

## Transcript of teachings by Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi on the Six Perfections

### Lesson 3

21 March 2019

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Meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha. Review: Perfections of generosity and ethical discipline. Perfection of patience. Harmfulness of anger. Benefits of patience. "If someone shouts at you, don't shout back!" (This class was conducted in English by Khen Rinpoche).

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#### **MEDITATION ON SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA**

(Class began with the usual meditation on Shakyamuni Buddha. Details in Lesson 1).

#### **REVIEW: PERFECTIONS OF GENEROSITY AND ETHICAL DISCIPLINE**

In the last two classes we talked about the practice of generosity and the practice of ethical discipline. We have covered these two topics.

As mentioned before, the practice of generosity is the antidote to the delusion of miserliness. It refers to letting go of attachment. As mentioned by Nagarjuna, the result is that you will be happier. It also brings lots of happiness, such as perfect wealth, in the future.

After that, we talked about the practice of ethical discipline. Practising only generosity is not good enough. You would want to have enjoyments for a long time, not just a short while. Therefore, you must practise ethical discipline. Without ethical discipline, you will not be able to enjoy the results of generosity for a long period of time. So, it is important to have ethical discipline. This is what Nagarjuna mentioned in his text.

Ethical discipline is important. The result of ethical discipline is that you will be able to have a good rebirth. By living in ethical discipline, you create less negative karma and you are able to create more virtuous karma. You are then able to achieve higher rebirth as a human being or god. That in turn gives you a lot of opportunities to practise the Dharma and avoid negative karma. That is one of the benefits of living in ethical discipline mentioned by Nagarjuna.

Even in this life, there are temporal benefits if you are able to live in ethical discipline. You will have less suffering and fewer problems. If you are not disciplined, even in this life, there are so many problems. All mental suffering and physical suffering come from not disciplining yourself. If you practise ethical discipline well, you are able to have a good rebirth in the future. The way you live your life now, your habituation with living in ethical discipline means that in future lives, you will have good rebirths and you are able to continually observe ethical discipline. That means you create more virtuous karma. That means you can achieve good rebirths again and again. In this way, you have some hope of being able to achieve your final goal, liberation or enlightenment. In this way, liberation or enlightenment is possible. Without ethical discipline, you won't have a good rebirth.

That means it will be difficult to achieve your final goal. Liberation or enlightenment is not possible. Therefore, ethical discipline is important.

## **PERFECTION OF PATIENCE**

Today's topic is about the practice of patience. It was mentioned by Nagarjuna that the result of practising patience is that it brings about a beautiful body like that of the Buddha. Whoever sees it finds it very pleasing. So, that is the result of being patient.

If you really want to help sentient beings, the most effective way is to have a beautiful body so that you can attract more people. That means you can teach or guide more people. That is one of the qualities. In this way, you can help more sentient beings. You can reach out to more sentient beings. Therefore, patience is important.

### *Harmfulness of anger*

As mentioned in one of Nagarjuna's texts, one of the faults of not being patient is when you are angry. (The first fault is that) when anger arises in your mind, you will look unpleasant. That is the fault of not being patient. Before that, you may be very beautiful or handsome and people like you. But the moment anger arises in your mind, immediately your beauty and good looks change to ugliness. It is very easy to recognize that. Maybe you don't see it yourself. You think you are beautiful but other people don't see that at all. Immediately, they see you as ugly and scary, an unpleasant person. But just a second earlier, when you were not angry, you were compassionate and patient and people liked you. So, it is very good to meditate on that.

(The second fault is that) anger harms others. Immediately, it gives suffering to sentient beings. Because of your anger, you become unpleasant and scary and you disturb the minds of others. The result is immediate. Not only that, if you were to look at yourself, you will find that you are not settled. Deep down, your mind is unhappy. It is not a calm but unsettled mind. This is a very effective meditation—remembering what anger brings, how anger harms others, how it harms oneself, destroying one's peace of mind immediately.

Anger is extremely powerful. So, recognizing that is very important. When you really recognize that, then you can do something about it. You are able to change and reduce the anger. Before that, everybody considers you to be a wholesome, good-hearted person. They think it is worthwhile to be your friend. But once your anger arises, at that moment, you become a different person. You become an unwholesome, unkind and harmful person. So, that is the problem of not being patient.

You really need to be mindful about that in daily life. When you really recognize that, if you don't want to be an unwholesome or bad person and you want people to consider you to be a good, wholesome, good-hearted person, then you really need to be mindful of whether anger arises in your mind or not.

Then the third fault is that when anger arises in your mind, you don't know how to differentiate (between right and wrong). Your wisdom totally disappears. When strong anger arises in your mind, you don't have the wisdom to judge what is right and what is wrong. Your whole mind is controlled by anger. What you see is from the viewpoint of

your angry mind, the totally wrong mind. Your mind sees only wrong things and doesn't see the right things when your mind is overpowered by anger. Therefore, at that moment, you don't have wisdom and you cannot differentiate what is right and what is wrong. Because of that, you harm others. Because you follow the anger and you don't have wisdom, you also harm yourself. When you don't know what is right and what is wrong, you only harm yourself and other sentient beings. This is what Nagarjuna said. When you analyse, it is exactly like that. There is no room for wisdom when strong anger arises. Almost nobody can help at that moment.

Nowadays, in the news, there are reports of many killings. All these boil down to anger and dislike. Due to that, one harms many sentient beings and create so much negative karma. It is very clear that anger do not bring any happiness to other sentient beings and to yourself.

When anger arises, your mind is totally not peaceful. So, it doesn't even bring happiness to yourself. This is what we see. The problem is not seeing that when you are not patient, you create so much negative karma and you harm yourself and others as well. Because of that, in the future, you will not have a good rebirth. You will have an unfortunate rebirth.

The fault of not being patient is that even in this life, it brings so much suffering. Then, there is no need to mention that in your next life, there will be even more suffering. If you look deeply, you will have endless suffering from life to life because of not having patience. It is endless suffering in the future. It is almost not possible for you to be free from suffering in the future.

When you really know what you have to experience by not being patient and always being angry, that the result can only be problems from life to life with endless suffering, then it is very scary. There will be so much unhappiness, even in this life.

It is also mentioned that due to so much anger, you are not healthy and will have lots of sicknesses. When you have so much anger, it is difficult to fall asleep. When you don't sleep well, then whatever food you eat is not delicious. You will be mentally sick, physically sick and look unpleasant and not beautiful. If you live your life with anger, then you become a very unpleasant person. Due to that, wherever you take rebirth, you won't have a pleasant rebirth. Even if you have a higher rebirth, you don't look pleasant. If you are not patient, even if you have a human rebirth, you don't look pleasant. You will look scary to others. This is the fault of not being patient.

### *Benefits of patience*

As for the benefit of being patient, when you are patient, whatever problems that come into your life, your mind will not be disturbed or harmed by them. You are able to live peacefully, undisturbed by these problems and remain very calm. That is the benefit of being patient. When you have patience, you are pleasant and beautiful and you bring happiness to others. Whoever lives near you, your friends, family members, neighbours and so forth, just by you being there, you are so pleasant and bring so much happiness to other sentient beings.

Also, when you are patient, it immediately brings happiness to your own mind. Everyone around you will consider you to be a good person, reliable and stable.

When you are patient, any problem that arises in your life, even if somebody were to criticize or harm you, your mind is very calm. This is because when you are patient, there is wisdom in your mind. When the mind is calm, there is wisdom. When you have wisdom, then you are able to do things correctly, knowing what is right and what is wrong. You are able to act according to your wisdom. Following your wisdom, you are able to do things correctly. In this way, you don't harm others. You don't create negative karma. The point is that when you are patient, you have great wisdom. Because of that, you can also do things more effectively to help others. Even in replying to or answering them, you can do so effectively.

So, once you live your life like that, being very pleasant with lots of wisdom and always very helpful to other sentient beings, that is called a happy and meaningful life. You can make your life meaningful by bringing happiness for yourself and others. In this way, you can call your life a meaningful life. So, live your life with patience for a happy life.

At the end of this life, when you have to leave this world, at time of death, then you have so much joy in the heart. The point is that when you have a lot of patience and you have so much happiness, even at the time of death, you will die with joy. So, that means you will have a good rebirth in the future.

Because of your practice of patience, you are pleasant in this life to others. Due to that, you live a pleasant life. Because of that, in future lives, when you take a human rebirth, you will have an extremely beautiful and pleasant body. The point is that as the result of being patient, just by seeing you brings happiness to other sentient beings. You must understand that.

This life is pleasant and the next life is pleasant. In this way, you can help many sentient beings. You don't harm them. Less harm to sentient beings means bringing more happiness to sentient beings. In this way, you create less negative karma. You create more virtuous karma. Life goes on like that one life after another. You will have good and pleasant rebirths, collecting merit and avoiding negative karma. In this way, you are able to achieve your final goal, such as liberation or enlightenment. As mentioned, the practice of patience is important for achieving a good rebirth. So, in this way, you can bring happiness to others.

*"If someone shouts at you, don't shout back!"*

In the practice of patience, on how to be patient, in the beginning, the Buddha said, "If somebody scolds you, do not scold back." There are these four points:

1. If somebody scolds you, do not scold back.
2. If somebody gets angry at you, do not be angry in return.
3. If somebody hits you, do not hit back.
4. If somebody finds fault with you, do not look at their faults.

So, those are the first steps that Buddha advised practitioners to follow.

You have to remember all that I have said earlier. So, when somebody shouts at you, what is your response? You want to shout back or do you want to be patient? Normally, we will shout back, thinking that will solve the problem. But if you look deeply, that doesn't solve

the problem at all. Without understanding (what I have said earlier), then you won't see the point of what I am saying now.

There are many ways to think. When somebody shouts at you, you think that he or she should not be shouting at you. But why not? Are you perfect? The question is that. Are you an enlightened being?

Don't you have some karma from the past? When you look at it as a Buddhist, the reason we get shouted at is because of our past karma. Even in this life, you don't see somebody shouting for no reason. Even in the present time, we may do something that doesn't fit with this person's mind. You may think it is right but it is not right for the other person. It is only right for you but it is not right for the other person. The condition is there. Nobody shouts for no reason, if there is nothing to shout about. There must be something.

The main thing is our own karma that we had collected in the past. Because of that, we are the condition for being shouted at by others. If you recognize that, if you believe in and have real understanding of karma, you will be able to accept it when somebody shouts at you. Otherwise, it is not possible to do so.

However, just being quiet and not shouting back does not mean that you are patient. You could be boiling with anger inside but smoke doesn't come out. In Tibetan, there is a saying, "There is fire inside the tummy but no smoke in the mouth." That is not patience.

Patience means there is no anger boiling inside the heart. Whenever one is being shouted at, immediately, one is able to remember the disadvantages of shouting back and being angry. Immediately, one needs to be mindful. Without that, it is not possible. So, on a daily basis, you have to be very mindful about that. So, in this way, immediately, you are able to recognize that it is not good. This really comes from your wisdom. Patience comes from wisdom. That is important.

When you understand about karma, you will understand that in samsara, there are always problems—shouting, criticizing, finding fault, hitting, beating. All these things happen everywhere in the world. As long as there are human beings and we are in samsara, all these problems will happen. We are not in the pure land. This is where we live so problems will exist. In reality, it is like that because we ourselves are the conditions. We created the karma in the past. In the present moment, of course it looks as if one has done something. It is a small reason. But when you look deeply, the main reason is karma.

So, when somebody shouts at you, the first thing to do is not to shout back. First, you must have mindfulness of the benefits of being patient and the faults of not being patient. Always keep them in mind. You need to do a lot of meditation for this to happen. Otherwise, it is not possible.

Look at it again from the point of view of karma. When you shout back with strong anger, you create karma. Immediately, that leaves a negative imprint in your mind. That means you are making your anger stronger for yourself by being angry and shouting back. You are creating another new karma. You already have karma from the past, but when you shout back, of course, you create a new karma to receive another shout from others in the future. If you look at it like that, it is not very wise to shout back. You may think you are

reducing the problem but in reality, you are not reducing the problem by shouting back. Instead, you are collecting more karma to be shouted at in the future.

Even in daily life, when somebody shouts at you, if you don't shout back and you keep quiet, then there is only one shout. Maybe it will be the first and the last one. But if you shout back, it won't be the first one and it won't be the last one. You will have more shouting in the future. In reality, it doesn't get better. We all know that by shouting, the situation becomes worse and worse. In the end it may even turn violent. Only when you don't shout back will there be less violence.

It is the same thing with being hit. When somebody hits you, if you don't hit back, that is the end of it. But if you hit back, then it is endless hitting back and forth. Depending on who is stronger, the other person or you will fall down.

It is the same with anger. Being angry with each other, that too becomes endless.

Finding fault with each other also become endless.

I am just giving an example of shouting. The point is that if you are very wise, you will know that it is better not to shout back. Because we don't have wisdom, immediately, anger arises and we shout back. Then it becomes very unpleasant. We think that shouting back is the best solution but in reality, that is not the best solution. By shouting back, you don't reduce the shouting. Instead you create new karma.

What is the point? When you look at this with your wisdom, then through meditation, you will see that there is not much point in shouting back. You really must recognize this. This is how you can be patient.

Of course, there are many ways to think about this. It is not easy because we have such a strong ego and the self-cherishing mind. We are not able to accept the shouting. Because of our ego and self-cherishing mind, we cherish ourselves so much, we are not able to accept even a small shout. Without thinking, we immediately shout back. Then we harm ourselves and we harm others.

At the end of the day, if you understand the law of karma, shouting back is harming others and harming yourself. Therefore, one of the methods to counter this is as follows. It is not easy for us but we have to train like that. If you really want to be patient, then you need to train.

- When somebody shouts at you, immediately, do not shout back. This is the very first step. At least, you do not shout back.
- Instead, you sit quietly for at least two to five minutes.
- Do some breathing meditation. I would suggest breathing in and out and letting go of the anger. It is not easy. You can train in not shouting back. Then immediately, shouting can be stopped. But when anger arises, it is not easy to stop it immediately. So when somebody shouts at you, do breathing meditation, breathing in and out and try to let go of the anger.

- Meditate on the law of karma. “I am being shouted at because of the karma I created in the past. May I never be shouted at again in the future.” Let go of your anger.
- Instead of anger, you feel the kindness of the person. “Because of him, I am able to purify the karma I created in the past.”
- At an even deeper level, you can see that person as a teacher, a guru of patience who is teaching you how to be patient. If you are able to see that person as a teacher teaching you patience, then you won’t be angry. Anger doesn’t arise.
- You also have to differentiate. You don’t get angry at the person who shouted at you because he is under the influence of his delusions and ignorance. He does not have any control over them. His mind is powered by anger, delusion or ignorance and because of that, the person doesn’t have any control. He doesn’t even wish for that.

He does not have any control as (the shouting) comes from the power of his anger and negative mind. So, it is not the person (who is at fault) but his deluded mind. So here, you have to differentiate between the person and his deluded mind. If you are able to differentiate between these two, then it is not the person (who is at fault). “Because of his delusions that are out of his control, he shouted at me.” If you are able to see that, then you won’t get angry with that person. Instead, you are able to develop compassion and feel sorry for the person. This is so much deeper and more powerful. So, the meditation can be done in this way.

- There are also many ways of looking at the reality of this shouting—the words, the sounds. By looking at whatever words the person says, in reality those words come from many conditions. One thing is that if you don’t hear anything, even if the person makes some sounds, there is no problem. Because you hear those words, then you have a problem.

Look at the sounds. Whatever unpleasant words the person says, they are just sounds. There is nothing solid there. Look at that deeply. There is nothing that you are able to pinpoint, “This is the thing that hurts me.” There is nothing solid in the object that you can point to.

Look at the reality of the labelled, ‘unpleasant words.’ Look at that reality. You won’t be able to find any unpleasantness there. If you look deeply, you will not be able to pinpoint anything that is so unpleasant, that really hurt you. Where is the hurt? Did it hurt the ear? Where did it hurt? Normally, people would say, “It hurt my heart.” Which heart are you referring to? The pumping heart? The pumping heart cannot be hurt by that!

So, this is another way to think. Where is it really hurting? Look at what is hurting you. Is it the person or the sounds? You may believe that it is the sounds that are hurting you so much. But the sounds are nothing. They are just words.

- When you are able to see that, you won’t feel the hurt there anymore. There is nothing

there, just your own thoughts. At the end of the day, it is not the person who is hurting you. It is your own thoughts that are hurting you. You exaggerated the words. "It must be that. He meant that." You labelled so much with your ignorant mind. In reality, you just label them like that. This is how your negative mind has made them so powerful in hurting you rather than the words themselves.

It is very good to recognize this. But normally, you never recognize this. You never think that it is your own thoughts that are hurting you. Rather, you always think it is the person's words that are hurting you. It is very important to understand this. If you really are able to understand this point, then there is no reason to be angry with the other person because the hurt is made up by yourself. If you can just listen to the unpleasant words and let them be, then there is no problem. But when you hold on to them, labelling them and making up so many reasons with your own thoughts, then it becomes a big problem. They become very unbearable. With such an unsettled mind, you will not be able to be patient at all. Your mind cannot settle down and will keep on thinking about what you can do to that person in retaliation. Wow, wow, wow! You can write ten pages on that.

This is what happens to us. The point is to understand that most of the hurt is coming from your own mind. The object is just a condition. You and the object are conditions. The best condition is your deluded mind. That is the main reason. If you don't have a deluded mind, then there is no problem. But because of having this deluded mind, then that becomes the problem. Then when you meet with the object, that is the condition, then suffering arises. So, it is good to recognize that.

With regard to finding faults, there was a student who told this great master that someone was finding fault with him. The master said, "That's OK. Human beings will find fault with human beings. He won't look at the faults of a dog. Human beings will look at human beings' faults. I am a human being so (I have the faults) of a human being. It's OK."

It is wonderful if you can have this kind of idea. It is the same thing with the sufferings found in samsara. We have problems with birth, aging, sickness and death. Nobody can deny that. This is the reality of samsara. Birth, aging, sickness and death are the reality of samsara. It is the nature of samsara. In samsara, there is no perfection. There are always problems. That is why it is called samsara. If there are no problems at all, then it won't be called samsara. Therefore, when we live in samsara, we have all these problems of aging, sickness and death. Whatever it is, we cannot stop them in samsara. While you are in samsara, you cannot stop them. So, you must accept them. By understanding that this is the reality of samsara and that nothing can be done about it, you have to accept this reality. So, patience here is about accepting this reality willingly, without complaint and recognizing that it is the nature of samsara.

Shantideva gave an example. He said, "When you touch the fire, your hand will be burnt. The nature of fire is to burn." You cannot complain about the fire. Its nature is like that. Similarly, being in samsara, you get sick, you age and you die. Therefore, there is nothing to complain about. You just have to accept it willingly.

I am talking about patience. Do you understand? What I am talking about here is

important. In reality, it is like that.

So, be a little bit mindful so that whenever anger arises, you know how not to shout back. That is the very first step.

It is mentioned that when the bodhisattvas are well trained, when someone shout at them, they are very happy. They welcome it, "Please shout at me." They feel so much joy because being shouted at comes from their karma. That means they are purifying their own karma. Not only that. It teaches them patience. So, the bodhisattvas welcome (the shouting).

Of course, this comes from your training. So, patience is important. When you are patient, then you are very pleasant, even in this present life. There will be more harmony, good relationships, good communications, happy family, happy friends and a happy society.

Without patience, then are so much problems even within the family, with relatives, and even in society and the whole world. If there is no patience, then all the problems come. Unhappiness comes as do the endless suffering. All this is made up by our own angry mind, for not being patient. So, try your best to understand what the benefits of being patient are and what the faults of not being patient are.

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