyful and more peaceful.

This is very important from now until future lives. Tonight, tomorrow, your life now and your future lives, you want them to be happy. You want to have a peaceful life.

**A peaceful and happy life comes
from rejoicing, from a good heart.**

Without rejoicing, without a good heart, one cannot have a good life. Because this life and future lives, everything depends on causes and conditions.

In the surroundings here, there are many trees. But without a seed, the tree cannot grow. Then the conditions are water and so forth.

**Everything depends on
causes and conditions.**

You have to know that.

Good or bad also depends on causes and conditions. The bad comes from negative actions, the good comes from positive rejoicing actions.

Therefore believe this, know this and develop devotion. Purify to lessen negative thoughts and negative actions. By cutting the bad thoughts, slowly, slowly your mind becomes more positive, stronger in being positive. Then life becomes more meaningful.

DEVELOPING POSITIVE DHARMA ACTIONS

Now you see that it is very important to develop positive Dharma actions—compassion, love, kindness, respect. These are very important things that we have to develop each day.

How do we develop them? We develop them by thinking about them in our mind, integrating them with our mind. Everyday thinking,

thinking, thinking Without thinking or meditating, we cannot develop them.

Only intellectual knowledge is not enough. You should meditate every day, having the right motivation, “I am going to purify so that I can attain enlightenment or achieve buddhahood. For that purpose, I am going to develop positive Dharma actions, compassion and love.” Then you can follow what your Dharma teacher explains to you. Then you train your mind every day.

Because of finances, we need to work, we need to do business. But this is only for this life’s happiness. Just having money is not enough. It alone cannot bring happiness and peace.

It is most definite that death will come at any time, any place. Therefore without Dharma, without positive actions, when death comes, those things that you have worked so hard for cannot be of any benefit.

**Only if you have compassion,
love, respect, virtuous thoughts,
then you will die peacefully
without any worry.**

Without these, if you have anger, strong attachment to your possessions, you are upset or you have strong negative emotions, then when death comes, you will have problems. You feel unhappy. Then you die with big worry.

Moreover negative actions committed through negative thoughts bring difficulties in future lives as well. Positive actions bring perfect life, happy life, peaceful life. Negative actions bring suffering, so many problems in this and future lives.

Therefore from now onwards, you have to change. Whatever negativities you have done, you have to purify them. Develop more positive thoughts and actions. Then you will

have happiness in many, many countless future lives. Then you will have better and better lives. Finally you will reach enlightenment. This is something you can plan for right away. You can make this choice for yourself now. Otherwise it is difficult.

THIS PRECIOUS HUMAN LIFE

Why is it necessary to do this? Because we have now this human life, which is very precious. We can achieve all the beneficial things on the basis of this life. It is unbelievably rare and precious.

If asked, “This human life—can we get that again or not?” it is not easy because we need so many good causes and conditions for it to come about.

**So now we have every freedom.
We can do all the good things and
we have the opportunity to do so.**

It is like being in a supermarket with plenty of choices. You can buy whatever you want to buy. You can choose.

Now this life, if you didn't do any good but instead you become lazy and waste it, then you lose this great opportunity. When death strikes, it is already too late and it will be difficult to obtain the precious human rebirth again.

Therefore it is very important to cultivate positive actions, Dharma actions, love and compassion and to stop negative thoughts and actions such as those already mentioned.

Which do we need to stop, which do we need to develop. We should know this clearly. Then every day, manage yourself. Look in your own mind. What you are doing with your actions, "Is it right or wrong?" You check yourself. You become your own master. Then you can develop.

So you see how important your human life is? It is very rare, you are very fortunate. Now you realise, “How wonderful, how lucky, how fortunate I am. Why? Because I can work for this and all future lives. This life’s good things come from past life’s good actions that I have done. Now future life’s well-being is dependent upon me right now. Therefore I will train perfectly in the right path.”

What is right path or wrong path, I have already mentioned.

Negative actions is wrong path,

positive actions is right path.

Now you have a choice.

“It is very rare to have this life. What is necessary for me is to have a perfect life that is free from all difficulties, suffering and problems. All these come from negative

actions. Therefore I need to purify all negative actions and develop positive actions to ensure a perfect life, be a good human being, a Dharma being and benefit numberless countless beings.” Think, “For this purpose, I am going to meditate. I am going to engage in positive actions, take care of others, help others.” So thinking, thinking, implement those thoughts in action.

THE DAILY PRACTICE

Now you can see, Dharma and compassion are important. Cherishing others is also important. But if you don't make time for practice, then it is difficult to implement those thoughts.

Therefore reflect in this way, “Now my life is very precious, but it does not last too long. It is impermanent. It is momentarily changing all the time. Everywhere, every day, I see

people dying, no fixed life, no fixed age. Some die when still young. Some die in middle age. So many conditions for people dying. But I am still lucky. Not yet die. Therefore it is very important to practise Dharma.”

Dharma develops. So every day, either for half an hour or one hour, look into your mind. You need to have a clean mind. Then you develop this motivation, “Wishing I become a buddha, I achieve great enlightenment and I purify wrong motivation; for that purpose, I am going to meditate, to develop the gradual path to enlightenment.

I cannot be attached to this life’s momentary pleasures because they are impermanent. When death comes, there is no benefit. Therefore I don’t need attachment for this life. I also don’t need attachment for future lives.

All samsaric pleasures, none of them ultimately benefit me. Therefore I am going

to get out of samsara and be liberated from all samsaric pleasures. I am going to completely abandon attachment, anger and ignorance. I am going to completely liberate myself from them. I am going to get out of samsara, completely leave samsara behind.

For this purpose, I am going to meditate.”

Then you can try to look into your mind and try to develop a pure mind, to develop the wisdom knowledge knowing the deeper nature of things and events. Then with compassion, reach enlightenment. This is your goal.

To completely reach enlightenment. This is our goal. How to do this? From now on, we develop and live with this motivation in our mind and implement it in our actions day by day. Then one day we will definitely reach there.

So what is our purpose in life?

Our purpose in life is to develop these positive and wholesome thoughts and actions and enhance them until we reach the ultimate goal of complete perfection or buddhahood.

NEED FOR MERIT

Meditation is very important. At the same time, we need a lot of merit, so as a means to accumulate merit or positive potential, you can have any buddha or bodhisattva Kuan Yin set up on the altar at home

If there is no problem (with other family members), then each day, make offerings of water bowls, flowers, incense—as many offerings as possible—and do prostrations with the right motivation, “I want to reach buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. For that purpose, I am going to accumulate all necessary merit so sincerely I make these offerings to you.”

**Making offerings to the real Buddha
in person and making offerings
to the statue of the Buddha—
you get the same merit.**

So you get vast merit from offering flowers or incense, whatever you can offer.

Whoever prays to and make offerings to the Buddha, their prayers will be fulfilled because the Buddha dedicated his life for many countless eons for sentient beings. As a bodhisattva, he made fervent prayers to be most beneficial for mother sentient beings.

So whatever your prayers, whatever you do, become perfect causes that will eventually cause you to achieve buddhahood. This being the case, therefore you can easily accumulate inconceivable merit by making offerings and prayers to the Buddha at your home or by coming to the Dharma centre where there

are many buddhas. Then you prostrate, make offerings, rejoice, help the centre and accumulate merit.

THE POWER OF MANTRA

Another thing you can also do is recite mantras. Mantra recitation is very powerful and a very easy method of purification. Also mantras can remove obstacles and diseases, benefiting yourself and benefiting others. So it brings you to enlightenment, buddhahood.

Therefore I am going to give you some oral transmission of mantras—the four mantras of Shakyamuni Buddha, Chenrezig or Kuan Yin, Tara and Medicine Buddha.

So you repeat after me:

TADYATHA OM MUNE MUNE

MAHA MUNEYE SVAHA.

OM MANI PADME HUM.

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SVAHA.

TADYATHA / OM BHAISHAJYE BHAISHAJYE /
MAHA BHAISHAJYE BHAISHAJYE /
RAJA SAMUDGATE SVAHA.

Now we recite together each mantra three times.

So whatever mantra you recite, either for yourself or for someone who is sick or dying, you can recite the mantra. It is so beneficial. Even for animals that are dying, you can recite the mantra. It will be so beneficial, freeing their lives from the lower realms. With the mantra that they hear, they will not be reborn in the hell realms, hungry ghost realms or animal realm.

Why? This is the power of the mantra. Therefore the more you recite them, the more beneficial it will be. When your mind is unhappy, you can recite the mantra. When you are sick, you can also recite the mantra.

It is so beneficial. Even for sicknesses, the mantras can remove and purify the causes and conditions of sickness.

So every day, try to recite them either 21 times or one mala (108 times) or whatever number you can manage. But the minimum is three times. If you can recite more, then it is more beneficial and quicker to become a buddha!

IMPORTANCE OF FAITH AND DEVOTION

Now I am going to conclude.

What is necessary in your daily life?

To remain close to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, you have to develop faith and devotion. Faith is necessary.

**If you have faith in the Buddha,
then whatever the Buddha said,
you will listen.**

The Buddha is full of compassion. Whatever will benefit others, whatever will benefit us, he told us.

All his teachings, he fully experienced them himself. Therefore he did everything. So now since he has done that, if you like to become like him, you have to follow him. He has total realisations from experience.

First develop renunciation. You see no benefit from samsara. Then remembering all beings' kindness, develop compassion, then bodhicitta.

What helps to develop these is through wisdom knowledge. Because everything is dependent-arising, nothing exists from its own side. Everything is empty. Therefore everything depends on causes and conditions and depends on the mind, so develop renunciation, compassion and bodhicitta, understanding right view and the three

principles of the path, i.e., the main causes to becoming a buddha.

All these we can develop in our life. So this is the conclusion.

Question: Why do good people always seem to have more difficulties, trouble and problems?

Answer: When we don't have enough merit, sometimes meditation or Dharma practice becomes a problem. When we don't have enough strong ethics for Dharma practice, just temporary intellectual understanding of Dharma—when our belief is not really from the heart—this is not enough.

Whatever the teacher explains about the Dharma, we have to know it and put it in our mind to practise it, then when our mind becomes Dharma, there will be no problem.

Just only knowing the words but the mind is busy on something else and not becoming

Dharma, then many superstitions arise such as, “I have been practising for a long time but I always have more difficulties, trouble and problems.”

Then the mind becomes worse, becomes completely negative. The heart cannot become Dharma. Then there is a problem.

Practising Dharma or meditating, yet thinking negative thoughts about other people, this is a sign of not enough devotion to the Buddha, the teacher or guru. So there’s a need to have more devotion. Whatever the teacher says, follow exactly. Then your problems will be lessened.

Also showing signs of more difficulties means strong negative actions are deep, so need more purification.

These problems are not from the Dharma. These problems are due to your own deluded mind and your own karma.

Buddhadharma only brings peace, OK? Therefore no need to doubt this. Look at the numberless arhats, numberless bodhisattvas and countless buddhas. Their examples are proof of this.

Question: In normal daily life, whether one is in meditation or not, whenever a negative thought comes into the mind—without actually putting it into action, just a negative thought—will that bring about a negative result?

Answer: Yes!

Question: Is there any difference between the negative karma created by negative thoughts and the negative karma created by negative actions?

Answer: Action more negative!

Of course, negative thought arising is already bad karma. Then if you act on it, it becomes even stronger.

You have negative thought but you don't say bad speech—maybe you hate the other person—but you know you cannot say it because it creates negative karma. Then there will be suffering, “I don't like suffering. Therefore knowing this, I cannot say bad words.” When you transform your thinking in this way, then it becomes positive.

Question: Do Sangha generally have more renunciation than lay people?

Answer: Yes, I hope so. What do you think?

Audience: Yes!

Answer: Sangha is Buddha, Dharma. Sangha is a refuge object so have to believe in Sangha.

A Sangha must have a subdued mind. If not, the Sangha is not perfect. From the side of the Sangha, subduing their mind is very important. If not subdued, then Sangha is not perfect.

If not renounced, having more negative thoughts than a layperson, then he or she is not a perfect Sangha.

DEDICATION

I am very happy you come here to listen to the Dharma. That is very good. Whatever I have mentioned, it is necessary to tell you. So thank you very much.

Today we have the merit of receiving and giving teachings. Thus we have a lot of merit so those merits we dedicate to the cause for us to become buddha, to achieve great enlightenment to benefit all sentient beings. We strongly dedicate in this way.

Also we dedicate, through this merit, to purify our negativities and remove any diseases, sicknesses and mental and physical problems, including that of our family, our loved ones and the country, and to stay

healthy, happy and peaceful. So we dedicate this merit and pray strongly for this.

And through this merit, for the numberless buddhas, bodhisattvas and arya beings, whatever they wish, we dedicate for those wishes to be fulfilled.

So now there's a lot of merit through praying and making dedications to benefit others. It also increases our merit if we rejoice. We are now closer to buddhahood. So you can completely rejoice today in our wonderful, incredible, inconceivable perfect merit, so completely rejoice! Thank you!



Khensur Rinpoche gave this teaching speaking directly in English.

◇ LIVING IN HARMONY ◇

Today the subject of these teachings is *How to Live in Harmony*.

Living in harmony is very important since we very much depend on those who live with us in society. We have to rely on them. Therefore living harmoniously with everyone is very important in our lives.

It is very important to have harmony in society and in the family. However, there are many conditions that bring about disharmony.

One of the principal sources bringing about disharmony is prejudice or discrimination against nationality, status, position or race.

This is one of the principal causes and conditions that bring about disharmony or disunity in the lives of people.

Fundamentally all of us have the innate negative imprint that discriminates against people and their status. So we have to work on that negative imprint, the negative imprint of making such discrimination.

Since there are many causes and conditions that can cause disharmony or disunity, we have to think about overcoming the causes that bring about disharmony in our lives and in our society.

OVERCOMING CAUSES OF DISHARMONY

We have to think all of us are equal in the sense that we do not wish for suffering and that we wish to achieve happiness. All of us have the same right to achieve happiness and overcome suffering.

Since one and all have this natural inclination for happiness and to avoid suffering, there is not much sense in discriminating against a group of people or at the national level.

Also as a human being, it is our responsibility to create the causes for harmony. We should engage in whatever means possible to bring about a peaceful environment where we live. We have to use this human quality to help ourselves to live in harmony where we are living and also to bring harmony to where others live.

**We have to think that fostering harmony
in society is our own responsibility.**

All of us wish for happiness, peace and comfort and all of us have the potential to achieve them. However we may not succeed

in doing so because of our distorted mental projections such as attachment, anger and other negative attitudes, especially criticising others in relation to their religious beliefs or criticising neighbours and family members. All these are negative views that we hold against others that bring about much unhappiness, disharmony and disunity.

We should not look at others with negative thoughts or focus on the shortcomings of others. Rather we should look at their good qualities, thereby minimising our criticism and dislike of others.

EXAMINING OUR ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

We have to examine ourselves, particularly our attitude with respect to what we are going to do and what will be our response towards others. We have to examine this. This is very important.

After examination, when we find that what we are thinking of and what we are going to do help others, this is something that we need to act upon and carry out. We need to do this.

On the other hand, if our action or attitude brings harm to others, this is something that we need to prevent and stop ourselves from doing.

So we have to examine in this way and then adopt the right attitude and engage in the right action. We should not allow ourselves to have the attitude of criticising others or looking down on others. These are attitudes we need to avoid and abandon.

**By abandoning criticising others
or looking down on them and instead,
cultivating positive attitudes towards others,
this becomes a cause that will bring
about harmony in the society and
community in which we live.**

It is very important to be aware of the way we react, the way we speak to others and what is our thinking. We have to examine that and be aware and alert as to how the actions of our three doors, i.e., our body, speech and mind, operate.

Generally speaking, it is very important that when we relate to others, we have to present ourselves in a pleasant way. When we talk with others, we should speak politely and we should not use harsh words. In terms of the mind, we should always have the thought of not harming others. Rather, we should have respect, love and care for others.

These three actions of our body, speech and mind are very important because they are among the causes that bring about happiness within the family, in the office and in the society in which we live. Therefore when we interact with others, with our

colleagues at the work place, whoever we are dealing with, we need to have respect, love and care for that person. This is what we need to do to cultivate a sense of respect for and a positive attitude towards others.

It is important to use the body, speech and mind to contribute towards the happiness and peace of society and our own family. When our behaviour, manner of speaking and our thinking is positive, wherever we may be, there will always be happiness. We will be able to contribute to the happiness of the people who live around us. It is very important to keep this in mind.

At the same time, just knowing this intellectually is insufficient. It is more important that we train ourselves in thinking in this way, then acting on it, implementing and practising it in our life. That is the essential part.

SHARING THE SAME PURPOSE

In this world, there are many religions such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and so forth. When you look at the essential purpose of all these religions, the essential message of all of them, what is it?

The essential purpose of all religions is to bring happiness to others and to avoid harming others and causing them pain.

Every religion explains the great necessity of avoiding harming others and that one should always help others. This is their essential message. All religions are unanimous with no difference at all in this regard.

There are differences among religions such as differences in their views but in terms of conduct or action, there is no difference at all.

**The main practice is not harming others
but instead, respecting others.**

**This is the most important
practice in our lives.**

Therefore there is a great need for harmony among all religions. One needs to respect all religions. For example, as a Buddhist, one needs to respect all other religions. One should look at the good advice to be found in other religions, appreciate other religions and think of them in a positive way. One should never criticise or condemn other religions. Rather one should have respect for other religions.

DEVELOPING POSITIVE THOUGHTS

Likewise one should develop positive thoughts towards all sentient beings such as love, compassion and care for others, and

the thought of benefiting them. These are the essential thoughts we should develop and later implement through our actions.

Having such understanding, there will be no basis to discriminate against others on the basis of culture and religion. When one is motivated by compassion and care for others, one will not have a negative attitude towards others.

**Therefore the practice of compassion,
love, respect and a kind heart
in our daily life is very important.**

When you have all that, there will be harmony, peace and happiness in the society or wherever one may live.

These positive thoughts are the very essence of all other religions. We need to think about these thoughts, cultivate

and familiarise ourselves with them and implement them in our daily life. This is very important. Then we will not make any negative judgements against others.

When we develop and enhance our love and compassion for others, this is the root of the happiness for ourselves and others. As we develop these feelings for others, we have to think about the fact that when we talk about ourselves, it is only about one person. But when we talk about others, they are innumerable, they are countless.

All others are the root of happiness for oneself because the good things that one enjoys are dependent on the kindness of others.

**Without the kindness of others,
there is no way that one can enjoy
the good things in life so others are
the root of our happiness and comfort.**

We have to remember their great kindness by developing strong feelings of love and compassion for them that are like the feelings of a mother for her only child. This strong sense of love, care and compassion should be there for all sentient beings.

COMPASSION IS ESSENTIAL

When we talk about compassion, what does compassion mean? Compassion is the genuine thought or wish to release all sentient beings from the state of suffering. Love is the wish that genuinely, from the heart, aspires for all sentient beings to be able to have all happiness.

We have to develop compassion and love. For instance, when we see someone experiencing suffering or difficulties and we cannot bear to see her suffer—in exactly the same way that a mother cannot bear to

see her only son suffer—this is the kind of attitude we should develop for all sentient beings. And just as a mother would wish for her child to have every happiness, likewise we should wish that all sentient beings have everlasting happiness too. This is genuine love.

These two attitudes must be developed within oneself. One begins the cultivation of these wonderful thoughts with people dear to oneself. Then one slowly extends that love and compassion to more and more people. Eventually one extends those feelings towards all sentient beings without leaving anyone behind. This is the way one should have love and compassion for others.

Later through steadily training oneself in this way, when the love and compassion become stronger, one moves to the next step by thinking, “I myself will make this happen.

I myself will cause all sentient beings to be completely free from suffering and to have everlasting happiness.”

This is the way one develops love and compassion for all sentient beings, taking care of them on a daily basis and extending one’s love and compassion to each and every one of them without exception.

When one is able to develop love and compassion for all sentient beings, the benefit is inconceivable because when one cultivates love and compassion for even just one sentient being, the merit one creates is already limitless.

Cultivating love and compassion for others is the most important thing that we have to pursue in our life. They are the most essential qualities in our life.

FACTORS THAT OPPOSE LOVE & COMPASSION

However there are numerous opposing factors that hinder the cultivation of love and compassion for others. The opposing factors are attachment, anger, pride and jealousy. The root of all these afflictive emotions is the self-grasping ignorance and the self-cherishing thought. These are the obstructions to the cultivation of unconditional love and compassion. These are the major afflictive emotions that we need to overcome in order to develop genuine love and compassion for others.

**Jealousy is one of the most selfish practices
in the sense that it does not allow us
to rejoice in the goodness of others.**

When we see others having good things or some success because of our jealousy, there is a

lack of peace or a feeling of unrest in the mind. Instead of being jealous of others, we should rejoice from our heart at the good things, successes and excellences achieved by others.

Pride is also one of the most destructive emotions that obstructs the cultivation of love and compassion.

Because of pride, one will always consider oneself as the most important person of all. One would not be able to see the positive qualities of others.

Generally speaking, when someone is very proud of his knowledge, this in fact indicates his lack of real knowledge. Pride is one of the most detrimental factors that prevents one from developing respect, love and compassion for others. It is clearly a very harmful negative attitude.

So to counter pride, one has to develop a humble attitude, seeing oneself to be in a lower position than others and seeing others as superior to oneself with far more good qualities than oneself.

But the very worst of all negative emotions that hinder the cultivation of respect, love and compassion is anger.

**With anger, one loses the very foundation
of developing love, compassion
and respect for others.**

In order to counter anger, one has to practise patience. Practise patience day by day, even when one encounters problem or difficult situations in one's daily life. Instead of being upset and angry, one must try to practise patience, one should try to be more forgiving.

Then one will really be able to cultivate respect, love and compassion for others. The practises of patience, love and compassion are inter-related. Therefore they must be practised together all the time.

Anger, jealousy, pride and all the negative emotions are the sources of all the problems in our life. They are the real enemies. So one has to overcome them instead of letting oneself come under the influence of these negative emotions. One should try to counter and lessen these negative emotions by cultivating love, compassion and respect for others. This is an important point that one should keep in mind and practise daily.

IMPORTANCE OF THE TEN VIRTUOUS ACTIONS

One of the causes for disharmony or what brings harm to others is the ten non-virtuous actions.

The three non-virtuous actions relating to the body are (1) killing, (2) stealing and (3) sexual misconduct.

The four non-virtuous actions relating to speech are (1) lying, (2) divisive speech, (3) harsh speech and (4) idle gossip.

The three non-virtuous actions relating to the mind are (1) covetousness, (2) harmful intention (or malice) and (3) wrong view.

**The ten non-virtuous actions
are the principal factors
that create disharmony
within the community that one lives in
and cause suffering to everyone.**

The root of these ten non-virtuous actions is the self-grasping attitude and the self-cherishing mind that lead to all the problems and troubles in the family and society.

The ten non-virtuous actions not only bring immediate problems to this life but they also serve as the causes for rebirths in the lower realms in the future where one will experience more painful consequences.

The ten non-virtuous actions are very destructive actions as they bring about much pain and problems to oneself and others. One should think about these drawbacks.

To counter the ten non-virtuous actions, one has to think about and engage in the morality of observing the ten virtuous actions or ethical discipline in one's life. One has to think about them again and again and again, and adopt them in one's daily life.

When one carries out the ten non-virtuous actions, one brings all sorts of problems to everyone one meets. The reason that there are so many problems at the

national level is due to the ten non-virtuous actions. Problems within and among religions are also related to the ten non-virtuous actions. Likewise problems within the community and society are related to the ten non-virtuous actions.

So the ten non-virtuous actions are the source of all troubles, problems and disharmony within a country and among the different religious beliefs.

If one were to follow the ten non-virtuous actions, that means there would be no peace, harmony and happiness in the country and no harmony among the different religions. On the other hand, following the path of the ten virtuous actions brings about happiness, peace, harmony, good health, prosperity and so forth in the world. Therefore one must be determined to cultivate the ten virtues in one's way of life and avoid the ten non-virtues.

The most important thing to bear in mind is the proper understanding of what the causes are that bring about problems and disharmony, and what the causes are that bring about harmony, peace and happiness.

We have to understand their respective causes and act accordingly.

There is a great necessity for harmony among all religions. The way to bring about harmony is to cultivate respect for each other's religion and to look at the positive qualities that each religion has to offer and the benefits that the religion brings to the lives of its followers.

The spiritual leaders of all religions play an important role and have a great responsibility to promote happiness and harmony among people in the world.

They should explain sincerely the need to cultivate respect for all religions and the need to look at the positive qualities or potential that all religions offer for the betterment of its followers. Spiritual leaders should explain this properly and in a precise manner. Then this would be a wonderful contribution to peace and harmony among people in the world.

ALL WAYS TO ACHIEVE FULL ENLIGHTENMENT

It is very important to understand the significance, essence and purpose of all teachings. Let us take, Buddhism, which has two traditions, namely the Theravadan (or Hinayana) and the Mahayana. When we do not understand the real significance or special features of these teachings, we may feel that they are contradictory.

Are they contradictory? No, they are not contradictory at all!

Because each of the practices of the different vehicles such as the Hinayana vehicle or the Mahayana vehicle will lead an individual practitioner eventually to the attainment of full enlightenment. In fact, the different vehicles are like the graduated stages to reaching full enlightenment.

The practices of the Hinayana vehicle serve as the preliminaries or the foundation, by following the path that is common to it, for one can then move on to the next stage, the Mahayana. There is a perfect sequential order to these practices and they are the perfect paths for persons of differing mental dispositions, aspirations and inclinations. The purpose of all these different vehicles is finally to achieve enlightenment. One can see from this context that they are not contradictory at all.

All these various practices of the paths—some act as the causes or the preliminaries

while others are the actual parts of the path leading to full enlightenment. For example, if we do not learn the alphabets—A, B, C, D and so forth—we would not be able to read and understand anything. So in order to be able to read and understand, we have to learn the alphabet. Likewise we need a solid foundation by practising the preliminaries.

For example, some of the teachings of the Buddha on lower rebirths common with the path of the person of small capacity act as the preliminary teachings. There are other teachings that act as the actual practice; for instance, the teachings of generating love and great compassion. So you see, when you do not know the significance of these teachings, you may think that they are contradictory.

Due to not understanding the actual significance of the teachings of the two vehicles, then problems such as prejudice

arises, i.e., taking the side of the Mahayana, criticising others or vice versa. When we know the actual purpose or the significance of the teachings of the two vehicles, that all these teachings were given by the Buddha himself, then we understand that by depending on them, we can achieve full enlightenment. Therefore there is no contradiction at all. All of them are the means to achieving full enlightenment so we have to know their significance and purpose.

It is more important to put the teachings into practice after having studied them well than just to have a dry intellectual knowledge of them.

Otherwise our studies may only cause our own arrogance and pride to be inflated, thinking, “I am so learned now.” The point is that whatever we have learnt, we should put it into practice.

PRACTISING DHARMA MAKES LIFE MEANINGFUL

To conclude, what is important in our daily life is for us to look within our mind and find out what is it that we really need to do? It is to practise Dharma.

**Without practising Dharma,
life is meaningless.**

**The actual purpose of our life
can be accomplished only
through Dharma practice.**

Since life is impermanent, we will definitely die but the time of death is uncertain. Death can come at any time, any day and anywhere because there are so many causes and conditions for death.

We should contemplate like this, “Luckily I am not dead yet but I am going to die soon. When that day comes, nothing can

be of any benefit except the Dharma. Therefore I am going to be a kind person, be compassionate and loving and I will always work for others. I will practise charity towards others, keep pure morality, cultivate patience, put effort into virtuous deeds, meditate and develop wisdom knowledge to ensure good future lives.”

If we have not practised like this but allowed negative thoughts to arise all the time, our future lives become a big problem. Therefore before dying, we have to make preparations. What should we do for our future?

Now think, “My future life is more important than this life. Others are more important than me because I am only a single person but others are numberless. They are very kind to me.

Therefore I must make my life meaningful every day—to be compassionate, to

genuinely love everyone equally and to respect everyone.

I will not be an angry person. I will have no pride, no jealousy and I will not harm others because when I harm others, I also harm myself.

Since all my future lives, good or bad, depend on me, it is very important that every day I practise developing a virtuous mind, purify my negative mind, purify anger, purify jealousy, purify pride, be humble, be respectful, be kind and always serve others.

My life will only become meaningful when I benefit others. My main aim for this life is to become a buddha, a fully enlightened being to benefit all other sentient beings.”

So every day, we must have a strong wish to become a buddha. If there is no such

thing as buddhahood or we cannot become a buddha, then we have no way of achieving this. But we have buddha nature. This is why this life is very important. We can create all the perfect causes and conditions to become a buddha. We have the freedom and the choice to be able to do so. If we were born in the lower realms, then there is no choice but now we have the choice and the freedom, so it is very important that we choose to become a buddha to benefit every sentient being.

When we benefit every sentient being, ultimately this benefits ourselves, achieving peace for ourselves. Nothing is lost. When we benefit others, we have nothing to lose. We will have more peace, joy and success.

This is what we need to do every day. We need to rush to do this because we are dying soon. Look at the world. Every day it is

getting worse and worse. So now what is the conclusion? It is to practise Dharma, nothing else. This is the conclusion.

DEDICATION

Now we do dedication for the merit generated by listening to and giving the teachings—to be able to practise the teachings and quickly achieve buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. Also we dedicate the merit to remove every obstacle that exists in the world, especially now that business is collapsing due to the global recession. As a result of this, everywhere people are suffering. So we must remove the obstacles, completely pacifying them.

May there be success, peace and happiness everywhere. Whatever you wish for, may it be perfectly successful. Whatever Dharma

projects there are in the world, may they also be perfectly successful.



This teaching was interpreted by
Ven. Tenzin Sherab.

◇ CUTTING THROUGH MATERIALISM ◇

The topic for today's teachings is *Cutting Through Materialism*. In other words, how to live our life without too much emphasis on material wealth.

It is very important that we ask ourselves this question, "Is there a way to live life without putting too much emphasis on material things?" The answer is, "Yes, of course! There is definitely a way of living our life without being too attached to materials things."

WEALTH ALONE DOES NOT BRING HAPPINESS

We need to cut down our strong attachment towards material things, even though we all believe that when we have material wealth, this will bring us happiness and when we do not have material wealth, this will bring us difficulties and problems.

Although this may be true to a certain extent, we cannot totally depend on material wealth alone for our happiness. Because when we check this from our own experience, we can understand quite easily that it does not matter how much wealth or property we may own, these possessions do not bring the real satisfaction or the happiness that we are hoping for.

**It is very important that we examine
for ourselves whether material wealth
truly brings the happiness and peace
that we are looking for.**

When we examine this well, we can understand from our own observations that material wealth does not bring lasting happiness. It is not the origin of happiness.

If material wealth can bring about true happiness and satisfaction, then there should be a person in this world who would say that he is fully satisfied and totally happy because of having so much wealth. But we can hardly point to anyone who is totally happy and satisfied based on material wealth alone. We cannot find such a person.

Since this is the case, it is very important that we examine what the actual cause is, that brings about lasting happiness and satisfaction. What is the source of true happiness?

THE TRUE SOURCE OF HAPPINESS

The true source of reliable happiness is the transformation of the mind into a positive

state. So it is not material wealth that brings about true happiness or satisfaction. That comes about through transforming the mind into a positive state.

It is quite easy to understand that external material development alone cannot bring about true happiness. This shows that along with external development, there is a great need for inner development as well.

The development of and the enhancement of wholesome thoughts within our mind—that is the right way to find real happiness, the true satisfaction that we are looking for.

We must build up our mental qualities such as contentment and having few desires. These are qualities that we must develop within ourselves.

**When we have contentment and few desires,
our life in general will be filled with
peace and happiness.**

Whatever occupation we may have, be it in business or otherwise, what is important is that we do not work just for material rewards. Our life should not depend entirely on material possessions alone. Rather we should think of material things as one of the many conditions that helps to support and facilitate our life. But we should not think that material things or material wealth is the one true source of real happiness.

THE IMPERMANENCE OF MATERIAL THINGS

Because all wealth, properties or possessions are not permanent in nature, they change. Sometimes in business, we do not always make profits but losses instead. Generally speaking, in life, all things go up and down.

**There is no stability in our life because
it is in the nature of impermanence.**

We have to think about the impermanent nature of wealth and every conditioned thing in our life. When we examine this deeply, we will find that all these things—including our friends, our body and so forth—will eventually have to be left behind. Because they are in the nature of impermanence, we cannot take them along with us at the time when we pass from this life to the next.

So there is no real essence or purpose in being attached to them, clinging strongly to them in the belief that they are the true source of our happiness. We need to check and examine what is the actual source of happiness.

FROM CONTENTMENT COMES HAPPINESS

After checking and examining the real nature of material things, we will come to the conclusion that being attached to them or placing too much emphasis on them is not the means to happiness.

**Believing that material things
will bring true happiness
is actually a misconception.**

In order to have real peace and real happiness, we must develop a sense of contentment and satisfaction in our life. When we develop these qualities of contentment and satisfaction, we will be happy and totally content with the material possessions we already have. Generally speaking, our life will be much more relaxed, more peaceful and calmer.

The practice of cultivating contentment and few desires is very important. It is one of the crucial conditions that brings about happiness and peace in our life. So whatever activities, business or profession we may be pursuing, there should always be a sense of satisfaction and contentment. This is very important.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A PURE MOTIVATION

The motivation behind the work that we do is also very important. Normally our motivation is to find happiness for this life alone. Mostly we are working for the sake of ourselves alone. This kind of motivation is unhealthy.

Due to this motivation, the work that we undertake becomes negative. This brings problems and suffering even though we are working in order to have happiness. Such self-centred motivation brings unhappiness and suffering in the long run.

Whatever actions we may be engaged in doing, there should be a positive element in our motivation. Our motivation should be pure.

We should not think only of working for the happiness of this life. Rather we should take into

consideration the many future lives to come. Our life is not just this life alone. Up to now, we have had innumerable past lives. We will continue to have countless future lives until such time when we can totally overcome the afflictive emotions that are the source of samsara. Until then, the cycle of death and rebirth in samsara will keep on circling round and round.

**Just as we search for happiness and peace
in this life, likewise we need to ensure
the happiness and peace of
all our future lives to come.**

For that, we need to create the causes that will enable us to fulfil our wishes.

Therefore we need to have a pure motivation behind all the activities that we undertake, i.e., the motivation to benefit and work for others and of working for long-term goals.

We should have a pure motivation when we are in business. We should be honest and not cheat others. We should not compete with others out of jealousy. We have to overcome all these unhealthy attitudes and eventually give them up altogether.

When we are able to give up all these unhealthy attitudes and cultivate a sense of caring for others, love and compassion for others, respect for others, with that motivation as a foundation, then whatever business or profession we may engage in becomes a virtuous activity. Together with benefiting everyone that we meet and associate with, at the same time, we are fulfilling the necessities of life. This is a skilful way of fulfilling the needs for this life together with working for our future needs.

This is the way we should lead our life. We should have a proper motivation

behind all the work we do. We should not think just of this life, i.e., a self-centred purpose, and come under the influence of our negative emotions.

A GOOD MIND BRINGS MORE HAPPINESS

It is more important to cultivate good qualities of the mind such as love, compassion and true renunciation than to be obsessed with material acquisitions. When we examine and analyse the difference between these two—the development of inner qualities vs. the accumulation of material wealth—which one is more important?

**The cultivation of mental qualities
such as love and compassion
is far more important than
the accumulation of
external material things.**

The reason is very simple. When we are able to cultivate the inner qualities of love, compassion and renunciation, this will bring about much happiness as well as solve all our pain and problems.

THE VALUE OF A PRECIOUS HUMAN REBIRTH

The great Kadampa masters said that as far as looking for the necessities of life—such as looking for food and shelter, supporting family members, overcoming enemies and so forth—are concerned, we can find such endeavours occurring even in the animal world. So these activities are not exclusive to being a human being.

If we were to behave in the same way as animals, i.e., only working for the purposes of this life, we are no better than they are.

Therefore the Kadampa masters advised us that since at this time we have achieved the

precious human rebirth, our lives should be different from the lives of animals.

**We must use this precious opportunity
and potential available to us
as human beings in a proper way.**

Having found a precious human rebirth, we should use it in a proper way by developing the positive thoughts and overcoming our attachment towards this life. We should not limit ourselves to thinking only about “me and mine,” but we should think about our long-term objective of working for the welfare of others. This is the way to differentiate ourselves from animals.

Even though we believe that material wealth is very important due to our strong habituation to this view, when we check this out in our life, we find it is not the case. So

to counter this misconception, i.e., thinking that wealth is the most important thing in our life, we have to remember that, at this time, we have obtained this precious human rebirth with its freedoms and endowments. If we were to just run after material wealth, letting our life be preoccupied and only concerned with this pursuit, it would be an extremely great loss despite having found this extremely rare and precious opportunity.

The precious human rebirth that we have achieved now is one of the most favourable bases for practising the Dharma.

The Dharma in turn is the perfect cause for the happiness of all future lives to come.

There is no way to achieve real happiness without practising Dharma. The best physical

basis for practising Dharma is this human rebirth that we have found now.

This precious human rebirth is not only extremely valuable but it is also extremely difficult to find. Let us consider the difficulty of obtaining this precious human rebirth from different aspects.

For a start, it is very difficult to gather the causes to attain a precious human rebirth. When we compare the number of people who have a precious human rebirth with other forms of rebirths, they are few and far between and are easily outnumbered.

Also when we reflect on the analogies of the difficulties of finding a precious human rebirth, we can easily understand the rarity of finding such a rebirth.

As it is very difficult to find, that is why it is extremely rare. It is a powerful basis for achieving the highest goals, so it is extremely

valuable and meaningful. We must make proper use of it, taking the real essence of and benefit from this precious human rebirth without any further delay.

We have to act right away in creating the proper causes for happiness. We should not delay this because when we delay this or put off our practices, finding such a precious human rebirth again is very difficult. It is almost as if we will never find it again in the future.

Therefore we have to think about the preciousness and difficulty in finding such a precious human rebirth. On a daily basis, think about death and impermanence—that death is certain but the time of death is uncertain.

Particularly recall that at the time of death and after death, the only thing that is beneficial and helpful is the Dharma.

We must think about this point over and over again. Then our strong attachment towards material wealth and our misconception that material wealth is the most essential thing in our lives will be slowly weakened and eventually uprooted.

WORKINGS OF CAUSE AND EFFECT

Sometimes in life, things do not go as well as we wish. We may face difficulties in family relations, business crises, health problems and so forth. When these undesirable events occur in the course of our life, we have to look deeply at what really created all these problems. The answer is our negative thoughts and unwholesome actions of harming others, telling lies and so forth. They are the actual causes of all the painful or undesirable things that happen in our life.

In the lives of some people, everything seems to go very smoothly—success in business, good health, happiness and peace in the family. Most of the time, they seem to experience only happiness and comfort in their lives. But all these things have their causes. The causes are virtuous thoughts and actions such as having a good heart, compassionate thoughts, practising charity, concern for all, helping others in every possible way and maintaining an ethical life. These positive thoughts, actions and karma are the causes for their success and happiness.

Since we do not wish for unhappiness but wish for happiness, we have to know what actually brings about the happiness we wish for and what brings about the painful experiences we do not wish for.

We have to identify the causes and conditions. After having identified them properly, we have to work to abandon the negative causes and engage in cultivating the virtuous causes. This is the way we should lead our lives.

THE BEST MOTIVATION

Whatever virtue we do, we should not think only of the purposes of this life alone. Rather we should think about the long-term benefits and goal. If we were to think only of the happiness and enjoyments of this life, then the benefits of whatever virtuous deeds we do or virtuous thoughts we have will be limited to this life alone.

Rather than cultivating such a short-term motivation, we should cultivate a motivation that aims at a higher goal. In short, in order to develop the motivation to achieve the state

of full enlightenment for the benefit of others, we should develop the thought of bodhicitta.

When conjoined with the bodhicitta motivation, when one makes an offering of flowers, incense or candles—even an offering of a single candle or a single stick of incense—it will create an inconceivable amount of merit or positive potential.

When one offers a flower with the motivation to have happiness in this life alone, the result will be limited to this life alone. We can understand from this that we should think long-term.

Motivation is a very important part of the practice.

**It determines the result of the action,
so we should cultivate
the best possible motivation,
that is, the bodhicitta motivation.**

With such a motivation, whatever we do becomes extremely meaningful. Behaving in accordance with such a motivation also gives meaning to and is the essence of our human life.

THE PRACTICE OF OFFERING

Whatever offering we may make, be it a candle or a flower, what is most important is having a proper motivation. When we are making an offering, for example, offering a candle, we should think that it is a perfect offering to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions. It is also an offering to all the holy objects of refuge. We should also think that we are not offering only a single candle but we are making infinite offerings.

The purpose of making such an offering should not be for the purposes of this life alone but we should think of all our subsequent lives to come until we achieve full enlightenment.

We should pray in all our lives to have a good rebirth that is most favourable for practising Dharma, to have good intelligence, to have a good heart in order to benefit others and finally to achieve the state of buddhahood. This should be the purpose of making offerings to all the buddhas, bodhisattvas and all the holy objects of refuge.

By making offerings in this way, the result is the accumulation of inconceivable merit. Due to the result of this meritorious act, in all our lifetimes in the future, we will have a good life, prosperity, success, good health and, most important of all, we would have planted the positive imprint for practising the Dharma.

Then in all our future lifetimes, we will be able to create more and more merit, more and more positive potential, ensuring that one will come closer and closer to buddhahood from life to life.

The final result is that we will be able to achieve the state of full enlightenment, that is, the state of the complete eradication of faults and attainment of only perfect qualities.

So you see by generating such a pure motivation and making offerings, this will make our human life very meaningful indeed.

THE POWER OF HOLY OBJECTS

When we make offerings to holy objects, the merit that we accumulate will be equal to the merit of making offerings to the actual Buddha in person. In fact, there is no difference in making offerings to the Buddha in person and making offerings to images or statues of the Buddha. This is said by the Buddha himself.

For example, when we look at a stupa which symbolises the holy mind of the

Buddha or when we look at an image of the Buddha and we recall his great qualities in our mind, generating the utmost respect and admiration for those holy objects, inconceivable merit is created.

One of the special qualities of the supreme holy objects is that whoever sees it or looks at it naturally creates an inconceivable amount of merit due to the power of the holy object itself. Even when we may not have strong faith, still we will accumulate a great deal of merit due to the power of that supreme object.

The reason for this is that before the Buddha achieved the fully enlightened state, he made strong prayers that whoever sees him, thinks of him, prays to him or hears of him, will benefit and receive great happiness. Because of having made such prayers and because one of the infinite qualities of the Buddha is his power of prayer—i.e., whatever

he prays for will be actualised—when we look at the image of the Buddha or any holy object, we will naturally create an infinite amount of merit.

**If we were to look at the image
with strong faith and admiration,
then the merit or positive potential
accumulated is beyond imagination.**

Therefore when we look at or make offerings to a holy object, try to generate as much as possible a strong conviction and faith in the power of the holy object. Doing this will be similar to making offerings directly to the Buddha in person.

The statues, thangkas or any holy objects are not just pieces of art or ordinary objects. They represent the inner qualities of the supremely holy beings who have completed

the two types of accumulations and who have the greatest qualities.

Therefore by having strong faith and conviction in holy objects and then making offerings or prayers, or even just putting our palms together in respect, we automatically create an inconceivable amount of merit.

We should regard the Buddha as an infallible object of refuge who will never deceive us. Likewise the images and likenesses of the Buddha are also reliable objects of refuge.

THE ESSENCE OF OUR LIFE

Now the conclusion is this. What I would like to remind you again is that we must reduce our attachment to materialism. We should not have the wrong belief that material things are the real source of happiness and that they are the most important thing in life.

In order to reduce our strong attachment and eventually to uproot our attachment to materialism altogether, we should practise developing a sense of contentment and satisfaction in our life.

**We should cultivate and enhance
our contentment and satisfaction
with what we already have,
instead of thinking,
“I want more, more.
I want better and better things!”**

Just as we wish to have happiness in this life, likewise we should ensure that we will enjoy happiness and good things in our future lives to come. We should think about and work to create the perfect causes and conditions for future lives as well.

**The way to ensure happiness and
comforts in future lives is
by engaging in virtuous actions.**

This is the only way to ensure happiness and good things so we should think about creating more and more meritorious actions in our present life. This should be the essential focus of our life now.

Also we should bear in mind the importance of cultivating a good heart, the thought of benefiting others and the practice of helping others. We should think of these wholesome thoughts and integrate them with our heart and mind, practising and living with them always.

This is very important. Otherwise having attachment to materialism or just thinking about the purpose of this life alone—this is not the actual way to achieve the happiness that one is looking and hoping for.

Also in whatever we do, the motivation is very important. With the right motivation of helping others, working for the benefit of others, then whatever activities we engage in in our daily life will be transformed into virtuous actions.

For example, when we conduct our business with sincerity, with the thought of helping others, without any thought of cheating others, being totally honest, working not just for ourselves but taking the well-being of others into consideration, then due to the power of such a motivation, this becomes a positive activity.

Likewise thinking in such a way, whatever we do in life will become positive.

These are some points that we need to keep in our heart and implement in our daily lives.

DEDICATION

I am very happy to be able to share these teachings with you and to be in an environment

where we can collectively create a vast amount of merit.

Now let us dedicate the virtue or the positive potential that we have accumulated. May they become the cause that will completely pacify the suffering and causes of suffering of all sentient beings. May all sentient beings achieve the state of perfect everlasting happiness, buddhahood.

Also we can dedicate the virtue we have accumulated for whatever wishes that we have to be fulfilled and for us to finally achieve the enlightened state.



This teaching was interpreted by
Ven. Tenzin Sherab.

◇ THE MELODIOUS SOUND ◇
OF THE KALAPINGA

*A Lamentation Requesting
the Quick Arrival of the Incarnation of
Khensur Geshe Lhundrup Rigshe*

One taste in the dharmakaya of great bliss,
of all the buddhas' transcendental wisdom;
All pervasive creator of everything,
whose kindness cannot ever be repaid;
Glorious Holy Lama clearing
the darkness of ignorance;
Compassionately descending from
Sky Enjoyment—the pure land;¹
Whose kindness is great and unequalled
by all ten-direction conquerors;

The sole wish-fulfilling jewel, fulfilling all hopes;
Kind Lama, remembering your kindness
more and more;
Please reveal the saintly face of the emanation
benefiting the Dharma and migrators!²

Since beginningless samsara,
through the power of karma and afflictions,
We have been sinking in the oceans
of suffering of contaminated samsara,³
Have experienced and are still experiencing
unimaginable and inexpressible sufferings.
Glorious Holy Lama,
liberating from the ocean of samsara,
Please reveal the saintly face of the emanation
benefiting the Dharma and migrators!

THE MELODIOUS SOUND OF THE KALAPINGA

We are the wretched child disciples
placing our hopes in you.
We are orphans pierced by
the sharp thorns of misery.
Kind Lama engaged in destroying
this state of misery,
Please reveal the saintly face of the emanation
benefiting the Dharma and migrators!

Alas, migrators are caught in the tornado
of bad conditions of this degenerate age,
And the essence of the teachings of
the Good-Minded One⁴
becomes a mere reflection.
Please pay attention to our situation.
Having arisen from a devastated mind,
while thinking of this,
Please reveal the saintly face of the emanation
benefiting the Dharma and migrators!

Being inspired by the melodious prayer
of those with devastated minds,
Magical emanation of the Glorious Lama
for those to be subdued,
Come quickly, so that the spring
of our benefit and happiness may arrive,
And show the stainless life that benefits the
Dharma and migrators!

The collection of child disciples assembled here
with their pure samaya,
For all our lives, we rely closely on you
the saviour, owner of the Dharmakaya lineage.⁵
May we children catch the father's teachings—
the biography that is the Essence of
the Good-Minded One's ear-whispered lineage⁶
that is held by the explanation and realisation.

THE MELODIOUS SOUND OF THE KALAPINGA

COLOPHON

Khensur Geshe Lhundrup Rigsel, the retired abbot of the Monastery of Kopan Ogmin Jangchub Chöling and the Nunnery of Khachoe Ghakyil, was very kind to me and all the monks and nuns. Khensur Geshe Lhundrup Rigsel regarded me as his root guru. For those reasons, I thought if I were to compose this prayer, then it would be auspicious to quickly meet his reincarnation.

Taking *Calling the Guru from Afar, The Spiritual Song Lamenting the Kind Father Lama; An Extended Song of Sadness becoming a Light for the Small Child* and others as the basis, I, called Thubten Zopa, composed this prayer in the Monastery of Kopan Ogmin Jangchub Chöling. It was entered electronically by the student Venerable Thubten Khedrub. Translated into English by Lama Zopa Rinpoche and Venerable Fedor Stracke.

Notes:

- 1 Tharpo Kachoe
- 2 Sentient beings
- 3 Continuously circling of the contaminated aggregates caused by karma and delusions
- 4 Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings
- 5 Rig-Dag
- 6 Lama Tsongkhapa's Nying-gu



◇ IN REMEMBRANCE OF ◇ KHENSUR RINPOCHE

The first memorial stupa in remembrance of Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup at Kopan Monastery was consecrated by Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche on 3rd May 2013. Twenty-five feet in height, flanked at its base by 32 stupas signifying the enlightened deeds of the Buddha, the stupa was a complete representation of the blessings of Khensur Rinpoche and the blessings of the Three Jewels: the stupa representing his holy mind (the Buddha), the scriptures it contained, his holy speech (the Dharma) and the hundreds of buddha statues, his holy form (the Sangha).

A second memorial stupa in the image of the Mahabodhi Enlightenment Stupa in Bodhgaya, India remains to be built at Khachoe Ghakyil Nunnery. This six-storey high Nine Thousand Buddhas Mahabodhi Relic Stupa promises to become one of the most remarkable relic stupas and it will house the relics of the holy body, speech and mind of Khensur Rinpoche.

For more information on this project, please visit:
<http://www.9000mahabodhistupa.com>



◇ ABOUT THE AUTHOR ◇

Khensur Rinpoche Lama Lhundrup Rigsel was born in Tibet in 1941 and joined Sera Monastery while still a boy. He left for India in 1959 where he met Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche.

In 1972, Lama Yeshe requested him to look after a small group of young monks in Kopan Monastery, Nepal. Thus began Khensur Rinpoche's 40 years of service at Kopan. He was officially bestowed the title of Khen Rinpoche (abbot) by the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2001. He remained in this position until July 2011.

Khensur Rinpoche passed away on 7th September 2011.

◇ WHAT TO DO WITH DHARMA TEACHINGS ◇

The Buddhadharma is the true source of happiness for all sentient beings. Therefore anything containing Dharma teachings, the names of your teachers or holy images is most precious and should be treated with respect.

To avoid creating the karma of not meeting the Dharma again in future lives, please do not put books (or other holy objects) on the floor or underneath other things, step over or sit upon them. They should be kept in a clean, high place, separate from worldly writings and wrapped in cloth when being carried around.

Should you need to get rid of Dharma materials, they should not be thrown in with the garbage but burned in a special way. Briefly, do not incinerate such materials with other trash but alone on their own, and as they burn, recite the mantra OM AH HUM. As the smoke rises, visualise that it pervades all of space, carrying the essence of the Dharma to all sentient beings in the six samsaric realms, purifying their minds, alleviating their suffering and bringing them all happiness up to and including enlightenment.

Thank you very much.



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