

Using Dharmakirti's lines of reasoning to establish that “one's impermanence is in the nature of suffering”:

<p>“Because compounded things are impermanent, one can establish that there is suffering. Due to the reason [of the existence] of suffering, one can establish that phenomena are selfless.”</p>
<p>When Buddha first taught the Dharma, He that all compounded phenomena are impermanent.</p>
<p>Behind this explanation of impermanence, there are different levels of subtleties: coarse and subtle impermanence.</p>
<p>The impermanence that Buddha was mainly referring to, was subtle impermanence [momentary disintegration].</p>
<p>Realizing this is difficult. But without realizing subtle impermanence, it is impossible to understand/ realize the 'all pervasive compounded suffering', or the 'suffering of conditionality'. Of the three types of suffering, this is the third type.</p>
<p>Even though it is said that all compounded phenomena are impermanent, but the specific impermanent phenomenon that one should primarily be focusing on, should be oneself.</p>
<p>Without realizing that oneself is in the nature of impermanence, then it would be difficult to realize how one is actually suffering.</p>
<p>It is really very difficult to realize one's own impermanence, especially oneself being in the nature of subtle impermanence.</p>
<p>This is because, when one thinks about oneself, there is the 'person' who woke up in the morning and also the [same] 'person' who [still] exists at a later part of the day.</p>
<p>When one thinks about the 'I' in the morning and the 'I' right now, one instinctively feels that it is the same 'I' which has not changed at all.</p>
<p>Similarly, when one looks at one's body, one feels that the body of this morning and the body now has not changed.</p>
<p>Therefore, [this shows that,] to realize subtle impermanence is really difficult.</p>
<p>What one instinctively believes is that, the 'I' and body of this morning, and the 'I' and body right now have not changed.</p>
<p>When one analyzes [deeper], this is not the reality. One's 'I' and body have changed, in fact, these have changed in each and every single moment, but one does not realize that.</p>
<p>If one were to set a stick on fire and twirl it quickly, there would be an appearance of a firebrand/ fire-wheel. In reality, there is no wheel there, [as it is merely made up of a continuum of each moment of the appearance of the fire when it is twirled].</p>
<p>Likewise, although one instinctively believes that the 'I' and the body do not change from moment to moment, appearing to oneself as being the same, in reality, these two are constantly changing in each and every moment.</p>
<p>The point is: While this is how the [unchanging nature of the 'I' and body] appear to one, one also instinctively believes and thinks that this is the reality. In reality, this is a mistake, it is false, not true.</p>
<p>In the study of logic found in the great treatises, the common statement is this: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The subject, 'sound', is impermanent, because it is a product.”</i></p> </p>
<p>By the valid proof of [the reason of it being a] product, one establishes that [the subject of inquiry:] sound, is impermanent.</p>
<p>Even though 'impermanent' here, means <i>disintegration</i>, and 'product' here, means <i>creation</i>, these two are actually <i>one entity</i> but <i>different isolates</i>.</p>
<p>When one applies this same line of reasoning to the subject of 'oneself' and 'one's body', then these can be phrased as: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The subject, 'I', is impermanent, because it is a product.”</i> and, <i>“The subject, 'my body', is impermanent, because it is a product.”</i></p> </p>
<p>Because one's body is a product/ is produced, this reason then establishes that one's body is in fact impermanent.</p>
<p>In the final analysis, one has to establish for oneself, that oneself and one's body are in the nature of impermanence, disintegrating moment by moment, due to the fact that these were produced.</p>
<p>Therefore, the Buddha said: “Because it is produced, it is a phenomenon that undergoes disintegration.”</p>
<p>By the very reason that it is produced, therefore, anything that is produced has the nature of impermanence, which means it undergoes disintegration in each and single moment.</p>
<p>Production arises due to a cause. There must be a cause that gives rise to production.</p>
<p>Then, what is the cause of this phenomenon that has a nature of impermanence? Is there a cause other than the cause that lead to its production, or is there something else?</p>

Buddha's teachings assert that: <i>“The cause of production of any phenomenon is itself the very cause of its disintegration.”</i>
This is an extremely difficult point to realize, but is something that one needs to establish for oneself.
Essentially, impermanence and product are one nature/ entity. It is just that they are different isolates.
To develop a definite understanding/ realization of the meaning of subtle impermanence, one has to realize that: <i>The nature of impermanence is, that whatever is produced necessary undergoes disintegration.</i>
Other than this [reasoning], there is no other way to realize subtle impermanence.
When one lights a butter lamp, there is illumination. When the flame dies off, the light disappears as well. Does the cessation of the light occur simultaneously with the the cessation of the butter lamp, or in sequence?
One needs to understand this: any impermanent thing undergoes momentary change in each and every single moment.
While this impermanent phenomenon exists, it exists [as a mere] continuum. For example, the body that existed in the morning and is still existing now, as a [mere] continuum.
Therefore, while this body exists, but during this time, it is not that it did not undergo change.
While there is the [existence of the] continuum of this specific impermanent phenomenon, in each and every single moment of this continuum, disintegration is occurring. This is what one has to understand/ realize.
[When one understands that oneself is in the nature of impermanence and thus suffering, one would cherish virtue:]
When one thinks about this, one should then utilize one's time, when one has the opportunity, to not let such opportunities go to waste, but to educate oneself, learn and reflect on Buddha's teachings.
By continually reflecting on one's impermanence, this will impel/ spur one to take whatever opportunities/ time one have to move one's mind in the direction of virtue as much as possible, whether it is prayers, engaging in practice or study.
Whatever that one learns in one's studies, these should always be applied to one's own mind to weaken/ reduce one's afflictions, the three mental poisons.
One has to remind oneself of one's own impermanence, to impel oneself to engage in virtue, whatever that is good, making a pledge to oneself to seize the opportunities when all the different [rare] conditions are still there, to do one's best.

How to approach the study of this text:

With respect to the approach one takes to studying this text, ideally, if one study this text by following the outlines of the commentary, then there is great benefit as there is a purpose which is helpful for gaining a good overview and understanding of the different sections/ parts of the text.
However, I do not think that I will be able to do this here, rather, if we can just get some understanding of some of the verses in the text, then that would suffice for our purpose.
For those who really have an interest and would like to read the root text together with the outlines, these can be found in the commentary to this root text by Gyaltsabje, it is available and one should find out how to get it.
The study of this text is different from other philosophical subjects, in that it is not that difficult to understand.

Introducing the ten chapters of this text:

This text, called “Engaging in the Deeds of a Bodhisattva”, has ten chapters.
The first chapter: is an Explanation of the benefits of the mind of enlightenment/ bodhicitta.
Thus, this is a teaching of the Mahayana. To be a Mahayanist, one must have the realization of bodhicitta, one then becomes a Mahayanist.
To develop bodhicitta, one has to firstly develop belief in bodhicitta, develop enthusiasm for cultivating bodhicitta, and develop faith in bodhicitta. For these reasons, the benefits of bodhicitta are explained.
It does not mean that one would be able to adopt and generate bodhicitta even if one has belief, enthusiasm and faith in it.
To generate and adopt bodhicitta, one must first overcome the obstacles, which are the negativities. These have to be purified first. Then one also has to accumulate the merits/ virtues, which are the favorable conditions.
On the basis of these two: confessing and purifying one's negativities and collecting merit , one then adopts bodhicitta through a ritual.
For these reasons, Chapter two: Confessing negativities , and Chapter three: Completely upholding the mind of enlightenment , are explained.

One then adopts bodhicitta through a ritual and generates this mind of enlightenment. But this is insufficient.
After one has adopted and generated bodhicitta through a ritual, it is important not to let this mind of enlightenment one had adopted degenerate.
To not allow one's commitment degenerate, one has to know exactly what to adopt and what to discard . For this reason, Chapter four: Teachings on conscientiousness , is taught.
After adopting bodhicitta and gaining the training in not allowing it to degenerate, there is the training in the deeds and practices of a bodhisattva.
In this respect, there is the general training, which is taught in chapter four, and the specific training, which refers to the training in the perfections.
Chapter five: Guarding introspection , is taught once one has adopted bodhicitta and needs to train in maintaining one's ethical discipline . To do so, one needs mindfulness and introspection, this chapter explains them.
The remaining chapters are: Chapter six: Relying on patience , Chapter seven: Teachings on joyous effort , Chapter eight: Teachings on concentration , Chapter nine: The perfection of wisdom and Chapter ten: Dedication .
If one were to ask where the practice of the perfection of generosity is shown in the root text, then according to the commentaries, the perfection of generosity is shown in the chapter of dedication .
In this chapter, there are verses which explain how to dedicate one's body, resources and roots of virtue to others.
These are the ten chapters of the text of Engaging in the deeds of a bodhisattva, which is essentially a teaching showing the entire practice of the Mahayana.

How these ten chapters are condensed into one dedication verse:

The dedication prayer that most are aware of: <i>Jang Chub Sem Chog Rinpoche...</i> <i>“May the precious bodhicitta not yet born arise and grow, May that born have no decline but increase forever more.”</i>
This verse is essentially the condensed meaning of all the ten chapters of this text.
When one expands on the meanings of this dedication prayer, one gets these ten chapters. If one condenses the subject matter/ meanings of these ten chapters, one gets this one dedication verse.
In the first line: <i>“May the precious bodhicitta not yet born arise and grow”</i> , bodhicitta, or the mind of enlightenment, can be looked at, in terms of the conventional mind of enlightenment and the ultimate mind of enlightenment.
Therefore, <i>“The precious mind of enlightenment”</i> refers to these two minds of enlightenment.
For one's mind of enlightenment that has <i>“not yet born arise and grow”</i> , there are the first three chapters that explain: A) How [to develop bodhicitta that has not yet developed] –
1) Explanation of the benefits of the mind of enlightenment, 2) Confessing negativities, and 3) Completely upholding the mind of enlightenment. But, it is not sufficient to adopt bodhicitta and allowing it to degenerate:
<i>“May that born have no decline”</i> . It is important to not let one's bodhicitta that has arisen to degenerate.
As a method to stop the degeneration of bodhicitta that one has generated, there is the explanation of the chapters on –
4) Teachings on conscientiousness, 5) Guarding introspection, and 6) Patience. These chapters then become very important.
<i>“But increase forever more”</i> . On top of not allowing one's bodhicitta that has been adopted to degenerate, one must ensure that it increases as well.
For that, one needs the explanations on – 7) Joyous effort, 8) Teachings on concentration, and 9) The perfection of wisdom.
Therefore, the bodhicitta that has not arisen, one must develop it, once it is developed, then one must ensure that it does not degenerate. On the basis of that, one must strive to increase one's bodhicitta.
The result of following through this process is that, one achieves the final fruit of attainment. The whole purpose solely being able to work for the benefit and welfare of others.
Therefore, this prayer is essentially the wish/ aspiration to be able to achieve such a final fruit, to be able to benefit others.

Summary of the sequence of the chapters:

May the precious (conventional and ultimate) bodhicitta not yet born arise and grow	To develop bodhicitta that has not yet developed	1) Explanation of the benefits of the mind of enlightenment – to develop belief, enthusiasm and faith in mind generation.	
		2) Confessing negativities – to remove unfavorable conditions/ negativities and gather favorable conditions/ virtues in order to generate mind generation.	
		3) Completely upholding the mind of enlightenment – adopting mind generation through a ritual after having cultivated the causes.	
May that born have no decline	Not letting one's bodhicitta that has arisen to degenerate	General trainings in maintaining the deeds/ practices of a bodhisattva	4) Teachings on conscientiousness – knowing what to adopt and discard in order not to degenerate one's commitments.
			5) Guarding introspection – knowing how to maintain one's ethical discipline.
But increase forever more	While maintaining that, to ensure that it also increases/ strengthens	Specific trainings in maintaining the deeds/ practices of a bodhisattva	6) Patience
			7) Joyous effort
			8) Teachings on concentration
			9) The perfection of wisdom
			10) Dedication – Training in the perfection of generosity

How to really set the motivation:

At the beginning of doing something, it is said that the motivation is very important. Likewise, the motivation for learning/ studying this text becomes important.
Each of us has to find one's own motivation. One has to look and search inside oneself and ask: “Why am I studying/ learning about this text?”
One needs to have an answer for oneself, when one says: “Setting one's motivation.”
One has to find one's own answer. Until one does so, one has to ask oneself this question over and over again.
I just share my own story: when I was young doing my studying from twelve to fifteen years old, of course, being young, I have no idea why I was studying philosophy.
I didn't have any motivation for studying, as I was merely following others in the class in the morning and night, I have to go without choice.
At the age of seventeen or eighteen, I started debating in Kopan. There were some Geshes who came from Sera [to guide us]. When they [posed a question], we have to debate with them.
It was extremely difficult to debate with [the Geshes]. They were scholars who can say everything like an enlightened being!
If you asked them any questions, they can answer. If you asked them to quote any texts, they can also do that.
That was what I felt, when I was seventeen or eighteen, debating with them. In my heart, I couldn't imagine how they could remember everything in their brains! Of course, they were Geshes.
Even after ten or fifteen years of studying these subjects, they could still remember everything!
Even though we were young then, but whatever we studied, we couldn't remember. So, I was full of [amazement and] admiration [for the Geshes]. Due to that, some kind of wish arose: “How wonderful if I could also answer like [they do]!”
It was only then, that some kind of motivation arose in me. I think I call that a motivation: “How wonderful if, whatever text that I read, I could know all of them!”
At that time, Lama Lhundrub also taught us, for example, a sentence like “Jang Chub Sem Chog Rinpoche...” I had zero idea [what it meant.] But they could also explain the [meanings] of the words very well.
I was also thinking: “How wonderful, if I could understand all the topics!”
[Such thoughts] were [the motivations] that made me study and [so-called] complete them.
This was what happened to me. For me, that was the motivation that made me study for so long, about fifteen to twenty years!
No matter how many times you studied, how many books you read, it was always an almost never ending learning, a never ending of questions, as the questions become more and more.
As you studied, you think more, then you think you know more, but then you realized you actually didn't know that much!

Therefore, it was very challenging. But for me, it was like that, I was always wondering, always wanting to know.
At that time, I didn't have much motivation to teach others or to do meditation. For me, it was just: "I want to know, I want to know everything!" That [thought/ motivation] kept pushing me, somehow, all the time, it kept coming to push me to study furthermore.
At that time, I had read so many commentaries, received so many teachings, sometimes I thought I knew them. But when the teacher asked the question, I realized that I actually didn't know anything at all! My understanding was totally wrong!
Therefore, at that moment, I realized that the teacher was extremely important. He can really clarify, make really clear what is right and what is wrong.
Because, sometimes you may read the book and think that you understood something, but you actually don't. You are merely getting some rough idea but you don't get to go deep down.
With a teacher, then I think I received much more benefits! You can really go deep down and have a good understanding.
At that time, you will really appreciate that the teacher is there. This was just how I had felt and how I had motivated myself.
Therefore, each one of us should ask oneself: "Why am I studying this?" Motivation is everything, it is the driving force.
Of course, everybody's motivation is different, some people want to know because they want to learn, others may want to put them into practice, more others may want to know and then share, teach and help others.
Whatever these may or may not be, the point is, one has to find one's own driving force, the motivation that drives oneself.
The reason why people do not achieve much, but getting stuck and staying where they are, being neither here nor there but merely trudging along, can all be boiled down to <i>not being clear in the mind what they want, not clear about the motivation</i> .
This is why motivation is everything. It is that which drives and determines the output/ result.
Therefore, whenever one studies/ learns, it is important to "adjust/ check" one's motivation. Based on that, as much as possible, one then learns.

Root text: I. The meaning of the title:

In the root text, it starts by saying: <i>"In the Indian language, the Bodhisattvacharyavatara, [in Tibetan, Jang Chub Sem Pa Cho Pa La Jug Pa]."</i>
<i>Indian language</i> means Sanskrit, the name of this text is Bodhisattvacharyavatara.
'Bodhi' in Tibetan, is made up of two syllabus: ' <i>Jang Chub</i> '. It is of great importance to understand these two words.
' <i>Jang</i> ' means 'to purify', here it means to know and purify all the obscurations that prevents omniscience/ all knowingness.
' <i>Chub</i> ' means to 'internalize/ actualize', here it means to gather and complete all the good qualities.
If fact, there is so much that one can understand/ read, into the meaning of 'Jang' and 'Chub'.
This depends on one's level of education. If one's scope of learning is limited, then one's understanding of 'Jang' would merely mean to purify or remove something.
But there is so much to be said about 'Jang'. When it means to purify, here it means to purify obscurations.
When one delves deeper into more detail, then these would be the afflictive obscurations and the knowledge obscurations. One can then delve deeper and deeper as to what these are.
As for 'Chub', to internalize or actualize all the qualities, for example, one can talk about all the qualities and realizations of the ten bodhisattva grounds. For one, these are something very inconceivable and difficult to fit into one's limited mind.
The point is: If one's scope of learning is narrow, then there is only that much one can understand from this word. If one's scope of learning is extensive, then there is so much that one can get at/ read into, merely in contact with 'Jang Chub'.
When one has a clearer idea of 'Jang' and 'Chub', then when one thinks of enlightenment/ Buddha, one would then feel/ generate the understanding that Buddha is something really special.
It is widely known and believed by most people, that there is no need to engage in extensive study, that there are no benefits in learning so much. But I have always said that, this is not the case, that this is wrong!
Because, one's scope of learning determines how much one can get, in this case, what 'Jang Chub' is.
Whether one says 'Jang Chub', 'enlightenment', 'Buddha' or 'object of refuge', one is referring to the same thing.
The more learning one has, this would mean one has more understanding of what 'Jang Chub' is, or who one is entrusting oneself towards.
When one has more education and learning, then when one is in contact with the word or thinks of Buddha, one's experience and feeling are very different.

When one has a good or complete understanding of what 'Jang Chub' is, then when one thinks of one's object of refuge, the Buddha, one would really be able to see for oneself/ know that he is really extraordinary.
If one understands what 'Jang Chub' is, all the qualities of realization and abandonment, and that it was achieved for the sake of sentient beings, then one would understand one's object of refuge, that which one is entrusting oneself to, to be like this, then this would give rise to very strong faith, firm devotion.
'Sattva' in Tibetan, is 'Sem Pa'. Here, it refers to the 'courageous one who works for the welfare of others'.
'Charya' [in Tibetan, is 'Cho Pa'], it means 'conduct/ deeds', 'Avatara' [in Tibetan, is 'La Jug Pa'], it means 'to engage in'.
This is the name/ title of this treatise [and its meaning.] The reason one needs to give a title/ name to the text is this:
According to <i>Descent into Lanka sutra</i> , Buddha said that, one affixes a name to eliminate the confusion of sentient beings.

II. The Translator's homage:

The verse of homage is made by the <i>Lotsawas</i> of the past. In English, this is roughly translated as 'translator', who pays homage to all Buddhas and bodhisattvas.
The Tibetan kings of the past instituted rules/ systems with respect to paying homage at the beginning of a translated work.
The reason for having different kinds of homages is to show which scriptural collection a translated treatise belongs to.
By merely looking at the homage itself, one would be able to easily and immediately identify which scriptural collection such a treatise belong to:
1) When it is homage to all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas – this treatise is a sutra collection/ Sutra pitaka. [this root text]
2) When it is homage to the Youthful Manjugosha – it is a knowledge collection/ Abhidharma pitaka
3) When it is homage to the All Knowing Omniscient One – it is a vinaya collection/ Vinaya pitaka

Student: Is great compassion a fear for sentient beings taking rebirth in cyclic existence?

Khenrinpoche: That is the kind of compassion that we have. But I think the fully qualified compassion is not like that. For the actual great compassion, it is a mind that is unable to bear sentient beings' suffering. But, this is a mind of great courage [instead of great fear]. It is a very strong and courageous mind. Although one does not have any solutions [to the plight of sentient beings], but one has great courage and strength of mind, a strong and powerful courage. It is precisely because this is such a courageous mind, that it can induce the next mind of wholehearted resolve, which is the attitude thinking: "I myself will do it alone!" Such kind of attitude cannot arise if one does not have a strong and courageous attitude.

The kind of compassion that one has is very ordinary and limited. One's compassion is mixed with attachment. Once in a while, one has a feeling of compassion arising, but it is mixed with attachment as it is not free from bias. Therefore, when one generates this kind of ordinary compassion, one's mind will become quite tight and narrow. One feels an uneasiness and the mind is disturbed with worries. This is the kind of partial compassion that one has.

The mind of great compassion is a mind that does not have preferences for some and not for other sentient beings. As such, there is no prejudice. I don't think such a pure mind of great compassion comes with these kinds of worries and fears. In fact, it is a very courageous mind.

Student: When one becomes a Buddha, one is still unable to release the suffering of sentient beings, then why become a Buddha? As there are already Buddhas now, but sentient beings are still suffering continually, then when we become Buddhas, can we really stop sentient beings' suffering?

Khenrinpoche: Looks like you don't want to get enlightened! Do you think you can help someone? You don't think you can help anyone? Student: yes. Khenrinpoche: Then when you are better, [developed] a good heart, plenty of money...! Then it's possible that you can help ten, twenty or a hundred people. So, it depends on your quality, money and heart, isn't it? So then, when you get enlightened, can you help many people? Student: yes. Khenrinpoche: So good, then faster get enlightened...!

Student: Is it true that one has to have single-pointed concentration [before] one can develop bodhicitta? Khenrinpoche: yes.

Student: If that is the case, then why does the practice of perfection of concentration only comes after the bodhisattva has developed bodhicitta?

Khenrinpoche: If you examine the great treatises, for example, in *Maitreya's Abhiyasamayalankara* [Ornament for Clear Realization] and the commentaries to that, it is evident that one needs calm abiding to actualize bodhicitta.

In the context of the perfection of meditative stabilization, which precedes the perfection of wisdom, in the discussion of the former, the training of the calm abiding there is not the calm abiding in general. Because, a calm abiding in the continuum of a bodhisattva is not necessary a calm abiding that is focusing on emptiness. The generation of calm abiding in the context of the perfections, is referring mainly to the calm abiding that is focusing on emptiness. Based on that, one develops a union of calm abiding and special insight. In the discussion on the Paths and Grounds, the bodhisattva achieves the calm abiding focusing on emptiness [only] on the Mahayana great path of accumulation. When that bodhisattva achieves the special insight focusing on emptiness, it is then that he becomes someone who is on the path of preparation. Subsequently, when that bodhisattva realizes emptiness directly, then he becomes someone on the path of seeing.

How to gain faith of conviction in the Buddhadharm through the four seals and lines of reasoning:

I have talked about the Four Seals in the past, this is something that we all should think about regularly:
<p>1) <i>All compounded phenomena are impermanent,</i> 2) <i>All contaminated phenomena are in the nature of suffering,</i> 3) <i>All phenomena are selfless and empty,</i> 4) <i>Nirvana is peace.</i></p>
The texts on reasoning composed by the great logicians Dignaga and Dharmakirti have stated: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>A) Because it is impermanent, therefore, it is suffering.</i></p>
What they are saying is the same as the four seals. But, this is not meant to be taken literally in that, just because something is impermanent, it is [necessarily] in the nature of suffering. One has to take the import of this statement:
<i>The reason that contaminated phenomena are in the nature of suffering is because: they are impermanent.</i>
This is something one has to resolve. Once one understands this, then one moves on to Dignaga and Dharmakirti's next point:
<i>B) Because it is in the nature of suffering, therefore, it is selfless.</i>
There are many ways to understand this statement. One has to think about this and come to an understanding for oneself.
Once one understands these two statements [A & B], then one would understand how <i>nirvana is peace</i> .
Although [Dignaga and Dharmakirti] did not state this directly, but in meaning, [one can state that]:
<i>[C) Because it is selfless, therefore, nirvana is peace.]</i>
This is an extremely important point to understand. In fact, this is the very root of the entire Buddhadharm!
When one understands for oneself how nirvana/ liberation actually exists, and how it is actually possible for oneself to achieve it, then one would really start to relish the Buddha's teachings.
Whatever learning and studying one does, it is to help move one's mind towards that understanding, that conviction.
Once one gains that conviction, then it will really help one to have the belief and faith in the dharma, which then helps one to aspire to actualize it.
These four seals attest a doctrine to be a buddhist doctrine. Hence, they are very important and one should reflect on them continually.

III. The meaning of the text**A. The act of introducing the explanation of the stages of the Mahayana path [1.1 – 1.3]**

1. Expression of worship [1.1(ab)] – Purpose, expressing worship and their meaning:

<p><i>a. Respectfully I pay homage to the Sugatas who are endowed with the dharmakaya,</i> <i>b. As well as to their children, and to all who are worthy of homage.</i></p>
The objects to whom the author is paying homage to, are essentially the Three Rare Sublime Ones/ Three Jewels, together with all those who are worthy of homage. After paying homage, he states his intention of composing this text.
In the commentaries, there is an explanation on the word <i>Sugata, Gone to Bliss, (Tib.) De Sheg</i> :
'De', which is translated as 'bliss', essentially means something wonderful and good. 'Sheg', means 'to have become'.
The goodness that is referred to in 'De', are A) The excellent abandonments and B) The excellent realizations .
A) The excellent abandonments have three features: 1) Abandonment, 2) Good abandonment and 3) Thorough abandonment:
1) Abandonment – refers to having abandoned the afflictive obscurations.
The purpose of this is to distinguish the Buddha from the liberation/ actual concentrations that the non-buddhists achieve.
For example, on the basis of calm abiding, the Tirtikas and Forders can achieve the minds of the formless realms, reaching the peak of cyclic existence.
In such a state of existence, such sentient beings have the quality of not having any manifest afflictions. But the abandonment that the Buddha has achieved is very different from such a state.
2) Good abandonment – refers to having abandoned the objects of abandonment such that it will never arise again.
The purpose of this explanation is to distinguish the quality of abandonment that the Buddha has achieved from the abandonments achieved by some of the Hinayana superiors.
In the explanation of the Hinayana paths, there are some who have achieved the Hinayana Superior's path.

Within those who have achieved the Superior's path, there are different categories like Stream-enterers and Once-returners.
Although the stream-enterers and once-returners are Hinayana superiors, but they have yet to abandon the seeds of innate afflictions, the innate apprehension of self. Due to that, they still have to take rebirth in cyclic existence.
This is unlike the Buddha, who have achieved the good abandonment in that, the afflictions that he has abandoned will never arise again.
3) Thorough abandonment (lit. abandonment without leaving anything behind) – refers to having completely abandoned the two obscurations, afflictive and non-afflictive/ knowledge obscurations
The purpose is to distinguish the quality of abandonment that the Buddha has achieved from the abandonment achieved by the Hearer and Solitary Realizer foe destroyers.
Such an abandonment that the Buddha has achieved is something that the Hearer and Solitary Realizer arhats have not.
Therefore, [the purpose of explaining] these three excellent abandonments that the Buddha has achieved, is to enable one to understand that they are to be distinguished from the qualities of abandonments achieved by those who:
1) have reached the peak of cyclic existence, 2) are stream-enterers and once-returners, and 3) are Hearer and Solitary Realizer arhats.
If one knows these points and then thinks about what the Buddha has abandoned, one would then see how the qualities of abandonment that he has achieved are very different from those achieved by the non-buddhas.
Of course, to be able to appreciate these points, one would have to know them, which can only come about through learning.
For example, ideally, one has to know about the presentations on the form and formless absorptions/ concentrations, the process of reaching the peak of cyclic existence, the presentation of the Hinayana paths, the different Sanghas, and the exact natures of stream-enterers, once-returners, Hinayana foe destroyers and so forth.
If one only wants a simple explanation, then one can take <i>Sugata</i> to simply mean <i>Gone to bliss</i> , with the bliss referring to abandonments and realizations.
B) The excellent realizations have three features: 1) Exalted knower, 2) Stable exalted knower, 3) Thorough exalted knower.
These terms are found in the texts of Dignaga and Dharmakirti. The purpose of explaining these three features of excellent realization is the same: to distinguish Buddha's qualities of realization from others.
1) Exalted knower – refers to the exalted knower that directly knows thusness/ perceives selflessness.
This is to distinguish from the quality of [attainments] of those in the formless realm absorptions, including the peak of cyclic existence. Although it is quite an achievement, but when compared to the Buddha's realization, it is nothing.
Because, even though they have achieved the highest possible state of existence in cyclic existence, but they have not realized thusness directly.
2) Stable exalted knower – refers to the stable realization of the Buddha that has completely destroyed the seeds of innate grasping.
This is to distinguish Buddha from the stream-enterer and once-returned. They are Hinayana superiors who have perceived the truth directly. However, their direct realization of selflessness is not as “stable” as the Buddha's realization.
This is because, their direct realization of selflessness is not powerful enough to destroy the seeds of innate self grasping. Therefore in that sense, unlike Buddha, they have not achieved a stable realization.
3) Thorough exalted knower – refers to the thorough knowledge of Buddha that sees each phenomenon exactly as it is, including the paths of the vehicles. As such, he is able to work perfectly for the benefit of sentient beings.
Therefore, this is to distinguish from the Hearer and Solitary Realizer arhats.
Therefore, <i>De Sheg/ Sugata</i> , in this verse refers to the Buddha Jewel, the object of homage.
Next, the <i>Dharmakaya (/Truth Body)</i> in this verse, refers to the Final Dharma Jewel.
This final Dharma Jewel consists of: 1) Nature [truth] body, and 2) Wisdom truth body.
1) Nature [truth] body – refers to the naturally pure sphere that is free of all [adventitious] stains, the final true cessation.
2) Wisdom truth body – refers to the wisdom of the exalted knower in the continuum of Buddha superior, the final true path.
In the first line: <i>a. Respectfully I pay homage to the Sugatas who are endowed with the dharmakaya</i> , there is a person who is endowed with the Dharmakaya. This person refers to the [Final] Sangha Jewel.
This line refers to the objects of homage, which are the Final Three Jewels: 1) Final Buddha Jewel 2) Final Dharma Jewel and 3) Final Sangha Jewel

In the second line: <i>b. As well as to their children</i> , the children [of the Buddha] in general refers to the bodhisattvas. Here in particular, they refer to the superior bodhisattvas.
<i>And to all who are worthy of homage</i> . Those worthy of homage refers to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha of the Mahayana
This verse of homage is paid primarily from the perspective of Mahayana refuge.
Therefore, the objects of refuge would be the Final Three Jewels, together with the superior bodhisattvas and so forth of the Mahayana, are all included as objects of homage.
In line one, <i>a. The Sugatas who are endowed with the dharmakaya</i> , Sugata is also referring to the Buddha's Four Bodies.
Through directly indicating <i>Dharmakaya</i> in this line, this by the way also shows the two Form Bodies indirectly: 1) The Complete Enjoyment Body, and 2) The Emanation Body.
There are many explanations about what Buddha is, the whole point being to understand who one is taking refuge in.
One always go for refuge to the Three Jewels, whether one uses the word 'Buddha', 'Sugata', 'Gone to Bliss' or 'Full Enlightenment', these are all the same.
These explanations are meant to help one gain a better understanding of one's object of refuge.

Summarized points of the Three Final Jewels:

The Final Three Jewels					
Final Buddha Jewel/ Sugata/ De Sheg	Meaning of 'De' / 'Bliss'	A) The excellent abandonments	1) Abandonment – refers to having abandoned the afflictive obscurations.	2) Good abandonment – refers to having abandoned the objects of abandonment such that it will never arise again.	3) Thorough abandonment – refers to having completely abandoned the two obscurations, afflictive and non-afflictive/ knowledge obscurations
		B) The excellent realizations	1) Exalted knower – refers to the exalted knower that directly knows thusness/ perceives selflessness.	2) Stable exalted knower – refers to the stable realization of the Buddha that has completely destroyed the seeds of innate grasping.	3) Thorough exalted knower – refers to the thorough knowledge of Buddha that sees each phenomenon exactly as it is, including the paths of the vehicles.
Final Dharma Jewel/ Dharmakaya	Directly indicates	1) Nature [truth] body – refers to the naturally pure sphere that is free of all [adventitious] stains, the final true cessation.			
	Indirectly indicates	2) Wisdom truth body – refers to the wisdom of the exalted knower in the continuum of Buddha superior, the final true path.			
		3) Complete enjoyment body			
		4) Emanation body			
Final Sangha Jewel/ Sugata	Person who is endowed with the Dharmakaya. [In dependence on the thoroughly purified aggregates of the Buddha, one labels the person, the Final Sangha Jewel.]				

2. The pledge to explain [this material] [1.1(cd)]

A. Identifying the subject matter to be explained [1.1(c)]: <i>c. Here I shall describe how to engage in the vows of the Sugatas' children,</i>
B. Rejecting the fault [of this material being Shantideva's] own fabrication [1.1(d)]:
C. Rejecting [the idea that it is unnecessary] repetition: <i>d. The meaning of which I have summarized in accordance with the scriptures.</i>
The author states that he pledges to summarize the paths taken by the bodhisattvas: How one initially generates the mind of enlightenment and on that basis, how one trains in the bodhisattva deeds/ perfections.
He says he is doing this in accordance with the Buddha's intent, with what is laid out in the Buddha's teachings, and not through his own whims, fancies or whatever that comes to his mind, not creating something new.
If he is going to explain by composing this text in accordance with Buddha's intent and whatever that has been laid out in the Buddha's teachings, then since these are already available, then what is really the point of doing so?
His purpose is to <i>summarize</i> the key points of the path. Therefore, Shantideva is saying that he is composing this summary of the Buddha's teachings so that one can <i>easily understand and realize the intent of the Buddha</i> .

3. Expressing humility and how Shantideva was inspired to compose [this text] [1.2 – 1.3]:

<p>1.2 a. <i>There is nothing here that has not appeared in the past</i> b. <i>And I have no skill in the art of rhetoric;</i> c. <i>Therefore, not to enact the welfare of others,</i> d. <i>I composed this in order to acquaint it to my mind.</i> 1.3 a. <i>For due to acquaintance with virtue,</i> b. <i>The force of my faith will for the time being increase because of these.</i> c. <i>If, however, these are seen by others</i> d. <i>Equal in fortune to myself, it will be meaningful.</i></p>
A. With humility, [Shantideva says that he] did not compose this primarily for the benefit of others [1.2(ab)]:
[Shantideva] is expressing humility by saying that he is not an expert in the meaning of the teachings, this is why he states: 1.2 a. <i>There is nothing here that has not appeared in the past.</i>
He is also saying that he is not skilled in the art of rhetoric to mean he is not an expert in language or the words, this is why he states: b. <i>And I have no skill in the art of rhetoric;</i>
As pride is an obstacle to gaining realizations, therefore, the point of such an expression of humility is to overcome that.
Whether one is composing a text, studying or whatever one does, it is important to do so in the absence of pride.
B. The reasons he was inspired to compose this treatise [1.2(cd) – 1.3(ab)]:
c. <i>Therefore, not to enact the welfare of others</i> , 'welfare of others' here, refers to those who, on their own, have the ability to understand the Buddha's teachings.
Therefore, he is saying that he did not compose this text for their purpose. Rather, he is composing this to acquaint it to his mind: d. <i>I composed this in order to acquaint it to my mind.</i>
1.3 a. <i>For due to acquaintance with virtue</i> b. <i>The force of my faith will for the time being increase because of these.</i>
Here is showing the reason for generating enthusiasm/ delight in composing this text. Whether it is composing a text or doing some other things, besides doing it without any pride, one should also do so happily with a sense of enthusiasm/ delight.
Even though one may not have pride, but if one feels discouraged/ lacks enthusiasm, then it is also difficult to achieve one's goals.
C. Showing that it [might] also be of benefit to others of equal fortune [1.3(cd)]:
c. <i>If, however, these are seen by others</i> d. <i>Equal in fortune to myself, it will be meaningful.</i>
Shantideva is saying that he himself will benefit from composing the text. Because, when he composes such a text that explains about bodhisattva practices, it increases his own faith in the practices of the bodhisattva.
If his composition is somehow seen and read by others who are [of equal fortune] to him, they will likely reap the same benefit as him. Therefore, it is through such enthusiasm and delight that he composes this text.
These verses [1.2 – 1.3] are the author's expression of humility and purpose for composing the text.
The lesson for oneself is this: In whatever that one does, it should be done in the absence of pride , but at the same time, one must also have courage and confidence and not be discouraged and small minded.
This is because, if one is narrow minded and lacks courage, then one would not be a suitable receptacle for qualities to arise.

B. The actual explanation of the stages of the path [1.4 – 10.58]

1. Imploring [the reader] to take the essence of this basis of leisuress and endowments [1.4]:
<p>1.4 a. <i>The leisuress and endowments are very hard to find.</i> b. <i>Since they accomplish the purposes of beings,</i> c. <i>If I do not accomplish benefit upon this,</i> d. <i>How will I acquire this in the future?</i></p>
The subject matter of a human life of freedoms and endowments has already been taught in the Stages of the path to enlightenment in the section of: the path that is shared with the persons of small capacity.
Khenrinpoche: So by now, when you hear about this sentence, “ <i>The leisuress and endowments are very hard to find,</i> ” you should be able to generate an entire understanding of what it means. One should be able to expand on this sentence.
Khenrinpoche: When you read this, you should be able to remember the whole Lam Rim!
When one talks about meditation, this is what it is: on the basis of some short verse, one then analyzes and reflects on the meaning of that.

Here, the statement is essentially saying that, one's human life of freedoms and endowments is something that is very difficult to achieve. When one sees this statement, the question should naturally arise in one's mind:
Why is achieving a human life of freedoms and endowments so difficult? What are the reasons proving so?
For example, one can say: <i>“The human life of freedoms and endowments, is difficult to achieve, because the causes for it are difficult to actualize.”</i>
In general, without a cause, one would not have an effect. Then by looking at how the Law of causality works in the external world, for example, one sees how, without fire, there would not be smoke; without a seed, there is no sprout.
Likewise, in the internal world of the mind, the Law of causality applies equally.
If that is the case, then if the causes are needed to actualize a human life of freedoms and endowments, what would these be?
It is not so straight forward but requires much analysis and reflection:
To merely become a human being in general, one has to maintain at least one kind of ethic, to refrain from at least one nonvirtue.
Here, the human life of freedoms and endowments is not merely being born as a human, but being born as a human with eighteen qualities: free from eight things and endowed with ten features: A perfect human rebirth.
Such a human life of freedoms and endowments is extremely difficult to acquire, because the causes are extremely difficult to actualize:
1) One must firstly have lived a life that possessed very pure ethics
2) One's practice of ethics must be complimented with the practices of generosity and so forth, on top of that,
3) These practices must be completed with pure aspirational prayers to be able to obtain such a life in the future.
One merely has to look inside oneself to see if one possesses these causes or not, whether one finds it easy or difficult to create these causes.
When one looks at this phrase “a human life of freedoms and endowments,” immediately, the meaning should actually arise very clearly in one's mind. Of course, this could only happen to one who reflects/ meditates regularly.
A person who reflects on this regularly would be very familiar. Because he has already thought about it, the meaning would immediately come to his mind that, indeed, one does possess such a human life of freedoms and endowments.
This is the result of reflection and meditation. For those who do not meditate, put aside knowing the meaning clearly in the mind, they cannot even account for these eighteen features. Even when trying to account for them, it becomes difficult.
If merely accounting for the eighteen qualities is already a challenge, then there is no need to mention about knowing the meaning. If one does not know the meanings, then how can <i>change</i> happen in the mind?
If one is habituated to reflection and meditation, then even merely seeing and thinking about the word “freedom”, immediately, one would get the feeling that one has this wonderful opportunity to practice and actualize the dharma.
This is because, one knows that one is free from all these major hindrances and obstacles. Because one has such an understanding, then one would be able to produce a feeling of joy that one has obtained something really wonderful.
Therefore, one has to sit down and reflect: “Will I get such an opportunity in my next life?”
The only way one can answer such a question is to look inside one's own mind, to see if one does possess or is able to create the causes or not. It is only then that one would know if one would obtain such a life again in the future.
Of course, one then needs to know what the causes are. If one looks inside one's mind and realizes that one does not possess/ lacks the causes and finds it difficult to create them, then one should identify what these are and start to actualize them.
Shantideva is telling one that, if at this juncture of one's life, while possessing all the conditions and opportunities for practice, one fails to make full use of them, it will be very difficult for one to obtain such conditions again in the future.
Therefore, one has to think about this and then persuade oneself to take the opportunities while one has them.
In short, this verse is an exhortation imploring one to take the opportunities right now.
After persuading oneself to take the opportunities, next is the explanation on the best way to extract the meaning and essence out of this human life of freedoms and endowments. This starts with verse 1.5.
There is a general explanation on how to extract the essence, and detailed explanations of the individual [topics,] in which, the benefits of mind generation will be explained.

Therefore, the three causes one needs to actualize to obtain a human life of freedoms and endowments in the future are: 1) guarding pure morality. What then, is the measure of pure morality?
2) This practice of pure morality must be complimented with the practice [as taught in] the perfections of generosity and so forth. But, the question is, to achieve a human life of freedoms and endowments, does one need to practice all [the teachings as taught in] the perfections?
3) One also needs to make very pure aspirational prayers. What then, exactly does this mean?
It is the same when one reads the Lam Rim/ Stages of the path to enlightenment literature in the section on the human life of freedoms and endowments. The discussions of these three points are also taught there.
These three causes are said to be very difficult to practice/ achieve. Because the causes are very difficult to achieve, this shows that it will be very difficult for one to achieve such a rebirth again in the future.
If one does realize this, and if one wishes to achieve this in the future, one would then automatically want to practice/ gather/ strive to actualize the causes for such a rebirth in the future.
If one really wants such an opportunity again in the future life, and one knows that one has to create the causes for this, then one would automatically do so/ strive at it on one's own without the need for someone to push/ remind oneself.

The conditions that lack freedoms:

Unable to know what to adopt and cast aside -	Being born:	1) Where Buddha has not arisen
No belief in the teachings -		2) Where the four followers are not active (border region)
Great difficulties in cultivating them -		3) With incomplete faculties
Lacks discrimination or constantly distracted by desire -		4) With wrong views
		5) In hell, 6) As a hungry ghost, 7) As an animal
		8) As a god in the desire, form and formless realms

The ten aspects of opportunity:

Five aspects of opportunities within one's continuum favorable for practice -	Being born:	1) As a human
		2) Where the four followers are active (central region)
		3) With complete faculties
		4) Without the karma of the immediate retribution (having reversible karma)
		5) With faith in the scriptural collections (faith in the source)
Five aspects of opportunities within the continuum of others favorable for practice -		6) Where Buddha has appeared
		7) Where His teachings are being taught (by either Buddha or his disciples)
		8) Where His teachings remain (and upheld by His followers who knows the ultimate sublime teachings)
		9) Where there are those following it (by realizing those teachings)
		10) Where there is caring by benefactors (that sustains those who are upholding and cultivating the teachings)

How one's human life of freedoms and endowments is the ideal basis for cultivating mind generation:

<p>1.4 a. <i>The leisures and endowments are very hard to find.</i> b. <i>Since they accomplish the purposes of beings,</i> c. <i>If I do not accomplish benefit upon this,</i> d. <i>How will I acquire this in the future?</i></p>
This verse from the last lesson is an exhortation to extract the essence from the human life of freedoms and endowments.
When one reflects on the difficulty of obtaining this, one can reflect upon it in terms of:
1) The causes for actualizing such a rebirth, 2) Its nature, and 3) An analogy
The text says that, now, having found this human life of freedoms and endowments, which is very difficult to find, once found, one has to use it [wisely]. Here, one is [exhorted] to extract its essence by practicing/ meditating on bodhicitta.
The text says that, if one wishes to meditate on bodhicitta, then one [realizes one] does possess the basis, the body, to do so.
When one is practicing the dharma in terms of cultivating the mind of enlightenment/ bodhicitta, it is much easier to do so, on the basis of this human life of freedoms and endowments. This is an ideal basis for doing such practices.
How all the practices as taught in the six perfections are needed as causes for such a rebirth:
To obtain such an ideal basis for the practice of dharma, this human life of freedoms and endowments, which has eighteen qualities, one has to accomplish/ actualize its causes.
The causes are: 1) Practice of pure morality, 2) Complimented with the practices of generosity and so forth, and 3) Completed with making stainless prayers.
To actualize such an ideal basis in the future for practicing dharma, one must actualize its causes, without which, one would not obtain such an opportunity again.
To practice the dharma, one must first have the means of survival, for example, food and other necessities for sustaining one's life, without which, it would be very difficult. These enjoyments come about through the a) practice of generosity.
To achieve a specific result, one must firstly create the [necessary] causes, which must concord with the result.
One needs such things like food, shelter/ home and so forth for survival. Even if one has these, one would still need to have good health. If one does not have good health, then it would also be very difficult to practice the dharma.
Good health is the result of having practiced ethical discipline in the past. Therefore, if one wishes to obtain a good body with good health in future lives, then one would have to actualize the cause: b) practicing ethical discipline.
Above these [favorable results], to carry out one's practice, one would also need good companions and helpers (lit. good entourage). This is also very important.
The cause of having good helpers and dharma friends and not nonvirtuous friends is: c) the practice of patience.
If there is a need to have companions who are helpful to one in the future, then one has to actualize its cause, patience.
Even if one has these three: means of survival, suitable body with good health and a circle of virtuous companions and helpers, this does not necessarily mean that one will practice the dharma.
To practice dharma, one must firstly have delight/ enthusiasm for it/ want to do it. The cause is: d) joyous perseverance.
It becomes challenging and difficult, if one lacks any of these four favorable conditions:
No means of survival/ things to eat, no good health, no good helpers/ companions/ assistants, no joyous enthusiasm for practicing dharma, then one's dharma practice becomes difficult.
If one sees the point and wants to experience these four favorable conditions in one's future lives, then one has to create the causes by: a) practicing generosity, b) guarding ethical discipline, c) cultivate patience, and d) strive in joyous perseverance.
Even if one has all these four conditions: articles for survival, good health, people that help/ assist and delight in virtue, but if one lacks a <i>focus</i> on virtue, a e) single-pointed concentration/ determination to keep the mind in virtue, then all these favorable conditions may actually become conditions for the generation of afflictions.
This is the case for many people: for example, one has all the favorable conditions, but many a times, some of these conditions actually become a cause for the generation of negative emotions.
Here, the single-pointedness is, that which is single-pointedly focused on the very intent on virtue. Without this mind wanting to practice virtue, then many times, the other conditions do become a cause for generating afflictions.
Without f) wisdom , it is also going to be difficult. One needs the intelligence/ discriminating wisdom that is able to differentiate between what one needs to cultivate and discard.

Without such a wisdom, for example, one would not think about the future but merely [be preoccupied] on the present happiness/ enjoyments of this life. One would also not think about creating the causes for future happiness.
If one lives one's life this way without thinking about and creating the causes for future happiness, [all the while], one would only be depleting whatever [pleasurable effects of the virtuous causes] one has accumulated in the past.
Therefore, one's discriminating wisdom becomes indispensable as well. Without this wisdom, one is merely using up all of one's enjoyments, which are the results of the practices one has [accumulated] in the past.
Without 'replenishing' them by creating the causes for future happiness, when all of one's virtues are used up, this will be followed by the start of suffering.
If one thinks along these lines [of reasoning], then it becomes clear that, one needs to have a reasonable practice of all the six perfections: generosity, ethical discipline, patience, joyous perseverance, some aspects of concentration and wisdom.
One needs [to have accumulated] a reasonable amount of such practices [in the past] to be able to do a reasonable practice of the dharma now.
Even if one has all [the favorable] conditions and one is able to do all these practices, but if the <i>motivation</i> behind all these practices is not correct, [then it would be difficult to achieve the results].
For example, one of the causes for achieving one's human life of freedoms and endowments is making pure stainless prayers, the minimum motivation [for achieving this] has to be a turning away from attachment to the happiness of this life.
This has to be the minimum driving force/ motivation behind all these practices, otherwise, it would again be difficult [to achieve the results].
All that I have said, was already covered in the Lam Rim/ Stages of the path to enlightenment [module].
The essence/ point is: since one has already obtained and still possesses this human life of freedoms and endowments, then one needs to extract that essence and make [full] use of it.
One could recite and reflect on this verse [1.4], and use it to persuade oneself to practice the dharma.
One could use it as a recitation to repeatedly remind oneself about its meaning: <i>The need to extract some meaning out of such a rebirth.</i>
If one does not do this, then I guess it would not be easy to <i>transform</i> one's mind, to <i>change</i> oneself.

2. Explaining how to take the essence

A. A general presentation [see pages 2 to 4: **Introducing the ten chapters of this text**]

B. An explanation of each topic individually [1.5 – 10.58]

Chapter One: Explanation of the Benefits of the Mind of Enlightenment

1. Reflecting on the benefits of cultivating mind generation [1.5 – 1.36]

A. Explaining this chapter's material [1.5 – 1.36]

Instructions on the reasoning behind abandoning negativities and practicing virtue [1.5]:

<p><i>1.5 a. Just as a flash of lightning brightly illuminates</i> <i>b. For an instant within the clouds on a dark night,</i> <i>c. Likewise in this world, through the might of the Buddha,</i> <i>d. Merit and intelligence occasionally occur for once.</i></p>
Although one has obtained a human life of freedoms and endowments, the suitable basis for practicing the dharma, but the desire to practice pure dharma arises very infrequently and with great difficulty.
Even if it does arise, it only lasts for a very short time, just like a flash of lightning in the dark [sky].
[In contrast,] one's nonvirtuous thoughts/ states of mind are very strong/ powerful and lasts for a long time, just like the night sky that is completely covered with thick clouds.
Therefore, one should firstly have [the virtuous thoughts] arise, using this as the basis, one should seek to extend the duration of such virtuous thoughts.
The text says that such virtuous thoughts that arise in one's mind are [only]: <i>Due to the enlightened influence of the Buddhas and due to the power of one's merit.</i>
One therefore needs to cultivate <i>faith</i> in the dharma, <i>aspiration</i> for the dharma and <i>belief</i> in the dharma.
Here particularly, one needs to develop belief in the Mahayana Dharma.
Such a belief is the basis for developing bodhicitta. Those who have belief in the vast and extensive, the Mahayana Dharma, will receive the blessings of the Conquerors/ Buddhas.
Those who receive the blessings of all the Buddhas are the ones who receive the blessings to actualize bodhicitta.

It is mentioned in one commentary that, it is very important to strive in cultivating and developing this belief in the Mahayana Dharma. It is the basis which allows for the arising of bodhicitta.
One is advised to cultivate this belief in the Mahayana Dharma on the basis of having found this human life of freedoms and endowments.
One knows from one's own experience how difficult it is for virtuous thoughts to arise. Even if they do, they do not last.
The commentary is saying that, whatever virtuous thoughts that have arisen, one should try not to lose it but maintain the continuity of such thoughts and increase them. This is the advice to cultivate belief in the Mahayana Dharma.
By doing this, one will be establishing the foundations for developing bodhicitta.

A. Explaining the benefits of mind generation [1.6 – 1.14]

a. The power to destroy all negativities and accomplish all virtues [1.6 – 1.8]

1) Destroying great negativities [1.6]:

- 1.6 a. Hence virtue is perpetually feeble,
 b. The great power of negativities, horrible.
 c. Except for a mind of complete enlightenment
 d. By what other virtue will it be overcome?*

There are two types of bodhicitta: conventional and ultimate bodhicitta. The bodhicitta here refers to the conventional.
Therefore, the verse here mainly refers to the benefits of conventional bodhicitta. One of the benefits of this conventional bodhicitta is that it has great power to destroy all the great negativities [in an instant].
In the commentary, it is said that even if one has accumulated the heavy nonvirtue that causes one to be reborn in the hells, but if one manages to develop bodhicitta, then it will completely overwhelm (lit. suppress/ outshine) that heavy negativity.
Therefore, the power of that negativity is small then, when compared to the power of bodhicitta.
Why is it then that, when bodhicitta arises, it can overwhelm and outshine heavy negative karma?
If bodhicitta is generated, one accumulates an amount of merit that is measureless, limitless. Therefore, this makes even those heavy negative karma small in comparison.
Therefore, perhaps when one generates bodhicitta, since one accumulates such powerful virtues, in that sense then, those nonvirtues becomes almost like powerless.
Therefore, the particular benefit of bodhicitta mentioned here is primarily related to conventional bodhicitta.

2) The power to accomplish supreme bliss [1.7]:

- 1.7 a. All the Lords of Subduers who have contemplated for many eons
 b. Have seen it to be beneficial;
 c. For by it the immeasurable masses of beings
 d. Will easily attain the supreme happiness.*

The Buddhas has thought about this for a very long time, looking at what is the most beneficial thing for sentient beings.
They see that it is bodhicitta, which is like the seed with which immeasurable sentient beings can achieve supreme happiness.

3) The power to accomplish whatever one wishes [1.8]:

- 1.8 a. Those who wish to destroy the multitudes of sufferings of existence,
 b. Those who wish to dispel the unhappiness of sentient beings,
 c. And those who wish to enjoy multitudes of happiness,
 d. Should never forsake the mind of enlightenment.*

a. Refers to the persons who practice the path that is shared with the paths of persons of small and medium capacities.
Even these individuals, who wish to destroy the multitudes of suffering of cyclic existence, should meditate on bodhicitta.
b. Refers to the persons of great capacity. For these individuals who wish to and who have the disposition to dispel the unhappiness of sentient beings, they should [definitely] meditate on bodhicitta.
c. Refers to the persons of small capacity, who wish to enjoy the multitudes of the happiness/ look for the good rebirths of humans and gods. Even such individuals should also meditate on bodhicitta.
[All such persons] should meditate on bodhicitta and should never forsake it.
In general, merely to achieve liberation or a good rebirth as a human or a god, one does not need to practice/ develop bodhicitta. But the point is that, when one actualizes bodhicitta, all these goals will also be achieved easily.
This is an advice for the practices of the Mahayana.

b. Attaining the special name and purpose [1.9]:
<p><i>1.9 a. When the mind of enlightenment is generated, in that moment</i> <i>b. Those wretched ones fettered in the jail of cyclic existence</i> <i>c. Will be called "Child of the Sugatas,"</i> <i>d. And will become objects of reverence by the humans and gods of the world.</i></p>
When bodhicitta is developed and arises in one's mind, one acquires a special name: "Child of the Sugatas."
Above being special in [having this] name, one also becomes special in [purpose] in that, one becomes the object of reverence by the humans and celestial beings.
[Even though] such a person who initially generates bodhicitta, is still an ordinary being in cyclic existence without any special qualities of abandonments or realizations, but whoever this person is, even as an animal, once bodhicitta arises in the mind, such a person becomes a special object, a child of the Sugatas. This is all because of bodhicitta.
c. Explaining the benefits by means of an analogy [1.10 – 1.14]
1) An analogy of the inferior becoming the supreme [1.10]:
<p><i>1.10 a. Like the supreme gold-making elixir,</i> <i>b. It takes the unclean body and transforms it</i> <i>c. Into the priceless jewel, a Victor's body.</i> <i>d. Therefore, firmly seize this so-called "mind of enlightenment."</i></p>
Just like the analogy of a small amount of gold-making elixir that can transform a lot of iron into gold, likewise, bodhicitta is that which can transform one's unclean body, being unclean in both its cause and nature, into the exalted body of a Buddha.
Here it does not mean that, once bodhicitta arises in the mind, one's actual unclean physical body [will miraculously] transform into the Buddha's exalted body, this is not possible. What it means is that, from the moment bodhicitta arises, on the basis of having such an unclean body, one can achieve enlightenment.
From the perspective of sutra, it is the factor of method, which is primarily referring to bodhicitta, that is responsible for achieving the Form Body/ Rupakaya. It is the factor of wisdom, which is primarily referring to the wisdom perceiving emptiness, that is responsible for achieving the Truth Body/ Dharmakaya.
But its explanation of substantial cause for achieving the Form Body, on deeper analysis, would be found to be inadequate.
A detailed explanation of the [fully qualified] substantial cause of the Buddha's Form Body can only be found in tantra.
2) An analogy of the difficulty in obtaining it and its preciousness [1.11]:
<p><i>1.11 a. Since the sole helmsmen of migrating beings, the limitless mind,</i> <i>b. Has upon thorough investigation seen its preciousness,</i> <i>c. All beings wishing to be free from the abodes of migration,</i> <i>d. Firmly seize this precious mind of enlightenment.</i></p>
Perhaps the example would be, how there is a need for a ship's captain, who can lead a group of people to locate and retrieve treasures in the middle of the great ocean.
Likewise, Buddhas have seen that bodhicitta is the best thing for accomplishing the welfare of sentient beings.
Bodhicitta is priceless, for it can lead sentient beings out of all suffering. Therefore, one should always hold onto bodhicitta.
3) An analogy of an unending and increasing result [1.12]:
<p><i>1.12 a. All other virtues are like the plantain tree,</i> <i>b. For after bearing fruit they will be exhausted.</i> <i>c. But the tree of the mind of enlightenment will constantly bear fruit,</i> <i>d. Whereby it is inexhaustible and flourishes more and more.</i></p>
If one wishes for an unceasing virtue that is always increasing, then one should meditate on bodhicitta.
Once one has bodhicitta, it is said that it will always increase, like some of those trees that constantly bear fruits.
Virtues that are not conjoined with bodhicitta are likened to plantain trees. Such trees are said to produce fruits only once, after which the trees will die and would not produce any more fruits. Such is said to be the benefits of bodhicitta, that once it arises in one's mind, one's virtues would be unceasing and would always increase.
Usually, at the end of any [virtuous] activities, one dedicates the merit accumulated. If one does so while conjoining them with bodhicitta, then that will be the cause for the merit to increase [inexhaustibly].
Here, it is merely explaining about the benefits of bodhicitta in general, but there are many things to discuss about the virtues that are conjoined with bodhicitta: whether these are necessarily unceasing or not.

4) An analogy of its ability to rescue from from great danger [1.13]:
<p><i>1.13 a. Like depending on a hero when greatly afraid, b. Even if I may have committed very terrible negativities, c. I shall be swiftly liberated in dependence upon it. d. Why then do those who have the imprints not depend on it?</i></p>
[Bodhicitta] is said to be the best method to purify those heavy negativities like the five immediate karmas and so forth.
It is like having to travel on a very dangerous road. If one [is in the company] of someone who is confident and brave to go forward, one would be less fearful.
Likewise, if one develops bodhicitta, then there is no need to fear those heavy negativities that one has already accumulated. Even those extremely heavy negative karmas such as the five immediate actions can be purified.
5) An analogy of destroying negativities effortlessly [1.14(ab)]:
<p><i>1.14 a. Just like the fire at the end of time, b. In an instant it certainly burns up the great negativities.</i></p>
In the Buddha's teachings, there is a presentation on how the world systems come into being and how these will go out of existence. At the end of a particular world system that undergoes disintegration/ destruction, it will be caused by fire.
All the abodes, from the first concentration and below, will be destroyed by this great fire at the end of the eon. The power of bodhicitta in destroying negativities is likened to such great fire that will destroy the world at the end of its existence.
What then, is the difference between this benefit and the earlier benefit when it was mentioned that bodhicitta, when it arises in one's mind, can completely overwhelm/ outshine negativities in an instant? [Destroying great negativities 1.6]
Of course, it's an explanation of bodhicitta in general, but does it apply to every instance/ all kinds of bodhicitta?
From the discussions on the Paths and Grounds, when the bodhisattva achieves the Forbearance level of the path of preparation, he achieves the confidence of never falling into the lower realms again.
Could that earlier benefit of bodhicitta overwhelming all the negativities that throw one into the lower realms specifically mean the confidence of not falling into the lower realms when the Forbearance level of the path of preparation is achieved?
6) The way benefits are taught in the sutras [1.14(cd)]:
<p><i>c. Its unfathomable benefits were explained d. To Sudhana by the wise Protector Maitreya.</i></p>
In <i>The Arrays of Stalks Sutra</i> , Maitreya explained to Sudhana that:
1) bodhicitta is like the seed of all the teachings of Buddha, 2) it is also like a field because it increases the white dharmas of all migrating beings, and 3) it is like a noble vase as it perfectly accomplishes all thoughts/ wishes.
In short, these are the benefits of bodhicitta. It is said that: when bodhicitta arises in the mind, one is able to 1) complete the accumulation of merit, 2) purify the heavy negativities easily, and 3) perfectly accomplish the aims of oneself and others.
With bodhicitta, one would become impervious and not easily affected by problems and obstacles.
This is because, once it arises, there is no more self-cherishing. Since self-cherishing is the source of all the problems and obstacles, in its absence, there would not be any more obstacles.
One does not accomplish one's own goals nor the welfare of others because of self-cherishing. If self-cherishing is destroyed, then one would be able to accomplish one's own purposes and the welfare of others effortlessly.
In essence, Shantideva is saying that, if one wishes to be free from cyclic existence, [one should] meditate on bodhicitta; if one wishes to free others from their sufferings and unhappiness, one also needs to meditate on bodhicitta; if one wishes to obtain a good rebirth as a human or a celestial being, then one should also meditate on bodhicitta.
One has to read the text and reflect on these points. The point is that one has to generate belief in bodhicitta. When one has belief in bodhicitta, then one would have aspiration and faith in bodhicitta.
It is the aspiration for bodhicitta that will kick-start one's practice to meditate on it.

Student: How does conventional bodhicitta suppress nonvirtuous karma?

Khenrinpoche: As mentioned before, the negativities are overwhelmed/ outshone by bodhicitta when it arises. It is kind of rendering the negativities powerless. Whether the seed of negativity is removed or not is a different issue. If one thinks of another example of how, on a bright sunny day, even though the moon is up there in the sky, but because the sun is so bright, it completely outshines the moon. But whether the seed of the negative karma is rendered ineffective/ powerless or not, is something that needs to be thought out. The seed of nonvirtue that causes rebirth in the lower realms would probably only be rendered powerless upon achieving the Forbearance level of the Mahayana path of preparation. When bodhicitta outshines negativities, one has to consider whether it does so in terms of rendering the seed of the nonvirtue powerless, or, merely preventing/ not allowing the result to arise.

The need to reflect on one's impermanence – why it is suffering:

Texts on logic: <i>Because it is impermanent, it is suffering; because it is suffering, it is selfless.</i>
One has to reflect on impermanence, if not, then: 1) It will be difficult to practice any <i>dharma</i> , 2) It will also be difficult to make one's dharma practice <i>pure</i> .
Impermanence is not merely referring to death. The actual meaning is momentary disintegration, in that, change occurs in every moment. Therefore, <i>it is not that death occurs suddenly and descends upon one [unexpectedly]</i> .
The reason that one's life ends with death is: <i>Because life is changing from moment to moment until death. Until then, one is getting closer and closer to that state.</i>
Therefore, one should understand that, in each and every single moment, one is moving closer and closer to death.
This is something that most people fear and dislike. Nevertheless, <i>One is helplessly moving closer and closer to death without choice!</i>
One is essentially led closer and closer to death in each and every moment due to one's own karma and afflictions.
One's "I, body and mind" complex came into being in this life, taking on the aggregates of a body and mind, under the control of karma and afflictions.
As one is moving towards death in each and every single moment, it's one's karma and afflictions that are responsible for this.
Therefore, it is one's karma and afflictions that have thrown one powerlessly [/without control] into possessing this set of body and mind. It is also these same karma and afflictions that are responsible for one's "I, body and mind" complex disintegrating/ changing from moment to moment. Ultimately, this leads to the "I, body and mind" dying eventually.
Because one is under the control of one's karma and afflictions, therefore, one's existence is in the nature of suffering.
Since the reality is this: <i>One's "I, body and mind" are impermanent having the nature of momentary change, therefore, there is no reason to grasp at/ be attached to them by holding onto them as [permanent/] unchanging.</i>
<i>Since one's existence is in the nature of suffering, therefore, there is no reason to be attached to it by holding onto it as something pleasurable.</i>
Sometimes, this is also explained as: <i>Because the body and mind aggregates are in the nature of suffering, therefore, they are unclean, filthy, dirty.</i>
Something which is unpleasant, dirty or filthy would cause revulsion when one comes into contact with it.
When one relates this idea back to one's body and mind, since these are dirty and filthy by nature, then there is no reason to grasp at/ be attached to them.
Therefore, one's contaminated body and mind are objects of revulsion and not attraction. This is because, these are by nature filthy and dirty.
One's "body and mind" complex are also selfless. This is because, these are the results of one's past karma and afflictions.
Similarly, one's current "I/ person" is also the product/ result of these karma and afflictions.
Therefore, it is also inappropriate to grasp on strongly to one's "body and mind" as being possessed by/ belonging to one's "I", being "mine", thinking: "These are mine!"
It is on the basis of such [ignorance] that one generates strong adherence and attachment.
If one has a good understanding and reflection on how oneself, body and mind that one possesses are: 1) In the nature of impermanence, 2) In the nature of suffering, 3) In the nature of being dirty and filthy, and 4) In the nature of being selfless, one should be able to [control] one's attachment, to work at it and reduce it.
As mentioned earlier, now, one has both a suitable working basis of a body and mind to generate virtuous thoughts, as well as particularly, the basis to generate the mind of enlightenment. But, this does not mean that one would [automatically] do so.
Therefore, it is very important to contemplate/ meditate on death and impermanence. Otherwise, there would be no way to generate the mind of enlightenment.

B. Identifying the entity of mind generation [1.15 – 1.18]

a. Divisions of the entity [1.15]:

<i>1.15 In brief, you should understand The mind of enlightenment to be of two types; The mind that wishes enlightenment And the mind that engages enlightenment.</i>

For something to be a mind generation The two [mental factors of] aspiration must be present: 1) Aspiration for enlightenment, and 2) Aspiration to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings.			
There is [an uncontrived] thought thinking: “I will achieve enlightenment to accomplish all the aims and welfare of others.”			
Such a mind is mind generation. As to how this mind generation can be produced, this has been explained in the Lam Rim/ Stages to the path to enlightenment module. One must train in the instructions either through:			
1) Seven-fold cause and effect personal instructions, or 2) Exchanging self and other.			
Such a mind generation does not come about easily, there is a process to achieve that.			
A) Division of mind generation by way of its nature/ entity: 1) Aspirational and 2) Engaged mind generation.			
B) Division by way of example: 22 types			
C) Division by way of pervasion/ boundary: 4 types			
In The Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra, the presentation of the Mahayana paths and grounds were explained:			
Mahayana paths of accumulation, preparation, seeing, meditation and no more learning.			
C) In terms of its boundary, there is the mind generation in the continuum of the –			
1) Ordinary bodhisattva on the Mahayana paths of accumulation and preparation, called:	2) Superior bodhisattva from the first to the seventh ground, called:	3) Superior bodhisattva from the eighth to the tenth ground, called:	4) Buddha superior on the Buddha ground, called:
Mind generation of aspiring conduct due to belief.	Mind generation of pure noble intention.	Mind generation of full maturation.	Mind generation free from all obscurations.
B) 22 types of mind generation by way of example – Mind generations that are likened to:			
1) Earth – Small path of accumulation	2) Gold – Middling path of accumulation	3) Waxing moon – Great path of accumulation	4) Fire – Path of preparation
5) Great treasure 6) Mine of jewels 7) Great ocean 8) Vajra 9) Most majestic of mountains 10) Great medicine 11) Virtuous guide 12) Wish-fulfilling jewel 13) Sun 14) Song of a gandharva – from the first to the tenth ground.			
15) Great king 16) Treasury 17) Great highway 18) Excellent horse 19) Spring of water – particular to the tenth ground.			
20) Joyful music 21) Flow of a river 22) Cloud - belonging to <i>preparation, actual</i> and <i>conclusion</i> [levels of Buddhahood].			
<i>Preparation</i> refers to the mind generation at the last moment as a sentient being.			
<i>Actual</i> refers to the uninterrupted path of the wisdom of meditative equipoise of Buddha.			
<i>Conclusion</i> refers to the wisdom of post meditative equipoise of Buddha.			

b. Explaining the divisions by way of analogy [1.16]:

<p>1.16 a. As is understood by the instances b. Of desiring to go and going, c. So the wise should understand respectively d. The distinction between these two.</p>
For example, someone who remains seated but has the thought: “I wish to go to such a place.”
Then there is another person [who may have this same thought] but acts on it, gets up and proceeds towards the destination. While proceeding there, there is also a thought thinking: “I wish to go to such a place.”
These two examples are similar in that, they have the same thought of wishing to go to such a place. But, one remains seated whereas the other has acted upon it.
Both aspirational and engaged mind generations are similar in that, both have the [uncontrived] thought thinking: “I must achieve full enlightenment to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings.”
But, an engaged mind generation has to be [directly] conjoined with the practices of the bodhisattvas such as the perfection of generosity. When a mind generation is not [directly] conjoined with such a practice, then it is an aspirational mind generation.
Put simply, engaged mind generation means mind generation [directly] conjoined with bodhisattva deeds; aspirational mind generation means mind generation not [directly] conjoined with bodhisattva deeds.
<i>Qualm</i> : What does it mean when the mind generation is conjoined or not conjoined with the practice of the perfections? Does it mean that, for example, the practice of the perfection of generosity has to involve an actual gift of some object? What is the meaning of mind generation that is conjoined with the bodhisattva deed of giving?

<i>Reply:</i> The great masters have stated that it is better to distinguish aspirational mind generation from engaged mind generation by whether it is directly conjoined with bodhisattva deeds or not. This is because, whether it is an aspirational or engaged mind generation, it is necessarily conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds one way or another.		
Therefore it would be better to included the word “directly” into the definition.		
<i>Qualm:</i> What then, is the meaning of “directly” conjoined?		
<i>Reply:</i> It means that the mind of aspiration for full omniscience to accomplish the welfare of others has to be manifest .		
For example, in the perspective of the wisdom of a bodhisattva superior in meditative equipoise directly perceiving emptiness, nothing appears except emptiness. That means, no other minds are manifesting except for this wisdom.		
<i>Qualm:</i> Is there bodhicitta in the continuum of such a superior bodhisattva in meditative equipoise directly focusing on emptiness? If it is no, would that mean he is no longer a bodhisattva? If it is yes, then how does bodhicitta exist for him?		
Bodhicitta is a mind of enlightenment. If one asserts that it exists in the continuum of a bodhisattva superior in meditative equipoise, then how does it exist? This cannot be in the form of an imprint/ predisposition as it is a mind/ consciousness.		
<i>Reply:</i> Some scholars assert that bodhicitta does not exist [in the continuum of this wisdom], because, for it to exist, it must be manifesting. Others assert that it exists but is not manifesting.		
According to the textbooks of Sera Jhe, it is asserted to exist, but it is not directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds. As such, between the two, aspirational and engaged mind generation, the bodhicitta existing in the continuum of a bodhisattva superior in meditative equipoise is posited as aspirational mind generation.		
In short, an aspirational mind generation is a mind generation that is not directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds, whereas an engaged mind generation is a mind generation that is directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds.		
Boundaries: Aspirational mind generation exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to the end of the continuum of a sentient being; whereas the engaged mind generation exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation up the Buddha ground.		
Entity of mind generation:	Mind generation: The mind thinking: “I will achieve full enlightenment to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings.”	
Divisions of its entity:	Aspirational mind generation: mind generation not directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds.	Engaged mind generation: mind generation directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds.
Boundaries of its divisions:	It does not exist in the continuum of those who have not entered the Mahayana path and Buddha ground. That is, from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to the end of the continuum of a sentient being.	It does not exist prior to entering the Mahayana path, therefore, it exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to Buddhahood.
Does [mind generation] exist in the continuum of Buddha? According to <i>Gyalsab Je's Commentary on Engaging in Bodhisattva Deeds</i> , he says yes. If [mind generation] does not exist in the continuum of Buddha, then one would also have to assert that Buddha does not possess: 1) Refuge [& its vows], 2) Pratimoksa vows, 3) Bodhisattva vows, and 4) Tantric vows.		
He says very clearly that one must assert that Buddha has [mind generation], which is the mind that possesses the two aspirations: to accomplish the welfare of others and to achieve full enlightenment [for oneself].		
Since Buddha is already fully enlightened, then does He still have aspiration to omniscience? Similarly, refuge possesses two characteristics: 1) faith in the Three Jewels' powers and abilities to protect oneself from 2) the fears of the sufferings of the lower realms and cyclic existence.		
Does Buddha have mind generation? If so, then does Buddha have the aspiration to omniscience?		
Also, there is a difference between bodhicitta and mind generation : bodhicitta exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to the ten ground, that is, only in the continuum of bodhisattvas. Whereas the Mahayana mind generation exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to [Buddha ground].		

c. Explaining the different benefits of aspiring and engaging mind generation [1.17 – 1.19]

1) The benefits of aspiring mind generation [1.17]:		
It is clear now that, an aspirational mind generation is not conjoined with the deeds. If so, then from the earlier explanations of the benefits of bodhicitta, is there a difference between the benefits of aspirational and engaged mind generation?		
<i>1.17a. Although great fruits will arise in cyclic existence</i> <i>b. From the mind that wishes for enlightenment,</i> <i>c. An uninterrupted flow of merit will not arise</i> <i>d. As in the case of the engaging mind.</i>		
Although the aspirational mind generation is not directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds but merely an aspiration/pledge to achieve enlightenment, still, it is a cause for enlightenment, higher rebirths as humans or gods, and eliminating all poverty, it can also give rise to great results even in the present life.		

The benefit of this aspirational mind generation is stated in the sutra <i>Liberation of the Superior Maitreya</i> :	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Son of the lineage, it is like this, for example the precious diamond, though broken, outshines the supreme ornaments of gold and so forth, still keeps the name "precious diamond," and eliminates all poverty. Son of the lineage, likewise, the precious diamond of the mind generation for omniscience, even without significance, outshines all the gold of the qualities of the Hearers and Solitary Realizers, it keeps the name of "Bodhisattva," and eliminates all poverty of cyclic existence.</i></p>	
The person who generates this Mahayana mind generation, regardless of whether this is directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds or not, immediately outshines all the Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and acquires the name "Bodhisattva."	
It is not that there is no difference in the benefits of aspirational mind generation and engaged mind generation as stated here: <i>c. An uninterrupted flow of merit will not arise as in the case of the engaging mind.</i>	
There are many benefits in merely generating this aspirational mind generation, but the benefits of this mind is unlike the benefits that come from the engaged mind generation.	
Although an uninterrupted flow of merit does not arise as in the case of the engaged mind generation, but there are many benefits from merely generating this mind of enlightenment.	
For, it is the cause of enlightenment, one acquires the name of "Bodhisattva", it eliminates the poverty of cyclic existence etc.	
Therefore, it is incorrect to say that there are no benefits by merely generating the mind of enlightenment alone.	
Therefore, do not forsake this mind of enlightenment.	
Of course, if one's mind generation is directly conjoined with the bodhisattva deeds, then the ensuing benefits will be greater.	
2) The benefits of engaging mind generation [1.18 – 1.19]:	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1.18 a. For one who has perfectly adopted this mind b. With the thought never to turn away c. For the sake of totally liberating d. The infinite realms of sentient beings,</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1.19 a. From that time onwards, b. Even while asleep or lacking conscientiousness, c. A force of merit equal to the sky d. Will continuously ensue.</i></p>
If one's mind generation is directly conjoined with the deeds of the bodhisattva, the benefits that ensue is that: even if he is drunk, asleep or abiding in a state of non-conscientiousness, a force of merit equal to the sky is said to continually arise.	
Aspirational mind of enlightenment is a mere thought, thinking: "I will achieve omniscience to accomplish the welfare of others, whereas, for an engaged mind of enlightenment, one is actually directly engaging in the deeds.	
Therefore, an aspirational mind generation is a mere cause for enlightenment, whereas the engaged mind generation completes the causes for enlightenment.	

Student: How does one, who has not entered any paths, practice any of these trainings?

Khenrinpoche: 1) This text is an instruction for a practitioner of the Mahayana, someone who can meditate on bodhicitta.

2) As for the kinds of trainees with various differing abilities: high, middling or of dull faculties, ideally, one should follow the scheme by firstly developing renunciation/ determination to be freed from cyclic existence and so forth.

3) Even if one cannot do this, the point is, while one has the opportunity of a suitable working basis [of one's human life of freedoms and endowments], one should accumulate as much merit as possible:

One of the essential trainings of a person of small capacity is to reflect on death and impermanence, the outcome of having done such a reflection should help that person become a better human being/ person, to be better hearted. When one realizes death and impermanence, one comes to see that one's friends, enemies and those not related in either ways, are all impermanent, will die anyway. In this sense, then there is no real purpose in having attachment to one and strong aversion and dislike for the other. Based on the reflection on death and impermanence, the result should be that one aspires to be a better person in such a way, at the least not to harm others, and as much as possible, to have love and compassion.

One of results of contemplating on death and impermanence is to come to this conclusion that, the best way to extract the essence from this human life of freedoms and endowments, making it meaningful, is to cultivate a good heart, to have love.

In the training of the persons of medium capacity, it is essentially to realize that, everything in cyclic existence does not go beyond the nature of suffering, does not transcend suffering. One contemplates on how [contaminated] impermanent things are in the nature of suffering, unclean/ dirty, how not to strongly grasp at/ be attached to a self which is empty. Through such reflections, one reverses/ turns away from grasping/ attachment. In place of that, one cultivates love.

By reflecting on the points that are found in the trainings for persons of small and medium capacities, whether it is meditating on death and impermanence or the suffering of cyclic existence, these are methods for oneself to be a better person, better hearted, which will translate into having better relationships in the family and with friends and so forth. Perhaps, when translated into practice, this is how to start. At the end, [all these practices] would have to be [done] for all sentient beings. Since this is not easy [to do], then one has to start from one's own family. The result of cultivating such practices is to initially see happiness and harmony with one's family. Through that, everybody is happy. If this cannot be achieved, where there is disharmony and fighting in the family, then saying that one is *practicing bodhicitta for all sentient beings* becomes just talk. By thinking of death and impermanence, one then tries to become a better, more loving person. By being mindful that life is short, one will reduce and abandon negativities.

Khenrinpoche: that is the practice, go home and start from your home, don't fight at home...joking!

Dignaga and Dharmakirti's statements of reasoning – how the former is the reason for establishing the latter:

The real meaning of impermanence is momentary disintegration, because, compounded phenomena undergo change in each and every moment. This should be applied to one's body and mind, to know how they undergo momentary disintegration.
When one sees oneself, one's body and mind are undergoing change in every single moment, one sees these as impermanent.
From the statement: 1) <i>Because it is impermanent, therefore, it is in the nature of suffering.</i> This shows that, since one's "I, body and mind are impermanent, one is helplessly and powerlessly undergoing momentary disintegration without choice .
This happens because these are the products/ results of one's karma and afflictions. Due to these, oneself, one's body and mind [have to] undergo momentary disintegration.
Since oneself, one's body and mind undergo momentary disintegration due to the power of one's karma and afflictions, therefore, these are in the nature of suffering.
2) <i>Because it is in the nature of suffering, therefore, it is selfless.</i> There are a few ways to interpreting the relationships between these two statements:
2a) One's "I, body and mind" are in the nature of suffering because these are products which are under the control of karma and afflictions. This means, one's "I, body and mind" are under the influence of something else other than themselves.
Due to this, oneself, one's body and mind are empty of/ cannot be an independent self. [Assertions of lower schools]
2b) The reason of one's "I, body and mind" being in the nature of suffering , is the very reason that establishes that: <i>One's body and mind [aggregates] are selfless; and oneself does not exist independently.</i>
All composed phenomena such as one's body and mind are impermanent because they undergo momentary change. One's "I, body and mind" complex are in the nature of suffering because these are under the control of karma and afflictions.
As such, there is no [correct] reason to have strong grasping and attachment to one's body and mind, because these are in the nature of suffering. [Assertions of Consequent Middle Way School].
I have given two interpretations of: <i>How it is selfless because it is in the nature of suffering.</i> [2a & 2b] Do keep these in mind.
The purpose/ benefits of reflecting on these statements:
When one reflects on: <i>How because it is impermanent, therefore, it is in the nature of suffering; because it is in the nature of suffering, therefore, it is selfless</i> , one is taking the first step in working on in reducing one's anger and attachment:
1) If one reflects about the impermanence of one's "I, body and mind", and understands this well, naturally, one's afflictions will decrease.
2) Above this, if one can contemplate how one's "I, body and mind" are in the nature of suffering, that also helps with reducing one's afflictions as well.
3) Above these, if one reflects well on the meaning of selflessness, then it goes without saying that one's afflictions will also naturally decline. One will experience more peace and happiness when one's afflictions are weaker.
If one remembers these three lines and reflects on them, it will be helpful, especially at times when one's mind is distracted [by attachment] or one's mind is disturbed [by anger].
<i>For attachment:</i> This is a method to work with one's afflictions, which can arise when things are going well.
During such times, one gets the idea that everything is well and fine. This is a situation where strong attachment arises, especially when there is complete preoccupation with the happiness of this life alone.
To counteract such attachments, then one can reflect on these three statements.
<i>For anger:</i> Likewise, when one's mind is disturbed, depressed or unhappy, one could also think about these three things.
Of course, the best antidote to the afflictions, is to meditate on emptiness/ selflessness. But this is quite impossible for now.
There is [the meditation on] bodhicitta as well, but this is also really difficult.
What is within one's reach, that is highly plausible, is to think how one's "I, body and mind" are by nature impermanent, in the nature of suffering. This is something that one can understand much easier and [can readily] practice.
Therefore, this is the first step that one must take, rather than thinking about emptiness or bodhicitta.
It is mentioned in the <i>Stages of the Path</i> literature that, amongst all ideas, the idea of impermanence is the most powerful.
Whether reflections on impermanence will really help oneself or not, is something that one has to think about and discover for oneself.

When one is completely absorbed/ preoccupied with the happiness of this life, when things are going well, or when one is feeling down and disturbed, one should try out and reflect on impermanence of things and events in life, whether this helps [to reduce such afflictions] or not. This is something one has to discover for oneself.
A correct meditation on impermanence will not lead to further depression/ unhappiness.
Rather, a correct meditation on impermanence will really be helpful for the mind as it really calms the mind. Above this, it gives courage and determination, and leads to the strengthening of one's love and so forth.
For example, if one understands/ have a strong idea that one will die the next day, then one will suddenly find no more reasons to be upset anymore, as there is no point in continuing to be angry.
One will be able to let go of one's possessions and house as there is no point [grasping at these], so it will be easy to do so.
If one really knows how to think about impermanence, then these will be the experiences.
[Due to this] mindset that one will have for the remainder of one's life, one will use it more meaningfully as one understands that life is short, that there is no point living it miserably, being unhappy and accumulating nonvirtues all the time.
Such thoughts/ benefits arise due to the reflection on impermanence. One would also develop thoughts of engaging in virtue and doing things that really makes one calm and peaceful. One would also be doing things that would be of help to others.

C. The reasons there are such benefits [1.20 – 1.30]

a. Establishing [the benefits] by quoting scripture [1.20]:

<p><i>1.20 a. For the sake of those inclined towards the lower, b. This is taught along with the correctness c. By the Tathagata himself d. In the Sutra Requested by Subahu.</i></p>
It is stated in the commentary that this verse is an explanation related to the benefits of engaged bodhicitta.
This is essentially saying that the Buddha Himself stated the benefits of engaged bodhicitta in the sutra requested by Subahu.
He talked about the immeasurable benefits of bodhicitta, for the sake of those who are of the indefinite Hinayana lineage.

b. Establishing [the benefits] by means of logic and reasoning [1.21 – 1.30]

1) The validity of obtaining benefits from aspiring mind generation [1.21 – 1.25]

a) As the functions of accomplishing virtue are limitless, the benefits are great [1.21 – 1.22]

<p><i>1.21 a. If even the thought to relieve b. Sentient beings of merely a headache c. Possesses the attitude to benefit d. And possesses boundless merit,</i></p>	<p><i>1.22 a. Then what need is there to mention b. The desire to dispel the boundless unhappiness of each sentient being c. And to accomplish boundless good qualities d. Of every single one of them?</i></p>
Once there was a householder/ layperson who wanted to explore the ocean so that he could find some treasure.	
When his mother knew about this, she pleaded him not to go as it was very dangerous. She was crying and grabbing his legs not allowing him to go. This son got upset and scolded her: “All this lamentation of yours is really inauspicious!”	
He then kicked his mother on her head, left and proceeded to the ocean to look for treasure.	
Somehow he got shipwrecked, but he was able to hold onto some plank remains of the ship, floated around for many days and eventually got swept ashore on an island. Initially, the island looked very attractive and pleasant.	
Then, he saw a 'spinning iron wheel'. Immediately, it descended on and started cutting his head. Of course, he felt great pain.	
There and then, he realized that it was definitely the ripening of his own karma of kicking his mother on her head.	
He then thought: “May my experience of such immense pain and headache be a substitute for the sufferings of all others who have to experience something similar to mine. May this purify the negativities of others who have created such karma.”	
Immediately after generating such a pure virtuous thought, he passed away and was reborn in the celestial realm.	
This is the story behind verse 1.21.	
One's parents are immeasurably kind to oneself. For oneself, they are very powerful objects due to their immense kindness.	
The lesson one can draw is that: one has to take good care of one's parents and be respectful to them.	
Khenrinpoche: when I was reading this story, I remember what my mother told me three, four years ago one day in my room.	
My mother told me that, when I was just two years old, my parents had business plans to go to India from Nepal. During those days, they have to walk one week just to reach the border to take the bus.	
They had wanted to leave me with my grandparents, who stayed in a place two, three hours' walking distant from my home.	

My mother then brought me to my grandparents' and left. Two days later, the night before she was to leave for India, she had a dream about me crying, holding her leg and telling her: "Mother, please don't go."
Due to that, she did not feel comfortable about leaving for India. She then went back to my grandparents' house and picked me up as she had decided not to go for her trip. She canceled her whole trip.
Of course, I could not remember anything, whether I was crying or holding onto her or anything like that. A week later, my mother told me that I was so sick that I had almost died. She said that, if she had left, I would have died.
When my mother told me that, I felt quite touched as she was really kind. She had to sacrifice her entire trip just because of a dream [about me]. What my mother did was just a simple thing, but she really sacrificed for us.
I think it is the same for everyone: somehow, they would sacrifice their lives for us.
Since one's parents are immeasurably kind to oneself, then as much as possible, one has to take care of them.
Back to the householder who generated that virtuous thought, it was just a simple thought. Due to that thought, he passed away from that life, was freed from that pain and was reborn as a worldly god in the celestial realm.
If a mere thought has that much benefits, then no need to mention how, the intention to free all numberless sentient beings equaling to limitless sky from their sufferings and establishing them in the highest happiness, would have boundless benefits.
Many times people would wonder and ask: "Even though one has a good thought, how can there be any real benefits?"
One can see then that, this is not the case when one is talking about actual bodhicitta.
If one is able to generate the actual, uncontrived and fully qualified bodhicitta, even though it may not be directly conjoined with any of the bodhisattva deeds, just that pure actual bodhicitta itself will bring about boundless benefits.

b) There is no altruistic intention that surpasses [aspiring mind generation] [1.23]

<p>1.23 a. Who has such an altruistic intention as this? b. Do even fathers and mothers have it? c. Do the gods and sages? d. Does even Brahma have it?</p>
In general, parents are considered to be an authority in their children's life, as being good and kind. Even though they have good intentions for their children, but generally, these are for their children's long lives, good health, wealth and power.
They do not wish for their children to achieve enlightenment. They do not have aspirational bodhicitta for their children.
One could say that, parents do not think about bodhicitta, because they do not know that such [a mind] exist, nor would they know how to generate such a thought.
The gods and the rishis, who are said to possess supernatural powers, like the various types of clairvoyance and so forth, even they do not have bodhicitta.
Most of the celestial worldly gods, nagas and so forth, have supernatural powers, some can read others' minds, some can read into others' past, but they do not have bodhicitta.
The point is that, they do not even have the thought: "I must achieve omniscience to accomplish the welfare of others." They do not have aspirational bodhicitta, the thought to benefit others.
As for Brahma, to be born as him, one must have cultivated the practices of the four immeasurables. Even for him, he does not have bodhicitta, does not have the thought: "I will achieve full enlightenment to accomplish others' welfare."
Essentially, the verse is saying that, parents, who are generally asserted to be an authority in life, someone to look up to, is kind and so forth, but do not have bodhicitta, neither do the powerful gods, even Brahma does not have bodhicitta.
1) One of the the four immeasurable thought is <i>immeasurable love</i> . This is the thought wishing others to have happiness. Such love is an antidote to <i>malice/ ill will</i> .
2) <i>Immeasurable compassion</i> is the thought wishing others to be free from suffering. This is an antidote for " <i>harmfulness</i> (rnam par 'tshe ba)".
3) <i>Immeasurable joy</i> is the thought of not wanting others to be separated from happiness. This is an antidote to <i>dislike</i> .
4) <i>Immeasurable equanimity</i> is the thought wishing all sentient beings to be free of the afflictions. This is an antidote to afflictions such as <i>anger</i> and <i>attachment</i> .
To meditate on bodhicitta, one must first have meditated/ cultivated on compassion. To have a good cultivation/ meditation on compassion, this must be preceded by a good cultivation of love.
Even if one is unable to practice exactly as it is taught in the Stages of the path to enlightenment/ Lam Rim literature, A) If in relation to all sentient beings, one can think from one's heart wishing everyone to be happy and free from suffering, then this will be love and compassion for one.

B) One can also think/ feel from the heart: “May everyone not be parted from happiness and be free from [bias].”
These are the four immeasurables of love, compassion, joy and equanimity.
When one achieves merely a good reflection, this can bring up some thoughts of love, compassion, joy and equanimity.
Merely upon their manifesting, this would definitely have an effect on/ lessen one's malice, anger and so forth.
With such reflections, one can reduce one's anger, attachment and so forth. It is only when one has reduced one's anger and attachment somewhat, that the thought of wishing to help and benefit others can arise.
Sometimes, people do wonder: “Are there any real, actual benefits by merely sitting there and generating some good intentions wishing others to be happy?” When one thinks about this, there is actual benefit, as the mind can change.
When all the afflictions have decreased somewhat, then the thought of wanting to be of benefit/ doing something for others can then [have the capacity to] arise. This is the actual, real benefit.
Some people may wonder: “All these instructions on developing bodhicitta and so forth, these are many and difficult, in essence, what should one do?” On one's level, [doing A) & B)] is something within one's reach/ practical.
It is not that one cannot think of love and compassion. One merely has to sit down and think along those lines of wanting everyone to be happy, including one's enemies; and wanting everyone to be free from suffering, including one's enemies.
Of course, when it comes to the actual practice/ work [of benefiting others], then naturally it will be challenging, but at the initial level when one starts to change one's own mind, doing [the above] is possible.
At this level, it does not require one to actually stand up and go and do something. One merely needs to sit down and change one's way of thinking first.
Khenrinpoche: this one is easy, you just sit down and think, that's all! You don't really need to do much, just sit down on a nice, comfortable cushion and think. It is as simple as that. Can that be done or not?
Whether it is about cultivating love or compassion, if one has strong thoughts about impermanence as a basis , how oneself is impermanent, disintegrating in every moment, how one's loved ones and enemies are also changing, disintegrating in each moment, it will then be easier to contemplate on love and compassion.
This is something that one has to do for oneself, put aside time to sit down, turn inward and then reflect. If one does not sit down and contemplate, then of course nothing will happen, no change. One needs to try for oneself, look and see whether one experiences any changes, putting aside no less than five minutes, for example.

c) How could such an intention to benefit sentient beings not bring about benefit for oneself as well? [1.24]

<p>1.24 a. <i>If those beings have not</i> b. <i>Even dreamt before of such an attitude</i> c. <i>For their own welfare in their dreams,</i> d. <i>How can they generate it for the welfare of others?</i></p>
If sentient beings such as parents, gods, sages and even Brahma have never wanted enlightenment for their own sake, not even in their dreams, then how is it possible that they would have actual bodhicitta and think of achieving omniscience to accomplish others' welfare?

d) Conclusion and praise [1.25]

<p>1.25 a. <i>Such a mind of welfare of sentient beings</i> b. <i>Does not arise even for their own sake;</i> c. <i>An outstanding jewel of the mind,</i> d. <i>An unprecedented wonder is born.</i></p>
The commentary says that, this precious superior mind of the bodhisattvas, that wishes to attain enlightenment to place all sentient beings in happiness and for all of them to abandon all of their sufferings, has not been generated even for a moment by other sentient beings even for themselves.
Therefore, others should also regard the generation of such a praiseworthy and exalted mind that has not arisen before as praiseworthy and they should also strive at it.
If bodhicitta, which is a very exalted, special mind, really arises in anyone's mind, then it would be such a praiseworthy wonder. Such an arising has also got to be due to relying on a Mahayana virtuous friend.
It is said that in the celestial realms, there are wish fulfilling trees. Generating bodhicitta is likened to finding and possessing such a tree in this world.
In the commentaries on the practices of offering the mandala, it is explained that wish-fulfilling trees are made of precious jewels: the roots are made of gold, lapis lazuli and other kinds of jewels, the fruits on it are also diamonds and so forth.

It is wish-fulfilling in that, whatever one asks of it, thinks and desires, it can bestow all of them.
Bodhicitta is likened to it in that, when it arises, it can also fulfill all of one's hopes.
Khenrinpoche: about the tree, I went to the Hindu Lama Sai Baba's place long time ago in the 80s. I just went there for a holiday because it was very cheap. All the food was free, rooms were only six rupees, so I spent three days there.
There's one tree on the hill near his cave. People said that whatever one wishes, one can get from it as it was what Sai Baba manifests: if you want banana or apple, you will get that. So, that was the wish-fulfilling tree, but I am not saying that that is the real one!
There are different kinds of super-knowledges, super human abilities, magical powers.
Of course, the best magical powers arise from having certain levels of concentration. But one can also have magical powers through reciting mantras and through external substances.
The magical powers that arise from meditating on concentration is the most genuine and powerful.

Student: Does one need engaged bodhicitta to enter the Mahayana? Is there an order in the generation of the two bodhicittas?

Khenrinpoche: Whether it is an aspirational mind generation or engaged mind generation, both are fully qualified mind generations. Whoever has it is a Mahayanist. It is certain that such mind generations do not exist in the continuum of those that have not entered the path.

As to the order, this is a big question that is not straight forward and not clear in the texts. But I do seem to remember seeing somewhere stating that, aspirational bodhicitta must first arise, that the first mind generation that arises is the aspirational bodhicitta, but I don't remember from which text I read that from. Of course, as to what this statement meant is another matter.

But it is clear in the text that the mind generation in the continuum of a bodhisattva superior who is in meditative equipoise is aspirational bodhicitta.

There are a few things to think about, [whether] the initial mind generation that arises is aspirational mind generation [or not]: It is said that one enters the Mahayana path with the realization of calm abiding. Then the question may arise: "Is bodhicitta achieved while in meditative equipoise? If so, then would that not make that initial mind generation an aspirational mind generation?"

This is opened for public discussion!

Understanding the lines of reasoning through analogy and scripture:

<i>Because it is in the nature of suffering, therefore it is selfless.</i>
I mentioned before that there are two ways to reflect on this. One has to analyze the two points over and over to see/ understand what I have explained. One has to think and come to understand:
1) Why [just] because it is impermanent, it is in the nature of suffering; 2) Why [just] because it is in the nature of suffering, it is selfless.
One has to think about these oneself in order to come to an understanding.
1) [The reason that one's contaminated] impermanent ["I, body and mind" complex are] in the nature of suffering is because [these have] arisen from karma and afflictions.
Because these have arisen from karma and afflictions, [therefore, these are] in the nature of suffering.
2) One also has to see why, [just] because it is in the nature of suffering, it is selfless. One has to think from where the suffering arose. On that basis, one then goes on to see how: "Because it is in the nature of suffering, it is selfless."
If one thinks and analyzes deeply where the source of suffering is, then one should understand and discover that the very root is [one's] ignorance, which is the apprehension of a self, which [when reduced to the essential,] is the view of the transitory collections. This is the root of all of one's suffering. This is the mind which apprehends a self.
Although a "self" is apprehended by such a mind of ignorance, in reality, such a "self" that is apprehended by [one's] ignorance does not exist.
Even though this "self" that is apprehended by ignorance does not exist whatsoever, but its nonexistence has to be proven.
In general, there are different lines of reasoning that one can employ to establish selflessness, such as 1) The reasoning of ' <i>one and many</i> ', or 2) The reasoning of ' <i>dependent arising</i> '.
1) The reasoning of ' <i>one and many</i> ': there are four essential points which must be realized:
a) The essential point of finding the object of negation – this is said to be extremely important. Based on this, then there is,
b) The essential point of establishing the pervasion, c) The essential point of establishing that it is not inherently one [with the aggregates], d) The essential point of establishing that it is not inherently different from the aggregates
The first essential point of finding the object of negation is extremely important, but it is also very challenging to correctly identify, in one's experience, the object of negation, what exactly <i>it</i> is to be targeted.
Although it is difficult, but one has to try. One should use an analogy to help one find such an object of negation:
<i>Mistaking a coil of rope to be a snake</i>
In the view of the mind that is mistaking the coil of rope to be a snake, there is a snake appearing from the side of the coil of rope somewhere there.
Likewise, when the "I/ self" appears to oneself, it appears to exist from the side of the body and mind, somewhere there within that collection.
In the perspective of this mind that mistakes the coil of rope to be a snake, there is a snake appearing from [the side] of the coil of rope. In this view, this concept of "snake" does not appear as something imputed/ projected by the mind.
Likewise, when the "I/ self" appears, it appears to exist from the side of the body and mind, it does not appear to one as something that is projected or merely imputed by [one's] thought.
This is the way in which the object of negation appears to one. In the perspective of the mind mistaking the coil of rope to be a snake, there is a snake appearing right there from the side of the coil of rope.
Likewise, in terms of grasping at the self, in the view of this mind, the "I" appears to be <i>projected from the side of the body and mind</i> without it appearing as something <i>merely [projected] by the mind</i> .
This is how/ the way the object of negation, the inherently existent "I" appears to oneself.
There is the <i>appearance of the "I" existing from</i> its own side, from <i>the side of the body and mind without being merely imputed by the mind</i> . Such an appearance is <i>that which needs to be negated, [this is the target]</i> .
When referring to the object of negation, one is <i>not negating the mere appearance of the self</i> , this is <i>not</i> what is to be negated.
One's greatest difficulty is to distinguish between these two in one's own experience. Even though their manner of appearing is completely different, but in experience, these two <i>appears to be mixed</i> .
Therefore, one's greatest challenge is to see their difference that one is not able to distinguish in experience.

One is not negating the mere appearance of the “I”, which exists, but one is unable to distinguish this [existent “I”] from the appearance of an inherently existent “I”. Therefore, one's problem lies in this.
Until one is able to distinguish [between these two] in one's own experience, there is no way to move forward in the process of realizing selflessness.
In the Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra, there is an explanation of the <i>Profound Four-fold Emptiness</i> : <i>Form is emptiness, emptiness is form.</i>
By changing the subject [of form] to “I”, one can think/ analyze: “ <i>I</i> ” is emptiness, emptiness is “ <i>I</i> ”.
“ <i>I</i> ” is emptiness: this means that, the “I” which appears to exist from the side of the body and mind without being merely imputed by the mind, does not exist whatsoever.
Although there is an appearance of such an inherently existent “I”, but it does not exist in reality. Since such an “I” does not exist in the way it appears, therefore, such an “I” is empty, it does not exist, hence, the “I” is emptiness.
If the “I” does exist in the way it appears, as inherently existent, then it should be findable.
When one looks for such an “I” on the body and mind, one should be able to find it. But it is very clear that, no matter where one looks for such an inherently existent “I”, it cannot be found.
The object of negation, the inherently existent “I”, which appears as a real “I” from the side of the body and mind without being merely imputed by the mind, does not exist.
For if it exists, it can be found upon searching amongst one's body and mind, but it cannot be found.
Although it appears, it does not exist in the way it appears, therefore, such an “I” is empty of existing in such a way.
Therefore, “ <i>I</i> ” is emptiness. The nature of the “I” is emptiness. Even though this is the case, this is not saying that the “I” does not exist. It does exist. It exists as a mere appearance, therefore: <i>emptiness is “I”</i> .
By thinking how “ <i>I</i> ” is emptiness, emptiness is “ <i>I</i> ”, one comes to understand how the “I” does not exist in the way it appears
The “I” is empty of existing inherently, is empty of existing in the way it appears to one. Therefore the nature of the “I” is emptiness. Yet, one cannot say that the “I” does not exist as it does, as merely imputed by thought, as mere appearance.
It is said that one should not take a partial/ biased position, merely supporting [the idea of] emptiness, but neglecting appearances; or supporting appearances but neglecting emptiness. If one does so, one will never realize emptiness.
One should not, in the name of appearance, deprecate emptiness; nor in the name of emptiness, deprecate appearance.
A correct understanding of mere appearance should help one bring forth an understanding of emptiness; a correct understanding of emptiness should help one bring forth a correct understanding of appearance.
Therefore, these two are mutually complimentary.
This is how, by the reason that it is in the nature of suffering, therefore, it is selfless. By understanding selflessness, how the “I” does not exist in the way it appears, one is then able to uproot ignorance apprehending a “self”, the very root of all suffering. By uprooting the root of suffering, one would be able to achieve nirvana, which is peace.

2) The validity of obtaining benefits from engaging mind generation [1.26 – 1.30]

a) The actual [benefits of engaging mind generation] [1.26]
<p>1.26 a. How can I fathom b. The merits of this jewel mind, c. The cause of joy of all migrating beings, d. And the panacea for the suffering of sentient beings.</p>
If the aspirational mind generation has all the above mentioned benefits, then it goes without saying that the engaged mind generation would have even greater benefits.
There is a citation from the sutra requested by <i>Viradhata</i> which establishes the benefits of engaged mind generation:
<p><i>The merit of the mind of enlightenment, if they were put into form, all of the sphere of space would be filled, it is even more than that.</i></p>
b) The validity of those [benefits] [1.27]
<p>1.27 a. If merely a benevolent intention b. Excels venerating the buddhas, c. Then what need to mention striving to make d. All beings without exception happy?</p>
It is said in the <i>King of Concentration Sutra</i> that, the benefits of even just the thought of wanting to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings is more powerful than the merit one accumulates from making numberless offerings to billions of Buddhas

<p>If the merit of an aspirational mind generation is more powerful than the merit one accumulates by making offerings to billions to Buddhas, obviously, the benefits that one gets from an engaged mind generation would be even more powerful.</p>	
<p>Such a mind generation is a mind of enlightenment that is [directly] conjoined with the practices of the bodhisattva deeds.</p>	
<p>Qualm: Since sentient beings wish happiness and do not wish for suffering, by striving in [these two] ways, they are able to achieve happiness and abandon suffering, would that not make them proficient and skilled in achieving happiness and abandon suffering? Why should others strive for their purposes?</p>	
<p>c) Dispelling doubts [1.28 – 1.30]</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1.28 a. Although wishing to be rid of misery, b. They run towards misery itself. c. Although wishing to have happiness, d. Like an enemy they ignorantly destroy it.</i></p>	
<p>Everybody is the same in not wanting a short life, nobody wants to be poor and sick. They do whatever they can to avoid these. Even though nobody wants to have a short life, but people are killing. Even though nobody wants to be poor, but they are stealing. Therefore, they are engaging in actions that are contrary to what they are looking for.</p>	
<p>The teachings are saying that, although the goal of everyone is to avoid problems and sufferings, but in trying to achieve that goal, many are actually creating the causes for suffering.</p>	
<p>If one lights a candle in the dark, somehow, moths are attracted to it. They then fly towards it and then get burnt.</p>	
<p>When they see the candle flame, there is something that attracts them. They then fly in pursuit of that attraction towards the candle flame. It is not thinking of committing suicide by flying towards it. It is actually looking for something but gets burnt.</p>	
<p>Likewise, sentient beings want happiness, but they naturally run towards the cause of suffering, in doing so, they suffer.</p>	
<p>We are all the same in wanting to be rich, to have long lives and good health. But in practice, sentient beings do not guard their ethical discipline of, for example, avoiding the ten nonvirtues. Above that, they create immeasurable negativities.</p>	
<p><i>In doing so, they behave as if virtue is their enemy. Hence, they end up destroying virtue by seeing it as almost an enemy.</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1.29 a. For those who are deprived of happiness b. And burdened with many sorrows, c. It satisfies them with all joys, d. Dispels all suffering,</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1.30 a. And clears away confusion. b. Where is there a comparable virtue? c. Where is there even such a friend? d. Where is there merit similar to this?</i></p>
<p>Verse 1.29 states that, bodhicitta, the mind of enlightenment, is the very thing that can dispel all the miseries, sorrows and poverties of sentient beings. It is bodhicitta that can bestow on them every happiness.</p>	
<p>Bodhicitta is that which bestows all joys, dispels all sufferings, clears away all confusions, hence, there is nothing else like it.</p>	
<p>It clears away the confusion regarding what is to be discarded and what is to be adopted. There is not anything that is like it in terms of performing these functions.</p>	
<p>One would not be able to find a friend that is like bodhicitta, which is able to eliminate all sufferings, bestow all joys and clear away all confusions with regard to what to discard and what to attain.</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: I guess, with regards to accumulating merit, there is not any other merit that is comparable to bodhicitta.</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: I guess then, the reply to this qualm would be: When one has the actual bodhicitta, then one will be in a position to help clear away the confusion in the minds of beings, [who are only] running after the causes of suffering although they only want happiness. One can show them with regards to what they need to adopt and discard.</p>	
<p>By thinking about the benefits of bodhicitta, one then strives to generate that which has not been generated, prevents that which has been generated from degenerating.</p>	
<p>The point of reflecting repeatedly on the benefits of bodhicitta is so that, one develops a strong/ real aspiration for it.</p>	
<p>It is only when one is convinced that one does stand to gain these benefits, would there be any strong and stable aspiration/ desire to achieve it. Such a desire is like the desire a thirsty person has for water: he is always thinking about finding it.</p>	
<p>Upon hearing and then repeatedly sustaining the reflections on the benefits of bodhicitta, one develops the thought that it is something that one must develop. When such an aspiration for bodhicitta arises, this would then fulfill that entire purpose of hearing and reflecting on the benefits of bodhicitta.</p>	
<p>Of course, since one does not have bodhicitta, one would not have any 'feelings' for the benefits of bodhicitta. One may even wonder: "Is this really true or not? How is that possible?"</p>	
<p>At one's stage of [spiritual] development, other than relying on the Buddha's speech, it is really difficult then, at the initial stages, to even be able to infer that there are such benefits.</p>	

For now, bodhicitta is quite out of reach for one. But as mentioned before: <i>Developing some equanimity, and based on that, some love and compassion is possible and within one's reach.</i>
<i>One does so by thinking of how one needs to rely on others, for that reason, how others are kind, and coming to develop some equanimity without strong anger towards some, while having strong attachment for others.</i>
<i>On that basis, one can also develop some sincere feelings of wanting everyone to be happy and to be free from suffering.</i>
When one is able to bring forth such thoughts of equanimity, love and compassion, then <i>one's mind would definitely become more relaxed and less uptight</i> . If one can develop bodhicitta, then one can infer that the benefits must be even greater.
One has to try out this practice of the four immeasurables to see if they work or not: <i>In terms of practice, these are the first steps one has to take.</i>

D. Praising the person who cultivates mind generation [1.31 – 1.36]

a. They are worthy of praise because even though they have not been entrusted [with a specific task], by drawing upon great compassion, they act to assist others [1.31]

- 1.31 a. *If whoever reciprocates benefit*
 b. *Is worthy of some praise,*
 c. *Then what need to mention the bodhisattva*
 d. *Who does good without its being asked of him?*

In the world, when someone receives help from another, normally the beneficiary would praise his benefactor by saying: “It was really very kind of him to have helped me.”

If that is the case, then it goes without saying that, bodhisattvas are worthy of homage and objects of one's offerings. This is because, they help sentient beings even without them asking.

The help that bodhisattvas render to sentient beings is not something insignificant, they work for the happiness of sentient beings in the present and all their future lives. As such, they are worthy of homage and offerings.

b. If someone who accomplishes the slightest of benefits is worthy of compliments, someone who accomplishes all benefit and bliss is worthy of the highest praise [1.32 – 1.33]

- 1.32 a. *The world honors as virtuous*
 b. *A man who procures mediocre food and for an instant gives it*
 c. *Disrespectfully to a small number of beings,*
 d. *That satisfies them for only half a day.*

- 1.33 a. *What need be said then of one*
 b. *Who constantly bestows the unsurpassed bliss of the Sugatas for a long time*
 c. *Upon countless sentient beings,*
 d. *Fulfilling all their hopes?*

This is an example of a man who gives food to some people:

The substance given here is merely food, the duration of giving it is very short, it is not given to a lot of people, just some, the amount given is just enough for these people not to be hungry for half a day, and the manner of giving is without respect.

Even then, someone who does this will be regarded in the world as quite a kind and generous person for the poor.

If such a person, who gives a small amount of food to a small number of sentient beings for a short time disrespectfully, is worthy of praise, then what need is there to mention those who work for all sentient beings until the end of cyclic existence, giving them the highest uncontaminated bliss of full enlightenment with the attitude of love and compassion?

It goes without saying that such a person is praiseworthy.

c. They are worthy of praise because they are the supreme field [1.34 – 1.36]

1) The reasons it is inappropriate to belittle a bodhisattva even in the slightest way [1.34]

- 1.34 a. *The Buddha has said that someone who generates an evil thought*
 b. *Against such a benefactor as a Child of the Victors*
 c. *Will remain in hell for as many eons*
 d. *As there were evil thoughts.*

It is said that the Buddha has taught that: anyone who generates/ develops anger or harmful thoughts toward the bodhisattvas will have to be born in the hells for as many eons as the moments of anger.

If such moments of anger toward a bodhisattva can have such destructive consequences, then what would be the merit/ virtues that can be accumulated if one has faith in him?

2) The reasons it is appropriate to cultivate faith [1.35(ab)]

- 1.35 a. *But if one acts out of an attitude of faith,*
 b. *Its fruits will multiply far more than that.*

It is said that those who act out of faith in relation to bodhisattvas will experience its results far more than how a sentient being has to be born in hells as many eons as there were moments of anger.
Bodhisattvas are very special powerful karmic objects. Hence, any evil thoughts or anger directed at them will have grave consequences; likewise, whatever virtuous thoughts directed at them will also lead to very powerful positive results.
3) Thus, it is befitting to pay homage to them and go for refuge [1.35(cd) – 1.36]
<i>1.35 c. Even in adversity the Children of the Victors generate no negativity, d. Instead their virtues naturally increase.</i>
It is said that bodhisattvas, in no matter what kinds of adverse conditions they meet, even with dangers to their possessions, health, lives and so forth, these conditions do not harm them, affect them nor cause them to generate negativities.
Instead, it encourages them to use such adverse conditions to increase their qualities and virtues.
<i>1.36 a. I prostrate to the body of he b. In whom the sacred precious mind is born. c. I seek refuge in that source of happiness d. Who brings to happiness even those who harm him.</i>
The verse says to prostrate to the person who possesses in his continuum, the mind of enlightenment which eliminates both the problems of cyclic existence and liberation.
One is also prostrating to the bodhisattva, who only benefits sentient beings, even those who harm him.
In short, the person who develops bodhicitta, a bodhisattva, is an object of homage and offerings for all humans and gods.
It is a great negativity to harm a bodhisattva. But, one accumulates very powerful virtue from making offerings and paying homage to him. Even just by showing a pleasant demeanor to a bodhisattva, one accumulates very powerful merit.
When one adopts through a ritual, the aspirational bodhicitta that comes with a commitment, one needs to abandon the four black dharmas and cultivate the four white dharmas.
One of these is to generate the recognition that all sentient beings are like the Teacher/ Buddha/ Founder.
The point is to train in pure appearance in relation to all sentient beings, precisely because one does not know who the other person is. In this case, one does not know exactly who is and who is not a bodhisattva.
As mentioned, if one gets angry and upset at a bodhisattva, one destroys so much merit and accumulates so much negativities
In one's context here, many people have already taken the bodhisattva vows as well as the tantric vows through various empowerments. In that sense, everyone can be said to be special objects.
Therefore, one should regard one another without anger, or showing unpleasant, disrespectful demeanor.
If one can think along these lines, it will be beneficial.
Even if one does see or notice some faults in others, the point is not to grasp at those faults and to hold onto them so strongly. In so doing, chances of getting angry is lesser.
One can think that the faults one see as being impermanent, it is not as if these will always remain. The faults are also not established from their own sides. It is not that the faults have always been there, as they are adventitious.
The Buddhas whom one has faith in now, were not always Buddhas [before, as] they were also sentient beings once, full of faults. In the training to regard others as Buddhas, seeing others as the Teacher, there is a basis for that:
Although sentient beings are not Buddhas now, but they are amenable to be a Buddha in the future, they can develop bodhicitta and can be Buddhas as they have the Buddha lineage, the seed of enlightenment within them.
In this sense, one develops this recognition looking at sentient beings as like the Teacher/ Buddha. It is like paying respect and having regard for the cause of Buddhas in that, they [will] be Buddhas one day:
<i>Just as one have regards for the result, one can also have regards for the cause.</i>
The point is that, as much as possible, one should try not to be upset/ angry, and as much as possible, one should try to focus on the qualities of others and not to get overly preoccupied with [others'] faults, grasping at them.
In that way, one would not get upset through focusing on and being preoccupied with their faults.
When one refers to sentient beings, they are not something that exist far away from oneself, they are [in fact] the ones around oneself. Here in one's context, they are the people in the same class.
As mentioned, many of you have bodhisattva and even tantric vows, so in that sense, are also special objects. So when one gets upset and angry at others, one would also accumulate negativities.
Therefore, as much as possible, one should have respect for one another, this is very important.

Student: What is the difference between bodhicitta and mind generation?

Khenrinpoche: In general, bodhicitta is mind generation. One would not find a definition for bodhicitta that is separate from that of mind generation.

Bodhicitta, or mind of enlightenment, is so-called, because it is a mind generation existing in the continuum of a bodhisattva. Because it is a mind generation existing in the continuum of a bodhisattva, it is called bodhicitta.

A Buddha is not a bodhisattva, for that reason, Buddha does not have bodhicitta.

In general, one can say that most of the time, bodhicitta is mind generation. Of course, it may sound strange initially, when one hears that the Buddha is not a bodhisattva [bodhi: enlightenment, sattva: being, hence, bodhisattva: enlightenment being.]

Student: ...?

Khenrinpoche: Sometimes, people get mixed up and think that love and compassion are the same. But love is the wish for others to be happy and compassion is wish for others to be free of suffering. If one has love, the thought wanting others to be happy, then the thought of harming others would not be there. When one is focusing on sentient beings that are tormented by sufferings and has a wish to free them from sufferings, then the thought of harming sentient beings would also not exist.

Then, is there a difference between harmfulness and malice?

Student: What is this affliction of 'dislike', being the opposite from immeasurable joy?

Khenrinpoche: immeasurable joy is the thought of not wanting others to be separated from happiness. In this sense, it is a stronger thought of wanting others to have happiness. 'Dislike' would be the opposite of that. Instead of wanting others to not be separated from happiness, the mind of 'dislike' is the thought wanting others to be separated from happiness.

How meditation on the Four Close Placements of Mindfulness is an antidote for the four erroneous conceptions:

One of the sufferings that one experiences arises as a result of following after the four erroneous conceptions:
<p>1) <i>Conceiving that which is impermanent to be permanent.</i> 2) <i>Conceiving that which is unclean to be clean.</i> 3) <i>Conceiving that which is in the nature of suffering to be happiness.</i> 4) <i>Conceiving that which is selfless to have a self.</i></p>
Many of one's problems and unhappiness, especially mental disturbances, arise from following these four erroneous conceptions. To stop these four erroneous conceptions, Buddha taught the <i>Four Close Placements of Mindfulness</i> :
1) Close Placement of Mindfulness on the Body: When one looks at the conceptions of that which is unclean to be clean, one should relate that conception to how one relate to one's body. In reality, one's [body] is unclean/ dirty by nature.
The mind that sees the reality of the body can reverse any conceptions of it being clean and pure. The purpose of seeing this reality of the body is to overcome attachment for it.
It is taught that one should look at how unclean and dirty one's body is in terms of the three times:
A) Past – one should bring to mind the source/ cause of one's body, from where and what did one's body come about.
B) Present – one should look at one's body at the present by seeing how it is by nature dirty and unclean.
C) Future – one should look at, in the future, what one's body will become of: a corpse.
To see this nature of one's body as being dirty and unclean, one has to analyze, reflect and think. By seeing the [real] nature, how it is dirty and unclean, one would be able to reverse and put aside any attachments one may have for one's body.
A lot of times, people accumulate negativities due to being attached to their bodies. Such attachments very often arise from this erroneous conception of the body as being pure and clean.
While one's body is indeed dirty and unclean by nature, the teachings are never ever suggesting that one should neglect, discard or not take good care of one's body.
Although one's body is by nature dirty and unclean, but it can be put to good use: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>On the basis of one's body, one can practice the dharma, cultivate a good heart and be of benefit to others.</i></p>
It is therefore wrong to think that one should just neglect one's body and not take care of it, merely because it is by nature dirty and impure. One should not, therefore, not take care of one's personal hygiene by not washing and cleaning it.
One's body can be useful if one uses it for something virtuous, to benefit others. So, one needs to take care of one's body.
<p><i>This instruction on the Close Placements of Mindfulness on the Body, looking at the unclean and impure nature of the body, is for one to work and deal with one's attachment.</i></p>
Taking care of one's body, although it is by nature dirty and impure, is likened to how some farmers collect and store the droppings of their farm animals.
Even though these waste are dirty, but because these can be put into good use, the farmers <i>keep and use it</i> .
But at the same time, they are <i>not attached</i> to the animal waste.
Khenrinpoche: When I was a young monk in Kopan, during those days there weren't that many buildings, so there was plenty of empty land. We have had to plant vegetables like cauliflower and cabbage. We've had to go to the fields and plant these.
Lama Yeshe used to teach us to go to the septic tank with our buckets and scoop up our solid and liquid waste.
He taught us not to put the waste on top of the vegetables, but dig up a little bit of the soil, put a scoop of these waste and then cover it with the soil.
After that, our cauliflowers became huge. If you put the cow dung, it is only this much, but when you put the “human dung”, then it becomes big. So when I was a kid, we did that. Then after [we harvest them,] we would eat them.
People may misunderstand that, since the body is in the nature of suffering and unclean, then perhaps it should be neglected. Of course, this is not correct. One has to take care of one's body. The point is to work against attachment for one's body.
2) Close Placement of Mindfulness on Feelings: This is a method to overcome the erroneous conception conceiving suffering to be happiness.
Whenever one experiences pleasant feeling, even though it may be a very small [feeling] to start off with, but one would immediately get emotionally attached to/ involved with the feeling, holding onto and grasping at it.

This is what most people work for in their lives. To achieve such a feeling, everybody does all sorts of things to get that.
When one pleasurable feeling subsides, one then focuses/ turns one's attention to another pleasurable feeling, running after it and doing so much just to achieve those same feelings.
When one analyzes those pleasurable feelings: a) They can never increase indefinitely. b) They always end up giving one suffering.
By seeing how feelings are in the nature of suffering, one can then reduce/ work with this erroneous conception conceiving suffering to be happiness.
Most of us are very attached, emotionally involved in one's pleasurable feelings. In the process, one accumulates nonvirtues just to experience that.
3) Close Placements of Mindfulness on the Mind: This is a practice to overcome the erroneous conception of permanence.
4) Close Placements of Mindfulness on Phenomena: This is done by seeing how all phenomena lack a self. This is to overcome the erroneous conception conceiving that which is selfless to have a self.
These are the Four Close Placements of Mindfulness: on the body, feelings, mind and phenomena. This is a method to reduce and work with one's attachment and grasping, because, one's attachment and grasping arises many times due to these four.

Why one should cherish others:

The mind of enlightenment/ bodhicitta, is very precious. Such a precious mind arises due to the existence of sentient beings who are tormented by suffering. Previously, instructions were shown on how to regard sentient beings as the Teacher:
Bodhicitta arises due to [the existence of] sentient beings; sentient beings have the Buddha nature, which means they have the potential to develop such a mind of enlightenment.
For these reasons, one should try to respect sentient beings and take care of them.
This will come later, but there is a verse that states: “As much as one cherishes the Buddha, that much should one cherish sentient beings.”
Therefore, there will be an internal contradiction if one cherishes and makes offerings to the Buddhas but not to sentient beings.
If one reflects on the benefits of bodhicitta, then one would find that bodhicitta is precious. If one finds bodhicitta to be precious, then the advice is that, one should also find sentient beings, from whom bodhicitta arises, to be precious.
For these reasons, one should take care of and cherish sentient beings as much as possible and at least not harm them.

Why one should never neglect the cooperative conditions that aids one on the path:

To adopt the mind of enlightenment, one must accumulate merit, which is the favorable condition for adopting bodhicitta; one also needs to purify one's mind of negativities, which are the unfavorable condition that hinders its adoption.
It is said in the great treatise on the Great stages of the path that, accumulating the merit, which is the favorable condition, and purifying the negativities, which are the unfavorable conditions, are the cooperative conditions for the production of the path/ generating the realizations in one's mind.
The substantial cause for producing the realizations in one's mind is sustaining the meditation on the respective topics of the Lam Rim.
This means that, if one merely sustains the meditation on the various topics of the Stages of the path, without accumulating merit and purifying the mind of obscurations , which are the cooperative conditions, then no realizations would arise .
As such, one cannot neglect accumulating the merit and the purification of the negativities, these two are indispensable.
Lama Tsongkhapa said in his great treatises, the Stages of the path to enlightenment that: 1) <i>When one hears the teachings but do not remember them,</i> 2) <i>When one reflects on the teachings but do not understand them.</i> 3) <i>When one meditates on the teachings but do not produce any experiences,</i> 4) <i>At such times when the mind is very weak, then one has to rely on the power of the field of merit.</i>
This is a personal instruction of Lama Tsongkhapa.
Therefore, there is a need to accumulate merit and purify the mind to be able to generate bodhicitta.
Nagajuna has stated the need to accumulate a vast amount of merit to generate bodhicitta. Arya Asanga has said that one has to accumulate merit to make the mind clear . It is only when the mind is clear, that bodhicitta can arise.
The point of accumulating merit through making offerings is to make the mind clear.

Chapter Two: Confessing Negativities

2. The way to train in the conduct once one has developed the two mind generations

A. Embracing mind generation

1. First, practicing the branches of preparation – prostration, offerings, going for refuge – and then confessing negativities [clearing] adverse conditions by means of the four powers

A. Explaining the chapter's material [2.1 – 2.65]

a. Offerings [2.1 – 2.22]

1) The need to make offerings [2.1]

<p>2.1 a. <i>In order to uphold that precious mind</i> b. <i>I make excellent offerings to the Tathagatas,</i> c. <i>To the sacred Dharma, the stainless jewel, and</i> d. <i>To the children of the buddhas, the oceans of excellent qualities.</i></p>
<p>2.1 a. states that: <i>In order to uphold that precious mind</i>, this states the attitude one should have when making offerings.</p>
<p>In this context, one should have the thought: “I am going to make this offering so that I can generate bodhicitta.”</p>
<p>Many times, people make offerings to put on a show, which is done with [an attitude of] arrogance or <i>pride</i>.</p>
<p>There are also many times when people make offerings with a sense of not willing to part with the offerings. They do offer, but with a sense of clinging/ <i>miserliness</i>. Therefore, one should not make offerings with such attitudes.</p>
<p>One should have a pure motivation for making offerings. The motivation here is to be able to develop bodhicitta, which is all about benefiting others.</p>
<p>With that as the motivation, the rest of the verse shows the objects to whom one makes offerings: the supreme field of merit. One makes offerings to the Buddhas, the sacred Dharma and also to the Bodhisattvas.</p>
<p><i>b. I make excellent offerings to the Tathagatas</i>, Tathagatas/ The One Thus Gone, essentially refer to the Buddhas. From earlier discussion on Buddha, there are the [divisions into the] Truth and Form Bodies.</p>
<p><i>c. To the sacred Dharma, the stainless jewel</i>, Dharma here refers to the true paths and true cessations.</p>
<p><i>d. To the children of the buddhas</i>, “Children” here primarily refers to the bodhisattvas abiding on the first ground and beyond, essentially showing the Sangha Jewel.</p>
<p>The Buddha Jewel can also be divided as the conventional Buddha Jewel and the ultimate Buddha Jewel: The two Form Bodies are the conventional Buddha Jewel, the two Truth Bodies are the ultimate Buddha Jewel.</p>
<p>Likewise, the Dharma Jewel can also be divided as the conventional Dharma Jewel and the ultimate Dharma Jewel:</p>
<p>The ultimate Dharma Jewel is the true paths and true cessations, whereas the conventional Dharma Jewel refers to the Twelve Branches of Scriptural Collection, when condensed, these become the Three Scriptural Collections.</p>
<p>Similarly, the Sangha Jewel can also be divided into the ultimate Sangha Jewel and the conventional Sangha Jewel:</p>
<p>Ultimate Sangha Jewel can be referred in one way as the true path and true cessation, the conventional Sangha Jewel refers to the superiors.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: Refuge here, refers to the objects of refuge, which can be divided into the ultimate objects of refuge and the conventional objects of refuge.</p>
<p>Ultimate objects of refuge refers to the final objects of refuge, this means that the ultimate objects of refuge only exist on the Buddha ground.</p>
<p>Conventional objects of refuge/ temporal objects of refuge refer to the true path and true cessation in the continuum of a sentient being.</p>
<p>With a pure attitude, one offers well to these objects. Offering that is <i>done well</i> means one has offered with <i>respect</i>.</p>

2) The actual making of offerings [2.2 – 2.22]

a) Offering unowned substances [2.2 – 2.7]

i) Offering substances [2.2 – 2.5(b)]:

<p>2.2 a. <i>Whatever flowers and fruits there are</i> b. <i>And whatever kinds of medicine,</i> c. <i>Whatever jewels exist in this world,</i> d. <i>And whatever clean refreshing waters;</i> 2.3 a. <i>Jewel mountains, and likewise,</i> b. <i>Forest groves, quiet and joyful places,</i></p>	<p>c. <i>Heavenly trees ornamented by and bedecked with flowers,</i> d. <i>And trees with branches laden with good fruit;</i> 2.4 a. <i>Fragrances and incense of the realms of gods,</i> b. <i>Wish-fulfilling trees and jewel trees,</i> c. <i>Uncultivated harvests, and all ornaments</i> d. <i>That are worthy to be offered;</i> 2.5 a. <i>Lakes and pools adorned with lotuses</i> b. <i>And the beautiful cry of wild geese,</i></p>
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2.2 a. <i>Whatever flowers and fruits there are:</i> All the flowers there are existing in the pure lands/ realms of the celestial beings, human and naga worlds, all the different species of flowers one finds, are the flowers that are mentioned here.
b. <i>And whatever kinds of medicine,</i> refers to medicine that are effective in curing the different illnesses and diseases, whatever these medicines there are, one takes them to mind and offers them.
c. <i>Whatever jewels exist in this world,</i> refers to whatever jewels there are, such as the wish-fulfilling jewel which is said to fulfill all of one's desires and needs, and also the other kinds of precious stones.
d. <i>And whatever clean refreshing waters;</i> there are certain types of water, when drunk, will harm one's stomach and throat. There are also certain kinds of water, when drunk, is good and helpful for one's body and health.
For example, there are certain kinds of water that possesses eight properties. Such are the kinds of water that one should offer
The widespread tradition of making water bowl offerings nowadays originated in Tibet. This is most likely due to the abundance of pure water that possesses those eight properties, which can be found almost everywhere in Tibet.
Since the water, which is so clean, pure and possesses those properties, is so readily available there, it became very easy to accumulate merit by merely offering it. Offering water is something that can be done without any clinging.
2.3 a. <i>Jewel mountains</i> refer to an entire mountain made of something precious. In the Abhidharmakosa [Treasury of Knowledge], there is an explanation of how Mount Meru is surrounded by these chains of golden mountains.
These are mountains that are made of precious substances.
b. <i>Forest groves, quiet and joyful places, c. Heavenly trees ornamented by and bedecked with flowers,</i> here, one can use the word “parks” for these, that are beautified/ adorned with flowers, and so forth.
d. <i>And trees with branches laden with good fruit;</i> here, one offers fruit trees. 2.4 a. <i>Fragrances and incense of the realms of gods,</i> one offers various kinds of fragrances and incenses, such as sandalwood and akuru.
b. <i>Wish-fulfilling trees and jewel trees, c. Uncultivated harvests, and all ornaments d. That are worthy to be offered;</i>
2.5 a. <i>Lakes and pools adorned with lotuses b. And the beautiful cry of wild geese,</i>
These are the various offering substances that are unowned, that exist in the realms of humans, celestial beings and pure lands. Wherever these may be, one brings to mind all these various offering substances and offers them.

ii) How to offer them [2.5(c) – 2.6]

2.5 c. <i>Everything unowned</i> d. <i>Within the limitless spheres of space;</i>	2.6 a. <i>Taking these with my mind, I offer them</i> b. <i>To the supreme beings, the Munis, as well as their Sons;</i> c. <i>O holy objects of offering, Compassionate Ones,</i> d. <i>Think mercifully of me and accept these offerings of mine.</i>
These are all the list of the various offering substances that are unowned.	
Whatever specific object one is thinking of, for example, a flower that exists in the various god realms, pure lands and the human worlds, one should visualize that the whole of space is filled with numberless of these flowers, one then offers them.	
There are an entire list of unowned offering substances, whatever these may be that one brings to mind, one should multiply that particular offering substance, thinking that it has become numberless, filling the whole of space, one then offers them.	
Bringing these different offering substances to mind, one then offers to the objects of offering mentioned earlier, perhaps, one can think that, the offerings are accepted.	
From one's own side, one visualizes them as numberless, filling the whole of space, one then offers them with the wish thinking: “Please accept my offerings.” One then thinks that one's offerings are actually accepted.	

iii) The reason one offers unowned substances [2.7]

2.7 a. <i>Not having merit I am destitute</i> b. <i>And I have no other gifts to offer.</i> c. <i>Thus, O Protectors, you who think of others' welfare,</i> d. <i>Through your power accept these for my sake.</i>	
Perhaps here, Shantideva is saying that he has not enough merit, therefore, is very poor in terms of these external resources and not possessing these various offering substances: “I offer these things that are unowned, please, may you accept it.”	
b) Offering one's own body [2.8 – 2.9]	
2.8 <i>Eternally I shall offer all my bodies</i> <i>To the Conquerors and their children.</i> <i>Please accept me, you Supreme Heroes.</i> <i>Respectfully shall I be your subject.</i>	2.9 <i>Through being completely under your care,</i> <i>I shall not fear conditioned existence and shall benefit</i> <i>sentient beings;</i> <i>I shall perfectly transcend my previous negativities</i> <i>And henceforth shall commit no more.</i>

Since “what I have is only my body, and I have nothing else to offer, as such, I offer myself, please accept it.”
The offering of one's body should be done willingly, happily, with faith and respect. The point of offering one's body to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas is so that, one can accomplish their wishes.
It is said that, by offering one's body to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, thinking that they accept it, henceforth, one uses one's body to work fearlessly for the welfare of others.
After having offered one's body, one applies an attitude of restraint, by pledging that one would not use one's body, that one has offered, to accumulate negativities.
Offering of one's body to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas is said to be the best protection for oneself: after having offered one's body, one essentially places oneself under the command and orders of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas.
One literally becomes their servant, allows them to use one in whatever ways to benefit sentient beings.
If one allows oneself to be used in such a way, then the Buddhas and bodhisattvas will always protect one.
As such, this becomes the best protection for oneself.
If one really dedicates one's body, speech and mind completely to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, then one would be under their influence and control. As such, one naturally accumulates lots of merits and purify away the negativities.

Student: If I think: “I am offering all the substances that are unowned in the ten billion world systems” and then offers. Does it count [as having made the offerings] if I don't visualize individual substances like flowers?

Khenrinpoche: In general, if you think that you are offering everything that exists in the world without bringing to mind a specific object, it is not that you don't accumulate merit. You definitely accumulate merit.

But when you do bring to mind a specific offering substance, while it is not yours, but when you bring it to mind, there is this feeling of closeness/ proximity, in that, it is very fresh. While it is not yours, but when you bring it to mind, you feel as if it is yours, that it belongs to you. Then, when you offer that, there is a kind of emotional involvement in that, with a kind of feeling. I think mainly [the practice of offering] is this. If you can visualize various specific offering substances and have them appear as clearly as possible to your mind, and then there is this emotional involvement with that, a feeling that it is yours. You then offer it. There is this additional flavor, a different feeling you would get from offering.

There is this account of two people making aspirational prayers: one really knows how to pray, is able to think extensively and make extensive wishes and aspiration. The other person does not really know how to think, but thought to himself: “Whatever he is praying, aspires to, may I also pray in the same way.” It is said that, this latter person would achieve the results of the prayer.

Perhaps there is this *danger* that you just think: “I offer whatever there is in this world.” Perhaps there is this likelihood that, you accumulate the merit of actually having offered all of that. Khenrinpoche: You got that?

Student: If you just think “everything unowned”, then is there a danger that, this would also include things that are not so good?

Khenrinpoche: You cannot think “everything in the world,” but “everything *good* in the world.” Then that would be fine.

Student: Since there is no such thing as substantial existence, then what is the thing that is attached to the ego? While uncovering the Buddha nature within us, is there a risk of the practice becoming a form of attachment?

Khenrinpoche: The nature of all phenomena is that they are empty of existing inherently/ truly. All phenomena have the nature of emptiness. It is because one does not realize that, then there is an apprehension/ grasping at the person as a real self, due to that, then there is the arising of the afflictions such pride and so forth. In the first place, if one really understands the ultimate nature of phenomena, then there is no basis for an apprehension of a self to arise.

Attachment is not to be fostered, rather, it is to be gotten rid of. The best method for overcoming attachment is to meditate on the emptiness of inherent existence.

As for whatever practice one is doing, including studying the dharma, everything that the Buddha taught is to overcome the afflictions. If it is a [dharma] practice, then it must contribute to the destruction of the afflictions. While the practice is [the karma done of] dharma, but whether the practice becomes [the virtuous karma accumulated of] dharma depends on whether the afflictions are harmed or not, at least a little bit. This is the criteria to judge whether what one does actually becomes dharma or not. It has to hurt the afflictions. While the thing that one is practicing is dharma, but if the practice does not contribute to the weakening/ lessening of the afflictions, but rather, if it causes/ contributes to the increase in the afflictions, then the practice does not become dharma. It only looks like a [dharma] practice, it is a counterfeit [dharma] practice, this is incorrect. Like what was mentioned earlier about [making] offerings. One may make offerings, one may give something, but if one does not know how to give, then that act of giving may actually become a show, a way of showing off and becoming proud. It is the same for studying the dharma, the whole point of studying is that, it must contribute to the lessening of the afflictions, it must hurt the afflictions. But at times when learning the dharma, instead of it becoming an antidote to the afflictions, it becomes a cause for competition and becoming arrogant. This is a sign of not knowing what is dharma and how to practice dharma. That is why, at the beginning of the Stages of the path to enlightenment, it is explained clearly how one should learn the dharma. In the context of hearing the dharma, one should listen through abandoning the three faults of a vessel and cultivating the six ideas. Of the six, there is the idea that oneself is a chronic patient and that the dharma is the medicine to the sickness of one's afflictions.

Signs showing that one's body is in the nature of suffering:

As mentioned previously, many of one's problems and sufferings arise from one's <i>four erroneous conceptions</i> .
A method to weaken this, is the practice of the <i>Four Close Placements of Mindfulness</i> : <i>The Four Close Placements of Mindfulness of the body, feelings, mind and phenomena.</i>
From the four features of impermanence, misery, selfless and empty, one can apply these to one's contaminated body and mind, by reflecting on how one's body is by nature unclean, impermanent, in the nature of suffering and lacking a self.
Through one's own experience, if one looks at the nature of one's body that one cherishes, how it is in the nature of suffering, then, no matter what one does to cherish and take care of it, from its own side, all it does is to give problems and sufferings.
All that is needed is a very small problem, merely a little harmful condition, and one's body starts to give a lot of pain.
Although one uses a lot of effort to care for one's body, giving it plenty of food, clothing and so forth, what is the level of pleasure one gets in return?
The point is, the body that one cherishes so much, with the amount of resources and effort that one puts in, all these are completely overwhelmed by just a little harmful condition.
All these effort, time and resources that one puts in, cannot protect one's body from even a mere small harmful condition.
This is the sign that the body one has, is in the nature of misery/ suffering:
All it needs is a small harmful condition and one experiences pain, despite putting in time and resources into taking care of it to derive some pleasure, from its side, the body does not give happiness nor pleasure.
This shows that one's body is in the nature of suffering. It is the very basis for all the physical problems, pains and suffering.
This is because, the basis [one's body] for experiencing the problem is there: as soon as one takes on a body like this, all it needs is a small condition to come along, then suffering arises quickly and easily.
This is one of the reason behind the meaning of: <i>All pervasive compounded suffering/ the suffering of conditionality.</i>
One eats to alleviate the suffering of hunger. When one feels hungry, it becomes unpleasant, a kind of suffering. But this kind of suffering cannot be removed from one's body: it needs to rely on an external condition of food [to help alleviate it].
The body itself is in the nature of suffering, it is not able to bestow pleasure from its own side. In the case of alleviating the suffering of hunger, it is the external condition of food that gives the pleasure that comes from eating.
Although food here, is the external condition for experiencing the pleasure that comes from eating, but again, there is a limit to how much one's food can do [to provide for that pleasure]. This is because, one just cannot go on eating [non-stop].
Therefore, there is a limit to what the external favorable condition can do for one in terms of experiencing pleasure.
But, when it comes to the conditions for producing suffering, the more the conditions for suffering [are present], the more suffering one experiences. [Both these situations] point to the body as having the nature of suffering/ misery:
<i>The more harmful conditions the body meets with, the more suffering it experiences, whereas The more favorable external conditions the body meets with, there is only a limit to how much pleasure it can experience.</i>
This is because, the pleasure that [the body] derives from such external conditions stops after a while, the pleasurable feeling does not increase [unlike that of the miserable feeling].
It is taught that, as a method to stop attachment and grasping for the body, the teachings advice one to meditate on how the body is unclean, impermanent, in the nature of suffering and lacks a self.
It is very important to continually think about the powerful <i>Four Seals</i> attesting a doctrine to be Buddhadharma:
<i>All composed phenomena are impermanent All contaminated phenomena are misery All phenomena are empty and selfless Nirvana is peace</i>
In the first turning of the wheel of dharma, the Buddha spoke on the <i>Four Noble Truths</i> . He said:
<i>This is true suffering, this is true origin, this is true path and this is true cessation.</i>
So, one has to understand the essential point behind these Four Noble Truths.

c) Mentally emanated offerings [2.10 – 2.22]

i) Surpassable offerings [2.10 – 2.21]

1' Ablutions [2.10 – 2.12(ab)]

Next is making offerings that are mentally emanated: of which there are surpassable and unsurpassable offerings. There are twelve types of surpassable offerings.

a' Bathhouse [2.10]:

*2.10 a. To very sweetly scented bathing chambers
b. With brilliantly sparkling crystal floors
c. And exquisite pillars ablaze with gems,
d. Having canopies above aglow with pearls,*

Before one offers ablution/ bath, one has to generate a bath house, which is visualized as very pleasant, beautiful, anointed with sandalwood fragrance, has a crystal floor, shining with light, and so forth. One then offers a bath:

b' The way [to perform] the ablution ceremony [2.11]

*2.11 a. I beseech the Tathagatas and their children
b. To come and bathe their bodies abundantly
c. From many jeweled vases filled with waters scented and enticing,
d. To the accompaniment of song and music.*

To perform the bath offering, one invites the Buddhas and their children to take their places inside the bath house. One visualizes that they then enter into it.

One offers bath to the Buddhas and their children with precious vases made of gold and so forth, filled with scented water and beautiful flowers. The entire bath offering is accompanied by songs and music.

One can visualize performing the actual bath offering oneself. If one is doing this in the context of tantra, then one visualizes emanating various goddesses holding vases in their hands, who then offer the bath to the Buddhas and their children.

After the bath offering is done, one visualizes that the water, that has been offered to oneself and all sentient beings of the six realms, purifies everyone of their negativities and obscurations.

Particularly, one visualizes these waters flow into the local gods, spirits and harm-givers. These waters pacify all their harmful intentions and in the place of these, one visualizes these harmful spirits and so forth develop bodhicitta.

The reason of offering bath to the Buddhas is not because their exalted bodies are stained, as theirs are unstained.

One does this to purify the stains of one's body, speech and mind.

Particularly, one offers ablution to purify one's impure and ordinary appearances in one's mind.

c' Drying the holy bodies [2.12(ab)]

*2.12 a. Let me dry their bodies with incomparable cloths,
b. Clean and well-anointed with scent,*

After offering ablution, one then visualizes drying their holy bodies with the unequalled cloth that is soft, clean and fragrant.

One then visualizes that the cloths for drying and the previously worn garments of the Tathagatas and their children all dissolve into various colored lights, yellow, red and so forth, these dissolve into oneself at the point between one's eyebrows.

One visualizes that one then received the qualities of all the Buddhas.

2' Clothing [2.12(cd) – 2.13(a)]

*2.12 c. And then may I present them
d. With fragrant well-dyed garments,
2.13 a. Manifold thin and soft clothes.*

When offering garments, some Buddhas are in the aspects that are devoid of attachment and some in the aspects of having attachment.

To those former guests, one offers, for example, the three-colored red robes of a monk. To those latter guests, one offers various clothes that are expensive, valuable, pure, soft, nice to the touch, in various shapes, designs and so forth.

Through [the merits of] offering these garments to all the Tathagatas and their children, one thinks that one is now clothed with the garments of *Shame and Embarrassment*.

Both of these mental factors are similar in that, they function to help one refrain from nonvirtues.

As to their difference: Shame is a mental factor that cause one to restrain from nonvirtue on account of oneself, whereas embarrassment is the mental factor that causes one to abstain from nonvirtue on account of others.

3' Ornaments [2.13(bcd)]

2.13 b. I adorn with hundreds of this and that supreme ornaments
c. The arias Samantabhadra, Manjughosa,
d. Avalokiteshvara, and so forth.

One offers ornaments [only] to those having the aspect of attachment, such as earrings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, belts and so forth. One offers to Samantabhadra, Manjughosa, Avalokiteshvara and so forth, the Eight Great Close Sons.

One can also offer these ornaments to the Buddhas in the aspects of Enjoyment Bodies.

One prays and dedicates the act of offering ornament for one to actualize the signs and exemplifications of Buddha.

4' Scents [2.14]

2.14 a. Like polishing pure, refined gold,
b. I anoint the bodies of the Lords of Subduers that blaze with light
c. With the choicest perfumes whose fragrance permeates
d. Throughout the billion worlds.

With respect to tantra, one visualizes scent goddesses emanating from one's heart holding in their hands vases containing perfumes/ scented water which they then anoint the bodies of the Tathagatas and their children.

After making such an offering of anointment to the Buddhas, one prays to actualize the Buddha's hue of pure refined gold.

5' Flowers [2.15]

2.15 a. And to the highest objects of giving, the Lords of Subduers, I offer
b. All enchanting, sweet smelling flowers,
c. Such as mandara, lotus, and utpala,
d. And beautiful, well-arranged garlands.

One offers pleasant flowers like mandara, lotus, utpala and so forth, all of which give out nice fragrant scent. One should also offer flower garlands that are well arranged and beautiful.

When one offers loose flowers to the Buddhas in the aspect of being free of attachment, one visualizes these flowers being transformed into a beautiful celestial mansion, into parasols and victory banners.

One offers flower garlands to those in the aspects of possessing attachment, for example, the Complete Enjoyment Bodies, and offers these *directly* to them.

It is taught in the commentaries that, after offering the flowers, one dedicates the merits and prays to be able to actualize the realizations of the *Seven Branches of Enlightenment*:

The branches of: mindfulness, discrimination, effort, joy, pliancy, meditative stabilization and equanimity.

6' Incense [2.16(ab)]

2.16 a. I also offer clouds of incense
b. Whose pervasive sweet aroma steals away the mind.

One offers incense that is very fragrant. It is mentioned in some teachings that, one can visualize billowing clouds of incense smoke going up into the ten directions, which transforms into the seven kinds of precious jewels, one then offers them.

One visualizes that all the sufferings in the continuum of oneself and others are cleared away.

One then prays and dedicates that one gains the ethical discipline that is pleasing to all the Buddhas.

7' Food [2.16(cd)]

2.16 c. I offer to them the delicacies of the gods
d. With a variety of foods and drinks too.

One prays that through offering these pleasant and nice food, may one achieve the supreme food of concentration.

8' Light [2.17(ab)]

2.17 a. I also offer them jeweled lamps
b. Arranged on golden lotus buds.

The containers [of light] are made of precious substances, adorned with lotuses and so forth. Inside these are shining jewels such as lapis and sapphire, which radiate light that eliminates all the darkness and fills the entire space with light. One offers them.

Or, when one offers a candle light, although the candle light one holds in one's hand maybe small, the teachings mention that one should visualize the container to be as large as the three-billion-fold world systems. The wick is very huge, the wax or butter is as great as the ocean. The light itself fills the whole of space. One then offers them.

One dedicates the merit through offering the light to eliminate all the confusion of not knowing and to develop the mind that knows all phenomena and be filled with the illumination of wisdom.

9' Offering an inestimable palace [2.17(cd) – 2.18]

<p><i>2.17 a. Upon ground anointed with incense b. I scatter loose pleasing flowers.</i></p>	<p><i>2.18 a. To those who have the nature of compassion b. I offer inestimable palaces resounding with melodious praises, c. Beautified by and blazing with hanging ornaments of gems of pearls d. That adorn the infinite space.</i></p>
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One dedicates this inestimable mansion so that one can actualize the great city of liberation.

10' Parasol [2.19]

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>2.19 a. Eternally shall I offer to the Lords of Subduers b. Jeweled parasols with golden handles c. And pleasing ornaments embellishing the rims, d. Standing upright, their shapes beautiful to behold.</i></p>
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Perhaps it is all right to visualize offering goddesses emanating from one's heart, holding in their hands these beautiful parasols, one then offers these to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

One prays that, due to offering these parasols, may one be protected from the heat of cyclic existence and the lower realms, and for one to come under the protection of the Three Jewels.

11' Music [2.20]

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>2.20 a. Besides those, may collections of offerings b. Resounding with sweet pleasing music, c. Clouds that appease the suffering of sentient beings, d. Remain individually.</i></p>

It says in the commentary that, one presents offering clouds of instruments and pleasant melodies that clears away the sufferings of sentient beings and satisfies them just by hearing these.

12' An unbroken continuum of blessings in the form of offerings [2.21]

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>2.21 a. May a rain of flowers and gems b. Descend continuously c. Upon all the Dharma Jewels, d. And upon the reliquaries and holy images.</i></p>
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One makes offerings to the Dharma Jewel, which can be divided into the scriptural Dharma Jewel and the realizational Dharma Jewel.

Scriptural Dharma Jewel consists of the *Twelve Branches of Scriptures* together with the volumes of texts. The realizational Dharma Jewel is essentially the qualities of abandonments and realizations in the continua of Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

There are many types of reliquaries/ stupas, such as the eight types of stupas and so forth.

Holy images are essentially the representations of Buddhas' bodies, whether it is in the form of statues and so forth.

One contemplates on making these offerings continuously not only to the Buddhas, but to the Dharma Jewel and also to such holy objects as stupas, statues and so forth.

It is said that when making offerings, these should be as many as possible, as beautiful and as best quality as possible.

As such, those offerings that are mentally transformed/ emanated, are therefore very important.

Summary of the purpose of making surpassable offerings:

Surpassable offerings	Purpose
1) Bath offering	Bath water: purifies the stains of impure and ordinary appearances of one's body, speech and mind.
	Drying cloths and worn garments dissolved into colored lights: receives qualities of all Buddhas.
2) Garments	Clothed with the garments of shame and embarrassment.

3) Ornaments	Actualize the signs and exemplifications of Buddha.
4) Fragrances	To actualize the Buddha's hue of pure refined gold.
5) Flowers	To actualize the Seven Branches of Enlightenment.
6) Incense	Gains the ethical discipline that is pleasing to all the Buddhas.
7) Food	Achieves the supreme food of concentration.
8) Light	To eliminate all the confusion of not knowing, develop the mind that knows all phenomena and be filled with the illumination of wisdom.
9) Inestimable palace	Actualize the great city of liberation.
10) Parasol	Protected from the heat of cyclic existence and the lower realms, and for one to come under the protection of the Three Jewels.
11) Music	Clears away the sufferings of sentient beings and satisfies them just by hearing these.
12) Blessings in the form of offerings	[To continually receive blessings through the force/ merit of making mentally transformed offerings.]

ii) Unsurpassable offerings [2.22]

<p><i>2.22 a. In the same way as Manjughosha and so forth b. Have made offerings to the Victors, c. Similarly do I bestow gifts upon the Tathagatas, d4. The Protectors, as well as their children.</i></p>
<p>The bodhisattvas abiding on the ten grounds are able to offer many offerings that are mentally emanated and transformed. Here, one visualizes that one is making this same kind of offering:</p>
<p>1) For example, when the bodhisattva Samantabhadra makes offerings, he a) emanates billions and billions of innumerable number of light rays going out to the equal numbers of pure lands/ Buddha fields.</p>
<p>At the tip of these innumerable rays of light are Samantabhadras.</p>
<p>b) From the hearts of these Samantabhadras, innumerable rays of light are again emanated.</p>
<p>At the tip of these light rays emanated by these Samantabhadras, are also Samantabhadras.</p>
<p>c) From the heart these Samantabhadras, again, innumerable light rays are emanated.</p>
<p>d) At the tips of these light rays are the various types of offerings. He then makes those offerings.</p>
<p>It is said that these great bodhisattvas make such extensive offerings through mental transformations. This verse is teaching one to make such similar offerings.</p>
<p>One thinks that one is also making such unsurpassable offerings in the way that the bodhisattva Samantabhadra is doing.</p>
<p>2) It is also taught that, one's meditation on love and bodhicitta are unsurpassable offerings.</p>
<p>3) When one visualizes one's roots of virtue transforming into various offering substances and then offering them, this also becomes unsurpassable offering.</p>
<p>4) All the activities of listening to the teachings, studying the dharma, practicing, meditation and so forth, can constitute unsurpassable offerings as well.</p>
<p>It is mentioned in the Stages of the path to enlightenment literature, making mentally transformed offering is a supreme method to achieve enlightenment, it is also a supreme method to help one actualize bodhicitta.</p>
<p>I think this is taught from the perspective of those practitioners who are living a simple life. It is said that one accumulates a lot of merit by making these mentally transformed offerings.</p>
<p>When making offerings of actual substances, at times this can be accompanied by arrogance/ pride or attachment/ miserliness</p>
<p>Shantideva, being a practitioner living a materially simple and contented life, emphasizes mentally transformed offerings for his particular lifestyle.</p>
<p>Therefore, it is taught that one should not look down on the practice of making offerings. Rather, one should familiarize oneself with the practice of making offerings and also making mentally transformed offerings.</p>
<p>When one makes mentally transformed offerings, essentially, one just imagine whatever one is going to offer. For example, when one offers some precious jewels, one visualizes in one's mind and have it appear clearly and then offer that.</p>
<p>This is not an extremely challenging and difficult task, but one accumulates a lot of merit as one is offering to the Buddhas.</p>

Since there are many types of offerings, then depending on what is mentioned in a particular prayer, as one is reciting the various verses that state the substances for making offerings, one then brings to mind, visualizes and then offers them.
This is what one has to think when one recites the verses of making offerings. If one is able to do this, one easily accumulates a huge amount of merit and purifies one's mind of obscurations, one creates the cause to achieve enlightenment.
The bodhisattvas on the first ground are able to emanate a hundred bodies, with these going to a hundred pure lands and makes offerings.
The bodhisattvas on the second ground are able to emanate a thousand bodies that go to a thousand Buddha pure lands and make offerings.
The bodhisattvas on the tenth ground are able to emanate bodies equal to the innumerable Buddha fields and make offerings.
So, if these bodhisattvas on the [bodhisattva] grounds have to make such offerings [just to accumulate merit], then it goes without saying that oneself needs to put in more effort into making offerings, since one has only one body.
It is mentioned in the Stages of the path to enlightenment literature, that there is something called the power of the merit field
When one makes any offerings to the merit field/ holy objects, it does not matter what kind of motivation one makes the offerings with, it also does not matter whether one dedicates this merit towards enlightenment or not, it is said that all such offerings one makes to the merit field and to holy objects automatically becomes a cause for full enlightenment.
This is the exception [as a cause for positive results]. This is due to the power of the merit field.
Thus, such an opportunity exists for one to seize. Therefore, whenever one has the opportunity to make offering to the merit field/ holy objects, even though one may have something small in one's hands, but like what is mentioned earlier, if one could visualize making extensive offerings, then one will easily accumulate a lot of merit.
The verses of making offerings thus far pertain to making offerings of one's body, surpassable and unsurpassable offerings. If one has time, one can recite these verses slowly and visualize accordingly, through that, one accumulates a lot of merit.

Student: Are virtuous thoughts samsara or not?

Khenrinpoche: In the first place, we don't know what samsara is. I've asked this question before: "What is samsara?" Firstly, one has to pin-point what exactly constitutes samsara.

As for virtues, it is not that if it is virtue, it is necessary not included in the twelve links of dependent origination. For there are many projecting karmas and actualizing factors included in the twelve links. For example, there are virtuous projecting karmas and virtuous actualizing factors that are included in the twelve links, like the projecting karmas for human and god rebirths. These are necessary virtuous, but are nevertheless included in the twelve links. Such a virtuous projecting karma for a human rebirth, for example, is motivated and propelled by ignorance that is included in the twelve links.

Since that is the case, is the virtuous karma in one's continuum samsara or not? What is samsara?

Student: Is mind generation not necessarily bodhicitta?

Khenrinpoche: Yes. In Sanskrit, bodhicitta has a connotation that can mean Mahayana mind generation. In Tibetan, it is *Te Chen Sem Kyed*, literally "Mahayana mind generation." Therefore, when *Te Chen Sem Kyed* is translated into English, one cannot translate it as bodhicitta, one has to say: "Mahayana mind generation." In English, mind generation and mind of enlightenment are different words.

Student: Are the three types of morality mentioned in the *Foundation of All Good Qualities* the same as the pure morality one needs to achieve a perfect human rebirth?

Khenrinpoche: I don't think one can link these two: the verse in the *Foundation of All Good Qualities* says, "Even if I develop bodhicitta but if I don't practice the three types of morality, I will not achieve enlightenment." The three types of morality in this sentence refers to the bodhisattva morality/ ethics.

The **pure** morality, that is one of the condition for achieving a human life of freedoms and endowments, is primarily referring to guarding **well** the ethical discipline of abandoning the ten nonvirtues.

What it means to Call one's Guru from Afar:

One may have heard the genre of prayers called <i>Calling the Guru from Afar</i> . It is important to know what exactly it means.
Calling the guru from afar has nothing to do with geographical proximity nor time. "Afar" has to do, metaphorically speaking, with: <i>The space between one's own mind and one's guru's mind.</i>
Therefore, calling the guru from afar is an attempt to: <i>Shorten this gap/ space between one's mind and one's guru's mind.</i>
One can look at this from an ultimate perspective or from a conventional perspective:
Ultimately, there is no real difference between one's mind and one's guru's mind in that, both are in the nature of emptiness.
Conventionally, in terms of appearance, there is a huge gap between one's mind and one's guru's mind in terms of qualities. In this sense, one's guru is superior to oneself in terms of his qualities. Calling the guru from afar is to shorten this gap.
When one calls one's guru from afar, one is making a heartfelt supplication based on a thorough understanding of how one:
1) Does not have those qualities, 2) Is tormented in cyclic existence, and 3) Has this single-pointed faith and trust that one's guru has the power/ ability to rescue/ protect one from these fears and sufferings.
It is within such a [mindset] of faith and devotion that one makes this supplication:
<i>When one has this single-pointed devotion to one's own guru, then one is never far from one's guru. If one does not have such a single-pointed devotion, then one is far from one's guru.</i>
When one has such a single-pointed devotion/ faith, this is the real teaching, the actual inner guru.
<i>One's actual inner guru [can only] arise in dependence on the outer condition, one's outer guru that appears to one.</i>
Therefore, one's outer guru is the [uncommon] empowering condition. In dependence on which, one can develop such a single-pointed faith. <i>When such a faith arises, this becomes the actual guru, one's real teacher.</i>
This is the essential point: when one's inner guru arises, one's single-pointed faith and devotion arise, it is due to this that one:
<i>1) Becomes closer to enlightenment, 2) Pleases all the Conquerors, 3) Will not come under the influence of negative friends.</i>
If one does not have such an inner guru, when one's single-pointed devotion/ faith in one's guru does not arise, then [merely] having an external condition, an external guru, does not mean that one will be liberated/ will get closer to enlightenment.
It is impossible to be saved and protected just by having the external guru, if one lacks such a single-pointed devotion.
But when one has such a single-pointed devotion, one becomes closer to one's guru, one becomes closer to enlightenment.
I think this is the point behind <i>Calling the Guru from Afar</i> . Why does one need to do that?
Because, as of now, there is a great gap/ distance between one's mind and one's guru's mind.
Calling the guru from afar is an intense heartfelt supplication made out of such a single-pointed devotion.
The whole point of doing this, is to make one's mind closer to one's guru, and hence closer to enlightenment.
<i>That which reduces this gap, making one closer to one's guru/ enlightenment, is this intense heartfelt devotion.</i>
When one's inner guru, one's single-pointed devotion arises, one then becomes suitable and possible to actualize all the realizations/ qualities of the path, starting from the topic of <i>human life of freedoms and endowments, death and impermanence</i> and so forth. All such qualities and realizations of the path arises from one's inner guru due to:
<i>One's Faith and Devotion</i>
Khenrinpoche: Some people may think: "Why do I need to call the guru from afar...? He is just in front of me...!"

Understanding the benefits of making offerings:

When one brings the merit field, the Buddhas to mind, even if one offers a single flower, the benefits are innumerable, one accumulates a lot of merit. By depending on the root of virtue accumulated from offering just this one flower, this will be a cause for one's own enlightenment.
With a decisive ascertainment on the benefits of making offerings, both actually set out and mentally transformed, one should strive in this.

b. Prostrations [2.23 – 2.25]

1) Verbally expressing homage [2.23]:

In general, paying homage can be done with one's body, speech and mind. Here, one first pays homage with one's speech by expressing verses of praise:

*2.23 a. I eulogize the oceans of excellent qualities
b. With oceans of branches of melodious praise;
c. May these clouds of pleasant eulogy
d. Certainly arise always to them everywhere.*

One eulogizes the qualities of the Buddhas. Here, there are many verses that praise their qualities and so forth.

One recites them and pays homage with one's speech through reciting this verse.

When one is reciting the respective verses in praise of the Buddhas and so forth, one can imagine that the melodic sound of the praises one is reciting fill the entire space and one offers that.

One thinks that one is constantly eulogizing/ verbalizing these verses praising the Buddhas.

Sometimes, the verses are recited in nice melodic tunes. For those who have a reasonably good voice, then praising the Buddhas with these melodious tunes and so forth can become an offering.

Khenrinpoche: So, it's good to have a good voice.

2) Physically prostrating [2.24 – 2.25]

a) [To the]Three Jewels [2.24]

Next is paying homage with one's body:

*2.24 a. With bodies as numerous
b. As all the atoms within the field,
c. I bow with my body to all buddhas of the three times,
d. The Dharma, and the supreme community.*

One pays homage/ prostrates to all the Buddhas of the past, present and the future, to the scriptural and realizational dharmas in their mental continua, and to the Children of the Conquerors, the bodhisattvas.

One does so with as many bodies as equaling to the number of atoms in the all the Buddha fields.

When one is paying homage, 1) reciting the verses in praise of the Buddhas through remembering their qualities, one also 2) adopts a respectful physical demeanor and 3) mentally have faith and devotion.

When these three are present, then this would be a complete practice of paying homage with one's body, speech and mind.

Paying homage with one's mind is the most important. This means having faith and devotion.

Through one's faith and devotion that come from recollecting the qualities of the Three Jewels, for example, if one engages in praising them with one's speech and prostrating to them physically, the faith and devotion one has would make one's paying homage with one's body and speech perfect.

This is something that one must bear in mind, to keep and note this down: of the three, paying homage with one's body, speech and mind, paying homage with one's mind is the most important, which is having faith and devotion that comes from thinking and remembering the qualities of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

On that basis, one should then engage in praising them with one's speech, prostrating to them physically.

Having the faith and devotion in the Three Jewels are the most important, the mental homage. If one does not have this, then it is difficult for there to be [any] real, great benefits just by prostrating physically or merely reciting some verses of praise.

It is difficult for these practices alone to have any significant impact on the mind. There is no transformation of the mind.

When one has such a faith and devotion to the Three Jewels, paying homage to them physically and verbally becomes easy.

Otherwise, without such a faith from the heart, then sometimes just prostrating physically or merely reciting some verses of praise can become like a chore!

b) The basis for the arising of mind generation and so forth [2.25(ab)]

*2.25 a. I pay homage to the basis of the mind of enlightenment,
b. To all supports of offering,*

Basis of the mind of enlightenment, are such things as the representations of the Buddhas like statues, the Mahayana scriptural collections, the object from whom one is going to adopt bodhicitta, and all supports of offerings like the representations of Buddha's body, speech and mind.

c) Prostrating to the abbot, master and so forth [2.25(cd)]

<i>2.25 c. To all abbots and masters d. And to all the [holders of] supreme conduct.</i>
Essentially, one prostrates to the abbot who grants one the pratimoksa ordination, the preceptors who grant the vows and to those abiding and striving on the path to liberation, these are all objects of prostrations.
Those who abide in the supreme conduct are those who help one to abandon the negative actions and behaviors, causes one to enter and abide on the path to liberation.
As for physical prostration, one [raises] both hands to one's crown, [forehead,] throat and heart. One then prostrates, of which, there are two types:
1) Prostration of five points of one's body touching the ground: one's two palms, two knees and forehead, and
2) Full-length prostration.
When the hands are on the crown, one prays to receive and achieve all the qualities of the Buddhas' body.
It is explained in the teachings that there are innumerable benefits from making even just one prostration.
For example, it is said that when one prostrates physically, below the space that one body covers while prostrating on the ground, the number of atoms covering that space going all the way down to the very core of the earth are innumerable.
It is explained that one creates the causes to be born as a Universal Monarch the number of times equaling those atoms.
These roots of virtue, ultimately, will become the cause for one to achieve full enlightenment.
Bearing in mind such benefits, one should strive at making prostrations, even if it is making merely three prostrations a day.
Whenever one hears, learns and studies the dharma and different advices, one should try to adopt and put into those practices within one's reach. This will actually fulfill the entire purpose of learning the dharma.

c. Refuge [2.26]

- 1) Causal refuge
- 2) Resultant refuge

Refuge: is a mind that 1) Fears the sufferings of cyclic existence and the lower realms, and 2) [Faith of] conviction in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha's power and ability to rescue and protect one from those sufferings.
There is a difference in the way of going for refuge for a person of: 1) Small capacity, 2) Middling capacity, and 3) Great capacity. Their differences are due to their different perspectives.
One has to understand that the presentation of refuge according to the Hinayana would also differ from that of the Mahayana.
Of the four Buddhist tenets, two are Hinayana tenets: the Great Exposition and Sutra Schools. Their assertions as to what Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are, are very different from the Mahayana's.
Both these schools assert that, the Buddha attained enlightenment from the path of preparation in one sitting, and traverse the rest of the learners' paths up to the path of no more learning.
As such, the body in which he achieves enlightenment in, is the body of an ordinary being, therefore, a contaminated body.
Therefore, for these proponents of the Hinayana tenets, the Buddha's physical body is not Buddha, because it is true suffering
Assertions of the Three Jewels according to the Hinayana tenets:
1) Buddha Jewel: They posit that the realization/ true path of the path of no more learning in the continuum of Shakyamuni Buddha is Buddha Jewel.
3) Sangha Jewel: They do not assert the Sangha Jewel as the person, the superior being. Rather, they assert that the qualities of realization, the true path in their continua to be the Sangha Jewel.
2) Dharma Jewel: They assert that the objects of abandonment/ true cessations in the continuum of Buddha and the superiors to be the Dharma Jewel.
Assertions of the Three Jewels according to the Mahayana tenets:
1) In the Mahayana [tenets], there is the presentation of the Four Bodies, of which, Buddha's Form Body is Buddha Jewel
2) The true path and true cessation in the continua of the Buddhas are posited as the Dharma Jewel.
3) All superiors are posited as Sangha Jewels.
Khenrinpoche: Is the body in the continuum of a superior bodhisattva a Sangha Jewel or not?

Causal refuge: the faith of conviction holding onto the belief that the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha existing in the continua of others as having the abilities to protect one from the fears [as mentioned above].
Resultant refuge: the faith of conviction in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha one will actualize in one's own continuum in the future as having the potential to protect oneself from those same fears.
The refuge prayer: <i>I go for refuge until I am enlightened, to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha</i> , this can indicate causal refuge.
<i>By the virtue I accumulate by practicing generosity and so forth, may I achieve enlightenment for sentient beings</i> , this can indicate resultant refuge.
The unsurpassed teacher is the Buddha, the unsurpassed refuge is the Dharma, and the unsurpassed guide is the Sangha.
The Buddha is the unsurpassable teacher, the one who shows the refuge.
What it means to go for refuge to the Buddha: On the basis of <i>holding onto Him as the unsurpassed teacher</i> , one makes: 1) A pledge to never adopt a path that is not shown by him 2) A pledge to practice exactly in accordance with he has taught.
The Buddha is the one who shows the way to refuge/ path. The path itself is the dharma.
When one takes refuge in the dharma: On the basis of <i>holding onto the Dharma as the unsurpassed refuge</i> , one makes: A pledge to practice this path exactly in accordance with how the Buddha has shown/ revealed.
Through practicing the dharma, whatever qualities of the dharma that arises in one's mind, that is the unsurpassable refuge/ protection. For example, when one adopts and abides in some vows for a day, such qualities of the vows that are present in one's mind are that which [actually] protect one. This is an example of an unsurpassable protection/ refuge.
The superior beings are one's companions, the ones who help one enter and actualize the path. They are the Sanghas.
Going for refuge to the Sangha: On the basis of <i>holding onto the Sangha as the unsurpassed guide</i> , one makes: A pledge to practice exactly in the way they have done and are doing.
Essentially, this is what refuge is: <i>A heartfelt promise/ pledge [to do all the above.]</i>
Refuge is very important at the beginning as it leads to all the other qualities and realizations.
Actually, all the practices can be condensed into the practice of going for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.
In the sutra called <i>The Stainless Sky</i> , it is said that if the merit of going for refuge were to materialize, even the whole of space would not be [big] enough to accommodate it.
<p>2.26 a. <i>Until the essence of enlightenment,</i> b. <i>I go for refuge to the Buddhas.</i> c. <i>Likewise, I go for refuge to the Dharma,</i> d. <i>And to the assembly of bodhisattvas.</i></p>

d. Confessing negativities by means of completing the four powers [2.27 – 2.65]

1) A general presentation

2) An extensive explanation [2.27 – 2.65]

a) An extensive explanation of the first power: The power of regret [2.27 – 2.46]

i) Feeling regret after investigating the way in which the negativity was performed [2.27 – 2.31]

On the basis of going for refuge, there is the branch of confession.
The teachings explain that one should strive not to be stained by negativities in the first place. Despite that, due to strong familiarity with the afflictions, even if negativities are accumulated, one should not merely leave them as they are.
Rather, one should strive to confess and purify them.
In the practice of confession, one should apply the Four Opponent Powers, the powers of:
1) Eradication (regret), 2) Applying the antidotes, 3) Restraint, and 4) Support.
1) Power of eradication – refers to regret for having committed negativities in the past.
To develop regret, one needs to reflect on the three effects of every single nonvirtue:
a) Fruitional effects, b) [Causally] concordant effects, and c) Environmental effects.
The [causally] concordant effect is also divided into two: b1) Causally concordant [experiential] effects and b2) Causally concordant behavioral effects.
2) Power of applying the antidotes: according to <i>Shantideva's Compendium of Trainings</i> , there are six antidotes listed: a) Dependence of the profound sutras, b) Interest in emptiness, c) Dependence on recitation, d) Dependence upon [holy forms], e) Dependence on [offerings], and f) Dependence on names.

3) Power of restraint: essentially making a pledge/ promise to not engage in nonvirtues again in the future.
4) Power of the support: refers to going for refuge in the Three Jewels and developing bodhicitta.
When one accumulates negativities due to one's overwhelming afflictions, one should not just leave them as they are, but should confess and engage in the practice of purification.
It is said that there is not any nonvirtue, no matter how heavy, that cannot be purified through confession.
What it means to accumulate nonvirtue:
Many people have the believe that, one has to [perform the activity] of the nonvirtue physically or verbally in a manifest way, for it to be an accumulation of nonvirtue.
This is not true: while these [performance of nonvirtues] are negativities [in themselves], but merely having strong negative thoughts [alone can] lend itself to accumulating nonvirtues. Like, having strong ill-will, the thoughts wanting to harm.
As mentioned in Stages of the path to enlightenment, if one entertains the strong thought to kill someone and keeps that in one's mind, just this [motivational intention] itself constitutes the accumulation of the karma of killing.
There are four permutations between karma [done] and karma accumulated.
In this case of harboring the strong thought to kill for a long time, this constitutes the karma of killing that is accumulated but not [done]. Of course, there are also actions/ karma that are done but not accumulated and so forth.
A karma that is accumulated essentially involves a strong mental intention that is forceful. With regards to entertaining the thought of killing, all one needs is merely to hold onto such a thought that really wants to do it.
Even though one has not [done/ performed] the act of killing, one [nevertheless] accumulates the karma of killing.
When such a karma is accumulated, this essentially means that a powerful/ strong negative imprint is planted in one's mind.
It is only a matter of time that it will definitely ripen, unless it is purified through confession.
The teachings tell one that if one accumulates negativities/ nonvirtue, one has to purify through confession and not just leave it as it is. This is because, it will not go away on its own.
It would be a completely different matter if somehow when one dies, one's imprints of nonvirtues can disappear on its own accord. Since that will never happen, but rather, these will all follow one's mind wherever it goes, then there will come a time when it will ripen. One will then have to experience the various effects of those ripenings.
1' Requesting the attention of the object [of refuge] to whom you confess negativities [2.27]
<i>2.27 a. With folded hands I request b. The complete buddhas and bodhisattvas c. Who possess great compassion d. And reside in all directions.</i>

2' Confessing negativities performed in the past by means of their time, cause, aspect and so forth [2.28 – 2.29]

<i>2.28 a. Since beginningless cyclic existence, b. In this life and in others, c. Unknowingly, I committed negativities d. And caused them to be done.</i>	<i>2.29 a. Overwhelmed by the mistakes of ignorance b. I rejoiced in what was committed, c. But now seeing these mistakes, d. From my heart I confess them to the Protectors.</i>
One brings to mind all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. By thinking of them as abiding in front of oneself, in their presence, one confesses all the negativities that one has accumulated by firstly generating regret for:	
1) All of one's nonvirtues committed not only in this life but since beginningless lifetimes.	
2) All the nonvirtues committed by oneself as well as the nonvirtues that one has caused others to accumulate.	
3) All the nonvirtues that one has committed through rejoicing in the nonvirtues of others.	
One confesses all such negativities/ nonvirtues that have arisen from ignorance.	
In the presence of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, one is essentially taking responsibility with a heartfelt acknowledgment that all of one's nonvirtues committed are not acceptable/ not right.	

3' Confessing heavy negativities [that were directed at] special objects [2.30]

<i>2.30 a. Whatever harmful acts of body, speech, and mind b. I have done by means of afflictions, c. Towards the Three Jewels, d. My parents, my spiritual masters, and others;</i>

Here, one is confessing all the negativities that one has accumulated due to the afflictions in relation to:
1) Those objects endowed with qualities like the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and to 2) Those who have helped one, one's parents, and to 3) One's gurus, who are very kind to one.
One confesses all of one's negativities committed due to the three poisons of ignorance, anger and attachment in relation to these special objects that one has accumulated 1) with one's body such as being disrespectful physically, hurting and harming them 2) with one's speech such as through criticizing and belittling them, or 3) with one's mind through having wrong views.

4' Confessing with regret by reflecting on the undesired effects [2.31]

<p>2.31 a. All the terrible negativities b. Done by me, a wrongdoer, c. Who have the created faults of a multitude of misdeeds, d. I admit to the Guides.</p>
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ii) Cultivating regret by fearing [the prospect] of dying while still in possession of the negativities and going for refuge [2.32 – 2.33]

<p>2.32 a. I may die b. Before my negativities have been purified; c. Please protect me in such a way d. As will swiftly and surely free me from them.</p>
Here, one goes for refuge seeking protection so that one can purify oneself from all of one's negativities before one's death.
This is purifying one's negativities through understanding how death is certain.
Next then is perhaps, to purify one's negativities through understanding that one's time of death is uncertain.
<p>2.33 a. The untrustworthy Lord of Death b. Without waiting, whether or not something has been done; c. Whether one is sick or otherwise, d. Suddenly comes; do not be complacent about life.</p>
This is saying that, one needs to purify one's negativities quickly, as there is no telling as to when death will happen.
There is no telling that, death will happen before one has finished one's work, or after that; that it will only happen when one is sick and not when one [is healthy] and so forth.
It is not certain that, one will [only] die at such a particular place, at such a particular time and with such a medical condition.
Through reflecting on these two verses, bringing to mind how one's death is certain and the time of that is uncertain, one should persuade oneself to strive in purifying one's negativities.
The point here is generating regret by bringing to mind that, if one were to die right now, then there will be all these negativities left over due to not having purified them.
By thinking of the certainty of death and the uncertainty of its time, one develops this sense of urgency to start purification right away.

Student: How can one take refuge in the body of a superior bodhisattva when it is true suffering, as well as in his mental continuum that still has projecting karma that propels rebirth back into samsara?

Khenrinpoche: Are you asking whether an arya bodhisattva is an object of refuge? Student: But [what about] his body?

Khenrinpoche: The body is not arya bodhisattva! Student: But isn't the person constituted by the body and mind?

Khenrinpoche: The body is not the person...

Student: In the verse: *I may die before my negativities have been purified; please protect me in such a way as will swiftly and surely free me from them.* Is this merely an expression of fear and desperation, rather than truly being able to be helped by the Three Jewels?

Khenrinpoche: If one does not purify one's negativities, one will have to be born in the lower realms and experience all the sufferings there. So out of fear not wanting that to happen, one makes a plea requesting the Three Jewels to protect one from that. It is basically confessing, acknowledging and having regret for having committed all those nonvirtues and expressing that in the form of a request.

Student: Is the ultimate Sangha Jewel the superior who has the true paths and true cessations in his continuum?

Khenrinpoche: Essentially, an ultimate Dharma and Sangha Jewels are the same. It is the true path and true cessation. If one does not divide the Dharma Jewel and Sangha Jewel into ultimate and conventional terms, then [in general], Dharma Jewel is true path and true cessation, whereas the Sangha Jewel is a superior. But if one were to divide the Sangha Jewel into the two, then one has to posit the above. In some texts, it says one way to divide is that, the ultimate Sangha Jewel is posited to be a superior while the conventional Sangha Jewel is posited as a community of at least four fully ordained monks.

Knowing when one's Dharma practice actually start:

I mentioned before that, the practice of going for refuge is extremely important.
Of the three objects of refuge, the Buddha is the one who shows refuge. If one goes for refuge to the Buddha, this means one recognizes the Buddha to be one's guide and one makes a pledge to practice his instructions exactly as he taught it.
The very purpose of going for refuge to the Buddha is generating this pledge: <i>“I will practice His teachings exactly as He intended.”</i>
To make such a promise/ pledge, one must first understand how the Buddha is an unsurpassed/ unparalleled teacher/ guide, as there is no other guides like him.
To gain such a conviction, one must hear the teachings and reflect on it to develop this understanding and conviction that the Buddha is as such. When such a faith of conviction arises, one will easily and naturally be able to make such a pledge.
The unsurpassed/ unparalleled refuge is the Dharma. It is said that this unsurpassed refuge, the Dharma, is that which protects one from all the undesirable things: cyclic existence and the lower realms.
Through seeing this, when one has such a conviction arising in the heart, this is when one goes for refuge to the Dharma.
One then makes a promise/ pledge/ commitment to practice the Dharma purely.
The unsurpassed guide is the Sangha, here, it refers to those who guide and help one's practice and are role models for one, essentially, these are the Arya/ Superior Sangha.
Going for refuge to the Sangha is making the commitment to practice [exactly] like these Arya Sanghas.
Therefore, going for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is essentially making such a pledge/ commitment.
It is with such a commitment that one's practice [actually] starts. It is [only] on the basis of knowing well what the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are, that one makes a strong pledge/ commitment.

iii) Cultivating regret by reflecting extensively on the way one has performed senseless negativities [2.34 – 2.38]

The section on confession teaches that, one should engage in the practice of confession through applying the Four Powers. Of these, the power of eradication has been taught.
The texts explained about generating regret for all of one's negativities accumulated since beginningless lifetimes by oneself, caused others to engage, having rejoiced at others' negativities, as well as in relation to the Three Jewels, parents and so forth.
By contemplating on all the results one will experience in the future when the negativities ripen, one develops strong regret.
If one were to die without having purified the negativities one has accumulated, then it will be a cause for regret.
In the text, it explains how one will [have strong remorse] if one were to die without having purified one's negativities, especially since one's death is certain and the time of that is uncertain.

1' Regretting negativities one has performed for the sake of close friends, one's body and material resources because one did not know that these are unreliable [2.34 – 2.35]

The text is telling one that, many a times, one accumulates negativities for the sake of loved ones, body and possessions.
One [is ignorant] that, at the end of the day, one will have to leave all these behind. One accumulates negativities out of attachment for loved ones and out of dislike/ anger for enemies in one's quest to defeat/ destroy them.
It is inappropriate to accumulate negativities for the sake of loved ones and enemies, for:
2.34 a. <i>Leaving all behind, I must depart alone.</i> b. <i>Through not having understood this</i> c. <i>I committed various kinds of negativities</i> d. <i>For the sake of my friends and foes.</i>
Whether one tries very hard to overcome/ destroy one's enemies or not, even if one does not do anything, sooner or later, they will die. It is likewise with loved ones. Even though one tries so hard to sustain and keep them, but they will also gradually decline and die over time.
Even oneself will also cease to exist one day. There will come a day where the world will also cease to exist.
For these reasons, it is really meaningless to accumulate negativities for their sake.
Through thinking this way, how it is inappropriate to accumulate negativities for their sake, one generates regret.

2' An example of them becoming only an object of memory one recollects at the time of death [2.36]

Why is it meaningless? Because one tries all ways and means to sustain one's relationships. But at the end of the day, they will just become a mere object of one's memory:

- 2.36 a. *Just like an experience in a dream,*
- b. *Whatever things I enjoy*
- c. *Will become a memory.*
- d. *Whatever has passed will not be seen.*

On the very last day of one's life, no matter how much enjoyments one has had in this life, how many friends, loved ones one has had, possessions and so forth, these will all be mere objects of one's memory/ appearance of one's mind.

They cannot help one beyond being merely an object of memory. This is evident when one think about it: on the very last day of one's life, all of one's past experiences are gone. When one recalls them, they are just objects of memory.

3' Regretting the negativities one continues to accumulate for the sake of unreliable things [2.37]

It is therefore very evident that these things are unreliable. One can see it directly with one's own experience:

- 2.37 a. *Even within this brief life*
- b. *Many friends and foes have passed away,*
- c. *But whatever terrible negativities I committed for them*
- d. *Remains before me.*

It is something that one can directly witness with one's own eyes, whether they are loved ones, friends or enemies.

Friends that have been nice, that one has sustained one's relationships with, enemies who have harmed one and those that one would like to harm and so forth. At the end of the day, they will all die.

Even though they may be gone, the negativities that one accumulates in relation to them remains [with one].

Even though one's friends and enemies may be gone, but one's negativities accompanies one like one's shadow.

One will have to experience the sufferings that these negativities will eventually bring about.

It is clearly evident that whatever benefits one received from loved ones and whatever harms one received from enemies will only last for as long as one's lifetime.

But the negativities one accumulates to overcome enemies and sustain loved ones will continue with one from life to life.

4' Regretting negativities one has already accumulated due to not realizing that the time of one's death is not certain [2.38]

- 2.38 a. *Thereby, through not having realized*
- b. *That I will suddenly vanish,*
- c. *I committed many negativities*
- d. *Through ignorance, attachment, and hatred.*

Although the time of death is uncertain, but due to one's familiarity with things as unchanging and permanent, one accumulates a lot of negativities. The teachings are telling one to generate regret for having lived in such a way through remembering the uncertainty of the time of death.

iv) Reflecting on the way in which negativities bring about fear [2.39 – 2.46]

1' Death is certain as one cannot add to one's lifespan yet it decreases without respite and to die while still possessing negativities is fearful [2.39]

- 2.39 a. *Remaining neither day nor night,*
- b. *This life is always slipping by*
- c. *And never lengthening.*
- d. *Why will death not come to one like me?*

This is considering how dangerous negativities are. *Remaining neither day nor night* means that, time is just slipping by, it does not stop and nothing is being added to one's lifespan. It is definite that one will die.

Bringing to mind all the negativities that one has accumulated, one generates regret.

Because the time of one's death is uncertain, therefore, one must strive to purify one's negativities.

The teachings gave an analogy of a pond: Imagine there is a pond that does not have any water inflow from other sources.

Under conditions like hot weather and so forth, it starts to dry up. There will come a time where the body of water will cease to exist. This is just like one's lifespan.

If one does not purify one's negativities, one will have to experience its results, which will be suffering, even in this life.

2' One will have to experience suffering in this life as well if negativities are not purified [2.40 – 2.42]
 a' Friends and loved ones cannot protect one from the sufferings of losing one's life if negativities are not purified [2.40 – 2.41(ab)]

<p>2.40 a. <i>While I am lying in bed,</i> b. <i>Although surrounded by my friends and relatives,</i> c. <i>The feeling of life being severed</i> d. <i>Will be experienced by me alone.</i></p>	<p>2.41 a. <i>When seized by Yama's messengers,</i> b. <i>What benefit will friends and relatives afford?</i></p>
<p>If one does not purify one's negativities, [what would] one's friends, loved ones and relatives be able to do?</p>	
<p>When one is lying on one's death bed, one may be surrounded by all of them. They may also do all sorts of things just to keep one alive. But there is [actually] nothing that they can do to prevent one from experiencing the suffering of death.</p>	
<p>One has to go through the experience of dying alone. The terrifying fear and suffering [one experiences] at the time of death can only be experienced by oneself alone and not anyone else.</p>	
<p>When one undergoes the death process, all the various subtle elements in the body will dissolve.</p>	
<p>If one has accumulated lots of negativities, then all kinds of frightening and terrifying images will be projected to the mind.</p>	
<p>One will have to experience all such fearful and frightening visions/ appearances oneself. No one can protect one from them, not the doctor nor one's loved ones.</p>	

b' The fear that comes from not performing meritorious acts [2.41(cd)]

<p>That which can protect one is [only] one's merit, for:</p>	
<p>2.41 c. <i>My merit alone shall protect me then,</i> d. <i>But upon that I have never relied.</i></p>	
<p>The actual unsurpassed protection is one's own virtuous karma. But one did not accumulate that. Bringing this fact to mind, one develops regret.</p>	

c' The anguish of regret [2.42]

<p>2.42 a. <i>O Protectors! I, so unconscientious,</i> b. <i>Unaware of such terror as this,</i> c. <i>Performed many negativities</i> d. <i>For the sake of this impermanent life.</i></p>	
<p>Overcome by regret, one expresses this desperation.</p>	

3' The reason great fear arises [2.43 – 2.44]

<p>2.43 a. <i>One who is being led today to the spot where his limbs will be mutilated</i> b. <i>Will be petrified.</i> c. <i>With dry mouth, sunken eyes, and so forth</i> d. <i>His entire appearance is transfigured.</i></p>	<p>2.44 a. <i>What need to mention the tremendous despair</i> b. <i>When stricken with the disease of terror,</i> c. <i>Being clasped by the frightful physical forms</i> d. <i>Of the messengers of Yama?</i></p>
<p>If a person was lead to his execution ground, a place where he will be killed, he will [obviously] be very frightened. One can see all the signs of terror just by looking at his physical appearance.</p>	
<p>If that is the case, then there is no need to mention that at the time of death, when one has the vision of messengers of the lord of death coming to catch and take one away, one will be [more] frightened. This is what may happen at the time of death.</p>	

4' The way in which [negativities] cause one to be tormented by sufferings in future lives [2.45 – 2.46]

<p>2.45 a. <i>"Who can afford me good protection</i> b. <i>From this terror?"</i> c. <i>With terrified, bulging eyes agape</i> d. <i>I shall search the four directions for refuge.</i></p>	<p>2.46 a. <i>Then seeing no refuge in the four directions</i> b. <i>I shall become enveloped in gloom.</i> c. <i>If there should be no refuge there,</i> d. <i>At that time what shall I do?</i></p>
<p>What then, would happen to one in future lives? It is said that people will die while experiencing these: they are terrified, they look around for help but do not find any protection. Their minds will be completely enveloped by darkness and gloom.</p>	
<p>In the next life, if one is born in the hells and if one were to look around for help, one would not be able to find any.</p>	
<p>This would be most terrifying. But this is the time when the Buddha would not be able to protect one. This is because, one is born there due to the ripening of a very powerful negative karma. When it ripens, there is nothing the Buddha can do.</p>	
<p>All the [confession] verses up to here come under the power of eradication.</p>	

The very essence of generating regret for having accumulated negativities is that, through remembering how death is certain, the time of death is uncertain and at the time of death, nothing helps except the Dharma.
By thinking about these, one develops regret for having accumulated all the negativities.
As mentioned earlier, one puts in so much effort to overcome one's enemies, those one does not like. Likewise, one puts in so much effort to sustain those who are in agreement with one. Through any of these ways, one accumulates lots of negativities.
But at the time of death, none of them is of any benefit. By keeping this in mind, in the first place, as much as possible, one should abstain/ refrain from accumulating any negativities.
But in the case when one does accumulate negativities, then as much as possible, one should purify them without any delay by remembering how the time of death is uncertain.
One has to remember that, one can sustain and support one's loved ones through attachment and overcome one's enemies.
[Nevertheless,] there will be a time where they will cease to exist, but one's negativities in relation to doing these will remain with one. One will have to experience its results. By remembering this, one should refrain from accumulating negativities.

b) The second power: The power of the support [2.47 – 2.53]

i) From this very moment on, rely on the refuge of the Three Jewels [2.47 – 2.48]

<p>2.47 a. Therefore from today onwards I go for refuge b. To the Victors, the protectors of migrating beings, c. Who strove for the purpose of protecting migrating beings d. And with great power eradicate all fear.</p>	<p>2.48 a. Likewise, I perfectly go for refuge b. To the Dharma they have realized, c. That clears away the fears of cyclic existence, d. And also to the assembly of bodhisattvas.</p>
These verses teach one to go for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.	

ii) Rely on the children of the Conquerors who possess powerful aspirational prayers [2.49 – 2.52]

<p>2.49 a. I, terrified b. Offer myself to Samantabhadra; c. To Manjughosha also d. I offer my body.</p>	<p>2.50 a. To the Protector Avalokiteshvara b. Who unmistakably acts with compassion, c. I utter a mournful cry, d. "Please protect this wrong-doer!"</p>
<p>2.51 a. In my search for refuge b. I cry from my heart c. To Akashagarba, Ksitigarbha, d. And all the Compassionate Protectors.</p>	<p>2.52 a. And I go for refuge to Vajrapani, b. Upon the sight of whom all hateful beings, c. Such as the messengers of Yama, d. Flee in terror to the four directions.</p>
There are the <i>Eight Great Sons/ Eight Close Bodhisattvas</i> :	
1) Samantabhadra, 2) Manjushri, 3) Avalokiteshvara, 4) Akashagarba, 5) Ksitigarbha, 6) Vajrapani, 7) Maitreya, 8) Sarvanirvana-viskambini. Bringing them, as well as one's negativities, to mind, one takes refuge in them.	

iii) Having gone for refuge, practice in accord with their instructions [2.53]

<p>2.53 a. Previously I transgressed your words, b. But now upon seeing this great fear c. I go to you for refuge. d. By doing so, please swiftly clear away this fear.</p>
After having gone for refuge, one should practice according to their advice. The "I" here refers to oneself who has accumulated all the nonvirtuous karma due to not following "your" teachings and has gone against "your" advice.
One has engaged in those that need to be discarded and not adopted those that need to be adopted.
As a result, one has to experience all the sufferings and problems. By remembering this, one makes a plea/ request and goes for refuge to them.
The verses here show the power of support: how to go for refuge.

c) The third power: The power of applying the antidote at all times [2.54 – 2.59]

i) The reasons it is appropriate to make effort in purifying negativities [2.54 – 2.57]

1' The need to quickly purify negativities as illustrated by the analogy of a disease [2.54 – 2.56]

a' Stating the meaning of the analogy [2.54]

<p>2.54 If I need to comply with a doctor's advice When frightened by an ordinary illness, Then what need to mention that it is so when perpetually diseased By the hundreds of faults of attachment and so forth?</p>

When people fall sick, out of fear for their health and lives, they would look for a doctor, seek his consultation and diagnosis.
Whatever the doctor advises, people usually follow exactly, even though it may involve some hardships or inconveniences.
If it is so for an ordinary sickness, then for one who has been afflicted by hundreds of faults of attachment, anger ignorance, pride and so forth, there is no need to mention that one would need to rely on and follow exactly the advice given by the all omniscient one, the Buddha.

b' There are great disadvantages to the disease of the three poisons, [further,] the medicine for destroying them is rare [2.55]

This mental sickness, one's afflictions, have so much more shortcomings, are so much more dangerous, yet, the medicine to cure such afflictions is very rare:

<p><i>2.55 a. If all the people dwelling in Jambudvipa</i> <i>b. Can be crushed by just one of these,</i> <i>c. And if no other medicine to cure them</i> <i>d. Is to be found in all the directions,</i></p>
--

In Gyaltsab Je's commentary, it is said that, even one moment of anger towards a bodhisattva can destroy all the human beings in this world and cause them to be born in the hells.

Yet the medicine [/cure] for such a sickness, which is meditation on the path and so forth, is so rare that one cannot find it anywhere else apart from the teachings that reveal them.

Other than that, one would not be able to find such a medicine anywhere else, not even in the celestial realm of Brahma.
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Even just one particular type of affliction [is so virulent that it] can cause harm to so many sentient beings. The medicine to cure the affliction is only the Dharma.

The importance and joy of doing one's prayers:

I mentioned this before, whenever one recites the preliminary prayers before class, one can visualize Shakyamuni Buddha in front. On the basis of recollecting the qualities of His exalted Body, Speech and Mind, one then recites those prayers.

One needs to remember at all times that, even just being able to think of Buddha, recollect His qualities and then recite those verses of praise, even though it may just be a very short period of time, one is very fortunate.

Just by doing this, this makes one's day meaningful. If this makes one's day meaningful, then this is something to rejoice in.

Why it is important not to give up one's daily commitment:

I thought to mention this: there are many people who take on many recitation commitments that come with attending many empowerments. They then accumulate a whole set of recitations that they have to do.

After a while, they feel that doing such prayers/ commitments become pointless.

There are many people who feel like that, that they have to do it. They do not see the purpose and meaning behind it.

Since it is a commitment, one has to do it. When one does these self-generation practices/ sadhanas, ideally,

1) As one recites the words of the practice, one should be reflecting [entirely] on the meanings of those words.

In the context of self-generation deity practice, if one is unable to reflect/ meditate on the entire practice, then,

2) One should hold onto one's divine identity/ pride as the deity. One then recites the words. This is [another way].

If not, then,

3) One should focus on the Six Session Guru Yoga, as guru yoga is the main [practice], recites that prayer and reflects on it.

If one cannot handle any meditation/ reflection [at all], then,

4) One just have to verbally recite the prayer. Since it is called a daily recitation, then it is meant as one.

If people may wonder: "Is there any point in merely reciting those verses?" Since it is a commitment, one just have to do it.

By merely reciting it, one is fulfilling one's commitment, one is also purifying the negativities/ obscurations one has accumulated with one's speech.

When one pays homage physically/ with prostrations, it is said that this purifies one's negativities with one's body.

Therefore, when one recites the prayers of daily recitations and commitments, one will purify the negativities of one's speech.

By believing in this, one just have to continue one's commitment without giving it up.

This is in response to people who come and ask me: "I have all these commitments that I cannot do, can I stop doing them?"

If one has these daily commitments which takes one or two hours, one has to recite them. This is better than not doing them.

If, instead of spending those one or two hours reciting, one is doing some other meaningful/ virtuous practices or meditations, then in my view, at least one is doing something else as a substitute.

But if, in place of reciting the daily prayers, one does nothing, then it is better to spend that one or two hours reciting, rather than not doing anything [virtuous].

If I were to tell people that: "Yes, you can stop your practice." Then they will stop their practices, they will even stop doing their recitations, and in its place, do nothing. Then that would not be right.

If, at least in its place, one is doing something meaningful/ virtuous, then perhaps something could be said about that.

It seems that, many people have this problem. They take on all such daily recitation commitments/ sadhanas and so forth.

Then some of them do not feel like continuing, others when they do them, they feel more like a chore/ burden that they have to do without choice. Ideally, one should be reflecting/ meditating as one is doing the practice/ reciting the words.

But if one cannot do that, then at least, one has to recite them and go through the practice as it is a commitment.

As I have said earlier, merely reciting the prayer itself purifies immeasurable amounts of negativities accumulated with one's speech. So it is not as if that, merely reciting the prayers has no benefits, as there are.

If one cannot even do that, then if in its place, one can do some other practices that are done well, then in my opinion, at least that can act as a substitute.

For example, one can think of Chenrezig and then recite Om Mani Padme Hum and cultivate a good heart, one is at least doing something virtuous. My point is, one has to do something virtuous and meaningful.

If one wants to give up one's commitment, then at least in its place, one should do such virtuous practices. Then at least that is good. Khenrinpoche: At the same time, I am not saying you can give up your commitment! If you want to give it up, then at least do something else [that is virtuous], so please don't misunderstand me...

Khenrinpoche: One of my teacher..., he keeps so many commitments, like one volume [of practices to do]. From morning five-thirty, he would start his prayers until eleven-thirty!
I don't know whether he has time to meditate or not, but when I see him, he is just reading so quickly, as he has more than two, three hundred pages [to recite]. I don't think he has time to meditate on each and everything.
Even at the age of eighty, he is still doing that. He is probably doing his meditation but I am not sure as it is hard to tell. So mostly, this is how they do their commitments.
I am [talking about this] as people are asking me: "Can I don't do my commitment?" It is difficult for me to answer that.
If I am the one who gave the commitment, then I can answer: "Okay, don't do." So, my idea is that, if you really cannot do or you really don't want to do your commitment, then do something else like meditation or chanting, anything [virtuous].
I think that's the way to do. Since I am answering this question for all, so [in the future], please don't ask me again...
I do understand that kind of feeling, as sometimes, personally, I do feel a bit like that as well. As there are so many recitations to do, then what is the point of doing that?
But if one thinks like that, then one should ask oneself: "If I don't do this, then what would I be doing in its place?"
What better alternative would one have? Of course, if one can meditate as one recites, then that should be the case.
But even if one cannot meditate, at least then, merely reciting the words, that is the Buddha's speech/ teachings, that has benefit in purifying one's negativities.
Everybody likes to recite sutras isn't it? There is Golden Light Sutra, Sanghata Sutra and a long list of mantras and dharanis that everybody likes to recite. Why do people recite them? Because one believes there is benefit, isn't it?
So, if there is benefit in reciting these things, then there must [also] be benefits in reciting one's daily prayers as well.
This is because, they are all the same, they are Buddha's teachings.
What I think is that, since one has really promised and taken on that commitment to do the practice, then it is best that one should continue in doing those practices without stopping.
As I have said, in the case of self-generation practice, even if one cannot meditate from the beginning to the end, but if one can focus on one aspect of the practice, say, the section on generating oneself as the deity, then one can just recite the rest.

How the sickness of one's afflictions are so harmful:

In the teaching on applying the power of the antidote at all times, the text gives an example of how, a sick person would rely on a skilled doctor and follow his advice accordingly.
If that is the case, then it is even more important for one, who is afflicted by the sickness of the afflictions, to follow the advice given by the skilled doctor, the Buddha.
The ordinary sickness that is associated with one's physical health is only confined to one life, as it will stop when one dies.
But one's sickness of the afflictions go beyond this one life such that these will do so much harm to one in myriads of ways.
One's sickness of the afflictions does not only harm one, it can also potentially cause one to harm all the numberless sentient beings.

c' Thus it is appropriate to practice in accord with the words of the Teacher, the supreme doctor [2.56]

<p>2.56 a. <i>Then the intention not to act in accordance</i> b. <i>With the words that can uproot every misery</i> c. <i>Of the All-Knowing Physician</i> d. <i>Is extremely bewildered and an object of scorn.</i></p>
To pacify the sickness of the afflictions, one has to rely on the instructions of the All-Knowing One, the omniscient Buddha.
He can help one eliminate the root of all of one's physical and mental sufferings and sicknesses.
If one does not follow His advice but engage in behaviors that are contrary to that, then it would be extremely foolish.
Instead of following the Buddha's teachings, if one lives [one's] life merely accumulating negativities, then one can become an object of ridicule by all Buddhas and bodhisattvas.
The great master Nagarjuna gave the analogy of someone who vomits into an extremely precious container made of gold and precious jewels. If one were to vomit into it, one would be considered very foolish.
Likewise, if after having found a human life of freedoms and endowments, instead of using it to accomplish something meaningful, one only engages in and constantly accumulating nonvirtues, then one would be so much more foolish.

I think this is about making a pledge to practice the teachings exactly as it was taught by the Omniscient One, the Buddha, who is the Supreme Physician.

2' Showing the need to purify by means of the analogy of an abyss [2.57]

- 2.57 a. If I need to be conscientious*
- b. Near a small, ordinary precipice,*
- c. Then how much more so near the precipices of long duration*
- d. That drop for thousands of yojanas?*

When one is moving up and down a flight of stairs, one would usually move with caution and conscientiously, knowing that if one is not careful, one may slip and hurt oneself.

If one is so conscientious when [merely] moving up and down a flight of stairs fearing one may slip and hurt oneself, then what need is there to mention the [necessity] to be even more careful and cautious when accumulating nonvirtues.

This is because, negative karmas would throw one into the deep abyss of the lower realms. Once one falls into that abyss, one would have to stay there for a very long time and it would be very difficult [for one] to be liberated from those existences.

Therefore, one needs to be even more cautious and careful with not accumulating negative karmas.

By remembering that if one accumulates nonvirtues, one will go to the lower realms and suffer there for a long time. Remembering this, one then cultivates conscientiousness.

In such an example of being careful when moving up and down a flight of stairs, if one is so careful with this, then it is so much more important to be more careful, cautious and conscientious when [it comes to avoiding one's] negativities.

ii) The appropriateness of making efforts quickly [2.58 – 2.59]

1' One should make effort in applying the antidotes to the negativities from this very day onward [2.58]

- 2.58 a. It is inappropriate to stay happily*
- b. Thinking, "Today alone I shall not die,"*
- c. For inevitably the time will come*
- d. When I shall go out of existence.*

The text explains about applying the antidotes to the negativities one accumulates immediately.

One should apply the antidotes right away, and not thinking that one will do that in the future after a month or a year.

It is incorrect to do that, because there is no guarantee that one would not die tomorrow. Therefore, thinking that: "I will not die today," is not correct. By understanding that one's time of death is uncertain, one has to apply the antidotes right away.

Since there is no guarantee that tomorrow will come, then one has to strive and apply the antidotes right away.

2' As there is absolutely no reason not to fear suffering, being lazy about cultivating the path is inappropriate [2.59]

If one thinks that: "Oh, that's no point worrying and fearing about death, anyways, I am not afraid about death." Then the teachings say that this is inappropriate and incorrect:

- 2.59 a. Who will grant me fearlessness?*
- b. How can I be surely freed from this?*
- c. If I shall inevitably go out of existence,*
- d. How can I remain in mental happiness?*

If one is fearless about death, thinking that: "There is no point worrying about death as I will not be afraid at that time," then this is inappropriate. Because, whether one likes it or not, at the time of death, because of having accumulated negativities throughout one's life, fear will [definitely] arise. At that time, nobody can help one.

The Buddhas cannot take away one's fears. The results of those nonvirtues will ripen and there will be suffering in the future.

Whether one [can help it] or not, fear will naturally arise at the time of death. There is nobody, not even the Buddhas, who can guarantee one that one will not experience any fears, any worries.

Since fear will naturally arise, therefore, it is wrong to merely live [an indifferent] life without any worries and just eat, sleep, enjoy oneself and not caring about death. This is wrong.

It is without a doubt that death will come. At that time, there will be worry and fear. Therefore now, one has to start applying the antidotes immediately.

If one may think that one will not fear death. Of course, death has not [come to one] yet. Since it has not happened, one may [mistakenly] think confidently that: "Oh, it wouldn't be a problem." But when it happens, it is almost for sure that there will be at least some worries and fears, especially if one did not spend one's life in virtue.

It is said that there are three levels of real Dharma practitioners:
1) The least [capable practitioner] dies without regret, knowing that at least he has done something in this life.
2) The middling practitioner dies without fear, knowing that he has done a good practice in this life.
3) The best practitioner faces death happily, and is ready to go [with great joy].
One really needs to keep this in mind: when one's time to die comes, even if one cannot go [with great joy], at least one should go without regret.
One should remind oneself that now, one still has the opportunity while one is still healthy, with all the favorable conditions for one to learn and practice. One should then take the opportunity and perform as many meaningful virtuous acts as possible.

- d) The fourth power: The power of turning away from negativities [2.60 – 2.65]
i) Refraining from [future] negativities from this day forward by regretting [past] negativities [2.60 – 2.62]
1' Purifying senseless negativities [2.60 – 2.61]
a' As material wealth is not reliable, it is inappropriate to be attached to it [2.60]

This is referring to relying on the mind of restraint:
<p>2.60 a. <i>What remains with me now</i> b. <i>From the past experiences that have gone?</i> c. <i>Through my adherence to them</i> d. <i>I have gone against my spiritual masters' advice.</i></p>
This verse is explaining about abandoning attachment to objects of desire.
One has been utilizing one's objects of desire: form, sound, smell, taste and touch since beginningless lifetimes. When these objects of desire come into contact with the mental consciousness, one develops and experiences pleasurable sensations.
But such pleasurable feelings last only for a very short time and it disappears almost immediately.
[Because] such pleasurable experiences finish [quickly], one would then go look for the next experience of pleasure.
This is how one spends one's life: from one short pleasurable experience to the [next] short pleasurable experience.
But whatever pleasures one is experiencing, it does not last, one then has to find the next experience of pleasure.
Therefore in this sense, it is really meaningless.
When one experiences pleasure again through coming into contact with one's objects of desire of form, sound, smell, taste and touch, it is meaningless to be emotionally involved with that pleasure, to be attached to it.
This is because, such an experience will not be, and will never be any different from the past experiences.
Just as [with] all the past experiences that one has experienced, it arises and last for only a very short time and disappears.
Whatever new experiences of pleasure that will arise, it will not be and will never be of any difference.
The text is saying that, even though one knows this, that whatever pleasures that one will experience will never be of any difference from the past experiences, that it will only last for a short time, but one disregards that fact, continues to run after and be emotionally [obsessed], involved and attached with such a pleasure. One then works so hard for that.
In the process, one disregards [restraining from] all the nonvirtues and negativities that one will accumulate just to achieve those pleasures. At the same time of course, one also disregard the advice given by one's guru and the Buddha.
This is what many [people] are doing, therefore, the teachings are telling one not to do that.
Here, this is referring to <i>applying the power of restraint</i> , through bringing to mind how so far, one has transgressed the advice of one's guru, [which means,] the advice of the Buddha.

- b' It is inappropriate to be attached to close friends and so forth [2.61]

<p>2.61 a. <i>Leaving behind this life</i> b. <i>And likewise my friends and relatives,</i> c. <i>If all alone I must go elsewhere</i> d. <i>How appropriate are friends and enemies?</i></p>
All the people and things that one considers to be so important in one's life, one's parents, relatives, loved ones, close friends, one's possessions and so forth, when it is time to die and leave the world, none of these can accompany one.
When one dies and leaves for the next life, one has to go alone. It is not as if one has a choice to decide where one will go to.
This will all be determined by one's own karma, which can [propel] one to anywhere from the lowest of the hells all the way to the peak of cyclic existence.

On the day when one is going to die, none of these can follow one, nor be of any benefit to one. One can only go alone.
The teachings say that: “ <i>The kings leave behind their kingdoms and the beggars leave behind their walking stick.</i> ”
Even though the things that they leave behind may be different, but the way of going to the next life is exactly the same: they have to leave everything behind and go alone.
The point here is, there is no reason to be attached, emotionally involved with friends and loved ones, because many times, one accumulates nonvirtues out of attachment to them.
By thinking about this, one applies restraint as much as possible to avoid nonvirtues.

2' Making effort day and night in the methods for being [freed] from negativities [2.62]

<p>2.62 a. “<i>How can I be surely freed</i> <i>b. From non-virtue, the source of suffering?</i>” <i>c. Continually night and day</i> <i>d. Should I only consider this.</i></p>
At the time of death, loved ones are of no benefit whatsoever, enemies are also not able to harm one [anymore], but what harms one at that time is all of one's negativities that one has accumulated for their sake, such as attachment for loved ones.
The negativities can be like the innumerable instances of the ten nonvirtues [that one has] accumulated for their sake.
Such negativities one has accumulated for their sake will cause one to experience innumerable sufferings.
As such, it is only appropriate to strive day and night thinking how one can be liberated from such negativities. This involves thinking about the presentation of cause and effect, more importantly, it is having the faith of conviction in karma.
On the basis of reflecting on the workings of cause and effect, karma, particularly, the sufferings one will have to experience when one's accumulated nonvirtues ripen, one strives to purify one's negativities as much as possible day and night.

ii) Confessing negativities performed in the past [2.63 – 2.64]

1' What one is confessing [2.63]

<p>2.63 a. <i>Through unknowing and ignorance,</i> <i>b. Whatever I have committed,</i> <i>c. Be it a natural misdeed</i> <i>d. Or a stipulated negativity,</i></p>
Negativities can be divided into natural misdeeds and stipulated negativities.
Natural misdeed is a nonvirtuous action by nature regardless of who the [person] is. It does not matter whether the person who performs/ engages this karma is holding vows or not. Whoever engages in this, accumulates nonvirtue.
Stipulated negativities only apply to people, for example, who have vows. It is a negativity that is committed when one goes against the rules/ vows [one has taken] that are stipulated/ laid down by Buddha.
For example, ordained persons are not supposed to eat after noon. The action of eating after noon is not necessarily a natural misdeed in itself. But for an ordained person in particular, if he eats after noon, then it becomes a stipulated negativity.

2' The way to confess [2.64]

<p>2.64 a. <i>I confess all of them directly</i> <i>b. In the presence of the Protectors</i> <i>c. With folded hands, prostrating again and again,</i> <i>d. My mind terrified by suffering.</i></p>
One thinks of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions abiding in the space in front of oneself, one recollects and brings to mind all the negativities one has accumulated. With palms folded and with intense regret, one confesses all of these to the extent that tears would be swelling in one's eyes and hairs standing on ends.
One then verbally expresses, with such an intense regret, all of one's negativities accumulated without concealing anything.

iii) Requesting the attention [of holy beings] and pledging to turn away from negativities [2.65]

<p>2.65 a. <i>I request the Guides</i> <i>b. To please accept my negativities as being mistakes.</i> <i>c. Since they are not good,</i> <i>d. I shall not do them again.</i></p>
By acknowledging a fault as a fault, all the nonvirtues one has accumulated as nonvirtues, and by promising/ making a pledge to not engage in them again, this is how one confesses. This concludes the second chapter, the chapter of confession.

Summary on the chapter of confession:

The teachings talk about the great importance of doing the practice of confession. It is very important that one must confess one's negativities and engage in purification practices.
The teachings say that it is due to one's negativities and obscurations that:
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>1) When one listens to the teachings, one cannot retain the words, 2) When one reflects, one does not understand the meanings, 3) When one meditates and familiarizes/ internalizes the topics, one does not get any experiences/ realizations, 4a) This is all due to one's negativities and obscurations which obscures/ blocks one's mind, 4b) One therefore has to engage in the practices of purification through applying the four powers:</i></p>
1) Power of eradication – one has to generate real [/genuine] regret for all the nonvirtues one has accumulated since beginningless lifetimes:
a) Performed by oneself, made others to engage in, or rejoiced in others' engaging in nonvirtues, as well as nonvirtues against special powerful karmic objects.
b) By recalling all the future sufferings one will experience when these negative karmas ripen.
c) Through reflecting on the certainty of death, the uncertainty of the time of death and how at that time, nothing except the Dharma is of any benefit.
d) By reflecting/ bringing to mind all the fears and sufferings one will experience at the time of death.
e) By thinking of all the future sufferings after one has taken rebirth as a result of one's nonvirtues.
One brings all such nonvirtues to mind and confesses them.
2) Power of support – going for refuge to the Three Jewels:
a) By bringing to mind all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, such as the Eight Great Sons, one offers oneself to them.
b) After having offered oneself to them, one makes a promise to follow their advice.
3) Power of antidote – one brings to mind all the faults/ disadvantages of the sicknesses of one's afflictions:
a) How these harm oneself as well as causes one to harm others.
b) With this in mind, one applies the antidotes, which are the teachings given by the Buddha, on the basis of acknowledging that the Buddha, the All Omniscient One, is the supreme physician.
c) The teachings also mention the importance of constantly relying on mindfulness and vigilance to spot the arising of any nonvirtues in one's mind.
d) If one notices that nonvirtues have already arisen, that one has accumulated nonvirtues, one should confess/ purify immediately without postponing them into the future by reflecting on how the time of death is uncertain.
4) Power of restraining from nonvirtues again –
a) Recollect that all of one's pleasures that one has experienced in the past are meaningless.
b) Recollect that all the pleasures one is currently experiencing are very much the same [and not any better than before].
One then restrains oneself from committing nonvirtues out of attachment and so forth.
Essentially, this chapter, chapter two, is teaching one to apply the four opponent powers and to purify one's negativities as much as possible.

Chapter Three: Completely Upholding the Mind of Enlightenment

2. The actual embracing of mind generation [to be done] after having first gathered the accumulations:

The conducive conditions such as rejoicing in virtue

A. Explaining the chapter's material [3.1 – 3.34]

The Seven Branch Worship is practiced to accumulate merit and to purify one's mind of obscurations.
In Chapter Two, the Chapter of Confession, the branches of homage, offering and confession were explained.
Here in Chapter Three, the Chapter of Adopting Bodhicitta, the remaining branches of rejoicing, [imploring for] the turning of the wheel of dharma, requesting not to pass away into parinirvana and dedication will be explained.
a. Preparation [3.1 – 3.22] 1) Rejoicing in virtue [3.1 – 3.4]
In this branch of rejoicing, there is rejoicing in the virtues of the causes and effects for: a) High status, b) Liberation and c) Full enlightenment:
a) Rejoicing in the virtues of the causes for and effects of higher rebirths [3.1]
<p><i>3.1 a. With joy I rejoice</i> <i>b. In the virtue that relieves the suffering of unfortunate rebirths</i> <i>c. Of all sentient beings</i> <i>d. And in the abiding in happiness of those subject to suffering.</i></p>
One brings to mind all those who are accumulating virtues that will result in achieving high status, as a human or as a god.
One rejoices in the virtues that will lead to high statuses not conjoined with renunciation, bodhicitta or the correct view.
Even though such virtues that will result in a high status as a human or a god are not conjoined with renunciation, bodhicitta or the correct view, nevertheless, it is a cause for high status/ good rebirth. One brings to mind these virtues and rejoices.
One should rejoice in sentient beings achieving good rebirths, excellent bodies, wealth, power, prestige, fame, and so forth.
When one sees such things happening to others, rather than feeling jealous or a negative sense of competitiveness, one should feel happy that they are enjoying these things. For they are enjoying the fruits of virtues they have accumulated in the past.
In short, when one sees sentient beings accumulating virtue, even though it may be a small one, but will nevertheless result in high status/ good rebirth, rather than feeling jealous, one should feel happy for them/ rejoice.
Similarly, when one sees sentient beings enjoying such good things in life as good body, prestige, power, fame, enjoyments, wealth and so forth, one should also feel happy for them rather than getting jealous.
Therefore, rejoicing helps one to: 1) counteract jealousy, 2) accumulate vast amount of merit, 3) not have a disturbed mind.
The point is, one should not feel disturbed, when one sees something good happening to others. Rather than feeling that way, one should feel happy and rejoice. If one feels happy for that, there will be great benefit for one.
One has to bear in mind that the explanation here is in the context of moving [one's mind] towards bodhicitta, which is essentially a spirit of wanting to benefit others.
In the light of this spirit, what one is doing here, in the practice of rejoicing, is the preliminary to generating bodhicitta.

b) Rejoicing in the virtues of the causes for and effects of mere liberation [3.2]

<p><i>3.2 a. I rejoice in that accumulation of virtue</i> <i>b. That is the cause for enlightenment,</i> <i>c. I rejoice in the definite liberation of embodied creatures</i> <i>d. From the suffering of cyclic existence.</i></p>
One rejoices in all the virtues that are causes to achieve either the Hearers or the Solitary Realizers' enlightenments.
One therefore rejoices in the virtues that are conjoined with the determination to be free/ renunciation, and the correct view.
One also rejoices in the effects of the virtues related to mere liberation, in those who have achieved the temporary Hearers' or Solitary Realizers' enlightenment.
“Temporary” refers to, for example, the Hearers who are Stream Enterers, Once Returners and Never Returners, as well as those who have achieved the actual Hearers' enlightenment, those who have liberated themselves from cyclic existence, the arhats.

c) Rejoicing in the causes for and effects of unsurpassable enlightenment [3.3 – 3.4]

<p>3.3 a. <i>I rejoice in the enlightenment of the Protectors</i> b. <i>And also in the grounds of their children.</i></p>	<p>3.4 a. <i>With joy I rejoice</i> b. <i>In the ocean of virtue of generating the mind of enlightenment</i> c. <i>That causes all sentient beings happiness,</i> d. <i>As well as in the deeds that benefit sentient beings.</i></p>
<p>Here, one focuses on those who have actualized the complete abandonments and realizations, [the <i>effects</i>] and rejoices.</p>	
<p>One also rejoices in the <i>effects</i> of temporary enlightenment, bringing to mind the qualities of realizations and abandonments of those abiding from the first ground onwards.</p>	
<p>If one is familiar with the presentations of the paths and grounds, for example, the qualities of realizations and abandonments achieved on those grounds, one would have many things to rejoice over.</p>	
<p>In Chapter One, the benefits of both aspirational and engaged bodhicitta were explained. The benefits of merely generating aspirational bodhicitta alone is innumerable. On the basis of this, there are also those who practice the six perfections.</p>	
<p>The merits that they accumulate is even much more powerful. One brings to mind the benefits that are accumulated and experienced by those who have developed the complete thought of achieving full enlightenment for all sentient beings.</p>	
<p>In the King of Prayers, the five types of persons who are objects of rejoicing are mentioned: a) Buddhas, b) [Bodhisattvas], c) Solitary Realizers, d) Those [with more to learn and no more to learn, the Hearers] and, e) Ordinary beings.</p>	
<p>Here, one rejoices in the paths of these three kinds of persons.</p>	
<p>It is said in the teachings that: a) If one rejoices in the virtues of those whose level of mind is lower than oneself, one accumulates more merit than that person.</p>	
<p>b) If one rejoices in the virtues of one's peers/ contemporaries, those who are of the same level of mind as oneself, one accumulates the same amount of virtue.</p>	
<p>c) If one rejoices in the virtues of those whose level of mind is higher than oneself, one gets a portion of that merit.</p>	
<p>When one sees others cultivating virtue or [having a good life], one is told to feel happy for them/ to rejoice.</p>	
<p>If one does not, then very often in its place, a) there will be jealousy, b) one then wants to compete with that person, c) the mind also gets disturbed, there is no peace. From one's own experience, this is evidently clear.</p>	
<p>Rather than feeling jealousy, one can really a) feel happy/ rejoice, b) one's mind does not get disturbed, there is peace in the heart. Above that, c) one accumulates merit.</p>	
<p>Of course, it is really difficult to actually measure the amount of merit one collects from rejoicing, this is not possible to express definitively. But it is very obvious that if one rejoices, one will experience peace in one's heart.</p>	
<p>It seems that it is easier to rejoice in the virtues of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. But to rejoice in the virtues and [enjoyments] of one's enemies is really difficult. Unless one is able to feel happy and rejoice in the virtues and [enjoyments] of one's enemies, then other kinds of rejoicing is merely [superficial].</p>	
<p>It is the same with thinking about bodhicitta: one has this nice feeling thinking that: "Oh, how nice if I can achieve enlightenment for sentient beings." But many times, when one thinks about this, one's enemy is [actually] excluded.</p>	
<p>As such, talking/ thinking about bodhicitta is mere talk.</p>	
<p>Likewise with rejoicing in the [enjoyments] and [virtuous] qualities of one's enemies, even if one is currently unable to entertain thoughts of benefiting them, one has to start from being able to feel happy for them when they experience [enjoyments] or when they engage in virtues and not to hold onto grudges.</p>	
<p>The point I am trying to make is that, it is very important for one to learn/ train to be able to rejoice in the [enjoyments] that are [experienced] to those people one does not like, the so called enemies.</p>	
<p>One should feel happy for the good things that are happening to them, and rejoice when they are engaging in virtue.</p>	
<p>This is because, most of us cannot do that. When one sees one's enemy, one cannot feel happy for the virtues that they are accumulating. Therefore, one should train one's mind to think: "It is pointless to let my mind be disturbed, there is no point getting jealous and be disturbed. Rather, I should think about the benefits of rejoicing."</p>	
<p>[When one does that,] there will be peace in one's heart, one also accumulates merit.</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: This morning I saw in the news one very famous designer who committed suicide in a New York luxurious apartment. She is considered to be a very famous designer, forty-nine years, not old, but you can see many of them in the news, all these famous actors, they commit suicide at a very young age. Sometimes I think about why they would [do that.]</p>	
<p>I just don't see [the reason]...they have everything, they are so famous, everybody know them, they have plenty of money. If they want to change boyfriends or girlfriends they can change ten or twenty [easily]. But I see them always [end up] committing suicide. That means, there is something missing [in their lives]. They are still not happy in the mind.</p>	

So maybe this is the point, maybe they don't know how to rejoice. I think mainly, they have so much competition. When they become so famous, then if somebody gets a little more famous than them, they would become so jealous and unhappy.
If they suddenly have some problems with their reputation, some bad reputation, then it becomes extremely miserable.
If they only know how to rejoice, if they don't have any jealousy, then I don't think they will die so early. Maybe sometimes, the jealousy would disturb the mind. Jealousy can cause great disturbances to the mind.
As such, one needs to be able to do something to counteract jealousy. The best antidote to jealousy is rejoicing.
So, one should strive with the practice of rejoicing and also become habituated to it.
In essence, the mind of rejoicing is a mind that is manifestly feeling happy.

2) Imploring [the teacher] to turn the wheel of dharma [3.5]

<p>3.5 a. <i>With folded hands I beseech</i> b. <i>The buddhas of all directions</i> c. <i>To shine the lamp of Dharma</i> d. <i>For all bewildered in the darkness of suffering.</i></p>
After the Buddha manifested the deed of achieving full enlightenment, He did not teach Dharma for forty-nine days.
It was only after Brahma and Indra's request that He [started teaching] the Dharma.
When Brahma and Indra implored/ urged the Buddha to turn the Wheel of Dharma, they did so with offerings of a thousand-spoke golden dharma wheel and a right-coiled conch respectively.
It was due to the request of the gods Brahma and Indra that the Buddha then turn the Wheel of Dharma.
When one requests the turning of the Wheel of Dharma, [the verse] says that one should request with one's palms folded with respect. The point is, this is an outer expression of one's inner desire to really want to hear the teachings/ Dharma.
In fact, this is how it should be. One must really want to hear the teachings from one's side.
If one hears the teachings with an intense heartfelt desire for the Dharma, then hearing the Dharma/ teachings will be very effective/ beneficial for the mind.
Therefore, it is stated in the Lam Rim teachings that, according to the code of ethical conduct for the ordained, the Vinaya, one should not teach without being requested.
If one looks at some of the accounts in the Jataka tales, which describes Buddha's past lives while he was still in cyclic existence: there was account of Buddha in one of his past lives using his body as a light offering, planting a thousand wicks on his body, burning and offering that merely to receive one verse of Dharma teaching.
There is also the life story of the great Tibetan yogi Milarepa, how much hardships he undertook before he got teachings.
All these point to the need to have this intense desire for the Dharma, and being able to bear hardships for it.
If one has these qualities, then hearing and receiving the teachings will be beneficial for one's mind.
From one's own side, one needs to have an intense heartfelt desire for the Dharma. One wants the Dharma so much because one sees the reason that, if one does not have it, it will not be right. Likewise, one sees [that this is] the same for others.
So, when one requests the teachings, one does so not merely for oneself, but also understanding how others are in the similar predicament. They also need and must have the Dharma.
With that kind of thoughts, one requests the Buddhas of the three times to turn the Wheel of Dharma. One visualizes offering thousand-spoke golden dharma wheel to accompany one's request. One then thinks that the Buddhas accepts one's request.
If one is doing guru-yoga, then visualize one's guru being inseparable from the merit-field/ Buddha. One then makes the request for them to turn the Wheel of Dharma, accompanied with an offering of the thousand-spoke golden dharma wheel.
One then thinks that one's request is accepted. This is how one practices.
If one is able to do this practice of imploring/ urging the Buddhas to turn the Wheel of Dharma, it is said that in future lives, one will not be a holder of wrong views, one will be able to continually hear/ receive the teachings.
Having wrong views are the greatest obstacles to practicing the Dharma. When one has wrong views, then there is really no basis to practice. It is really important to be free from wrong views.
If one has wrong views, say, in relation to cause and effect, then there is no opportunity, mental space for Dharma practice.
It becomes very beneficial, if from life to life, one does not end up being someone who holds onto wrong views.
Such a practice of imploring/ urging the Buddhas to turn the Wheel of Dharma will help with that.

3) Requesting him not to pass into [pari]nirvana [3.6]

<p>3.6 a. <i>With folded hands I beseech</i> b. <i>The Victors who wish to enter nirvana</i> c. <i>Not to leave migrating beings in blindness</i> d. <i>And to remain for countless eons.</i></p>
<p>When the Buddha was about to pass away into parinirvana, there was a householder called Cunda who requested the Buddha not to pass away. As a result, Buddha delayed His parinirvana by three months.</p>
<p>There is a verse from the <i>Golden Light Sutra</i>: <i>The Buddha does not enter complete nirvana;</i> <i>Neither does the Dharma cease to be;</i> <i>Yet for the ripening of beings.</i> <i>Tathagatas manifest passing beyond suffering.</i></p>
<p>Buddhas never die. For they are completely freed from birth, aging, sickness and death. But they show various aspects, including passing away, to ripen the minds of sentient beings, as a way of persuading their hearts to practice Dharma.</p>
<p>The Buddhas show themselves in various aspects to benefit sentient beings: 1) All the Supreme Emanation Bodies will manifest the deed of passing away into parinirvana. 2) The Enjoyment Bodies never demonstrate the deed of passing into nirvana.</p>
<p>When the Buddhas manifest the deed of passing into nirvana, it is not that the Buddhas really die. Rather, they show that aspect to ripen the minds of sentient beings.</p>
<p>One brings to mind all the Buddhas, as well as one's own gurus, with respect, one requests them not to pass away into parinirvana, but to request them to abide for a long time. One thinks that they accept one's request.</p>
<p>One requests them to remain for eons to eliminate the darkness/ ignorance of not merely oneself, but also others, especially those who are objects to be tamed/ subdued by them.</p>
<p>Requesting the Buddhas to not pass away into parinirvana is a cause for one's own life obstacles to be pacified, a cause for one's own long life.</p>

4) Dedicating virtue [accumulated] [3.7 – 3.10]

<p>Here, there are general dedication, dedication for the sick, to alleviate hunger and thirst, as well as to fulfill all wishes.</p>
<p>a) Dedicating in general [3.7]</p>
<p>3.7 a. <i>Thus by the virtue accumulated</i> b. <i>Through all that I have done,</i> c. <i>May all the suffering of all sentient beings</i> d. <i>Be dispelled.</i></p>
<p>In general, dedication of merit means dedicating one's virtue to the achievement of full enlightenment.</p>
<p>In this context, one does this practice of dedicating one's merits to be able to actualize bodhicitta.</p>
<p>The development of bodhicitta has its roots in compassion, which is the love/ mercy that wishes sentient beings to be free of suffering. When one dedicates this way using verse 3.7, in a way it is a condition to think about and bring forth compassion.</p>
<p>One dedicates virtues accumulated in the past, present and the future for the elimination of suffering of all sentient beings.</p>
<p>Whether it is generating the motivation or dedicating the virtue, these are actions that move the mind in a certain direction.</p>
<p>Here, one generates the motivation to eliminate the sufferings of others. One also dedicates one's merits for all sentient beings to be free of suffering. Essentially, it is moving the mind towards compassion.</p>
<p>As such, this has to come from one's heart for one's mind to move in a certain direction. When [such motivations and dedications] come from one's heart, then one's mind will be [able to move] in that direction.</p>
<p>Dedication is not so much about reciting the prayer. It is not about recitation, the thought has to accompany that recitation.</p>

b) Dedicating for the sake of the ill [3.8]

<p>3.8 a. <i>May I be the doctor and the medicine</i> b. <i>And may I be the nurse</i> c. <i>For all sick migrating beings in the world</i> d. <i>Until their sicknesses are healed.</i></p>
<p>One dedicates one's merit accumulated in the three times for the benefit of the sick. One becomes a doctor, medicine and a nurse for them. As mentioned, it is a condition to move one's mind towards compassion.</p>

On a practical level, when one [actually] encounters those who are sick, then as much as possible, one also has to take care of them by attending to them, giving them medicine and so forth.

There was an account of Buddha Himself attending to a fully ordained monk [who was sick], who was incapacitated and soiled himself. Buddha personally attended to him and washed him. He then said that monks should also attend to the sick.

c) Dedicating for the alleviation of hunger and thirst [3.9]

- 3.9 a. *May a rain of food and drink descend*
b. *To clear away the suffering of thirst and hunger,*
c. *And during the eon of famine*
d. *May I myself turn into food and drink.*

There is an eon of famine, in which sentient beings have to endure long periods of time without any food and drink. One dedicates one's merit to be a cause for the rain of food and drink to appear, to clear away their sufferings of hunger and thirst.

There is also the eon of sickness and the eon of weapons:

During the eon of sickness, it is said that many sentient beings will suffer from many kinds of sicknesses. One dedicates the merits one has accumulated such that, during that time, one can become medicine, doctor and nurse for them.

During the eon of weapons, it is said that sentient beings will hack one another with weapons. One dedicates merit one has accumulated such that during this eon of weapons, all those weapons will be transformed into flowers.

In a sutra, Buddha said to Ananda: "If any sentient being were to abandon killing just for one day and night, those roots of virtue will cause that sentient being not to be born during the eon of weapons."

He added: "Anyone who offers arura (some medicine) to the sangha, then by depending on such roots of virtue, they will not be born during the eon of sickness."

He also said to Ananda: "Any sentient being who offers even a little bit of food to the sangha, in dependence on those roots of virtue, they will not be born during the eon of famine."

The great eon – its timeline and when the teachings will decline:

I thought to give some explanation of what an eon (Skt: kalpa) is:

One has heard about accumulating merit and wisdom over a period of three countless great eons.

One great eon is made up of four [equal] periods [in terms of the world system,] the periods of:
1) Formation 2) Abiding, 3) Destruction and 4) Nothingness.

1) The eon of formation is made up of twenty intermediate eons. [It is the same for the other three periods].

Altogether, eighty intermediate eons make up one great eon.

2) In the twenty intermediate eons of abiding, there is a cycle of lifespan of sentient beings.

At the beginning, the lifespan goes down, at the very end of this eon, the lifespan goes up. In between, these are continual cycles of lifespans increasing and decreasing.

In the context of this world system, where one thousand Buddhas descend, they do so during these twenty intermediate eons.

At the beginning of this eon of abiding, sentient beings' lifespans are said to be very very long. The lifespans of these sentient beings gradually decrease over time. But the rate of decrease is very slow.

From an innumerable long life, it slowly decreased to eighty thousand years. From eighty thousand years, it decreased to forty thousand years.

When the lifespan reached forty thousand years, this was when the first of the thousand Buddhas, Krakucchandra, (*Tib: Khor Wa Jig*) appeared in this world. He came and taught the Dharma, but it subsequently decline.

When sentient beings' lifespan reached an average of thirty thousand years, the second Buddha, Kanakamuni, (*Tib: Ser Thub*) came [and turned the Wheel of Dharma].

When sentient beings' average lifespan declined to twenty thousand years, the third Buddha, Kashyapa, (*Tib: Od Srung*) appeared and turned the Wheel of Dharma.

When the average lifespan of human beings is a hundred years, which is [the present age], Shakyamuni Buddha, (*Tib: Shakya Thub Pa*) descended and taught the Dharma.

According to the sutric tradition, Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings are said to abide for five thousand years.

If this is divided into periods of five hundred years, then there would be ten periods of hundred years.

The existence of the ten five-hundred year periods of Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings:

1) During the first period, the first five hundred years, many sentient beings achieved arhatship.
2) During the second five-hundred year period, the number of sentient beings achieving arhatship became lesser, but there were many who were achieving the state of never-returned.
3) During the third five-hundred year period, the number of sentient beings achieving the state of never-returned became lesser, but there were many that were still achieving the state of stream-enterer.
These first three five-hundred year periods are known as the three periods of actualizing the fruits/ attainments.
The next three five-hundred year periods are called the three periods of actualizing the attainments related to the three higher trainings: the first is related to the higher trainings in wisdom. This is the fourth five-hundred year period.
4) During the fourth five-hundred year period, the number of beings who are actualizing the fruit becomes much lesser, but there are people attaining the wisdom of realizing selflessness.
5) During the fifth five-hundred year period, the number of people realizing selflessness becomes much lesser, but there are many people who are practicing and actualizing single-pointed concentration.
6) During the sixth five-hundred year period, the number of sentient beings practicing and actualizing concentration becomes much lesser, but there are many people who are practicing ethical discipline.
Going by this timeline, one is now in this time period where there is still the practice of ethical discipline.
Khenrinpoche: no attainments, no wisdom, no concentration, just trying to keep some precepts. This is the time [for one].
Then the next three five-hundred year periods is called the period of transmission related to the Three Scriptural Collections of Abhidharma, Sutra and Vinaya.
7) In the seventh five-hundred year period, the number of people who are engaged in the three higher trainings become very few, but there are many who are studying the scriptural collections of knowledge/ Abhidharma.
8) In the eighth five-hundred year period, the number of people who are studying and learning the Abhidharma scriptural collection becomes very few, people are just concentrating on learning the Sutra scriptural collection.
9) In the ninth five-hundred year period, the number of people who are expounding on the Sutra scriptural collection becomes very few, most of the people who are teaching are only teaching on the Vinaya scriptural collection.
10) In the final five-hundred year period, there will be ordained people but without any vows nor knowledge of the vinaya.
This final period is called the period of mere sign, where there will be people who looked like ordained, bearing the signs of wearing robes, but there will be no vows nor knowledge of the vinaya.
When this [period ends], Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings will come to a complete end.
This is how the Buddha's teachings will pan out over this five-thousand year period. This is like a timeline that shows how Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings will decline over time.

The eons of famine, sickness and weapons:

Human beings' average lifespan [here in the southern continent] is about a hundred years. There will come a time when the average lifespan will decrease all the way to thirty, twenty and then ten years. This is merely on the first cycle of decline.
The eon of abiding is made up of twenty intermediate eons. What has been explained up to now, which covers the first four Buddha, all these occur on the first of the twenty intermediate eons.
The average lifespan of the humans in this world will gradually decline all the way to thirty years, then to twenty years and then only ten years. This is said to be the result of the vast accumulation of nonvirtues.
When the average lifespan of human beings reaches ten years, this is when there will be the eon of famine, where many sentient beings will die due to not finding food and water.
During the eon of sickness, many sentient beings will die from sicknesses and diseases.
During the eon weapons, any [object] that sentient beings pick up becomes a weapon and they will start to hack one another. The world will then transform into a living hell [on earth].
The three dedications mentioned [3.7 – 3.9] above are related to the eons of famine, sickness and weapons. One dedicates one's roots of virtue such that during the eon of:
1) Famine – one transforms into food and drinks, 2) Sickness – one transforms into doctor, medicine and nurse, 3) Weapons – due to one's roots of virtue, all the weapons transforms into rainfall of flowers.
During the eon of weapons, many sentient beings will be killed. Some will survive, become extremely disenchanted with killing and they will abandon that. Due to these roots of virtue, their lifespans will gradually increase.

Time periods of when Buddhas will descend:

Over time, sentient beings will also gradually abandon the other nonvirtues. They will then live in the ethical discipline of abandoning the ten nonvirtues.
As a result of these roots of virtue, the average lifespans of the human beings gradually increase from ten, twenty, thirty, all the way [back] up to eighty thousand years.
When the lifespan cycle is on the increase, it is said that the Buddhas do not appear. This is because sentient beings are not likely to generate disenchantment.
[Also,] Buddhas do not come during the time when the average lifespan is below a hundred years, nor above eighty thousand years.
From an average lifespan of ten years, the lifespan starts to increase, this will be [the eon] of ascent, which will reach eighty-thousand years.
When that average lifespan starts to decrease, this is when Maitreya Buddha will descend.
When the average lifespan of human beings are ten years, I read somewhere that they will get married around five years old.
Khenrinpoche: no surprise [there], because they live for only ten years!
In terms of years it takes from the start when sentient beings' lifespans were very long and gradually declining all the way to ten years, this takes 9 billion human years. This is repeated another nineteen times.

How the lifespans of the beings of the eon of weapons gradually start to increase:

During this eon of abiding, the average lifespan of beings starts from an infinitely [number of years], then it gradually decreases down to eighty-thousand, then all the way down to ten years.
[After that,] the average lifespans of human beings again increases, from ten to eighty-thousand years. When the average lifespans start to decrease from eighty-thousand, this is when Maitreya Buddha will descend.
Contrary to some understanding, Maitreya Buddha will not descend when the average lifespan of human beings is ten years.
This is in terms of him not appearing in the form of a Supreme Emanation Body. Rather, it is an emanation of Maitreya Buddha who will appear during that time. The human beings of that era are essentially very short, about 6 inches.
The emanation of that Maitreya Buddha will come at a height of twelve inches, double that of the average humans.
Due to this difference, the humans would ask him: "Why do you have a much bigger body than us?" He would then reply: "I have such a body because I have abandoned killing and I have practiced patience and so forth."
As a result of hearing what this emanation will say, these humans will start practicing the ethical discipline of abandoning the ten nonvirtues. As a result, the average lifespan of the human beings will start to increase all the way up to eighty-thousand.
It is only then that Maitreya Buddha will descend in the form of a Supreme Emanation Body.
It is said that Maitreya Buddha will be born in the place where Shakyamuni Buddha showed the deed of passing away into parinirvana, that is, in Kushinagar. This is how it is explained in some commentaries.

d) Dedicating [one's virtues so that it acts] as the cause for all that one wishes [3.10]

<p><i>3.10 a. May I become an inexhaustible treasure</i> <i>b. For those who are poor and destitute.</i> <i>c. May I turn into various articles of all necessities</i> <i>d. And abide close before them.</i></p>
<p>Prior to [the practices of] dedicating the merit one has accumulated, there were the earlier practices of urging the Buddhas to turn the Wheel of Dharma, requesting them not to pass away into nirvana and so forth.</p>
<p>Here, one dedicates [these] virtues accumulated using the verses [from 3.7 to 3.10].</p>
<p>One dedicates the merit one has accumulated such that it becomes food for those who are hungry, water for those who are thirsty, objects of enjoyments and wealth for those who are poor.</p>
<p>Therefore, one dedicates one's merits such that one becomes an inexhaustible treasure for sentient beings.</p>

5) Training the mind that gives away [one's] body, resources and roots of virtue before practicing the branch of the perfection of generosity [3.11 – 3.22]

a) Training the thought to give away [one's] body, resources and roots of virtue [3.11 – 3.15(ab)]

<p>In the context of generating bodhicitta being explained here, this chapter is about adopting bodhicitta.</p>
<p>Prior to doing this, one has to purify one's negativities which are the unfavorable conditions and accumulate the collections, which are the favorable conditions. After having done this, one needs to train the mind before adopting bodhicitta.</p>
<p>Initially, one trains in a attitude/ thought of giving/ dedicating away one's body, possessions and roots of virtue to others, which is a different attitude [compared to one's usual attitudes].</p>
<p>Before one can generate bodhicitta, one firstly has to eliminate thoughts of self-cherishing and develop the thought wanting to benefit others.</p>
<p>The objects of bodhicitta are the numberless sentient beings. Of course, at the present moment, one lacks such an ability to actually benefit all sentient beings. But, one still has to train in the thought from the beginning.</p>
<p>Although one is incapable of actually giving/ dedicating oneself and everything [one owns] to sentient beings right now, nevertheless, one has to start by training/ developing those thoughts in one's mind.</p>
<p>The teachings explain that, on the basis of training in these thoughts, then there will come a time when one will actually be able to dedicate oneself and give away one's body, possessions and so forth to others.</p>
<p>The objects [that one gives away] are primarily one's body, possessions and merits/ roots of virtue. Of these, it is said that dedicating/ giving away one's body is the most important.</p>
<p>[This is because,] one's body is that which one cherishes/ holds onto/ grasps at, the most.</p>
<p>One holds onto one's body, identifying it as “my body”, on that basis, to bring about its happiness/ pleasure, one goes about accumulating wealth, possessions and even merits/ virtues to take care of one's body [/one's present life.]</p>
<p>The main thing that one holds onto/ grasps at, is one's body. To reduce and remove such a grasping at one's body, one trains in the thought of dedicating it away to others.</p>

i) The way to give them away [3.11]

<p><i>3.11 a. Without any sense of loss</i> <i>b. I shall give my body and resources,</i> <i>c. As well as all my virtues of the three times,</i> <i>d. For the sake of accomplishing the welfare of all sentient beings.</i></p>
<p>This verse explains about dedicating/ giving away one's body, possessions and merits accumulated in the past, present and in the future for the accomplishment and welfare of sentient beings. Such a dedication has to be done without a sense of loss.</p>
<p>One trains one's mind in developing this thought of really dedicating one's body, possessions and roots of virtue of the three times to all sentient beings through reciting this verse, at the same time, one allows this thought to arise from one's heart.</p>
<p>Therefore, one's mind has to be familiarized with this [thought/ attitude].</p>
<p>Particularly in the situations when one feels one's life is threatened or one is experiencing some harm, usually there will be worries and fears. At those times, it becomes even more important to train one's mind to dedicate one's body away.</p>
<p>If one is familiar with dedicating it away, then at those times, one can think: “Since I've already dedicated it away to others, then it [actually] belongs to others.”</p>

Since one has already given it away to others, then perhaps there will be less fear or even no fear.
Likewise, when one's possessions are threatened, if one has trained one's mind, one can remind oneself that, since one has completely dedicated/ given away these [possessions] to others from one's heart, then there is no basis to conceive of/ apprehending "these as mine."
Since there is no holding onto "these as mine", then one's mind will be very peaceful and relaxed.
In the event when one loses a particular object that had belonged to oneself, if one's mind is familiarized to such ways of thinking, then one just needs to bring to mind the thought of having already given the object to others.
If the idea of holding onto the object as being "mine" is no longer there, then even if one loses that object, it would not cause one a great deal of worry, one would not get so uptight. One's mind would be peaceful.
Whether something belongs to one or not essentially depends on whether one has this idea of ownership or not. If one has this idea/ holds onto this idea that "it is mine", then it is one's.
But if does not have this idea that it is "mine", does not have such a feeling, then even if something happens to it, one loses something that [supposedly] belongs to one, but since one no longer has this idea that it is still one's, as one has already given it to others, then there will be no basis for the mind to be uptight and disturbed.
Therefore, [the teachings] say that it is important to train in this thought of giving/ dedicating all these to others.
[Situations may] happen to one's body. Sometimes one gets harmed physically, gets disturbances from non-humans, one's possessions are on the decline, harmed, stolen and so forth.
If one is familiar with the thought of dedicating all these to others, then one's mind would not be uptight and disturbed.
In the Tibetan practice of Chöd (Lit. 'to sever'), what it essentially is, is about cutting through the ego-grasping.
By cutting through one's ego-grasping, one would not no longer have a sense of self-cherishing. One would then be able to dedicate one's body and so forth away without any sense of loss.
Therefore, the real meaning of Chöd, the practice of severing, is cutting through grasping at the self.
The inner meaning of Chöd is imagining cutting one's body and from one's heart dedicating it away to different kinds of non-human entities. Therefore, the practice of Chöd is dedicating one's body and giving it away to others.
The outer meaning of Chöd, is to cut away ties with others. One lives alone in isolation.

ii) The reason it is appropriate to give [them] away in a definite manner [3.12]

1' Due to abandoning attachment to all and giving [them] away, one will attain nirvana [3.12(ab)]

2' As sentient beings are the supreme field, it is appropriate to give [such] away to them [3.12(cd)]

There are valid reasons for giving away one's body, possessions and roots of virtue. It is an appropriate thing to do:
<p><i>3.12 a. By giving all, I shall transcend sorrow</i> <i>b. And my mind will accomplish nirvana.</i> <i>C. All will be given similarly;</i> <i>d. It is best that I give to all sentient beings.</i></p>
What one wants, is to reach a state of existence where there is no more suffering whatsoever. By dedicating one's body, possessions and roots of virtue accumulated in the three times away to others, what one gets in return is the sorrowless state.
A) Since the sorrowless state is what one gets from giving, and since the sorrowless state is what one wants, therefore, when [one combines these two reasons, the conclusion is that], it is highly appropriate then, to give these away.
B) The teachings state that one dedicates all of these to all sentient beings:
B1) Whether one dedicates one's body and gives it to others or not, one has to leave it at the time of death [anyway].
B2) Whether one dedicates and gives away one's possessions or not, one has to part with them one day [anyway].
B3) Whether one dedicates one's roots of virtue to others or not, these will be destroyed by anger anyway. Even if it is not destroyed by anger, once it ripens and one experiences the fruitional effect of that virtue, it ceases anyway.
For these reasons, [again] it is also highly appropriate to dedicate them to others.
Since one now has this opportunity to be able to dedicate them to others, while the opportunity is still there before they are gone/ lost, it becomes the very best thing to do, to dedicate them for others.

iii) How to practice once one has given them away [3.13 – 3.15(ab)]

1' From this day forward, discarding the [thought] “My body is independent.” [3.13]

*3.13 Having already given this body as what makes them happy
For the pleasure of all embodied beings,
Depending on what pleases them,
Constantly killing, abusing, or beating it,*

After one has completely dedicated one's body, possessions and roots of virtue to others from one's heart, then one has to train and develop the thought that, others can do whatever with them.

However others want to use one's body, they can do so, by beating it, killing it or criticizing it.

The idea is, one trains one's mind such that, others can do whatever they want with one's body.

Since one has dedicate one's body completely from one's heart to others, then one needs to project this intention/ will, that allows them to do whatever they want with it.

2' Explaining the meaning of this extensively [3.14]

*3.14 a. Although they may play with my body
b. And make it a basis of jest and blame,
c. Because I have already given this body of mine to them
d. Why do I act with concern?*

Whether others use one's body for play, amusement or as a basis for ridicule, making fun of it in the presence of many other people, since one has given it completely to others, then one should not have the idea that, what they are doing is bad, etc.

The point here is, to cut the idea thinking: “This body is mine”, to cut the sense of ownership/ possession of one's body.

One gets emotionally very excited when one is praised. When one is criticized by someone pointing out one's faults, one gets emotionally very disturbed.

When someone points to some nice feature that one's body possesses, one again gets very excited. When someone points out certain faults in one's body, one gets very upset.

Therefore, one [gets involved in] this emotional roller-coaster, feeling [the turmoils of] the ups and downs.

All such turmoils come because of [one's] very strong self-cherishing. If one does not have self-cherishing or one has less of it, then the corresponding emotional turmoils of ups and downs will also be lesser.

If one can think along these lines [of reasoning], then perhaps one would not experience such extreme mental upheavals.

One would also [have more mental space to] to develop the thoughts to think more about/ concentrate more on others.

3' Applying this to appropriate activities [3.15(ab)]

*3.15 a. I shall make it do whatever action
b. That will not cause any harm.*

One should use one's body to engage in actions that are not harmful but are beneficial to others.

b) Aspiring for virtue to become a cause that [is inexhaustible] [3.15(cd) – 3.17]

i) Aspiring for [virtue] to act solely as a cause for the benefit of others [3.15(cd)]

*3.15 c. When anyone encounters me
d. May it never be meaningless for him.*

Here, one dedicates one's merit to be a source of inexhaustible virtue. One trains in the thought thinking: “Whoever were to think of me, focuses their attention on me, may it never become meaningless for them.”

ii) Aspiring for [virtue] to act as a cause for such thoughts [to become inexhaustible] [3.16]

*3.16 a. If in those who encounter me
b. A faithful or an angry mind arises,
c. May that eternally become the cause
d. For fulfilling all their aims.*

Here, the verse is saying that, it does not matter who, whether the person gets angry at and wants to harm one, or the person has faith and devotion in one, wanting to help one, just by that connection, may it become meaningful for them.

One dedicates that, through such connections with oneself, may all their wishes/ desires get fulfilled.

Regardless of the intentions/ attitudes of the persons who focuses their attention on one/ who encounters one, from one's side, one dedicates and prays that, may that connection become a cause to fulfill all their wishes.

iii) Aspiring for virtue to act as a cause for the action [to become inexhaustible] [3.17]

*3.17 a. May all who say bad things to me
b. Or cause me any other harm,
c. And those who mock and insult me,
d. Have the fortune to become enlightened.*

This verse is saying that, whoever criticizes one/ abuses one verbally in front of one, or who harms one's possessions, or insults one behind one's back, one dedicates and prays for them to have the fortune to become enlightened.

One dedicates one's roots of virtue such that, whoever comes into contact with one, just by seeing, hearing or remembering, may all of them achieve enlightenment.

Bear in mind the context of the explanations, these are practices for training the mind prior to adopting bodhicitta through a ritual. Therefore, such exercises for training the mind are essential.

Without training the mind in such a way, there is no way to adopt bodhicitta through a ritual.

c) Aspiring for virtue to become a cause for material resources [3.18 – 3.22]

i) Aspiring for oneself to act as a cause [providing] all the necessities of others [3.18 – 3.20]

*3.18 a. May I be a protector for those without one,
b. A helmsman for travelers, and
c. A ship, a boat, and a bridge
d. For all who wish to cross.*

Here, one thinks and trains one's mind to become a savior for those who lack one, a guide to show them the path, for those who wish to travel, to become a boat, bridge and a ship.

*3.19 a. May I be an island for those who seek one
b. And a lamp for those desiring one.
c. May I be a bed for all who desire one
d. And a slave for all who want an embodied slave.*

For travelers who are tired after traveling for a long time who really need a place to rest, [one dedicates oneself] as an island/ a place for them to rest.

[One dedicates] oneself as a lamp for those who are ignorant as to what needs to be adopted and what needs to be discarded.

[One dedicates oneself] to become a bed to those who need one, a slave/ servant for those who need one or who are sick. One becomes a caregiver/ servant to the sick and old.

[One dedicates oneself] to act like a slave just like how one would follow the orders of a king.

One acts like these as a servant to others.

*3.20 a. May I be a wish-fulfilling jewel, a good vase,
b. Knowledge- mantras that accomplish, and great medicine.
c. May I become a wish-fulfilling tree
d. And a wish-fulfilling cow for embodied beings.*

Continuing explanations on the chronology of a great eon:

A great eon is made up of four different eons, [of which,] the eon of abiding is specifically mentioned.
This eon of abiding itself is also made up of [twenty] intermediate eons, [of which again,] the first phase of [these twenty phases] is mentioned.
This is when the eon starts with beings having infinite lifespan, which gradually decreases all the way to ten years.
This span of time is ninety <i>dun-jyur</i> (90 x 100,000,000), which is nine billion years. During this period, four Buddhas have descended in this world.
When the average lifespan of the human beings in this world reaches ten years, there will be an eon of famine, an eon of sickness and an eon of weapons. [During those times,] there will be widespread suffering, [according to <i>Abhidharmakosa</i>].
Those sentient beings will begin to feel extremely disenchanted with violence and killing. They then start to abandon them.
As a result of the roots of virtue that comes from abandoning killing and so forth, the average lifespan of human beings will again start to increase, from ten years and so forth going all the way up to an average lifespan of eighty thousand years.
The first and the last intermediate eons last nine billion years each. The eighteen intermediate eons in-between are made up of [a combination of] an ascending and a descending period.
It is only the first and the last eons that are each a descending and an ascending eon respectively. That is, the first intermediate eon starts [descending] from a [period of] infinite lifespan ending in ten years.
The last intermediate eon [starts from a ten year lifespan and ends with a lifespan of eighty-thousand years.]
The eighteen eons in between are made up of a cycle of ups and downs. The period of each [up and down of these eighteen] cycles is equivalent to the first or last eon. Therefore, each ascent lasts 4.5 billion years, each descent lasts 4.5 billion years.
In the first intermediate eon, human lifespan starts from an infinite-years lifespan going all the way down to an average of ten years, the rate of descent is said to be very slow [lasting nine billion years].
As the next [half] cycle of the second intermediate eon starts from ten to eighty-thousand years, the rate of ascent is quick, [lasting 4.5 billion years].
When the human lifespan reaches an average of eighty-thousand years, there will be a descent again [into the second half of the second intermediate eon], the rate of decline is also very fast, [lasting 4.5 billion years].
In the second intermediate eon, when the lifespan reaches eighty-thousand years [from ten years], from there it will decline.
When the decline starts, that is when Maitreya Buddha will descend.
It is said that during this time of Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings, whoever was to get ordained, builds representations or images of Maitreya Buddha, meditates on Maitreya Buddha, recites His mantra, all these are causes to be born at the time when He descends into the world. [These persons will] become His direct disciples and achieve enlightenment.
In all these intermediate eons, it is said that the remaining thousand Buddhas would not descend when the lifespan is increasing from ten to eighty-thousand years.
They would only descend when the average lifespans are decreasing from between eighty-thousand to ten years.
They would also not descend when the average lifespans of human beings are below ten years old.
Even though there are twenty intermediate eons that form the eon of abiding, the thousand Buddhas will descend during this period only when the lifespans of human beings [are declining] from between eighty-thousand to ten years old.
This is just the twenty intermediate eons that make up the eon of abiding. Therefore, the <i>Fortunate Eon</i> refers to the thousand Buddhas that will descend during this eon of abiding, which is made up of these twenty intermediate eons.
There are also twenty intermediate eons of the eon of formation, destruction and nothingness. During these sixty intermediate eons, no Buddhas will descend.
Even though the thousand Buddhas will descend during the eon of abiding, it is only half of the time [that they will do so].
As for founder of this present era, Buddha Shakyamuni, He did not abide for a long time, [only eighty short years]. His teachings are said to survive for only five thousand years.
During the eon of destruction, the destruction of the <i>abode</i> of sentient beings will take one intermediate eon [the twentieth].
The destruction of the <i>sentient beings</i> who inhabit those abodes will take nineteen intermediate eons [first to nineteenth].
The sentient beings that will [gradually cease to exist are respectively,] the sentient beings from the hells, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, demi-gods, desire realm gods and the form realm gods of the first three concentrations.

In terms of the abode that [will be] destroyed, the first will be the desire realm and form realm first concentration, which will be destroyed by fire. The abode of the second concentration will be destroyed by water, the abode of the third concentration will be destroyed by wind.
However, the abodes above the third concentration of the form realm, [that is, the form realm forth concentration and all the formless realms,] will not be destroyed by the elements.
Those sentient beings of the hells, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, demi-gods, desire realm gods and form realm gods of the first three concentrations will [become extinct]. Then where do they go?
For example, those hell beings who have completely exhausted their negative karmas to be born in the hells, some will take rebirth as a god at the forth concentration of the form realm.
If the karma to be born as a hell being is not exhausted, then they will be reborn in the hell of another world-system.
During the twenty intermediate eons of nothingness, there is literally nothing, where no new world [of that particular world system] will form during that time. It is only after the eon of nothingness will the eon of formation begin again.
The world will initially form, starting with the wind element, followed by fire, water, then earth. The physical abode will then gradually form, which will take one intermediate eon, [the first of the twenty eon of formation].
The sentient beings that will inhabit this world will come into being/ reborn into this world and will reside in it. This takes nineteen intermediate eons.
The twenty intermediate eons of each of the four periods of formation, abiding, destruction and nothingness makes eighty intermediate eons. These eighty intermediate eons collectively form one great eon.
Verse 1.5 at the beginning of this text states: <i>Just as a flash of lightning brightly illuminates For an instant within the clouds on a dark night, Likewise in this world, through the might of the Buddha, Merit and intelligence occasionally occur for once.</i>
Based on what is now known about the formation of the universe and when the Buddhas come, one now sees that the eons of darkness [where there are no teachings] are [extremely] long.
Comparatively speaking, the eon of illumination, where there is the illumination of Dharma, is very short.
If one thinks about this, one sees how difficult it is to be born at the time when the Buddha has actually descended into the world, taught the Dharma and one has met the Dharma. Above that, one also gets to practice it.
Even though it may only be a small practice, but even being able to do just that is [incredibly] fortunate, as the verse says: <i>“Just as a flash of lightning brightly illuminates for an instant within the clouds on a dark night.”</i>
The earlier presentation [of when the eon of famine and so forth occur] is according to [Vasubandhu's] <i>Abhidharmakosa</i> .
In Asanga's treatises, he said that when the average lifespan of human beings in this world reaches thirty years, that is when the eon of famine will occur.
When the average lifespan of human beings reaches twenty years, the eon of sickness will occur.
When the average lifespan of human beings reaches ten years, the eon of weapons will occur.
It is mentioned in some teachings that, one offers weapons so as not to be born during the eon of weapons. There is a tradition where one offers weapons that are inserted into holy objects.
This is like saying that, one is giving these weapons up and offers it. This acts as a cause to not be reborn during the eon of weapons.
It is said that, sentient beings who are born during the eon of weapons, the moment they come into contact with each other, they get upset and become extremely violent.
Anything that they pick up becomes a weapon and they would start hacking each other, so there is a lot of suffering.
The main cause for not being born during the eon of weapons is to abandon killing and to cultivate love and compassion.
By keeping this in mind, as much as possible, one should guard one's ethical discipline and cultivate love and compassion.

The more faith one has in one's guru, the more profit one gets:

The topic of the meditation program now is correctly relying on a virtuous friend. Sometimes it is helpful to memorize certain scriptural citations as a basis for meditating on the topic. For example, there is a verse by Gyalwa Ensapa:

*In short, whatever great or small realization one generates, this is commensurate with having meditated with little or great faith in one's fully-qualified gurus.
To the qualified valid gurus, may I be able to complete the commitment without obstacles, and look at the gurus' qualities with no mistakes.*

Therefore, Gyalwa Ensapa is saying that, whether one achieves small or great realizations, these are dependent on whether one's faith is small or great.

For this reason, with one's fully-qualified guru, who is the source of all attainments, focus and reflect only on his good qualities, do not focus and seize on his faults.

By holding onto to a strong commitment to only focus on his qualities and not his faults, one thinks:

"May I fulfill and bring this commitment to completion."

This is the same when one examines the first verse of *The Foundation of All Good Qualities*, where it says:

*The foundation of all good qualities is the kind and perfect, pure Guru;
Correct devotion to him is the root of the path.
By clearly seeing this and applying great effort,
Please bless me to rely upon him with great respect.*

Meditation on the topic of correctly relying on the virtuous friend is mainly **cultivating faith in the guru**.

Then what is the **sign of having faith in one's guru**? How does one know whether one has faith in one's guru?

Perhaps it is this: *If one gets reprimanded/ scolded by one's guru, and one is able to, for example, see and understand that as a mantra recitation of a wrathful deity, then this is a sign that one has faith in one's virtuous friend.*

I seem to remember that this was said by the master Padampa Sangye.

He also said that, to be struck/ hit by one's guru is like receiving an empowerment. There are some empowerments that one receives by generating the thought that such-and-such obstacles/ hindrances are removed.

It is said that, getting hit/ struck by one's guru is like receiving an empowerment that clears away one's obstacles.

Of course, *the guru has to be qualified*. What a qualified guru does is that, *he is the destroyer of one's three mental poisons*.

One's guru is there to destroy one's ignorance, anger, attachment and one's self-cherishing. That is the function of one's guru.

Again, the guru has to be valid and qualified for this to apply. The disciple/ student also has to be qualified as well.

But in this day and time, it is extremely difficult to find really qualified teachers/ gurus. It is also extremely rare to have students who are qualified:

*In this day and time, people consider those gurus who hurt their self-cherishing to be bad [gurus],
whereas those gurus who support their self-cherishing to be good [gurus].*

*They consider those gurus whose wishes accord with the wishes of the students to be good [gurus],
whereas if the directions [the gurus] give do not accord with the student's wishes, then they are considered to be bad [gurus].*

*What I think in these days and time is that, the role of the guru and student has been reversed,
essentially, the student now becomes the guru of the guru.*

Khenrinpoche: when you think really carefully, it has become like that!

Nowadays, it has come to a point in time where the ways gurus act and speak, have to take so much into considerations how the students think and feel. The gurus cannot even speak directly, honestly and truthfully with the students.

In [the actual practice of guru devotion], this should not be the case.

Of course, the guru in question has to be qualified. In the context of having a qualified guru, if one has faith, then one would have no difficulties to accomplish, follow and fulfill the advice given by one's guru.

If one has faith, then getting reprimanded and scolded by one's guru do not become an issue/ problem. Not only would one not feel bad about being reprimanded/ scolded, if fact, one feel's happy.

This is because, one sees the point, that one's particular fault/ mistake has been exposed. Therefore, one can change.

It is only through such a process that one can progress and actually make changes or gain realizations.

Therefore, this verse from Gyalwa Ensapa is very effective for one's mind, one should memorize it and using that as a basis, reflect on it.
In short, whether one gets great or small realizations is dependent on whether one's faith/ devotion is great or small.
This is something one has to conclude for oneself: it all boils down to faith . One has to see for oneself that, one's own level of progress and attainments are commensurate with one's faith. One has to see for oneself how:
<i>If one has more faith, one gets more profit.</i>
This is something to keep in mind and think about as it is very important. This is because, the teachings on guru devotion always mention that, faith is very important. When one has faith, everything comes, everything works. This is quite evident:
<i>When one has faith in something, whatever it may be, this [faith] will urge one on to want to obtain, learn or understand it.</i>
When one meditates on guru devotion, primarily, it is cultivating in faith.

ii) Aspiring for more extensive times and functions [3.21]

<p>3.21 a. <i>Just like the great elements, such as earth,</i> b. <i>And like space,</i> c. <i>May I always be many varieties of bases of sustenance</i> d. <i>For the boundless sentient beings.</i></p>
Essentially, these verses of dedication are verses for generating very extensive aspiration.

iii) Aspiring for no discontinuity in object and times [3.22]

<p>3.22 a. <i>Likewise, until all attain nirvana,</i> b. <i>May I also be the source of sustenance</i> c. <i>For all the realms of sentient beings</i> d. <i>That reach unto the ends of space.</i></p>
This is essentially saying that, for as long as sentient beings exist, then may one be the source of sustenance for them.
Here it is making extensive aspirations to be of benefit to sentient beings for a very long time. One is projecting the will/ intention in making the aspiration to actualize that.
Prior to adopting/ generating bodhicitta, one has to train the mind in the preliminaries. Dedicating one's body, possessions and roots of virtue is one method. Initially one trains to do that for all sentient beings mentally.
Even after one has generated bodhicitta, one has to continually train one's mind to be able give/ dedicate them away.
Through this training, there will come a time when one will actually be able to dedicate and give these away.
In fact, there must come a time when one must give these away in actuality.
In the explanations of the Stages of the path to enlightenment, it was taught that, one should make use of one's body after one has dedicated it from the bottom of one's heart to all sentient beings.
Even though one still has to use one's body, one still needs to take care of it by eating, putting on clothes and so forth, but all these have to be done with the motivation of benefiting others.
The teachings say that one should keep this in mind as much as possible whenever one utilizes these various objects of enjoyments, to generate/ motivate the thought that one is doing it for others.
This concludes making prayers of dedication in training the mind, the preliminaries before adopting bodhicitta through a ritual.

b. The actual [taking of bodhisattva vows] [3.23 – 3.24]

<p>3.23 a. <i>Just as the previous Sugatas</i> b. <i>Generated the mind of enlightenment,</i> c. <i>And just as they dwelt according to the stages</i> d. <i>In the trainings of a bodhisattva;</i></p>
Verse 3.23 is saying that, taking the Buddhas and bodhisattva abiding on the grounds as examples, just as how they generated bodhicitta and abide in the the training of bodhisattvas,
<p>3.24 a. <i>Likewise for the benefit of migrating beings,</i> b. <i>I shall generate the mind of enlightenment,</i> c. <i>And likewise I shall</i> d. <i>Learn the trainings according to the stages.</i></p>
3.24(ab) is for generating the aspirational mind of enlightenment. 3.24(cd) is taking the engaged bodhisattva vow.

Essentially, this verse is saying that, just as one generates the aspirational mind of enlightenment and the engaged mind of enlightenment, likewise, one will also abide in the bodhisattva trainings.
One can take the bodhisattva vows from a master who has the vows. If not, one can take the vows in the presence of a visualized field of merit. In its presence, one adopts bodhicitta using, for example, these two verses.
In terms of the ritual in these two verses, one is adopting both the aspirational and the engaged bodhicitta all at once.
Khenrinpoche: But I myself have a question: when one receives the vow in one's continuum, does one firstly receives the aspirational bodhicitta that comes with a commitment and then the engaged bodhisattva vow. Or are these two received at the same time?
In the Stages of the Path literature, these two are adopted sequentially: If one is able to [keep] the commitments, then one first adopts the aspirational bodhicitta that comes with commitment.
Subsequently, if one feels that one can practice the perfections, the deeds of the bodhisattva, it is only then does one take the bodhisattva vow.
But when one examines the ritual words here in 3.23 and 3.24, both the aspirational bodhicitta with the commitment and the bodhisattva vow are taken at the same time through one ritual.
So my question is, when one receives the vow, are they received sequentially or simultaneously?
In 3.24(d), it says: <i>Likewise I shall learn the trainings according to the stages.</i>
One has to train the bodhisattva deeds in stages. For example, the practice of dedicating/ giving one's body, is only done mentally when one is an ordinary person on the ordinary path.
But when one abides on the grounds, it is said that one would be able to give one's body away without any difficulties.
If one gives away one's body when one is not ready, this is actually a fault, a mistake.
But when one is ready, for example, when one is a bodhisattva abiding on the grounds, then the teachings say that the bodhisattvas are able to give away their bodies as easily as giving a plate of vegetables to others.
Here, it is referring to the practices of a generous attitude and the practices of increasing it. This is to reduce miserliness.
When one reaches a point where there is no longer any miserliness in one's mind, then giving anything away like one's body would be easy.

c. Concluding actions [3.25 – 3.34]

After adopting the vow, one concludes by rejoicing that one has adopted bodhicitta. One rejoices in oneself as well as causing others to rejoice as well.	
1) Cultivating joy oneself [3.25 – 3.33] a) The accomplishment of one's own welfare [3.25 – 3.28] i) Cultivating joy by uplifting the mind [3.25 – 3.26]	
3.25 a. <i>Those intelligent ones have concluded lucidly seizing</i> b. <i>The mind of enlightenment in this way,</i> c. <i>But, in order to increase it,</i> d. <i>They should highly praise it in the following manner:</i>	3.26 a. <i>Now my life is fruitful.</i> b. <i>I have attained a good human existence,</i> c. <i>Today I have been born in the buddha lineage.</i> d. <i>I have become a child of the Buddha.</i>
It is important to rejoice in the benefits of bodhicitta through reflecting on its benefits prior to generating bodhicitta.	
After one has generated bodhicitta, it is also very important to rejoice that one has generated bodhicitta, as well as uplifting one's mind.	
3.26 (ab): In this time while one is still alive, one has had this opportunity to generate bodhicitta and take the vows. After having taken the bodhisattva vow, this is what one should reflect on, on one's own. This is something very meaningful.	
Especially when this time, when one has this precious human rebirth, due to generating bodhicitta, one has now become a <i>Child of the Victorious Ones.</i>	

ii) Having found that mind, cultivating conscientiousness [3.27]

3.27 a. <i>Now whatever happens,</i> b. <i>I will act to not sully</i> c. <i>This flawless, holy buddha lineage,</i> d. <i>Initiating actions concordant with this lineage.</i>
One thinks that, after having taken the bodhisattva vow, in whatever one does, one will make all of one's actions harmonious/ concordant with the Buddhas' lineage. This means that, whatever one does, it is for the benefit of all sentient beings.

This verse is also saying that, after taking the bodhisattva vow, as much as possible, in whatever one does, one will not be doing it for one's own selfish reasons. One will not allow oneself to be stained by the bodhisattva downfalls and faults.

Therefore, as much as possible in whatever one does, one does so with the thought of benefiting others, as well as not mixing them with one's personal selfish purposes.

One should also be conscientious to check whether one is committing any of the downfalls and faults of the bodhisattva vow.

The main thing is, after having taken the bodhisattva vow, one should continually rely on mindfulness and vigilance to ensure that whatever one does, one does so with the thought to benefit others and as much as possible, to ensure that these are not done due to self-cherishing.

iii) Cultivating joy by gaining the conviction of the difficulties to find this mind [of mind generation] [3.28]

3.28 a. *Just like a blind man*
 b. *Discovering a jewel in a heap of rubbish,*
 c. *Likewise by some coincidence*
 d. *This mind of enlightenment has been born within me.*

The verse is saying that, the bodhisattva vow that one has taken is as rare as a blind man who finds treasure in a rubbish bin.

If one thinks about this, one can see that this is very true. This is because one is essentially “rubbish”, in that, one's mind is completely filled up with the garbage of the afflictions of the three mental poisons.

Despite that, at this time and age, one has this opportunity to reflect on bodhicitta and take the bodhisattva vow. This is indeed very rare. ***This is due to the power of one's own merit, as well as [due to the power of] one's virtuous friend.***

Despite one's afflictions and the great demon of self-cherishing, one has the opportunity to think of bodhicitta, generate it and take its vow. This is indeed very very rare. This is like something which is impossible becoming a possibility.

Here, one is rejoicing by understanding the rarity of such an occurrence.

b) The accomplishment of others' welfare [3.29 – 3.33]

i) The power to alleviate the suffering of sentient beings [3.29 – 3.31(ab)]

1' Destroying migrators' lord of death [3.29(ab)]

When one actualizes bodhicitta, this will fulfill all of one's wishes, it will enable one to fulfill the wishes of others.

[These are shown in] the following verses, which rejoice in them:

3.29 a. *This is also the supreme ambrosia*
 b. *That overcomes the lord of death of migrating beings.*

Bodhicitta can overcome the lord of death. With it, if one shows the path to/ teach sentient beings, they can be placed in the undying state of Great/ Full Enlightenment. Bodhicitta is like the nectar that bestows this undying state.

Bodhicitta can also stop untimely death: If one thinks about it, in most cases, untimely is caused by self-cherishing. Therefore, if one has bodhicitta, one will be able to avoid untimely deaths.

2' Destroying poverty [3.29(cd)]

Bodhicitta also destroys the experience of poverty of sentient beings:

3.29 c. *This is also the inexhaustible treasure*
 d. *That eliminates all poverty of migrating beings.*

When one achieves the eighth ground, one achieves mastery/ control over many phenomena, including life, possessions and so forth. Such a bodhisattva on the eighth ground is said to possess innumerable resources like the *Sky-treasury*.

With it, he can eliminate the poverty of sentient beings. Such a mastery over the resources that he has is due to his bodhicitta.

3' Destroying disease [3.30(ab)]

Bodhicitta can also eliminate sicknesses of sentient beings:

3.30 a. *This is the supreme medicine*
 b. *That quells the disease of migrating beings too.*

In the medical literature, there are four hundred and four kinds of diseases and sicknesses that are mentioned.

These diseases and sicknesses are caused by the three mental poisons.

Therefore, they can generally be classified into three classes of disorder: 1) Wind disorders (*rlung*), the subtle energies of the body, arise from ignorance. 2) Bile disorders arise from anger. 3) Phlegm disorders arise from attachment.

Among them: 1) One hundred and one do not last for a long time, 2) One hundred and one are related to karma, 3) One hundred and one are related to spirit interferences, and 4) One hundred and one affect the life-force.
Since these four hundred and four types of sicknesses and diseases have their sources in the three mental poisons, the bodhisattvas overcome them with meditation on love and so forth.
They pacify these sicknesses and diseases that sentient beings experience by giving them teachings on love, the twelve links of dependent-origination and ugliness to help them overcome these mental poisons, the source of all the diseases mentioned.

4' Destroying the general sufferings of cyclic existence [3.30(cd)]

5' Destroying the sufferings specific to the lower realms [3.31(ab)]

Bodhicitta can destroy the sufferings of cyclic existence in general and specifically the sufferings of the lower realms:
<i>3.30 c. It is the tree of rest for migrating beings d. Wandering and weary on the path of conditioned existence.</i>
This shows how bodhicitta destroys the sufferings of cyclic existence in general.
Since bodhisattvas have to work for the welfare of others, it is stated in the teachings that, bodhisattvas should therefore train in the paths of the Hearers and Solitary Realizers, to help them achieve their respective enlightenments.
They therefore help those who are weary in cyclic existence by showing them the path of the persons of middling capacity, who can then achieve liberation from cyclic existence through their respective enlightenments.
By depending on the power of bodhicitta, the bodhisattvas show some sentient beings the path of the Hearers and Solitary Realizers, enabling them to liberate themselves from cyclic existence and achieve the Hearers and Solitary Realizers' enlightenments.
<i>3.31 a. It is the universal platform that leads all migrating beings b. To freedom from the bad migrations.</i>
This shows that bodhicitta can destroy the sufferings of the lower realms in particular.
Bodhisattvas show the persons of small capacities the way to accomplish virtue, what they need to adopt and discard. In doing so, they protect these sentient beings from falling into the lower realms. All these happen due to their bodhicitta.

Student: How would someone who generates a contrived bodhicitta through a ritual be called a bodhisattva? Is there a difference between the term Buddha lineage and Mahayana lineage?

Khenrinpoche: One is only the Child of the Buddhas when one generates bodhicitta. Prior to generating bodhicitta, one is not called a Child of the Buddhas. When great compassion arises in the mind, then the Mahayana lineage is awakened, but that is not called the Buddha lineage.

Student: Is it all right to say that, at this stage of generating bodhicitta through a ritual, it is still contrived bodhicitta?

Khenrinpoche: The discussion in the text is done from the perspective of someone who has developed the actual uncontrived bodhicitta.

Student: Does he generate uncontrived bodhicitta upon taking this ritual, or during calm abiding? This is because, I understand that uncontrived bodhicitta is generated in meditative equipoise of calm abiding. One generates the uncontrived aspirational bodhicitta at that point while in meditative equipoise.

Khenrinpoche: One needs to have developed calm abiding prior to actualizing uncontrived bodhicitta. That discussion [in the text] is not about actualizing bodhicitta within meditative equipoise. If you don't understand this, then listen one more time: It is said that, one needs to have calm abiding to actualize bodhicitta. But there isn't a necessary pervasion that bodhicitta is developed within calm abiding. That is a separate discussion.

The discussion here in Chapter Three is about *Adopting bodhicitta through a ritual*. One generates the aspirational bodhicitta that comes with a commitment, and then one takes on the bodhisattva vow. It is **within that context** that one generates bodhicitta.

Whether bodhicitta is developed within calm abiding or not, this can be an object of discussion, as this is not stated.

What is stated in the teachings is that, to actualize bodhicitta, one must have calm abiding.

On the basis of adopting bodhicitta through a ritual in this context here, one develops the actual uncontrived bodhicitta.

ii) The power to dispel the obscurations – the causes [of suffering] [3.31(cd) – 3.32(ab)]

1' Dispelling afflictive obscurations [3.31(cd)]

2' Dispelling the obscurations to knowledge [3.32(ab)]

Bodhicitta is also said to eliminate the afflictive and knowledge obscurations:
<p>3.31 c. <i>It is the dawning moon of the mind</i> d. <i>That dispels the torment of afflictions of migrating beings.</i></p>
This shows that bodhicitta eliminates the afflictive obscurations.
<p>3.32 a. <i>It is the great sun that annihilates</i> b. <i>The cataracts of ignorance of migrating beings.</i></p>
This shows that bodhicitta can also eliminate the knowledge obscurations.
Previously, it was mentioned how the bodhisattvas show the path to liberation to those persons of middling capacities, for them to achieve liberation from cyclic existence.
Bodhisattvas also show the persons of small capacities the methods that enable them to achieve high status: a good rebirth as a human or as a celestial being.
But the ultimate goal of the bodhisattvas is to lead all beings to the state of full enlightenment. To do that, bodhisattvas have to help sentient beings overcome their manifest afflictions. This will enable sentient beings to develop bodhicitta.
The teachings likened bodhicitta to the cool moonlight that can dispel the discomfort of heat in that, bodhicitta can help protect and eliminate the heat of the afflictions.
Here, bodhicitta has the power to eliminate those coarse manifest afflictions such as miserliness, bad ethics, anger, attachment, jealousy, pride and so forth. This is the meaning of 3.31(cd).
It is also said that, bodhicitta can eliminate the knowledge obscurations. That which interferes/ hinders the achievement of omniscience, is called the knowledge obscurations. But as one knows, the various Buddhist philosophical systems/ tenets posit knowledge obscurations differently.
Bodhicitta can destroy the knowledge obscurations just like how the sun can eliminate the darkness of the three-billion-fold world-systems.
The only [method] that can destroy the knowledge obscurations is the wisdom realizing selflessness. But that which gives this wisdom the power to do that is bodhicitta. Without it, this wisdom realizing selflessness does not have the power to do so
When this wisdom realizing selflessness is conjoined with bodhicitta, then it can eliminate the knowledge obscurations.

iii) The power to accomplish all benefits and bliss [3.32(cd) – 3.33]

1' Accomplishing all benefits [3.32(cd)]

<p>3.32 c. <i>It is the quintessential butter</i> d. <i>From the churning of the milk of the holy Dharma.</i></p>
--

Buddha turned the three turnings of the Wheel of Dharma, through that, so many teachings were given by Him.
It is commonly said that there are eighty-four thousand teachings given by Buddha, but if one were to ask what the very heart essence of all these teachings were, then it is the ultimate good heart, bodhicitta.
This is just like butter being the very essence of milk, if one churns it, what one gets at its essence/ core, is butter.
Therefore, the ultimate purpose of hearing, reflecting and practicing on all of the Buddha's teachings is to develop and actualize the good heart, bodhicitta. The teachings say, once it is developed, then it will enable one to achieve all the benefits.

2' Accomplishing all bliss [3.33]

Bodhicitta can bring about the achievement of all happiness:
<p><i>3.33 a. For all those guests who are migrating beings journeying on the path of cyclic existence</i> <i>b. Who wish to utilize the resources of happiness,</i> <i>c. This will place the great travelers of sentient beings</i> <i>d. In supreme happiness and satisfy them.</i></p>
The great travelers here, are the six types of limitless sentient beings. The path of cyclic existence is the entire [six realms], starting from the lowest avici hell, up to the peak of cyclic existence.
Bodhicitta is that which will enable these sentient beings to partake of all the enjoyments of aryas.
The bodhisattvas abide in cyclic existence to work for sentient beings:
A great traveler is one who does not stay in one place but travels very frequently from one place to another.
The six types of sentient beings in cyclic existence are like that, they do not abide in one state of existence, but are constantly moving from one to another in cyclic existence. Khenrinpoche: Like a big customer of a hotel, who comes very frequently.
Bodhicitta can actualize all the wishes/ benefits of these sentient beings.
The verses from 3.25 – 3.33 are related to [cultivating] rejoicing oneself . Verse 3.34 is inducing others to rejoice:

2) Causing others to develop joy [3.34]

<p><i>3.34 a. Today in the presence of all the Protectors</i> <i>b. I invite the migrating beings to be guests</i> <i>c. In happiness until they attain the state of Sugata.</i> <i>d. May gods, anti- gods, and so forth be joyful.</i></p>
The “I” here refers to the the person who has developed and adopted bodhicitta through this ritual. This person is inviting all sentient beings to be one's guests.
This is in the presence of all the Buddhas and bodhisattva. With them as witnesses, one undertakes the [responsibility] in pledging to work for [sentient beings'] temporal and ultimate benefits/ goals.
This is what one has done, during the ritual when one adopts bodhicitta. As such, one induces/ asks that all the gods, anti-gods and so forth to rejoice in what one has done. In doing so, they will accumulate merits.
It is said that these gods and demi-gods will protect one when one is doing one's practices.
This is the third chapter, [the chapter on Completely Upholding the Mind of Enlightenment].

B. The way to train in the conduct of the perfections

1. The way to cultivate conscientiousness: The branch that prevents the deterioration of mind generation and [its associated] conduct. [Chapter Four]
2. The way to train in ethics: A specific explanation given with regards to mindfulness and introspection – the methods for purely guarding all virtuous dharmas. [Chapter Five]
3. Explaining the way to train in the remaining four perfections –
 - A. The way to train in patience. [Chapter Six]
 - B. The way to train in joyous effort. [Chapter Seven]
 - C. The way to train in concentration included in the [mundane] and [supramundane] calm abidings [Chapter Eight]
 - D. The way to train in wisdom – the nature of insight [Chapter Nine]
4. Explaining, by way of the branch of dedication, the way to train in giving away body, material wealth, and the roots of virtue for the welfare of others. [Chapter Ten – Generosity]

Chapter Four: Teachings on Conscientiousness

B. The way to train in the conduct of the perfections

1. The way to cultivate conscientiousness: The branch that prevents the deterioration of mind generation and [its associated] conduct.

A. Explaining the chapter's material [4.1 – 4.48]

a. A brief presentation of the way to cultivate conscientiousness [4.1]

The main essence of Chapters Four and Five is practicing conscientiousness and vigilance [respectively].	
Earlier, one has adopted bodhicitta through a ritual, particularly, one has taken the bodhisattva vow. This has many disciplines/ precepts/ trainings to guard. One has to guard them without transgressing them.	
To do that, one needs conscientiousness and vigilance, hence, Chapters Four and Five [are taught].	
After adopting bodhicitta through the ritual, it is important to not let the bodhicitta that has been developed to degenerate, as well as not transgressing the trainings of the bodhisattva vow. For this reason, one needs to apply conscientiousness.	
Verse 4.1 is a [synopsis] of the meditation on conscientiousness:	
<p><i>4.1 a. Having firmly upheld the mind of enlightenment in this way,</i> <i>b. A Victors' Child should always make effort</i> <i>c. To not transgress the trainings</i> <i>d. Without ever wavering.</i></p>	
Earlier, one has [been taught the generation of] bodhicitta. In [those sections,] there are the preliminaries, the actual generation of bodhicitta and the conclusion.	
After that, without postponing the intention of wanting practice the trainings, thinking that one would do so in the future, one applies conscientiousness thinking: "I am going to practice this right away."	
Here, it is very important to apply conscientiousness to counteract distractions, laziness and so forth.	
Conscientiousness is placing one's mind on a virtuous object without letting the mind become "contaminated".	
This is essentially a derivative of joyous effort. Here, one is applying effort.	
After taking the bodhisattva vow, one has to guard one's trainings without letting them degenerate. The trainings here are essentially the <i>Six Perfections</i> and the <i>Four Ways of Gathering</i> sentient beings into one's fold.	
If one has only generated aspirational bodhicitta that comes with a commitment, one has to abandon the four black dharmas and cultivate the four white dharmas.	
Above this, if one has taken the bodhisattva vow, one has to guard against the eighteen root downfalls and the forty-six faults.	
In short, after taking the bodhisattva vow, there are two things to do:	
1) Do not let the bodhicitta that has been generated to degenerate.	
2) Prevent the degeneration of the trainings in the perfections.	
By not letting the mind come under the control/ influence of laziness and distraction, one applies effort in such trainings.	
This is the brief explanation on the practice of conscientiousness. Next is an extensive explanation.	

b. An extensive explanation [4.2 – 4.47]

1) Cultivating conscientiousness in regards to mind generation [4.2 – 4.11]

a) The reasons it is inappropriate to discard mind generation [4.2 – 4.3]

Here, the text is mainly explaining about meditating on conscientiousness [with respect to] bodhicitta.	
One looks at the reasons why it is inappropriate to give it up:	
<p><i>4.2 In the case of a reckless undertaking</i> <i>Or one not well examined,</i> <i>Although a promise may have been made,</i> <i>It is reasonable to examine, "Shall I do it or leave it?"</i></p>	<p><i>4.3 But how can I ever withdraw</i> <i>From what has been examined by the great wisdom</i> <i>Of the buddhas and their children,</i> <i>And has been examined and examined by myself?</i></p>
Verse 4.2 is saying that, a) there are people who undertake certain tasks without examining the pros and cons of it.	
b) Some people also undertake some tasks without a proper examination [of its nature]. Even though they do think a little bit, but these are not well thought out and they [proceed to] undertake them.	
Among these two examples, there are also people who give up whatever they have started to undertake.	
In these cases in general, whether they follow up with what they have decided to do, or they give that up after starting it, it does not really matter.	

But if one is [adopting] bodhicitta [verse 4.3], then it would be a completely different matter.
This is because, the pros [of adopting] and the cons of [discarding] bodhicitta has already been examined and analyzed well by those possessing great wisdom, such as the bodhisattvas Manjushri, Maitreya and so forth.
Likewise here, one has thought through about the great benefits/ qualities of bodhicitta and one has had a heartfelt appreciation, not merely [uttering it.] It was on that basis that one generated bodhicitta and undertook the bodhisattva vow.
Now, if one were not to train in the bodhisattva vow due to being distracted by something else or laziness, then this would be inappropriate/ incorrect. For this reason, one has to strive in the practice.
The point is, one must strive and rely on conscientiousness, as there will be great disadvantages/ shortcomings/ faults, if one gives bodhicitta after having generated it. It is said that one will be born in the lower realms.

b) The disadvantages of discarding mind generation [4.4 – 4.11]

i) The disadvantages of going to the lower realms [4.4 – 4.7]

1' The reasons one migrates to the lower realms [4.4]

4.4 a. *If, having made such a promise,
b. I do not accomplish it through action,
c. Then by deceiving all those sentient beings
d. What kind of rebirth will I take?*

At the time of adopting bodhicitta through a ritual by generating bodhicitta and taking the vow, one took the oath and made the pledge to work for the benefit of all sentient beings.
After taking the oath, if one does not act on one's promise, then one would have deceived all sentient beings.
If one has deceived all sentient beings, the text asks: “ <i>What kind of rebirth will I take?</i> ”
Of course, there is no way one will get a good rebirth, if that is the case, one would only get a rebirth in the lower realms.
At the time of taking the bodhisattva vow, one invites all sentient beings as one's guests and one is making the oath to actualize all their temporal, ultimate wishes and to work for their benefit.
If one discards bodhicitta, one is discarding the oath/ promise to work for one's guests, the migrating sentient beings.
If one breaks one's promises to all these numberless sentient beings, then of course the ensuing misdeed/ fault would be great.
This is because, one would have deceived all sentient beings. The result of that is only a rebirth in the lower realms.
Keeping this in mind, one should never ever give up bodhicitta.
One therefore has to rely on conscientiousness after generating bodhicitta to stop it from degenerating.

2' Stating the proof for that [4.5 – 4.6]

4.5 a. *If it has been taught
b. That he who does not give away
c. The smallest thing he mentally thought to give
d. Will become a hungry ghost,*

4.6 a. *Then if I should deceive all migrating beings
b. After having from my heart invited them
c. To unsurpassable happiness,
d. What kind of happy migration will I go to?*

It is taught in the sutras that, if one did not actually give what one has intended to give, one will be born as a hungry ghost.
It could even be a small little thing as a plate of vegetables. If one is bound by the bonds of miserliness, due to that, when one has real intentions to give but did not act on it, then that will be a cause for one to be born as a hungry ghost.
If after having invited all sentient beings to be one's guests, and after having made the sincere oath from the depths of one's heart to accomplish all of their welfare, one does not act on one's promise, one would have deceived all of them.
If that is the case, then how is it possible that one will get a good rebirth?
One would also have deceived all the Buddhas, bodhisattvas, gods, demi-gods and so forth.
With these thoughts in mind, then one should not let the bodhicitta that one has generated to degenerate.

3' Abandoning contradictions [4.7]

There may be some people who object that one will be born in the lower realms if one gives up bodhicitta:
It is said that, Shariputra once developed bodhicitta and was engaging in the practice of the perfections.
A mara came and demanded his right hand. Shariputra then cut off his right hand and gave that with his left hand to the mara.
Due to giving his severed right hand with his left, the mara was very displeased and severely criticized Shariputra.
Due to that, Shariputra became disheartened and subsequently gave up his bodhicitta.

Although he gave up his bodhicitta, he still became a foe destroyer later on. Based on this account, there are people who say that even though one gives up one's bodhicitta, that does not mean one will be going to the lower realms.
This is the historical account. After generating bodhicitta, Shariputra was approached by a Brahmin who was an emanation of mara, who then asked Shariputra for his hand. When he gave it with his left hand, in the cultural context, it was disrespectful.
Verse 4.7 is the reply [to this qualm]:
<p><i>4.7 a. Only the Omniscient Ones can discern</i> <i>b. The inconceivable manner of the action of</i> <i>c. Those who give up the mind of enlightenment</i> <i>d. But are liberated.</i></p>

ii) One ceases to work for the sake of others [4.8 – 4.10]

1' As the deterioration of mind generation involves a serious [lit. heavy] downfall, the welfare of others deteriorates [4.8]

If one's bodhicitta degenerates, then it is a heavy downfall. This will cause one's activities one does for the welfare of others to degenerate:

<p><i>4.8 a. This, for a bodhisattva,</i> <i>b. Is the heaviest of downfalls.</i> <i>c. If it were to occur, the welfare of</i> <i>d. All sentient beings would be weakened.</i></p>

Degenerating one's bodhicitta is one of the eighteen root downfalls of the bodhisattva vow. When one degenerates one's bodhicitta, one commits a root downfall which is a very heavy transgression.

Due to the degeneration of one's bodhicitta, one's work to accomplish the welfare of others will degenerate as well.

In short, if one's bodhicitta degenerates, one commits a root downfall, which is a very heavy transgression. Due to this, one would not be able to accomplish extensive works for others.

Keeping this in mind, one applies conscientiousness to not allow one's bodhicitta to degenerate.

In the text called *The Superior Compendium*, it states that, although one has practiced the paths and ten grounds for ten million eons, if one generates the wish to be a Solitary Realizer Arhat, at that moment, one's ethical discipline has received a fault and degenerates. This [fault] is heavier than a root downfall [of the praktimoksha vow].

The explanation to this verse from *The Superior Compendium* states that, if a bodhisattva who possesses the vow gives up his aspirational bodhicitta, he receives a root downfall. If he does not have the bodhisattva vow, then his negativity is still heavier than a root downfall of the praktimoksha vow.

What Gyaltsab Je's commentary is saying is that, if a bodhisattva [holding] the bodhisattva vow gives up his aspirational bodhicitta, then he incurs a root downfall.

In the case of a bodhisattva [not holding] the bodhisattva vow, the negativity he incurs from giving up bodhicitta is still heavier than committing a root downfall of the praktimoksha vow.

This seems to be saying that, one can generate the uncontrived bodhicitta without the bodhisattva vow. This seems to be what the text is implying when one reads it.

[If that is the case,] then is there such a thing as having generated [uncontrived] bodhicitta without the bodhisattva vow?

If this is possible, then for the person who generates bodhicitta without the vow, that bodhicitta in his mind is aspirational bodhicitta. It is clear in a few texts that, if engaged bodhicitta is present, the bodhisattva vow is necessarily present.

Going by this [reasoning], then for the so called bodhisattva who has bodhicitta but does not have the bodhisattva vow, the bodhicitta in his mind would have to be an aspirational bodhicitta.

But then, is there such a thing as having bodhicitta without the bodhisattva vow? Khenrinpoche: What do you think?

This is what Gyaltsab Je's commentary says. He says very clearly that, if a bodhisattva who has the vow, gives up bodhicitta, then he receives a root downfall of the bodhisattva vow. But if he has no vows, then his negativity is still heavier than the root downfall of the praktimoksha vow. How does one then read into this?

2' It is equivalent to a bodhisattva obstructing the virtue of other bodhisattvas [and thus] one migrates to the lower realms [4.9]

If one [bodhisattva] obstructs the work/ virtue of another bodhisattva, the ensuing fault is also said to be very heavy and also a cause for lower realms:

<p><i>4.9 a. Should others for even a single instant</i> <i>b. Hinder or obstruct his merit,</i> <i>c. By weakening the welfare of sentient beings</i> <i>d. There will be no end to their unfortunate rebirths.</i></p>

In Gyaltsab Je's commentary, he cites the <i>Sutra of Magical Emanation Definitely Pacifying</i> , which says that: <i>It is heavier to obstruct the virtue of a bodhisattva offering a morsel of food or drink to an animal Than to rob all sentient beings of this world of the Southern Continent of all their food and then kill them.</i>
Since that is the case, one should be careful about this: One does not know where there are bodhisattvas. So it is very easy to make this mistake. If one is able to protect oneself from this, one would be able to abandon the door of accumulating faults with respect to others.
The point here is, one should not obstruct or cause hindrances when others are engaging in virtuous activities.
The commentary is also saying that, <i>since one does not know who is or who is not a bodhisattva, then one has to be careful not to interrupt the virtuous activities of others.</i>

3' The reasons for that [4.10]

<i>4.10 a. If I shall degenerate b. By destroying the happiness of even one sentient being, c. Then what need is there to mention destroying the happiness d. Of all embodied beings vast as space without exception?</i>
If one interrupts the virtue someone is accumulating that will enable him to be born as a god or a human, the ensuing negativity is very heavy.
If that is the case, it goes without saying that the negativity will be [even heavier] if one does something to hinder/ interrupt bodhicitta, the cause of happiness of all sentient beings.

iii) Attaining the grounds is postponed [4.11]

If one abandons bodhicitta, one would be very far from attaining the grounds:
<i>4.11 a. Thus if those who have the force of a downfall b. And the force of the mind of enlightenment c. Were to stay revolving within cyclic existence, d. For a long time they would be hindered from attaining the grounds.</i>
It is said that, if those who have taken the bodhisattva vow were to incur a root downfall of abandoning bodhicitta, then even after generating virtue and again re-generate bodhicitta, they will still be in cyclic existence.
Due to that, sometimes he would be going to the lower realms, sometimes getting a good rebirth. He would remain very far away from actualizing, for example, the first bodhisattva ground <i>Very Joyous</i> .
The point is, after one has generated bodhicitta and taken the bodhisattva vow, it is important to strive from the very beginning not to be stained by the downfall and not to let one's bodhicitta degenerate.
One may think: "Even if my bodhicitta degenerates, I can still restore it." It is true that one may restore it, but because of having incurred the earlier downfall, one would then be very far from actualizing the bodhisattva grounds.
If one incurs a root downfall, one can purify the negativities accumulated through the practice of confession of applying the four powers. As a result purifying one's negativity, one would not have to experience the result of going to the lower realms.
But because of having incurred a root downfall in the first place, this acts as a great obstacle/ hindrance to achieving the higher realizations and qualities. Therefore, it is important to not be stained by the downfalls from the beginning.
[Verses 4.1 – 4.11] are explanations on how important it is to not allow one's bodhicitta to degenerate by applying conscientiousness.
One does so by thinking of the great faults/ negativities that will ensue from letting one's bodhicitta degenerate. One has to try to always strengthen and increase one's bodhicitta that one has already generated.

Student: When one's bodhicitta has degenerated, after purifying with the four powers, one can still avoid going to the lower realms. Why can't this purification also prevent one's path from being delayed even if bodhicitta is restored?

Khenrinpoche: For example, if one were to walk to somewhere, if one's legs are in good condition, one will reach it easily. If one's legs are broken, of course, one can still heal it, but nevertheless, having broken one's legs is an impediment/ obstacle to reaching one's destination. One would have reached one's destination earlier/ quicker, if one did not break one's legs.

Khenrinpoche: One can get the idea just from this example, why [one's path] is postponed. It doesn't mean one cannot fix one's legs, one can still go to the hospital and get them fixed to be "like normal", but that will prevent one from reaching one's destination, it will take a longer time to reach one's destination. It is like that. So, it is mentioned that, "From the beginning, better not break the vows." So, they advised that. It doesn't mean that, if you purify negative karma, then you can again accumulate negative karma. [Even though] it's possible to purify them, but it's postponing your destination. So, it's similar like that.

Concluding advice on the section on being conscientiousness with regards to bodhicitta/ mind generation [4.2 – 4.11]:

After taking the bodhisattva vow, one has to be conscientiousness about bodhicitta that one has already generated, as well as the trainings in the perfections that one has promised to undertake.
With regards to developing conscientiousness with respect to bodhicitta that one has generated, this section is teaching on the reasons why it is inappropriate to give up one's bodhicitta.
Essentially, there are many great disadvantages/ faults if one gives up bodhicitta that one has generated [Verses 4.1 – 4.11].
Since that is the case, by reflecting/ keeping in mind these great faults/ disadvantages, one strives in applying conscientiousness to not allow one's bodhicitta to degenerate.

2) Cultivating conscientiousness with regards to the training [4.12 – 4.47]:

- a) Being conscientious to abandon negativities [4.12 – 4.20]
- b) Being conscientious about cultivating virtue [4.21 – 4.27]
- c) Being conscientiousness to abandon the afflictions [4.28 – 4.47]

a) Being conscientious to abandon negativities [4.12 – 4.20]

i) If negativities and downfalls are not abandoned, one must continue [to take rebirth] in the lower realms [4.12]

<p><i>4.12 a. Therefore just as I have promised</i> <i>b. I shall respectfully accomplish it.</i> <i>c. If from now on I do not strive</i> <i>d. I shall descend from lower to lower states.</i></p>
At the time of taking the bodhisattva vow, one promises to abandon the eighteen root downfalls and the forty-six faults.
Here, one should think: "Now, I am going to practice in accordance with the promise I have made at the time of taking the bodhisattva vow."
Here, the verse says that one should practice "respectfully". One should practice respectfully to guard against committing the downfalls and faults by remembering the benefits of keeping to the training and the disadvantages of going against it.
One sutra: In this degenerate times, the benefits of keeping one precept for a day and night exceeds the merit accumulated for making tens of millions of offerings such as foods and drinks etc. to the Buddhas equaling the grains of sand in the Ganges.
One should read/ understand about the benefits of keeping to the trainings and the great benefits one derives from doing so.
One should not keep to the trainings feeling that it is an obligation/ burden. Rather, if one understands the benefits, what is in it for oneself, then one would do that happily.
As the verse says, [I will] respectfully accomplish the promise/ keep to the training. This means one does it happily, joyously striving/ persevering in this training. As the very meaning of joyous perseverance is the mind it is enthusiastic about virtue.
One should reflect on the benefits of keeping to the vows and trainings that one has promised to undertake.
If one takes on these vows and commitments and does not put any effort in keep the vows, if one gets stained by all the downfalls and faults, then the negativities from committing them would cause one to stay in the lower realms for a long time.
If one thinks: "Even if I don't strive in keeping my vows and abide in the trainings that I've promised, it is still all right, as there are numberless Buddhas and bodhisattvas that are so powerful, kind and compassionate. They will definitely [save] me from going to the lower realms and will continue to place me on the path to higher rebirths and enlightenment."
If one ever thinks like that, then understand that this is a mistake:

ii) The Buddhas and their children act with equanimity [4.13 – 4.14]

<p><i>4.13 a. Although countless buddhas have passed by b. To benefit all sentient beings, c. Yet I was not an object of their care d. Because of my own misdeeds.</i></p>
<p>All numberless Buddhas, including Buddha Shakyamuni, work only for the happiness and welfare of sentient beings.</p>
<p>Numberless of them, including Buddha Shakyamuni, have already passed.</p>
<p>Although that is so, however, one was not saved by them due to the faults of one's own misdeeds/ negativities.</p>
<p>One is like a patient that cannot be saved even by a very good doctor. For if the patient does not listen/ follow the doctor's advice, there is nothing the doctor can do.</p>
<p>Likewise, one was not protected/ saved by the numberless Buddhas and bodhisattvas of the past due to one's own misdeeds.</p>
<p>If one has a burnt seed, even if one has all the cooperative conditions such as water, fertilizer and so forth, the seed will still not sprout. For it to sprout, the seed must have the potential to transform into the sprout.</p>
<p>But if it is burnt, then no matter how much fertilizer and water one has, one would not get any sprout.</p>
<p>Likewise, all the numberless Buddhas and bodhisattvas possess inconceivable powers and compassion. But due to the power of one's nonvirtue, one was not protected by them.</p>
<p>If one thinks: “Even if all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas do not protect/ rescue me in this life, they will definitely do so in my next.” If one thinks this way, this is also wrong:</p>
<p><i>4.14 a. If I still act like this, b. Again and again I will likewise experience c. Bad migrations, sickness, bondage, d. Mutilation, and laceration.</i></p>
<p>If one does not put any effort into guarding and keeping one's vows that one has promised to do, and due to that, keep getting stained by downfalls and faults, then the negativities one accumulates from them would throw one not just once into the lower realms, but for many lifetimes.</p>
<p>Even if one is born as human, but due to the negativities accumulated from transgressing one's trainings, one will experience the causally concordant effects of sicknesses, lack of freedom/ bondages, physical harms like being beaten and so forth.</p>
<p>The point is, it is difficult to be protected by the Buddhas and bodhisattvas in one's future lives, if one is not careful in this life, if one does not put effort into keeping the vows and trainings one has promised.</p>
<p>By not keeping the vows and continually getting stained by these downfalls and faults, these would cause one to be born in the lower realms for many lifetimes.</p>
<p>Therefore, it is wrong to think that it is all right if one does not keep one's vows in this life and that one would still be protected in one's future lives, as one would be in the lower realms or one would experience the negativities as a human.</p>
<p>Thinking like this, one should be conscientiousness in keeping one's vows.</p>

iii) The difficulty of obtaining a human life of leisures and endowments [4.15 – 4.16]

1' If mind generation deteriorates, it becomes difficult to obtain leisures and endowments that possess the four wheels – conditions [that facilitate practice] [4.15]

<p>It is possible that people may think: “Even if I did not do so well this time, but when I get a human life of freedoms and endowments again in my next life, I will try harder then.” Having such a thought is a mistake:</p>
<p><i>4.15 a. If the arising of a tathagata, b. Faith, the attainment of a human body, c. And my being fit to cultivate virtue are rare, d. When will they be obtained again?</i></p>
<p>It is said in the teachings that the coming of the Buddhas are as rare as an <i>Udumbara</i> flower.</p>
<p>The appearance of Buddha in any particular world-system is a very rare phenomenon. If one thinks about the time span generally needed for anyone to achieve omniscience, the accumulation of merit and wisdom for three great eons are needed.</p>
<p>To complete the accumulation of merit and wisdom, one needs three of these great eons to achieve full enlightenment.</p>
<p>After having done so, the Buddhas would then turn the Wheels of Dharma to accomplish sentient beings' welfare.</p>
<p>But if one were to look at the time span, starting from the formation of a world-system until its destruction, in most of the eighty intermediate eons in one great eon, Buddhas do not descend. These are mostly eons of darkness.</p>

Buddhas only descend during the eon of abiding, of which, there are only twenty intermediate eons of them.
Even then, Buddhas do not descend during all of these twenty intermediate eons of abiding. They would only do so when the average lifespans of humans are on the decline. This means half of the time, for ten intermediate eons, they do not descend.
Of the ten intermediate eons that are left, Buddhas also do not descend all the time, only at a certain time period.
If one connects them together, one would understand the rarity of the appearance of Buddhas in any world-system.
Of the ten endowments of a human life of freedoms and endowments, five pertains to oneself and five pertains to others.
Of the five pertaining to others, there are four that are related to the Buddhas' descent: [a) having descended] b) having taught the Dharma, c) the Dharma abiding and [d) having those who are practicing it.]
There are also the five endowments that are related to oneself, one of which is having faith in the Buddha's teachings. Having a real appreciation and faith in the Buddha's teachings are also very rare.
Therefore, to achieve a human life bestowed with the eight freedoms and ten endowments is very rare.
Therefore, it is a mistake to think that one will get such an opportunity again in the future, to have another human life of freedoms and endowments, for it is very rare.
Therefore, while one still has the opportunity when a) one can perform any virtue one likes, b) one can start immediately, c) one is free of any obstacles for doing so and d) one has all the conditions, then one should start right away.
The teachings are saying that, while one still has all the favorable conditions, free of all the obstacles, then this is the time to work hard and strive [in virtue].

2' Even though they have been obtained, one should make effort because they quickly perish [4.16]

It is incorrect to think: "I will practice later on in life, because now, things are going well as I have good health and will continue to have that. I will just do it later in my life." The teachings are saying that, thinking in such a way is also incorrect:
<p><i>4.16 a. I am free from sickness like the day, b. Fed and free from harm, c. But life is momentary and deceptive; d. The body is like an object on loan for but a lava [1.6 minutes].</i></p>
In any day of one's life, when things are going well, one is not sick, one has all the favorable conditions, no [enemies trying] to destroy one's life, no obstacles, although that is so, but it is never certain that the rest of one's life would be like that.
Even if one assumes that, for the rest of one's life, it would be a good one, one will be healthy for the rest of one's life, things are going well, there will come a time when these will all end.
From now until that end-day, all these favorable conditions are being depleted day by day, moment by moment.
One's precious human rebirth is just like an object that is on loan, obtained just about once.
Just like something precious, such as gold or something similar, that is on loan to one, there will come a time when that object which is on loan to one will be repossessed by the owner without any choice.
Likewise, there will come a time when one's life will be taken by the lord of death.
Therefore, it is incorrect to think that: "I will keep to my vows and trainings/ practice in the future." One has to be conscientiousness in keeping to one's promise.

iv) There is no opportunity to practice virtue if one has taken rebirth in the lower realms [4.17 – 4.19]

1' There is no opportunity to practice virtue if one is reborn in the lower realms [4.17]

There are times when people think that, getting a human life of freedoms and endowments is not difficult, that it is something one will acquire over and over again. With this assumption, one also assumes that it is therefore all right to practice in the future when one gets such an opportunity again. Of course again, this is incorrect:
<p><i>4.17 a. With such behavior of mine b. I will not obtain even a human body. c. If this human form is not attained, d. There will be solely negativity and no virtue.</i></p>
This is in the context of someone who has adopted/ generated bodhicitta through a ritual and having taken an oath of the bodhisattva vow to practice the perfections.
If such a person does not strive to keep to his oath, but instead being careless, repeatedly accumulates nonvirtues by committing downfalls and faults, then this is what will happen to him: he will not get even a [mere] human rebirth.
As such, only the lower realms are opened to him. Once one finds oneself there, one will not have any opportunities to engage anything beneficial/ virtuous.

The teachings are saying that, if one seriously looks at one's own actions/ behaviors, one will understand that it will be difficult for one to obtain such an opportunity again in the future.

Even merely obtaining a human rebirth will be difficult. One will end up in the lower realms, then it is for sure that there will be no opportunities for virtue, instead, one will only be engaging in nonvirtues all the time.

2' If one does not make effort when one has obtained a higher rebirth, one will be ignorant about what to abandon and cultivate when one takes rebirth in the lower realms [4.18]

Once one finds oneself in the lower realms, when nonvirtues are continually being accumulated, then of course, getting out of that and getting another human rebirth will be extremely difficult.

While one may not be able to directly perceive the hell and hungry ghost realms, one can observe the lives of the animals:

There are many kinds of animals that have to kill others just to survive. If one were in such a situation, for the whole of one's life, one is continually killing. It is very clear that one will be constantly accumulating nonvirtue.

If that is the case, how is it then possible to obtain a good rebirth thenceforth?

- 4.18 a. If, even when I have the good fortune of virtuous conduct,
b. I do not create virtue,
c. Then what shall I do when all confused
d. By the suffering of the unfortunate rebirths?*

If one did not employ one's body, speech and mind in even the smallest of virtue while one has the human life of eight freedoms and ten endowments, then once one is in the lower realms, one would not even be able to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, what one needs to cultivate/ adopt and what one needs to discard/ abandon.

If due to this, one ends up in the lower realms such as the hells, one would be completely overwhelmed by the suffering, one would also be completely confused as to what to adopt and what to discard.

By thinking about this, one applies conscientiousness in keeping to one's training and to engage in virtue.

3' It is extremely difficult to be liberated from the lower realms [once one has taken rebirth there] [4.19]

- 4.19 a. If I do not create virtues
b. But readily amass negativities,
c. Then for hundreds of millions of eons
d. I shall not even hear the term "good migration."*

The verse is saying that, while one has the opportunity, if one does not cultivate even the smallest virtue but only accumulate negativities, then one will be reborn in the lower realms and will have to stay there for *hundreds of millions of eons*.

Once one is there, it will be very difficult to get out. Putting aside about getting a good rebirth, even to hear the mere word 'good rebirth' would be extremely difficult.

v) The reason it is difficult to obtain the freedoms and endowments [4.20]

- 4.20 a. For this very reason, the Bhagavan said
b. That just as in the case of a turtle inserting its neck
c. Into a yoke adrift upon the vast ocean,
d. It is very hard to attain the human state.*

The Buddha taught in the sutras of the difficulty of obtaining a human life of freedoms and endowments through an analogy:

There is a golden yoke floating around on the surface of a vast ocean. At the bottom of the ocean, there is a blind turtle, who surfaces [to take a breath] once every hundred years.

The chances of that turtle surfacing and putting its neck right through the hole of that golden yoke are very minute.

Likewise, the chances of getting a human life of freedoms and endowments are similarly difficult.

In short, this section explains how one has to be conscientiousness in abandoning negativities/ nonvirtues.

If one is not conscientiousness in abandoning nonvirtues, keeps on accumulating them and being stained by the downfalls and faults, the result of all these negative karmas would only be a rebirth in the lower realms.

One would have to stay there for a very long time. It would also be very difficult to get out once one is in it.

Keeping these points in mind, one applies conscientiousness in keeping to the vows and trainings one has promised.

This is similar to what is stated in the *Stages of the Path* literature. In short, one has the opportunity to employ oneself in virtue, one also has the ability, one can do so. One should start right away as it would be a mistake to postpone one's practice.

These verses here are very powerful. One can use them for reflection, especially at times when one feels the difficulty in keeping to the vows and trainings.
By reading and contemplating on them, one should find the joy and willingness to keep to one's practice.
If one loves and cherishes oneself, then one has to keep to the trainings/ practices. If this is not the case then it is different.
When one loves oneself, this is not about loving oneself for merely this lifetime, this is about one's long-term happiness.
When one knows how to think, that is, thinking long-term, then one will come to regard one's practice and virtue as an ornament and not a burden. It is something to be enjoyed rather than something [that feels] like a burden.
There are vows and commitments to be kept, including one's commitment of daily recitations and so forth.
If one does not know how to think, then sometimes one will find doing these things a bit difficult and as a burden.
At these times, one must really know how to think, by reflecting on these points mentioned.
At a lot of these [correct thinking] boils down to having the faith of conviction in karma [and its results].
Having such a faith of conviction in karma is so important.
This ends the section on being conscientiousness to abandon the negativities.

b) Being conscientious about cultivating virtue [4.21 – 4.27]

i) As negativities accumulated in the past are limitless, it would be appropriate to make effort in abandoning them [4.21]

*4.21 a. If even by the negativity committed for an instant
 b. One will abide in Relentless Torment for eons,
 c. Then because of the negativities I have accumulated in beginningless cyclic existence,
 d. What need to mention my not going to a good migration?*

This verse says that, if one has to be reborn in the hell realms merely by getting angry with a bodhisattva for even just one moment, then it is needless to say that one will have to be born in the lower realms for a very long time due to the immeasurable amount of nonvirtues one has accumulated since beginningless lifetimes.

If these nonvirtues are not purified, they will throw one into the lower realms. Therefore, one has to really strive and work hard in confessing and purifying all the negativities one has accumulated since beginningless lifetimes.

ii) The reasons why one would not be freed from the lower realms by experiencing suffering there merely one time [4.22]

The teachings state that, between virtue and nonvirtue, the heavier of these two will ripen first.

If both of these are of equal strength, then that which one is more familiar with will ripen first.

If one is equally familiar with virtue and nonvirtue, then that which is [accumulated] first will ripen.

If one thinks [carefully] about this, for one, one's nonvirtue is much more powerful. One is also more familiar with them.

If that ripens, then one will have to experience problems and sufferings. For that reason, one has to confess and purify them.

Some people may think that it is not really necessary to purify one's negativities as once they ripened and are experienced in the lower realms, all these sufferings will exhaust all the negativities that one has accumulated.

When one's negativities are exhausted, then one will be liberated from the lower realms and one will get a good rebirth.

Of course, this is another incorrect position, for:

*4.22 a. Through experiencing merely that
 b. I shall not be liberated,
 c. Because while experiencing that in such a way
 d. Other negativities will be strongly produced.*

Even if one finishes experiencing the fruitional effects of being born in the lower realms as a result of the nonvirtues accumulated in the past, one will still not be liberated from the lower realms just because one finishes experiencing the result.

This is because, when one is there, one is always accumulating nonvirtues as there are always anger, ill-will and so forth. One [readily] engages in such nonvirtues as killing and so forth.

Therefore, [this shows that] it is wrong to think that one will be liberated from the lower realms after one has finished experiencing the fruitional effects of one's nonvirtue.

While one is experiencing that fruitional effect in the lower realms, one is continuously accumulating [fresh] nonvirtues that will [obstruct] one from being liberated from there.

With the basis of a lower realm rebirth, one's ability to engage in virtue is very weak. One will be continually accumulating nonvirtue in that state of existence.

Therefore, the commentary says that, one should strive now to stop creating the cause of the lower realms, as well as purifying the negativities that one has already accumulated in the past.

If one does not strive in virtue after having obtained a good rebirth, then one will be deceiving/ cheating oneself:

iii) The reasons it would be appropriate to make effort in the antidotes to negativities [4.23 – 4.27]

1' One deceives oneself, if one does not make effort in virtue once one has obtained the leisures and endowments [4.23]

*4.23 a. If, having found such leisure,
b. I do not familiarize with virtue,
c. There can be no [greater] deception other than this;
d. There can be no [greater] confusion other than this.*

This verse can be particularly effective. One can commit this to memory and use it to constantly remind oneself.

After having obtained such a human life of freedoms and endowments, where one has all the conditions to practice:

1) One has met with the teachings of the Buddha and understood it, 2) One has also met with a virtuous friend.

From one's own side, if one practices, the best thing that can happen is to achieve full enlightenment.

Even if that does not happen, one can still do something to move closer towards generating bodhicitta.

At the very minimum, one should at least not die with any regrets. To do so, one has to be familiarized with virtue.

At the time of death, if one is satisfied that one can go without any regrets due to having done some practices in this life, thinking: "I've done quite a fair bit, so I am all right, I don't have any regrets, **I can go.**" This should be the minimum.

Despite having met with the teachings and understood it, if one does not practice them but instead spends one's entire life letting oneself be controlled by one's three mental poisons of ignorance, anger, attachment and living a life filled with the eight worldly dharmas, then at the time of death, one will die with great regrets.

When this happens, there is no greater deception than this. One will have cheated and deceived oneself in the greatest way.

This is about thinking to oneself: "I should practice pure Dharma."

2' One will experience suffering in this life [4.24]

If one is not conscientious in practicing virtue, one would experience suffering in this life [as well]:

*4.24 a. If, having understood this,
b. Out of confusion I am indolent afterwards,
c. When it is time to die
d. Tremendous grief will rear its head.*

Despite having obtained such favorable conditions, one still spends one's life indulging in the objects of desire.

Teachings are saying that, at the time of death, one will experience great regret, as one will think: "Oh [no], I didn't practice!"

Such an experience of great regret will result in the experience of great misery/ mental suffering.

Most of us are in such a situation: despite having all the conditions for practice – one knows one can do it, one knows how to do it, but one has a long list of reasons why one cannot do it. One uses this to postpone one's practice: "Not now, not [yet]."

Using one's daily recitation commitment as an example, some may think: "What's the point of doing this, what's the benefit?"

Immediately, that already is the reason to not do it, to stop engaging in virtue.

Rather than coming up with reasons to do something beneficial, one always find a reason to not do it. Even if one wants to do it, but sometimes one thinks: "This is not the time", or "I don't have time." Again, this is another reason to not do it.

Or when it comes to educating oneself in the Buddha's teachings, some people may think: "Oh, now it's too late in my life, I'm old, I don't have the ability..." Again, immediately, one ends up with another reason to cut off virtue.

There are so many reasons one brings up to stop oneself from practicing Dharma. One cuts the Dharma away from oneself.

Actually, one knows what one has to do/ practice and what one has to discard/ stop doing. One knows one can do it now.

But one finds all sorts of reasons to stop oneself from doing it. The teachings are saying that, if one finishes one's life like that, at the time of death, one will definitely feel very regretful. This will result in great misery/ suffering.

This is evident, as when one gets sick, one remembers when one was well: "Oh, [when I was well], I didn't do it, I've wasted [those times]." One feels regret. It is likewise the same [at one's time of death].

Thinking about these points, one applies oneself in conscientiousness to cultivate virtue. If one is not conscientious in cultivating virtue, one will suffer when one [finds oneself] in the lower realms.

Summary of the sections on *Being conscientious to abandon negativities and cultivating virtue:*

We are on the section on <i>Being conscientious about cultivating virtue</i> [4.21 – 4.27].
If one is not conscientious in accomplishing virtue, then the text says that suffering will ensue in this life and future lives.
Earlier section was about 1) Cultivating conscientiousness in protecting one's bodhicitta/ mind generation and not letting it degenerate [4.2 – 4.11] and 2) Cultivating conscientiousness with regards to the trainings [4.12 – 4.47].
In essence, section 2) discusses about 2a) Being conscientious in abandoning negativities/ not being stained by the downfalls and faults, 2b) Being conscientious in cultivating virtue, and 2c) Being conscientious in abandoning the afflictions.
Being conscientious in the training is covered in these three points. What is the difference between 2a) and 2b) ?
For 2a) essentially, after having adopted the bodhisattva vow, one has to check now and then if one has been stained by the downfalls and faults or not. For if one is stained, then suffering would follow. Hence the emphasis is to avoid being stained .
For 2b) essentially, i) If one is stained by the downfalls and faults, then one should confess and purify them. Otherwise, one would have to experience the fruitional effects of having committed them.
Also, this section states that, ii) Even if one does manage to purify the negativities accumulated through committing the downfalls and faults, one's realizations are postponed/ delayed.
The point [in 2b)] is that, one has to engage in virtue and purify any downfalls and faults that are accumulated, through applying the four opponent powers. If not, suffering will again ensue.
Therefore, it is important to engage in virtue to counteract whatever [nonvirtues] one has already accumulated.

3' One will be tormented with the sufferings of the lower realms in the future [4.25]

<p>4.25 a. <i>If my body burns for a long time</i> b. <i>In the fires of hell which are difficult to bear,</i> c. <i>Inevitably my mind will be tormented</i> d. <i>By the blazing fires of unbearable remorse.</i></p>
<i>The fires of hell which are difficult to bear</i> , are said to be hundreds of thousands of times hotter than any fires that humans are aware of. If one ends up there, then one's minds will be tormented with great [remorse].
Metaphorically, one's mind will “burn” in the fire of great remorse, over and above one's body literally being burnt by the fire

4' The reasons it would be appropriate to abandon negativities and make effort in virtue [4.26 – 4.27]

a' To be led again to the hell realms after having wasted [one's life when in possession of] the pleasures and endowments, would be utter stupidity [lit. equal to not having a mind] [4.26 – 4.27(ab)]

<p>4.26 a. <i>Having found by some coincidence</i> b. <i>This beneficial state that is so hard to find,</i> c. <i>If now while having knowledge</i> d. <i>I am once again led into the hells,</i></p>	<p>4.27 a. <i>Then, as though I were confused by mantra [spell],</i> b. <i>This mind will be reduced to nothing.</i></p>
<i>This beneficial state that is so hard to find</i> , is referring to the human life of freedoms and endowments that now one has.	
Such a state is extremely difficult to get. One [gains conviction of] this through understanding the difficulty: 1) Of its nature, 2) Of obtaining the causes, 3) Through analogies.	
Such a special basis that one has now obtained enables one to practice Dharma readily. Such an opportunity one has is due to the virtue/ merit one has accumulated in the past. Finding such an opportunity is something that happens just about once.	
It is not as if one is crazy or not able to distinguish between what is harmful and beneficial now.	
Despite all such opportunities, if one is lead once again into the fires of the hells, then that would be something really inappropriate, something very wrong. If this happens, has one lost one's mind, or has someone cast a spell on one?	
It is like some people who are confused, having lost their thoughts and unable to think when they receive some black magic.	
Is that happening to one? Or is it because one has completely lost one's mind/ gone crazy?	
What is it that is leading one back into the lower realms? Is it because one has lost one's mind? Or that one is unable to tell the difference between what is good and harmful? Or is it that one is now confused by some magic spell?	

b' It is appropriate to think of the cause of such confusion [/ignorance] [4.27(cd)]

<p><i>Even I do not know what confused me;</i> <i>What is there inside me?</i></p>

This is just a query asking oneself: “What exactly is the exact cause, that is leading me back into the hells?”
One may have thoughts of wanting to learn, reflect and internalize/ meditate on the teachings.
One may also have thoughts to practice ethical discipline, to accomplish the Dharma in general.
While one may have the intentions about accomplishing and practicing the Dharma, yet at the same time, one does not seem to have any independence/ freedom of choice in carrying them out. One is unable to be doing anything about them.
There must be something working at the background that stops one. It is not due to any black magic, nor not knowing what to do. Yet there is something that is stopping one. One has to check repeatedly to discover what this source of confusion is.
This is the meaning behind these two sentences [in 4.27(cd)].
Of the three sections that make up the outline 2) Cultivating conscientiousness with regards to the trainings [4.12 – 4.47], the second section 2b) Being conscientious in cultivating virtue, is complete.

- c) Being conscientious to abandon the afflictions [4.28 – 4.47]:
- i) Reflecting on the faults of the afflictions [4.28 – 4.36]
 - ii) It is inappropriate to be weary of the hardships involved in abandoning the afflictions [4.37 – 4.44]
 - iii) Cultivating joy [in the conviction] that it is possible [to abandon the afflictions], as these would be abandoned if effort is made [4.45 – 4.47]

- i) Reflecting on the faults of the afflictions [4.28 – 4.36]
a' The way they rob one of independence [of mind and actions] [4.28]

The afflictions cause suffering in that, they take away one's freedom to act without any freedom or control:
<p>4.28 a. <i>Since enemies such as hatred and craving</i> b. <i>Have neither arms nor legs,</i> c. <i>And are neither courageous nor clever,</i> d. <i>How have I been used like a slave by them?</i></p>
If this is linked to the questions in 4.27(d), then this is the transition. Essentially, this is the answer to that question.
In short, it is one's afflictions that stop one from carrying out one's intentions to practice the Dharma and accomplish virtue.
Here, they are one's enemies: anger, craving, which includes desire and attachment, and of course, ignorance is always there.
When these are extended, the list of afflictions would include the six root and twenty secondary afflictions.
One is identifying the culprit, the afflictions, like anger, craving. Attachment, etc., which cause one to do lose one's freedom.
These enemies, the afflictions, are unlike the external enemies. They do not have any forms like legs, hands and they do not carry any weapons. Even though they are neither courageous, smart, wise nor hardworking, but they act as if they were.
The afflictions harm everyone: the rich, the poor, the students and the teachers. Everybody is harmed by them.
One's afflictions like attachment causes one to be emotionally glued/ attached to objects of desire/ enjoyments.
One is led helplessly by the nose, as one runs after all such objects of desire without choice. One loses one's freedom to it.
Day in and out, one does everything to accomplish all such objects of desire.
Likewise, one is also controlled by one's anger, to the point that, one does not even care about one's own life [any more].
In essence, everyone without exception, has been made a slave to their own afflictions. For, one takes and carries out their orders without any choice. One does exactly what one's afflictions tell one to do.
In that sense, one has become a servant/ slave to one's afflictions. The result of being a slave is suffering. Shantideva is telling one that, one's afflictions have basically made one their slave. Due to that, one has lost one's independence.

- b' The way they bring one immeasurable suffering [4.29 – 4.31]

Due to that, one is led into boundless suffering:
<p>4.29 a. <i>While they dwell within my mind,</i> b. <i>At their pleasure they cause me harm,</i> c. <i>Yet I patiently endure them without any anger.</i> d. <i>This is an inappropriate state and patience is a contemptible state.</i></p>
Where does this enemy of the afflictions abide, where is its temple that houses them? It abides in none other than the temple of one's mind, as a guest. While it is there, it tells/ gives orders to one as to what one should do.
One happily follows what it says, in return, they readily harm one without any hesitation.

Although one listens and follows the advice, orders and commands of the afflictions which abide in one's mind, what it does in return, is that it harms one without hesitation, doing so happily and joyously.	
If this is what they do to one, then it would be wrong to practice patience with them and just accept them.	
If one practices patience with one's afflictions, letting them do whatever they wish to one, then this would be a contemptible state, something [deserving being] criticized by the wise and holy.	
Essentially, these verses are saying that, one should look at the afflictions as the enemies and strive to overcome them.	
An affliction is defined as that which disturbs the mind greatly. Therefore, it is extremely important to contemplate the faults of one's afflictions, for the moment they arise, one's mind is greatly disturbed:	
<i>1) One's afflictions cause one's mind to look at things in a very distorted way.</i>	
<i>2) When they manifest, they further strengthen those nonvirtuous imprints in one's mind and</i>	
<i>3) Cause the afflictions of a similar type to maintain their continuity in one's mind.</i>	
<i>4) One's afflictions harm one as well as others.</i>	
<i>5) They will harm one in this life, 6) They will also harm one in one's future lives.</i>	
<i>7) They greatly disturb one's mind, causing one great suffering and anguish.</i>	
<i>8) They bring about all the problems of cyclic existence.</i>	
<i>9) They separate and lead one further away from permanent happiness – liberation.</i>	
<i>10) They cause one's virtues to degenerate.</i>	
The point of understanding these faults of one's afflictions is so that, one can regard them as one's enemies.	
On that basis, one would then be able to strive to defeat them.	
<i>4.30 a. Should even all the gods and anti-gods b. Rise up against me as my enemies, c. They cannot lead me to nor place me in d. The fires of Relentless Torment.</i>	<i>4.31 a. But this foe, the powerful afflictions, b. In an instant can cast me there, c. Which when met will cause not even the ashes d. Of Mount Meru to remain.</i>
The point here, is to think about the great harm one's afflictions do to one:	
No matter how powerful these harmful interferers, such gods like Indra, the demi-gods (<i>non-humans</i>) and so forth, were to rise up as one's enemies, they cannot harm one beyond destroying one's possessions and taking one's life.	
These are about the maximum [harm] they can bring one. On their own, they can never throw one into the lowest of the hells, the avici. But one's internal enemy, one's afflictions, are so much more powerful than these external enemies.	
These inner enemies, the afflictions inside one, is so much more powerful than the external enemy, for they can throw one in an instant into in the avici hell [and other] lower realms. They can also cause one many other problems and sufferings.	
Therefore, one has to destroy one's real [/actual] enemy, one's afflictions, which are so much more powerful.	

c' The time period in which they cause harm is unlimited [4.32]

Not only do one's afflictions cause one problems and sufferings, they also harm one over a very long period of time:	
<i>4.32 a. All other enemies are incapable b. Of such a length of time c. As can my afflictions, d. The long-time enemy with neither beginning nor end.</i>	
One's afflictions have harmed one in the past. If one does not apply antidotes to destroy them, then they will harm one in the future in the way that they have already done so in the past. The harms that one's external enemies cause, someone that harms and cause problems to one and that one does not like, are nothing, compared to one's inner enemies, the afflictions.	
For the external enemies do not have that capacity to harm one in the way one's inner enemies, one's afflictions, are able to.	
One's afflictions have harmed one since lifetimes without any beginning. If one does not do anything about this, it will have no end as well in harming one. One's external enemies can never harm one in such a way. To destroy one's long-existent enemies of the afflictions, it is not sufficient merely to apply antidotes for a short period just once or twice.	
There is no way the afflictions can be defeated by merely a once or twice application of the antidotes. Rather, just like the flow of a river, one has to continuously apply the antidotes to the afflictions.	
The teachings are saying that, to deal with such a long time powerful enemy, one's afflictions, if one does not apply persistent effort to deal with them, there is nothing [else that can be done to harm them].	

d' The reasons it is inappropriate to befriend the afflictions [4.33]

<p>4.33 a. <i>If I agreeably honor and rely upon [others],</i> b. <i>All will enact benefit and happiness,</i> c. <i>But if I rely upon these afflictions</i> d. <i>In return I will be harmed by suffering.</i></p>
<p>If one offers gifts of presents and so forth to one's external enemies and tries to befriend them, one can at least placate and pacify them. One may even get some happiness or benefits in return from them.</p>
<p>But if one befriends one's inner enemies, the afflictions, gives and does what they want, not only will they not return the favor, give any happiness and benefits, above that, they will cause more harms and damages to one.</p>
<p>The more one befriends and does what one's afflictions like, the more problems and harms one receives in return.</p>
<p>Therefore, it is wrong to regard them as friends. Rather, one should regard them as enemies and strive to destroy them.</p>
<p>For destroying the enemies, one's afflictions, is a method to achieve peace and happiness.</p>
<p>Essentially, verses 4.32 and 4.33 are saying that, while it is appropriate to make friends with the external enemies, it is inappropriate and wrong to make friends with the inner enemies, one's afflictions.</p>
<p>The external enemies are not [always accompanying and mixing with one], but the afflictions are with one all the time.</p>
<p>What most people usually do is to fight the external enemies and make friends with [their own] afflictions.</p>
<p>What one needs to do is the opposite, like what the <i>Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds</i> are saying, one should:</p>
<p><i>Make friends with one's external enemies and make enemies with one's afflictions.</i> <i>Do not be friends with one's afflictions.</i></p>

2' To cultivate patience towards the afflictions is inappropriate [4.34 – 4.35]

a' Reflecting on the way they act to harm the mind [4.34]

<p>4.34 a. <i>While in cyclic existence how can I be joyful and unafraid</i> b. <i>If in my heart I certainly prepare a place</i> c. <i>For this incessant enemy of long duration,</i> d. <i>The sole cause for the increase of collections of harms?</i></p>
<p>As stated earlier, one's afflictions have harmed one for a very long time in the past. The moment it manifests in one's hearts/ minds, one is immediately disturbed/ harmed. They bring about problems in this life and harm one's future lives as well.</p>
<p>This enemy, one's afflictions, which have been around for a long time abiding in the center of one's heart:</p>
<p>1) If one holds them in high regard, places great importance to whatever they tell one, then one will be harmed in a great way.</p>
<p>2) If one holds them in middling regard in what they tell one, then one will be harmed in a middling way.</p>
<p>3) If one holds them in small regard in what they tell one, then one will be harmed in a small way.</p>
<p>4) If one completely disobeys the commands of one's afflictions, then one will never be harmed.</p>
<p>With one's afflictions abiding in the center of one's heart, there is no way to be free of worries and fears in cyclic existence, there is no way to be truly happy.</p>

b' Reflecting on the way they act to harm the body [4.35]

<p>4.35 a. <i>How shall I ever have happiness</i> b. <i>If in a net of attachment within my mind</i> c. <i>There dwell the guardians of the prison of cyclic existence</i> d. <i>Who become the slayers who kill me in hell and so forth?</i></p>
<p><i>One's afflictions are the guardians of the prison of one's three realms.</i></p>
<p>When one is hacked and killed by the hell guardians while in hell, these guardians are the results of one's afflictions.</p>
<p>If one's mind is ensnared and captured by the net of one's afflictions, like attachment, then there will be no room for happiness in this and future lives.</p>
<p>Verses 4.34 and 4.35 explains how the afflictions harms one's body and mind.</p>

Student: What is the **definition of ultimate bodhicitta?**

Khenrinpoche: If one goes by definition, then **an ultimate mind generation is: A Mahayana Superior Knower that is abiding as a special type of wisdom which is a subsidence of duality with respect to the final mode of abiding of complete enlightenment.** Put simply: An ultimate mind generation is the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness in the continuum of a Mahayana Superior.

Student: If Brahma and Indra [were the first persons] to request teachings from Buddha [after He manifested enlightenment], then why are they not buddhist?

Khenrinpoche: When the Buddha was born, these gods such as Indra and Brahma actually went to the birth place [in Lumbini] and offered an ablution to the new born baby who was to become Buddha later on.

These gods are worldly gods still in cyclic existence, whereas one's founder/ teacher Shakyamuni Buddha is freed from it. As such, just from the time Buddha descended into this world, by the mere fact that He is free of cyclic existence, his existence outshines all beings of cyclic existence.

Perhaps this is why, due to the fact that Buddha is [enlightened] and free of cyclic existence, His very presence automatically outshines them. He is thus able to bring/ gather into His presence all such worldly beings and gain control over them.

Perhaps then, such powerful worldly beings like Indra and Brahma were able to recognize Buddha to be a special being and of great benefit to the world. For that perhaps, this is why they request Buddha to turn the Wheel of Dharma to benefit others.

Brahma is said to be like a creator of the world and regarded as the “Lord/ Owner of this world”. In the teachings, it is mentioned that, when one does the practice of requesting the Buddha to turn the Wheel of Dharma, one can visualize oneself as Brahma to request the turning of the Wheel of Dharma by visualizing oneself [as Brahma] offering a thousand-spoked golden dharma chakra.

[The fact that] these powerful gods requested the Buddha to turn the Wheel of Dharma, shows to others that, the Buddha is a very special person, who must be someone who is more exalted than these powerful gods. It is said that, [even] the natural splendor of the Buddha's exalted Body readily and completely outshines all such worldly gods. Perhaps for these reasons then, that these worldly gods decide to request the Buddha to teach.

3' Developing the strength of mind to destroy [the afflictions] [4.36]

<p><i>4.36 a. Therefore as long as this enemy is not overcome with certainty before my very eyes, b. I shall never give up exerting myself against it. c. Self-important people who become angry even at slight short-lived harm d. Will not go to sleep until it is overcome.</i></p>
<p>Prior to this verse, [verses 4.28 – 4.35] already explained about the great faults and disadvantages of the afflictions.</p>
<p>The afflictions are so harmful in inducing suffering, in that they can throw one into even the lowest of hells and has harmed one since beginningless lifetimes. If one does not counteract them, they will continue to harm one well into the future.</p>
<p>Earlier verses [4.33 – 4.35] also explained why it is wrong to befriend and be patient with one's afflictions. For the more one befriend and are patient with them, the more harm one receives from them.</p>
<p>Teachings also say that, the inner enemy of the afflictions is much more powerful than the external enemy. Therefore, it is not sufficient merely to weaken or suppress one's afflictions, rather, one has to strive to work at destroying them from the root.</p>
<p>It is saying that one should generate the courage to strive to destroy the afflictions from the root by applying the antidotes.</p>
<p>Here, an analogy is given of how, an ordinary person, who when criticized, may go all out to destroy the person who did the criticizing. He holds onto the resentment and will not rest until his enemy is overcome/ destroyed or the situation is corrected.</p>
<p>If so much effort is put just to counteract such a small little harm in this life, then all the more, one should put in much more effort to destroy one's inner enemy, the afflictions.</p>
<p>This finishes the section explaining the way to reflect on the fault of the afflictions [verses 4.28 – 4.36].</p>

ii) It is inappropriate to be weary of the hardships involved in abandoning the afflictions [4.37 – 4.44]

1' Wearing the armor that is capable of destroying the afflictions and not feeling weary about the hardships that come along with that [4.37 – 4.38]

<p>This section explains the need to strive in destroying the afflictions, why it is incorrect to feel tired when the tasks of destroying the afflictions becomes difficult:</p>	
<p><i>4.37 a. If at the time of a violent battle, b. Vigorously desiring to conquer those afflicted ones who are naturally subject to suffering through death, c. Men, disregarding the pain of being pierced by spears and arrows, d. Do not withdraw until the goal is accomplished,</i></p>	<p><i>4.38 a. Then what need to mention that I should not despair and be indolent, b. Even if I am caused many hundreds of sufferings, c. When now I strive to definitely overcome my natural enemies d. That are the constant cause of all suffering?</i></p>
<p>Even if, after one puts in effort but did not manage to destroy the external enemy, there will come a time when this enemy will naturally die/ cease to exist. Such external enemies, the pitiful sentient beings, are actually one's objects of compassion.</p>	
<p>When people fight with their enemies, they are very determined to destroy them. In the process, they put up with all kinds of hardships. Even if they are hit by the weapons wielded by the hands of their enemies, they would not stop until they win.</p>	

In reality, one does not even need to try to defeat one's enemy, because sooner or later, this external enemy will disappear/ die. But the world is not like that, they would attempt to destroy their enemies and continue to do so until they are all killed.
However, such a naturally existing inner enemy, one's afflictions, will not die on their own accord, unless one destroys them.
The moment one's afflictions arise, they are harmful and disturbs one, like how the nature of fire is just hot and burns. As mentioned earlier, one's afflictions harm everyone, from the top to the bottom, and everyone in between.
They harm everyone in limitless ways, bring one into the worst suffering, the sufferings of the avici hells. As such, it is only appropriate and correct to strive in destroying this natural enemy, one's inner afflictions.
Of course, in this process, one will meet with all kinds of problems and sufferings. But one has to accept/ put up with this [hardship] that comes along with destroying one's afflictions. One should generate the determination/ courage to do this.
The teaching is saying that, it is incorrect to feel that one is incapable of applying the antidotes in destroying one's afflictions. [Due to feeling incapable], one then remains discouraged and thus [fails] to do anything.
It is also incorrect to spend time doing nothing/ not applying any antidotes to destroy one's afflictions but remaining lazy.
In essence, these 2 verses are saying that, if one can put up with all kinds of difficulties and hardships in overcoming one's external enemies, then all the more so, one should put in even more effort in destroying one's afflictions.

2' The benefits of joyous effort in destroying the afflictions [4.39 – 4.42(ab)]

a' It would be appropriate to bear [/be patient with] hardships, [as such efforts] are the cause for the excellences [that fulfill] one's own welfare [4.39]

<p><i>4.39 a. If even scars inflicted by meaningless enemies b. Are worn upon the body like ornaments, c. Then why is suffering a cause of harm to me d. Who impeccably strive to fulfill the great purpose?</i></p>
Ordinary worldly persons will fight and destroy their enemies over some small problems. Sometimes when they fight, they would receive wounds. When these heal, they would become scars.
There are people who would regard such scars as ornaments that they are proud to show others.
Khenrinpoche: In Nepal, sometimes you can see that [happening]. Not everybody [does that], but some of them, when they fight, sometimes they [end up getting] scars. [They would boast to others:] “[I got this] when I was young fighting [others].” They don't see that as bad but think that they are brave people. They consider these as some kind of [body] decoration.
Here, maybe people don't fight [like that]. Do Singapore people fight [like that]? They only have “mouth fighting!”
It is interesting how the Indian people fight. Somehow they don't really hit/ touch the other person, but there are so much arguments with each other. Tibetans are not like that, they don't argue much, [they] just [start hitting].
Maybe Chinese people are the same, I don't know. Most of the Himalayan people, they don't argue with the mouth, one or two sentences, that's it, the hands are already starting. But the Indians, I don't see them using their hands, only their mouths!
If scars from these fighting with one's ordinary external enemy can be regarded as an ornament by some, then one should consider all the hardships one meets, while practicing to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, as ornaments as well.
No matter how much hardships or sufferings one will meet in the process of achieving enlightenment to benefit others, one should look upon all of these as that which will lead one into something most beneficial with the most meaning.
Therefore, one should regard such hardships and sufferings as ornaments. Since they will help one accomplish one's own goals/ wishes/ purposes, one should put up with them.
Therefore, it is entirely appropriate to put up with all the hardships and sufferings that come along in the process of destroying one's afflictions.

b' It would be appropriate to bear hardships, [as such efforts] are the cause for the excellences [that fulfill] the welfare of others [4.40]

<p><i>4.40 a. If fishermen, outcastes, farmers, and so forth, b. Thinking merely of their own livelihood, Endure the harms of heat and cold, d. Why do I not endure them for the sake of the happiness of migrating beings?</i></p>
If fisherman and farmers can endure all the cold and heat while pursuing their livelihood to sustain themselves, then it would be [even more] appropriate and [reasonable] to put up with hardships and sufferings, no matter how much there may be, while in the process of defeating one's afflictions.
Therefore, it is appropriate to bear with all the hardships and sufferings that come along when one is defeating one's afflictions to accomplish the happiness and welfare of sentient beings.

c' The reasons it is necessary to [put in effort] to bring to completion the pledges one has made in the past [4.41 – 4.42 (ab)]

<p>4.41 a. <i>When I promised to liberate migrating beings</i> b. <i>Dwelling in the ten directions as far as the ends of space</i> c. <i>From their afflictions,</i> d. <i>I myself was not yet freed from the afflictions.</i></p>	<p>4.42 a. <i>Thus unaware of even my own capacity,</i> b. <i>Was it not somewhat crazy to have spoken like that?</i></p>
<p>Qualm: One has made the promise to destroy the afflictions in the continuum of others. Therefore, it is unsuitable to strive to destroy the afflictions in one's own continuum. This is because, one would then fall into the extreme of peace. Therefore, it is incorrect for bodhisattvas to strive to destroy the afflictions in their own continuum.</p>	
<p>Reply: This is incorrect. Perhaps it would be all right to assert that, at the time when one made the promise to liberate and destroy the afflictions in all sentient beings, one also took the oath/ promise to destroy the afflictions in one's own continuum.</p>	
<p>The mind of enlightenment is made up of two aspirations: an aspiration to accomplish the welfare of others and an aspiration to omniscience. The former is the cause while the latter is an assisting factor that plays a complimentary role.</p>	
<p>To accomplish the welfare of others [by] destroying the afflictions in their continua, one must first destroy the afflictions in one's own continuum. Otherwise, one will be powerless and be unable to destroy the afflictions in others.</p>	
<p>If one is bound by cyclic existence, one cannot accomplish the welfare of others. Therefore, one should strive to abandon one's afflictions in one's own continuum.</p>	
<p>There is no danger that the bodhisattvas would fall into the extreme of peace when they destroy their own afflictions.</p>	
<p>In fact, the understanding of, disgust, disenchantment with the faults of cyclic existence and the intensity in which they strive to destroy their afflictions are tens of hundreds of times more powerful than what the Hearers and Solitary Realizers have.</p>	

3' It is appropriate to be diligent in the practice of destroying the afflictions [4.42(cd) – 4.44]

a' One should make effort in the antidotes to the afflictions [4.42(cd) – 4.43]

<p>4.42 c. <i>Since this is the case I should never withdraw</i> d. <i>From vanquishing the afflictions.</i></p>	<p>4.43 a. <i>I shall adhere to this and,</i> b. <i>Resenting them, I shall meet them in battle!</i> c. <i>But afflictions such as these types</i> d. <i>Destroy afflictions and are not included.</i></p>
<p>The afflictions are the object to be abandoned, therefore one has to strive to apply effort in destroying them all the time.</p>	
<p>One should never reverse from destroying the afflictions and should always regard the afflictions as objects to be abandoned.</p>	
<p>With that thought, one should always strive to destroy them.</p>	
<p>Qualm: If one is so attached to [/obsessed with] destroying the afflictions, does that not become an affliction in itself? If one is so angry [/resentful] with the afflictions, is that also not an affliction? Should one not therefore abandon these attitudes?</p>	
<p>Reply: 4.43 (cd) <i>But afflictions such as these types destroy afflictions and are not included.</i> Its meanings are as follow:</p>	
<p>Gyaltsab Je's commentary says that: <i>Holding onto the antidote, an anger to that which has to be abandoned, these appear like afflictions but actually belong to the class of the antidotes that destroy the afflictions and is therefore not included in the category of that to be abandoned.</i></p>	
<p>Here, having a desire and an attachment [/obsession] to the antidotes of the afflictions may look like an affliction in itself, but it is not. Essentially, such a desire [/obsession] to apply the antidotes to destroy the afflictions is itself a strong aspiration.</p>	
<p>With that, comes strong mindfulness and vigilance, which are applied when implementing the antidotes to the afflictions. These come along with the aspiration to destroy the afflictions, in this context, is the attachment [/obsession] to the antidotes.</p>	
<p>The mind that is mindful and vigilant about the faults of the afflictions is able to recognize and abandon them. Therefore, these are helpful and necessary in destroying the afflictions.</p>	
<p>Therefore, they form the antidotes to the afflictions and do not become the afflictions themselves.</p>	
<p>In short, based on mindfulness and vigilance, there is a mind that looks upon the afflictions as an enemy through seeing the fault of the afflictions. Such a mind understands the value, necessity and purpose of the antidotes.</p>	
<p>Although this mind may look like an attachment [/obsession] to the antidotes, as well as looking like an angry mind [/resentful mind], being upset with the afflictions, this mind itself is not an affliction. It is part of the antidotes to the affliction</p>	

b' One should make effort so that one does not come under the power of the afflictions at any time [4.44]

<p>4.44 a. <i>I would rather be burned and killed,</i> b. <i>And even have my head cut off,</i> c. <i>Than to ever bow down</i> d. <i>To the enemy that is the afflictions in any way.</i></p>

One point this verse is making is, one has to: <i>Work at destroying the afflictions and strive to not let the mind come under their control.</i>
Qualm: If it is so troublesome to deal with/ destroy one's afflictions, with so many difficulties and problems that arise in the process, is it not better just to follow it?
Khenrinpoche: Is it not better? <i>If you follow it, then you solve the problem. That's what we usually think.</i>
This verse is an answer to [such a qualm]: to have one's limbs or head chopped off is of no big issue. At most, such actions would merely end one's life, but [unlike the afflictions], such actions would not send one to the hell realms.
If one allows oneself to be controlled by one's afflictions, these will send one into the lower realms of the hells and obstruct one's achievement of full enlightenment. Therefore, they are much more terrifying, for they bring one the greatest suffering and obstruct one from the most beneficial and meaningful, one's achievement of full enlightenment.
These verses are very beneficial and useful for the mind. One should read, think about them regularly to understand the faults of one's afflictions and gradually be familiarized with these verses.
Because of these reasons, one should strive to work at not letting oneself come under the control of the afflictions. If one does not, then these will bring one the greatest suffering and prevent one from achieving the most meaningful.
This concludes the section on why, <i>It is inappropriate to be weary of the hardships involved in abandoning the afflictions [4.37 – 4.44]</i> , which tells one to take joy/ being enthusiastic in destroying the afflictions, rather than becoming disenchanting.

iii) Cultivating joy [in the conviction] that it is possible [to abandon the afflictions], as these would be abandoned if effort is made [4.45 – 4.47]

1' If the afflictions in one's own continuum are completely uprooted, there is no place [that will] support them in one's mind [4.45]

4.45 a. Ordinary enemies when expelled from one country
 b. Simply settle down in another and embrace it,
 c. And when their capability is recovered they then return;
 d. But the way of this enemy, my afflictions, is different.

Even if one managed to expel one's enemy to some faraway place, it is possible that he can recover and return to haunt one.

However, the inner enemy, one's afflictions, are not like that. Once they are vanquished through the force of the antidotes completely from the root, they are completely destroyed and can never return again.

2' [Since] the afflictions arise from wrong causes, one will be able to abandon them if one applies diligence [4.46]

4.46 a. Afflictions, afflictions! When abandoned by the eye of wisdom
 b. And dispelled from my mind, where will you go?
 c. Where will you dwell and return to harm me?
 d. Although this is so, weak-minded, I have been reduced to making no effort.

Here, *afflictions, afflictions* is expressing how lowly they are:

If one analyzes properly, one would see that they can be vanquished, as these arise from mistaken causes.

One needs to abandon them through generating the eye of wisdom realizing emptiness.

Once the afflictions, which abide in one's continuum, are vanquished/ eliminated by the wisdom realizing emptiness, they will have no where else to go. It is not as if they will [temporarily] leave one's mind, go somewhere else to recover and then return to haunt one. This will not happen with the afflictions.

Student: As a student who has studied the teachings and practiced for so many years, why is there still no improvement?

Khenrinpoche: You said so many years of practice? **Student:** Oh, no practice, sorry! So many years of external activities...

Khenrinpoche: Supporting the afflictions and not destroying them, isn't it? Then you ask why is it that you are still not improving? **Student:** Yes. **Khenrinpoche:** The answer is already there, yes?

Khenrinpoche: Firstly, we don't put in effort to abandon the afflictions, never! [We are] always following the afflictions. So [even though] that's what you hope [to achieve, some improvement], but [there's] "no hope." All the advice is here [in the root text]: recognizing the disadvantages of the afflictions, how much they harm us. There are soooo many advice here. How [our afflictions] control our minds. [They are so unlike] our external enemies. For example, [when] someone just say some harsh words, [you can see] how much that hurts you. You cannot sleep [for the whole night]. You keep on thinking what to say back/ how to [retaliate with spiteful words]. This is just a small word of harm to you, but you would put in so much effort to think of how to [retaliate], making sure he will not say such things to you again. We put in so much effort for merely such a small [harm]

Khenrinpoche: What Shantideva is saying is about our afflictions, how much they will harm you, but you never think [about that] at all! These are the real enemies but we never think that way.

We consider [our afflictions] as our best friends, but never recognize that they are our worst enemies!

*Whatever the [real] enemy, the delusion says, you will try to follow them and feel happy even [by doing that].
This is how the delusion deceives us, but we would never recognize that.*

*So, all the advice [in the text] is [saying], is to recognize that your delusion is your inner enemy.
So, don't fight with the outer enemy, fight with your inner enemy.*

Khenrinpoche: I think the advice from Shantideva is about that. You don't need to destroy or kill the outer enemy, it will die by itself. You need to kill your inner enemy, you need to destroy it. Also, [it is not the case that,] when you die, your delusion will disappear [by itself]. No, it will continue. So that's why you must put effort and destroy it.

So, what we've read so far is very simple [language], two or three sentences and we've finished with Shantideva's text! But he is saying that, we have to understand that the delusion is the real enemy. We must understand that. So, whenever we have a difficult time, whatever suffering we are experiencing fighting the delusion, [we must be aware that] this is important. [For] this purifies you negative karma, whatever sufferings we may have fighting the delusion, it becomes the cause for enlightenment. Again, the [text] is saying that, the delusion has no basis as it comes from a wrong mind. Since there is no basis to it, if you put in effort, you will be able to destroy it. With the understanding of/ realization of emptiness, we can destroy it.

Student: If we are really honest with ourselves, all the activities we do are to follow the instructions of our afflictions and not to overcome them. If it takes so much virtuous causes to obtain a precious human rebirth, why is it that at the time of the result, the afflictions seem as powerful as before?

Khenrinpoche: It is not necessarily [the case] that you have meditated on emptiness in your past lives to obtain a precious human rebirth. Perhaps if you have done that in your past lives then maybe there would be less delusion in this life.

Student: Should the powerful virtues cultivated in past lives not also be as powerful in this life? Why is it then, that my afflictions seem to be more powerful than my virtues in this life?

Khenrinpoche: Generally, all rebirths in cyclic existence are due to karma and afflictions. As such, generally, all rebirths in cyclic existence happen without choice, under the control of karma and afflictions, including the human life of freedoms and endowments. Such a rebirth is a result of contaminated virtue, propelled by the ignorance of the twelve links of interdependent-origination. Therefore, it is a result of ignorance, under the control of the afflictions. Because we did not rely and apply the antidotes to the afflictions in the past, therefore, our state of existence now is [still] under the control of karma and afflictions. Did we accumulate strong virtues in the past? Yes, otherwise, there is no way to obtain such a human life of freedoms and endowments. Did we practice some kind of ethical discipline? Yes, to some extent, here and there, definitely there were some practices of ethical discipline. But did we apply the antidotes to the afflictions? Did we meditate strongly on that? That's the question...

It is clearly evident that, because we didn't strongly apply the antidotes to the afflictions, therefore, now in this life, the afflictions are still very strong.

[Let's] look at what we do in this life: Yes, [even though] we have a human life of freedoms and endowments, we have met the teachings, we understand the teachings, we listen to the teachings on the faults of the afflictions. But at the end of the day, are we applying the antidotes to the afflictions? Are there even people who will spend just five minutes sitting down and really look at the problems and the faults of the afflictions? Even that is rare!

Therefore, it is not a question of not being able to do, the problem lies in not doing!

If you look at this whole chapter [Teachings on conscientiousness], from the beginning to the end, it is basically imploring us to start, since we have a perfect human rebirth and so forth. Now is the time to start, we should do it now. From the beginning to the end, [this chapter] is all about saying that.

Khenrinpoche shows the sign: [Don't be a person whose listening ends up] *Going in one ear and out the other*. [Something heard and then soon ignored or forgotten].

Khenrinpoche: [Sometimes it is] better to use sign language! Did you understand that? Okay...

Dealing with the afflictions and abandoning them is no easy task. Because they have been there since beginningless lifetimes. Therefore, we are thoroughly familiarized with them. Therefore, it's impossible to deal with them just by applying the antidotes just once. Therefore, there's a verse that says that you have to apply the antidotes like the flow of a river, that is, continuously. Otherwise, it is not possible at all.

As such, therefore at least for now, there should never ever be a time that we should be asking the question: "Why is it that my afflictions are not subsiding, not becoming weaker?" In the first place, we are not doing anything about it. Therefore, we should not even be asking this question.

If we have been continuously applying the antidotes and really working [against] the afflictions, and after many years, if we still find it difficult [to overcome them], perhaps maybe then, one can wonder why [it is not working].

Khenrinpoche: That is the right time to ask your question: "Why, I've put in so much effort but I am still like that..?" Now, there should not be such questions being asked.

How the wisdom realizing selflessness will be that which destroys one's afflictions:

It is mentioned in the text that afflictions arise from erroneous minds, as such, it is possible to eradicate them, as one has the capacity to destroy them. This is through developing the wisdom realizing selflessness in one's own mind.
One's afflictions will not disappear on its own accord, it is by developing this wisdom that will enable one to destroy them.
The way this wisdom realizing selflessness destroys one's afflictions is very similar to how darkness is overcome by light.
When the wisdom realizing selflessness arises in the mind, the afflictions do not go anywhere but are naturally pacified/ ceased there and then. <i>They disappear/ dissolve into the clear light mind.</i>
Because of one's lack of wisdom, which is a very weak state of mind, one is unable to overcome one's afflictions. If one is able to develop this wisdom realizing selflessness, then it is said that one's afflictions will be destroyed easily.
When the wisdom realizing selflessness is actualized, it would be easy to destroy one's inner enemy, one's afflictions. This would be a much easier task than overcoming one's outer enemies.
As is stated in 4.16(d): <i>Although this is so, weak-minded, I have been reduced to making no effort.</i>
As one does not have this wisdom, or it is weak, therefore, one has not been able to vanquish one's afflictions.

3' If [the afflictions] are completely uprooted, there is absolutely no place that supports their existence and [thus], it is appropriate [to assert] that they [can be abandoned] [4.47]

This verse essentially explains that one's afflictions can be overcome because they do not exist truly.
Qualm stated by Gyaltsab Je that may be raised by others: There may be people who think: "Since afflictions are generated in one's own continuum, therefore, they would have to exist inherently. If so, how could they be abandoned?"
This is what one will think, when one looks at one's afflictions. They look so real as if they have always been right there, so solidly existing from its own side. Therefore, one may wonder whether it is really possible to overcome them. Reply:
<i>4.47 a. If these afflictions do not abide within objects, b. Not in the collection of sense powers, between the two nor elsewhere,</i>
4.47(ab) is referring to how one's afflictions are [ultimately] not inherently existent. This is an explanation on how one can think/ reflect on one's afflictions not being inherently existent, when such afflictions as anger arises in one's mind.
Using the Four Permutations to refute inherent existence:
When such afflictions as anger or attachment arises strongly, one can check if they exist right from the side of the object of anger or attachment or not: A) Does it exist inherently right there on either one's enemy or one's object of attachment?
One's afflictions do not exist inherently on one's enemy nor on one's loved ones. For example, one's attachment/ desire does not exist inherently on the form one is attached to.
The form one is attracted to, or the enemy one is upset with, do not exist right there from the side of the object.
If one's afflictions existed inherently on the objects of attachment or anger, then whoever comes into contact with these objects would also necessarily have to generate attachment or anger respectively.
But when the foe destroyers come into contact with forms, they do not generate attachment towards the forms they perceive.
This is something to think about: Attachment does not exist inherently from the side of the object one is attached to. Anger does not exist inherently from the side of the enemy.
One can just examine one's own experience: When one is very upset with a situation or somebody, the anger appears to exist/ come from the side of the object. One would never think it is coming from one's own side, made up by one's own mind.
Similarly, when one is attached to an object or to a person, there is this energy of attachment coming from their sides. One would never think that it is coming one's own mind. This is how things appear to one and how one believes experientially.
The teachings say that such afflictions as attachment and anger arise from incorrect mental attention.
When one investigates, at the very root of such an attention, there is this innate believe/ apprehension of inherent existence/ true existence, something real right there.
How attachment operates: 1) In the view of this attachment, there is an <i>appearance</i> of an inherently existent object of attachment/ desire, a very nice object/ person.
2) <i>Incorrect mental attention</i> then comes in and exaggerates the object beyond what it actually is.
3) From that, comes a very strong emotional involvement/ <i>grasping [attachment]</i> .

Likewise: 1) In the view of anger, there is an <i>appearance</i> of an inherently existent enemy/ unpleasant object.
2) <i>Incorrect mental attention</i> then exaggerates the person to be worse than/ beyond what he actually is.
3) From that, this leads to very strong <i>dislike [anger]</i> .
This is how afflictions arise and function: 1) The basis is always an <i>apprehension</i> of inherent existence/ true existence.
2) With this as a basis, then there is <i>incorrect mental attention</i> that superimposes features/ characteristics onto the object of attachment or anger beyond its actual nature.
3) One's mind then believes in that and reacts, which produces strong <i>anger or attachment</i> .
4) With strong anger or attachment, this leads one to <i>accumulate karma</i> .
5) With the accumulation of karma, one <i>experiences</i> all the varieties of problems and <i>sufferings</i> of cyclic existence.
Every single problem or pain that one experiences is a ripening result of karma that one has accumulated. This is motivated/ driven by one's afflictions, which are based on one's <i>apprehension and belief</i> of true existence/ inherent existence.
Therefore, all of one's problems come from one's karma and afflictions. Of the two, one's afflictions are the principal cause.
For, if there are no afflictions, then even if there are still karma remaining, these will not be able to give rise to its effects.
Therefore, between the two, one's afflictions are much more powerful.
That which can directly oppose this ignorance, one's apprehension of inherent existence, is the wisdom directly perceiving selflessness. When this wisdom is generated, it renders ignorance powerless such that thenceforth, one would not accumulate new projecting karma.
Nagarjuna's <i>Fundamental/ Root Treatise on Wisdom</i> states that: <i>Suffering arises from karma and afflictions, which come from incorrect mental attention.</i> <i>Since the root of ignorance is the apprehension of inherent existence, as such, this ignorance is seized by emptiness.</i>
If one examines the process with which afflictions arise, essentially, they do so through one's own incorrect mental attention, the root being one's ignorance. Basically, these come from one's own mind.
Even though this is the reality, but one would never think that one's afflictions are made up by one's mind. One believes [wholeheartedly] that they come from [the side of] the object, whether they are a pleasant or an unpleasant object.
When one is very attached to [or upset with] an object, one does so because one feels [strongly] and completely that there is something right there coming from the side of the object. One would never think that it is the projection of one's own mind.
In short, the afflictions do not abide within objects, unlike what one innately believes. When one gets very upset or attached, one feels this energy/ affliction is coming right there from the side of the pleasant or unpleasant object.
If the afflictions are coming from the side of the object like one innately believes, then it follows that, whoever comes into contact with the object would necessarily develop afflictions of attachment or anger. But this is not the case.
When one is very attached to a person or object, there is an appearance and believe that everything pleasant about that object comes completely from the side of the object.
When one is upset with a situation, object or person, from one's own experience, all the unpleasant characteristics, what one does not like, is believed to have come completely from the side of the object, it has nothing to do with one's mind.
Although this is what one believes, but the reality is that, one's afflictions do not exist inherently within the objects.
For if they existed inherently with the objects, then it absurdly follows that, whoever comes into contact with those objects would necessarily generate afflictions.
One's afflictions do not exist inherently within the objects, B) neither do they exist inherently/ abide inherently within one's sense powers or mental sense powers, one's consciousness.
This is because, if they are existing inherently within the sense powers, then it absurdly follows that, whenever the sense powers are in operation, then they would necessarily be in an afflicted state.
Similarly, if the afflictions are abiding inherently within the consciousnesses, then it would also absurdly follow that, as long as it is a consciousness, a mind, there will always be an affliction manifesting.
If one's afflictions exist inherently within one's sense powers, then it necessarily follows absurdly that, whenever one sees or hears things, these experiences are necessary afflicted. It does not necessarily mean that afflictions are always manifesting.
If one's afflictions exist inherently in one's various sense powers and consciousnesses, this would [absurdly] mean that, whenever they came into existence, the afflictions were already there from the beginning, in oneness with them.
It would then absurdly follow that the arhats would have afflictions, since they have sense powers and consciousnesses.

The point is this: It is wrong to believe that one's afflictions are inherently one with one's sense powers or consciousnesses.
This is because, there will be many logical fallacies [as shown above].
Although one's afflictions do not exist inherently, but when one conceives of them, they appear as so real/ inherently existing.
But, just because they appear to exist inherently, this does not mean that they are so.
So, one's afflictions: A) Do not exist inherently within the objects, B) Do not exist inherently within one's sense powers. The text is saying that, one's afflictions also C) do not exist inherently between these two.
If one's afflictions are not inherently existing, are not found within objects, sense powers, nor in between these two, and also D) Do not exist inherently somewhere else outside [these three], then ultimately, the afflictions do not exist inherently.
These afflictions, which have been harming one since beginningless lifetimes up to now, are not inherently existent. Since they are not so, then how is one being harmed by them?
If one's afflictions do not exist inherently in the four ways as stated above, then how can the inherently existent afflictions harm one? <i>They cannot harm one, since they do not exist inherently. As such, inherently existent afflictions cannot harm.</i>
Through such reflections, one deals with one's afflictions when they arise: 1) One initially suppresses them, then 2) eventually eliminate them from the root.
[Verse 4.47(cde)] explains how to deal with one's afflictions through understanding that they [merely] exist conventionally: <i>c. Then where do they abide and how do they harm all migrating beings?</i> <i>d. They are like an illusion. Thus I should dispel the fear within my heart and strive for the sake of wisdom.</i> <i>e. For no meaning, why am I harmed in hell and so forth?</i>
Although one's afflictions do not exist inherently, as there is no such thing as an inherently existent affliction, nevertheless they appear as inherently existent. Therefore, such an appearance is like an illusion.
Through understanding all these [points, one] <i>discards all the fears of not being able to abandon the afflictions</i> due to thinking that these are inherently existent.
Therefore, it is correct to strive in abandoning the afflictions through developing wisdom by thinking: <i>"Why should I allow myself to go to the hells and suffer there, now that I know the afflictions can be destroyed?"</i>
In short, one deals with <i>one's afflictions</i> by reflecting on how they <i>are not inherently existent but are like illusions</i> .
Teachings are saying that, when one's afflictions arise, one should not follow after them. Rather, one should investigate: 1) Why one's affliction is arising, 2) What is its cause and 3) How it is arising.
One then looks for its very origin/ source/ root of one's afflictions: It is through generating the wisdom realizing selflessness that one will be able to cut this very root of the afflictions.
Teachings say that, once one is able to develop this wisdom, one will be able to destroy [all of one's] afflictions.

c. Summary [4.48]

<i>4.48 a. Therefore, having thought about this,</i> <i>b. I should make effort for the sake of accomplishing the trainings explained.</i> <i>c. If the doctor's instructions are ignored,</i> <i>d. How will a patient in need of treatment be cured by the medicines?</i>
All the earlier verses in this Chapter Four explains about:
1) How to be conscientious in guarding one's bodhicitta that has been generated,
2) How to be conscientious to guard one's trainings: 2a) How to be conscientious to guard oneself against being stained by the bodhisattva downfalls and faults in the first place. 2b) Even if one is stained by these downfalls and faults, one should confess and purify them. 2c) How to be conscientious in guarding oneself against one's afflictions.
One has to cultivate conscientiousness by reflecting on all the advice explained in this chapter.
This verse is saying that, just like a patient who is very sick would need to follow the doctor's advice, the appropriate medicine and treatments, likewise, one has to follow the advice given by the Buddha with regards to being conscientious in one's trainings.
In Gyalsab Je's commentary on this chapter, he concludes by saying that: <i>Freedom from memory of faults, increasing virtue without degeneration, these depend with certainty on meditation on conscientiousness. Therefore, should those proficient, always depend on conscientiousness.</i>
This is Chapter Four: meditating on conscientiousness.

Chapter Five: Guarding Introspection

2. The way to train in ethics: A specific explanation given with regards to mindfulness and introspection – the methods for purely guarding all virtuous dharmas.

A. A general presentation [of the Lam Rim path]

- a. The reasons it is necessary to [cultivate] the trainings once mind generation has been developed
- b. Teaching that Buddhahood will not be accomplished by practicing only [either] method or wisdom
- c. Explaining the stages of [cultivating] in the trainings

Essentially, this chapter is an explanation of how to protect/ keep one's ethical discipline pure. One does so with mindfulness and introspection.

To achieve full enlightenment, it is necessary to enter and engage a path that is unmistakable and complete:

If a path is mistaken, one would not achieve the result. Likewise, if there are elements of the path that are missing/ incomplete, one would not achieve the result as well.

Teachings are saying that, it is not sufficient to generate aspirational bodhicitta, rather, after generating aspirational bodhicitta, one must take the bodhisattva vow and engage in the trainings. Otherwise, one would not achieve the result.

All the bodhisattva's trainings can be condensed into the six perfections. When it says *Training in the path that is complete and unmistakable*, this means the bodhisattvas have to practice the bodhisattva deeds/ trainings, particularly the six perfections.

Of these six, the chapter here explains the perfection of ethical discipline.

B. The subject [meaning] of the branches

a. Explaining the chapter's material [5.1 – 5.109]

1) An extensive explanation of the way to practice [5.1 – 5.107]

a) The method for guarding the trainings: Guarding the mind [5.1 – 5.22]

i) By guarding the mind, one comes to guard all [5.1 – 5.5]

1' A brief presentation on the necessity of guarding the mind [5.1]

2' The faults of allowing the mind to degenerate [5.2]

3' The benefits of guarding the mind [5.3 – 5.5]

ii) The reasons for [guarding the mind] [5.6 – 5.8]

iii) Making effort in guarding the mind [5.188 – 5.22]

b) The method for guarding the mind: Guarding mindfulness and introspection [5.23 – 5.33]

c) The way to train in the conduct of guarding the mind by means of mindfulness and introspection [5.34–5.97]

d) The branch or method of excellent trainings [5.98 – 5.107]

2) Conclusion: It is necessary to put into practice the meaning without [leaving them on the level of] mere words [5.108 – 5.109]

1' A brief presentation on the necessity of guarding the mind [5.1]

The essence is this: to guard one's trainings, one has to guard one's mind. Therefore, it is very important to guard one's mind.

- 5.1 a. *Those who wish to guard their trainings*
 b. *Should very tightly guard their minds.*
 c. *Those who do not guard their minds*
 d. *Are unable to guard their trainings.*

There are many trainings that the bodhisattvas have to undertake. For them to protect these, they have to focus on guarding their minds. One has to guard/ protect/ stop one's mind from engaging in erroneous objects.

If one's mind is not protected against/ stopped from engaging/ following erroneous objects, then it will be very difficult to protect one's trainings. As such, it is therefore very important to guard/ protect one's mind.

One's mind is likened to an untamed elephant. The way to tame it is to tie it with a very strong rope to a very stable pillar, checking on it every now and then to see if it is still tied to the pillar or not.

Likewise, one guards/ protects one's mind from wondering off and engaging in erroneous objects with the rope of mindfulness and the guard of introspection.

The thoughts in one's mind is likened to the waves in the ocean, which just come one wave after another without stopping.

Such thoughts are not stable, do not last for a very long time but exist for a very short time and is replaced by another.

One has to guard one's mind with mindfulness and introspection. Mindfulness is a mental factor that does not allow the mind to forget the virtuous object of observation. One has to tie one's mind of mindfulness to a virtuous object of observation.

It is mindfulness that stops the mind from forgetting this chosen object of observation.

How mindfulness protects the mind: It *does not allow the mind to forget what it is engaging in and what it is discarding*, by causing the mind to stay on its virtuous object of observation without forgetting.

Introspection/ vigilance is likened to a person who *checks on what one's body, speech and mind are doing*. It is through introspection that one continues to engage in applying mindfulness.

In short, one guards one's trainings by guarding one's mind with mindfulness and introspection.

2' The faults of allowing the mind to degenerate [5.2]

- 5.2 a. *In this [world,] unsubdued and crazed elephants*
 b. *Do not cause such harms*
 c. *As the harms of Relentless Torment*
 d. *Caused by the unleashed elephant of my mind.*

If one allows one's unsubdued/ untamed mind to wonder off and does whatever it likes, then one would end up accumulating many negativities which will throw one into the hells. This is something that an external untamed elephant cannot do to one.

Therefore, one has to strive in guarding/ protecting one's mind.

3' The benefits of guarding the mind [5.3 – 5.5]

a' A brief presentation [5.3]

- 5.3 a. *But if the elephant of my mind is tightly bound*
 b. *Through all by the rope of mindfulness,*
 c. *All fears will cease to exist*
 d. *And all virtues will come into my hand.*

This verse is saying that, if one binds one's mind tightly onto a virtuous object of observation, one will protect one's mind. One will easily achieve the status of good rebirth as a human or god and the happiness of liberation.

One needs to guard/ protect one's mind with mindfulness and introspection. If one can place one's mind strongly on a virtuous object of observation, one would then be able to acquire all virtues, happiness, overcome nonvirtues and sufferings.

It is said in the sutra that, the best thing is to subdue one's mind. If one does so, one achieves all happiness.

As Lama Atisha also said, if one subdues one's own mind, the external enemy cannot harm. But if one's mind moves and wonders onto erroneous objects, then one would be harmed. This is how one's external enemy, as a condition, can harm one.

The external enemy acts as a condition for one's inner enemy, one's afflictions to arise, which burns one's mind. This is how one's enemy destroys one. Therefore, one has to vanquish/ subdue one's inner enemy. This is the advice of Lama Atisha.

One may think: "Even if I subdue my own mind, but there are so many external difficult conditions. There is no way I can protect myself against all these. Therefore, there is no way to be totally free of fear even if I subdue my mind."

b' An extensive presentation [5.4 – 5.5]

- 5.4 a. *Tigers, lions, elephants, bears,*
 b. *Snakes, and all my enemies,*
 c. *The guardians who are hell beings,*
 d. *Evil spirits and likewise cannibals,*

- 5.5 a. *Will all be bound*
 b. *By binding this mind alone,*
 c. *And will all be subdued*
 d. *By subduing this mind alone.*

Khenrinpoche: ***That is the answer. You [discover this for yourself].***

Student: Regarding verse 4.47, how would an erroneous mind think that the afflictions exist within the object?

Khenrinpoche: This is an exercise to discover that the afflictions do not inherently exist. To do so, one has to discover that they do not inherently exist in the objects, the sense powers, in between [and elsewhere]. This verse is saying that, since the afflictions do not exist inherently within the objects, the sense powers, in between [and elsewhere], therefore, these afflictions do not exist inherently at all:

If these afflictions do not abide within objects, not in the collection of sense powers, between the two nor elsewhere...

Student: How does the conception conceive that the attachment, for example, exist within the object?

Khenrinpoche: Don't we think [like] that? **Student:** No. One doesn't think that the attachment is embedded in the object.

Khenrinpoche: You don't feel that attachment is coming a hundred percent from the object? You feel it is coming from your mind? **Student:** I feel what is coming from the object is the exaggerated good quality, like, this dress is the nicest in the world.

Khenrinpoche: So, you would see that the attachment is totally coming from the object, giving [you] this attachment from the object, isn't it? **Student:** I see the quality of the object... **Khenrinpoche:** So, this gives the attachment, isn't it? Who is giving the attachment? **Student:** But the attachment is arising in my mind. **Khenrinpoche:** But who produced [that thought]? [We feel] it is a hundred percent produced from the object, isn't it? When you get angry with a person, it is also exactly like that.

What you feel is: "I am okay, but this person is a hundred percent giving anger to me." [The affliction is coming] totally from the object, you don't feel that "my mind is unhappy/ angry," isn't it? **Student:** I think my mind is focusing more on the qualities of the object, like the dress is really nice...it's the quality of the object that comes to my mind and makes attachment arise. **Khenrinpoche:** The point is that, [you would feel that] the object [completely produces] your attachment, your mind does not think [that it is totally responsible for producing] the attachment.

How when one subdues one's mind, one subdues everything:

<p>It was explained in the previous lesson that, to protect one's ethical discipline, one has to guard one's mind. Without guarding one's mind, there is no way to guard one's ethical discipline. Therefore, guarding one's mind is very important.</p>	
<p>The text says that if one guards/ protects one's mind well, then one cannot be harmed by the external enemy.</p>	
<p>If one's mind is stirred by the waves of the incorrect mental attention, that will be how appearances like the external enemy arise. Such an external enemy acts as condition for one's inner enemy, one's afflictions such as anger and attachment to arise.</p>	
<p>When this inner enemy, one's affliction arises, it kills one. Thus, one's main enemy is one's inner enemy, one's afflictions.</p>	
<p>One has to subdue/ discipline one's own mind. When one does so, there is no external enemy, who cannot harm one.</p>	
<p>On the basis of recognizing the problems/ faults of one's afflictions, one then has to strive in destroying them.</p>	
<p>If one allows one's mind to be moved and stirred by the waves of the incorrect mental attention, then when the afflictions arise, the harms they will bring one will be very great. For they can throw one into the lowest of lower realms, the avici hell.</p>	
<p>Such harms done to one by one's inner enemy, is something that one's external enemy cannot do.</p>	
<p>The teaching here is on the application of mindfulness and introspection. In this context, this is with regards to the things one needs to adopt and discard. If one is able to do so, then cultivation of virtue will be easy.</p>	
<p>Taking the ethical discipline of abandoning the ten nonvirtues as an example, before one can apply mindfulness and vigilance in cultivating this, one has to firstly recognize each individual entity, how each of them are created and how to abandon them.</p>	
<p>My point is, without knowing these essential points, there is no way one could apply mindfulness, which is not forgetting something one already knows. One then cannot be mindful in abandoning the ten nonvirtues. Therefore, one has to know.</p>	
<p>Similarly, to keep whatever praktimoksha, bodhisattva or tantric vows one has taken, one needs to know the trainings first, what the vows are, before one can be mindful of that.</p>	
<p>Here, the discussion is on the practice of mindfulness and vigilance in relation to the practice of ethical discipline. There are the ethical discipline of the praktimoksha, bodhisattva and tantric vows. Whichever these are, before one can protect and guard them well with mindfulness and vigilance, one must firstly know what these are.</p>	
<p>The ethical discipline here is primarily the ethical discipline of the bodhisattvas, which can be classified into three ethical disciplines of: a) Restraint, b) Gathering virtuous Dharma, and c) Benefiting sentient beings.</p>	
<p>Essentially, these three ethical disciplines form the ethical disciplines of the bodhisattvas.</p>	
<p>To keep and protect them, one has to first know what they are, on that basis, one then strive to protect them.</p>	
<p>Acharya Shantarakshita said that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Because of apprehending things to be truly existent, this acts as the condition for afflictions such as anger and attachment to arise.</i></p>	
<p>Through apprehending things to be truly existent, the inner enemy, one's anger and attachment arise. If this grasping at things as truly existent ceases, then there is no way for anger and attachment to arise.</p>	
<p>Therefore, the great master Shantarakshita is saying that, if the root source of all the problems, one's belief/ apprehension in things to be truly existent, one's ignorance grasping at a self, is destroyed, then there is no way for one's inner enemy, one's anger and attachment and so forth to arise. When there is no inner enemy, there will not be any external enemies.</p>	
<p>The appearance and concept of an external enemy is very much dependent on having anger. In the view of anger, there is a projection of external enemy: "Oh, this person has harmed me!" Without hatred or anger, there will not be an external enemy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">One's external enemy does not exist from its own side, existing right there inherently. Rather, it is a product/ creation/ projection of one's inner enemy.</p>	
<p>Teachings say that, if one's inner enemy does not exist, there will be no external enemy. Therefore, the teachings emphasizes the need to subdue one's own mind.</p>	
<p>One may think that, it does not really matter how much one subdues one's mind, as there will be no way to stop all the myriad external problems and [harmful] conditions. The problems are still present, one will not be able to protect oneself.</p>	
<p>If one thinks this way, then the reply to that is explained in [5.4 – 5.5]:</p>	

b' An extensive presentation [5.4 – 5.5]

<p>5.4 a. Tigers, lions, elephants, bears, b. Snakes, and all my enemies, c. The guardians who are hell beings, d. Evil spirits and likewise cannibals,</p>	<p>5.5 a. Will all be bound b. By binding this mind alone, c. And will all be subdued d. By subduing this mind alone.</p>
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There can be harms that come from different kinds of animals like tigers, lions, elephants, bears, snakes, all of one's human enemies, the hell guardians, those who perform black magic that harms one, as well as all the different types of blood drinking spirits and so forth.
When one fastens one's mind with mindfulness and vigilance onto a virtuous object of observation such as compassion and bodhicitta, then one will not experience fear. All these harms will not be able to affect one.
When one sees animals, one is afraid of being harmed by by them. One is afraid of being harmed by humans, non-humans and so forth. When one analyzes, <i>such fears come from self-cherishing.</i>
<i>Therefore, the greater one's self-cherishing is, the greater will be one's worries and fears.</i>
In place of self-cherishing, if one has strong thought of cherishing others, particularly when there is compassion and bodhicitta, even though that would not make the animal go away, from one's own side, one would not experience fear.
Even if one meets with all such frightening animals as poisonous snakes and so forth, if there is strong thoughts of benefiting others in one's mind, they would not frighten one.
This is because, <i>when there is strong thoughts of benefiting others, one's mind is very stable, calm and relaxed.</i>
Khenrinpoche: When you just sit there, if the lion were to eat you, then what do you do? You have come there [after] having generated bodhicitta mind, if the lion comes in front of you and is going to eat you, then how [would you react]?
Khenrinpoche: Or they wouldn't eat you...I am not sure. I think they wouldn't eat you. Maybe the lion smells that you are not the right person, that you don't have self-cherishing: "I only like those who have self-cherishing!"
In such a situation, putting aside whether one gets eaten by the animal or not, if one has been accustomed with the strong thought of benefiting others, then definitely there will be no fears nor worries from one's side.
There are many historical accounts of real bodhisattvas who have really generated actual bodhicitta coming into contact with wild animals, because of their actual real bodhicitta, the wild animals would just naturally get pacified and subdued. They would just become pacified and stay by the side [of the bodhisattva].
<i>Therefore, those who have bodhicitta are able to subdue others' minds.</i>
Perhaps, that can be one of the symbolism behind certain Buddhas and bodhisattvas sitting on lions and some having a snake as their hood [sheltering] their holy bodies.
Therefore, the teachings say that, <i>if one's mind is subdued, then one would be able to subdue everything!</i>
<i>When people come into the presence of real bodhisattvas, somehow, these people are naturally pacified. This is due to [the bodhisattva's] powerful bodhicitta. Everything gets pacified, everything becomes very calm.</i>

ii) The reasons for [guarding the mind] [5.6 – 5.8]

1' Negativities depend upon the mind [5.6 – 5.8]

2' Qualities depend upon the mind [5.9 – 5.17]

1' Negativities depend upon the mind [5.6 – 5.8]

a' Scripture [5.6]

b' Reasoning [5.7 – 5.8(ab)]

c' Summary [5.8(cd)]

a' Scripture [5.6]

5.6 a. The perfect speech itself indicated,
b. "Thus all fears
c. As well as all boundless suffering
d. Originate from the mind."

It is said that all the fears and boundless sufferings originate from the mind, because, all the fears of this and future lives arise from one's negative mind. The source of this statement is mentioned in the *Clouds of Jewels Sutra*, where Buddha said:

"If one controls one's mind, one controls all phenomena."

b' Reasoning [5.7 – 5.8(ab)]

c' Summary [5.8(cd)]

5.7 a. Who intentionally created
b. The weapons of hell beings?
c. Who created the burning iron ground?
d. From what did all those hosts of women ensue?

5.8 a. The Muni taught that all such things
b. Are the negative mind.
c. Hence, within the three worlds
d. There is nothing to fear other than my own mind.

It is explained that there are hell guardians in the hells who wield such different weapons as swords and spears.
Who or what created such weapons? They are not created by an Almighty Creator God. Who created the hell's burning iron grounds? The creator is not someone else.
In one of the surrounding hells, there is a tree called the <i>Samali Tree</i> . From that vicinity, one hears the cries of women. Who created [such a phenomenon]?
This tree is as big as a mountain. The hell beings there hear the cries of their objects of attachment, the voices of the women the hell beings are attached to. They hear them calling out to them from the top of the tree.
Due to attachment, they climb up the tree to look for them. The beings are then pierced by all kinds of swords.
When they reached the top, they would then hear the voices coming from the bottom of the tree instead.
They would then climb down the tree looking for the source of voices that they are attached to.
Who or what is the creator of all such sufferings? These are not created by someone else, neither are they generated without a cause. All these [appearances] are the result of one's own negative mind.
When those who are not skilled in logic and reasoning, as well as those who deny karma and its effects are told: "When humans see liquid as water, hungry ghosts see it as pus and blood, which they cannot consume, this is all due to karma." They would then reply: "If there is really pus and blood as what the hungry ghosts see, then these should also appear to me."
If one thinks this way, then one has to understand that this is wrong: "Such an appearance of pus and blood is [merely] an appearance to the mind of the hungry ghost. In actuality, there is no pus and blood [from their sides]. This is because, if the pus and blood really existed [from their sides], then these would have to appear to a human [as well]."
If one asserts [that the pus and blood exist from their sides], then one would also have to deny the existence of hell fire. Since hell fire is an appearance only to certain beings and does not exist for one [as a human], then for one, there is no hell fire.
If one thinks this way, one is then denying karma.
One can also argue that, what one sees as water is seen as nectar by the gods. But one does not see that as nectar.
If one says that nectar does not exist just because one does not see it, then one would also have to say that the water that appears to oneself also does not exist.
[This is because, since water does not appear to the gods, then it absurdly should also not exist, going by one's own logic.]
The point is: If one says that blood and pus is just an appearance to the negative minds of the hungry ghosts, so it does not really exist, then one is basically deprecating karma and its effects. Why this line of reasoning is wrong:
It is essentially coming from one's human prejudice that, if it exists, then a human must see it. It must appear [only] to a human for it to exist. Essentially, it all goes back to oneself: "So long as I don't see it, then it must not exist!"
What one as a human sees as a bowl of liquid, that which is wet and moist, one sees it as water, due to one's strong karma that causes one to have a very strong appearance of water. For one, that [bowl of liquid] exists as water.
But for a hungry ghost, that same bowl of liquid appears and is established as blood and pus due to his very strong karma.
It is not established as blood and pus from its own side of the liquid. It is not also not established as water from its own side.
For the gods, due to their better, purer karma, merit, the bowl of liquid appears as nectar. If that bowl of liquid is established as nectar from its own side, by its own nature, then whoever sees that bowl of liquid would have to see [only nectar].
How phenomena, even though it does not exist from its own side, can still function to cause suffering:
<i>All such frightening appearances that exist in hells as the weapons wielded by the hell guardians, fire, the burning iron grounds and so forth, are not created by someone else. They are all created by one's negative mind.</i>
<i>If one created the karma, then this is the creation of one's own mind.</i>
<i>There is then this appearance of frightening images, which are not real fire existing from its own side, but due to one's negative karma created by one's own mind.</i>
<i>Then there is a projection/ appearance of all such fire and burning iron ground.</i>
<i>Even though these do not exist from its own side as real fire, but such appearances nevertheless torment the mind.</i>
<i>One goes through the experience of being burnt, pierced, harmed and so forth.</i>
<i>Therefore, it does not mean that, just because it is a mere appearance to one's negative mind, then it cannot function.</i>
<i>Although these are mere appearances to/ creation of one's own negative mind, nevertheless, they function to cause suffering, problems and pain.</i>

One may fall asleep and dream about being trapped in a blazing building and being burnt by the fire in the dream.
Although it is just a dream appearance to the dream consciousness, nevertheless in that dream, one experiences fear and pain.
One may even wake up perspiring all over one's body. One could say that it is just a mere appearance to one's mind, but nevertheless, such a mere appearance to one's mind does cause suffering. A mere appearance can function to generate fear.
This analogy of dream fire should only be used to illustrate that mere appearances can function to cause fear and suffering. It cannot be used to conclude that the dream fire and hell fire are the same. The former does not exist while the latter does.
This is something that requires deeper analysis, one should think deeper about this: what is the difference between these two?
When one thinks about the analogy of the dream fire, one may conclude by saying that:
Just like the dream fire, which is a mere appearance to the dream consciousness, the hell fire is also just a mere appearance to the negative mind. All such hells, its fire and so forth are not so real as it is described in the text. It is actually just a mere appearance to the negative mind. If one asserts this, would there then be any problems?
If one asserts this, then it would [absurdly] follow that, there is no hell fire. If there is no hell fire, then it follows that there is no hell. If there is no hell, then there also cannot be any hungry ghosts.
It is not easy to posit the existence of something, whether something exists or not. What would be the criteria? How does one define/ posit something to exist or not?
All the tenets from the Autonomy Middle Way School and below assert that, whether anything exists or not is determined by whether there is a valid cognizer realizing/ certifying the object.
For the Consequence Middle Way School, an existence is posited as a mere appearance.
If one were to ask anyone who has the worldview of the Autonomy Middle Way School and below: "Why is it that a human being does not have horns but a cow does?" They would reply: "One can see that the cow has while the human has not."
They are essentially saying that, the presence or absence of horns is determined by whether there is a valid mind cognizing the horns or not. That is how they determine [whether something exists or not].
If one asks most people, which includes those who assert the Autonomy Middle Way School's view and below: "So how does one validate the existence of horns?" This would be the answer: "Because there is a mind realizing horns."
But if one considers their answer, essentially, there is something [existing] right there from its own side, there is a horn right there from its own side. This is the very crux/ basis of all their views.
But such an existence from its own side is the main target which is negated by the Consequence Middle Way School.
Whatever everybody else asserts, becomes the object of negation, that which is refuted by them. According to them, whether a cow has horns, or a human does not have horns, are none other than that which is posited by convention.
These are merely posited through convention, that is all. Whether a human does not have horns and the cows have horns, both are the same in that, they do not exist from their own sides.
The Consequence Middle Way School says that phenomena are posited conventionally, as mere appearances.
Even though phenomena are mere appearances posited through mere name and labels, nevertheless, they do function.
Just like how a dream fire can cause fear and worries, likewise, although all such appearances of weapons, burning grounds and fires in the hell realms are mere appearances to the negative mind, they do function to cause fears, worries and pain.
But, there is a difference between a dream fire and a hell fire. The former is posited to not exist, while the hell fire is posited to exist. Nevertheless, both are posited conventionally.
One has to see the difference. Why is it that the dream fire does not exist? Why is it that the hell fire exists?
Khenrinpoche: What do you think? You think [the hell fire] exists or does not exist?
The point is: Although the hell fire is mere appearance to the negative mind, nevertheless, hell fire exists to cause pain, fears and sufferings. Therefore, it is important to protect one's mind:
<i>5.8(ab) The [Subduer] taught that all such things are the negative mind.</i>
All the fears contained in the desire, form and formless realms arise from the negative mind.
This is the section explaining how all faults arise from the mind. Next is the explanation on how all qualities depend on mind.

- 2' Qualities depend upon the mind [5.9 – 5.17]
- a' Generosity depends upon the mind [5.9 – 5.10]
- b' Ethics depends upon the mind [5.11]
- c' Patience depends upon the mind [5.12 – 5.14]
- d' Joyous effort depends upon the mind [5.15]
- e' Concentration depends upon the mind [5.16]
- f' Wisdom depends upon the mind [5.17]

2' Qualities depend upon the mind [5.9 – 5.17]

a' Generosity depends upon the mind [5.9 – 5.10]

1" Completing the perfection of generosity does not depend upon eliminating [all types of] poverty amongst all migrators [5.9]

5.9 a. *If the perfection of generosity*
 b. *Were the alleviation of migrating beings' poverty,*
 c. *Then since there are still starving migrating beings,*
 d. *In what manner did the previous Protectors perfect it?*

If the [completion] of the perfection of generosity is contingent on eliminating all poverty in the world, since poverty still exists in abundance, this follows that all the previous Buddhas have not perfected /completed the perfection of generosity.

2" It is brought to completion by familiarizing oneself with the attitude of generosity [5.10]

The [completion of the] perfection of generosity is the cultivation of the mind of giving that is brought to fulfillment:

5.10 a. *The perfection of generosity is taught to be*
 b. *The mind intending to give all things,*
 c. *As well as its result, to all beings;*
 d. *Hence it is simply the mind.*

The completion of the perfection of generosity is said to be the complete habituation of the mind of giving that gives away one's body, resources and roots of virtue, together with its resultant merits from such giving.

One trains in the generous attitude, the mind that is able to give up everything: one's roots of virtue, resources and body, including the effects of such giving, merit, giving all these away to sentient beings without any miserliness and attachment.

When such an attitude is brought to completion, being thoroughly habituated to such an attitude, then this is said to be a completion of the perfection of generosity.

Therefore, the completion of the perfection of generosity is contingent on the mind itself, not on any external factors:

One brings to fulfillment/ completion such a habituation of giving/ generous attitude thoroughly to its highest level.

Therefore, generosity has to be understood as a mind, as it is defined as a generous *attitude*.

b' Ethics depends upon the mind [5.11]

1" It is incorrect [to assert] that completing the perfection of ethics depends upon the eradication of all sentient beings who kill [5.11(ab)]

The perfection of ethical discipline is also a quality that is dependent on the mind: the completion of the perfection of ethical discipline does not depend on the absence of any sentient being that one could kill:

5.11 a. *Where will the fish and so forth be driven*
 b. *So that they will not be killed?*

If the perfection of ethical discipline is posited as removing/ putting all the sentient beings one can kill in a safe place such that they cannot be harmed by anyone, then one would never be able to find such a place.

2" It is brought to completion by familiarizing oneself with the intention to abandon [killing] [5.11(cd)]

Thinking one does not wish to kill: "I will not kill nor harm others even at the cost of my life", this then is ethical discipline.

Therefore, it is a mind of abandonment [of nonvirtues]. Likewise, if one thinks: "It does not matter [under what situation], I will not take what is not given, I will not steal." Such a mind of abandonment [of nonvirtues] is ethical discipline.

When such a mind of abandonment is brought to completion through constant familiarization, that is then posited as the [completion of the] perfection of ethical discipline.

One may be in a situation where one has a choice to kill, but one restrains oneself thinking: "I will not kill, this is not good."

Restraining oneself this way is ethical discipline. Merely sitting there and not killing anyone is not posited as ethical discipline. Ethical discipline is a mental attitude of abandoning [nonvirtues]. When such a mind of abandonment is brought to completion through constant familiarization, this is the completion of perfection of ethical discipline.

Student: What is the measure of having refuge in one's mind?

Khenrinpoche: When the entity of refuge was discussed, the two causes of refuge were mentioned. One of the causes of refuge is having fear of the sufferings of cyclic existence and the lower realms. The other cause is having the conviction that the Three Jewels have the ability/ power to protect one from such fears.

If one takes and possesses genuine refuge in the Buddha, this means that one has the conviction/ complete trust that he has the power to protect one from those fears mentioned above.

Such a conviction/ trust is similar to the conviction that a sick person has in a doctor: When a sick person sees a doctor, the patient may entrust himself completely to the doctor. He is willing to carry out all the instructions of the doctor.

Having refuge in the Buddha is similar to that. One has this complete trust that the Buddha can protect one from those fears.

One must firstly have the fears of oneself going to the lower realms and suffer there. Above that, one has the fear of cyclic existence. On the basis of such fears, one must also have the understanding/ faith/ conviction/ trust in the Buddha's ability to protect one from those fears. Such a faith only comes from understanding/ thinking.

When such a faith arises, in essence, it is thinking: “[Wholeheartedly,] I trust that he can really protect and deliver me from these fears,” this then is the refuge in Buddha.

If one trusts Buddha, the enlightened one, extending from that, one would be able to have refuge in his words/ teachings/ Dharma. Similarly, one would also have trust and refuge in those who follow these teachings, the Sangha.

When one goes for refuge to the Dharma, this means that one has conviction/ faith/ trust in the Buddha's teachings/ words, as these are all taught by him. Therefore, if one has faith in the Buddha, then one would have faith in his words/ teachings.

From this, one would know whether one has refuge or not and whether one's faith is stable or not. If in one's mind one has such fears and one has such an absolute trust that Buddha can protect one from those fears, this is the sign that one has refuge.

c' Patience depends upon the mind [5.12 – 5.14]

1" Meaning [5.12]

*5.12 a. Unruly sentient beings are like space;
b. All of them cannot possibly be overcome.
c. But if I overcome the mind of anger alone,
d. This will be equivalent to vanquishing all those foes.*

This verse is saying that, patience depends on/ arises from the mind.

As for *Unruly sentient beings*, they are everywhere, wherever there is space, there are sentient beings. As long as sentient beings exist, there will necessarily be those who would do harm.

The verse is saying that, there is no way to eliminate/ destroy all these sentient beings who do harm upon oneself and others.

Even if one were to try, one would never succeed. Even though there are such sentient beings, if one overcomes one's mind of anger, that [alone] would be equivalent to having vanquished/ conquered/ destroyed all external enemies.

2" Analogy [5.13]

3" Applying the analogy to the meaning [5.14]

*5.13 a. Where could I possibly find enough leather
b. With which to cover the surface of the earth?
c. Having leather on just the soles of my shoes
d. Is equivalent to covering the earth with it.*

*5.14 a. Likewise it is not possible for me
b. To counteract things externally;
c. But should I counteract this mind of mine,
d. What is the need for counteracting others?*

The verse is saying that, there is no way one can eliminate all the external sources of harm, even if one were to try. But if one can eliminate/ counteract the inner enemy, one's anger, then there is no need to counteract one's external sources of harm.

It is mentioned in the sutras that, if one tames one's anger, one's external enemies will be pacified.

But if one's anger is not tamed, then one's external enemies will increase. Cultivating patience is for the sake of reducing one's wrath/ anger and then pacifying it. Essentially, the practice of patience is a practice of the mind.

d' Joyous effort depends upon the mind [5.15]

*5.15 a. Although the result of generating a clear mind
b. Is Brahma and so forth,
c. The results along with body and speech will be
d. Weak in conduct, therefore it is not like that.*

Gyalsab Je's commentary explains it this way:

The result of generating the mind of Clear Joy for meditating on the absorption of the first form realm that is contained in the absorption, is to be reborn in the place of Brahma and so forth. If one does not have that strong mind, then the result of the mind that comes with the body and speech belongs to the class of behavior or action with less joy. They cannot be reborn in the first form realm and therefore, the completion of joyous perseverance depends on the mind.

The meaning is this: There are respectively, the four meditative stabilizations of the form and formless realms. In the abodes of the first meditative stabilization/ concentration of the form realm, it can be divided into three lands/ abodes.

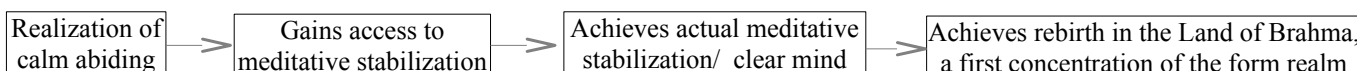
To be reborn in this example as the form realm god of the first meditative stabilization called *The Land of Brahma*, such a rebirth must be preceded by meditating on a *clear mind*, which is meditating on an actual concentration.

This means that, to be born in the first concentration of the form realm, this must be preceded by a realization of calm abiding/ meditative serenity, a quality of the mind.

Based on that, one must have gained an access to the meditative stabilization, based on that, one then achieves an actual meditative stabilization/ an actual concentration. All such qualities are dependent on the mind.

Without a clear mind like calm abiding, without having gained access to meditative stabilization and without having actualized the actual concentration, there is no way to be born in *The Land of Brahma*, or other form and formless realms.

Without the mental qualities like these clear states of mind, other kinds of virtues that are the results from practices of body and speech cannot result in these rebirths.



One can explain *clear mind* here to mean, cultivating love and compassion, the *Four Immeasurables*. It is through cultivating these minds that one can be reborn in Brahma Land and so forth.

Without the joyous perseverance of the clear minds, one's actions of body and speech will be weak. As such, [these physical and verbal activities] on their own cannot lead one to be born in the Land of Brahma and so forth.

How the accumulation of virtuous karma with body and speech also depends on the mind:

One accumulates virtue with one's body, speech and mind. If there is a strong enthusiasm for virtue, which is a **mental quality**, then one really accumulates that virtuous karma.

Due to that strong enthusiasm for that activity, one engages in it. One then leaves an imprint/ impression on one's mind.

But in the absence of such a strong enthusiasm for virtue, even if one carries out that action with one's body and speech, [when it comes to accumulating an action], I wonder what is it that is actually being accumulated?

If there is a strong enthusiasm for virtue, with that accompanying strong enthusiasm, if one actually does accumulate virtue with one's body and speech, then there is something to be said about accumulating virtue with one's body and speech.

Because, since such an accumulation of virtue of body and speech is closely tied-in with the strong enthusiasm, then something could be said about that, that one is accumulating something.

But in the absence of enthusiasm for virtue, then what exactly is being accumulated, when one is merely physically or verbally doing that action?

Essentially, this is an explanation on how all the qualities are very much dependent on the mind.

The entity of joyous perseverance is posited as a mind that has a virtuous object as its object of observation. Focusing on such an object of observation, the aspect of joyous perseverance is a clear mind having enthusiasm for virtue.

The essence of this verse is this: To be born in the form and formless realms, one must have a clear mind. It does not matter what virtue one creates with one's body and speech, without the qualities of a clear mind, there is no way to be born there.

e' Concentration depends upon the mind [5.16]

- 5.16 a. *The knower of reality taught*
 b. *That even if recitation and hardships*
 c. *Are practiced for long periods of time,*
 d. *They will be meaningless if the mind is distracted elsewhere.*

Khenrinpoche: So what have we been doing?

It is evident from one's own experience that, whatever tasks/ jobs/ activities one undertakes, in the process of carrying it out, if one's mind is not focused/ concentrated, one's heart is not there, even if one may complete it, it will not be a job well done.

In doing one's daily recitation, mantras or undergoing austerities, putting up with such hardships as doing Nu Nyes and so forth, even if these were done for a very long time, if these practices were done with a distracted mind, one will not achieve anything that is greatly meaningful.

If one takes the words literally, the teachings are saying that, it does not matter what one does, as long as it is done with a distracted mind, all such practices as one's daily prayers are meaningless, useless.

Khenrinpoche: In the English expression, if one asks a man to do a job but he cannot do that, normally one could say something negative like: “You are not a man!” [“You are not man enough for the job”] There are such expression: [“You are not man enough, are you a man?”] You can't even do that!” Of course, the person is obviously a human.
Likewise here, the verse says, if one practices all such hardships and austerities for long periods of time with a distracted mind, these will be meaningless/ useless. Here, it does not mean that there is absolutely no benefit/ meaning.
What it means is that, one would not achieve anything that really has great meaning.
In short, without a concentrated mind/ attention/ focus, the teaching is saying that one will not achieve one's purposes/ goals.
But if one can focus on what one is doing single-pointedly, then one will achieve one's goals. Therefore, achieving one's goals/ purposes depend on one's mind. Practices like one's daily recitations and prayers are methods for one to stabilize one's mind. They must then become methods to help one focus one's mind.
In a sutra, Buddha said: <i>“Oh Bhikkhus, austerities, prayers and so forth that distract the mind to the desire realm do not have a result.”</i>
This is saying that, whatever virtuous practices one is engaging in with one's body and speech, these have to be done without a distracted mind. For if these are done with a distracted mind, it will not bring about any results.

f Wisdom depends upon the mind [5.17]

<p>5.17 a. <i>Even those who wish to obtain happiness and overcome suffering</i> b. <i>Will wander with no aim</i> c. <i>If they do not comprehend the secret of the mind –</i> d. <i>The principal Dharma.</i></p>
<i>Secret of the mind</i> here can be explained in different ways:
The Dharma to be known/ learnt/ understood is none other than the secret of the mind, which, in this context, is the:
<i>Mind's emptiness of true/ inherent existence.</i>
It is a secret because, 1) one should not reveal the teachings on emptiness to unsuitable vessels, whose minds are not ripened.
The mind's emptiness of inherent existence is a quality every sentient being possesses. As long as it is a sentient being with a consciousness, then it is the ultimate nature of that consciousness to be empty of existing inherently.
Although this is the reality, but most sentient beings are unaware/ has not realized the ultimate nature of their own minds.
As such, 2) it remains a secret for them.
<i>The principal Dharma, the ultimate nature of all phenomena, including one's mind, is empty of inherent existence.</i>
<i>It is this ultimate nature of the emptiness of inherent existence that all phenomena arise from. Therefore, all phenomena are the display of emptiness. All external objects are the creation of the mind:</i>
<i>All the appearances of phenomena are like reflections and the mind is like the mirror. Therefore, all phenomena are appearances/ reflections of the mind. Therefore, all phenomena are creations of the mind.</i>
Understanding this fact constitutes the principal Dharma.
Without realizing 1) that phenomena are empty of existing inherently, the selflessness of phenomena, 2) that phenomena are the display of emptiness, 3) that they all arise from emptiness, 4) that external objects are projections/ creations of the mind, one would not be able to achieve nirvana/ peace or full enlightenment.
When the Consequence Middle Way School asserts external objects, they assert them to not exist truly.
Many times, when people hear the word “external object” and think about “external object”, what they think is that, it is something that is separated from the mind, existing right out there from its own side. This is not what this school means.
They are also not asserting that the external object are minds, but are: <i>Mere projections of the mind, a separate/ distinct entity from the mind.</i>
Without realizing this secret of the mind, there is no nirvana and no omniscience. As such, one has to continue to circle in cyclic existence repeatedly. To achieve nirvana and omniscience, one has to understand and realize this secret of the mind.
Having some understanding and reflecting on how phenomena are projections/ creations of the mind is helpful. One could relate this to one's enemy, how he is the creation/ projection of one's own mind.
As explained before, the basis of all the problems is this apprehension of true existence, ignorance. In its perspective, whatever appears, appears as truly/ inherently existent. One assents/ believes in it. With that as the basis, incorrect mental attention comes and exaggerates or deprecates the situation or object. Based on that, anger or attachment arise.

On the basis of ignorance, incorrect mental attention comes, based on that, this is how the object of attachment/ hatred arise/ appears. Due to anger and attachment, one creates the enemy and the object of attachment.
This helps the mind to understand how one's external enemy and object of attachment are mere creations of one's incorrect mental attention, one's mind. There is no real enemy from the side of the person/ situation, there is no real beautiful/ pleasant/ attractive object from its side. Rather, it is a projection of one's attachment.
It is very important to understand how everything is a mere display/ projection of one's mind.
As mentioned in the context of anger, the external enemy is a projection/ creation of anger. Therefore, if there is no anger, there is no enemy. Because, enemy comes into being merely because one is upset, one has dislike for him.
<i>But if there is no anger, there is nothing to appear as an enemy. As such there is no enemy, even if he does something bad. Since there is no projection of enemy, then it is like as if there is no enemy.</i>
From this, one can see how, the enemy is a [mere] projection/ creation of the mind. If there is anger, there is enemy, if there is no anger, then there is no labeling “enemy”. One does not consider that person as “enemy”.
It is the same with attachment: the object of attachment is the projection of attachment. Because one projects an exaggerated object, the object appears nice and real in the view of attachment. Therefore, in its view, there is an object of attachment.
<i>In the absence of the view of attachment, when there is no attachment, even though the pleasant object is there, but because there is no attachment, that pleasant object has nothing to appear to.</i>
Therefore, even wisdom is a quality that is dependent on the mind. Here, it refers to the wisdom realizing selflessness. Without this wisdom, there is no nirvana and omniscience.

The symbolism of debate gestures:

In the course of conducting a debate in the monasteries like Sera Je, it is carried out with certain hand gestures, including the clapping of hands. Khenrinpoche: Many of you may not have seen it, you may think they are doing some kung fu!
The challenger puts his left hand out with the palm facing upwards, the right hand is raised which would then hit the left.
There are many symbolism in such gestures, which are up to the individual to visualize/ think. The theory is this:
On the palm of one's left hand, one visualizes all six types of migrating sentient beings on it.
One's raised right hand is the sword of wisdom. As one claps, this symbolizes the sword of wisdom cutting, destroying eliminating the ignorance/ darkness/ confusion in the minds of these six types of migratory sentient beings.
Once this is done, the left hand then faces downwards while the right is raised up again with the palm facing towards oneself.
This symbolizes that, after one has eliminated their ignorance, one then leads/ guides them to enlightenment.
At the beginning of every debate session, when the hands are clapped, they would shout out very loudly the word “DHI”.
Actually, they are quickly reciting “OM AH RA PA TSA NA DHI”, as they clap, they would shout “DHI” rather loudly.
The syllables of the mantra are AH, RA, PA, TSA: 1) AH refers to phenomena not being established by their own entities.
This is essentially referring to emptiness. In the perfection of wisdom sutras, there are the extensive, middling, short and the condensed versions. The latter is the Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra.
The most condensed version is the Perfection of Wisdom in one letter: AH. Khenrinpoche: If you know the AH, that's it!
2) RA refers to phenomena being separated/ free from dust. Dust here refers to true existence. This means that all phenomena are free from true existence/ not truly existent.
3) PA refers to the ultimate, which is the emptiness of all phenomena.
4) TSA refers to no birth and no death. If one examines the ultimate nature of all phenomena, there are no production and disintegration. As such, if this is related to a sentient being, from an ultimate point of view, there are no birth and no death.
5) NA refers to being free of name. Khenrinpoche: I wonder how does one explain this, to be free from name/ label?
It is all right to say that all phenomena are established in mere name. But phenomena are not the names . Perhaps this could be the explanation of how phenomena are free from names.
Khenrinpoche: Could you say that all phenomena is name ? The Consequence Middle Way School asserts that “All phenomena exist as mere names.” But does that mean that all phenomena are names?
If one could say that phenomena are not names, then one could say that this would be the meaning of “free from names.”
How Lama Tsongkhapa phrases it, is that, it is free from names . The question is, what exactly does it mean?
Khenrinpoche: What is name? Is it form, consciousness or non-associated compositional factor?

Student: Non-associated compositional factor. Khenrinpoche: Is name not form? I think the name is form. Is it word or not? So name is just a sound, isn't it?
This is the entire explanation of emptiness. After shouting <i>DHI</i> , the debater recites the prayer: "May we come to realize the meaning of emptiness exactly as it is intended."
Next, the debater observes the non-objectifying three circles: One carries out the debate focusing on the debater, the opponent, as well as the debate itself all to not exist inherently.
The intention/ motivation behind such debates/ analysis is to eliminate the darkness/ confusion/ ignorance in one's and others' minds. Mainly, this is to eliminate the ignorance in one's own mind, its effect is to realize the ultimate nature of reality.
Therefore, right from the beginning of the formal entry into the exercise of dialectics/ debates, starting from the first clap that one makes, one generates the intention to be able to arrive at and settle the view of selflessness one day.
It is only with that, that one's darkness/ confusion of ignorance in one's mind can be removed.
One therefore engages in dialectics/ debates with the intention to be able to realize the ultimate nature of reality, selflessness.
Until then, one has to continue to circle and suffer in cyclic existence.
This is the theory/ intention behind [all such symbolism]: From the first day, one sets such a motivation. Ideally and theoretically, this should be the mindset all the time when one engages in dialectics/ debates.
Of course, one would not be able to continuously place one's mind focused on such an attention. Many a times as it always happens, the mind gets distracted, then there comes to be a distinction between oneself as a challenger and the defender, a "you and me." In the process, one then gets upset with one another in the debate.
Sometimes, this also becomes the condition for one to be very arrogant and proud. This happens all the time.
In the course of engaging in such dialectics/ debates/ discussions, for as long as one can maintain mindfulness on the fact of how everything does not exist inherently, oneself and the opponent, such a focus/ concentration/ attention helps the mind not to be distracted and ending up with states of anger or pride.
Perhaps, this is why right from the very beginning when one formally enters into such dialectics/ debates, one is introduced to the purpose behind such an exercise with a brief stating of the meaning of emptiness.
Therefore, in the context of engaging in a discussion here, it is important to have the thought of wishing to help one another eliminate the darkness/ ignorance of confusion. Otherwise, sometimes in a discussion, people may not be happy with each others' answers or questions. It does happen many a times, where one's discussion partners becomes an enemy.
Khenrinpoche: So it is like that! When such things happen, then it is like medicine transforming into poison. As such, the medicine, which has been transformed into poison will not be able to cure.
If one can maintain the understanding/ feeling of emptiness of inherent existence during the discussion, then that will be ideal. If not, then as much as possible, one should just have that at the back of one's mind that, the whole point of the exercise is to help one another eliminate unknowing/ ignorance.
Therefore, this verse [5.17] is quite helpful, if one can memorize and reflect on it.
Verses up to here [5.6 – 5.17], explains how all the faults and qualities all arise from one's mind.
The conclusion is that, since all the faults and qualities arise from one's mind, therefore, it is essential to guard one's mind.

How one is deceived by appearance and due to that, how one experience suffering:

<p>A verse from the Seventh Dalai Lama:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>All phenomena of both samsara and nirvana are fabrications of conceptual thought. By apprehending phenomena to exist ultimately, you are deceived. As such, do not apprehend phenomena as truly existent, rather, look at them as empty.</i></p>
<p>What this is saying is that, everything in samsara, including all the harms and problems; and everything about nirvana, are all creations/ projections of the mind in that, these are all merely posited by conceptual thought.</p>
<p>The descriptions mentioned in the text thus far about all the sufferings and problems of this and future lives are all creations/ projections arising from one's mind. These problems are the problems of samsara.</p>
<p>Such problems that come into existence are something merely posited by thought.</p>
<p>Nirvana is a quality which is also achieved in dependence on the mind. Non-abiding nirvana also comes from mind.</p>
<p>Earlier lesson also mentioned that, all the six perfections are also dependent on the mind. Wisdom, including the wisdom perceiving the ultimate nature of reality/ wisdom realizing selflessness, is a quality that is also achieved through the mind.</p>
<p>This is the reality of all phenomena, both samsara and nirvana, every phenomena included in them exist as through being merely posited/ designated/ imputed by thought.</p>
<p>Although that is reality, but when phenomena appear back to oneself, they do not appear as a creation of/ imputed/ designated by one's mind. Rather, they appear back as something existing right there from the side of the object under its own power.</p>
<p>All phenomena of samsara and nirvana appear in that way, one also believes/ assents to such an appearance.</p>
<p>This is how one is deceived/ cheated.</p>
<p>Like the previously mentioned example of how one's enemy actually exist, the reality is that, one's enemy is the projection/ creation of one's own mind.</p>
<p>It is only because, in the perspective of one's anger, in relation to it, that one designates an enemy.</p>
<p>Therefore, if there is no anger from one's own side, then the enemy, the person who harms one, does not exist for one.</p>
<p>Because one has anger, then "enemy" exists, which causes all the pain and problems. An enemy exists for one because one has anger. It is only in the perspective of anger that there is the appearance of "enemy", and one believes an enemy exists.</p>
<p>If one has no anger at all, then it does not matter what the person does to one, whatever harm there is, as long as anger does not manifest/ exist, then in one's mind, the label "enemy" does not exist. It only exists when anger comes up.</p>
<p>It is therefore clear from this example that, one's enemy is the creation/ projection of one's own mind. In the absence of anger, regardless of what the other person may do, if one is not angry, then the label "enemy" does not exist for one.</p>
<p>Above this, if one's mind understands that this label "enemy" is a mere designation/ projection of one's own mind, that there is no "real enemy" from the side of the object, then one's anger becomes very powerless/ weak.</p>
<p>This is because, there is no basis for it to [become angry].</p>
<p>For one, not only is there an appearance of an enemy right there from its own side that has nothing to do with one's own mind, that the issue does not lie with oneself, but everything lies from the side of the object, that the problem exists from the side of the object, that there is a real enemy existing right there. That is how one's enemy appears back to one's mind.</p>
<p>One's mind then ascents to/ believes in that appearance. This is how strong anger arises. Therefore, the verse says</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>All phenomena of both samsara and nirvana are fabrications of conceptual thought. By apprehending phenomena to exist ultimately, you are deceived.</i></p>
<p>This is how one is deceived. When one is deceived in such a way, one then experiences suffering. Therefore, it ends with:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>As such, do not apprehend phenomena as truly existent, rather, look at them as empty.</i></p>
<p>Do not apprehend/ believe/ ascent to the mistaken appearance of inherent existence.</p>
<p>In the example of an enemy, do not believe in the mistaken appearance of an enemy existing right there from its own side.</p>
<p>Rather, see it as it is, as a mere projection of one's own mind, look at it as empty.</p>
<p>Understand that mistaken appearance is not reality. Since it does not exist in the way it appears, therefore, it is empty.</p>
<p>Verses like this are quite useful, if one can memorize and reflect on it, it could be very useful for one.</p>

Likewise, verse 5.17 could also be very useful for one, if one could memorize and reflect on it:
<p>5.17 a. <i>Even those who wish to obtain happiness and overcome suffering</i> b. <i>Will wander with no aim</i> c. <i>If they do not comprehend the secret of the mind –</i> d. <i>The principal Dharma.</i></p>
The <i>secret of the mind</i> here, is the ultimate nature of one's mind, which also includes the ultimate nature of all phenomena in that, one's mind and all phenomena do not exist from their own sides inherently, they are empty of existing inherently.
Without understanding this, no matter what one does, one would always run into problems.

iii) Making effort in guarding the mind [5.18 – 5.22]

1' Brief presentation [5.18]

2' Extensive explanation [5.19 – 5.22]

1' Brief presentation [5.18]

<p>5.18 a. <i>This being so,</i> b. <i>I shall hold and guard my mind well.</i> c. <i>Except for the mode of conduct of guarding the mind,</i> d. <i>What use are many other modes of conduct?</i></p>
As was mentioned in the earlier section, all the fears, sufferings and problems of this and future lives are products/ creations of one's own mind. Likewise, all the happiness, bliss of this and future lives are also products/ creations of one's own mind.
As such, there is nothing more important than guarding one's mind. To do that, one has to be mindful of/ not forget what one needs to adopt and discard. Every now and then, one should apply introspection/ vigilance to check what one's mind is up to.
This is how one has to guard one's mind. The verse says that, one has to continually guard one's mind without letting one's mindfulness and introspection degenerate.
There are many other modes of conduct, practices or behaviors that one can undertake with one's body and speech.
But if undertakes them with one's body and speech, yet neglecting to guard one's mind, then the verse says: if one neglects to guard one's mind, what use is there/ what would be the point to engage in all the conduct with one's body and speech?
Such various modes of conduct will not bring about any great purposes.
One should remember from the onset, one should understand that all such various modes of conduct, behaviors and practices that one adopts/ engages in with one's body and speech, are methods to help one subdue and tame one's mind.
One should therefore ensure that all such practices, behaviors and conducts of one's body and speech ultimately benefit one's mind in that, they have to contribute to the protection of one's mind.
<i>Essentially, the verse says that, no matter how much physical and verbal effort/ hardships one endures/ puts in, if one neglects to guard/ protect one's mind, then there will not be any great purposes/ real benefits that one will get from these.</i>
[Due to this then,] there may be people who mistakenly think that: “Since these are not important, what is the use then, of doing prostrations, circumambulations and daily prayers, as they do not benefit the mind?” Thinking this is a huge mistake.
With this as a reason, these people just give up their practices. Yet, they are also not doing anything with their minds. It is not as if they are doing anything spectacular to guard/ protect their minds. They end up with nothing.
<i>If one is not doing any of these so called activities/ practices/ behaviors with one's body and speech, but doing the real practice of really guarding/ protecting one's mind with mindfulness and introspection, then perhaps there is something.</i>
Most people end up with nothing. Therefore, it is important not to end up like that.
Therefore, it is important not to misinterpret the meaning of these verses:
<i>Except for the mode of conduct of guarding the mind, what use are many other modes of conduct?</i> One may then use this as a reason to not engage in any such practices as circumambulations or prostrations.
Some may quote 5.16: <i>The knower of reality taught that even if recitation and hardships are practiced for long periods of time, they will be meaningless if the mind is distracted elsewhere.</i> One may then say: “Even if one can recite prayers and engage in hardships for a long time, but one will be doing it with a distracted mind anyway, so what's the point of doing?”
If one uses [such a flawed reason] to substantiate one's wrong position to not do it anymore, then one is essentially mistaken.
The intent of the Bhagavan Buddha behind these statements is that, if one engages in practices with a distracted mind, one would not achieve any great purposes.
<p><i>He did not say that one will not achieve anything, as there is still some benefit.</i> <i>It is just that, [such ways of doing the practices] do not hit the point, one does not really get the actual benefit.</i></p>

The point behind these verses is that:

***There is a need to protect/ guard one's mind, to change one's mind for the better.
Such a positive change can only come and be transformed from the inside.
Since transformation depends on the mind itself, as such, it is important to guard one's mind.***

2' Extensive explanation [5.19 – 5.22]

a' The way to guard the mind [5.19]

- 5.19 a. *Just as I would be attentive and conscientious of a wound*
 b. *When amidst an unruly, freed crowd,*
 c. *So I should always guard the wounds of my mind*
 d. *When dwelling among negative people.*

When one has to meet some people, who may be careless, not conscientious, mindful nor vigilant, if one happens to have an open wound while meeting them, one will always be very careful to ensure that one's wound does not become aggravated.

One does everything one can to protect oneself from being wounded further. Likewise, if one has to mix with a crowd of people that may agitate one or stir up one's attachment, then one has to rely on mindfulness and vigilance to guard and check one's mind against anger and attachment: “Am I developing anger/ attachment with such objects?”

If one is not mindful and vigilant when mixing with others, then when one comes into contact with undesirable objects, one will get upset/ angry, when one comes into contact with desirable objects, one may develop strong desire/ attachment.

If one gets upset or attached, then there will be so much pain. One suffers. Therefore, one has to guard one's mind.

As such, one finds many teachings instructing that, ideally for beginners, they should dwell in isolation, staying far away from objects of anger and desire. This is especially so in the beginning when one starts to train one's mind.

As one's mind is still weak, when it meets with the object, it gets affected and changes immediately.

To make it easier to have a hold of one's initial trainings with some stability, oneself as a beginner should ideally live alone in isolation to give some space to work with one's mind. This is because, one needs to protect/ guard one's mind.

As a beginner, one's mind is so easily affected by one's external environment. Merely meeting with an object of anger or attachment, one's mind immediately gets affected by being attached or angry.

Therefore, those who really wish to tame and subdue their minds should go into retreat. That is the purpose of retreat.

If one looks at the advice given for those wishing to develop meditative serenity/ calm abiding, it is important for one's mind to be free from mental chatter/ discursive thoughts. One needs to have as few discursive thoughts as possible so that one can develop calm abiding. ***As such, one needs to isolate oneself from the hustle and bustle of busy life.***

b' The reasons it is necessary to [do so] [5.20]

- 5.20 a. *If I am conscientious of a wound*
 b. *Through fear of the small suffering of a wound,*
 c. *Then why do I not guard the wounds of my mind*
 d. *Through fear of being crushed by the mountains of Mass Destruction?*

This verse explains the meaning through a worldly analogy: If one has an open wound and something bad comes into contact with it, one will suffer tremendously with a lot of pain.

One is then usually very careful and does everything one can to protect one's wound with strong mindfulness and vigilance.

If one is so conscientious of one's [physical] wound, but if one is not mindful and vigilant to guard one's mind, instead one accumulates negativities, then such negativities will result in so much more suffering in future lives in the lower realms.

As such, one should put in even more attention into guarding the “wounds” of one's mind.

As verse 5.7 says: *Who intentionally created the weapons of hell beings? Who created the burning iron ground? All the sufferings of lower realms like the unbelievable sufferings of the hells are all the results of one's untamed negative mind.*

Since one does not wish for such sufferings, one has to stop one's negative mind by guarding one's mind.

The whole point is to essentially guard one's mind. Since one does not like sufferings, and since these come from one's untamed and unsubdued negative minds, then one has to guard one's mind. That is, if one does not wish for suffering.

c' The benefits of [doing so] [5.21]

- 5.21 a. *Should I behave in such a way,*
 b. *Then whether among negative people*
 c. *Or even in the midst of women,*
 d. *The steady effort of restraint will not decline.*

People who are constantly mindful and vigilant are able to maintain their trainings in any situation, will not be affected by them and are also very stable in such situations.
If one is constantly mindful and vigilant, then it does not really matter what situation one is in.
Whether there are a lot of negative people, or where there are a lot of objects of desire and attachment such as women and so forth, this will not affect one's practice of restraining and taming one's mind.
Even though the verse says <i>in the midst of women</i> , one should understand it is not just about women. This is because Shantideva is a monk. So, from the perspective of men, generally, women are attachment or objects of desire.
So, if one is a woman, then one has to understand it as <i>in the midst of men</i> .
This is the benefit, when one is able to be continually mindful and vigilant, then it does not matter what situation one is in, one will be able to keep one's trainings and vows.

d' Devoting oneself [voluntarily] to [the practice of] mindfulness in order to guard the mind [5.22]

<p>5.22 a. <i>It is better to be without gain,</i> b. <i>Honor, body, and sustenance,</i> c. <i>And it is better to let other virtues degenerate,</i> d. <i>Rather than ever to let the mind degenerate.</i></p>
One may receive material gifts, rewards, honor, being shown respect, being praised and paid homage to/ prostrated to, being given necessities/ sustenance of livelihood, others may even give up their lives just for one. It is easy to not have all these.
There are also many other virtues one engages in with one's body and speech. Even if one does not do any of these or if one allows such practices to degenerate, it is of no great importance.
According to Gyaltsab Je's commentary, it is of no great importance not to have any of the above. But it is a matter of great significance if one degenerates one's mind, meaning that one allows one's good heart, bodhicitta, to degenerate.
One's bodhicitta should never degenerate, as one is protecting one's mind in the context of cultivating the altruistic intention of bodhicitta here.
The verse is saying that, it is not a matter of great significance to not have all the necessities of life, even if one does not get to perform other virtues of body and speech, and these degenerate. But if the conduct of guarding one's mind through mindfulness and introspection degenerates, then that will be a matter of great significance as it will result in a great loss.
Verses 5.18 – 5.22 shows why/ how one strives in guarding one's mind.

b) The method for guarding the mind: Guarding mindfulness and introspection [5.23 – 5.33]

i) Brief presentation [5.23]

ii) Extensive explanation [5.24 – 5.33]

i) Brief presentation [5.23]

<p>5.23 a. <i>To you who wish to guard your minds,</i> b. <i>I thus fold my hands [and urge you],</i> c. <i>“At the cost of your life, guard</i> d. <i>Mindfulness and introspection!”</i></p>
Earlier, there were the explanations of all the problems that come with not guarding one's mind and the reasons why it is appropriate to guard it.
Here, Shantideva is urging those who consider themselves to be his followers to guard their mindfulness and introspection, even at the cost of their lives.
He is asking those who believe in him not to let their mindfulness or virtue degenerate, and not to let their introspection, which checks upon what their own body, speech and mind are up to, to degenerate as well.
He is urging one with his folded hands to guard one's mindfulness and introspection. He is not doing this because he is showing respect due to having faith in one.
Rather, it is a gesture that emphasizes his understanding of the importance of guarding one's mindfulness and introspection.

ii) Extensive explanation [5.24 – 5.33]

1' The faults of lacking introspection [5.24 – 5.28]

2' Guarding mindfulness as a method of guarding introspection [5.29 – 5.33]

1' The faults of lacking introspection [5.24 – 5.28]

a' If one is separated from mindfulness and introspection, any action one performs has little force[5.24]

b' Wisdom will not become pure [5.25]

c' Ethics will not become pure [5.26]

d' Virtues accumulated in the past will be destroyed [5.27]

e' The accomplishment of virtues not previously performed will be hindered [5.28]

a' If one is separated from mindfulness and introspection, any action one performs has little force[5.24]

<p>5.24 a. <i>People who are disturbed by sickness</i> b. <i>Lack strength in all actions.</i> c. <i>Likewise, the minds disturbed by confusion</i> d. <i>Lack strength in all actions.</i></p>
<p>One who is sick will have difficulties going to work. Even if he does so, he will probably not do a good job. Likewise, the virtuous actions of one whose mind is confused by ignorance/ disturbed by confusion will have little power.</p>
<p>The functions of mindfulness and introspection are different. Mindfulness functions to not forget what is virtuous or nonvirtuous; but it is introspection that allows one to know whether an action one will be engaging in or is already engaging in is correct or not. Without it, one would not be able to know it.</p>
<p><i>If one does not have introspection, when one engages in an action, one cannot tell whether such an action is [virtuous or nonvirtuous]. Then such an action will obviously have little power.</i></p>
<p><i>If one does not have introspection, then even the virtuous actions that one engages in would have little power or efficacy.</i></p>

b' Wisdom will not become pure [5.25]

<p>5.25 a. <i>Whatever has been heard, contemplated, and meditated</i> b. <i>By those whose minds lack introspection,</i> c. <i>Just like water in a leaking vase,</i> d. <i>Will not remain in mindfulness.</i></p>
<p>The verse here is saying that, in the absence of introspection, whatever wisdom one has developed will slowly degenerate/ disappear. This is because, the mind tends to wonder and gets distracted by other things.</p>
<p>Even if one does develop some wisdom arisen from hearing, reflection or even meditation, but due to lack of vigilance, these different kinds of wisdom one has developed will slowly degenerate and disappear.</p>
<p>The analogy here is that of a leaky vase: no matter how much water one pours into it, slowly, the water will just seep away.</p>
<p>The verse is therefore saying, having mindfulness alone is insufficient, one needs introspection/ vigilance. Without introspection, even if one develops any wisdom, it will slowly degenerate and disappear.</p>

Khenrinpoche: This is something to think about. There is actualizing karma from the twelve links. The teachings mention that, this actualizing karma has to be nourished by craving and grasping. What is the boundary of nourishing? Where does one demarcate between 1) an actualizing karma being nourished by craving and grasping and 2) [an actualizing karma] not being nourished by craving and grasping?

The point is this: the actualizing karma has to be nourished by craving and grasping before death. Does this happen one month, a week, the day or one minute before one dies? When is such an actualizing karma activated/ nourished by craving and grasping?

Let's says one is definitely going to be born as a human, when is this actualizing karma activated/ nourished by craving and grasping?

Since a human rebirth is in the desire realm, such a rebirth is nourished/ activated by craving and grasping that belongs to the desire realm. The craving and grasping that activate the actualizing karma to be born as a human, these [actualizers/ actualizing causes/ actualizing factors] are nonvirtuous.

Khenrinpoche: Are these virtuous or nonvirtuous? Is the desire/ attachment of the desire virtuous or nonvirtuous? It is nonvirtuous. You have to accept that it is nonvirtuous, it cannot be virtuous.

[Since that is the case,] then it follows that it is actually nonvirtue that is the activator of the karma that causes one to be born with a good rebirth as a human being. Therefore, nonvirtue plays a very helpful/ important part that brings together the conditions for rebirth as a human. [Therefore, it seems that, the conditions for rebirth as a human] arise from nonvirtue.

Therefore, it seems like it's a nonvirtuous mind that brings about a good rebirth. How is that so?

[Since that is the case,] then at the time of death, one does not have to worry about dying with nonvirtuous thoughts. There is no need to put so much effort to die with virtuous thoughts.

Khenrinpoche: Are you getting the point I am asking?

The question is this: ***The karma to be born as a human being necessarily has to be nourished/ activated by craving and grasping. But these two are nonvirtuous since they are afflictions. [Since that is the case, does it mean that] a good rebirth is a result brought about by nonvirtue?***

Khenrinpoche: Why is the twelve links of dependent-origination placed in its particular order? How does craving and grasping nourish [actualizing] karma?

Student: The order of the twelve links is for the purpose of meditation, to go through the meditation process.

Khenrinpoche: If somebody asks: “That’s for the purpose of meditation but not the actual order, why are these placed in an ‘unreal’ order?” Student: I don’t know.

Student: I think it is the attachment/ grasping to the “I”. When one is going through the death process, there is an innate grasping of the “I”, a very strong attachment that will nourish the potential existence, to have another rebirth.

Khenrinpoche: When does that happen? Student: Not sure, but to be thrown into a human rebirth, one needs a virtuous projecting karma. With the two causes, the projecting and actualizing causes, then one can have a human rebirth.

Khenrinpoche: Everybody listening [to the question and the answer]?

How phenomena exist:

<p>Aryadeva in his <i>Four Hundred Verses</i> states that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Because thought exists, therefore phenomena exists.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>If there are no thoughts merely positing phenomena, phenomena cannot exist.</i></p>
<p>An existent that is not merely imputed/ posited by thought, is like a dream person. It is important to understand that all phenomena are posited/ imputed by thought.</p>
<p>An existent that is not merely imputed by thought is likened to an illusory elephant or a dream person. In essence, when one searches for the dream person, it is nothing more than that mere appearance of the person to the dreaming consciousness.</p>
<p>This is essentially a mistaken consciousness. Other than that, there is nothing that one can call “a dream person.”</p>
<p>So long as the dreaming consciousness, which is a mistaken consciousness, exist, then to it a dream person appears.</p>
<p>This is how a dream person exists, nothing more than that mere appearance. If this dreaming consciousness ceases to exist, then the dream person would not appear, neither would it exist as well.</p>
<p>Take another example of mistaking a coil of rope to be a snake: If one thinks of the appearance of a snake, which appears to the mistaken consciousness that misperceives the coil of rope to be a snake, it is nothing more than a mere appearance to this mistaken mind, nothing else and nothing more than that.</p>
<p>When referring to an illusory elephant, a dream person or an appearance of a snake that is wrongly imputed to a coil of rope, their manner of existence is none other than their appearance to the respective consciousnesses that perceives them, there is nothing more than that.</p>
<p>A dream person cannot exist without it appearing to the mistaken dreaming consciousness. It has to depend on it [to exist as a dream person]. In essence, a dream person is just that mere appearance to the dreaming consciousness.</p>
<p>It is very clear from here that, <i>without depending on a dream consciousness</i>, one cannot posit/ talk about a dream person.</p>
<p>Just like these examples, when referring to form, sound, smell, taste and touch, these [objects] are nothing more than mere appearances to the thought that apprehends them. These [objects] are posited through their appearance to thought.</p>
<p>Without them <i>appearing to thought</i>, without <i>the thought</i> to which [these objects] appear to, one cannot account for them, one cannot posit them. One has to analyze this using the earlier analogies and forms as examples.</p>
<p>One cannot posit form <i>without depending on the thought</i> to which that form appears to. Therefore, form is essentially none other than that which is merely posited/ imputed by that thought to which form appears to.</p>
<p>In short, there is nothing that can exist without being posited by thought. If one can point to something that can exist without being merely imputed by thought, then that [absurdly means that], that phenomenon is truly existent/ exists from its own side.</p>
<p>Form is merely imputed by thought, there cannot be a form that exist without being merely imputed by thought. As such, form is something [/exist as something] that is merely imputed by thought, <i>it is</i> something merely imputed by thought.</p>
<p>It is essential to think how all phenomena are merely posited by thought on a regular basis. Of course, this is challenging.</p>
<p>Form is posited as none other than that which appears to the thought apprehending form. It is merely imputed by the thought consciousness apprehending it. As it is established and imputed by thought <i>to be</i> form, form <i>exists as</i> form, form <i>is</i> form.</p>
<p>Between form and dream person, both are similar in that they are merely imputed by thought through their appearances to the consciousnesses apprehending them. But while form <i>is/ exists as</i> form, a dream person <i>is not/ does not exist as a person</i>.</p>
<p>That which determines something as an existent while others are not, as in the case of a dream person not being a person, is something that requires much further thought.</p>
<p>What has been discussed is a brief explanation on how all phenomena are merely imputed by thought, which has been explained through an analogy. The analogy was given, which is to be applied to the meaning. Using a dream person:</p>
<p>It is none other than that mere appearance to the mistaken dream consciousness that it appears to.</p>

Other than that, there is nothing one can posit to as a dream person. This analogy is to help one understand how all phenomena are merely imputed by thought. Whether these are form, sound, smell, taste or touch, these are merely posited through their appearing to the thought consciousness apprehending them.

Therefore, it is important to constantly think about how all phenomena are merely imputed by thought using these analogies.

How one's knowledge and wisdom will degenerate if one lacks mindfulness:

In the previous lesson, it was mentioned how one's wisdom will degenerate if one fails to apply mindfulness and vigilance.

There are many types of wisdom, those arisen from hearing, reflection and meditation.

If one considers the knowledge one may have gained through the course of one's study, whatever these may be, they are subject to degeneration/ be forgotten if one does not have mindfulness and introspection.

Whatever one has heard and learnt, one needs to remember them. One needs to be mindful of the knowledge one has gained. Otherwise one will forget them. That is why there are people who say that: "Even though I've done quite a fair bit of study, but I don't remember whatever I've studied." This is a clear sign that, they have not applied mindfulness.

c' Ethics will not become pure [5.26]

If one lacks introspection, one would not be able to develop pure ethical discipline:

- 5.26 a. Even those who have plenty of hearing,
b. Faith, and diligent endeavor
c. Will become sullied by a downfall
d. Due to the fault of lacking introspection.*

The verse is saying that, even if one has done extensive study, one knows the essential points of practice with regards to what to adopt and discard, one has faith in karma and its effects, and one may even be joyously persevering in one's practice, but if one lacks mindfulness and introspection, then one's ethical discipline will still degenerate.

Even if one has all these qualities, but if one does not have introspection, one's ethical discipline will degenerate. This is because, if one is not careful, attachment/ desire can creep into one's mind.

Due to that, one's ethical discipline will degenerate. One then becomes stained by downfalls.

The point behind these verses is that, introspection is greatly needed.

d' Virtues accumulated in the past will be destroyed [5.27]

- 5.27 a. The thieves of non-introspection,
b. In following upon the degeneration of mindfulness,
c. Will steal even the merits I have firmly gathered
d. [So that] I shall then proceed to lower realms.*

Attachment and anger are likened to robbers, whereas jealousy, arrogance and pride are likened to thieves. In the absence of introspection, one will be harmed by the robbers of anger and attachment, as well as the thieves of jealousy and pride.

When there is a lack of introspection, this gives anger, attachment, jealousy and so forth a chance to sneak into one's mind and then steal and rob one's virtues/ merit one has accumulated in the past. When one's merit/ virtues are stolen or robbed, one would then not be able to obtain a good rebirth. As such, one would end up in the lower realms.

If one lacks introspection, then the inner robbers and thieves of one's attachment, anger, jealousy and so forth will come and steal one's virtue, just like how robbers and thieves plunder the wealth and possessions of others.

When one's merit/ virtues are stolen by them, one would be depleted of one's merit, one would not be able to get a good rebirth, one ends up being born in the lower realms.

e' The accomplishment of virtues not previously performed will be hindered [5.28]

If there is a lack of introspection, besides depleting one's accumulated merit, it also hinders one's cultivation of new virtue:

- 5.28 a. This host of thieves of the afflictions
b. Will search for a good opportunity and occasion.
c. Having found it, they will steal my virtue
d. And destroy even life in a good migration.*

Before they strike their victims, robbers would usually size up the situation first by looking at their target and analyze whether they would be able to overcome and rob the person of his wealth.

If they think they are able to, they would also look for a suitable time, whether it is better to strike in the day or at night. It is only after much considerations and having determined that they are more likely to succeed, would they strike.

Likewise, the inner robbers and thieves of anger, attachment, jealousy and pride are always on the look out to see when they can harm one. Once there is an opportunity, they manifest readily, even when one is in the midst of doing something virtuous.
They then stop and prevent one from accumulating virtue. These afflictions, which are likened to robbers, are always on the look out to find an opportunity to strike one and deprive one of merit and good rebirth.
Verse 5.27 explains that, the merit/ virtues one has accumulated in the past could be destroyed if one lacks introspection.
5.28 explains that, if one lacks introspection, one would not be able to cultivate new virtue one has yet to accumulate earlier.
This concludes the explanation of the faults of lacking introspection.

2' Guarding mindfulness as a method of guarding introspection [5.29 – 5.33]

a' Brief presentation [5.29]

b' Extensive explanation [5.30 – 5.33]

a' Brief presentation [5.29]

<p>5.29 a. <i>Therefore, I shall never let mindfulness depart</i> <i>b. From the doorway of my mind.</i> c. <i>If it goes, I should recall the harms of the lower realms</i> d. <i>And closely place it there.</i></p>
Guarding one's mindfulness is said to be the method for guarding one's introspection.
If one likens one's mind to be the house, to protect it, one usually place a security guard at its entrance. The guard here is one's mindfulness, which guards the house of one's mind.
One places the guard at the entrance of one's mind to guard against one's mind engaging erroneously in objects to prevent robbers or thieves [of one's afflictions] approaching.
Mindfulness is like the [guard at] the door that stops the mind from being distracted outwards, attaching and involving itself with objects of forms, sounds and so forth.
If one discovers one is distracted out engaging erroneously in different objects, one has to be mindful to think: "If I allow my mind go astray, then I will have to suffer in the lower realms." As such, one pulls one's mental attention back and place it on a virtuous object of observation and be mindful of that. In short, if one's mindfulness degenerates, there are these faults.
As such when one's mindfulness degenerates, bring it back and put one's mental attention on a virtuous object of observation.

b' Extensive explanation [5.30 – 5.33]

1" The external condition: Relying on the virtuous spiritual teacher [5.30]

2" The internal condition: Paying correct mental attention [5.31 – 5.32(ab)]

3" The way introspection is developed through mindfulness [5.32(cd) – 5.33]

1" The external condition: Relying on the virtuous spiritual teacher [5.30]

<p>5.30 a. <i>Through the company of gurus,</i> <i>b. Through the subsequent teachings of abbots, and through fear,</i> c. <i>Mindfulness will easily be generated</i> d. <i>In fortunate people who act respectfully.</i></p>
For beginners, whose mindfulness are not stable, a method to guard their mindfulness is to be in proximity of their gurus/ virtuous friends and also be in the company of friends who abide in the pure trainings.
The qualified guru shows what is to be abandoned and what is to be cultivated. The trainee/ disciple has to put them into practice correctly.

2" The internal condition: Paying correct mental attention [5.31 – 5.32(ab)]

<p>5.31 a. <i>"I am always dwelling in the presence</i> <i>b. Of all those buddhas and bodhisattvas</i> c. <i>Who are endowed</i> d. <i>With unimpeded vision in all."</i></p>	<p>5.32 a. <i>By thinking in this way,</i> <i>b. I shall likewise obtain possession of shame, respect, and</i> <i>fear.</i></p>
This is a method for cultivating mindfulness and introspection: The Buddhas are omniscient as they see every phenomena without obstruction/ impediment.	
One can think that one is in the presence of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas all the time, that they are always looking at one.	
The verse is telling one to always remind oneself that there are Buddhas and bodhisattvas right there seeing everything that one does. One can think of oneself as being in their presence all the time.	

Just as when one is about to engage in nonvirtue, out of consideration for oneself, one should abstain from committing that nonvirtue. Doing this on account of oneself is 1) shame .
Out of 2a) respect for one's training , out of 2b) embarrassment that abstains from nonvirtue on account of others [one' gurus, Buddhas and bodhisattvas], and the 3) fear of the consequences of engaging in nonvirtue, this is how one can protect/guard one's mindfulness and introspection.
The verse is saying that, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas always see all the things that one does. They know it when one engages in nonvirtue as they see everything.
Therefore, there is no way to [hide from] that, pretend otherwise and deceive them thinking they would not [know]. Keeping that in mind, one restrains oneself from nonvirtue.
Khenrinpoche: I went to someone's house. There are some pictures of His Holiness and others gurus in her room. Somehow she puts them inside her cupboard and cover them up. I ask her why she had to cover them up, she replied that she needed to watch TV at night! She thinks it's not appropriate so she closed [the cupboard door] and locked it.
Khenrinpoche: I know that person so I joked: "Even if you cover them up, they will still see! So better don't cover up."
If one has a good understanding of what Buddha really is, that they are omniscient with unimpeded vision of all that exist, then if one is mindful that they are right there all the time, it does make a huge difference to one's practice of restraining oneself from nonvirtue.

3" The way introspection is developed through mindfulness [5.32(cd) – 5.33]

a" The way mindfulness arises [5.32(cd)]

b" The way introspection arises from that [5.33]

a" The way mindfulness arises [5.32(cd)]

<i>5.32 c. Also through doing this, d. Recollection of the Buddha will repeatedly occur.</i>
If one has a good remembrance of the Buddhas as suggested in the previous verse, by thinking how they are omniscient, are always there seeing everything one does and so forth, then one will be able to remember well the Dharma and the Sangha.
With such a habit of remembering them, it is said that one would easily generate mindfulness of the Three Jewels.

b" The way introspection arises from that [5.33]

<i>5.33 a. When mindfulness abides for the purpose b. Of guarding against [afflictions] from the doorway of the mind, c. Then introspection will come about d. And even that which had gone will return.</i>
If one places mindfulness of not forgetting what is to be adopted and discarded at the doorway of one's mind, it is said that the introspection investigating whether one's body, speech and mind are actually engaging in nonvirtue, will naturally arise.
If one has strong mindfulness placing it at the door of one's mind, even if one's introspection does degenerate a bit, but because of having strong mindfulness to begin with, then one will be able to bring back that introspection one has lost.
If one has continual and strong mindfulness, one will be able to stop one's mind from being distracted away from one's object of observation. When there is strong and continual mindfulness, one's mind would not be distracted from one's object and stay distracted without even knowing for a long time. Such [a distraction] will not happen.
When there is strong mindfulness, one's introspection that checks whether one's mind is distracted or not will just come on its own accord.
The point is, during the time when mindfulness has degenerated, it is more difficult to have introspection, to be aware and be cognizant that one's mind is already distracted. But when there is strong mindfulness, it is much easier to be vigilant and catch the mind straying away from one's object of observation.
This section [5.29 – 5.33] explains the relationship between mindfulness and introspection, whereas this verse 5.33 goes with the outline: The way introspection arises from that. "That" refers to mindfulness. When there is strong mindfulness, introspection follows naturally and easily.
The section on: b) The method for guarding the mind: Guarding mindfulness and introspection [5.23 – 5.33] is complete.

c) The way to train in the conduct of guarding the mind by means of mindfulness and introspection [5.34–5.97]:

i) The way to train in the ethics of refraining from negativities [5.34 – 5.58]

ii) The way to train in the ethics of gathering virtuous dharmas [5.59 – 5.83]

iii) The way to train in the ethics of working for the benefit of sentient beings [5.84 – 5.97]

i) The way to train in the ethics of refraining from negativities [5.34 – 5.58]:

1' Making effort to purify all conduct of the three doors 5.34 – 5.44]

2' Guarding against all deterioration [5.45 – 5.58]

1' Making effort to purify all conduct of the three doors 5.34 – 5.44]:

a' Examining the conduct of body and speech [5.34 – 5.39]

b' Examining the conduct of the mind [5.40 – 5.41]

c' Explaining the contexts for permitted and prohibited actions [5.42 – 5.44]

a' Examining the conduct of body and speech [5.34 – 5.39]:

1" Examining one's motivation before acting with the body [5.34]

2" Advice related to actions like looking and so forth [5.35 – 5.38(ab)]

3" Application to other behaviors [5.38(cd)]

4" Examining the posture [5.39]

1" Examining one's motivation before acting with the body [5.34]

With regards to checking the conduct of one's body and speech, initially, before carrying out an action with one's body or speech, one should investigate one's mind to see what the motivation wanting to engage in that action is:

*5.34 a. When, at the beginning,
b. Having known that such a mind is with fault,
c. At such a time, like a piece of wood,
d. I should remain being able to rely [upon the antidote].*

Before carrying out an action with one's body and speech, one should see what the motivation is, the kinds of thoughts that are going on in one's mind, whether these are virtuous or nonvirtuous.

Upon checking one's motivation, if one discovers that it is nonvirtuous, then with the understanding that, if one continues to carry out its action anyway, it will bring about negative consequences in this and future lives.

With such an understanding, one should thoroughly restrain oneself and abide firmly, which means stopping oneself from doing that action with one's body or speech.

When one discovers that [one has a] nonvirtuous motivation that is driving one [towards a physical or verbal action], then one should immediately restrain oneself thoroughly, not follow through with such an intention and restrain oneself.

At the same time, one should also try to eradicate those nonvirtuous thoughts [as well].

Most of one's physical and verbal actions are outflows/ manifestations of one's thoughts. As such, one should remain mindful and vigilant. Because, if one acts out one's [nonvirtuous] thoughts physically and verbally, then this would lead to all kinds of negative consequences and basically hurting/ harming others.

This verse is advising one to investigate/ examine one's motivation. When one does discover that it is a nonvirtuous motivation that is driving one to commit an action with one's body and speech, then one should thoroughly restrain oneself and stop oneself from acting out those thoughts.

2" Advice related to actions like looking and so forth [5.35 – 5.38(ab)]

a" A general presentation of where to direct one's gaze [5.35]

*5.35 a. Never should I look around
b. Distractedly for no purpose.
c. With a resolute mind
d. I should always keep my eyes cast downwards.*

The verse is saying that, at all times, one should never look at things that are:

1) Not in accord with Dharma, 2) A cause of distraction and 3) Meaningless.

While keeping one's focus on a chosen virtuous object of observation, physically, one's gaze should not be placed beyond the space in front, looking around or afar, but merely gazing generally in front.

This advice is given because, if one is looking around in a distracted manner, one would not be able to hold one's mind onto a virtuous object of observation. If one's gaze happens to fall upon an object of desire or anger, then this would induce all kinds of incorrect mental attention. As such, this would bring about the manifestation of afflictions and sufferings.

Therefore mentally, one has to be mindful and not forget one's chosen virtuous object of observation; physically, one should place one's gaze generally in front without looking around and afar.

b" How to act when fatigued [5.36(ab)]

*5.36 a. But in order to relax the gaze
b. For a short while I should look around.*

Even though the behavior mentioned in 5.35 should be adopted at all times, but at times one may feel tired/ exhausted.
If one were to keep at that way of looking at things, one may end up being very mentally disturbed.
Therefore, at times when one needs a rest, one can occasionally, look further ahead/ around, but [this should be done] without ever losing mindfulness of one's chosen virtuous object of observation.

c" How to act when in the presence of others [5.36(cd) – 5.37(ab)]

<p>5.36 c. <i>If someone appears in my field of vision</i> <i>d. I should look at him and say, "It's good that you have come."</i> 5.37 a. <i>To check if there is any danger on the path and so forth</i> <i>b. I should look again and again in the four directions.</i></p>
In the course of adopting such a physical demeanor of not looking afar but generally casting one's gaze downwards, if someone were to come into one's presence, just because one is engaging in such a mode of conduct, rather than sitting there and pretending that one is meditating and not seeing him, one should acknowledge his presence by saying: "Welcome."
It is said that, if a person comes into one's presence, one can acknowledge him by saying "welcome", but without necessarily having to look/ stare directly into his face.
Of course, when one is walking along a road that may present some dangers of being robbed, having wild animals around and so forth, in such situations, if one persists in looking downwards, one may get into problems.
Therefore, in such situations, one has to be careful and vigilant of one's surroundings by looking around.
Again, while one is doing so, this does not mean that one should be mentally distracted.
These are the advice pertaining to the need for constant mindfulness and awareness [of one's body and speech.]

Student: In the phrase "merely imputed by thought," is this referring to conceptual consciousness alone?

Khenrinpoche: In the treatises, sometimes [this phrase] is written as "merely imputed by mind," other times for instance, in Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Verses*, it is written as "merely imputed by thought." Even other times, one sees it as "merely imputed by name," "in the nature of mind."

In the phrase "merely imputed by thought," can one take this thought to be the [conceptual] thought mentioned in *Mind and Awareness*, where there is the division of consciousness into conceptual and non-conceptual: [conceptual consciousness is] a mind apprehending a sound generality and meaning generality as suitable to be mixed.

With respect to "thought," this only exists on the level of sentient beings. At this level, is there any issue/ problem with identifying such a "thought" to be a conceptual thought/ conceptuality?

The consciousnesses/ states of minds in a sentient being's continuum are either conceptual or non-conceptual. In the phrase "merely labeled by thought," personally, I think there should not be a problem with identifying thought in the phrase "merely labeled by thought" to be a conceptual consciousness.

Recap:

The lessons being taught so far has been on guarding one's mind with mindfulness and introspection. In the context of this text, one has to guard one's training in the bodhisattva deeds with these.
Ethical discipline is divided into three types, the ethical disciplines of: 1) Restraint, 2) Gathering virtuous Dharma, and 3) Benefiting sentient beings. Guarding one's training here, mainly refers to guarding one's training in ethical discipline.
Shantideva teaches how to keep one's actions of body, speech and mind pure. In the previous lesson, how one should investigate the conduct of one's body and speech was explained.

d" How to act when resting [5.37(cd) – 5.38(ab)]

<p>5.37 c. <i>To rest, I should turn my head around d. And then look behind me.</i></p> <p>5.38 a. <i>Having examined both ahead and behind, b. I should proceed to either come or go.</i></p>
Before this verse, one was taught how to look at one's surroundings. One was advised not to look distractedly. Rather, one should just cast one's gaze downwards towards the space merely in front.
This is because, if one were looking around, then there is the danger of one's mind getting distracted by some objects.
<i>"To rest, I should turn my head around, and then look behind me,"</i> here, this is in the context of being in an area which presents danger in the form of wild animals, robbers and so forth.
In that sense, one adopts this physical demeanor when one becomes tired from the practice of just looking downwards.
If one sees that there is danger behind one, then one should continue moving forward. But if one looks ahead and there is danger, then obviously one has to go backwards.

3" Application to other behaviors [5.38(cd)]

<p>5.38 c. <i>Being aware of the necessity d. I should act like this in all situations.</i></p>
For ordained people, whether they are in a monastery, going to town, sitting in a prayer session, eating, sitting, walking, talking, doing things to benefit oneself or others, these are the physical conducts that they are supposed to engage in.
The point is, one should engage in whatever activities with introspection. If one is a Dharma practitioner, this is what one has to do. Whatever it may be, these actions should be engaged in with introspection.

4" Examining the posture [5.39]

<p>5.39 a. <i>Having prepared for an action with the thought, b. "My body will remain in such a way," c. Then periodically I should look to see d. "How is the body abiding?"</i></p>
If one is engaging in a practice session, ideally right at the beginning, one should adjust and sit in the seven-fold physical posture of Vairocana. One then projects the will/ intention to sit and remain in that posture throughout the entire session.
But this does not necessarily mean that one would be able to do that for the entire session. During the session every now and then, one should investigate with introspection if one is sitting in that correct posture or not.
This completes the section on investigating one's conduct of body and speech.

b' Examining the conduct of the mind [5.40 – 5.41]

- 1" Focusing the mind on a virtuous object [5.40]
- 2" Examining whether or not the mind is single-pointed in virtue [5.41]

1" Focusing the mind on a virtuous object [5.40]

<p>5.40 a. <i>With utmost effort I should check b. To see that the crazed elephant of my mind c. Is not wandering off but is bound d. To the great pillar of thinking about the Dharma.</i></p>
Here, an analogy is given of an untamed, crazy elephant. If one does not tie up the crazy untamed elephant to a pillar but set it loose, it will cause a lot of damage. If one has such an untamed crazy elephant, it is extremely important to fasten it to a strong pillar to prevent it from doing whatever it wishes.

One's unsubdued untamed mind is likened to this untamed crazy elephant. One has such an unsubdued mind that is afflicted with anger, attachment and other afflictions.
If one does not fasten one's mind to a virtuous object of observation using mindfulness and introspection, but allow this untamed mind to wander off wherever it wishes, when it comes into contact with objects that will stir up one's emotions, causing anger or attachment, that will lead one into accumulating nonvirtuous karma and into the lower realms.
Rather than letting one's mind run after external objects, one should fasten it to the great pillar of the Dharma.
In the context of practice, this means that when one is recollecting [Dharma] words, one should fasten one's attention onto the words without forgetting what one has heard, learnt and read.
When reflecting on the meaning of the teachings, one should fasten one's mind onto the meaning of one's practice.
When one is meditating , with mindfulness and vigilance, one should fasten one's mind onto the chosen virtuous object of observation. Through that, one will not lose one's object of observation.
This advice also applies when one is listening to the teachings. Whenever one listens to the teachings, one should apply mindfulness and vigilance so that one can stay focused on what is being said, the words , as well as its meanings .

2" Examining whether or not the mind is single-pointed in virtue [5.41]

<p>5.41 a. <i>I who strive by all means for meditative stabilization</i> b. <i>Should not wander off even for a moment.</i> c. <i>Thinking, "What is this mind of mine doing?"</i> d. <i>I should investigate my mind.</i></p>
If one is striving to achieve concentration, then it is extremely important to fasten one's mind onto the object of observation, investigating whether one's focus and attention is actually being placed on the chosen object of observation or not.
Having concentration means that one is able to stay focused on a chosen object of observation without being distracted.
With mindfulness and vigilance, if one does discover that one's mind is distracted from one's object of observation, then one should bring it back onto the object.

c' Explaining the contexts for permitted and prohibited actions [5.42 – 5.44]

<p>5.42 a. <i>But if I am unable to do this when involved in fear or</i> b. <i>Celebrations and the like, then I should relax.</i> c. <i>Thus it has been taught that at times of giving,</i> d. <i>You may be indifferent to ethics.</i></p>
Generally, there are certain actions of the body and mind that one is supposed to engage in.
But in certain situations, for example, if there is danger to one's life or where there is a special occasion when one is focusing on paying homage, making offerings to the Three Jewels, or when one has to engage in certain actions that will bring great benefits to others, in these situations, perhaps there are exceptions.
If one is engaged in a sustained practice for developing concentration, for example, in a special occasion of a Buddhist festival that involves paying homage, making offerings to the Three Jewels and so forth, at these times temporarily, it is all right to stop one's practice of concentration and engage in these, but it should be done with mindfulness and vigilance.
Essentially, if there is a special purpose, then it is all right even if one does not adopt those subtle behaviors/ actions with one's body and speech one normally has to engage in.
Another explanation in the commentary: If one is engaging in the practice of generosity and wishes to further strengthen it, even if one is unable to engage in some modes of conduct required in the practices of ethical discipline, it is still all right.
For example, ordained persons are generally not allowed to walk around swinging the hands and making other unnecessary gestures. But, if one is practicing generosity and has to distribute gifts with one's own hands that involves walking around and moving the hands and so forth, then that is an exception.
The point is, if one is primarily engaged in the practice of generosity at a point in time, even if one is unable to adhere to some of these subtle aspects of ethical discipline, it is permissible.
If one is engaged in the practice of the generosity of giving fearlessness, protecting others from fears, when one sees a deer trying to escape from a hunter, and if that hunter were to ask: "Did you see that animal?" Because one is supposed to give fearlessness and protect that animal, in that situation, then it is permissible to say: "No I didn't."
Khenrinpoche: Is it okay to say that or not? If you have to protect the animal, then somebody were to ask you that, you have to say: "I didn't see it." Isn't it? However, this is a lie and therefore necessarily a nonvirtue, isn't it?
But, did Buddha ever give permissions to engage in a natural misdeed of lying, which is by nature a nonvirtue?

In a commentary it says that, in such a situation, it is all right to say: "I didn't see the animal." In another mind training text, it suggests that, perhaps one could answer: "I didn't see that truly existent animal!"	
Khenrinpoche: If I am not wrong, one of the text explained something like that. Even though you are telling the truth [about the existent,] but you still deceived the [hunter], isn't it?	
In one of his past lives before becoming a Buddha, there was an account of him traveling in a ship with many others. When he discovered that there was a person on board who planned to kill everyone on board that ship, he killed that person.	
Essentially, this verse is saying that, if one is primarily focused on the practice of generosity, then during that training, it is permissible to not to guard some subtle points of ethical discipline.	
Qualm: But, is it not true that the practice of ethical discipline is superior to the practice of generosity? As such, it is therefore incorrect to be indifferent to the practice of ethical discipline while one is engaged in the practice of generosity. Reply:	
5.43 a. <i>I should undertake whatever deed I have intended to do</i> b. <i>And think of doing nothing other than it.</i> c. <i>With my mind focused upon that,</i> d. <i>I should set about for the time being to accomplish it.</i>	5.44 a. <i>By acting in this way, all will be done well,</i> b. <i>Otherwise neither will be done.</i> c. <i>There will thus be no increase</i> d. <i>In the secondary affliction of non-introspection.</i>
At the very beginning prior to doing any work, one needs the intention to start it and to accomplish it. One tells oneself: "I will continue with it until I accomplish it, I will complete the task."	
For example, if one is engaged in studying this text, from the very beginning, if one decided to start it, one has to tell oneself that one will finish learning the text. If one does not do that, in the midst, if one decides to look at something else, then one would not be able to accomplish this particular task of studying Shantideva's text.	
In reply to the qualm, the situation is with regards to one who is primarily focused on the practice of generosity. He has to start with the practice and ensure that he brings it to completion.	
In the process, if he gets distracted and does something else, then he would never be able to finish his practice of generosity. In the end, he would not be able to achieve anything, there is no generosity, neither is there any ethical discipline as well.	
Khenrinpoche: From my own example, when [someone recommends a book,] I would read ten pages of it. After that, [someone may recommend another] book, I would read ten pages of that as well. At the end, I would never finish any book.	
The idea is that, when you read one book, you should focus [on it] and complete it. When you have completed that, then you can [start reading] another. I am telling you about my own experience, how bad I am in reading books.	
I never complete one book, except when I study. That's different, because I have to finish it.	
Whether it is one's study or practice, one has to get at it in an orderly way. One just cannot skip. One has to finish the earlier practices before one can begin with the later ones. Otherwise, one would never finish. When one starts with something, before one can actualize it, if one were to turn to something else, one would never be able to achieve anything.	
One has to start from the beginning in one's practice, there is not such a thing as 'jumping'. One has to finish the earlier practices before one moves onto the next. It is then that one can bring one's practice to fulfillment.	
When one walks, one lifts up one's right leg. Before one plants one's right foot on the ground, one does not lift one's left leg.	
Before one's right foot is firmly planted on the ground, if it is still in mid-air, if one tries to lift one's left foot, then you would know what would happen next!	
While it is true that the practice of ethical discipline is superior to the practice of generosity, but until one has completed the practice of generosity well, with stability and familiarity, one cannot move onto the next.	
The sections up to here [5.34 – 5.44] are explaining about investigating one's body, speech and mind.	
The next section explains about gaining mastery/ control [over one's body, speech and mind].	

2' Guarding against all deterioration [5.45 – 5.58]

a' Guarding against deterioration in the training of body [5.45 – 5.54]

1" Not allowing oneself to fall under the sway of distraction [5.45]

2" Abandoning senseless activities [5.46]

3" Examining the motivation when acting [5.47 – 5.54]

b' Guarding against deterioration in the training of the mind [5.55 – 5.58]

1" Not allowing oneself to fall under the sway of distraction [5.45]

5.45 a. *If I engage in a variety*
b. *Of senseless talk*
c. *Or in many kinds of spectacular shows,*
d. *I should abandon attachment towards them.*

If it is beneficial, it is possible that one can carry out meaningless talk, dancing, singing or some spectacular performances. Even so, one still has to do so mindfully without attachment.

In the first place, senseless speech, singing, dancing, watching shows and so forth are meaningless in that, these are distractions. But if there is a purpose for engaging in them, say to protect the minds of others, then one must engage in them mindfully and without attachment. The point is, it is never correct to let one's mind be distracted.

2" Abandoning senseless activities [5.46]

*5.46 a. If for no reason I dig the earth,
b. Cut grass, draw patterns in the earth, and the like,
c. Then, recalling the advice of the Sugatas,
d. I should immediately stop out of fear.*

It happens that, there are some people who just cannot sit still, but have to do something with a distracted state of mind.

They end up digging holes in the ground or plucking leaves from plants and trees for no reason.

Khenrinpoche: There is a restaurant which places [drawing] chinks [on the dining table] for you to [doodle]. They purposely put them there as they know what people want to do.

The examples of cutting grass and so forth mentioned here, are primarily [meant for] a fully ordained monk to be mindful of his vows. There are purposes behind them. For example, if one were to cut grass, there is the danger of killing and so forth.

The point is, if one finds oneself being distracted and about to engage in meaningless activities, with mindfulness and vigilance, one has to bring one's mind back.

Here, in the bodhisattva's training, one should not engage in any activities that do not bring any benefits to sentient beings.

If one finds oneself engaging in meaningless activities like cutting grass, making patterns or digging holes in the ground and so forth, then with mindfulness and introspection, one should bring one's mind back and stop oneself from doing these things.

3" Examining the motivation when acting [5.47 – 5.54]

a" Brief presentation [5.47]

b" Extensive explanation [5.48 – 5.53]

c" Summary [5.54]

a" Brief presentation [5.47]

*5.47 a. Whenever I have the desire
b. To move or to say something,
c. First of all I should examine my mind
d. And then, with [steadfastness], act in the proper way.*

Before one starts to move around, change one's physical posture, doing something with one's body or before speaking, there would be an [intention] to do or say something.

Whatever physical or verbal activity one is about to engage in, the verse is saying that one should check one's motivation. If it is nonvirtue, ideally one should stop oneself from doing that. If it is virtuous, then one could engage in it.

It is through checking one's motivation that one stops oneself from committing faults and downfalls.

For a person who is seriously committed to engage in the practices of the training to develop bodhicitta, before engaging in any physical or verbal activities, ideally he would look into his own mind and examine to see if his motivation for wanting to do those actions are driven by self-cherishing or motivated by the thought of benefiting others.

Upon checking, if his motivation is found to be a self-cherishing thought, then he would not engage in those actions.

If he is motivated by a heartfelt thought of benefiting others, then he would engage in those actions.

b" Extensive explanation [5.48 – 5.53]

(1) How to act when one [has the intention] for the afflictions to arise [5.48]

*5.48 a. Whenever there is attachment in my mind
b. And whenever there is the desire to be angry,
c. I should not do anything nor say anything,
d. But remain like a piece of wood.*

When one sees or thinks of a desirable external object or person, wishes to be attached to the object/ person; when one sees or thinks of an unpleasant object or person and wishes to be upset/ angry, the verse is saying that at those times, one should remain still physically and verbally by not doing nor saying anything.

In those situations, [there is the danger that] one's mind wishes to follow after attachment or anger. The point is not to follow after them. The verse is saying that one should remain still and not follow after one's afflictions physically, verbally nor mentally. One should remain still on these three levels.

(2) How to act when excitement and so forth arise [5.49 – 5.50]

<p>5.49 a. Whenever I have excitement, the wish to verbally belittle others, b. Pride and arrogance; c. When I have the thought to describe the faults of others, d. Cunningness and the thought to deceive others;</p>	<p>5.50 a. Whenever I am eager for praise b. Or have the desire to blame others; c. Whenever I have the wish to scold and quarrel; d. At such times I should remain like a piece of wood.</p>
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When one finds that there is pride and arrogance arising, having the wish to expose others' faults and so forth, one should not follow after such wishes/ intentions to engage in them. Rather, one should remain still.

(3) How to act when [one wishes for] gain and honor [5.51]

<p>5.51 a. Whenever I desire material gain, honor, or fame; b. Whenever I seek servants or a retinue, c. And when in my mind I wish to be served; d. At these times I should remain like a piece of wood.</p>
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When there is the desire to look for wealth, praise, good reputation, a retinue of followers, the verse advises one to remain still and not to follow after such thoughts.

(4) How to act when thinking of [neglecting] others' welfare [5.52]

<p>5.52 Whenever I have the mind wishing to neglect the welfare of others And to pursue my own welfare, Wishing to say something, At these times I should remain like a piece of wood.</p>

For a person seriously engaging in the practice of cultivating bodhicitta, benefiting others is a priority over benefiting self.

If there are thoughts of cherishing oneself and neglecting the welfare of others, perhaps the person should remain still by not entertaining and following after such thoughts of self-cherishing merely to benefit himself.

If there is a motivation of self-cherishing thought to speak with the wish to merely benefit oneself, or to speak due to being angry, then at these times one should remain silent and not say anything.

There is a saying in Tibetan than, "One's mouth is like a treasure house of negativities."

Essentially, these are advice for one to remain still physically, verbally and mentally when one is about to engage in nonvirtue. This is about checking one's motivation.

(5) How to act when one [has the intention] for anger and discouragement and so forth to arise [5.53]

c" Summary [5.54]

<p>5.53 a. Whenever impatience, laziness, fear, b. And likewise shamelessness or the talking of nonsense, c. And thoughts of partiality arise, d. At these times too I should remain like a piece of wood.</p>	<p>5.54 a. Having in this way examined his mind for afflictions b. And for thoughts that strive for meaningless things, c. The hero should hold his mind steady d. By means of the antidotes.</p>
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Student: With regards to laziness, why is it that one remains like a piece of wood and not do anything about it?

Khenrinpoche: Joyous perseverance is the mind that is enthusiastic about virtue. The opposite of that is laziness, which is unenthusiastic about virtue. When there is laziness, one has to stop one's mind from following after that thought. If you follow that thought, you will become more lazy, so better stop following that thought.

Student: When I am about to get angry, I can't just remain still. If I do that, my anger would just build up. What should I do?

Khenrinpoche: When you are about to get angry, don't say [anything]. **Student:** But my anger will just build up, I can remain still for one or two minutes but after five minutes, something [nonvirtuous] will come out of my mouth. **Khenrinpoche:** That is why, it should not be coming out. **Student:** Practically, other than remaining still, should I not be doing something else?

Khenrinpoche: It is okay to be doing something else. But the whole idea is not to follow after those emotional thoughts.

Student: So long as I am doing something to stop that energy from building up to carry out the action like shouting back, then it is fine? **Khenrinpoche:** Yes.

How in general, it is projecting karma, not craving and grasping, that primarily determines the type of rebirth:

Student: Between the two karmas of the twelve links, the actualizing karma only occurs at the time of death, whereas it is the projecting karma that is being accumulated in one's entire lifetime. Therefore, to guard ethical discipline, one must have the faith that whatever one does, there is projection into higher or lower rebirths. However, we do not really know the exact details how the projecting karma is being nourished and come together with the actualizing karma that throws one into a good or bad rebirth. Could Khenrinpoche elaborate on this?

Khenrinpoche: Projecting karma is essentially like the seed from which a sprout appears. Without a seed, a sprout would not exist. Therefore, [projecting karma] is the principal cause [for rebirth].

Whether a projecting karma is accumulated or not, one has to understand the teachings in the Lam Rim on how karma is accumulated. ***For a karma to be accumulated, it has to be powerful and sustained over a period of time.***

There is the explanation on the permutations between karma accumulated and karma done. In short, karma that is accumulated are those karmas that are powerful and sustained over time.

That which determines the type of rebirth one takes, either a good or bad rebirth, is primarily dependent on projecting karma.

To accumulate a virtuous projecting karma which is a cause of good rebirth, such virtuous karmas that are accumulated have to be strong and consistently sustained over a period of time.

The projecting karma will manifest as the actualizing karma prior to death.

According to the twelve link of dependent-origination, prior to actualizing karma manifesting before death, there must be craving and grasping that nourishes [the projecting karma]. The question that I mentioned before was about two things:

1) When does craving and grasping [manifest] in the sense of nourishing the [projecting] karma?

2) Is the desire/ attachment of the desire realm necessarily nonvirtuous?

The actualizing karma manifests prior to death. Those that cause it to manifest are craving and grasping.

During the death process, the inner elements of the physical body undergoes dissolution. This starts with the 1) earth element dissolving into the water element, 2) water element dissolving into fire element, [3) fire dissolving into wind] and so forth.

What I think is this: The ***craving and grasping has to be manifest during these first three stages of the entire death process.***

When craving arises, depending on which karma is stronger, virtuous or nonvirtuous, there is craving for future existence.

Perhaps this craving for future existence is not so much about craving for a particular type of body or existence, but is a general craving for embodiment, [a ***general***] craving for an ***existence*** again.

This is merely my personal opinion as these are not stated in any texts. After craving comes grasping, which is essentially a stronger form of attachment. The earlier craving for an embodied existence becomes much stronger.

One is really clinging on, wanting to get a ***particular*** kind of ***existence***.

One has to think about this for oneself as one will not find any description or discussion in any text pertaining to this.

At the time of grasping, there is a very strong desire/ attachment wishing to be embodied again, to take on an existence, one then wonders: "What [sort of rebirth] would I get?" [Such a thought] nourishes [the projecting] karma.

Therefore, craving and grasping nourish the karma that was accumulated earlier. Depending on whether it is a virtuous or nonvirtuous projecting karma, craving and grasping give it strength that make it very powerful.

One then dies and moves on to the next life. In sutra, there is no description beyond the dissolution of the elements. It is only tantra that describes the later steps that make up the whole death dissolution process. [These later steps] are the:

1) White appearance, 2) Red increase, 3) Black near attainment and so forth.

The primary cause of the next rebirth, be it good or bad, is the seed of the projecting karma that was accumulated earlier.

It is not craving and grasping, which are conditions to nourish the primary cause, the [projecting] karma.

The point is this: The primary cause of a good rebirth is the virtuous projecting karma. It is not craving and grasping.

Analyzing whether attachment of the desire realm is necessarily nonvirtuous:

As to whether the desire/ attachment of the desire realm is necessarily nonvirtuous, this is something to be analyzed.

According to the *Abhidharmakosa (Treasury of Manifest Knowledge)*, it states that the attachment of the desire realm is necessarily nonvirtuous. But afflictions like ignorance and view of the transitory collection can be [ethically] unspecified.

It is stated clearly that, [other than these two], all other afflictions are necessarily nonvirtuous.

The ignorance of the twelve links can said to be [ethically] unspecified.
The projecting karma accumulated is that which was motivated by such an ignorance, [an ethically] unspecified mind.
Therefore based on this, there is nothing wrong to assert that craving and grasping can nourish a virtuous projecting karma.
In the Hinayana tenet's text like the <i>Treasury of Manifest Knowledge</i> , afflictions such as attachment of the desire realm is necessarily nonvirtuous. But in the treatises of the Middle Way, which are Mahayana tenets, it is perhaps not so clear-cut.
It is mentioned in these teachings that, there can be instances of attachments which are apprehensions of true existence, [ignorance which can be ethically unspecified.]
As such, perhaps one can say that the attachment of the desire realm is not necessarily nonvirtuous .
Therefore, would it be all right to assert that, it is possible to have attachment of the desire that is [ethically] unspecified?
I am merely giving you my personal opinion. No one can say for sure that this is the case.
Student: How does this relate to contaminated virtuous karma and uncontaminated virtuous karma?
Khenrinpoche: This discussion on projecting karma in the context of the twelve links is necessarily contaminated. We are looking at the process of how projecting karma is accumulated as something being impelled by ignorance of the twelve links.

Discussion on whether karma and afflictions exist in the pure lands:

Khenrinpoche: Gyurme was asking what sort of karma is needed to take rebirth in the pure lands. You need karma to be reborn in pure land, isn't it? Is that contaminated or uncontaminated karma?
Student: It is contaminated karma. Let's take Amitabha pure land as an example...
Khenrinpoche: Essentially, are you saying that, to be born in Amitabha pure land is the result of karma, which was motivated by ignorance? Student: Yes.
Khenrinpoche: It follows that, the body of a sentient being in the pure land is true suffering. Student: Yes.
Khenrinpoche: It follows that, there is suffering in Amitabha's pure land. Student: No. The person has no suffering of suffering and suffering of change, but has pervasive compounded suffering.
Khenrinpoche: Why do they have suffering? Student: Due to karma and ignorance.
Khenrinpoche: So, in Amitabha's pure land, there are [beings] with karma and delusion, isn't it? Student: Yes.
Khenrinpoche: So you have suffering [there] isn't it? Student: There are some sentient beings there that have karma and delusion. Khenrinpoche: So they have suffering like us, no different from us, isn't it? Better stay here, don't go there!

How attachment of the desire realm is not necessarily nonvirtuous:

Student: With regards to attachment that is [ethically] unspecified, let's say I dedicate all my virtues to have a precious human rebirth. I have no understanding of emptiness, so my prayer is contaminated thinking about an inherently existent next life motivated by attachment grasping at inherent existence. Is this an example of an [ethically] unspecified attachment?
Khenrinpoche: It is clearly stated in the teachings that, the ignorance of the twelve links is [ethically] unspecified. But the [projecting] karma that is motivated by this ignorance could be virtuous, nonvirtuous or [ethically neutral].
This is clearly stated in the <i>Svatantrika Madhyamika's</i> explanation of the twelve links.
My earlier question was: Are craving and grasping necessarily nonvirtuous or not. According to the Hinayana tenets, the attachment, therefore the craving and grasping belonging to the desire realm, are necessarily nonvirtuous.
But the Mahayana tenets assert that, the attachment, [therefore the craving and grasping] of the desire realm, is not necessarily nonvirtuous.
Particularly, according to the Consequence Middle Way School, they assert that there can be an attachment that is an apprehension of true existence. Based on this, my personal opinion is that perhaps, the attachment of the desire realm is not necessarily nonvirtuous.
The reason why I asked those questions was, even if one thinks that craving and grasping as necessarily nonvirtuous, for one getting a good rebirth, what these nourish is a virtuous projecting karma.
Is there a problem then to assert, even if craving and grasping are necessarily nonvirtuous, that they can nourish a virtuous projecting karma? That was the reason for bringing this up for discussion.
One could substantiate and justify that, even if craving and grasping are nonvirtuous, they can act as a condition for good rebirth in that, the primary cause of a rebirth is a virtuous projecting karma. It is not due to craving and grasping, which are mere conditions that nourish and activate the [virtuous projecting] karma.

How karma forces craving for rebirth in cyclic existence and grasping to wish for a specific rebirth:

Between the virtuous or nonvirtuous projecting karma that impels rebirth in the next life, the 1) <i>weightier</i> one will ripen first.
If both are equally [weighty], then the one that one is 2) <i>more familiar</i> will ripen first.
If one is equally familiar [with virtuous and nonvirtuous actions], then the [karma] that was 3) <i>done first</i> will ripen.
Therefore, depending on which karma is stronger, virtuous or nonvirtuous, correspondingly there will also be craving and grasping [at the time of death].
If one is going to achieve a good rebirth, then at the time of <i>craving</i> , one will have desire/ craving to have a future existence.
Can one say then that, at the time of <i>grasping</i> , there is [also] desire for a specific kind of existence?
Craving and grasping nourish and activate the [projecting] karma such that, when it is fully potentialized, one is definitely going to that specific rebirth. Khenrinpoche: What do you think? Are you [satisfied with such a line of reasoning?]
Khenrinpoche: [Don't just leave it as it is, you have to go deeper to] the second level.
In the case of someone going to get a good rebirth, if you accept that at the time of grasping, there is desire for a particular good rebirth, then you would also have to accept that there is [grasping for] lower rebirth.
[At the time of craving and grasping, would there be a possibility for] someone to think: "I want to get a hell body." Can such a thought arise? Khenrinpoche: Would craving [have such thoughts]? Student: No.
Khenrinpoche: Why can't such a thought arise? Couldn't your karma force you to think that way? For those going to the lower realms, do they have the thought wishing to go to the lower realms?
Student: How could there be craving for an existence to be burnt in hell? Khenrinpoche: You don't have craving at that time? Student: I think we have craving for warm when we feel cold which nourishes the particular projecting karma for hell.
Khenrinpoche: You can still feel hot but still be born as a human being. Student: Maybe then you crave for a human existence. I cannot imagine having to crave for hell existence. Khenrinpoche: The question is: Why not?
Khenrinpoche: When does craving start to nourish the projecting karma? A year before death? Student: I don't know. Let's say I have attachment for a woman, craves and grasps for her. If in my past life I have the [imprint] of sexual misconduct, at that time this seed was about to bear fruit, then craving and grasping would nourish this seed which ripens.
Student: Similarly at the time of death, one feels cold and has grasping for warmth. This nourishes the seed accumulated in the past to be born in the hell. I feel you cannot be craving for a specific hell existence.
Khenrinpoche: Are you saying that, if a person is going to take a human rebirth, he would not have any craving for heat and cold, that craving for heat and cold means necessarily having to go to the lower realms? It is not necessarily so, isn't it?
Khenrinpoche: Even if you are to be born as a human, it is possible that you have craving for heat and cold, isn't it? At the time of death, if you feel hungry, it does not necessarily mean you are going to the hungry ghost realm, isn't it?

How karma is the deciding factor for high or low rebirth:

[What sort of rebirth one takes] is all determined by karma, isn't it? [If that is the case,] then there is no point in remembering one's guru, the Three Jewels since it is already fixed. Karma throws you that way, there is nothing you can do.
Khenrinpoche: No matter what virtuous mind you have at the time of death does not change anything? Or would it?
Student: Even if you have negative karma, if you cut off craving and grasping, it would not ripen. Therefore, one can actually control that.
Student: There is a story of a great Lama who has great compassion for all, especially for those in the lower realms. So he wanted to take rebirth there and prayed for that. But he had a dream that somehow he would be going to the pure land instead. So even though he craves for lower realms, his karma decides for him otherwise.
Khenrinpoche: What you said actually supports the point that taking higher or lower rebirth is not by wish but determined by one's karma. The Lama has the wish to go to the lower realms to help sentient beings, but because he didn't have the karma to go to the lower realms, therefore he couldn't go there. So, it's all about karma.
Without the strong karma that will propel one into the lower realms, even if one has the wish to go there, one would not be able to go there. But if one has both strong negative karma to go to the lower realms as well as a wish to go there, then one will get there. From here, it is clear that the deciding factor is karma, whether one has the karma or not.
Student: It follows that, a seed can sprout without water and the sun.
Khenrinpoche: There is no need for you to state this, because it is clearly stated in the text that, merely having the karma alone is insufficient. For it to ripen, it must be activated by craving and grasping. No one is disputing that.
Of the two primary causes of cyclic existence, karma and afflictions, it is affliction that is the principal cause. Without the afflictions that nourishes the seed of karma, no matter what it may be, it would not be activated nor ripen.

No one is saying that, just because you have the seed, you will definitely have a sprout.
Khenrinpoche: Don't put your seed on the table and wish for it to grow, it won't work!

How the power of the object can change karma at the time of death:

This is something you need to think about: What does craving nourish? What does grasping nourish? Is there a difference in the way they nourish [the projecting karma]?

Can one say that the difference in their manner of nourishing [the projecting] karma is that, craving nourishes it in a general way, whereas grasping nourishes it in a specific way?

Perhaps it is all right to say that, if there is single-pointed faith in the guru or the Three Jewels, then this is an exception.

Generally as a rule, karma dictates everything. But in the case of someone remembering and generating single-pointed faith in the guru or the Three Jewels, then this is where the **power of the objects** factor in, as mentioned in the Lam Rim.

It is mentioned that, in most cases, if the motivation is nonvirtuous, that action itself would be nonvirtuous. If the motivation is virtuous, then that action would be virtuous. This is a general rule that applies to almost all situations.

That which differentiates between virtue and nonvirtue is essentially the quality of the mind, whether it was virtuous or nonvirtuous.

It is mentioned clearly in the *Great Stages of the Path* by Lama Tsongkhapa that, when the power of the object is involved, then regardless of one's motivation behind making offerings to the Buddha, constructing holy objects and so forth, even if the motivation is nonvirtuous, the whole karma becomes virtuous due to the power of the object. These are the exceptions.

Khenrinpoche: Do you understand what I am saying? What's the point I am driving at?

The essential point I am saying is, **at the time of death, if one can remember one's guru, Buddha, that can change karma!**

The four divisions of grasping:

Student: Among the four divisions of grasping, which ones are virtuous, nonvirtuous and [ethically neutral]?

Khenrinpoche: In the explanation of grasping, there are four kinds of grasping: 1) Holding onto what you want, 2) Holding onto views, 3) Holding onto ethical discipline and conduct, and 4) Holding onto assertions that there is a self.

Perhaps there is not a division of these into virtuous or nonvirtuous.

In the *Lower Abhidharma, the Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*, it is stated clearly that the attachment of the desire realm is necessarily nonvirtuous.

The way karma ripens:

Student: At the time of death, if a baby dies, he does not really have a consciousness that will properly think of any virtuous or nonvirtuous object. If there is also no holy objects around for him to see, would it be the case that, where he will be reborn in would depend on the karma of his previous lives?

Khenrinpoche: The general rule is, whether it is good or bad rebirth is all dependent on karma. Whichever is heavy, familiar and whatever was [done] earlier [respectively] would determine the type of rebirth.

If both virtues and nonvirtues are equally heavy, then whatever virtuous or nonvirtuous karma one is familiar will ripen. If one is equally familiar with them, then whichever was [done] earlier will ripen.

As to which karma will ripen first, it will the heavier of the two, virtuous or nonvirtuous. If these are equally heavy/ weighty, whatever one is familiar with will ripen first.

This is because, whatever manifest at the time of death is that which one is familiar with.

How ordinary beings go through the same process of the twelve link when taking rebirth in the pure land:

As to rebirth in the pure land, for an ordinary being like oneself, one must have accumulated the karma to to be born there.

Whatever that karma is, it is that which is impelled by ignorance. One accumulates that karma, which would have to be nourished by craving and grasping.

Perhaps one would have to probably say that, to be born in the pure for [an ordinary being like oneself], the process is quite similar in that, one has to accumulate the karma which is impelled by ignorance and nourished by craving and grasping.

Of course, there are many other necessary conditions [needed] before one can get the result of going to the pure land, the first of which, one must have accumulated the very strong virtuous karma, without which, there is no basis to be born there.

For us ordinary beings, the way we accumulate karma necessarily involves ignorance. Then at the time of death, there must be a very strong craving and grasping/ strong wish to be born in that particular pure land.

Characteristics of ordinary pure land beings:

This shows that, there are ordinary beings who have not entered any paths, that are born in the pure lands.
One would also find Hearers, Solitary Realizers as well as Bodhisattvas. One would therefore find many kinds of persons there. But, it is said that in the pure lands, there is no nonvirtues and no suffering. Are there afflictions in the pure lands?
Khenrinpoche: Is there attachment in the pure lands? Student: Yes but not manifest. Khenrinpoche: When you are reborn in the pure land, if you see all the beautiful palace and goddesses, will you develop attachment or not?
Student: In some texts it says that, for an ordinary being born in the pure land, it is more difficult to generate bodhicitta. Can this be an example to show that there are attachments in their minds? Khenrinpoche: Not necessarily.
Since there is no suffering in the pure lands, then it is very difficult to generate renunciation. If one cannot generate renunciation, how would one be able to generate bodhicitta?
Ven Gyurme: It follows that, going to the pure land is an obstacle to generating bodhicitta.
Khenrinpoche: It is not impossible, it just takes a long time that has no limit. When you develop renunciation and bodhicitta in the pure land, then of course you have to get enlightened there. Without renunciation and bodhicitta, you won't get enlightened. It only takes a long period of time.
Student: Since there are ordinary beings in the pure land, then there are still non-manifest afflictions of the all-pervasive suffering in their minds. Khenrinpoche: Whether they have pervasive compounded suffering remains to be examined.
But it is clearly mentioned in the teachings that, anyone born in the pure lands automatically gains the five kinds of super-knowledge like clairvoyance, clairaudience and so forth.
If that is the case, then it would seem to suggest that, anyone born there automatically has calm abiding.
It is also stated clearly in the teachings that, once one is born in the pure lands, one will never be reborn in any inopportune state.

Recap of outlines:

The section so far was explaining on *Guarding against all deterioration* [5.45 – 5.58] which has two sections: *Guarding against deterioration in the training of body* [5.45 – 5.54] and *Guarding against deterioration in the training of the mind* [5.55 – 5.58]. The former section 5.45 – 5.54 has been explained.

Next section is *Guarding against deterioration in the training of the mind* [5.55 – 5.58]. This has three sections:

b' Guarding against deterioration in the training of the mind [5.55 – 5.58]

1" Guarding by means of the individual antidotes [5.55 – 5.56]

2" The common antidotes [5.57]

3" The way to apply oneself to the cultivation of the antidotes [5.58]

1" Guarding by means of the individual antidotes [5.55 – 5.56]

<p>5.55 a. <i>Being very resolute and faithful,</i> b. <i>Steady, respectful, polite,</i> c. <i>With a sense of shame, fear, and pacification,</i> d. <i>I should strive to make others happy.</i></p>	<p>5.56 a. <i>I should not be disheartened by the whims</i> b. <i>Of the childish who are in discord with one another;</i> c. <i>I should be merciful, thinking, "This mind of theirs</i> d. <i>Is due to the generation of afflictions."</i></p>
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With respect to whatever practice one is to undertake, the things to be done are:

1) Preliminaries, 2) Actual practice and 3) Conclusion, which are the beginning, middle and end of one's training.

One should have eliminated any doubts with regards to these trainings that constitutes whatever practice one is undertaking.

It is said to be very important to have no more doubts to whatever practices one undertakes. One should have eliminated any wrong concepts/ understanding one is undertaking.

If possible, one should at least have a *Correctly assuming consciousness/ Correct valid belief*.

Above this, if one has valid cognition of the practice one is undertaking, then this will even be better.

The point is, one has to be very resolute in one's practice, this means one must not have any doubts or wrong understanding of the practice one is undertaking.

5.55a: 1) *Resolute* here means just that. One must have strong ascertainment of the topic one is going to practice on. One should have eliminated any doubts and wrong understanding such that one knows: "It is just that and nothing else."

On that basis, one then develops the faith of conviction, indicated by 2) *faithful*.

On that basis, one then engages one's practice with proper thought and action. One must have stable intention and action when carrying out one's practice, [*being 3) steady*].

Having stable intention means being determined in doing one's practice and not be side-tracked by any unfavorable conditions like getting sick or meeting with problems, which becomes a reason for discontinuing. This should not be the case.

Whatever practices one is doing, one must have strong wish to do that from the bottom of one's heart with great enthusiasm.

With respect to one's conversation with others, say, one's teacher or those who are senior in training, it should be carried out with 4) *respect*. The nature of the conversation should be soft and gentle [*5) polite*].

The advice here is saying that, just like how one interacts with one's teacher and those who are senior in training to oneself, one should likewise extend that manner of conducting gentle conversations with respect to everyone.

6) *With a sense of shame*, one should restrain from negativities on account of oneself, as well as through [*7) fear*] remembering the fruitional effects one has to experience in the future if one were to engage in them.

By reflecting on the future negative consequences if one were to engage in negativities, one has to subdue one's senses [*8) pacification*]. One has to restrain one's eye, ear and mental sense powers.

One has to restrain one's eye sense powers in that, one has to be **vigilant**. Otherwise, it is possible to generate all sorts of negative thoughts and afflictions depending on what one sees.

It is the same with hearing. When one hears certain things, these act as conditions for one to develop afflictions.

It is also the same with subduing/ taming one's mind. Through subduing the behavior of one's body and mind, it says that, one should strive to make others happy. These are the trainings/ advice for bodhisattvas.

They have to engage in the trainings by being very subdued, as well as striving to make others happy.

One reason for this is that, by making others happy, they stop others from creating negativities in relation to themselves. Otherwise, others may be creating heavy negativities towards a bodhisattva.

It says here that, bodhisattvas have to live in harmony with others. Nevertheless, others may get upset with the bodhisattva or cause problems to the bodhisattva. In such cases, it says here that the bodhisattva must not become disheartened.
If a sentient being reacts in very negative ways, gets upset despite the bodhisattva showing love, if the latter gets disheartened or upset due to that condition, then there is a danger that he may degenerate his bodhicitta. As such, he should be careful.
Here, the bodhisattva should remind himself that, the dispositions and inclinations of sentient beings are so varied.
They are also beset with afflictions. Therefore, when a bodhisattva faces a sentient being who is very upset or negative, he should remind himself that such a sentient being is acting under the control of his afflictions.
This fact alone is the reason for the bodhisattva to show even more love and affection towards that sentient being.
The <i>Ornament of Mahayana Sutras</i> says: <i>By thinking how they are without power due to the constant faults possessing the mind, do not hold it against beings.</i>
Aryadeva's <i>Four Hundred Verses</i> says: <i>Like the physician that does not get disturbed despite aggression [from the patient], The Able Ones see the afflictions. There is no person without afflictions.</i>
This is an advice for bodhisattvas to not get disheartened when they meet with negative or difficult people. They have to understand and remind themselves that sentient beings are afflicted and act that way due to that.
As such, one should cherish them, to have even more love and affection.

2" The common antidotes [5.57]

<p>5.57 a. <i>Having control over that which is actually not misdeeds</i> b. <i>In myself and other sentient beings,</i> c. <i>I should always hold my mind</i> d. <i>Like an emanation without an I.</i></p>
Here, it is saying that, whether one is engaging in activities for oneself, like eating or virtue, or when one engages in activities to benefit others like giving teachings and so forth, this should be done without being puffed up, thinking one is doing something so important. One should not generate any [sense of] self-importance.
This is an advice to engage in any activities, for oneself or for others, without holding onto the “I, self”, by reflecting on how things are like illusion and empty by nature.

3" The way to apply oneself to the cultivation of the antidotes [5.58]

<p>5.58 a. <i>By thinking again and again that</i> b. <i>After a long time I have obtained the supreme leisures,</i> c. <i>Thus I should hold my mind</i> d. <i>As utterly unshakeable as Mount Meru.</i></p>
This is something that one has to constantly remember: One's human life of freedoms and endowments that one possesses now, which is obtained just once, is a result of having worked very hard and a very long time over many lifetimes in the past.
On this basis, it is said that, one can achieve so many meaningful goals. Yet, it is something that one has to part with in time.
By reflecting on these, one should persuade oneself to move one's mind into practicing the Dharma.
One's mind that wishes to engage in virtue, should be protected. One should ensure that it is as stable as a mountain. Khenrinpoche: It should be as stable as a mountain, not like a water bubble.
Of the three types of ethical discipline, <i>The way to train in the ethics of refraining from negativities</i> [5.34 – 5.58] is complete.

ii) The way to train in the ethics of gathering virtuous dharmas [5.59 – 5.83]

1' Abandoning attachment to the body: The cause for not training in ethics [5.59 – 5.70]

2' One should be [skillful] about accomplishing virtue [5.71 – 5.83]

One of the reasons why one is unable to guard one's ethical discipline and engage in virtuous practices is due to the attachment to one's body. Therefore, at the beginning, one has to overcome such an attachment.
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1' Abandoning attachment to the body: The cause for not training in ethics [5.59 – 5.70]

a' An example of how it is inappropriate to be attached to the body [5.59 – 5.60]

<p>5.59 a. <i>If, mind, you are not made unhappy</i> b. <i>When this body is dragged here and there and</i> c. <i>Taken away by vultures attached to flesh,</i> d. <i>Then why do you advise so now?</i></p>	<p>5.60 a. <i>Holding this body as “mine”,</i> b. <i>Why, mind, do you guard it so?</i> c. <i>Since you and it are separate,</i> d. <i>What use can it be to you?</i></p>
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Everyone is very concerned about their bodies. One does everything to take care of one's body: when one is hungry, one looks for food; when one is cold, one puts on additional layers of clothing and so forth.
When something happens to one's body, one does everything to take care of it. One does all such things due to being attached to one's body. If something happens to a specific part of one's body, one gets very upset and worried.
If someone were to point out a physical flaw in one's body, one would get upset. This shows that one is attached to one's body
At the time of death, one leaves one's body behind. Whether it is given to the vultures, rots, eaten by maggots or burnt by fire, if one is not upset at that time, then why would one be so upset now when something happens to one's body?
Therefore, it is inappropriate to conceive/ hold on strongly to one's body as “mine,” having the idea that “it belongs to me.”
If so, all kinds of problems and unhappiness arise. As such, <i>Holding this body as “mine”, why, mind, do you guard it so?</i>
Qualm: I have to, as I need it as a necessity. Reply: <i>Since you and it are separate, what use can it be to you?</i>
Oneself and one's body are not the same. They are different/ separate. No matter how one may think of one's body as something that belongs to one and is absolutely necessary, at the time of death, one has no choice but to discard it.
There is nothing one can do to stop oneself from discarding one's body.
This is similarly stated in the outlines of the Lam Rim on Death and Impermanence, where it says: <i>At the time of death, even the body is of no use.</i>

b' Reflecting on the body's lack of cleanliness [5.61]

<p>5.61 a. <i>Why, confused mind,</i> b. <i>Do you not hold onto a clean, wooden form?</i> c. <i>Just what is the point of guarding</i> d. <i>This rotting machine that is a collection of filth?</i></p>
The verse is asking: “Why are you so attached to your body, holding onto it even though it is by nature filthy, dirty and merely a dirt/ filth-making machine?”
This is something one has think about over a period of time. It is not apparent when one merely analyzes it superficially.

c' Reflecting on how the body is without essence [5.62 – 5.64]

1" If one were to divide the body into parts and examine them, one would find nothing that is in the slightest a reliable essence [5.62 – 5.63]

<p>5.62 a. <i>First of all, mentally separate</i> b. <i>The layers of skin,</i> c. <i>And then with the scalpel of wisdom</i> d. <i>Also separate the flesh from the skeletal frame.</i></p>	<p>5.63 a. <i>And, having split open even the bones,</i> b. <i>Look right down into the marrow.</i> c. <i>While examining this ask yourself,</i> d. <i>“Where is its essence?”</i></p>
Earlier verses explained why there is no purpose in holding onto one's body and being attached to it, since it is filthy by nature and a filth-making machine. Nevertheless, it is still possible to think that there is some reason to holding onto it.	
Verses 5.62 – 5.63 are telling one that, there is actually no real essence/ meaning in one's body.	
One has to use wisdom to investigate whether, in reality there is any essence [in one's body], something really worthwhile for one to hold onto. With the mind of wisdom, one first looks beneath the layer of skin, then goes down to the level of the flesh, then down to the bones, and then right into the bone marrow.	
With the eyes of wisdom, one asks oneself objectively, what exactly is the very essence one is holding/ grasping onto?	
What one sees, the matters that make up one's body, is the very reality. But one does not perceive one's body that way precisely because one does not look nor think about reality. If one really thinks about it and goes beneath the skin, what one finds is just muscles, flesh, bones, blood and so forth. One would not find these as being attractive. Therefore:	

2" It is inappropriate to be attached to something that has no essence [5.64]

<p>5.64 a. <i>If, even when searching with such effort</i> b. <i>You see no essence,</i> c. <i>Then why with so much attachment</i> d. <i>Are you still guarding this body now?</i></p>
This is an exercise one has to do for oneself: The nature of one's body is dirty, unclean and filthy. There is also no essence whatsoever in it. After having seen all of these, yet if there is still grasping at one's body, being so attached to it, then one has to ask oneself: “What exactly am I so attached to?”

d' The reasons it is inappropriate to be attached to the body [5.65 – 5.66(ab)]

<p>5.65 a. <i>What use is this body to you</i> b. <i>If its filth is unfit for you to eat,</i> c. <i>If its blood is not fit to drink</i> d. <i>And if its intestines are not fit to be sucked?</i></p>	<p>5.66 a. <i>At second best it is only fit to be guarded</i> b. <i>In order to feed the foxes and vultures.</i></p>
<p>In analyzing “<i>What use is this body to you</i>”, one should ask: “Can I eat my flesh, am I going to drink my own blood, am I going to eat my intestines, can all these sustain me?” If one is not going to do that, then what exactly is one so in need of?</p>	
<p>What is it that one is cherishing, holding on so tightly to one's body? If one is taking care of one's body to feed the wild animals, then perhaps that is something else. Of course that is not the point. The point is to ask oneself what the reason is.</p>	
<p>There are many points mentioned here, all of which are meant for one to address one's attachment to one's body.</p>	
<p>There is a need to work on and abandon one's attachment to one's body. Without abandoning attachment to one's body, it will be very difficult to guard one's ethical discipline and engage in virtue.</p>	
<p>Due to one's attachment to one's body, one suffers so much. The more worries one has over one's body, the more one suffers so much mentally as well as physically. One works so hard to take care of it and so forth.</p>	
<p>The intensities of mental disturbances and physical discomfort one experiences in cherishing one's body, is proportional to the strength of one's attachment for one's body.</p>	
<p>Attachment to one's body is one of the unfavorable conditions that prevents one from engaging in virtue.</p>	
<p>One has to understand that, these points here are not telling one not to take care of one's body. All these are saying are that, if taking care of one's body is solely due to attachment for it, then it is inappropriate.</p>	
<p>This is because, so many problems will arise due to one's attachment. One also cannot engage in virtue nor engage them in great amount. If that is the case, then one should only use one's body to engage in virtue.</p>	

e' As [the body] quickly perishes, it is appropriate to utilize it for virtue [5.66(cd) – 5.70]

1" It is appropriate to utilize the perishable body for virtue as death will soon be upon oneself [5.66(cd) – 5.67]

<p>5.66 c. <i>This body of a human being</i> d. <i>Should only be put to work.</i></p>	<p>5.67 a. <i>Even though you guard it thus,</i> b. <i>Then what will you do</i> c. <i>When it is stolen by the merciless Lord of Death</i> d. <i>And given to the birds and dogs?</i></p>
<p>If one critically examines one's body, from the inside out, it is just filthy by nature. If one looks for its core essence, looking for anything really meaningful from the inside out, again, there is nothing that one can point to that is really meaningful.</p>	
<p>If one's body is without meaning but just dirty from the inside out, then how can one extract the meaning and essence from it, to make full use of such a dirt-filled body?</p>	
<p><i>One's mind must obtain full control over one's body and speech.</i> <i>Through that, one should employ one's body and speech in virtue.</i></p>	
<p>Of the six types of migratory beings in cyclic existence, the human body is the best basis for practicing and actualizing the Dharma. As such, having obtained an opportunity now, one should employ one's body and speech as one's servant and use them to engage in virtue. This is the only way to make use of one's body.</p>	
<p>If not, when one makes use of one's body in the usual way, out of attachment taking care of one's, giving it food, drinks, adorning it with make up, jewelries and so forth, one will still have to die. There is nothing one can do about it.</p>	
<p>One still has to discard one's body one day.</p>	

2" An example of how it is inappropriate to carry on with craving while not doing a single thing [about it] [5.68]

<p>5.68 a. <i>If servants are not given clothing and so forth</i> b. <i>When they are unable to be put to work,</i> c. <i>Then why do you nourish it in health</i> d. <i>When, even though caring for the body, it goes elsewhere?</i></p>
<p>For example, if one has domestic help or workers under one's charge, if they do not do their jobs, one would not continue to pay them salary, offer food or accommodation. One would in fact subject them to disciplinary actions.</p>
<p>Likewise, if one feeds one's body, takes care of it, adorns it and does everything for it out of attachment, despite it not performing any virtues, then at the time of death, it will leave one.</p>
<p>All such things done for it will be for nothing. What one gets in return is nothing at all.</p>

3" Causing [one's body] to accomplish one's aims and desires by providing it with incentives [5.69]

<p>5.69 a. <i>Now having paid my body its wages,</i> b. <i>I shall make it enact my welfare.</i> c. <i>I shall not give it anything</i> d. <i>If it is not beneficial.</i></p>
<p>If one feeds one's body, takes care of it, "pays it wages", if it is able to benefit oneself, then it is worth [doing these]. Otherwise, it is not worth [doing all such things for] it.</p>
<p>Now having paid one's body its wages by giving it food, sustaining it and so forth, one should employ it in virtue by learning, reflecting and accumulating virtue.</p>

4" It is appropriate to [conceive of using one's body to] accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings [5.70]

<p>5.70 a. <i>I should conceive of my body as a boat,</i> b. <i>A mere support for coming and going,</i> c. <i>And in order to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings</i> d. <i>Transform it into a wish-fulfilling body.</i></p>
<p>One should regard one's body like a boat, on which one can cross the ocean of cyclic existence and reach the shores of liberation and omniscience, thereby achieving the exalted body of the conquerors, which are wish-fulfilling jewels.</p>
<p>This is because, any sentient beings who come into contact with the wish-fulfilling exalted bodies of the conquerors, merely through hearing, seeing, thinking and so forth about it, the wishes of many sentient beings are fulfilled.</p>
<p>These are the verses for: <i>Abandoning attachment to the body: The cause for not training in ethics [5.59 – 5.70]</i></p>

2' One should be [skillful] about accomplishing virtue [5.71 – 5.83]

a' Performing ordinary activities excellently [5.71 – 5.73]

1" How to act when encountering others [5.71]

<p>5.71 a. <i>Now, while I have freedom,</i> b. <i>I should always present a smiling face</i> c. <i>And cease to frown and look black-faced;</i> d. <i>I should be a friend of migrating beings and be straightforward.</i></p>
<p>1) Firstly, one's body and speech have to come under the control of one's mind.</p>
<p>2) Then one's mind has to come under the control of the antidotes.</p>
<p>3) Then when one is interacting with others, one should present a smiling face without having an unhappy facial expression.</p>
<p>4) One should then be a friend to sentient beings, be straightforward and honest in one's dealings, conversations with others without any forms of deceit or guile, merely putting on an act with pretension.</p>
<p>In essence, one should relate to others with a pleasant demeanor, talking to them honestly, truthfully without pretension, deceit or guile. [<i>Guile: Speaking or acting in seemingly inconspicuous or harmless ways to different people concerning the same matter; but actually being cunning in attaining a goal.</i>]</p>

2" How to act with regards to discarding and adopting basic necessities [5.72(ab)]

<p>5.72 a. <i>I should desist from inconsiderately and noisily</i> b. <i>Moving chairs around and so forth,</i></p>
<p>These are advice for the bodhisattvas. The point is, whatever they do, these should be done without harming others or cause disturbances to them. Whether one is moving/ dragging any objects around, one should not do so noisily. In setting cushions or seats, one should not just dump them on the ground, making a lot of noise but do so it gently.</p>
<p>The point is not to cause disturbances to others and not cause others to lose faith in one. Though these are advice for bodhisattvas, they are also applicable to oneself in that, these are activities by which one can "beautify" one's actions.</p>
<p>At the least, one should ensure that these do not disturb nor harm others. In that sense, it is relevant.</p>

3" Acting at all times with noble demeanor [5.72(cd) – 5.73]

<p>5.72 c. <i>As well as from violently opening doors;</i> d. <i>I should always delight in humility.</i></p>	<p>5.73 a. <i>The stork, the cat, and the thief,</i> b. <i>By ambushing and moving silently,</i> c. <i>Are able to accomplish what they desire to do;</i> d. <i>I should always behave in this way.</i></p>
<p>Whether it is the opening or closing of doors, if these actions are done in a violent way, like slamming it on people and so forth, it does disturb and make people unhappy.</p>	

1) With the recognition of one's own mistakes and faults, one should abide in humility. This is how one should go about conducting and practicing the Dharma.
It is best to live a life of simplicity and contentment. This refers to going into isolation, where one does not meet with people. In such a situation, one would be able to subdue one's own mind and complete one's practice.
2) With conscientiousness, one has to behave in a pacified and subdued manner. This is also how one should go about in one's practice of the Dharma.
When predators hunt for their preys, they do so in a very subdued manner, taking a lot time planning and being patient. They would sneak up on their preys, attack and then kill them. These are achieved in a very quiet, non-exposed way.
Likewise, when one is engaging in one's practice [to destroy one's inner enemy, the afflictions,] one should also not be going around advertising: "I did how many of this, I am doing this or I did that!"
<i>To accomplish what they desire to do, I should always behave in this way.</i> The "I" here refers to the <i>able one, the bodhisattva</i> . So, I, the able bodhisattva, should always behave in this way. The able ones, the bodhisattvas, at all times when they work for the benefit of sentient beings, always do so in a peaceful, subdued manner and with conscientiousness

b' Being [skillful] in the way of befriending others without incurring negativities [5.74 – 5.78]

1" How to speak beneficially [5.74]

<p>5.74 a. <i>With respect I should gratefully accept</i> b. <i>Unsought for words that are of benefit</i> c. <i>And that wisely advise and admonish me.</i> d. <i>At all times I should be the pupil of everyone.</i></p>
When one receives advice, including those unsought ones that are beneficial for oneself, one is advised to listen to it. One should place the advice as something precious to be placed, metaphorically, on the crown of one's head.
This can only be done in the absence of pride. One listens to and acts on the advice without pride and considers oneself as a student of all [others, and considers them] who can give good, beneficial advice to oneself.

2" How to speak truthfully [5.75(ab)]

<p>5.75 a. <i>I should say, "Virtuously said,"</i> b. <i>To all those who speak well,</i></p>
In response to an advice that was well spoken and beneficial, one should say: "Well said."

3" How to act when others engage in virtue [5.75(cd)]

<p>5.75 c. <i>And, if I see someone creating merit,</i> d. <i>I should praise him and be well pleased.</i></p>
If one sees or hears of someone accumulating merit, one should rejoice and directly praise that person to enhance his enthusiasm.

4" How to act when remarking on each others' qualities [5.76]

<p>5.76 <i>I should discreetly talk about the good qualities</i> <i>And repeat those recounted.</i> <i>If my own good qualities are spoken about</i> <i>I should just know and be aware that I have them.</i></p>
If there is a possibility that the person one wishes to praise may think that one is merely trying to flatter him, then rather than praising him directly, one could do so indirectly by telling [his good qualities] to someone else. When someone mentions about the good qualities of another person to one, one should respond and agree by saying: "Yes, it is just so."
If someone were to directly praise one for having some good qualities, one should firstly check to see if one actually does possess them or not. If one does, one should simply recognize that as a fact without feeling conceit, arrogance or pride.
Khenrinpoche: I seem to remember in a commentary that, if someone praises one for some qualities one knows that one does not possess, perhaps one could reply: "How wonderful that you have a very pure mind!"
One can think of the person that praises one's non-existent qualities as someone special, having some qualities himself.
If the person praises someone for a quality that exists, it is simply a verbal acknowledgment: "This person has such-and-such qualities." That is about all and there is nothing beyond that.
When one sees others making offerings to the Three Jewels, the text says that, one should encourage them by praising them. This enhances their enthusiasm, making them feel good about what they are doing.

Student: How will meditation on the Four Close Placements of Mindfulness lead one to be able to actually subdue one's mind in an actual situation?

Khenrinpoche: Chapter Five is essentially a teaching on mindfulness and introspection. To generate them, one needs a method. The example of the Four Close Placement of Mindfulness is a method to develop such mindfulness. The Four Close Placements of Mindfulness are [placing mindfulness] on the body, feelings, mind and phenomena.

When one practices the Close Placements of Mindfulness on the body, this involves being mindful in one's physical and verbal behavior: what sort of physical posture, demeanor one adopts and how one speaks to others. One also checks on whether one's activities undertaken are harmful to others and so forth.

The Four Close Placements of Mindfulness are methods to develop mindfulness. Whatever mindfulness and introspection one develops through this, one has to be able to practically bring it over to one's daily life when one goes about one's activities.

One is not short of instructions as one has already heard and know so many of them. The problem is that, one does not have many experiences of them. One has not put them into practice on a consistent basis. Ideally, before one starts to help anyone, doing things to benefit others, one has to firstly listen to the teachings, understand and internalize them. One then has to familiarize them with one's mind through constant practice. This has to be done in physical isolation of a retreat. It is only when one gains an experience would one be in a position to help others. Therefore, Lama Tsongkhapa said in the Lam Rim that, without subduing one's own mind, there is no basis to help others, no way to subdue others.

Even though ideally this is how it should be, but one is not like that. One listens, knows and even talks about the Dharma, one does not practice but at the same time one wants to help others.

Khenrinpoche: *Of course, one is not helping but creating more problems! When oneself is not subdued and goes to talk to people, then how would one be able to talk to others and subdue, calm others? Not possible. This is like that for everyone.*

So here, we are merely listening to the teachings, just learning the theory. I am not sure when you are going into isolation.

It is not that, learning the theory has no benefits as there are. Due to having heard the theory, in a later time, one can at least remember there is such-and-such a thing that one should or should not be doing. There is the benefit [of having heard the teachings, one knows what to adopt and discard].

Student: By virtue of being born in the pure land, beings there would have the five super-knowledges and calm abiding. Prior to being born there, must beings already have achieved calm abiding and the five super-knowledges?

Khenrinpoche: No. Otherwise the number of people going there will be very little. What I mentioned about having calm abiding occurs when one is already there. It does not necessarily have to occur before going there. But I am not sure whether everyone who is born in the pure land will achieve calm abiding or not. Perhaps for those of the Mahayana lineage who are born there, due to the power of the place/ environment they are born into, they seem to automatically possess calm abiding.

In Lama Tsongkhapa's explanation on the qualities of Amitabha's pure land, he mentions that, those of the Mahayana lineage achieve the five super-knowledges when they are born in the pure land. I wonder if everyone who is born there would actually achieve them automatically.

Student: At the time of death, if one has single-pointed faith in one's guru or Buddha, is such a faith called craving and grasping? Is such a single-pointed faith called actualizing karma?

Khenrinpoche: In short, having single-pointed faith in your own teacher/ guru is not attachment, rather it is faith. But such a single-pointed faith in one's guru at the time of death is a condition for one of the virtues accumulated in the past to ripen. The single-pointed faith itself, at the time of death, is not the cause of one's next good rebirth, rather, it is a condition. This is because, it itself is not karma. It is a condition for one of the virtues one must have already accumulated in the past to ripen.

Student: Instead of getting inspired by this text and being happier, I am using it to [to punish myself with guilt and remorse over past actions], how do I stop that?

Khenrinpoche: You are saying something like, the teaching is beating you, over ten years? Quite a lot of suffering, quite miserable? Over ten years? So long? Sorry about that...I think there is a verse that answers that.

[Setting the motivation, what one is looking for:] Right at the beginning of the Lam Rim, one is advised on how to listen to the teachings. The example of a sick patient is often given. The patient knows that he is sick, goes around various doctors for opinions, advice and medicine. But after getting all the medicine, he merely stores them up without taking them. This is likened to people who listen to many teachings but feel that, the more teachings they listen, the more these become a burden. This is a clear sign that the person did not practice the teachings he has received, therefore, he gets this idea that it is a burden.

[Analyzing the teachings to experience it:] Whatever teachings one has heard and studied, one needs to analyze and think about them to get a taste of them. Until one gets that experience of having tasted the teachings, it would be like what the teachings say, all of these become like a burden. Whether it is initiations, keeping vows and so forth, are all like a burden.

[Having single-pointed faith:] In other cases, there are people who have a lot of faith, this is very helpful. Whether it is a single-pointed faith in the guru's advice/ speech, or single-pointed conviction in the workings of karma and its effects. When one has such faith of conviction in the guru's speech/ advice and/ or karma, then it does make a positive difference to the mind. One does not find such teachings or advice a burden but inspiring. If one does not have such faith, above that, one does not have any experience, have not tasted the teachings through critically thinking and analyzing them, then for that person, the Dharma will feel like a burden.

[Knowing how to cultivate those practices that one can do:]

There is a verse in the text that says:

5.82 I should always perform actions endowed with skill and faith.

In all actions I should not depend upon anyone else.

When one practices the Dharma, one has to do so from one's own side. One should not be doing so merely because others are doing so, such that one is merely a follower. This is wrong. One has to see the point for oneself, voluntarily and happily does it from one's own side. That is how Dharma has to be practiced.

Because the goal/ motivation is so important, therefore, right at the very beginning of the Lam Rim before the actual subject matter is explained, one is taught how to actually listen and teach the Dharma. There is a very extensive explanation that has to do with **motivation: what one is looking for**. When listening to the teachings, one is taught to abandon the three faults of a vessel [*Not: paying correct mental attention, understand/ with good motivation, mindful*] and cultivate the six attitudes [*sick, doctor, medicine, taking it, Buddhas are excellent, teachings to endure.*] These are extremely important. One has to start with that. When one does not even get that right from the beginning, then of course, it is going to be difficult.

[Knowing how to aspire to cultivate those practices one cannot do:] It is true that, most of the things one hears in the teachings are way above one's actual abilities to train. Nevertheless, one has to see its purpose, how these teachings fit into the grand scheme of things [how, when the appropriate time occurs, a person's skills will be implemented within an overall implementation of a large plan], what is the goal of the teachings. Therefore, from one's own side, one must not see the Dharma as a burden, that is important. Those teachings that one cannot train now, are those one can aspire to be able to train in the future. One does so by making strong aspirational prayers.

[Knowing one's obstacles:] The main problem for one is: 1) One's bad habits, conjoined with 2) One's laziness, and 3) Not fearing about what is going to happen to one's future lives, merely concerned about this life. Due to these, one is facing difficulties. It is not that one does not have the ability to practice the Dharma, because one has it. One faces difficulties because of these three main problems. In Tibetan, those who are merely concerned about the affairs of this life are called *Tsu Tong Wa*, literally, those only looking at this side and not the other side. If one analyzes further, let alone not thinking about this life, there are some who do not even think about tomorrow. All they are concerned about is, "What am I seeing right now." There are people who are merely concerned about today and does not care what happens tomorrow: "I am just going to spend my day like that, just today is all that matters." Many are like that.

[Knowing how to practice pure Dharma:] Having faith is also very important. *Faith the procreator of all qualities/ virtues*. Without faith, there is no way one can cultivate any white Dharmas. What [the student has] said is exactly the truth. This is the reality, this is the situation. To actually be able to practice a transformational Dharma that can actually move one's mind is very difficult. To make one's practice to actually become a pure practice is very difficult. Therefore, it is emphasized and explained so many times in the teachings very clearly, what the boundary between Dharma and non-dharma is. What is the sign of someone who is practicing the Dharma:

If it is an antidote to the afflictions, it is Dharma. Anything that is done that can hurt the afflictions, then that is Dharma. Whatever one does, if it is hurting and harming one's afflictions such that, over time, One's mind becomes more subdued and pacified, then that is a real sign that the person is a real Dharma practitioner.

[Knowing how to not practice the Dharma:] On the other hand, one may think one is a Dharma practitioner, one proclaims one is a Dharma practitioner. Whatever one does, whether it is studying, hearing, reflecting, meditating or practicing the Dharma, if what such activities do are merely increasing one's afflictions, then such a person is not a Dharma practitioner at all. He has the appearance of a Dharma practitioner, he looks like a Dharma practitioner but in reality, he is not a practitioner at all. This is the case where, while **what** that person is practicing **is Dharma**, that **practice itself did not become Dharma** [the form of the Dharma did not become an antidote for the person]. This is the case of a medicine becoming a poison. If the medicine, which is meant to heal and benefit, becomes poison, then there is really **nothing else that can be done**. Most of us are like that, one hears many teachings but, **rather than letting it benefit one, one makes it a poison**.

Khenrinpoche: All the advice becomes poison, becomes painful, becomes a bother.

[Concluding advice:] Therefore, it is extremely important that, one has to absolutely try to ensure that, from the very beginning, one does not end up like that. That is why Lama Tsongkhapa, right at the very beginning in his LamRimChenMo, explained very extensively, how one should learn the teachings and listen to the Dharma.

That is why, if one practices according to the stages of the path to enlightenment, right from the very beginning, one is told how to adjust one's motivation when receiving the teachings. Immediately after that, there is the teaching on correctly relying on a virtuous friend, which is essentially talking about faith. There is the setting of the motivation at the very beginning, then faith comes in. Right after that, there is the exhortation, imploring and persuading of one's mind to practice the Dharma by reflecting on the topic of identifying a human life of freedoms and endowments, the meaningful goals one can achieve with it, and also how extremely difficult it is to acquire such an opportunity. When one thinks and reflects on these topics according to the stages as in the outlines, then going into the topic of a human life of freedoms and endowments, all that one will experience is happiness. Even merely being able to listen to the teachings is so joyful as one realizes the preciousness and rarity. That is why, if one trains one's mind according to the stages of the path, then I don't think we will feel that the Dharma would become a burden, including learning Shantideva's text.

If one knows how to think, then when one receives these teachings, it will only strengthen one's faith in, appreciation of and determination to the Dharma.

In essence, what [the student] was pointing out, what one needs, is analytical meditation. There is no way that, hearing, studying the teachings alone, will prevent the Dharma from appearing as a burden to one. If one critically analyzes the topics through analytical meditation, starting with correctly relying on the virtuous friend, then going into the topic of a human life of freedoms and endowments, and then death and impermanence, with such experiences, one will not feel that the Dharma is a burden.

The heart summary is this: If one wishes for a solution for all these problems, including stopping oneself from feeling that the Dharma is a burden, the heart solution is, one needs to reflect and engage in analytical meditation on the Lam Rim.

5" The benefits of acting in a way that [brings joy to] others [5.77 – 5.78]

<p>5.77 a. All initiatives are a source of joy b. That would be rare even if it could be bought with money. c. Therefore, the excellent qualities causing others [joy] d. Causes the enjoyment of the happiness of joy.</p>	<p>5.78 a. I shall suffer no losses in this life b. And in future lives shall find great happiness. c. But misdeeds will make me unhappy and bring suffering, d. And in future lives I shall find great suffering.</p>
<p>If one really thinks about this, whatever one is doing, whether one is doing something for oneself or for others, what exactly one is seeking is merely happiness, joy and satisfaction inside.</p>	
<p>As for the Bodhisattvas, whatever they do with their body, speech and mind, their goal is only to make others happy.</p>	
<p>When others are made happy, then incidentally, they themselves experience so much peace and happiness inside as well.</p>	
<p>To have such kind of happiness, making others and oneself happy, is said to be priceless.</p>	
<p>When one sees others doing well in accumulating merit, engaging in virtue, have many qualities, enjoyments and pleasant physical appearances, whatever good things happening to and possessed by others, if one could rejoice in that, one would also feel real happiness in one's heart.</p>	
<p>The teachings are telling one about the very special kind of happiness one will feel when one truly rejoice in the good things and qualities of others. One really feels great satisfaction and happiness. Incidentally, doing so will not cause one's possessions and whatever one desires to degenerate.</p>	
<p>When one rejoices, one has no jealousy towards the good things of others, as such, one would have great peace in one's heart.</p>	
<p>As a result of this, one's mind can remain very stable and calm. In future lives, one would also acquire a good rebirth.</p>	
<p>Instead of rejoicing, if one is jealous when seeing others doing and looking better, having more qualities, if one gets upset thinking: "Why him and not me?" If one develops a sense of negative competitiveness, wanting to compete with the person, all such negative thoughts would cause one to be not calm, very disturbed and unhappy in this life.</p>	
<p>One also accumulates karma to have suffering in future lives.</p>	
<p>Merely from looking at this verse as an example, one could see that it is really not a burden, really not something that is very heavy that one has to carry around and feel miserable about carrying/ practicing.</p>	
<p>It is merely an observation of reality, one knows it. If one sees someone who is doing better than one, more wealth, good looking, has more virtue and so forth, instead of rejoicing one feels jealous, this only makes one very miserable and unhappy.</p>	
<p>If one feels happy thinking: "How nice that this person is experiencing the fruitional effects of his virtue accumulated in the past." One feels happy and calm. With such an attitude, it is also easier to make friends with him.</p>	
<p>Otherwise, one becomes very miserable and unhappy: "Why is this person doing so much better...?" Then it will be very difficult to make friends with him. Would having such knowledge become a burden?</p>	
<p><i>Khenrinpoche: If you do it then it is very joyful, if you don't then it is a burden.</i></p>	
<p>All such wonderful advice in the teachings, like those one sees here in Shantideva's text, are not a burden. It is just because one does not do it. One is ignorant, blinded and does not wish to do it. Otherwise, if one does it, one benefits.</p>	
<p>In short, these two verses are saying, when one sees the good things of others, do not be jealous because, it is pointless.</p>	

c' Being [skillful] about performing karmic [actions] of the three doors [5.79 – 5.83]

1" How to act when speaking [5.79]

2" How to act when looking [5.80]

3" Connecting oneself solely with virtue

1" How to act when speaking [5.79]

<p>5.79 a. When talking I should speak from my heart and on what is related. b. Making the meaning clear and the speech pleasing. c. I should abandon attachment or hatred, d. And speak in gentle tones appropriately.</p>
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This is saying that, if someone asks one a question, one should 1) answer sincerely and speak agreeably that fits with the person's mind.
One has to 2) speak coherently such that, whatever one says in the earlier part of the conversation has to gel with the later part of the conversation. These have to make sense and be reasonable.
If the parts are not comprehensible and do not gel, then it becomes a contradiction. If one contradicts oneself, the other person is not going to believe what one is saying.
One has to 3) speak clearly in a way that is easily understood by others.
One should also 4) speak without strong motivation of attachment for one's own position and without hatred for someone else. The 5) tone has to be gentle .
The 6) length of one's reply or conversation should be appropriate , not too long and not too short. There are some, when they start speaking, they never stop. The listener becomes tired after a while.
On the other extreme, some people just reply one's question merely in one word. As to what is the appropriate length the conversation should be, this is something one has to judge by looking at the person's [body language].

2" How to act when looking [5.80]

<p>5.80 a. When beholding someone with my eyes, b. Thinking, "I shall attain buddhahood c. By depending upon this being," d. I should look at him candidly with love.</p>
One should look upon the person with affection by reminding oneself that, this person one sees, is an object upon which one generates bodhicitta in relation from whom one is going to practice the six perfections and achieve enlightenment.
The teachings say that, one has to look at all sentient beings like how a mother looks upon her child with affection.
The motivation is love. The engagement has to be straightforward, without any pretense, deceit or guile.

3" Connecting oneself solely with virtue [5.81 – 5.83]

a" [Offering] to the special fields for giving [5.81]

b" Virtuous karma occurs through its own power [5.82]

c" Having examined [that] there is a purpose, engage in entering into higher and higher trainings [5.83]

a" [Offering] to the special fields for giving [5.81]

<p>5.81 a. Always being motivated by affection b. Or being motivated by the antidotes, c. In the fields of excellent qualities, benefit, and suffering, d. Great virtues will come about.</p>
When giving to the special fields of giving, there is the feature of time , as one does so constantly. This is shown by always .
The feature of attitude is shown by affection , which means to have strong love and affection, or faith. Essentially, this feature refers to a very strong aspiration. [<i>Affection: feelings of tenderness, fondness, warmth, regard, respect, protectiveness, devotion, liking, endearment, affinity, mental intimacy, familiarity, closeness, concern, indulgence.</i>]
The feature of antidote means that, whatever practice is one doing, say generosity, all the effort one puts in to practice that, must become an antidote to one's miserliness. Likewise, when one practices ethical discipline, this must become an antidote to the discordant class/ opposite of ethical discipline.
In the case of making offerings to the field of excellent qualities , these refer to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.
Giving to the field of benefit mainly refers to one's parents. Giving to the field of suffering refers to suffering sentient beings.
By offering and giving to these objects, one accumulates great virtue.
There are a few factors that make virtue strong:
1) The feature of time : if one engages in the similar kinds of virtue continually, this makes the virtue very strong.
2) The feature of motivation/ attitude : if the attitude behind the virtue is virtuous and is generated very strongly from the depths of one's heart, this again makes the virtue very powerful.
3) The feature of powerful objects : if the virtue is directed at such powerful objects as the fields of excellent qualities and so forth, then the virtue accumulated is also very strong.
4) The feature of antidote : if the virtue one creates becomes an antidote to one's afflictions/ the opposite of the virtue, this also makes it very powerful.

The opposite is also true: some of these features are also true of [accumulating] nonvirtues:
1) Time: if one engages in the nonvirtue continually, then the nonvirtue is going to be very strong.
2) Motivation: if one engages in the nonvirtue that is motivated from the heart, having very strong afflictions, strong intentions to engage in the nonvirtue, this also makes the nonvirtue very strong.

b" Virtuous karma occurs through its own power [5.82]

<p>5.82 a. I should always perform actions b. Endowed with skill and faith. c. In all actions d. I should not depend upon anyone else.</p>
When one engages in virtue, one should do that from one's own side based on an understanding of the situation of reality.
One should not engage in virtue out of imitating someone else, seeing someone engaging in virtue and trying to copy/ follow that person's example. One is not going to achieve anything meaningful.
Whether it is generating bodhicitta, practicing the six perfections and so forth, whatever it is, that practice has to be based firstly on a thorough understanding of the nature/ reality of things:
<p>What is virtue, what makes it powerful, the motivation one should have, how to generate that, how to dedicate the merit, what is the merit accumulated for, and so forth.</p>
One's practice should done with an understanding of these from one's own side. One cannot be doing the practice by merely copying: one sees someone doing and one merely follows suit.
Whatever practice one undertakes, one has to know exactly what one is doing and how to go about doing that.
One needs to know all the essential points exactly. One has to firstly gain the faith in the practice that comes from understanding. [It is only then that] one engages in it.
After that, one should engage in the practice wholeheartedly/ from the heart and continually.
When one performs/ engages in virtue, one has to do it from one's own side without needing someone to prompt, encourage or persuade one. Creating/ accumulating virtue should not be like a job, waiting there for a task.
Therefore, before doing any practice, one has to know exactly what one is going to do, knowing the essential point, believing in it, seeing that: "It is excellently and exactly like that." One will naturally have an enthusiasm for it, wanting to do it from one's own side. One would not need anyone else to tell one to do it.
When one is actually getting down to doing it, one also does not ask others to do it for oneself: "Can you prostrate/ offer water bowls on my behalf [and dedicate the merits to me]?"
If oneself cannot do that for whatever reasons, then that is a different matter. Otherwise, oneself has to do it.
This is the meaning of the last sentence: <i>I should not depend upon anyone else.</i> One has to do it oneself and not ask someone else to do it on one's behalf.

c" Having examined [that] there is a purpose, engage in entering into higher and higher trainings [5.83]

<p>5.83 a. The perfections such as generosity b. Are progressively more exalted, c. But for a little I should not forsake something greater. d. Principally I should consider the welfare of others.</p>
There seem to be an internal contradiction between this verse and verse 5.42, which explains about leaving the practice of ethical discipline in equanimity if one is primarily focused on [the practice of] generosity.

Student: Is the attachment of craving and grasping to the “self” at the time of death, the same attachment that is an apprehension of true existence?

Khenrinpoche: Of the three mental poisons, attachment and anger have their origins in ignorance, which is the basis/condition for the arising of these two. As to what ignorance is, there are basically two interpretations:

- 1) According to the logician *Dharmakirti*, ignorance is posited as mere unknowingness/ merely not knowing.
- 2) Chandrakirti posits ignorance as something more than that. Above being not knowing, it is also an active misapprehension that apprehends true existence. In short, attachment arises due to an apprehension of true existence.

What I have mentioned in the earlier lesson [lesson 25, page 132] is not a definitive position. I did not say that, if it is attachment, it is necessarily ignorance, or that, if it is ignorance, it is necessarily attachment. I was merely wondering that, according to the *Middle Way School's* interpretation, is there an attachment that is in the entity/ nature of ignorance, is there an ignorance which is an entity/ nature of attachment. This is something to think about.

Khenrinpoche: What was the point of that discussion [in lesson 25]?

Student: The Hinayana tenet asserts that, attachment of the desire realm is necessarily nonvirtuous, but the Mahayana tenets assert that, attachment of the desire realm is not necessarily nonvirtuous. This is due to the attachment that is an apprehension of true existence.

Khenrinpoche: That is correct. This discussion was in the context of the Twelve Links, the first of which is ignorance. All the great treatises agree decisively that, ignorance is [ethically] unspecified, neither virtuous nor nonvirtuous. But the karma that is motivated by it can either be virtuous or nonvirtuous. According to *Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakosa*, with the exception of ignorance, the view of the transitory collection and the view holding onto the extreme, all other afflictions are necessarily nonvirtuous.

The qualm raised earlier was related to how craving and grasping nourish an accumulated projecting karma. This needs to be nourished/ activated by craving and grasping. In the case of a virtuous projecting karma, if craving and grasping are nonvirtuous, it would be [less reasonable to conclude how], the activating agent is nonvirtuous but what it nourishes can be virtuous. This is basically the qualm.

As a result of this, if one analyzes the issue from the perspective of the Mahayana tenets, I wonder if attachment is necessarily nonvirtuous. Having said that, I am not all implying that, there could be attachment that is virtuous.

c" Having examined [that] there is a purpose, engage in entering into higher and higher trainings [5.83]

5.83 a. *The perfections such as generosity*
 b. *Are progressively more exalted,*
 c. *But for a little I should not forsake something greater.*
 d. *Principally I should consider the welfare of others.*

In the *Stages of the path to enlightenment's* section on the six perfections, it was stated that, in terms of the order, the latter perfections are more superior to the former, the former being less superior to the latter.

As such, the latter perfections are more exalted, better, has more benefits than the former. Comparing generosity and ethical discipline, ethical discipline is superior and more exalted than generosity. Generally, if one has to choose between these two, then it has to be ethical discipline.

If one has to choose between two things, one would have to choose the better one and not forsake the greater for the lesser.

In general, it is like that. But if in special situations where one has to do something to greatly benefit others, then one has to choose that option. This is because, this fulfills the purposes of both self and others. The purposes/ welfare of others are more important than the purposes of oneself.

If there are great benefits to others in making extensive giving, then in those situations, it is permissible to remain indifferent to certain subtle aspects of ethical discipline that are practiced for one's own purposes.

Another exception could be this: If one is engaged in meditation, but when there are people who have come a long way to request teachings, having great hopes and interests in receiving instructions from one, since there are the greater purposes of benefiting others, then one should temporarily suspend one's meditation and make the gift of Dharma to them.

Generally, if one were to weigh the practices of generosity and meditative stabilization, the latter is much more superior and important than generosity.

In the case of someone who holds the bodhisattva vow being requested to teach by others who have great genuine interest, if he does not do so, then there is the danger of committing a root downfall of not giving the Dharma.

Verse 5.42 explains about remaining indifferent to certain aspects of ethical discipline when one is practicing generosity.

This is in the context of training the mind in proper stages for someone who has the ability to practice generosity but may not be able to practice the fine details/ rules and regulations of ethical discipline. He can thus remain indifferent to such aspects.

This completes the explanation on *The way to train in the ethics of gathering virtuous dharmas* [5.59 – 5.83]

iii) The way to train in the ethics of working for the benefit of sentient beings [5.84 – 5.97]

1' Devoting oneself to the welfare of others [5.84]

2' Conduct of gathering others without sullyng oneself with negativities [5.85 – 5.90]

3' Looking after the minds of sentient beings and training in the conduct that is unsullied by negativities [5.91 – 5.97]

1' Devoting oneself to the welfare of others [5.84]

*5.84 a. When these are well understood,
b. I should always strive for the welfare of others.
c. The Far-Seeing Compassionate Ones have allowed
d. Those that were forbidden.*

The training in the ethical discipline of accomplishing the welfare of others has to be done while knowing and abiding in the two former ethical disciplines of restraint and gathering virtuous dharma.

On that basis, one then trains in the ethical discipline of accomplishing the welfare of others.

While abiding in these first two types of ethical disciplines and without holding any considerations for oneself, self-interests or self-cherishing thoughts, then one trains in accomplishing the welfare of others.

If one needs to work for the benefit of others, there are great variety of actions and things one has to undertake.

Then one may have a qualm: In the course of engaging in such myriad activities to benefit others, would there not be a possibility of being stained by downfalls? The reply is in this verse 5.84.

The greatly compassionate ones, the Buddhas, who see well into the future and show how to accomplish long term highest happiness, have said that to benefit others, one should abandon holding onto small happiness and happily take on suffering.

Buddha has prohibited without exceptions, those who are working mainly for their own purposes, those of the Hinayana dispositions seeking liberation from cyclic existence for their own self-interest, from committing the ten nonvirtues.

But for those who are abiding in the Mahayana, who have absolutely no self-cherishing/ no self-interest at all, Buddha gave permissions for these bodhisattvas to engage in the seven nonvirtues of the body and speech.

Such exceptions are given to the bodhisattvas in that, if there were purposes and benefits, they could engage in the three nonvirtues of body and four nonvirtues of speech, which are usually considered nonvirtues.

There are no exceptions given for covetousness, malice and wrong views. Such exceptions were given by the Buddha to the bodhisattvas. **Khenrinpoche:** Not for us...

2' Conduct of gathering others without sullyng oneself with negativities [5.85 – 5.90]

a' Gathering [others] through the generosity of material gifts [5.85 – 5.87]

1" The difference between giving and not giving food and clothing [5.85]

*5.85 a. I should divide my food amongst those who have fallen into error,
b. Those without protection, and those abiding in modes of conduct,
c. And eat merely what is suitable for myself.
d. Except for the three robes I may give away all.*

This is an advice to give away food and clothing one has enough of, to others around one, those asking for it, animals and those abiding in ethical discipline.

One keeps an appropriate and suitable amount for one's own consumption and the rest is to be given away.

One's amount of food intake must be appropriate. If one hoards and then eats everything that is presented to one, gorging and stuffing oneself, then this becomes an obstacle to engage in virtue as the body has become very heavy.

On the other extreme, if one does not eat anything and gives away all, this would also become an obstacle for one to continue one's practice. One therefore has to take a moderate and appropriate amount of food.

In the case of ordained persons, he should give away excess things and clothing that are necessities for others or when others ask for it. The exceptions are the three main robes, which have to be kept. If not, this becomes an obstacle to continuing living in the practice.

This is in the context of benefiting/ helping others. If one has spare possessions of food, clothing and so forth, the advice is to give them away.

2" Not causing harm to the body for the sake of minor and/or difficult actions [5.86]

*5.86 a. This body that is for practicing the sublime Dharma
b. Should not be harmed for only slight benefit.
c. If I behave in this way,
d. The wishes of all beings will be quickly fulfilled.*

Beginner bodhisattvas should properly protect their bodies and not give parts of their bodies like their hands for some insignificant purposes. They should protect their bodies with appropriate amount of food, clothing and avoid the extremes.
In so doing, they can sustain themselves to practice the Dharma, dedicating towards and accomplishing the welfare of others.
Gradually training in stages, the bodhisattva will eventually accomplish the temporal and ultimate goals of all sentient beings.
<i>Aryadeva's Four Hundred Verses:</i> <i>Although one views one's body as an enemy, one still has to protect it.</i> <i>If one lives for a long time while abiding in ethical discipline, great merit will arise from that.</i>
This is again stating the need to protect the body without falling into the two extremes. While abiding in that, one protects one's ethical discipline so that one can work for others.

3" Explaining the time and need for practicing the giving of body [5.87]

<i>5.87 a. Those whose attitude of compassion is impure</i> <i>b. Should not give their body away.</i> <i>c. No matter what, both in this and future lives,</i> <i>d. They should give it as causes for fulfilling the great purpose.</i>
For those whose compassion is impure, referring to the bodhisattvas who have not achieved the first ground <i>Very Joyful</i> , they should not give away their bodies, limbs and so forth. Rather, they should protect them, as these are the basis for practice.
Once one has reached the first ground onwards, it is alright to give one's body away if there is a purpose. This is because, if one gives away one's body before reaching the first ground, the pain experienced may become a condition to generate regret.
For bodhisattvas who have achieved the first ground onwards, there would not be such danger. They are able give their bodies without any regret. In fact, they feel very joyful in giving, therefore, it is alright for them to do so.

b' Gathering [others] through dharma [teachings] [5.88 – 5.90]

1" Inappropriate physical posture for a listener to assume when the dharma is being explained [5.88]

<i>5.88 a. The Dharma should not be explained to those who lack respect,</i> <i>b. To those who wrap cloth around their heads although they are not ill,</i> <i>c. To those holding umbrellas, sticks, or weapons, and</i> <i>d. To those with covered heads.</i>
When listening to the teachings, one's mind should have respect for the teacher and the teachings. Externally, one should also physically show respect for both.
While listening, if the listener does not have any mental respect for the teachings, teacher and does not abide in a respectful demeanor externally, then there is no benefit to give that teaching.
If one is in the position of a listener, one should listen by adopting an appropriate physical posture and mental attitude.
Mentally, one should have respect for the Dharma, the instructions as well as the teacher.
Physically, one should also abide in a respectful posture. It is only then the teachings that one receive become beneficial for the mind, otherwise not. It is for this reason that there are such rules.
If the listener does not have respect for the teachings and as a result generates non-faith, then there is a danger for the listener to accumulate nonvirtues that will throw him into the lower realms. For that reason, one should not teach such a person.
Unless one is sick, one should not be listening to the teachings while wearing a cap, hat or covering one's head with a cloth. The instructor should not teach such people, including those who carry weapons, umbrellas covering their heads and so forth.
These are not exhaustive, but are gestures that are interpreted as being disrespectful.
Therefore, merely holding an umbrella or covering one's head and so forth does not necessarily mean being disrespectful. One therefore has to judge according to the time, situation, cultural difference, environment and the people one is teaching.
If these are not a show of disrespect, then it is alright. But if one assesses it to be so, then one has to consider.
<i>Khenrinpoche:</i> I am not sure about the Chinese [custom], but when the Tibetans go to see a high lama for blessings, they always take out their hats and put it in front of their chest [respectfully]. They don't go in with their hats on top of their heads to receive blessings. You know why? Because the hat blocks the blessings! Just a joke...
In Tibetan culture, I think there is some respect there as the head is the highest [part of the body]. You remove the hat and bow down to show some respect. Do the Chinese do that? It depends on culture so I am not sure.
There are other rules like: Not teaching to people who sit on thrones, seated higher than the instructor and so forth. All these are seen as disrespectful. Exceptions can be applied to those who are sick. The main point is about not showing disrespect.

It is said that, one should listen to the teachings with single-pointed faith and respect. One should not deride, criticize, show pride, make fun, [ridicule, mock, jeer at, disparage, insult, show contempt] and so forth to the teacher. One should not listen with such attitudes as these will bring no benefit.

The teachings forbid [the instructor] from teaching those who are disrespectful and act in such ways. This is because, even if one teaches, there is no benefit. Therefore, one is not permitted to teach such people.

2" Examining the features of a vessel's intentions [5.89]

- 5.89 a. The vast and profound should not be taught to lesser beings
b. Nor to a woman unaccompanied by a man.
c. Out of respect for the Dharmas of lesser and supreme beings as equal,
d. I should utilize all.*

For those who are predisposed to the Hinayana, like the Hearer and Solitary Realizers, it is not suitable to teach them Mahayana teachings like the extensive explanations of the paths and grounds and so forth. It would not greatly benefit them.

It is stated in the vinaya that, an ordained monk should not teach the Dharma in an isolated place to a woman not accompanied by a man and so forth. The same also applies to a nun teaching a man.

It is also incorrect to consider the Mahayana to be better than the Hinayana and then not teach the Hinayana due to that.

The reason for having Mahayana and Hinayana teachings is due to the capacity of the trainees. One should come to understand and explain that all Dharma teachings, whether Hinayana or Mahayana, are methods to reach enlightenment.

Therefore, one should not view one Dharma as good while the other as bad. All are paths that lead sentient beings to enlightenment. If one holds the view that the Hinayana Dharma as bad and unnecessary to achieve enlightenment and so forth, one accumulates the very heavy negative karma of abandoning the Dharma.

The food for a child and the food for an adult are different. One cannot say that one is better and the other is bad. Each type of food has its own purpose that fits the needs of the person eating it.

Therefore, it is important to understand how all the Buddha's teachings, including the Hinayana teachings, are paths leading one to enlightenment. If one holds onto one Dharma as good and the other as lowly, then one abandons the Dharma.

The Buddha mentioned in the sutras that, the negative karma of abandoning the Dharma is heavier than destroying all the holy objects in this world, as well as killing all the arhats equal in number to the sand grains of the Ganges river.

Accumulating such heavy negative karma of abandoning the Dharma can occur easily. Therefore, one of the best way to avoid that is to clearly educate oneself in the entire Buddhist path structure of the Hinayana and Mahayana, including tantra.

A lot of times, the occurrence of such a fault is just due to not knowing. Here, in learning this text, there are many advice given. One may think: "Though there are so many, it does not benefit me and does not enable me to achieve enlightenment."

If one thinks about this, this becomes quite similar to abandoning the Dharma. **Khenrinpoche:** What do you think? Therefore, one has to be extremely careful not to accumulate the heavy negative karma of abandoning the Dharma.

3" One should not treat [a person] who esteems the extensive [path] like [one who feels an affinity towards] the lower paths [5.90]

- 5.90 a. I should not connect the Dharma of a lesser being
b. To one who is a vessel for the vast Dharma.
c. I should not forsake the conduct,
d. Nor deceive by means of sutras or mantras.*

If one teaches Hinayana Dharma and then connects a sharp-facultied Mahayana trainee to the Hinayana path, there is a danger that one commits a bodhisattva root downfall.

Another example: It is also very inappropriate to tell someone abiding in the Mahayana that: "You merely have to focus on emptiness and realize it. There is no need to maintain ethical discipline nor abandon negativities and everything will be fine."

Or one says: "You merely have to focus on emptiness. There is no need to train in the other extensive deeds of the bodhisattva." If one says that, there is also the great danger of committing a downfall.

To those who have the capacity to train in the vast and profound aspects of the Mahayana and correctly abiding in it, it will be wrong if one tells them: "You do not have to do all these many complicated trainings, you merely need to recite this sutra like the Diamond Sutra, and that will be enough." Or: "You just recite this mantra and that is enough."

This is the meaning of: *To one who is a vessel for the vast Dharma, I should not deceive by means of sutras or mantras.* If one does so as above, one is actually deceiving them.

If you really think about it, it is really not an easy task to be teaching the Dharma. If you want to teach others, you also have to know their needs, wants, thinking, inclinations, dispositions and likes. It is difficult as one cannot tell.

3' Looking after the minds of sentient beings and training in the conduct that is unsullied by negativities [5.91 – 5.97]

a' An extensive explanation [5.91 – 5.96]

b' Summary [5.97]

a' An extensive explanation [5.91 – 5.96]

1" Abandoning faulty physical conduct and lack of faith in others [5.91 – 5.93]

<p>5.91 a. <i>When I spit or throw away a tooth-stick,</i> b. <i>I should cover it up.</i> c. <i>Also it is deplorable to urinate and so forth</i> d. <i>In water or on land that is utilized.</i></p>	<p>5.92 a. <i>When eating I should not fill my mouth,</i> b. <i>Eat noisily or with my mouth wide open.</i> c. <i>I should not sit with my legs outstretched</i> d. <i>Nor rub my hands together.</i></p>	<p>5.93 a. <i>I should not sit on mounts, upon beds,</i> b. <i>Nor in the same room together with the women of others.</i> c. <i>Having observed and inquired about</i> d. <i>What causes non-faith in the world, I should abandon it.</i></p>
<p>Some of the things mentioned here may not occur in Singapore. But the general idea is not to engage in behaviors or actions that will cause others to lose faith [in oneself], disturb or make others feel uncomfortable.</p>		
<p>In India past and present, people brush their teeth using [the frayed ends of the twigs of chew sticks from trees such as] neem trees. It is not that there were rubbish bins in ancient times. When done brushing, one merely throws it away.</p>		
<p>People also spit or blow their noses everywhere. One should not engage in such polluting activities in the presence of one's gurus, in temples or places that are environmentally clean.</p>		
<p>One should not urinate or defaecate in clean places, parks or where people move about and so forth.</p>		
<p>When eating, there are people where, even before the food reach their mouths, it is already wide open. There are also some who eat while making a lot of noise. Khenrinpoche: There are also some who put too much food into the mouth.</p>		
<p>These are not good behavior when eating. Here is an advice not to eat with so much attachment and greed [/ with gluttony].</p>		
<p>There is an advice to regard food as medicine. When one takes medicine, one does not go to the extreme of either not taking, taking very little, or the other extreme of taking too much. For it to work, the medicine must be taken in suitable amounts.</p>		
<p>Food should likewise be regarded as medicine. One's food intake should also be moderate, neither too much nor too little.</p>		
<p>One should also not eat with attachment or anger. If one eats with the motivation to look good, for the body to be strong, to build muscles, then that is eating with attachment. If one eats to be physically strong in order to defeat one's enemy in a fight, that is probably eating with anger.</p>		
<p>The point is, one should eat with the motivation to sustain one's body necessary for the practice of Dharma. Through that, one works to benefit others.</p>		
<p>When sitting down with one's legs fully stretched out, this may at times be considered [unaesthetic].</p>		
<p>Khenrinpoche: I am not sure about rubbing hands together, something to do with washing hands. I am not sure...</p>		
<p>Generally, ordained people should not sit on mounts, beds or being in the same place together with women.</p>		
<p>In short, these are advice for one to abandon actions that are considered by people in society at large, to be culturally offensive, [unaesthetic] or disturbing the minds of others causing them to lose faith [in one].</p>		

Student: Why do the non-returners not have the attachment to the self at the time of death?

Khenrinpoche: Since they don't have to return, so they don't need the attachment. If you want to come back, then you need attachment; if you don't want to come back then you don't need attachment. [Being a] non-returner means he does not need to come back to the desire realm anymore, so they don't take rebirth in the desire realm.

In the presentation of the Hearers and Solitary Realizers, there are four types of such persons: stream-enterers, once-returners, non-returners and foe destroyers.

Non-returners are those who will never be reborn again in the desire realm due to karma and afflictions.

In the presentation of the Hinayana paths, these are essentially the four superiors. The stream-enterers and once-returners are Hinayana superiors who have achieved the arya paths. Nevertheless, they still have to take rebirths in the desire realm. For the non-returners, because they have abandoned the manifest afflictions of the desire realm, therefore, they are not reborn in the desire realm due to karma and afflictions. The point is, the non-returners do not have the craving that will nourish that karma to be reborn in the desire realm. According to the lower abhidharma, *Abhidharmakosa*, stream-enterers and once-returners are superiors.

2" The way to act when the path and so forth are being shown [5.94 – 5.95]

<p>5.94 a. I should not give directions with one finger; b. But instead indicate the way c. Respectfully with also d. All of my right arm.</p>	<p>5.95 a. Nor should I wildly wave my arms about; b. Instead I should make my point c. By uttering sounds with mild gestures and a snap of fingers d. Otherwise I shall lose control.</p>
<p>If one was being asked for directions, one should point the right direction not with just one finger but respectfully with one's right hand. One is advised to show the right direction with a respectful attitude both physically and verbally.</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: I was doing a text-memorizing retreat very long ago in Dharamsala, perhaps in 1982. I was staying in Tushita for two months. I need to complete [memorizing] the text, so I was memorizing whole day and night.</p>	
<p>It was winter, during December/ January, so it was quite cold. One morning, I came out of my room to sit outside the gomba to get some sun. There was an English nun whom I know, who brought along some Korean or Chinese visitors, I am not sure.</p>	
<p>She was bringing them from the back and perhaps was looking for [Ven] Roger, I am not sure. So she asked me where his room was. I was feeling very cold so I did not move from where I was sitting. It was very near and visible to where I was.</p>	
<p>So I merely pointed the room to her [with one finger]. She got so upset [with my gesture] and said to me: "You must stand and show me the way!" The room was just in front and you can see it, so I merely said: "That's the room."</p>	
<p>Somehow, she was not pleased [by my reply]. Of course, it was also my problem, that I did not happily [show them personally.] Since I was feeling cold, I just wanted to relax, so I merely pointed [with my forefinger].</p>	
<p>She got so upset and became so unhappy for a long time. She did not want to talk [to me]. I also didn't want to talk. After one or two months, it was alright. We became friends and had dinner together. So [that's the story].</p>	
<p>I was not really helping, just sitting down there pointing. So, sometimes you can see that, if you really want to please the person, you must stand and, with a respectful manner, perhaps bow down a little bit, [and show the direction with both arms!]</p>	
<p>Of course, then the person will be extremely pleased: "Ven, welcome to Tushita, this is the way..." I didn't do that.</p>	
<p>So, [such things do happen], many of us are like that, when we are busy or stressed, then when someone asks: "Where's the toilet?" Of course, if you merely point with one finger, it's not really pleasant.</p>	
<p>When you point with the index finger, there's something wrong [with it] as it is quite strong [a gesture]. When you are angry, you point with that, not with other fingers but the index finger. So, the advice here is, don't point with one finger.</p>	
<p>Of course, each finger has it own meaning, I am not sure who created those ideas.</p>	
<p>My teacher, Gen Lobsang Rinpoche, who is ninety years old now, came to Singapore twice. One time, Angela was cooking momo, meat dumplings, at my place and offered to him. After he ate them, she asked him how the momos tasted.</p>	
<p>My teacher replied by pointing with his middle finger! I didn't know what that meant, so I asked her, she said this was not a good sign. My teacher meant that, it was not the best [showing the thumb finger], nor the worst [showing the little finger], but the middle [showing the middle finger]. She laughed and told him it was not a good sign.</p>	
<p>My teacher said there was nothing wrong with that: "Who made this [rule] ? It was not the best nor the worst but merely medium." Therefore, using all the fingers is the best. With one finger there are many different meanings, so better not use it.</p>	
<p>This is an advice to indicate the direction with respectful physical and verbal attitude so as not to cause non-faith in others.</p>	
<p>Verse 95 is also saying that, when one is showing directions, making a point or attracting attention and so forth, one should not be waving one's arms wildly, speak loudly nor shout. One should do so gently or snap one's fingers gently to attract attention. If the person is within earshot, there is no need to shout nor speak loudly. This is to avoid disturbing others.</p>	

Of course, if the person one is communicating is far away, then it is a different matter. Khenrinpoche: Essentially, don't be <i>kia-su</i> [having an anxious, selfish behavior that fears missing out something].
Sometimes, when you go to restaurants, some people [attract the attention of the waiter] with a gentle wave, others may [wave wildly] and even shout. If others were to see one's behavior like that, they may see one as being aggressive and harsh.
They don't feel that you are nice and good person. This will generate negative minds in others: "This person is like that..." This is the idea here. In short, such advice is to stop others from becoming negative with oneself.
Also, such behaviors and actions can be considered as [unaesthetic] and unacceptable [behaviors].
This is in the context of an advice for bodhisattvas. They need to behave in such ways to prevent others from generating non-faith, from being disturbed. Through that, these people would fall to the lower realms.

3" The way to lie down [5.96]

<p>5.96 a. Just as the Protector lay down to pass away b. So should I lie in the desired direction, c. And first of all with introspection d. Make up my mind to quickly rise.</p>
Here is an advice for lying down, by adopting the posture of Buddha when he displayed the deed of passing into parinirvana.
One should 1) lie straight on one's right side, placing one's left hand on one's body and resting one's head on one's right hand.
Somehow, it seems that when lying on the right, it is more uncomfortable than if one lies on the left.
Khenrinpoche: I noticed, when I sleep [on the left], it seems it is easier to fall asleep, [that position] looks like it's more comfortable. If I slept [on the right], it is not that comfortable when compared to [the left]. It is a little bit uncomfortable.
It seems like one is not that relaxed when you lie on the right. Khenrinpoche: According to the scientists, our heart is on the left while our stomach is on the right. So, when you sleep [on the left], your stomach is resting more comfortably.
When you sleep [on the right], you stomach is a little bit [uncomfortable]. Perhaps due to that, when one falls sleep lying on the right, it makes a difference to maintain mindfulness and vigilance, the sleep does not become too deep and sinking.
This is unlike those [types of sleep] one gets when lying on the left, where one is completely absorbed into [deep] sleep.
Although it may be more comfortable lying on one's left side, due to it being too comfortable, the sleep itself becomes very thick and heavy, making it very difficult to wake up from.
It is also said that, such a posture [of sleeping on the left] lends itself to unpleasant dreams or nightmares.
If one were to adopt such a practice of lying on one's right side, due to the sleep not being totally relaxed, then it will not be heavy. This helps in maintaining mindfulness and vigilance. There is also less occurrences of bad dreams.
One is also advised that, while lying in that position trying to fall asleep, for as long as one is still awake, one should: 2) maintain manifesting a virtuous state of mind. One then lets oneself fall asleep within such a virtuous state.
At the time of falling asleep, one should also 3) apply mindfulness and vigilance, to check if any afflictions are manifesting. If there are, one should try one's best to remove them, make them leave, then try to fall asleep with a virtuous state of mind.
One should also 4) bring to mind an object of illumination, something bright and clear. This helps to prevent very deep sleep.
One should also manifest the thought prior to falling asleep with 5) an attitude wishing to wake early the next morning.
As seen in the module on <i>Mind and Awareness</i> , sleep is a changeable mental factor. As such, if one is able to fall asleep within a virtuous state of mind, then the entire sleep becomes virtuous.
When one tries to fall asleep while adopting the posture Buddha used when showing the deed of passing into parinirvana, thinking: "This was how Buddha laid down when he passed away." There will be the additional benefit of remembering him.
When one remembers the Buddha, one accumulates merit. When one does that while falling asleep, one would not be harmed. This includes not being harmed from non-human entities.
There is an advice of conflating the four major periods of one's life into a day: 1) being born, 2) growing [into adult life], 3) aging adult and 4) death. 1) Waking up in the early morning is like a child being born, 2) one's working day is like adult life.
3) After a full day, one comes home to rest, this is like old age [/ aging adult]. 4) When one is so tired lying on the bed unable to move, this is like an old person who is very sick and on the verge of death.
As one falls asleep, all the sense consciousnesses become dormant and dissolve. It is only the mental consciousness that is manifesting. This is like dying and finally having died.
During sleep, one's dreaming state is like being in the intermediate state after death. Next morning when one awakens, this is like having entered into a new birth, new life.

Even in one day, one can look at it in terms of being born, living life, aging and dying. Waking fresh on a new day is like a new birth. Although one feels that everything is the same, one is still the same person, but actually, yesterday has passed.
The person of yesterday and the person of today is actually a different person. Time and everything else is also different.
In a sense, death is like sleeping. When one falls asleep, the grosser elements and consciousnesses dissolve and become dormant. It is not as if the stream of consciousness is severed. It is still there as one wakes up the next day.
Death is very much like that. In that sense, perhaps there is nothing to fear about death in that, dying is like going to sleep.
At the time of dying, the grosser elements and consciousnesses dissolve. What is left at the end is the extremely subtle stream of consciousness, which will move on to the next existence.
One does not fear falling asleep. Thinking in such a way, perhaps there is also nothing much to fear about death itself.
It is not that, one's consciousness goes out of existence at the time of death. Thus, there is nothing to fear about death itself.
But after death, depending on the virtue or nonvirtue that one has accumulated, one gets either a good or bad rebirth.
Depending on the kind of rebirth one gets, then there are all sorts of happiness or suffering one has to go through.
If one has lived one's life practicing Dharma, cultivating a good heart or engaging in virtue, then there is nothing to fear about dying. It is just like falling asleep and getting a good rebirth. <i>What one needs to fear is having accumulated nonvirtue.</i>

b' Summary [5.97]

<p>5.97 a. <i>From among the limitless deeds</i> b. <i>Of a bodhisattva that have been taught,</i> c. <i>I should certainly practice as much</i> d. <i>Of this conduct that trains the mind.</i></p>
Generally, the trainings of the bodhisattvas, like the six perfections and the four ways of gathering sentient beings, are really extensive and limitless. In short, these are all instructions for modifying behaviors of one's body, speech and mind.
For now, even if one cannot engage all of these limitless trainings, one can train to modify one's physical, verbal and mental behavior as taught here in this text.

d) The branch or method of excellent trainings [5.98 – 5.107]

i) Extensive explanation [5.98 – 5.106]

1' The cause for purifying one's trainings [5.98]

<p>5.98 a. <i>Three times by day and three times by night</i> b. <i>I should recite The Sutra of the Three Heaps;</i> c. <i>By relying upon the Victors and the mind of enlightenment</i> d. <i>My remaining downfalls will be purified.</i></p>
If one has taken the bodhisattva vow, one has to avoid committing the root downfalls and faults. If a root downfall occurs, one has to confess to a person who holds the bodhisattva vow. After confessing, one should retake/ revive the vow.
If a secondary transgression/ fault occurs, one should confess it through the recitation of the <i>sutra of the three heaps</i> .
This sutra is commonly known as <i>Confession of the bodhisattva downfalls/ Confession to the thirty-five Buddhas</i> .
The three heaps are: 1) Confessing, 2) Rejoicing and 3) Dedicating.
When confessing to the thirty-five Buddhas, one visualizes them in one's presence and goes for refuge and generating bodhicitta. This constitutes the power of the foundation.
One then confesses one's negativities, whatever downfalls and secondary transgressions one has committed.

2' The basis of the trainings [5.99 – 5.100]

<p>5.99 a. <i>Whatever I do on any occasion, [195]</i> b. <i>Whether in terms of myself or others,</i> c. <i>I should make effort and learn</i> d. <i>Whatever training has been taught for that occasion.</i></p>
Whatever bodhisattvas do, whether it is to accomplish their own or others' welfare, these should be engaged, in accordance with whatever is taught here in this text, with their body, speech and mind.
Explanations given so far in this text pertains to physical demeanor one should adopt, how one should speak and the kinds of thoughts one should possess.

5.100 a. *There is no such thing as something*
 b. *That is not learned by the Victors' Children.*
 c. *Thus if I am skilled in abiding in this way*
 d. *Nothing will be non-meritorious.*

Bodhisattvas work for the benefit of others. To do so, they have to know everything. Therefore, there is nothing that they should not learn.

It is taught that the bodhisattvas have to know and meditate on the Hearers and Solitary Realizers' paths. This is because, they have to take care of the welfare of those from these lineages. To do so, bodhisattvas have to know these paths before helping.

Everything that a bodhisattva does, including moving around, learning things, or benefiting others, is done with mindfulness and vigilance. Everything is cause for enlightenment and accomplishing sentient beings' welfare.

As such, everything that they do enables them to accumulate great merit. They are even able to convert and transform actions that are usually nonvirtuous into actions that are virtuous.

This verse is saying that, since bodhisattvas need to work for the benefit of all sentient beings, they have to learn everything.

3' The specifics [5.101 – 5.102]

a' Dedicating virtues for the welfare of all sentient beings [5.101]

5.101 a. *Directly or indirectly, I should not do anything*
 b. *Other than the welfare of sentient beings.*
 c. *Solely for the welfare of sentient beings*
 d. *I should dedicate all towards enlightenment.*

Whether one is directly benefiting sentient beings through giving teachings or material gifts, engaging in one's daily prayers, in retreats and so forth, whatever virtue one accumulates, one has to dedicate them for the welfare of sentient beings.

In terms of striving, one does so to accomplish only the welfare of sentient beings. This is reflected in one's dedication: One prays and dedicates one's roots of virtue for the achievement of full enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings.

b' One should never abandon the Mahayana spiritual teacher and trainings [5.102]

5.102 a. *Never, even at the cost of my life,*
 b. *Should I forsake a spiritual friend*
 c. *Skilled in the meanings of the Mahayana*
 d. *[Who abides in] the supreme modes of conduct of a bodhisattva.*

In *Stages of the path to enlightenment*, the qualification of a Mahayana virtuous friend is clearly mentioned. One should know these qualifications well. One also has to know well the necessary qualifications of a suitable disciple/ student.

Many of you are now familiar with the topic of correctly devoting to the virtuous friend.

On the basis of knowing what the qualifications a Mahayana virtuous friend should possess and the qualifications that a suitable student must possess, one should know the benefits one gets if one relies correctly on such a teacher and the faults/ disadvantages one would experience if one makes mistakes in giving up that relationship.

As for the actual way of relying on the virtuous friend, there are reliance in thought and in action.

Because there are so much benefit and profit if one correctly relies, and so many disadvantages and problems that ensues if one incorrectly relies, on a qualified Mahayana virtuous friend, therefore, it says here:

Never, even at the cost of my life, should I forsake a spiritual friend.

4' The basis one hears and reflects upon [5.103 – 5.106]

a' Training in reliance upon the sutras [5.103 – 5.104]

5.103 a. *I should train in devoting myself to my spiritual master*
 b. *In the manner taught in The Biography of Shrisambhava.*
 c. *This and other trainings spoken by the Buddha,*
 d. *I should understand through reading the sutras.*

5.104 a. *I should read the sutras*
 b. *Because it is in them that the practices appear.*
 c. *To begin with, I should look at*
 d. *The Sutra of Akashagarba.*

In *The Array of Stalks Sutra*, there is an account of *Shrisambhava* going to the bodhisattva *Ngosang* asking how anyone should rely on the virtuous friend.

This sutra mentions nine attitudes that a disciple should [adopt] in relying on the virtuous friend, the attitude which is like: 1) Dutiful child, 2) Diamond/ Vajra, 3) Earth, 4) Mountain, 5) Servant, 6) Sweeper, 7) Foundation/ Rope, 8) Dog and 9) Ferry

For example, in relying on a virtuous friend, one's attitude should be like 2) a vajra, which is unshakeable. It does not matter what conditions one meets with, one never gives up.

In the course of relying on a virtuous friend, one may meet with challenges and difficult conditions. At those times, regardless of whatever conditions, one's attitude/ reliance on the virtuous friend should be immovable, firm like a mountain.
One should not become fickle and change [one's attitude].
One's attitude should be like 5) a servant, whatever advice and work given by one's guru, one does not negotiate but does it.
One should be like 8) a dog. If one scolds one's dog, it does not get angry nor retaliate but merely looks at one happily. Likewise, when relying on a virtuous friend, one should not get angry.
One should be like 1) an obedient child, who follows exactly what his parents tell/ advise him.
Verse 5.103 shows the attitude one should train in, when relying on the virtuous friend. One should also be clear in the essential points of the trainings one will be engaging in, by referring to the sources like the sutras.
The commentary here says that, for those who have taken the bodhisattva vow, they must definitely look at <i>The Sutra of Akashagarba</i> . This is because, one has to know the root downfalls and secondary transgressions. This sutra is clear on that.

b' Training in reliance upon the treatises [5.105 – 5.106]

<p>5.105 a. I should definitely look at b. <i>Compendium of Trainings again and again</i> c. <i>Because what is to be constantly practiced</i> d. <i>Is clearly and extensively shown there.</i></p>
The <i>Compendium of Trainings</i> was composed by Shantideva himself. He advises one to also look at that text. Since it is quite elaborate, it is insufficient to look at it merely once but repeatedly.
<p>5.106 a. <i>Alternatively I should sometimes look at</i> b. <i>The condensed Compendium of Sutras.</i> c. <i>Also, I should make an effort to look at</i> d. <i>The second composed by Arya Nagarjuna.</i></p>
One can also look at his <i>Condensed Compendium of Sutras</i> , or the text with the same name composed by Arya Nagarjuna.
Both Shantideva and Nagarjuna composed a text with the same name, the <i>Compendium of Sutras</i> . It seems that, the one composed by Shantideva was not translated into Tibetan.

ii) Conclusion [5.107]

<p>5.107 a. <i>I should do whatever</i> b. <i>Is not forbidden in those [works].</i> c. <i>I should impeccably practice whatever training I see</i> d. <i>In order to guard the minds of worldly people.</i></p>

2) Conclusion: It is necessary to put into practice the meaning without [leaving them on the level of] mere words [5.108 – 5.109]

a) Mindfulness and introspection are required in all places of the training [5.108]

<p>5.108 a. <i>The defining characteristic of introspection</i> b. <i>In brief is only this:</i> c. <i>To examine again and again</i> d. <i>The states of my body and mind.</i></p>
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b) The meaning of the actual [training] [5.109]

<p>5.109 a. <i>Thus I shall put these into action with my body,</i> b. <i>For what can be achieved by merely expressing words?</i> c. <i>Will sick people be benefited</i> d. <i>Merely by reading the medical texts?</i></p>
One should investigate with vigilance to see if the behaviors of one's body, speech and mind are contrary to the bodhisattva training, if one is coming under the control of the afflictions. The point is to practice relying on mindfulness and vigilance.
The last verse of this chapter is saying that, one should put all these advice into practice with one's body, speech and mind. There is no benefit in merely knowing the teachings, just as a sick person would never recover by reading a medical journal.
In short, one has to examine whatever one does with one's body, speech and mind with mindfulness and vigilance, to see if it is more beneficial for others or not. Those who engage in activities that are more beneficial for others are the wise ones.

Nagarjuna:

*Despite having studied and learnt extensively, if one does not put them into practice,
Then one would be like a blind person who is holding a lit butter lamp [but cannot see].*

*Knowing all the Dharma and having all opportunities and conditions to practice but not doing so,
Is like someone who is in a pool of [clean] water but remains very thirsty.*

Lama Tsongkhapa:

*To practice the Dharma, you have to know the Dharma. To know the Dharma, you have to learn it.
The point of learning the Dharma is so that, you practice it.*

*Right from the beginning when you listen to the Dharma, you must understand clearly that,
The entire point of learning, reflecting and meditating is to subdue your own mind, by dealing with your afflictions.*

*If you do not tame yourself, there is no way, no basis and no reason to tame others.
Therefore, subdue yourself first.*

Student: How does the condition of having single-pointed faith in the guru [a virtuous state of mind] at the time of death [act as a condition to] change a nonvirtuous actualizing karma into a virtuous one?

Khenrinpoche: Generally, a projecting karma for a good rebirth is virtuous while the projecting karma for rebirth in the lower realms is nonvirtuous. As for a nonvirtuous karma transforming into a virtuous one [at the time of death], this is probably not possible. As mentioned before, the very basis for a good rebirth has to be a virtuous projecting karma. There must be virtue in the first place. At the time of death, if a virtuous frame of mind is manifesting, this would nourish a virtuous karma that was already accumulated in the past, which leads to a good rebirth. One cannot have a virtuous state of mind nourishing a nonvirtue that leads one to a good rebirth.

Khenrinpoche: At the time of death, if a virtuous frame of mind is manifesting, does this mind then newly accumulate a virtuous projecting karma, which is nourished to become an actualizing karma that projects one into a good rebirth? Is that possible? At the time of death, is it even possible to accumulate new projecting karma?

Student: No. Because, projecting karma has to be accumulated before the time of death. This is because, it has to fulfill the conditions of [basis, attitude, performance and culmination].

Khenrinpoche: Why not?

Student: Okay then, it is possible to create projecting karma. **Khenrinpoche:** Then you can nourish that [virtuous] projecting karma to become the actualizing karma to take good rebirth, is that possible? Why?

Khenrinpoche: One thing [you must learn about discussion/ debate is that,] you must listen to the point of the question and then reply directly to it. If somebody asks question, then if you [avoid answering the question, stall and waste time,] then you are not getting the point, then this will take a long time. This you must learn [to avoid]. Sometimes somebody asks something but you are talking about something else. So here what I am asking is that, you must answer [to the *point* being raised by the questioner].

Student: Projecting karma can be created at that time, but it is not likely that it can be nourished. This is because, the karma is accumulated too quickly and is still weak.

Khenrinpoche: In your logic, due to that, the karma which was accumulated eons ago must then be nourished [at the time of death] isn't it? This means that the karma created in this life cannot be nourished [at the time of death]. This is because, your logic is that, [the karma that has to be nourished at the time of death] has to be [accumulated] long ago and is strong. That means, to nourish a [projecting] karma, it has to be accumulated eons ago.

Khenrinpoche: But, something that was accumulated in this life time can be nourished [at the time of death], isn't it?

Student: Are you saying that, at the last moment before you die, you create virtuous karma that becomes the projecting karma? The projecting karma that is created at the time of death needs to be activated/ actualized by craving and grasping to become the actualizing karma [in order for it to be that which impels a rebirth.] Due to that, the [projecting] karma that is created is not the last moment. You need an intervening moment before you die, the [virtuous mind] that created the projecting karma was not the last moment, you need to have craving and grasping, which becomes the last moment [before death.]

Khenrinpoche: Seems like you've got something there. Does the virtuous mind come before craving and grasping or after them?

Student: The virtuous mind comes before craving and grasping.

Khenrinpoche: That's it, I got you! If you say [the virtuous mind comes before craving and grasping,] then what you said earlier contradicts your reply now...

Khenrinpoche: Of course I don't have a conclusive answer, this is just to get some idea how you [debate/ discuss]. What the other person says, you must reply directly [*to his point*]. Of course, we are not fighting, but merely [addressing the logical point]. Like what [a student says, the logic was] too short a time [to nourish the projecting karma,] if you don't think much, then of course whatever he says, you just keep quiet, then [the discussion is over]. Most people would think: "Oh, that's right..." You don't really go deep down. What [the other student says about being nourished by] craving and grasping. People also believe that is also right. This shows people don't really think much.

Here, when you are [studying] Buddhist philosophy, you need to think about what [your opponent says], until you get the right [logic]: "Oh, this makes sense, this is the right [answer] as it does not contradict any logic." It is only then that you get some idea [of the point in question.] This is what we need to learn and think. Our minds need to think more.

Of course, when we get upset in debate, this is also not correct. Even though you have to be strong, but you cannot get upset. Sometimes this happens even in the monastery: [When the debaters start out,] it is virtuous mind, but after a while, it [descends into] arguments: "I am right, you are wrong!" [One's virtuous mind becomes an angry mind.] So far from what I see, even though anger can arise, but we don't end up fighting or hitting [each other]. So, we shouldn't [allow anger to arise.]

When you debate, you have to be strong, otherwise [if you are afraid to defend yourself], then you would accept whatever they say: "Okay, whatever you say..." Then you don't really go into debate. You just say your view, the others don't really think much. Others share their views and you just say: "Okay..." Then you are not really going deep down.

You should go deeper in order to understand. Of course, to do that, you must have some knowledge, otherwise it will be difficult.

Chapter Six: Relying on Patience

3. Explaining the way to train in the remaining four perfections

A. The way to train in patience

a. Explaining the chapter's material [6.1 – 6.134]

Anger is a big obstacle to the generation of bodhicitta. The discordant class of bodhicitta is anger. Therefore, it is said that meditation on patience is a very important antidote to anger.

This chapter is an explanation of *1) The faults of anger*, and *2) The benefits of patience and the need to respect others*:

1) Abandoning hindrances to the accomplishment of abiding by the antidotes: Devoting oneself to the cultivation of patience [6.1 – 6.6]

2) Engaging the mind in the methods for accomplishing patience [6.7 – 6.134]

1) Abandoning hindrances to the accomplishment of abiding by the antidotes: Devoting oneself to the cultivation of patience [6.1 – 6.6]

a) The disadvantages of anger [6.1 – 6.6(ab)]

b) Reflecting on the benefits of patience [6.6(cd)]

a) The disadvantages of anger [6.1 – 6.6(ab)]

i) The unseen disadvantages [6.1 – 6.2]

ii) The visible disadvantages [6.3 – 6.5(ab)]

i) The unseen disadvantages [6.1 – 6.2]

1' Anger destroys the roots of virtue [6.1]

2' One should make effort in cultivating patience after having understood the faults [of anger] and qualities of patience [6.2]

1' Anger destroys the roots of virtue [6.1]

*6.1 a. Whatever wholesome deeds,
b. Such as generosity and making offerings to the sugatas,
c. Have been amassed over thousands of eons,
d. Will all be destroyed by anger.*

Eon here, refers to **one great eon**, which consists of eighty intermediate eons: [twenty intermediate] eons of formation, [twenty intermediate] eons of abiding, [twenty intermediate] eons of destruction, [twenty intermediate] eons of nothingness.

Here, the merit amassed over 1000 of such a *great eon* one has accumulated through such practices as generosity, ethical discipline, patience, meditative stabilization, essentially all the collections of merit, is destroyed by just one moment of anger directed at a bodhisattva. This is an indication to show how powerful anger is as a negativity:

1) A mere moment of strong anger directed at a bodhisattva destroys collection of merit amassed over **a thousand great eons**. This was taught by the Buddha in the sutras, but the context refers to a **non-bodhisattva getting angry at a bodhisattva**.

In *The Play of Manjushri Sutra*, it is said that, merit accumulated over a hundred eons is destroyed by anger. This sutra is also cited by *Chandrakirti* in his *Supplement to the Fundamental Treatises on the Middle Way*.

Therefore, it seems to have some discrepancy here. But the context is different in this latter citation. It refers to a [higher] bodhisattva getting angry at a [lower] bodhisattva.

Therefore, if **2) a higher bodhisattva gets angry at a lower bodhisattva**, then the former destroys the collection of merit accumulated over **a hundred great eons**.

The Mahayana path of accumulation is divided into *small, middling and great*. The Mahayana path of preparation is divided into *[heat, peak, forbearance and super-mundane qualities]*.

If a bodhisattva who is on the Mahayana path of preparation were to get angry with a bodhisattva on the Mahayana path of accumulation, then the former would destroy the collection of merit accumulated over 100 great eons.

If a [lower] bodhisattva gets angry at a higher bodhisattva, the former also destroys merit.

In the *Condensed Sutra [Verse Summary of the Perfection of Wisdom]*, it is mentioned that, if a bodhisattva who has not received prediction of his enlightenment were to get angry at a bodhisattva who has received prediction of his enlightenment, then the former will have to “train all over again.”

Perhaps, a bodhisattva who has obtained prediction of his enlightenment is at least a bodhisattva on the Mahayana path of preparation. Then if a bodhisattva on a Mahayana path of accumulation were to be angry at a bodhisattva on the Mahayana path of preparation, then the former will have to “train all over again.”

The meaning of <i>having to train all over again</i> is given in an example: 3) A bodhisattva on the Mahayana path of [accumulation] is to attain the Mahayana path of preparation within one [great] eon.
But before he achieves the Mahayana path of preparation, if he gets angry at a bodhisattva on the Mahayana path of preparation, due to that, his achievement of the Mahayana path of preparation is delayed by one [great] eon.
In that sense, it is <i>like [as if]</i> he has to start all over again. Khenrinpoche: That means, [when it has taken him one great] eon [to arrive at where he was], but because of anger, [now he has to take one more great eon, that is,] two [great] eons.
The teachings also mention that, 4) if a non-bodhisattva gets angry with another non-bodhisattva, that means ordinary beings getting angry with one another, one also destroys merit.
Another text gives an example of the merit one accumulates from making one full-length prostration to a stupa containing the actual relics of Buddha. One accumulates the merit that enables one to be born as a universal wheel-turning monarch the number of times equaling to the number of atoms the body covers the floor while prostrating.
Such vast amount of merit is destroyed when one gets angry at a fellow practitioner similarly engaging in virtue as oneself.
The roots of virtue that are included in the collection of merit is subject to destruction when one gets angry, but the roots of virtue that are included in the collection of wisdom are not destroyed by anger.
The destruction of the roots of virtue does not mean that the of roots of virtue themselves are literally destroyed. What it means is that, a particular root of virtue's capacity to produce a fruitional effect is hindered or eliminated.
<i>Chandrakirti's Supplement to the Middle Way</i> says, the hindering of the roots of virtue's capacity to produce a fruitional effect is discussed in terms of <i>extinguishment</i> : 1) Great extinguishment, 2) Middling extinguishment or 3) Small extinguishment.
For example, if a particular root of virtue was not destroyed by anger, it would have A) produced a great fruitional effect, or it would have B) enabled one to experience that positive fruitional effect for a very long time.
But due to anger, one still experiences the positive fruitional effect, but 3a) the [intensity] is smaller or 3b) for a shorter time period. These are examples of 3) Small extinguishment.
1) A great extinguishment refers to a situation where one almost does not experience any positive results from that root of virtue. This is because, its capacity to produce any positive effects has been eliminated.
<i>Chandrakirti</i> explains what are great and small extinguishments and says that, based on that, one should come to conclude about the middling extinguishment oneself.
Essentially, the destruction of the roots of virtue means the elimination or the hindering of the roots of virtue's capacity to produce a positive fruitional effect.
This means that, 1) the roots of virtue will not produce any positive fruitional effect or, 2) it only produces something very small. The destruction of the roots of virtue does not mean that the seed of virtue is destroyed.
The seed is not destroyed, rather, it is the seed's capacity to produce a fruitional effect is either hindered or incapacitated.
<i>[From BP 2 Module 4b, Lesson 9, 3 September 2013:</i> Page 41: The meaning of the term 'roots of virtue' would seem to be the same as 'seeds of virtue'. This is because, the roots of virtue are that which produces virtue. Page 42: What one must remember, is the meaning of the 'destruction of the roots of virtue'. This is posited as 'harming the capacity of roots of virtue to issue forth a ripened effect'. This is not the same as 'destruction of the seeds of virtue.']
The Mind Training teachings (Lojong) advise that, one should look upon everyone as a virtuous friend/ guru, and also to meditate on the kindnesses of all.
If the person one gets angry at is a Buddha or a bodhisattva, one destroys so much merit. Even if the person is just an ordinary being, one also destroys a lot of merit. Hence, these teachings advise one to regard everyone as a virtuous friend.
When one sees such proclamation by the Buddha on the invisible effects of anger, one may find it difficult to believe. It is literally inconceivable that a mere moment of anger can destroy roots of virtue accumulated over a thousand great eons.
One great eon is already hundreds of billions of years. Here, merit accumulated over a thousand [of such] great eons can be destroyed by just one moment of anger. As such, this is rather difficult to know and believe, as this cannot fit one's mind.
But this proclamation was made by the Buddha, who at all times see every single phenomena as it is [without mistake], including those that are extremely hidden, like the ones mentioned here.
[What I am about to say] is not exact proof that anger can destroy roots of virtue accumulated over such a long period of time, but if one applies a little bit of reasoning, one can see some truth in this:
Relationships between loved ones or close friends that has been built up over a long period of time say, for over 30 or 40 years, can actually be all destroyed by a few harsh words spoken just one time.
This is comparing one moment of harsh speech that can destroy relationships that was built up over 40 years.

One knows that one's nonvirtuous actions, be it anger or harsh speech, are very strong. One brief moment of this can produce very bad consequences, whereas one's virtues are very weak. One needs so much effort just to be able to do small virtues.

These are the *invisible* faults of anger. As such, one cannot directly perceive them but have to rely on Buddha's words.

2' One should make effort in cultivating patience after having understood the faults [of anger] and qualities of patience [6.2]

- 6.2 a. *There is no negativity like hatred,*
- b. *And no fortitude like patience.*
- c. *Thus I should cultivate patience*
- d. *Persistently through various ways.*

As seen before, anger is one of the greatest hindrance to developing and producing the experiences and realizations of the paths within one's mind. It is also so powerful in destroying virtue accumulated over such long periods of time.

Therefore: *There is no negativity like hatred.* There is also no other antidote to anger that can come close to patience.

Since that is the case, therefore Shantideva says that, one should earnestly and persistently cultivate through various avenues that will be [taught] soon.

ii) The visible disadvantages [6.3 – 6.5(ab)]

1' Anger eliminates the opportunity for physical and mental pleasure [6.3]

2' [Anger] causes the destruction of friendships and so forth [6.4 – 6.5(ab)]

1' Anger eliminates the opportunity for physical and mental pleasure [6.3]

- 6.3 a. *My mind will not experience peace*
- b. *If it holds painful thoughts of hatred.*
- c. *I shall find no joy or happiness;*
- d. *Unable to sleep, I shall feel unsettled.*

It does not matter who one gets upset/ angry with, so long as one continues to keep that anger in the mind, one will not experience any peace. This is plainly obvious to all.

When there is anger in the heart, there is no peace inside. One feels very unsettled. This also affects one's sleep.

One will not be able to fall asleep easily or even may not even sleep at all. If one's sleep is affected, then one's physical well-being and thereby one's health will also be affected as well.

Essentially, an unhappy mind also acts as a condition for one's physical ill-being as well. This is also very obvious to all.

When one's mind is disturbed by anger, one will not feel settled as one's mind cannot be at ease.

These are *visible* faults because, everyone sees, knows, are aware of and experiences it.

2' [Anger] causes the destruction of friendships and so forth [6.4 – 6.5(ab)]

- 6.4 a. *A master who has hatred*
- b. *Is in danger of being killed*
- c. *Even by those who for their wealth and honor*
- d. *Depend upon his kindness.*

- 6.5 a. *By it, friends and relatives are disheartened;*
- b. *Though drawn by his generosity they will not rely upon him;*

Even if one treats one's followers well, like showering them with material comfort, gifts and so forth, but if one is bad tempered, [loses patience easily,] gets upset and angry with them, they will forget all such positive treatments one has given.

They get upset with their master, sometimes they may retaliate and may even harm or kill him. Such things happen mainly because of anger.

Under the influence of anger, people usually engage in harsh speech. The physical demeanor will also be unpleasant.

Through anger, one's friends and relatives will become disheartened and even leave one.

Even if one attempts to bring others into one's fold by showering upon them all sorts of material gifts generously without any hesitation or a sense of loss from one's own side, if one is an impatient person, then no matter how much one gives materially to them, they will never submit themselves to one wholeheartedly. They will feel a mental distance toward oneself.

Even though they may still rely on one and do things for one, but they will not be doing it happily nor from the heart.

iii) A presentation of the disadvantages in brief [6.5(cd) – 6.6(ab)]

- 6.5 c. *In brief there is nobody*
- d. *Who dwells comfortably with anger.*

- 6.6 a. *The enemy, anger,*
- b. *Creates sufferings such as those.*

In short, there will not be any person who can [truly] say that he is happy while there is anger burning in the heart.
Since anger has all such faults, therefore the text is saying that, one should strive to abandon anger.
As mentioned earlier, anger: 1) Destroys roots of virtue one has accumulated in the past.
2) It prevents one from experiencing the positive fruitional effects of happiness that one would otherwise have experienced.
3) It causes one to create negative karma which would then throw one into the lower realms like the hells.
In essence, anger causes one problems and sufferings in this life as well as future lives.
Therefore: <i>The enemy, anger, creates sufferings such as those.</i> In short, the enemy, anger, is the full-fledged cause of all of one's problems in this and all future lives.

b) Reflecting on the benefits of patience [6.6(cd)]

<i>6.6 c. But whoever assiduously overcomes it d. Creates happiness in this and other lives.</i>
On the other hand, if someone were to subdue his own mind, control and able to destroy his own anger, then he would not experience all those problems of anger just mentioned. Instead, he will have happiness in this and all future lives.
Destroying [one's] anger is the cause for achieving happiness in this and all future lives.
Therefore, the text says that, one should strive to abandon anger, cultivate and meditate on patience. If one meditates on patience, it would not bring about any problems and there are only the benefits of happiness in this and all future lives.
<i>Gyaltsab Je's</i> commentary mentions that, meditating on patience is the cause of happiness <i>only</i> . Therefore, one should strive in cultivating it. But if one gets angry, there is no benefit whatsoever as one experiences <i>only</i> problems.
Through meditating on the disadvantages of anger explained earlier, one should strive in cultivating its antidote, patience.

2) Engaging the mind in the methods for accomplishing patience [6.7 – 6.134]

a) Stopping the causes of anger [6.7 – 6.126]

b) The benefits of cultivating patience [6.127 – 6.134]

a) Stopping the causes of anger [6.7 – 6.126]

i) The nature of the cause along with its disadvantages [6.7]

ii) Instructions on making effort in the methods for overcoming anger [6.8]

iii) The actual method for overcoming [anger] [6.9 – 6.10]

iv) Having examined in detail the causes that give rise to anger, making effort to abandon them [6.11 – 6.126]

i) The nature of the cause along with its disadvantages [6.7]

<i>6.7 a. Having found its fuel of mental unhappiness b. In the doing of what I do not wish for c. And in the hindering of what I wish for, d. Hatred develops and then destroys me.</i>
What is the cause of anger, being upset? One becomes unhappy , one does not like it, if:
Someone prevents 1a) Oneself or 1b) Loved ones, from achieving what we want. Someone causes 2a) Oneself or 2b) Loved ones, to encounter problems, what we do not want
One's unhappiness builds up, becoming stronger such that, it eventually leads one to become angry .
Mental unhappiness is like the nutritious food that is eaten by a physically weak person to build up and regains his strength. Over time, he can actually overcome and defeat his enemy. Mental unhappiness is like the food for anger.
When mental unhappiness builds up, it gives strength to anger. Over time, this anger becomes powerful, which then destroys one's roots of virtue in the way seen earlier.
When one notices that one is getting upset, one should arrest it there and then, thus preventing one's mental unhappiness from continuing. If one allows it to continue, it will manifest as strong anger or hatred, which then destroys one's roots of virtue.
Mental unhappiness is the condition for the arising of anger, if one does not stop it but let it grow, it will lead to the arising of very strong hatred. When this happens: <i>Hatred develops and then destroys me.</i> This means destroying the happiness of this and future lives.

Student: If a higher bodhisattva destroys 100 great eons of merit when he gets angry with a lower bodhisattva, will his attainment of the next level also be delayed by 100 great eons?

Khenrinpoche: It is not clearly [stated] in the treatises, but if we say that a higher bodhisattva who gets angry at a lower bodhisattva would destroy merits accumulated over 100 [great] eons, then perhaps one might have to say that, his achievement of the next level would also be delayed by that number of [great] eons. This is because, he has to accumulate that amount of merit [to achieve the next level].

Khenrinpoche: There are 3 countless great eons, each is made up of many great eons. Ven. Gyurme thinks that, 1 countless great eon is just 1 great eon.

Student: So, 1 countless great eon and 1 great eon is different? **Khenrinpoche:** Yes. **Student:** Then how many [great] eons would 1 countless great eon be? **Khenrinpoche:** More than a few hundred billion great eons. You have to go like: 1, 10, 100, 1000 and so on for ten times to reach 1 countless great eon:

[1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 or 1×10^{45} great eons]

ii) Instructions on making effort in the methods for overcoming anger [6.8]

<p>6.8 a. Therefore I should totally destroy b. The fuel of this enemy; c. This enemy has no other function d. Than that of causing me harm.</p>
<p>The cause of anger is mental unhappiness. Anger arises due to the build up of mental unhappiness.</p>
<p>In the previous lesson, one saw how mental unhappiness is liken to the food that builds up one's physical strength in that, mental unhappiness is the very fuel that enables anger to arise and become very powerful.</p>
<p>If someone does not eat, then his physical strength and health will deteriorate. Likewise, if one removes away mental unhappiness, then anger will not have any strength [to arise and become powerful].</p>
<p>Therefore, what one has to do is to cut away mental unhappiness, strive to stop it because, it is the cause that leads to anger.</p>
<p>If one does not stop mental unhappiness, then it will grow leading to anger. When anger/ hatred arises, it will destroy one in this and all future lives. Anger has no function other than destroying one in such a way.</p>
<p>Therefore, one has to strive in the methods to overcome the enemy, one's anger.</p>

iii) The actual method for overcoming [anger] [6.9 – 6.10]

1' It is inappropriate to nurture [mental unhappiness] [6.9]

2' The reasons for that [6.10]

1' It is inappropriate to nurture [mental unhappiness] [6.9]

<p>6.9 a. Whatever befalls me, b. I shall not disturb my mental joy. c. Having been made unhappy, I shall not accomplish what I wish for d. And my virtues will decline.</p>
<p>Whatever sufferings or problems that come along, one should 1) voluntarily accept it and to hold onto the oath/ 2) pledge not to be mentally disturbed/ unhappy about problems that [are manifesting.]</p>
<p>It is the view of the vast majority that, if one does not retaliate when harmed, but voluntarily accepts the problem and being patient, then one would lose. This is because:</p>
<p>1) [One feels that] others would look down on and take advantage of oneself. 2) [One may then fear that] this would lead to more people [increasing the] cause of harm.</p>
<p>Therefore, putting aside the practice of patience, vast majority of people think that they must retaliate. [One feels that,] without retaliating, one would not be able to protect oneself.</p>
<p>When people are in danger, face problems or harms from others, they feel that it is necessary to show a fierce demeanor, that one is ready to retaliate and fight.</p>
<p>Most people want to do that as they think that is the way to protect themselves, otherwise, they would be taken advantage of.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: [When] somebody bully you, you show your muscle!</p>
<p>When somebody is out to harm one, wishing to do something bad against one, the usual reaction is that one does not like it. One becomes mentally unhappy.</p>
<p>But when one becomes unhappy, the only result is that one gets disturbed. The other party is still around, yet is not harmed.</p>

When someone gives one problems, the usual reaction is that, one gets mentally unhappy and disturbed. One then puts on a fierce demeanor, ready to defend oneself and eventually retaliating.
When one looks at it superficially, by so doing one is protecting oneself. One may even save oneself from that small problem. So, it looks as if one is protecting oneself, it feels one has actually protected oneself.
But if one analyzes its [real] meaning, one has actually destroyed oneself. This is because, when mental unhappiness builds up in the mind, then it becomes anger or hatred.
When anger manifests, what it does is that it only burns the merit one has accumulated over a very long period of time.
<i>[By getting angry,] one is essentially hurting oneself.</i>
Although superficially, if one does not think about it, it looks as if one has actually protected/ saved oneself.
If one does not think about things, but merely looks at things superficially, then [retaliating] looks as if there is some benefit as one has protected oneself [from harm].
The results of [the action] of getting angry and acting it out by retaliating, if one analyzes [carefully], are merely hurting oneself in the long run.
Therefore, the text says that, for that reason, there is nothing appropriate in being unhappy about something.

2' The reasons for that [6.10]

<p><i>6.10 a. Why be unhappy about something</i> <i>b. If it can be remedied?</i> <i>c. And what is the use of being unhappy about something</i> <i>d. If it cannot be remedied?</i></p>
One becomes unhappy due to a particular situation or problem, there are many factors and conditions that bring about mental unhappiness. Then the question [one should be asking is]: “Is there anything that can be done about it?”
Can the conditions that bring about one's unhappiness be removed? Can one do something about that?
This verse says that, if something can be done about it, then there is really nothing to be unhappy about.
Even if there is nothing that can be done about it, the factors and conditions that lead to one's unhappiness cannot be changed, the verse is saying that, all the more there is no reason to be unhappy because, what benefit is there [to be unhappy]?
For example, if one is carrying a bag while walking and drops it, sometimes one gets upset immediately even at such [a small inconvenience]. But if one thinks about it, all one has to do is just to pick it up and the problem is solved.
In this case, something can be done. One just have to pick the bag up. But why does one get upset?
Since something can be done by just picking it up, then there is no reason to be unhappy.
But if one drops one's treasured mug, which is expensive enough and one likes it, if it is broken into pieces, of course one would be unhappy and get upset. In this case, there is actually nothing one can do about it as it is already broken.
Since there is already nothing one can do about it, but if one gets upset, one merely disturbs oneself, making oneself unhappy. But [getting upset] is not going to bring one's mug back.
In short, whether the situation can be remedied or not, [either way] there are no [appropriate] reasons to be unhappy.
Because, if it can be remedied, then there is no reason to be unhappy. Even if it cannot be remedied, there is also no reason to be unhappy, as there is no benefit [whatsoever].
Whatever is the situation, there is no real, appropriate and logical reason to be unhappy. Being unhappy brings about no benefit at all. What it brings is only more unhappiness. The only result is that, one is basically disturbing one's mind.
These advice are profound: they are very effective if one thinks about it. But whenever one sees, hears or reads something like these, we should understand that these are messages for oneself. One should not think that it is a general message for everyone else. This is one problem when one reads or hears something, one tend to regard it like an ordinary lecture:
[One thinks:] “This is a lecture for the general audience, it is directed at someone else. This message does not apply to me.”
Of course, if one looks at the advice with such an attitude, then it will never benefit one, as one thinks: “This is referring to someone else, [it is not referring to] me.” Actually, it is referring [exactly to] oneself.
Therefore, one should always relate to oneself thinking: “This is an advice for me!” It is only then that [the teachings] would benefit [one] as [there is hope that] there could be change [happening within oneself.]
It is a completely different matter if one is faultless. If one does not have such problems and faults mentioned in the teachings, then one can think that [such advice] are meant for someone else.

If one has those faults, then one has to understand that [such advice] are... **Khenrinpoche: Directed at myself, to me! If you don't have this problem, then of course, it is not for me but it is talking about somebody else.**

But if you have the problem, then always point at yourself: "This is talking about me. Others are good. I am the one Shantideva is talking about." Then it is more effective.

Most of the time we don't think that way, but thinks that it is talking about this other person. We just listen and [be complacent].

- iv) Having examined in detail the causes that give rise to anger, making effort to abandon them [6.11 – 6.126]
 1' A general presentation of the divisions [of anger with respect to] the objects that give rise to anger [6.11]
 2' Stopping anger towards that which brings unwanted things [6.12 – 6.86]
 3' Stopping anger towards that which hinders one's desires [6.87 – 6.126]

1' A general presentation of the divisions [of anger with respect to] the objects that give rise to anger [6.11]

This verse is a slightly extended presentation of the objects in relation to which one gets angry at:				
<i>6.11 a. For myself and for my friends b. I do not want suffering, contempt, c. Harsh words, and unpleasant talk; d. But for my enemies it is the opposite.</i>				
In some commentaries it is said that, there are 24 objects one can get angry at: <i>A) Getting 12 undesirable objects, and B) Not getting 12 desirable objects.</i>				
Examples of getting the 12 things one finds undesirable are <i>suffering/ pain and so forth.</i>				
Of these 12, there are <i>A1) 4 that pertains to oneself, A2) 4 pertaining to one's circle and A3) 4 pertaining to one's enemies.</i>				
Essentially, this has to do with the 8 worldly dharmas :				
Causes for mental unhappiness with person or situations, when getting or not getting them [6.11 – 6.126]:				
A) Getting the 12 undesirable objects [6.12 – 6.86]	<i>A1) 4 pertaining to oneself [6.12 – 6.63]</i>	a) Encountering suffering [6.12 – 6.51]: Three types of patience	c) Encountering criticism/ harsh speech [6.52 – 6.53]	<i>[6.90 – 6.101]</i>
		b) Encountering the lack of material possessions or respect [6.55 – 6.61]	d) Getting a bad reputation [6.62 – 6.63]	
	<i>A2) 4 pertaining to one's circle (parents, partners, children, friends, even one's gurus) [6.64 – 6.75]</i>	a) Encountering suffering	c) Encountering criticism/ harsh speech	
		b) Encountering the lack of material possessions or respect	d) Getting a bad reputation	
	<i>A3) 4 pertaining to one's enemies. When they are not hindered from: [6.76 – 6.86]</i>	a) Encountering pleasure [6.80]	c) Encountering praise/ pleasant speech [6.76 – 6.77]	
		b) Getting material possessions or respect [6.81 – 6.86]	d) Getting a good reputation [6.78 – 6.79]	
B) Not getting the 12 desirable objects [6.87 – 6.126]	<i>B1) 4 pertaining to oneself. When one is hindered from: [6.90 – 6.126]</i>	a) Encountering pleasure	c) Encountering praise/ pleasant speech	
		b) Getting material possessions or respect	d) Getting a good reputation	
	<i>B2) 4 pertaining to one's circle (parents, partners, children, friends, even one's gurus). When they are hindered from:</i>	a) Encountering pleasure	c) Encountering praise/ pleasant speech	
		b) Getting material possessions or respect	d) Getting a good reputation	
	<i>B3) 4 pertaining to one's enemies. When they are hindered from [6.87 – 6.89]:</i>	a) Encountering suffering	c) Encountering criticism/ harsh speech	
		b) Encountering the lack of material possessions or respect	d) Getting a bad reputation	
Such causes of mental unhappiness, if left unchecked, become anger				
In brief, these are getting the 12 undesirable objects or situations and not getting the 12 desirable objects or situations. For all of them, there are 4 that pertains to oneself, 4 pertaining to one's circle and 4 pertaining to one's enemies.				

2' Stopping anger towards that which brings unwanted things [6.12 – 6.86]

a' Stopping anger towards those who harm one [6.12 – 6.63]

1" Being patient with those who would create suffering for one [:The three types of patience] [6.12 – 6.51]

If oneself and loved ones experience sufferings, something undesirable, one gets upset and angry. Therefore, one needs to meditate on patience that accepts sufferings:

a" Cultivating the patience that [voluntarily] accepts suffering [6.12 – 6.21]

(1) Reflecting that contaminated phenomena are not beyond the nature of suffering [6.12(ab)]

(2) Reflecting on the benefits of meditating on suffering [6.12(cd) – 6.13]

(3) Reflecting that if one is familiar [with such attitudes, patience] is not difficult to cultivate [6.14 – 6.19]

(4) The benefits of making effort in abandoning the afflictions [6.19(cd) – 6.20]

(5) An extensive explanation of the benefits of meditations on suffering [6.21]

(1) Reflecting that contaminated phenomena are not beyond the nature of suffering [6.12(ab)]

6.12 a. *The causes of happiness occasionally occur,*
b. *Whereas the causes for suffering are very many.*

It is the nature of being in samsara that the things one wants do not come about easily, that the causes for the happiness one is looking for are not plenty.

For example, what one wants is pleasure, praise, good reputation and material possessions and respect. Although one wants these, but they do not occur as the causes for experiencing them are very few. Whereas the opposite of these four, the things one does not want, are occurring frequently. This is the nature of being in cyclic existence.

As it says here: *the causes for suffering are very many*. This shows the nature of cyclic existence. As long as one is still in it, the causes for suffering are very many and come without choice. One does not have any control over it.

To understand the reason why: *The causes of happiness occasionally occur, whereas the causes for suffering are very many*, one has to examine their causes:

1) Everyone hardly engages in the causes for happiness, hence a lack of happiness [is the result] while one is in cyclic existence. 2) Everyone is engaging in negativities and accumulating much more nonvirtues [than virtues], hence there are more problems and suffering that one would experience [as a result].

This is just the very nature of one's existence in cyclic existence, there is nothing much one can do about it. Along as one is in cyclic existence, one will definitely be creating more nonvirtue than virtue and hence, one will experience so much more problems than happiness.

There is nothing more to do about it than just accepting it. By that one cultivates patience with regards to accepting suffering.

In *Maitreya's sutra*, there is the use of feces as an example: It will never be able to smell nice as that is its very nature.

Likewise, samsara is like that, it is in the nature of cyclic existence. Once one is in it, one will only find problems. There is nothing one can do about it.

If it happens that one has to encounter the smell of feces, one has no choice. One can either be very disturbed by it, or one merely tells oneself: "There is no choice, being smelly is its nature. There is nothing I can do about it."

Khenrinpoche: Living in cyclic existence, we have so much expectations: "I want happiness all the time." We expect so much. This is like expecting poop to have good smell. It will never happen. So better not have expectations.

(2) Reflecting on the benefits of meditating on suffering [6.12(cd) – 6.13]

6.12 c. *Without suffering there is no definite emergence.*
d. *Therefore, mind, you should stand firm.*

6.13 a. *If the followers of Durga and the people of Karnata*
b. *Endure the feelings of burns, cuts, and the like meaninglessly,*
c. *Then for the sake of liberation,*
d. *Why have I no courage?*

If one knows how to think and meditate on suffering, since one does not like suffering, then thinking about it generates disenchantment. One loses faith with suffering. This is necessary to produce the thought wishing to definitely get out of such a situation, one's samsara. On the basis of that, one will develop a wish to be liberated.

Aryadeva's Four Hundred Verses say: If there is no suffering, one does not think about it and become disenchanted with it. Then there will be no way one will be liberated. This is because, one will not be interested, aspire and work for freedom.

Arya Vimuktisena (Pakpa Namdrolde) says that:

If you possess a stable disenchantment with cyclic existence, then there is the peace of nirvana, liberation for you.
On the other hand, if you think well and highly of samsara, you will continue to circle repeatedly in it.
Then there is no liberation for you.

<p>Whether one achieves nirvana/ liberation or not, <i>depends on suffering</i>. Suffering must be the condition. Because of suffering acting as a condition, if one were to generate a thought of definite emergence, wanting to be free from suffering, then one can achieve freedom from it. Therefore, there is a purpose, there is benefit in thinking of and meditating on suffering.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Khenrinpoche: Therefore, if you love liberation, then you must love suffering!</i></p>
<p><i>Without suffering, there is no renunciation.</i> There will be no talk of definitely wanting to emerge or free oneself from cyclic existence/ suffering: <i>Therefore, mind, you should stand firm</i>, when suffering occurs, do not be disturbed by it, there is benefit.</p>
<p>The teaching here is saying that, when suffering occurs, the best thing to do is to accept it, to be patient with it.</p>
<p>One experiences suffering due to the ripening of nonvirtuous karma one has accumulated in the past. Sometimes, one suffers because of another person acting as a condition for one to [experience] suffering. One then feels that it is due to that person.</p>
<p>Also sometimes, when one practices the Dharma, one also experiences problems and sufferings.</p>
<p>Whether one is experiencing a problem that is 1) the ripening of some nonvirtuous karma accumulated in the past or 2) it is due to another person acting as a condition for one to experience that suffering, in both of these cases, there is nothing much one can do about it. It just happens without any wish and one cannot control it.</p>
<p>The teachings are saying that, in these situations, there is nothing much one can do other than to accept and put up with it.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>One should voluntarily accept the suffering and be able to bring such an experience into one's practice.</i></p>
<p>Should one decide <i>not</i> to accept the situation, thinking: "I cannot accept this, why should I?" Then the result of such a decision would be that, 1) <i>One's mind would be very disturbed and unhappy, which would erupt into anger.</i></p>
<p>2) <i>Due to not accepting the suffering problem, sometimes one may get disinterested, disheartened and discouraged in one's practice. One gives it up. Such a refusal to accept suffering becomes a huge obstacle to continue one's practice.</i></p>
<p>If one does not voluntarily accept the problem, put up with it or know how to, one will be very unhappy and upset.</p>
<p>[Such an unhappy mind] is in addition to an already existent problem. By not accepting the situation and being unhappy with it, 1) the original problem still remains and will not go away on its own. 2) Above this, one is also adding another problem on top of the original problem. This additional problem is one's mental unhappiness.</p>
<p>When one is mentally unhappy, one will think in many crazy ways, so many negative thoughts will arise.</p>
<p>One then gets more disturbed, upset and angry. One is basically adding on an additional mental suffering, worry and anxiety onto an already existent problem. This will make the already problematic situation even more intolerable. When one reaches that stage of having two problems, then to think: "Now I am going to accept suffering." This would become very difficult.</p>
<p>Due to the ripening of nonvirtuous karma together with the gathering of various conditions, a problem arises.</p>
<p>If one mentally accepts and puts up with the problem by thinking that it is the nature of life in samsara, it is like that and there is nothing one can do about it, even though this does not make the problem go away, but at least one is not adding on additional suffering onto oneself, making oneself unhappy. The advice for one here is that:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>When a suffering problem arises, to not be mentally disturbed, let the suffering get the better of oneself and overwhelm one. One should not give oneself additional problems and let the situation hinder one's practice. Rather, one should use it to enhance one's practice, to generate even more determination to practice.</i></p>
<p>There are people who think: "It is because I practice Dharma that I got the problems now." If one does not know how to think [and then blames the Dharma], then this will really be a bad problem.</p>
<p>What I can say is that for one, problems hardly come due to one's practice of the Dharma. This is because, one is seldom practicing the Dharma. If one experiences problems due to Dharma practice, then perhaps this could be a sign that the Dharma practice is really pure.</p>
<p>Therefore it does not mean that, all Buddhists who call themselves Dharma practitioners will have problems.</p>
<p><i>Khenrinpoche:</i> So this means, don't worry that when you come to class or puja you will get sick. [It will not be the case].</p>
<p>Those who practice the Dharma purely and properly may experience problems in the form of sicknesses like headaches, body aches, discomfort or whatever. For them, that is a purification because, that suffering is in place of the suffering they would have to experience in the lower realms for a very long time.</p>
<p>Due to their pure practice, their immeasurable amount of negativities were purified such that, only a small amount is left which takes on the aspect of problems in this life.</p>
<p>For them, when they do experience sicknesses and problems, they are actually very happy, a cause for them to be happy.</p>
<p>If any of you were to get sick, please don't tell me that it is because you practiced the Dharma! Just say it's your karma!</p>
<p><i>Khenrinpoche:</i> I hear some people say that, "I have problems when I read the diamond cutter sutra." [If you don't think that way,] I will have less complain!</p>

Khenrinpoche: Just to reiterate the measure of the destruction of the roots of virtue:

When a non-bodhisattva is angry with a bodhisattva, the [former] destroys merit accumulated over a thousand eons. When a higher bodhisattva gets angry at a lower bodhisattva, the [former] destroys collection of merit accumulated over a hundred eons. When a lower bodhisattva gets angry at a higher bodhisattva, the [former] has to meditate on the path again. It is clearly mentioned in the text the meaning of this is that, they have to train again for eons. It does not say how many, but for...

Khenrinpoche: can be two hundred, three hundred, five hundred eons. I am not sure.

How to stop anger from arising:

[The outline heading in this section is:] Cultivating the patience that [voluntarily] accepts suffering [6.12 – 6.21]
The teachings say that, when one experiences suffering, one should accept it voluntarily.
1) One of the reason is that, one is in cyclic existence, whose nature is such that it does not transcend suffering. It is in the nature of being in cyclic existence to be beset with problems and sufferings.
Remembering this, one comes to accept problems and sufferings as part of one's life existence.
2) Another way to put up with suffering and accepting it is to reflect on the benefits/ advantages of suffering from a positive angle. For someone who really is a practitioner of the Buddhadharma, particularly someone looking for permanent happiness, liberation from cyclic existence, to develop the aspiration to be free of all problems, one must firstly have problems.
Therefore, the existence of suffering is an essential condition upon which one develops disenchantment with cyclic existence.
Such a disillusionment spurs one on to seek total freedom once and for all, for the liberation from cyclic existence.
As such, without suffering as a condition, there is no way to develop disillusionment and disenchantment with samsara. Without such a disenchantment, there will be no [genuine] wish to be freed from it.
Therefore, for such a person who is intent on achieving liberation, it is better to have suffering, which is a good thing.
As mentioned before, suffering acts a condition for one to develop disillusionment/ disenchantment with cyclic existence. Due to that, one can develop an attitude of definite emergence/ renunciation.
One who does not see the faults of contaminated existence, having to exist in the state made up of contaminated body and mind, that if one holds onto the view that samsara is pleasant, like a beautiful garden, then for one, there is no end to samsara.
One will just continue on in cyclic existence because, since one does not see its problems, one would not want to develop the wish to get out of it. Because there is suffering, and if one recognizes [suffering as it is], this becomes an essential condition for one to develop disillusionment and disenchantment with such a contaminated existence.
This will spur one to develop the intent/ wish to definitely get out of such a contaminated existence.
Due to recognizing suffering [as it is], then when one develops disillusionment and disenchantment with samsara, this becomes the door for one to enter into renunciation, to develop the thought of definite emergence.
Having problems and sufferings in fact persuade and enable one to think about doing things that are beneficial/ virtuous.
One also has to realize that, whatever problems and sufferings one experiences, are the results of nonvirtuous karma one has accumulated in the past. As such, one can look at such experiences as a broom that sweeps away all of one's negativities.
Therefore, in that sense, there is something beneficial and positive to the experience of suffering. If one is able to look at one's problems and sufferings from this perspective, then it helps one voluntarily accepts the problems one is encountering.
If one is able to voluntarily accept the problems and sufferings through realizing the benefits of suffering with a positive perspective, then it makes huge difference in that, one will not be as unhappy and mentally disturbed as before. One's mind will be able to stay calm and relaxed.
When one experiences problems, sufferings, makes a choice not to put up with it and refuses to accept it, then the only result is that one will be very unhappy inside. One's mind gets disturbed. The mental unhappiness will build up to become anger.
When one is very angry, one will look at oneself and everything around through such a view. Everything and everyone one sees will appear as unpleasant, as an enemy, bad or as a problem.
The initial problem may have been very small. But this is what can happen if one makes a choice to refuse voluntary acceptance of it. One then reacts with unhappiness. This is what one gets.
When problems arise and one experiences discomfort or unhappiness, then one should remind oneself that this is the nature of contaminated life. So long as one is in samsara, it will always be like that. Then what will be the point of begrudging its nature? That is life [in samsara], there is nothing one can do about it.
One should also remind oneself that, whatever problems, sufferings and unhappiness one experiences, these are the ripening results of the nonvirtues oneself has accumulated in the past.

Through reminding oneself of these points, when the problem arises, this makes it much easier to voluntarily accept and bear with it. In so doing, one is at least able to stop oneself from getting more unhappy, protect one's mind from being disturbed.

This is very important for stopping anger from arising.

(2) Reflecting on the benefits of meditating on suffering [6.12(cd) – 6.13]

- 6.13 a. *If the followers of Durga and the people of Karnata*
b. *Endure the feelings of burns, cuts, and the like meaninglessly,*
c. *Then for the sake of liberation,*
d. *Why have I no courage?*

It is said that the faithful followers of the goddess Uma burn their bodies and so forth in order to please her.

There are also followers of certain religious beliefs who jump into fires or pierce their bodies with all sorts of weapons and so forth, who undergo many such physical hardships.

There are also those who endure all kinds of physical austerities like piecing and cutting their bodies and so forth, just to achieve what they believe is the celestial state of Brahma.

If there are so many people in this world who can endure so much hardships to achieve goals that are not as meaningful as liberation, then why should those who claim to be achieving liberation not put up with hardships and difficulties in the process? Therefore, those who are intent on achieving liberation should all the more bear with the difficulties involved.

Since liberation is a much more meaningful and loftier goal, it is appropriate and important to endure suffering to achieve it.

If there is a need to tolerate difficulties and sufferings, the next question would be whether it is possible at all. Yes, because:

(3) Reflecting that if one is familiar [with such attitudes, patience] is not difficult to cultivate [6.14 – 6.19]

(a) An extensive explanation [6.14 – 6.18(ab)]

(i) Establishing that if one has familiarized oneself [with such attitudes,] they are easily applied [6.14]

- 6.14 a. *There is nothing whatsoever*
b. *That is not made easier through acquaintance.*
c. *So through becoming acquainted with small harms,*
d. *I will become patient with great harms.*

This is just stating the reality. Whatever the situation or object, once one is accustomed and familiar with something, it will become easier, be it a bad habit/ fault or a good habit/ quality.

Therefore, one should start to acquaint oneself with tolerating smaller discomforts and problems, becoming more accustomed in putting up with these difficulties. One will then be more patient with bigger problems.

Shantideva's Compendium of Trainings says that ordinary sentient beings find samsara very delightful. Although its nature is problems and sufferings, one does not think that it is suffering but [enchanted].

Even though that is not the reality, then why does one find it beautiful and nice? This is due to **familiarity** as one has been so accustomed and habituated to view it in such a mistaken way.

Although reality is such that, one's existence is contaminated samsara, that it is in the nature of suffering, but one views it in a completely distorted way, thinking it is pleasurable and happy. This is through a bad habit/ bad familiarity, albeit a habit.

Conversely, if through familiarity, one is able to accept, endure sufferings and not be disturbed by it, then it is also possible to familiarize one's mind to the extent that, everything one sees, including sufferings, will be seen in a positive light, as pleasant.

One will be able to develop such a concentration. It is a mere matter of familiarization.

For example, the great bodhisattvas on the first ground, due to having achieved an exalted practice of the perfection of generosity, are able to happily give away their bodies.

Even if they have to cut off their bodies piece by piece, every additional piece they cut and give away brings about more joy and happiness. This is possible for them because of their familiarity with such a practice.

In short, [whether one is able to endure suffering or not,] is all a matter of being familiar. In this context of cultivating the patience of voluntarily accepting difficult situations and sufferings, if one is acquainted with such a practice, then over time, one will be able to tolerate problems and difficulties in that, it does not disturb one's mind.

It is even possible to familiarize one's mind to the extent that, even suffering is seen as a positive cause for happiness.

Therefore, it is all a matter of habituation.

(ii) Establishing that by means of an analogy [6.15]

<p>6.15 <i>Who has not seen this to be so with meaningless sufferings, Such as the feelings of [Harms from] snakes, insects, hunger, and thirst And of rashes?</i></p>
<p>This verse is an example for the earlier verse: It is said in that verse that it is all a matter of familiarity, due to that, one is habituated with enduring problems and sufferings without being disturbed, even able to see it as a condition for happiness.</p>
<p>But if one does not [wish to] endure problems and difficulties, then even small problems can disturb one greatly.</p>
<p>This verse shows a few examples that are very obvious to everyone: if anyone were to tolerate insect bites, feeling hot, hungry and thirsty over time, such experiences would not affect one as much as it would have if one had refused to tolerate it.</p>

(iii) The object towards which one is [cultivating] patience [6.16]

<p>6.16 a. <i>I should not be impatient [207]</i> b. <i>With heat and cold, wind and rain, and so forth, and</i> c. <i>Sickness, bondage, beatings, and so forth;</i> d. <i>For if I am, the harm will increase.</i></p>
<p>The examples given here are about putting up with hot weather in summer and cold weather in winter; changes in the weather with wind, rain or experiencing all kinds of sicknesses and so forth. Such are the situations during which one should endure.</p>
<p>If one does not, then such experiences will just bring more problems, unhappiness and sufferings. This verse is saying that, one should not be intolerant to small problems and discomforts. If one is, then these will cause more harms and problems.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: There are some people, when they get teased a little, get upset very easily. They have such a character, you cannot tease him even a little, as he will get upset. I noticed that, people would continually tease such a person even more.</p>
<p>It is also the same in the monastery. I noticed there was a monk who was like that. In the open debating courtyard, there were small pebbles everywhere. Sometimes [other monks would throw them at] him and he would get so upset.</p>
<p>He would look around but would not be able to see who did it. [The more] his reacted that way, [the more the other monks] would also do the same. So, because he cannot take it, he [ended up with] more problems.</p>
<p>Even if you say a little bit of nasty things, he would again get upset with such a small thing. In this way, people would make fun of him, everybody teased him.</p>
<p>There are others, when you throw pebbles at them, they wouldn't care: "It's only a small pebble, never mind."</p>
<p>For them, there are less pebbles thrown at them. When being teased, they just smile and take it easy. I noticed that, such people have less problems, being teased or disturbed less by others.</p>
<p>I think this verse is saying something like that. When a small problem comes, you must accept it. Someone says something nasty, you just smile and bear with it. Next time, the other party would not do that anymore.</p>
<p>But if you don't accept and get upset, then it will come back again. So here, you must know what you want: if you don't want more of the nasty things, then you just smile and accept; but if you want more, then react.</p>
<p>The good thing about my friend [in the monastery] was that, after so many had teased him, he couldn't take it any more, he eventually [accepted it and] became more tolerant. He had less problems after that.</p>

(iv) An example of how the strength of patience arises if one familiarizes [oneself with it] [6.17 – 6.18(ab)]

<p>6.17 a. <i>Some when they see their own blood</i> b. <i>Become especially brave and steady,</i> c. <i>But some when they see the blood of others</i> d. <i>Become unconscious and faint.</i></p>	<p>6.18 a. <i>These come from the states of the mind</i> b. <i>Being either steady or timid.</i></p>
<p>There are those who become more courageous when they see their own blood being shed. When they shed blood in a fight from cuts and bruises, such a sight gives them more courage to fight [even more aggressively].</p>	
<p>Whereas there are others who, when they see even the blood of others, would lose heart, become discouraged and timid.</p>	
<p>Such a difference in reaction shows that it has nothing to do with seeing blood. Rather, this has to do with the strength of the characters/ mind. Here, one could say that it is courage or the lack of it.</p>	
<p>When one applies the analogy here to the [intended] meaning, blood is likened to one's problems and sufferings. When one encounters them, rather than being discouraged or be defeated by them, the ideal reaction is to have even more determination and courage to deal with and solve the problems. This is of course, if only one is a real practitioner.</p>	
<p>It is mentioned in a sutra that: <i>one's mind should not be like a leaf that flutters in the wind.</i></p>	

This is especially so in the context of transforming one's mind in practicing the Dharma.
Whatever practice one does, right from the very beginning, one needs to be very determined, courageous, firm and stable. One must have the mindset right from the start to expect and put up with difficulties and problems.
<i>It is a matter of having determination, courage and stability.</i>
The teachings say that, one's firmed and determined mind should be so strong that, one can even use the problems [and apply them into] one's practice, instead of letting them become obstacles.
Therefore, to transform one's mind to practice the Dharma, one needs a very firm determination and courage. With that, in the course of one's practice, one can deal with any problems that come along the way, transforming even the difficult situation into something beneficial for one's practice.
Therefore, right <i>from the very beginning</i> of one's mental transformation of practicing the Dharma, if one does not have a strong stable determination and courage that thinks: "Come what may, I will take it!", then when one meets with even a small problem, it becomes huge and one does not wish to put up with it, thinking that it is very difficult.
Then, even a small problem becomes a huge obstacle that prevents one from doing and continuing one's practice.
Perhaps this is the meaning of the analogy stated in the above sutra quotation:
<i>Rather, one should be as stable as the trunk of the tree.</i>
Therefore, one's mind should be like a trunk of a tree and not a leaf. Even with just a slight breeze, it would flutter here and there. Likewise, just because of a small problem, one should not change [one's mind] in a negative way.

(b) Summary [6.18(cd) – 6.19(ab)]

<p>6.18 c. <i>Therefore I should disregard harms</i> d. <i>And be unaffected by suffering.</i> 6.19 a. <i>Even when those who are skilled are suffering,</i> b. <i>Their minds remain very lucid and undefiled.</i></p>
In short, in the course of achieving something that is greatly meaningful, one should patiently and voluntarily put up with the hardships along the way. In the course of one's mental transformation in practicing the Dharma, it becomes very important for one not to allow one's mind be disturbed by various problems and difficulties.
<i>Those who are skilled</i> , refer particularly to the meditators and practitioners of the Mahayana, who are intent on developing bodhicitta to benefit others. They should not let their minds be disturbed and affected by difficulties and problems.
To summarize this section that explains about developing the patience that voluntarily accepts sufferings, the point here is that, even though there may be difficulties and problems, one should not be disturbed. One should not let them cause and increase any mental unhappiness which will lead into anger.
Above voluntarily accepting problems and sufferings, one should use the experience of problems and difficulties to enhance one's determination and courage.

(4) The benefits of making effort in abandoning the afflictions [6.19(cd) – 6.20]

<p>6.19 c. <i>When war is waged against the afflictions</i> d. <i>Much harm is caused at the time of battle.</i></p>	<p>6.20 a. <i>The victorious heroes are those</i> b. <i>Who, having disregarded all suffering,</i> c. <i>Vanquish the foes of hatred and so forth;</i> d. <i>The rest slay corpses.</i></p>
When people go to war, they are acutely aware that they will experience many difficulties and problems in the process. Whatever the reasons for going to war are, once decided, they will disregard whatever difficulties and problems there may be as they are intent on waging the war to defeat their enemies.	
As for Dharma practitioners, they are like these soldiers in that, they also go to war. But real practitioners go to war with their afflictions. When they fight against their afflictions, they know very well that there will be problems that come with it.	
They are [very] aware how difficult the problems that come along will be, when they start to fight their afflictions.	
Even though they know [how tough] it will be, but they still do it. In this context, it is vanquishing the foe of anger through the practice of patience. For one that is intent on cultivating patience, to vanquish the enemy of anger, one would know very well what the enemy, one's anger, can do to damage, how it can counterattack, when one fights it.	
Even though one understands all the problems involved, but one is willing to disregard all of them and fight it.	
Those who wage wars against their own afflictions like anger, with a strong intent and determination to vanquish them, are the real and best of all heroes.	

They are unlike ordinary “heroes” who only defeat their outer enemies. These are not real heroes, as what they are doing are merely advancing the death of their enemies. Even if they did not kill them, the enemies will soon die on their own accord.
Ordinary “heroes” are not real heroes as what they are doing are no different from killing a [future] corpse. Therefore, there is nothing “heroic” in that. The real heroes are those who conquer their own afflictions.
I mentioned this before: Those who are practicing correctly, hitting the point/ mark, may experience a lot of sufferings through their very pure and correct practice. A lot of their nonvirtues committed in the past ripen in that life through experiencing problems and sufferings. One has to understand that such things do happen.
For them, it becomes even more important to realize that and put up with it. External soldiers who go to war understand the problems and difficulties they will face. But because they are intent on vanquishing their external enemies, they will disregard all the problems in the process and will put up with them just to achieve their goals.
Likewise, a real and pure practitioner who practices correctly, who is strongly intent on destroying his afflictions, know how difficult it will be as there will definitely be problems. But he is prepared and are even more determined not to give up.
It is through not giving up that they will be able to complete and achieve their goal of vanquishing their afflictions.
[On the other hand,] there are many people who are afraid to practice Dharma because they think: “When I practice the Dharma I will get problems, therefore, [better not so I can avoid getting problems.]
Khenrinpoche: I heard before when many people say: “I get headaches when I read the <i>Diamond Cutter Sutra!</i> That's why I don't want to read it.” That is why, if one does not know the reality, what is right and what is wrong, one does not know how to think, one would then really get a lot of misunderstanding.
Like what I said in the previous lesson, there are many people who tell me: “I get so many problems because I did this practice or I recited that text.” Like what I have said, please do not tell me this.
This is because, none of us are actual real Dharma practitioners. When one experiences problems, it is not due to having practiced the Dharma as one has [yet to start]. When one experiences problems, just acknowledge that it is the result of one's own nonvirtue accumulated in the past that ripened. Do not assign blame to the Dharma as one did not even practice purely.
It will be a different matter if one is a real practitioner. In such a case, one would not even complain nor mention any of such things in the first place. When a pure practitioner experiences problems, he would not complain nor attribute that to his practice. This is because, he would immediately know that it is a result of his own nonvirtue accumulated in the past.
It is a clear sign that, those who attribute their sufferings and problems as a result of having practiced the Dharma are actually not practitioners. They do not know what is Dharma practice and thus do not practice it. <i>This is because, how can the Dharma bring about suffering?</i>
Therefore, those who are the real practitioners are the real heroes because, they are the ones who fight their own affliction, which is the real enemy. They know exactly what it means to practice, all the problems, difficulties and challenges [that will come along with it]. Yet they do it [wholeheartedly] with the intention to vanquish their own afflictions.

(5) An extensive explanation of the benefits of meditations on suffering [6.21]

<p>6.21 a. Furthermore, suffering has good qualities: b. Through being disheartened with it, arrogance is dispelled, c. Compassion arises for those in cyclic existence, d. Negativities are shunned, and joy is found in virtue.</p>
When one thinks of and realizes one's problems and sufferings, one can use that personal experience to 1) <i>develop disillusionment and disenchantment with samsara</i> . These are also helpful 2) <i>to weaken one's arrogance and pride</i> .
Due to such a personal understanding of suffering, one can come to understand how others are in a similar situation, how everybody has problems and sufferings. This can help one 3) <i>to have compassion for others</i> .
It is said in the teachings that, through meditating on one's own sufferings, one develops the thought of renunciation to achieve definite emergence. When one meditates on others' sufferings, one develops compassion for them, wishing for them to be free of suffering.
When one suffers, one would develop the thought to dislike suffering, to be parted from it. Due to that wish, when one investigates its cause and understands that it is actually <i>nonvirtue</i> , one would then 4) <i>restrain oneself from committing it</i> .
Since one does not want suffering, this means one wants happiness. Due to that wish, when one investigates its cause and understands that it is actually <i>virtue</i> , one would then 5) <i>engage in the accumulation of it</i> .
These are the benefits of experience sufferings in that, when one has problems, due to not wanting it but happiness, this spurs one to really think more in-depth about the causes of happiness and sufferings. When one thinks of them in terms of karma and its effects, this would then spur one to abandon nonvirtue and cultivate virtue.
This ends the section on <i>Cultivating the patience that voluntarily accepts suffering</i> [6.12 – 6.21].

Knowing *how* to practice patience:

The teachings tell one that, one's mind follows whatever it is habituated with. Its quality is such that, whatever it is familiar with, then that particular activity or object is comprehended more easily. One finds it easier to do things one is familiar with.
In the previous lesson, one saw how one has to be patient and tolerate small problems and sufferings. By being accustomed with bearing smaller problems and sufferings, one can gradually tolerate greater problems and difficulties.
This is in the context of practicing the Dharma. The entire point of doing this is so that, one subdues one's afflictions in one's own continuum. This means to go to war with one's afflictions with the goal of vanquishing them.
Therefore, one has to understand that, in the process of doing so, one will experience a lot challenges and difficulties. It is at such times that one has to be tolerant and put up with them.
One has to cultivate patience that voluntarily accepts sufferings and problems that one meets with. Having said that, one must also know <i>how</i> to do so.
Putting up with problems and difficulties, tolerating all sorts of unpleasant situations does not mean that one merely does nothing when these come. One must know <i>how</i> to deal with the situation, <i>how</i> to be patient. This involves thinking.
For example, when one meets with difficulties, problems, challenges and sufferings, one should remind oneself that, whatever problems and sufferings one experiences, is the result of one's own accumulated nonvirtues.
Such an experience of problems and sufferings that one goes through, is like a broom that sweeps away all the negativities and obscurations. It is through thinking about such a reason that one is able to accept the situation voluntarily.
Also, one should remind oneself of the benefits of such experiences. Without any problems and sufferings, one would not be looking for solutions, thereby one would not remember and practice virtue.
[Having] problems and sufferings persuade one to look for solutions, to think of future lives and engage in virtue.
Even though one has to be tolerant, put up with the difficulties, problems and sufferings that one meets, one must know how to do so. It does not mean merely accepting it thinking: "It doesn't matter."
There are some who are like that, who misunderstands [what it means to be patient,] thinking: "I'll just accept it." In actual fact, they are not really accepting it, as deep down inside, they are merely accumulating the unhappiness.
Due to accumulating more and more unhappiness, eventually it will [become uncontrollable], then they will erupt into anger.
There are people who are like that. This is not practicing patience. Many people have the wrong understanding of patience.
They think that, to practice patience means merely to keep quiet and accepting it. They are actually not doing so, as deep down, their minds are still disturbed. <i>Practicing patience does not lead to disturbed minds.</i>
Practicing patience means that, one looks at the situation and deal with it from various angles without letting the mind be disturbed. <i>The whole point is to be able to deal with the situation yet at the same time, deep inside, one is undisturbed.</i>
<i>This is what patience is.</i>
<i>6.19 Even when those who are skilled are suffering, their minds remain very lucid and undefiled.</i>
This is how patience should look like. Even though there may be a problem, but deep down, one's mind is still clear and undisturbed. In fact, the capable and skillful ones are those who can even feel happy and joyful in the midst of difficulties.

b" Cultivating the patience that is intent on [virtue] [6.22 – 6.34]

Essentially, this section explains how, those who get angry with oneself, do so without any independent control:
(1) An extensive explanation [6.22 – 6.32]
(a) As both anger and the one who is angry and so forth, rely upon causes, they are not independent [6.22 – 6.26]
(i) Neither anger nor the angry person is independent [6.22 – 6.25]
(1') The reasons it is inappropriate to be angry with an afflicted person [6.22 – 6.23]
Most people, including oneself, can accept being stricken with sicknesses without assigning blame. One puts up with it.
But if there is someone who causes one problems, then one feels that one cannot and does not wish to put up with it.
The reason being that, with one's sickness, one believes that it has no control and just happens. But with the person who harms one, one believes that he did it on purpose, solely existing to destroy and cause problems to one.
Since that is the case, one has all the [justified] reasons to be upset and retaliate.

<p>6.22 a. As I do not become angry b. At great sources of suffering such as bile disease, c. Then why be angry at those with mind? d. They too are provoked by conditions.</p>	<p>6.23 a. For example, although they are not wished for, b. These sicknesses arise; c. Likewise, although they are not wished for, d. These afflictions forcibly arise.</p>
<p>Shantideva is asking why does one not get upset with one's sicknesses due to the imbalance of the elements and so forth.</p>	
<p>Even though they make one feels uncomfortable, somehow one does not blame it, get upset nor be angry at the sickness.</p>	
<p>Yet why is it that one gets angry at those with a mind, sentient beings, that cause one problems?</p>	
<p>One gets sick for a variety of reasons: due to the changes in weather, interferences from non-human entities, wrong diet, inappropriate lifestyles and so forth. There are many conditions that cause one to fall sick.</p>	
<p>As such, one does not really have much control over them. When the causes and conditions are present, one just falls sick.</p>	
<p>Sicknesses do not arise without a reason. Whatever these may be, when one falls sick, one does not blame the sickness.</p>	
<p>One does not get angry at the sickness because one knows that, sicknesses occur due to many reasons. In that sense, sicknesses do not have a choice [to arise]. Due to causes and conditions, one experiences the discomfort of being sick.</p>	
<p>But when one thinks of a person who harms one, one feels that one's anger and retaliation towards him is justified.</p>	
<p>This is because, one thinks that the person is harming one intentionally, solely out to get at one. Therefore, one feels that: "I am right to be upset with him."</p>	
<p>Even though this is what one feels, but in reality, these above two situations are similar in that, the sicknesses one experiences and the harm one receives from the harmdoer arise without any choice nor independence.</p>	
<p>This is because, both of them arise due to their own causes and conditions.</p>	
<p>Due to certain causes and conditions as mentioned, one experiences sicknesses. But for the person one feels is having full control and so forth in harming one intentionally, in reality, he has actually no control nor independence.</p>	
<p>Therefore, both these examples are similar in that, they occur due to being under the control of other factors:</p>	
<p>One gets sick due to a whole variety of reasons, the person who harms one is not really doing it intentionally because, he has no actual choice. This is because, he is under the influence and control of the afflictions, as he is an afflicted person.</p>	
<p>An afflicted person means someone being under the control of his afflictions. As such, when he causes harm, that act of harming is not something that has arisen without any causes. He harms precisely due to the afflictions of anger in his mind.</p>	
<p>Since the person who harms one is doing that under the influence of his own afflictions, therefore, he has no choice as he is under the control of his afflictions. As such, the harm that one experiences is a dependent-arising, due to some other factors.</p>	
<p>Because the harm one experiences is a dependent-arising, it is empty by nature, empty of existing inherently.</p>	
<p>If one thinks about dependent-arising in this context, one can focus on oneself being the experiencer of the harm, the person causing harm to one and the action of the harm itself, [all these three aspects] to be empty [of existing inherently.]</p>	
<p>The main point here is to understand that, the people who harm one, who are upset with one, did not do it out of choice in the sense that, they are under the influence and control of their own afflictions such as anger.</p>	
<p>It is due to their afflictions that they cause harm to one. As such, they are not independent, they do not have control.</p>	
<p>If one thinks about it, [there is no valid reason] to be upset with the person who harms one. If one really wishes to be angry and assign blame, then one should be angry at the afflictions of the harmdoer, not the person.</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: Are you getting the logic? Whether you can practice that or not, that's another question, but you must first get the logic of what Shantideva is saying.</p>	
<p>Even though that is the logic, but of course, one has one's own "logic." One would normally think that: "Granted that the sickness does not have any choice, due to certain causes and conditions they arise [to harm me.] Therefore, I don't blame it [for my suffering.]"</p>	
<p>Qualm: "Even though the harmdoer also does not have any choice due to being under the control of his afflictions, but why should I be angry at his afflictions? These do not have any intentions to harm me, rather, the harmdoer has the intention to harm me and is upset with me, not his afflictions!"</p>	

(2') Anger is not willingly developed [6.24]

<p>6.24 a. Without thinking, "I shall be angry," b. People become angry with no resistance, c. And without thinking, "I shall produce," d. Likewise anger itself is produced.</p>
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Before one gets upset, when one's mind is undisturbed, one does not think: "I just want to harm and hurt this person!"			
But due to certain conditions, then the thought arises: "I want to hurt him!" [This would not occur] prior to anger arising.			
There must be some conditions coming together that resulted in one getting upset. Without the gathering of such conditions, one would not be upset. No one wishes to be upset and harm others [if there were no conditions.]			
If one were to examine the conditions that made one upset and harm others, although they lead one to getting upset, they themselves from their own sides do not have any intentions to harm others [either.]			
Even though these conditions do not have any thought of causing harm to another person, but when they gather, then without any choice, anger and the thought to harm others arise.			
The line of reasoning is this: 1) It was established, using the example of being <i>sick</i> , how it arises due to various causes and conditions, hence, it does not arise independently.			
2) It was also established how, <i>people</i> do not get upset without any reason. They get upset and harm one mainly due to the [gathering of conditions] that produced the afflictions.			
3) When one looks at the person, he does not have the intention right from the beginning to harm and hurt someone. But when causes and conditions completely gather, then somehow without any choice, <i>anger</i> and the <i>thought to harm</i> arise.			
Qualm: "Even though the afflictions don't have the intention to harm me, but the person has the intention/ choice to harm me. Even though you can say the person may not have the intention to harm me, but he still wants to harm me."			
Reply: This is because, once the causes and conditions for him to harm come together, the thought in him to harm will arise.			
Due to gathering of causes and conditions, the "other factors" of dependent-arising	There is imbalance of the elements and so forth	One experiences sickness	Understanding that both sickness and its causes and conditions do not have independent intentions to harm , one does not blame the sickness nor its causes and conditions
	Harmdoer generates anger and the thought to harm	One experiences harm	Understanding that both the harmdoer and the causes and conditions that resulted in the anger do not have independent intentions to harm , one should also not blame the harmdoer nor its causes and conditions

(3') As all negativities arise from causes and conditions, they are without independence [6.25]

<p>6.25 a. All misdeeds there are b. And all the various kinds of negativities c. Arise through the force of conditions; d. They do not have self-power.</p>			
Due to such afflictions as anger and attachment, nonvirtuous karma is accumulated, like taking the lives of others, taking what is not given, engaging in sexual misconduct, lying, divisive, offensive and meaningless speeches and so forth.			
All such nonvirtues that arise are due to the forces of conditions. They do not exist and arise independent of other factors, nor do they arise intentionally . One cannot intentionally wish to do something without depending on some other factors.			
The reason why people engage in nonvirtue of the acts of harming others is because of the play of various causes and conditions coming together. Hence, it is not as if they arise without a cause, that they are done out of an independent wish.			
If one understands this, then when one sees people who engage in a lot of nonvirtues, all sorts of acts of harming others, putting aside being upset with them, one would in fact generate compassion for them.			
This is because, one understands that they are under the control of some other factors and are not doing them intentionally.			
This is the reality, when people engage in nonvirtue and cause harm to others, including oneself, one feels that they are doing so intentionally, having a say and control. Since this is what one feels, [such misconceptions] make one even more upset.			
This is because, one thinks that they are doing so on purpose and intentionally. But that person is not doing so intentionally in the sense that, he does not have any control. He is being controlled and pushed by his afflictions.			
To start with, there are many causes and conditions for him to be upset with one. When these gather, then he will get angry powerlessly and without choice. Motivated by his anger, he would cause harm to oneself.			
If one is able to understand this line of reasoning, seeing how the harmdoer does not have any choice and is completely and powerlessly under the control of causes, conditions and his afflictions, thereby getting upset and harms one, rather than feeling that he is doing it on purpose, it is possible for one to think: "It is like that, there is nothing that can be done."			
It is even possible to have thought of concern, affection, love and compassion for one's harmdoer.			
The harmdoer is doing so without choice due to being under the control of his afflictions. Then, what about the afflictions? His afflictions such as anger itself also does not have independence as well:			

(ii) Their causes and conditions are also not independent [6.26]

<p>6.26 a. <i>These conditions that assemble together</i> b. <i>Have no intention, "I shall produce,"</i> c. <i>And neither does that produced by them</i> d. <i>Have the intention, "I will be produced."</i></p>
<p>Without the external object of visual form, there is no way to say: "Eye consciousness seeing visual form." Without the external object of sound, one cannot say: "I heard something." Ear consciousness apprehending sound would not arise. Without the external object of touch, there is no way to say: "I felt that object."</p>
<p>Without visual form, one cannot say: "I saw something." Without seeing something, one cannot say that it is beautiful or ugly. Without tactile object, the feelings of tactility would not arise. As a result, one cannot say: "This is rough or smooth."</p>
<p>If the external object of sound does not exist, one cannot say that one heard something, without hearing any sounds, one cannot say whether the sound was pleasant or unpleasant.</p>
<p>Therefore, for a pleasant or unpleasant feeling to arise, for example, a bodily feeling, there must be the gathering of object, sense power and consciousness. Through the gathering of these three, this is the mental factor of contact.</p>
<p>This leads to the mental factor of feeling. Depending on how one perceives or distinguishes the object, there is pleasant or unpleasant object. For there to be feelings, there must be the [gathering of] all such other factors.</p>
<p>Likewise, for anger to arise, there must be the gathering of the situation/ object, mental sense power and consciousness.</p>
<p>Therefore, these three [conditions] must gather before anger can arise. Although they must gather before anger can arise, these three conditions from their sides, whether on their own or collectively, do not have the intention to produce anger.</p>
<p>The anger itself, which is a product of the gathering of these three conditions, also does not have the thought thinking: "I am now produced and have arisen independently from these three conditions."</p>
<p>The point behind these lines of reasoning is to show that, anger is not generated intentionally, not due to the person thinking: "I want to get angry and now anger arises." The point is, anger is the product of other causes and conditions.</p>
<p>When the causes and conditions gather, then anger itself will arise.</p>

(b) Refuting the existence of independent causes [6.27 – 6.31]

<p>This section serves to refute the positions of some non-buddhist schools. It is obvious that there is a difference between the Buddhist and non-buddhist position. In the presentation of causality, the former's position is very different from the latter.</p>
<p>For example, there is the position of the non-buddhist Indian philosophical system of the Samkyas which, even though they assert causality, assert that causes are <i>independent</i>, that causes exist independently.</p>
<p>This is in complete opposite to the Buddhist position, which asserts that causes are <i>other-powered</i>, that the causes themselves are also under the control of some other factors/ other powers.</p>

(i) Refuting the independent self and principal of the Samkyas [6.27 – 6.28]

(1') Refuting that the principal generates independent expressions [6.27 – 6.28(ab)]

<p>The Indian non-buddhist philosophical system called the Samkyas asserts <i>Principal</i> and <i>Generality</i> to exist independently:</p>	
<p>6.27 <i>That which is asserted as the "Principal"</i> <i>And that which is imputed as the "Self,"</i> <i>Do not arise after having purposefully thought,</i> <i>"I shall arise."</i></p>	<p>6.28 <i>If they are not produced and non-existent,</i> <i>What is asserted to be produced at that time?</i></p>
<p>Stating the core assertions of the Samkyas [Enumerators]: They assert object of knowledge/ existence is exhaustively divided [enumerated] into 25 categories. Whatever that exists, necessarily falls into these 25 categories. They assert a Principal that is like the Creator of all the different aspects of it, which are the creation/ expressions of the Principal.</p>	
<p>Of the 25 categories: There is the Principal and the Self (2 out of 25). The rest of the 23 categories are expressions/ aspects of this Principal. They assert the Self to be consciousness/ awareness, permanent, unitary and independent.</p>	
<p>The 25 categories of the object of knowledge can be subsumed into 6 terminological divisions such as qualities, substance and so forth. In the category of substance, there are 9 divisions. One of which is <i>self</i>. Such a <i>self</i> is a substance and not consciousness. It is form which is permanent, unitary, independent as well as being substantially established.</p>	
<p>Due to that, it is not dependent on other factors, rather, it acts as a basis for other qualities [to arise.]</p>	
<p>In general, there are 24 qualities, but the qualities that arise in dependence on this <i>self</i> are 9, such as happiness, suffering, anger, attachment and so forth. The point of this discussion is that, in dependence on this <i>self</i>, anger arises in dependence on it, it is produced by this <i>self</i> <i>independently</i>.</p>	

Such systems as this do assert causality, but the problem is that they assert causality to be independent, without depending on some other factors. Such “independent cause” then produces an effect. This becomes a logically untenable problem.
In essence, verse 6.27 – 6.28(ab) is saying that the position of the Samkyas is incorrect because, since the <i>self</i> , in dependence upon which, qualities such as anger and attachment are produced, is [itself] independent and unproduced, then how could it produce something else?
If there were ever such an “independent cause,” since it is independent, it can exist on its own without depending upon some other factors. This means that it is not produced. If itself is not produced, then how can it produce something else?
For the sake of analysis, even if one allows that, an “independent cause” has a cause, is produced by another “independent cause,” then since it is produced by another “independent cause,” then itself [must be] produced.
Since it is produced, then how can it be permanent? It has to be impermanent. But the Samkyas assert it to be permanent. Since it is produced in dependence upon something else, the “independent cause” cannot be independent/ autonomous.
The point is that, even though they assert there are causes and conditions that produce things, but these are independent. If the cause itself is independent, then it is permanent, not subject to momentary changes, due to it not being produced by something else. Since it is independent and permanent, then it cannot produce an effect.
Therefore, the Samkyas' assertion that anger and so forth can be produced from an independent cause, an <i>I/ self</i> , is untenable.
One has to understand the Buddhist system's assertion. If it is a functioning thing/ product, its coming into being/ existence is necessary dependent upon some other factors. Therefore, it is not independent, it is necessarily other-powered and cannot be self-powered. This is the reality.
But some of these non-buddhist schools are saying that, there can be an “independent cause” that can produce an effect.
For example, the Samkyas say that, the Principal, the Self and so forth, are permanent, unitary and independent causes that can produce effects. This is not tenable.
The main point is that, there is no such thing as a self-powered cause. If it is a cause, it is necessarily other-powered. This means that, it is never independent, it comes into being by depending upon some other factors other than itself.
The reality is that, if something is a cause, it is necessarily impermanent and other-powered, dependent upon some other factors other than itself. Therefore, it is not independent. There is never such a thing as an “independent cause.”
If that is the reality, then if one were to examine the Samkyas' position, that they assert a Principal and a Self which are causes that can produce some effects, then do these two arise from a cause or without a cause?
1) If they assert that these two arise from a cause, then it would follow that these two cannot exist, because if these two are products of other causes, they themselves cannot be independent and self-powered. But they assert them to be self-powered.
2) If they are independent, self-powered, permanent and do not undergo momentary change, then they also cannot produce effects. But they assert these two can produce effects.

(2') Refuting that an aware being autonomously experiences objects [6.28(cd)]

<i>6.28 c. Since it would always be distracted to its objects, d. It follows that it will never cease.</i>	
The Samkyas assert that the Self engages in its object, enjoy and utilizes it from its own side independently and permanently without depending on some other factors and never changing. This is refuted by these two lines.	
This is because, this would absurdly mean that, once this permanent and independent Self engages in its object, it would forever do so continuously without stopping. This is because, it is permanent, never changing and independent.	
One would never be able to posit a time where the Self is not engaging in its object due to it being permanent and independent. This is never the case as one knows that, forms, sounds and so forth change. Since there is a change in object, then there must be a change in the experiencer. For example, if form ceases, then there cannot be a Self utilizing it.	

(ii) Refuting the independent self of the Nyaya[yikas] [6.29 – 6.30]

(1') It is not valid [to posit that] a permanent phenomenon produces an effect [6.29(ab)]

(2') It is not valid [for a permanent phenomenon] to rely upon conditions [6.29(cd) – 6.30(ab)]

(3') Permanent phenomena are not related to conditions [6.30(cd)]

<i>6.29 a. If the Self were permanent b. It would obviously be devoid of activity, just like space. c. So even if it were to meet with other conditions d. What could the unchanging do?</i>	<i>6.30 a. Even if, when acted upon, it remains as before, b. Then what did activity do to it? c. If it is said, “This is the activity of that,” d. How could the two ever be related?</i>
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These very much have the same assertions and refutations as before.

(iii) Once one understands all migrators to be like emanations, [they see that it is] inappropriate to be angry [with them] [6.31]

6.31 a. Hence all are governed by others,
b. And through the power of that, they have no power.
c. Having understood in this way, I shall not become angry
d. At all things that are like emanations.

Examples given earlier like anger, sicknesses, harmdoers and so forth, are all dependent-arising in that, they all arise through the force of other factors and not in and of themselves.

The harm that one receives is a result of the gathering of many causes and conditions. But the causes and conditions that brought the harm one experiences, are themselves products of other causes and conditions, which are also products of other causes and conditions and so forth.

When there is a harmdoer in one's life that causes one problems and harms. He is doing so due to his own anger and afflictions. He is angry because of his own mental unhappiness.

His mental unhappiness is again due to the gathering of causes and conditions like objects or situations, sense powers and consciousness. This produces an experience that makes him unhappy. When this builds up, he would get angry. Due to his anger, then he harms one. The entire process starts with the gathering of object/ situations, sense powers and consciousness.

The gathering of these three conditions also come from a cause, this is where karma and the afflictions are involved.

Therefore, an entire causal mechanism is this: Something arises because of a cause, which itself is a product of some other causes and so forth. Hence, the various causes that bring about experiences are themselves the products of other causes.

Therefore, causes are not independent, they are dependent-arising. They are other-powered and not self-powered.

Therefore, there is no beginning to this entire causal mechanism. In short, if it is a functioning thing, a product, an impermanent phenomenon, it has no beginning.

If one were to look for a real independently existing cause, the first moment, one will not be able to find it. This is because, there is no beginning. A cause is a result of some other causes, which are the results of some further causes that preceded it.

Going by this line of reasoning, there is no beginning to causes in general. Therefore, there are no independently existing causes. As a result, things are dependently originated. One can say that, things are dependently-arisen.

Therefore, there is not a single phenomenon whose existence is not dependent upon some other factors. As a result, there are no truly existent phenomena existing by their own entities from their own sides independent on other factors.

Whatever exists is dependently-arisen. Hence, phenomena are *like-illusions*.

Therefore, the harmdoer who causes one problems, is not an independent harmdoer that can exist independently, truly and from his own side. He came into being due to the interplay of many causes and conditions.

One can use such a reflection to counteract any anger one has towards that person.

When there is anger in one's mind, when one is upset with a situation/ object or a person, in the perspective of this anger, it is directed at an "independently existing" harmdoer existing truly in and of himself right there from his own side.

This harmdoer is just there to harm one without any other reasons for his actions and behavior. Since this is what one believes in, therefore, one gets upset at [the harmdoer due to such way of thinking].

But, one is getting upset at something which does not exist!

One has to realize this through reflecting on dependent-arising, how the harmdoer does not exist alone and independently. This is because, there are many causes and conditions that cause him to act in that way. Due to that many causes and conditions, that harmdoer is not independent.

But, to be able to understand subtle dependent-arising, one firstly has to understand coarse dependent-arising, at the level of causality, which has many causes and conditions that made him angry and [got him to] harm one.

If one understands that there are a whole variety of causes and conditions that made him harm one, then one would realize that he is not independent. Therefore, by understanding dependent-arising at the level of causality, one comes to understand dependent-arising at the subtle level.

Since his actions are products of various causes and conditions, therefore, he is not independent, existing from his own side. Therefore, he is empty of existing truly/ inherently. This is how one counteracts anger with reflection on dependent-arising:

Firstly, at the level of causality, based on that, one understands how, things are *dependently-designated*, at the subtle level.

Recap:

In verse 6.31 explained in the previous lesson, it was mentioned how it is inappropriate to be angry based on understanding how all phenomena are like emanations. The presentation of causality was given to explain how effects are produced independence upon their causes, thus making them other-powered, not having any independence.

Based on that, one can understand dependent-arising on the subtle level where all things are empty of existing inherently.

(c) The need to overcome anger [6.32]

- 6.32 a. *OPINION: What will counteract it?*
- b. *Counteraction would also be inappropriate.*
- c. *RESPONSE: In dependence upon it the continuity of suffering will be severed;*
- d. *It is not inappropriate.*

This verse shows the qualm raised by most proponents of Buddhist tenets. When they hear the presentation of the emptiness of inherent existence, how all things do not exist inherently, they are unable to accept. To them, if things did not exist inherently, then the methods and antidotes to counteract anger would not work.

It is only the Consequence Middle Way School who asserts that phenomena are empty of existing inherently. All lower schools from the Autonomy Middle Way School and below assert otherwise.

For the former, they assert that all phenomena exist in mere name, merely imputed by name, by thought, merely designated.

As a result, things cannot exist inherently, they are empty of existing inherently. This is their fundamental assertion.

Such an assertion cannot be accepted by all the lower schools because, it cannot fit their minds. For them, if things existed as something merely imputed by thought, this means that everything is merely made up by the mind.

This would mean that, one can make up anything with one's mind. As long as one makes it up, it exists.

Hence, if things are merely made up by the mind in whatever way, then how would one be able to classify something as the truth and others as false? How would one coherently explain that, in dependence on a set of causes, one has a definite effect?

All the lower schools assert that, all phenomena exist from their own sides, that there is something definitely right there from its own side that stands out from other things. For example, a seed exists from its own side functioning to produce a sprout.

Such an ability to produce a sprout is inherent in the seed, a special quality and feature of the seed. If things were merely imputed by mind, one can just make up anything. If that is the case, then why can it not produce a horse or elephant?

There very fact that the seed can only produce a sprout, is the clearest sign/ proof that there is something [inherently] right there from the side of the seed that makes it different.

Therefore, things are not merely imputed by mind but have something [inherently] right there from the sides of the objects.

With the exception of the highest school, this is essentially the common view of all the lower schools of Buddhist tenets.

What these lower schools assert are also essentially what one thinks as well. When one thinks of how a seed produces a sprout, one would think that the seed really produces a sprout right there from its own side.

One cannot imagine how [such a process] is something that is merely imputed by thought. This just cannot fit one's mind as one feels that there is something right there about the seed, which has the special potential to produce a sprout.

This is what all the lower schools would also assert.

In *Nagarjuna's Fundamental Treatise on Wisdom*, there is an objection raised by the lower tenets which states:

Qualm: If things do not exist inherently, by their own nature, nothing there from the side of the object, that everything is merely imputed by thought, then there is no way to coherently posit causality, the creation, disintegration of things and the Four Noble Truths. If one cannot posit the Four Noble Truths, there is no way to posit the Three Jewels.

This is essentially what 6.32(ab) means. The objection raised here is that: If things do not exist inherently, then there is no way to coherently explain how, by cultivating the antidotes, one can counteract anger.

The Consequence Middle Way School refutes this completely by turning their opponents' position back onto themselves:

Reply: In reality, if things existed inherently from their own sides, then there is no way to coherently posit causality, the production, disintegration of things and the Four Noble Truths. Therefore, there is no way to posit the Three Jewels.

It is only when one asserts the emptiness of inherent existence would one be able to coherently posit [causality,] arising, disintegration, the Four Noble Truths, the Three Jewels and so forth.

Khenrinpoche: Whose argument do you think is better? If you think the Consequence Middle Way School's position is the best, how do you prove that?

Firstly, one has to analyze the meaning between 1) Emptiness of inherent existence and 2) Inherent existence. What do these two individually mean? What does “ <i>Inherent</i> existence” say?
<i>Inherent</i> existence, existence by its own entity, right there from its own side under its own power, self instituting, all mean:
<i>An existence on its own that is independent of and without depending on any other factors.</i>
If things existed inherently, then how can cause and effect possibly work?
If things existed inherently, then it is independent. If it is independent, then there is no need for dependency. If there is no need for dependency, then how would one assert cause and effect? Do effects not depend on causes?
If things existed inherently, then cause and effect/ causality would not work.
It is precisely the nature of reality that, things are dependently-originated, there is dependent-arising. Therefore, things cannot exist inherently. While things are empty of existing inherently, they do exist as dependently-originated.
Therefore, it is only when one asserts the emptiness of inherent existence could one coherently posit dependent-arising.
As a result of depending on the antidote, the practice of patience and so forth, one can achieve the result, the abandonment of any objects of abandonment, such as anger. This is the meaning of 6.32(cd).
Although the antidotes and the process of counteracting anger do not exist inherently, but the process of applying the antidotes exist conventionally. In dependence on that, one is able to counteract the object of abandonment, here, one's anger.
If one counteracts one's anger, one would not experience the results of one's anger.

(2) Summary [6.33 – 6.34]

<i>6.33 So when seeing an enemy or even a friend Doing something incorrect, By thinking, “It arises from such conditions,” I shall remain in a happy frame of mind.</i>	<i>6.34 If things were established with one's freedom, Then since no one wishes to suffer, Suffering would not occur To any embodied creature.</i>
One sees how things and events arise from their own causes and conditions, how they are dependently-originated at the level of causality, and something being dependently-designated [at the subtler level].	
Therefore, when one applies [this antidote] when one is being harmed by an enemy or even a friend, something one does not like or feels is incorrect in a situation, one has to understand that this happens due to certain causes and conditions which lead them to do such things. It arose in dependence upon some other factors.	
Verse 6.33 is saying that, one should remain calm and happy despite the difficult situation. This is because, it arose out of various causes and conditions.	
If things and events did not arise due to their own causes and conditions, but rather, if they can arise out of a choice, a freedom, then how would one still be suffering? Even though everyone is the same in not wanting suffering and only wants happiness, how is it that situations do not go according to everyone's wishes?	
Obviously, things and events do not arise because one wants them to, that one has a choice and freedom. Things and events do not arise by choice but due to the gathering of their respective causes and conditions.	
Whatever experiences and situations one meets with, these are the result of the gathering of many causes and conditions.	
Hence, these are not independent but dependently-arisen.	
This completes the section on Cultivating the patience [of certitude about the teachings] [6.22 – 6.34].	

c" Cultivating the patience that intentionally not retaliate against those who cause harm [6.35 – 6.51]

In order to disregard the harm done to oneself, one has to stop oneself from getting angry with the harm received.
One of the methods to do that is to cultivate compassion:

(1) Engaging the mind in the method of compassion [6.35 – 6.38]

(a) Some sentient beings cause harm to oneself due to the lack of understanding [6.35 – 6.36]

<i>6.35 Through lacking conscientiousness People even harm themselves with thorns and other things, And for the sake of obtaining women and the like They become obsessed and starve themselves.</i>	<i>6.36 And there are some who harm themselves By hanging themselves, leaping from cliffs, Eating poison and incompatible food And unmeritorious deeds.</i>
These two verses are saying that, when one experiences harm from someone, one has to focus on how the harmdoer is actually harming himself. Therefore, putting aside getting angry, there is reason only to generate concern and compassion.	

(b) If one can kill even oneself due to lack of understanding, it is not surprising that they can cause harm to others [6.37]

6.37 a. *If, when under the influence of afflictions,*
b. *People will even kill their treasured selves,*
c. *How can they not cause harm*
d. *To the bodies of others?*

If people can harm their most treasured possession, their own lives, under the influence of their afflictions, then why would it be surprising when they harm others, including oneself?

(c) Therefore, it is appropriate to feel compassion for them [6.38]

6.38 a. *Even if I virtually cannot develop compassion for such people*
b. *Who through the arising of afflictions*
c. *Set out to kill me and so forth,*
d. *The last thing I should do is to become angry with them.*

This verse is saying that, it is extremely inappropriate to be angry with those who harm one under the influence of their own afflictions. In reality, it is only appropriate to generate compassion towards one's harmdoer.

Even if one cannot do that, the least one can do is not to become angry with them.

(2) Stopping the causes of anger [6.39 – 6.41]

(a) It is inappropriate to be angry with a child if it is in his nature [to lack understanding and acting so] [6.39]

6.39 a. *Even if it were the nature of the childish*
b. *To cause harm to other beings,*
c. *It would be inappropriate to be angry with them,*
d. *For this would be like begrudging fire for having the nature to burn.*

When an ordinary person harms one, the first thing to do is to analyze his nature: Is he by nature childish or not?

If it is his nature, then it is obvious that he will harm one. There is no need to begrudge him for doing so as it is his nature. Just like one would not get angry at the fire for burning one, as there is nothing one can do about it. It is its nature to burn.

[Therefore, for a childish person who gets angry at one,] what can we expect [from him other than being harmed?]

Since it is in the nature of the person to act in that way, then it is inappropriate and incorrect to be angry with him.

Even if it is not in the nature of the person [to be childish,] it is still inappropriate [to get angry.]

(b) It is inappropriate to be angry even if the conditions that brought about harm are adventitious [6.40]

6.40 a. *And even if the fault were incidental [219]*
b. *In sentient beings of definite nature,*
c. *It would be inappropriate to be angry,*
d. *For this would be like begrudging space for allowing smoke to rise in it.*

One should analyze and check if it is in the nature of the harmdoer to harm or it is due to some temporary condition.

If it is in his nature to harm, then it would be inappropriate to get angry, as this would be like begrudging fire for burning one's hand when one puts one's hand into the fire.

If it is not in his nature to harm, if he is usually good hearted by nature, a calm and patient person, but due to causes and conditions causing him to incidentally get upset, then all the more it is inappropriate to be angry with him.

This is because, being angry with such a person is like being angry at the sky rather than getting angry at the smoke [haze] that covers it. What one is unhappy at is the smoke [haze,] which is temporary and does not happen [all the time.]

Instead of getting angry at the smoke [haze,] if one gets angry at the sky, then this is like getting angry at the person who is generally by nature calm and good hearted.

(c) By examining the direct and/or indirect causes, [one understands that] being angry is inappropriate [6.41]

6.41 a. *If I become angry with the wielder,*
b. *Although I am directly harmed by the stick and so forth,*
c. *Then since he too is incited by hatred,*
d. *I should be angry with the two or with the hatred.*

If someone hits one with a stick, one may experience pain and gets upset immediately. One does not get upset with the stick, which is the actual [condition] that caused the pain. Instead, one gets upset with the person.

This is because, one thinks that the stick is wielded by him as the stick does not have any choice.

[One feels that] it is actually the person who wields the stick that is at fault. If one accepts this reasoning, then one should also likewise accept that, the harmdoer is also [without choice, as he is] under the control of his afflictions like anger.

Since that is the case, why should one get upset with the harmdoer and not his anger? If one really wishes to be upset, one should be upset with his anger and not him.

(3) Reflecting on unwanted occurrences due to one's own faults [6.42 – 6.51]

(a) The meaning of the actual [6.42 – 6.49]

(i) Reflecting on the harm brought upon oneself by another as [being] one's own fault [6.42]

*6.42 a. Previously I caused similar harm
b. To sentient beings.
c. Therefore it is right for this harm to occur
d. To me who is the agent of harm to sentient beings.*

Whatever undesirable experiences that befalls upon one, in the final analysis, it is the result of one's doing in the past.

In one's past lives, one has caused similar harms to others. As a result, the karma is now ripening upon oneself.

(ii) The cause of suffering is a disadvantage of having [appropriated] a body [6.43 – 6.44]

*6.43 a. Both the weapon and my body
b. Are causes of my suffering.
c. Since he gave rise to the weapon and I to the body,
d. With whom should I be angry?*

When someone hits one with a weapon that causes pain, such an experience of pain is the coming together of the harmdoer and one's own body. When the experiencer of pain, one's own body, is hit by the harmdoer wielding a weapon, pain arises.

The harmdoer and oneself, [the perpetrator and] the victim, are both causes of the suffering that one experiences.

For any phenomenon to arise, there must be the [gathering of] substantial cause and cooperative condition.

The harmdoer who wields the stick and the stick itself are like the cooperative conditions for producing the pain one feels. One's body is like the substantial/ main cause for the arising of one's painful experience.

If the harmdoer and oneself are equally responsible for the arising of the pain, then one has to ask oneself why is it that, one is only particularly upset with the harmdoer? One should also take some responsibility. If one really feels justified in getting angry, then one should also be equally angry with oneself, since one has a role to play in this experience of suffering.

Therefore, there is no real justification and reason to be angry only with the harmdoer [alone.]

*6.44 a. If in blind attachment I cling
b. To this suffering abscess of a human form
c. That cannot bear to be touched,
d. With whom should I be angry when it is hurt?*

The nature of one's body is such that, it is easily harmed and difficult to sustain. It is like a huge boil [a single skin infection covering the entire body], all it takes is just a small condition for it to feel discomfort and pain.

When the temperature goes up a little, one starts to feel very hot and uncomfortable; but if the weather turns a little cold, one also feels very uncomfortable. Such is the nature of one's body.

The body that one has is in the nature of suffering, something that is easily lost and difficult to sustain and keep alive.

Due to ignorance, one develops very strong attachment and clings onto it with a very strong notion that “this is mine.”

Due to that clinging, one finds it very difficult to tolerate any harm that is done to one's body.

The verse is saying that, the problem actually originates with oneself. One is clinging onto this 'boil' of the suffering body in the first place, which is in the nature of suffering, very easily lost and very difficult to sustain.

Since that is the case, then why is one angry at the harmdoer when in fact, the problem actually lies with oneself?

(iii) [Seeing this as] a fault of having [created] the causes of suffering in a former life [6.45 – 6.46]

*6.45 a. The childish do not wish to suffer,
b. And are greatly attached to its causes,
c. Thus they are harmed by their own misdeeds;
d. Why should they begrudge others?*

Even though no one likes to suffer, and everyone wants happiness, but most people run after the causes of suffering.

One's problems and sufferings are the ripening results of nonvirtuous actions accumulated in the past.

Although one does not like suffering, but in the past, one craved and ran after the causes of suffering: one killed and took the lives of others, one stole the possessions of others and so forth.
As a result of such nonvirtuous actions, now one is experiencing problems.
<i>6.46 a. For example, just like the guardians of hell b. And the forest of sword leaves, c. So this is produced by my actions; d. At what should I be angry?</i>
All the experiences of being burnt, tortured and cut by sword leaves and so forth in the hells, are all the results of one's own nonvirtuous karma. In short, every single problem and suffering one experiences is the result of one's own nonvirtue.
Therefore, it is inappropriate to be upset with the situation or the harmdoer. Rather, one has to understand that, all these problems are the results of one's own doing.
In fact, when someone harms one, one is [actually] responsible for that person engaging in nonvirtue. One is the condition for the harmdoer to harm one in the first place as it was one's own karma that “instigated” it.
In fact, one is actually causing someone else to accumulate nonvirtue:

(iv) As it is one's own karma that causes others into bringing suffering upon oneself, it is inappropriate to be angry with them [6.47]

<i>6.47 a. Having been instigated by my own actions, b. Those who cause me harm come into being. c. If due to this they should proceed to sentient beings' [hells] d. Am I not destroying them?</i>
It is due to the “instigation” of one's own nonvirtues accumulated in the past that one [now] has the harmdoer causing problems to one. Therefore, his harming one is actually “instigated” by one's own nonvirtuous karma.
As a result, it is one that actually causes the harmdoer to harm oneself. If that is the case, is it not oneself that is sending others to the lower realms of the hells? If one analyzes deeply, is one not the [actual] harmdoer, not the other person?
This is because, it is one's own nonvirtue that caused that person to harm one [in the first place]. Through that, he is accumulating negativities and would end up in the hells. One is basically the one sending him to the lower realms.
If one thinks about this, it can really help one practice patience.

(v) Anger itself is erroneous and thus inappropriate [6.48 – 6.49]

<i>6.48 a. By taking them as objects b. I purify much negativity through patience. c. But in dependence upon me they will proceed d. To hell suffering for a long time.</i>	<i>6.49 a. So since I am causing harm to them b. And they are benefiting me, c. Why, unruly mind, do you become angry d. Erroneously?</i>
If one is able to practice patience in dependence on an enemy or a harmdoer, besides being able to develop patience, one is also able to purify much negativities accumulated in the past. Therefore, that enemy becomes a benefactor for oneself.	
Due to one's own nonvirtues, a harmdoer comes into one's life and causes one problems. It is therefore at the “instigation” of one's own nonvirtues that such a harmdoer causes harm to one. In doing so, he accumulates great nonvirtues.	
As a result, he would have to suffer in the lower realms such as the hells for a very long time.	
If one thinks about it, one has [actually] become the harmdoer. One has become the harmdoer of one's harmdoer. If one is able to practice patience, one's harmdoer can become one's benefactor.	
This is because, in dependence upon him, if one is able to cultivate patience, one develops one's own patience, completes the accumulation of merits and purifies negativities. One receives all such benefits from that harmdoer.	
Therefore, that harmdoer has now become one's benefactor, one has become the harmdoer of one's harmdoer [instead].	
If the harmdoer is very beneficial for oneself if one is able to cultivate patience, then getting angry at him would be a mistake. Therefore, the verse is asking why is one angry with one's benefactor. Putting aside being angry with him, in fact, one should be very happy with him and also like him.	
These are the various arguments one can use to develop the patience that disregards any harm done to one.	
When one thinks about it, these [advice] are very useful that would definitely help one control one's anger:	
1) To recognize that when one experiences harm from someone, it is incorrect to put all the blame on the harmdoer as one is equally responsible for the pain. For example, even though he wields the stick, one has the body to experience pain.	

2) One has to consider karma: whatever problems and sufferings one experiences is the result of one's own nonvirtues. Therefore, one cannot assign blame at anyone else except oneself.
3) One is actually the cause of one's harmdoer going to hell. One actually receives benefits from him in terms of being able to practice patience and so forth.
When one reflects on all such reasons, then it becomes very useful to cultivate the patience that disregards harm.
There are many reasons and arguments put forth already. [What is left is for] one to reflect on it. If one does not [do anything] about it, then there is nothing that can be done [to overcome one's anger,] as these remains mere words.
But if one were to think about them, these [reasons] are very useful. This is because, whenever one experiences problems or harms, one's instinctive reaction is that one would never think one is ever responsible and at fault.
It is always an external person and/ or situation [that is responsible.]
But if one were to really reflect on it and come to acknowledge that one has some responsibilities, that [acknowledgment] itself alone is already very helpful to control one's anger.
If one has the ability to think deeper how in fact, one is actually the harmdoer and one's harmdoer has become one's benefactor in that, he is the best teacher for patience and so forth, then the practice of patience becomes more profound.
It is then even possible to regard one's harmdoer as one's teacher and respect him.
Of course, for those who can reach that level in regarding the harmdoer as a benefactor, then from that day onwards, enemy probably would not exist for that person.

Recap:

In the previous lesson, it was explained how, in dependence upon the existence of the harmdoer acting as a necessary condition for one to practice patience, if one does cultivate patience, then one would accumulate the collections and purify negativities. In that sense, he is not [actually] a harmdoer but a benefactor who helps one.
If one gets upset with him and retaliates, then of course he would also get upset, be angry and retaliate. As a result, he accumulates nonvirtuous karma and will go to the lower realms and suffer for a long time. In that sense, one has become the harmdoer to him. So, he has become a benefactor to one whereas oneself has become a harmdoer to him.
For these reasons, the teachings tell one that, it is completely inappropriate to be upset and hold onto him as an enemy.
When one faces such a person in one's life, then it is good to think about what one has learnt here and analyze whether he or oneself is the actual harmdoer, whether in fact, one's harmdoer is one's benefactor and oneself is the actual harmdoer.
The teachings are telling one that in reality, that is the case, one has actually become the harmdoer.

(b) [Rejecting qualms] [6.50 – 6.51]

(i) Refuting [the position holding] that the enemy does not benefit oneself [6.50(ab)]

Qualm: How is it that one is the harmdoer whilst the one harming one is one's benefactor? That is impossible.
The line of reason is this: one's harmdoer helps one to practice patience. If one practices patience, one gets all the benefits. Therefore, instead of being a harmdoer, he is actually one's benefactor.
Qualm: Because of being harmed by him, I get angry. When I get angry, I am throwing myself to the lower realms. Without him, I would not go to hell. So how could he be my benefactor as he is the condition for me to go to hell? Reply:
<i>6.50 a. If I have the excellent quality of thought, b. I will not go to hell.</i>
Although one's existence is the condition for one's harmdoer to create negativities and thus go to hell, this does not mean that one would necessarily go to hell. If one has the excellent quality practice of patience, one would not go to hell.
Whatever is the situation, if one practices patience, one would not go to hell as one did not create the cause.
But if one does not cultivate patience and gets upset and angry, then one will go to hell.

(ii) Refuting [the position holding] that oneself does not bring harm upon others [6.50(cd)]

Qualm: If one asserts that he is one's benefactor helping one, since he is helping one, then how would he go to hell? Reply:
<i>6.50 c. If I am protecting myself, d. How will they accrue [merit] here?</i>
If one practices patience, one stops accumulating negativities and avoids the lower realms. One thus guards and protects oneself from the lower realms. But how does one's practice of patience protect and save others from the lower realms?
If [one's practice of patience] does not save him from going to hell, then in reality, one is actually still the harmdoer.
Qualm: If he is a benefactor, then I should also be a benefactor as well to him, as by harming him, I am also benefiting him.
Khenrinpoche: Everyone wants to be a benefactor? A benefactor of anger? Sometimes when people get angry, they would say some nasty things and then say: "Oh I am teaching you patience!" Actually he is not teaching patience. To teach patience, he must be patient! This means that he is not really teaching patience, but practicing impatience.
Such ways of thinking is inappropriate. Reply:

(iii) Stopping ingratitude towards those who act beneficially [6.51]

<i>6.51 a. Nevertheless, should I return the harm b. It will not protect them either. c. By doing so my conduct will deteriorate d. And hence this fortitude will be destroyed.</i>
When someone harms one, instead of accepting it, if one chooses and decides to retaliate and fight back, the harmdoer would get more upset and disturbed. He would then accumulate even more negativities.
If one thinks one is a benefactor to him by helping him through one's retaliation, then how does causing him to be more upset, disturbed and accumulating more negativities be an act of help and benefit to him? In what way is one benefiting him?
There is actually no benefit to him whatsoever when one retaliates. When he gets more disturbed, upset and accumulates more negativities due to one's retaliation, it does not protect him from his anger.

Above that, one harms one's practice of the <i>Four wholesome virtues</i> :
1) When scolded, not scolding back, 2) When hit, not hitting back, 3) When one's faults are exposed, not exposing the harmdoer's faults, 4) When harmdoer is angry at one, not reacting with anger.
So, it is completely wrong to think that by retaliating, one is benefiting one's harmdoer the way one sees him as a benefactor.
If one adopts that view and thinks that one has now become his benefactor when one retaliates to cause him to practice patience, then one should analyze whether are there any benefits.
The conclusion would be none, as it causes him to be more upset, angry and as a result, accumulates more negativities.
Above that, if he is a real practitioner training to cultivate bodhicitta, then when one retaliates, it would only harm [his] <i>Four wholesome virtues</i> , as well as [his] practice of patience.

2" Being patient with those who would belittle oneself and so forth [6.52 – 6.63]

a" Being despised and belittled does not harm one's body [6.52 – 6.53]

These two verses are saying that, it is appropriate to meditate on patience when one experiences contempt, slander, criticism or harsh speech. This is because, such experiences do not really harm one's body and mind:	
<p>6.52 a. <i>Since my mind is not physical</i> b. <i>In no way can anyone destroy it.</i> c. <i>Through it strongly adhering to my body,</i> d. <i>My body is harmed by suffering.</i></p>	<p>6.53 a. <i>Since contempt, harsh speech,</i> b. <i>And unpleasant words</i> c. <i>Do not cause any harm to my body,</i> d. <i>Why, mind, do you become so angry?</i></p>
One's consciousness is not physical, hence, it cannot be harmed by any kind of weapons. Then how does one suffer physically when one's body gets harmed? The basis lies in one's strong grasping at one's body as being "mine".	
With one's ignorance grasping at the self acting as the condition, one then holds onto one's body as being "mine" very strongly. Due to such a concept of strong grasping, this is how one feels physically hurt.	
Because one has such a strong grasping at one's body, holding onto it as "mine," then when it is physically harmed, one feels the harm.	
Therefore it is said that, if one does not have that concept of strong grasping at one's body, then even though the harmdoer may [inflict physical harm to] one's body, one would not have the idea that: "My body has been harmed."	
When one experiences criticism, harsh speech, slander, these are essentially merely words and sounds. Would these harm one's body in any way? No, these cannot harm one's body even in the smallest way.	
If words and sounds cannot harm one's body in the slightest way, then how could it possibly harm one's non-physical mind?	
No matter how one thinks about it, there is no way these can harm [one's mind].	
If these can actually harm one, then it must harm either one's body or mind. These words and sounds cannot harm one's body in any way. Since it cannot even touch one's body nor harm it, then how could these ever harm one's non-physical mind?	
Since these cannot harm one's body nor mind, then there is actually no real reason to feel justified in being upset, when one experiences criticism, harsh speech, slander and so forth.	
Even though one [may] accept that experiencing such words and sounds cannot harm one's body and mind. But one may not accept it easily, rather, one would use other reasons to justify retaliation:	
Qualm: When he says such things and if others were to hear about them, then this may cause them to not to like me. I do not like it when others do not like me! Therefore, I do not like him saying such things. Reply:	

b" It is inappropriate for one to be angry with a person who is himself in a rage [6.54]

<p>6.54 a. <i>If others' disliking me</i> b. <i>Will not devour me</i> c. <i>Either in this or in another life,</i> d. <i>Why do I not want it?</i></p>
If one thinks that the criticisms, contempt, harsh and unpleasant speeches will cause others to dislike one, thus justifying oneself in being upset, then the question to ask is: How do others' dislike of oneself harm one in this life?
Will that eat one up and harm one in this life? How do their dislike of oneself harm one also in the future life?
[The conclusion is that,] these do not harm one in this and future lives. Even though others may dislike one, then so be it. But one does not have to dislike them in return for disliking one.
If one dislikes them in return, then one will be accumulating additional and unnecessary negativities.

c" It is inappropriate to be angry because material gain has been obstructed [6.55 – 6.61]

(1) It is inappropriate to be angry at obstructions to material gain because they quickly perish [6.55]

Qualm: Even though I do not have to dislike him for disliking me, but when he says nasty things about me, this harms my reputation. When others hear about this, then they may lose faith and dislike me. Then this will harm my material gains, which are important to me. Therefore, I am right in being upset with my harmdoer:

6.55 a. *Because it will hinder my gain,*
 b. *I do not want this.*

One feels justified in being upset with the harmdoer who says nasty things about one. **Reply:**

c. *I shall discard my gains here*
 d. *And my negativities will remain securely.*

One may think: "It is justified for me to retaliate to protect my source of income, reputation and so forth." One may do that and become successful in stopping others from slandering and so forth, thus stopping others from disliking one.

As a result, one's income and gains would not deteriorate. One then manages to carry on to gain money and property.

Even if one manages to do all of that. One day, one still have to leave everything behind. One has to die and go on to the next life. In the process of all such negativities, one accumulates a lot of nonvirtues primarily through anger.

Anger then embeds itself even deeper, stronger and stabler in one's mind. Each time one gets angry, one enhances and strengthens that nonvirtue and its imprint. All such negativities remain with one when one goes to the next life, which will cause one to suffer then.

Therefore, it is incorrect to feel justification in retaliating against criticism, slander and so forth for the sake of protecting one's wealth, income, material gains and so forth.

This is because, even if one does protect all these by retaliating, all of these would have to be left behind at the time of death. But the negativities one accumulates for their sake remain firmly in one's mind, which will harm one in one's future lives.

Qualm: Material gains like money are important as I need to survive. Without food and dwelling, I would not be able to live. Since it is not unreasonable to need these, then if there is anyone who harms my source of income and material gains, then I will have a difficult life and may even die. Thus, it is justified for me to be upset, retaliate and get what is due to me. **Reply:**

(2) Stopping the pursuit of negativities [6.56]

6.56 a. *Thus it is better that I die today*
 b. *Than live a long time through wrong livelihood.*
 c. *Even if I should live a long time,*
 d. *There will be the very suffering of death.*

There are people who make a living and accumulate wealth through causing harm and problems to others, motivated by anger, jealousy, negative competitiveness and so forth.

Through such means, some do become successful, accumulate a lot of money and may even live a long time.

But sustaining livelihood through harming others actually constitutes wrong livelihood. Hence, it is better to live a shorter life that is not sustained by wrong livelihood and die earlier, than to live a long life sustained by wrong livelihood.

When one lives a long life sustained by wrong livelihood, one accumulates so much negativities that will harm one in one's future lives. At the time of death, it will cause one a lot of problems.

Therefore, the essential point is that, there is no benefit to sustain one's livelihood through harming others. Even if one manages to accumulate a lot of wealth, in reality, it is of no benefit.

Therefore, the Kadampa masters say:

It is better for the evil ones, those who commit nonvirtues, to have a shorter life.

(3) By means of an example, establishing the inappropriateness of craving material gains [6.57 – 6.58]

6.57 a. *Suppose someone should awaken from a dream*
 b. *In which he experienced one hundred years of happiness,*
 c. *And suppose another should awaken from a dream*
 d. *In which he experienced just a short while of happiness,*

6.58 a. *For both of these people who have awakened*
 b. *That happiness will never return.*
 c. *Similarly, whether my life has been long or short,*
 d. *At the time of death it will be finished like that.*

The example here is about someone who enjoys a lot of things in a dream. This is to show that, craving for material gains are inappropriate, without any real meaning.

For example, one falls asleep and had a very nice dream experiencing all the objects of desire of the five senses and that lasted for a very long time. But once one wakes up, the entire [pleasurable] experience would only be an object of one's memory. There is nothing one can hold onto and still utilize.

Likewise, even if one lives for a very long time, say a perfect hundred years with all the desirable objects of enjoyments, at the time of death, all such enjoyments would only become an object of memory. One cannot utilize nor enjoy them again.
One's [situation] at the time of death would not be any different from another, say, who has had a shorter life with much less enjoyments. Everybody will be the same at the time of death.
Whether one has had a long and enjoyable life, or a short but less enjoyable life, at the time of death, whatever enjoyments and pleasurable experiences would all be like a dream, an object of memory, <i>nothing beyond that</i> .
Whatever enjoyments one may have had in one's entire life, at the time of death, one cannot experience them again. Above that, one would also never experience those same experiences again in the future lives as well.
So, whether one has had a short or long enjoyable life, at the time of death, these will all be the same, [as mere memories].

(4) The reasons craving material gains are inappropriate [6.59]

<p>6.59 a. <i>Although I may acquire abundant gain</i> b. <i>And enjoy happiness for a long time,</i> c. <i>I shall go forth naked and empty-handed,</i> d. <i>Just like having been robbed.</i></p>
Even if one spends one's entire life accumulating wealth and resources, properties and so forth, derive some satisfaction, enjoyment and pleasure from these, and even live for a very long time having those enjoyments, at the time of death, one has to leave all these behind. One will literally be stripped of all of these things. It is as if one has been robbed completely.
One cannot bring anything along with one to the next life.
This is very much the same as what is taught in the <i>Stages of the Path</i> outline section on death and impermanence that says:
<p><i>At the time of death, nothing helps except the Dharma: Friends will not help, resources will not help, your body will not help.</i></p>
The conclusion is that, at the time of death, nothing is of any benefit to oneself except the Dharma.
Such occurrences are plainly obvious, as one does not need to analyze just to understand that. This is the reality which one can see: one sees people die. When they do, one sees they cannot take anything with them.
The teachings are telling one so far that, it is not right to have attachment and crave for material gains and so forth. But one has many reasons to try to prove that there are situations where money is important and beneficial.
Qualm: Many people in the buddhist circle think that, if one has a lot of money and live a long time, one can accumulate a lot of merit by making a lot of offerings. One can make many holy objects, texts, stupas and do many wonderful things. Through that, one thinks one can accumulate merit and purify one's mind of negativities. Therefore, money is useful.
Since if one has money and can do many of such things, then to acquire it, sometimes one has no choice but to get angry. One needs attachment and so forth. This is still alright because, with one's wealth, one can do all such wonderful things as accumulating merit and purifying obscurations. Therefore, it is "not true that craving is bad all the time."

(5) Refuting the reasons for spending one's time in material pursuits [6.60 – 6.61]

<p>6.60 a. <i>OPINION: If I were to live due to gain,</i> b. <i>Then I shall exhaust negativities and [increase] merit.</i> c. <i>RESPONSE: If I were to get angry on account of gain,</i> d. <i>Will not my merit be consumed and negativities created?</i></p>	<p>6.61 a. <i>If my very life were to degenerate</i> b. <i>For the sake of that,</i> c. <i>Then what will be the use of the life</i> d. <i>Of one who commits only negativities?</i></p>
Khenrinpoche: This is the answer [to the above qualm.]	
These verses are telling one that, it is incorrect to follow after anger and attachment thinking that, by doing that to accumulate money, one can use it to accumulate virtue and purify one's mind.	
Qualm: To accumulate merit and purify one's mind and practice the Dharma, one needs money and material gains to sustain one's life. So, in the process, it is alright to get angry and have attachment sometimes.	
Reply: Did one not accept earlier that, by following after attachment and getting angry, this has many disadvantages like destroying roots of virtue accumulated over a thousand eons? One can deplete so much merit with anger and there are so many negative consequences of anger. Would one not experience all such disadvantages?	
Since that is the case, would this not harm one's supposed motivation of sustaining one's life to practice Dharma?	
On one hand, one says that one wishes to live a long life with money to practice Dharma, yet, one is doing things to destroy that very opportunity and that life. Is that not a contradiction?	
One may feel justification in getting angry by following attachment, this is so that one has material possessions to practice Dharma through accumulating merit and purifying one's mind of obscurations.	

But, does getting angry not lead to the destruction of merit, which one says one is trying to accumulate? Would that not be a contradiction in one's position?

Essentially, whatever one's arguments may be, the point in this chapter is that, no matter how one thinks and argues about it, one would not be able to succeed in justifying oneself getting angry.

Contrary to what [is correct], one believes that there are always situations, times, reasons and excuses to get upset.

But whatever one can think of, these are all clearly mentioned and answered in the text. One therefore has to think about all such answers oneself.

Khenrinpoche: The bodhisattvas have permission to engage in the three physical and four verbal nonvirtues, but no permission to engage in the three mental nonvirtues. Why are these three not allowed?
 Do bodhisattvas have permission to have covetousness?
 It is entirely possible for a bodhisattva to steal motivated by covetousness, isn't it?
 Do bodhisattvas have attachment and covetousness?
 Are there situations where it is permitted for bodhisattvas to have attachment?

Attachment/ desire is an affliction. It is clear that there are things that bodhisattvas do out of attachment in order to accomplish great purposes for others. It is mentioned before that, bodhisattvas do not specifically focus on abandoning attachment, unlike the Hinayana path, where attachment is necessarily abandoned. In the general Mahayana of the Perfection Vehicle, it is taught that, bodhisattvas do use afflictions such as attachment as a method/ branch to accomplish great purposes for sentient beings' benefits. There are historical accounts of bodhisattvas in the past who fathered many children to enhance Buddha's teachings.

Khenrinpoche: So, whether attachment and covetousness are allowed or not allowed, explain the reasons.

d" It is inappropriate to be angry because others lack faith in oneself [6.62 – 6.63]

(1) As speaking ill of oneself causes others to lose faith in one, it is appropriate to be angry with [the act of] speaking ill of others [6.62]

<p>6.62 a. Since sentient beings will be weakened, b. I shall be angry with those who say unpleasant things. c. Why are you not likewise angry d. With those who say unpleasant things to other people?</p>
<p>Qualm: One may think: “When a harmdoer criticizes me, when others hear of this, it may cause them to lose faith in me. Since this is not what I want, I have the right to be upset with the harmdoer.”</p>
<p>“He also creates negativities and exhausts his [virtues], hence he will go to the lower realms. Therefore, I must do something about this and use [wrathful methods] to stop him.”</p>
<p>One may think this way and be upset, or think one can use aggressive, angry methods to stop him from harming himself.</p>
<p>Reply: 6.62 (cd) <i>Why are you not likewise angry with those who say unpleasant things to other people?</i></p>
<p>If one hears of a harmdoer criticizing others [whom one may have jealousy with,] in such a situation, why is one not upset with the harmdoer of others?</p>
<p>This [reasoning] is linked to the earlier qualm: When someone criticizes, dislikes, is upset with and has no faith in one, one needs to do something to prevent one's harmdoer from exhausting his merit and go to the lower realms.</p>
<p>[If that is the case,] then likewise when one hears of another harmdoer criticizing another person, [since one also needs to prevent this harmdoer from going to the lower realms,] then why is one not angry [and not doing anything about it?]</p>
<p>When it involves someone else criticizing another, it is appropriate for one to be upset, but one is not.</p>
<p>Qualm: There is no reason for me to be upset. This is because, there will be no end to being upset. In the latter situation where another person is being criticized by another harmdoer, the criticized person needs to do something himself, as this is not my problem. Since it does not involve me, I don't need to get upset. Reply:</p>

(2) If one can bear the lack of faith in others, it is appropriate to bear the lack of faith others may not have in oneself due to the afflictions [6.63]

<p>6.63 a. If you are patient with this lack of faith b. Because it is related to others' non-faith, c. Then why are you not patient with unpleasant words d. Since they are related to the arising of afflictions?</p>
<p>In a situation where there is another harmdoer getting upset and criticizes another person, the former is doing so due to lack of faith through seeing faults [in the person he criticizes.]</p>
<p>When one sees this, one may think that there must be a reason why this harmdoer is criticizing the other person. Perhaps the latter did or said something wrong, thus creating the situation to be criticized now by the former.</p>
<p>One may then feel there is no reason to be upset with the harmdoer who criticizes him, as it is also the latter's faults. It is therefore really none of one's business. One should remain relaxed and be patient as it does not affect one here.</p>
<p>If that is the case, then when one is being criticized, the harmdoer who acts out of none-faith and says such unpleasant words to one, is also doing this due to his afflictions. He has no independence whatsoever.</p>

In essence, the teachings in this section tell one that, when one experiences problems of criticisms, slander, dislikes and lack of faith, putting aside being angry with one's harmdoer, the reality is that, one should be very happy when it happens.
As mentioned before, when one experiences problems and difficulties, one should regard all of them as a broom that sweeps away all of one's negativities and that which can also persuade one to engage in virtue.
When one experiences problems such as criticisms, one should remind oneself that it is ultimately one's own doing, an experience which is the ripening of one's own nonvirtues one has accumulated in the past.
Such unwanted situations are essentially the eight worldly dharmas. When one experiences them, some of the advice that are mentioned here can be put to use through reflecting on them.
The chapter up to here has shown so many reasons proving that, no matter what one may think or say, in the final analysis, there is no reason whatsoever to justify anger. Without any exceptions, anger is completely inappropriate.

b' Stopping anger towards those who harm one's loved ones [6.64 – 6.75]

It has been shown earlier [6.12 – 6.63], why it is inappropriate for one to be upset when oneself is harmed.
Even though this idea may be accepted, but one may think that it is justifiable to be upset if one's loved ones/ circle are harmed. One is not getting upset for oneself [but for their sake.]

1" Stopping it by means of the patience that is intent on virtue [6.64 – 6.65]

a" The reasons it is inappropriate to be angry with those who cause harm to the bodies [of the Sugata] and so forth [6.64]

<i>Gyalsab Je</i> puts forth a qualm that may be used by oneself: “Although it is inappropriate for me to be upset when I am harmed, but if the Three Jewels are harmed, I will not incur any faults if I am upset for the Three Jewels.” Reply:
<p>6.64 a. <i>Should others talk frivolously about or even destroy</i> b. <i>Holy images, reliquaries, and the sacred Dharma,</i> c. <i>My hatred is inappropriate,</i> d. <i>For the buddhas and so forth can never be harmed.</i></p>
The objects to whom one goes for refuge are the Three Jewels: Buddha Jewel, Dharma Jewel and the Sangha Jewel. Even if the Buddhas are “harmed,” it is impossible for them to be unhappy. Therefore, they can never be harmed.
The Sangha Jewels are primarily the superiors who have realized emptiness directly. Therefore, they have abandoned the intellectually acquired grasping at the self. When they are harmed, they do not have the grasping that thinks: “I am harmed.”
Therefore, they do not become unhappy and are thus not harmed.
The Dharma Jewels are the true paths and true cessations, which can never be harmed as well. Since the Three Jewels do not experience any unhappiness nor can they be harmed, therefore, it is inappropriate at those harmdoers of the Three Jewels.
Likewise, the representations of the Buddha's body, speech and mind, whether these are holy statues, paintings, scriptures, stupas and so forth, these are matters/ forms which are atomically established.
Even if these holy objects are destroyed, the Buddhas can never be harmed. Even though it is possible to be upset when one sees others destroying holy objects, there is no reason to be.
There are people who criticizes and belittles the Dharma. Even then, there is no justifications and reasons to be upset.
When people engage in such destructive acts of criticizing the Dharma or destroying holy objects, they accumulate so much heavy negative karma. When one sees this, besides not being upset, one should have even more compassion for them.
It is completely appropriate to develop more care, concern and compassion for them.
One may get very upset when one sees others belittling the Dharma or destroying holy objects and so forth. The teachings are telling one that, it is not only inappropriate and wrong, rather, one should have even more compassion for such people.

b" Likewise, it is appropriate to be patient with those who cause harm to those dear to oneself [6.65]

<p>6.65 a. <i>I should counteract anger towards those</i> b. <i>Who harm my spiritual masters, relatives, friends and so forth,</i> c. <i>By seeing, as in the manner shown before,</i> d. <i>That they arise from conditions.</i></p>
The verse is saying that, it is inappropriate to be upset at those who criticize or harm one's gurus, parents, loved ones, friends and so forth. Because there are reasons, like the ripening of karma for example, for such things to happen.
These harms directed at them are the results of the gathering of various causes and conditions.

2" Stopping it by means of the patience that intentionally not retaliate against those who cause harm [6.66 – 6.75]

a" It is inappropriate to be angry only with animate beings [lit. those who have minds] [6.66]

- 6.66 a. *If embodied creatures are harmed*
- b. *By both those with mind and those without mind,*
- c. *Why single out and begrudge only those with mind?*
- d. *Therefore I should be patient with harm.*

One is harmed by a combination of sources that includes both sentient beings and non-sentient beings.

There can a sentient being, someone with a mind, that is involved in harming one, but there can also be other factors such as the four elements of earth, water, fire and wind, that can also harm one.

However, one only gets upset at sentient beings who harm one, but not with the elements that harm one.

In reality, both sentient and non-sentient sources of harm are equally responsible for causing one pain. Then the verse is asking why is one only upset with the former and not the latter?

Why does one single out sentient beings only and get upset with them, but not with non-sentient sources of harm?

b" The reasons anger is inappropriate [6.67]

- 6.67 a. *Should one person do harm out of confusion*
- b. *And another is confused and gets angry,*
- c. *Then who would be without fault?*
- d. *And who would be at fault?*

People often engage activities that harm others, such as stealing and killing, while being ignorant of the consequences of those actions they have to experience in the future in the form of suffering.

There are people who are ignorant of the consequences of their actions of harming others [harmdoers]. There are also people who are ignorant of the consequences of getting angry at people who harm them [angry at harmdoers].

Both [harmdoers] and [persons angry at harmdoers] have come under the influence of the mara of afflictions, acting out of ignorance. Hence, one cannot attribute fault merely to one and not the other as both are at fault.

Both the [harmdoer,] being ignorant of the consequences of his actions, and the person who gets angry when receiving harm, while being ignorant of the consequences of getting angry, are equally at fault.

Essentially, the verses are saying that, there is no justification to retaliate against any harm directed at oneself.

c" Reflecting on one's own faults [6.68 – 6.69]

- 6.68 a. *Why did I previously commit those actions*
- b. *Because of which others now cause harm?*
- c. *If all are related to my actions*
- d. *Why should I begrudge them?*

- 6.69 a. *Having seen thus, no matter what,*
- b. *I should strive in this way for what is meritorious,*
- c. *That all will have*
- d. *Loving thoughts towards each other:*

Essentially, when one sees harm directed at loved ones, one has to understand that, that is due to the power of the ripening karma accumulated in the past. When conditions gather, there is nothing one can do as it is irreversible. It will happen.

This is something one has to think for oneself: Since these experiences are the results of karma, there is no reason and justification to be upset with those who harm one's loved ones.

Rather, one can use the opportunity to think: "How wonderful it would be, if all had love towards one another, if I had love as well towards both my loved ones and their harmdoer."

These are advice for one to develop love, compassion and bodhicitta. When one's loved ones are harmed, instead of reacting with anger, one should develop love for both loved ones and their harmdoers.

d" Reflecting on the benefits of [such a] patience [6.70 – 6.75]

(1) Making effort so that one's virtue does not deteriorate [6.70 – 6.71]

- 6.70 a. *For example, if a fire in one house*
- b. *Has moved into another house,*
- c. *It is right to remove and get rid of straw and such things*
- d. *That the fire will spread to.*

- 6.71 a. *Likewise when my mind is attached to something*
- b. *And the fire of hatred spreads,*
- c. *I should immediately get rid of it*
- d. *For fear of my merit being burned.*

For example, when one's neighbor's house catches fire, one could sense that the fire will soon spread into one's house. In it one may have a lot of flammable necessities one is emotionally attached to.

In such a situation, if one continues to keep them, one's house will quickly burn down completely. Even if one has attachment to them, one would realize that one still has to throw them out quickly before this happens.

Even if one is normally attached to one's belongings, in such a situation, one happily throws them out of one's house.
Likewise, when one's loved ones, those who matter, are harmed, they are probably very upset. Their fire of anger blazing in their minds will burn and consume whatever merits they have accumulated.
If one also gets upset when one sees them being harmed, then the fire of anger will also burn in one's heart, thereby also consuming one's merit that has been accumulated.
The reason the fire of anger in the minds of loved ones can move from there into one's own mind, igniting one's anger consuming one's merit, is because of one's attachment to them.
If one does not have attachment for them, there is no way one will be angry when one sees loved ones suffer.
Just like the example where, if there is nothing flammable in one's house, the fire in one's neighbor's house would not do much damage to one's house. One's house can burn down quickly if it is filled with all sorts of flammable objects.
If one throws all such flammable objects away, one's house will not burn.
Likewise, if there is no attachment for one's loved one's, then one would not be affected by their anger. These are methods to stop anger from arising in one's mind. Here, to stop anger, one needs to remove attachment in one's mind.

(2) Accepting small sufferings will act to overcome the cause for the sufferings of the hells [6.72 – 6.73]

(a) Analogy [6.72]

(b) Meaning [6.73]

<p>6.72 a. <i>Is it not excellent if a man condemned to death</i> b. <i>Is released after having his hand cut off?</i> c. <i>Is it not excellent if I am spared from hell</i> d. <i>By way of human suffering?</i></p>	<p>6.73 a. <i>If I cannot endure</i> b. <i>Even just this suffering of the present,</i> c. <i>Then why do I not refrain from getting angry,</i> d. <i>The cause of suffering in hell?</i></p>
<p>Qualm: How is it possible not to have attachment? You are asking me to give up my emotional bond, my connection with my loved ones. As a result, it is separating myself from them, making a clear distinction that we are no longer connected. This is something I cannot do as I cannot bear to be emotionally separated, disconnected and feel unbonded from my loved ones.</p>	
<p>To be emotionally bonded and connected, there obviously must be some desire and attachment for them. As a result, attachment is needed and necessary. Therefore, when they are harmed, it is justifiable to be upset as this is what I need.</p>	
<p>Reply: The pain of separation from loved ones is relatively small, when compared to the suffering one has to experience when one gets upset for their sake.</p>	
<p>If one practices patience and voluntarily accepts the small sufferings, inconveniences and discomforts that come along with feeling the sense of separation from loved ones due to not being attached to them, such a suffering is small and one should voluntarily put up with it.</p>	
<p>This is because, one is saving oneself from the suffering of more samsara in the future, particularly, from the great suffering of being born in the hell realms, which is the result of getting upset and acting it out.</p>	
<p>One has to make a distinction between short-term pain and long-term pain. One should choose and tolerate short-term pain. Otherwise, then there would be long-term great pain.</p>	
<p>Verse 6.73 is telling one that, if one cannot tolerate both the harms one experiences and the harms directed at loved ones, then how would one be able to tolerate the sufferings of the hells in the future?</p>	
<p>If one retaliates with anger due to oneself or loved ones being harmed and not tolerating it, then one has to ask oneself whether would one be able to tolerate the consequences of one's acts of retaliation, which are primarily motivated by attachment?</p>	
<p>Therefore, one has to turn away from the causes of the lower realms, which are essentially one's afflictions like anger.</p>	
<p>This is something one has to think about whenever one feels one cannot tolerate the harm done [to oneself and loved ones.]</p>	

Student: Would there be bodhisattvas who get angry but not have their roots of virtue destroyed but merely have their realizations delayed?

Khenrinpoche: Postponement of the realizations of the path is a result of the destruction of the roots of virtue.

Student: When karma is about to ripen, can it be reversible or stopped? **Khenrinpoche:** Yes, it is possible.

Student: Then, for example, when craving and grasping nourishes a negative projecting karma at the time of death, can this be reversed by another virtuous mind that deposits a virtuous imprint at that same time of death, which can then be immediately nourished by a second set of craving and grasping for this positive projecting karma to become an actualizing karma for a good rebirth?

Khenrinpoche: According to the *Abhidharmakosa*, the lower abhidharma by *Vasubandhu*, once the intermediate state of a particular realm comes about due to the previous nourishing of craving and grasping, such an intermediate state is irreversible. That is, once one enters the intermediate state of hell, one will definitely go to hell.

But according to *Asanga's* higher abhidharma, the *Compendium of Knowledge*, it is said that, even if the intermediate state of a particular realm is already established, if very strong virtue is accumulated, then that intermediate state can be changed. If one follows the *Compendium of Knowledge*, which is the higher abhidharma, the position that the intermediate state can be reversed, then it goes without saying that, at the time of craving and grasping, whatever karma these are nourishing can also be reversed. Another karma can be nourished.

Student: If karma is reversible, how is faith, being a condition and not karma, able to reverse karma?

Khenrinpoche: When stating the phrase “karma has changed,” it means that, at the time of death, if one were going to the lower realms, but with faith as a condition, another karma comes into play. It is not that the first nonvirtuous karma has transformed into a virtuous karma, this is not possible.

Student: At the time of death, can there be a nonvirtuous projecting karma being reversed by a *fresh* virtuous karma due to the condition of faith, that results in a good rebirth?

Khenrinpoche: Yes.

Advice on seeing the benefits of study and continuing on with it despite any difficulties:

Khenrinpoche: This citation from the sutra was mentioned before –

- 1) The merit one gets from offering food and clothing for eons equaling the numbers of sand grains in the Ganges River is huge. But comparing this merit 1) to,
- 2) Merely hearing the word “Buddha” or seeing his representations in the form of paintings, statues and so forth, one accumulates even greater merit. This means there are much more opportunities one has in accumulating merit in merely hearing the word “Buddha,” seeing his representations and so forth. If one accumulates so much merit in 2), then it goes without saying, how much more merit one accumulates if,
- 3) Out of faith, one were to put one's palms together and pay homage to Buddha, or one verbally praises his qualities. If that is the case, then by extension, the fact that one has,
- 4) Opportunity to come into contact with such instructions showing the stages proceeding towards enlightenment, such a path that is praised by all the Buddhas, to be educated with these instructions, analyze and reflect on it, the merit one accumulates from doing these would be even much greater than all the earlier examples of 1), 2) and 3).

This is why I have always mentioned about the need to read your materials and text. From here, you can see how much benefit you can get by educating yourself, by learning and reading the text. It is important to read the text. On that basis, if you are able to analyze and think about what you read, then of course, the benefits will be really great. That is why, the essential point I am trying to make is that, you should keep in mind the benefits and purposes. Then you have to continue to educate yourself, to familiarize yourself by looking at your materials and text.

How one needs to plant stable positive imprints now when one is still alive:

While you read, you [also] have to analyze and think. In doing so, you plant imprints in your mind. It is important to plant stable imprints. I did mention before, you plant imprints when you merely read the text, you also plant imprints when you reflect and analyze the teachings. You also plant imprints when you familiarize yourself with the teachings through meditation. Your imprints of the latter are superior to the former: the imprints of meditation and reflection are superior to hearing and so forth. At this time while you still have the human life and having met the Buddha's teachings, you must try your best to place as many imprints as possible, as many *stable* imprints as possible in your mind.

The benefits of planting stable imprints:

We have had this mini discussion on the *Twelve Link of Dependent-Origination* recently. From this, you can see that, it is vital to plant good and stable imprints while we are still alive. If you didn't really do that and then expect that, at the time of death, you can suddenly think of something virtuous, claim that it can be nourished and ripened, this can be rather far-fetched. It is not impossible, but it is difficult. If one cannot do that while one's mind is clear, then it is going to be difficult at the time of death. So, while one is still alive, when the mind is still fresh, then it is important to plant as many stable imprints as possible. It is only then, that at the time of death, would there be a good chance of getting a good rebirth, due to one's familiarity [during one's lifetime]. When we are alive, when the mind is still fresh, alert and employable, if at this time we cannot do anything to figure things out like planting imprints and so forth, when you think about this, how is it possible to do so at the time of death? If we can't do it when the mind is clear, then at the time of death, when the mind is a bit disturbed and so forth, how is it possible to say that: “[Even though] I am not doing anything now, but at the time of death it will happen!” This is also a bit far-fetched. You would wonder, how is that possible? So the point is, while we are alive, then as much as possible, [you should] work on this continuously through learning and educating yourself, practicing and so forth, to plant stable imprints.

The natures of craving and grasping:

[Concerning] craving and grasping, I don't think *craving* starts only at the time of death. It is [there] when you are [still] alive. This is because, when the four projected results, name and form, six sources, contact and feeling manifest, I would think that craving, that which nourishes karma, starts already. So, I don't think it starts [only] at the time of death but [when we are alive.] This is because, there are the projected results of feeling. We desire pleasant feelings and don't like unpleasant feelings. When pleasurable feelings arise, we crave and develop attachment for it. That is how [craving] nourishes [karma]. This is what is called nourishing. We don't like suffering. Due to attachment, we want to be free from it. When we are alive, we have this feeling: “I am coming into being, I am in existence.” We wouldn't want to discard and lose our existence, we don't want to be parted from our bodies. This is also due to craving. Through this craving alone, we accumulate so much fresh new karmas. As for *grasping*, which is the stronger form of craving, it *primarily* arises/ manifests during the time of death. From here, we could perhaps say that, there could be instances or situations of grasping before death.

Questions for pondering:

Therefore, the main question is: At the time of accumulating projecting karma, when that is finished, something is left on the causal period consciousness. From then, that projecting karma is accumulated, it is finished. Then how does it transform or manifest as the actualizing karma? What is the process for actualizing karma to manifest? When does craving nourishes karma?

It is important to think about karma. There are so many things to think about. It is not enough merely to say: "I have heard it, it is like that." You need to think about it until you get a decisive and definite ascertainment: "Oh, it is like this and not like that!" To reach that stage, you need to understand, you really need to think about it from many angles. To do that, you need to have questions.

Discussion on karma which is accumulated but not completed:

Khenrinpoche: A karma that is accumulated is a karma you would definitely experience. To experience the results of a karma that is accumulated, must that karma be completed in that, the four categories of *Basis, Attitude, Performance and Culmination* must be present?

For example, a karma of killing which is a karma that is accumulated. To [definitely] experience the result of this karma of killing which is a karma that is accumulated, must the act of killing be completed? That is, the person dies before one.

For the karma of killing to be powerful enough to issue forth an effect that one [definitely] experiences, does that karma of killing need to be culminated?

Student: It does not need to be.

Khenrinpoche: Where does it say that the karma that is accumulated but is not culminated? Does one need all four categories for a karma of killing to be accumulated?

Student: There is no need. **Khenrinpoche:** Give an example. Which of the four you don't need? To make it simple, the motivation, performance and culmination, which is it you don't need? **Student:** Performance and culmination.

Khenrinpoche: Illustrate the karma of killing which is a karma that is accumulated with just the motivation.

Student: The bodhisattva captain who killed not out of a nonvirtuous motivation.

Khenrinpoche: Did the bodhisattva captain accumulate negative karma? **Student:** Yes. **Khenrinpoche:** It follows that you can accumulate negative karma motivated by virtuous motivation.

Student: Nagarjuna, in his past life, severed the head of an ant while cutting grass.

Khenrinpoche: This is an example of a karma that is done but not accumulated. For a karma to be accumulated, do you need the three: motivation, performance and culmination?

Discussion on covetousness:

Khenrinpoche: For something to be a completion of covetousness, one needs all three: motivation, performance and culmination. Even if all these three are present, it does not manifest in any physical nor verbal way, but through the gathering of these three, one accumulates karma. What is posited as culmination here?

Student: The decision thinking: "I will make that thing mine!" **Khenrinpoche:** Well said. Everybody must remember what she said! Then what is posited as the performance of covetousness? **Student:** The strong desire to have that thing. **Khenrinpoche:** What is posited as the motivation? **Student:** Grasping?

Khenrinpoche: The motivation of covetousness is posited as the thought wanting to possess an object belonging to another.

What covetousness is:

Essentially, covetousness is a stream/ continuity of a similar thought. It is just that the intensity of the thought increases. At the beginning when you have the thought, the motivation is that, when you see something belonging to others, then you think: "I want that!" When such a thought grows stronger it will become performance. When you reach a point when you decisively think: "I really want this, how wonderful if this is mine!" This is the culmination. When you have the motivation, performance and culmination, then you have the complete act of covetousness. In dependence on that, you accumulate karma. This does not mean that covetousness is karma, it is not. But through the complete act of covetousness, which is an affliction, based on that, you accumulate karma.

Positing how karma is accumulated but not done:

In terms of the karma of killing, for it to be a karma that is accumulated but not done, initially there must be the 1) *motivation/intention* to kill, then the thought becomes stronger and stronger where you 2) *mentally want* [but perhaps not yet decided] to kill that person. Say you posit that using the term "performance". When you reach a point where you 3) *mentally decide*: "I am going to kill this person!" At this phase, perhaps we use the term "culmination". In that sense, then you have motivation, "performance" and "culmination". Through that, this is what I think how a karma is *accumulated but not done*, which would definitely bring about a result.

However in the teachings, killing is classified as a physical karma. The culmination of killing is also posited as that, the victim has to die before you. So, you have to analyze [whether is there any contradiction with what I have just said].

The importance and benefit of thinking about the topics:

From this exercise you can see that things are not so straight forward. [It is not that] you can just look at it casually and merely accept that it is like that. If you really think deep, there will be so many questions. Therefore, we cannot say with certainty that we really know and believe in the subject. It really requires constant thinking and analysis. To reach a point where you are so convinced and speak with conviction: "It is like this and not like that!" This will be a result of having really thought about things well for some time. You really have to dig and think [deep]. It is only then that you can speak with conviction. This is what makes a *high quality Buddhist!*

That is why it is very important to think about [the subjects], then you will have questions to ask in class. Otherwise, it all looks very easy. When you think that it is easy, that is when it becomes boring: “I come to class, sit, listen and he talks. It is so boring as there is nothing much.” This happens when we do not think. If we just take a cursory look at this text, *Engaging in the Deeds of a Bodhisattva*, then it all seems quite straight forward and easy. But we when start to think about the subject, then we will discover that, it is rather difficult to say with conviction about it. You will not have the confidence after you are being asked. Like here, we have been discussing on the chapter about patience. To cultivate patience to deal with anger, we have to use a whole variety of reasons. The chapter is just telling us how to think: what sort of line of thinking is incorrect, what is correct and so forth. Essentially, we have to think about what it is trying to tell us for ourselves. If we see any reasons being brought up that we do not agree with, then you will be able to say with confidence: “I don't agree with this.” You can then challenge it and even ask that in class. Even with the reasons that are valid and correct, you still need think about it yourself to reach a point where you are confident: “Yes, it is really like that. What it says is really true!” Therefore, we have to think. Without thinking, this is not going to happen.

(3) It is appropriate to enjoy hardships that accomplish greater purposes [6.74 – 6.75]

(a) Feeling regret for how many bodies one has wasted in the past and still not accomplished either one's own nor others' welfare [6.74]

As seen previously, it is possible to have objection to the idea of being emotionally parted from and not attached to one's loved ones: “I cannot bear this as it is unpleasant and I cannot put up with it.”

If there are such thoughts, then one of the replies is this verse:

6.74 a. *For the sake of my desires*
 b. *I experienced thousands [of eons] in hell,*
 c. *But I enacted the purpose*
 d. *Of neither others nor myself.*

In the past, out of desire for material gains or any pleasurable objects of form, sound, smell, taste, touch and so forth, one has sacrificed a lot and bore all sorts of hardships, including having to sacrifice one's limbs.

Due to that, the karmas one has created out of attachment [has even thrown one to be] born in hell. One has experienced so much suffering because of following after desire and attachment.

All such experiences of suffering were for nothing in that, one's own desires/ purposes/ goals are still not met/ fulfilled, neither has one fulfilled the purposes/ goals/ welfare of any other persons.

Having experienced all those problems and sufferings for so long a time, has not brought about any benefit and achieved anything meaningful.

If that is the case, then why should one not put up with and tolerate the problems and difficulties one is experiencing now, which comes about through having to practice patience, since it would bring about something greatly meaningful?

(b) It is appropriate to enjoy accomplishing the welfare of all migrators by being patient with present hardships [6.75]

6.75 a. *But now since great purpose will be established*
 b. *From harm which is not as much,*
 c. *I should be solely joyful*
 d. *Towards such suffering that dispels the harms of migrating beings.*

By tolerating and being patient with the suffering that one experiences now as a human being, accepting them voluntarily, one will be able to avoid the suffering of the lower realms such as the sufferings of the hells.

Hence, one's [human] suffering is nothing when compared to the sufferings of the hells.

Like what was mentioned before, with the thought of voluntarily accepting the problems and sufferings that one experiences, seeing it as a method to purify one's negativities accumulated in the past, as well as using it to persuade oneself to accumulate virtue, the cause of happiness, therefore, it is reasonable and appropriate to meditate and cultivate patience.

This concludes the section on: Stopping anger towards those who harm one's loved ones [6.64 – 6.75]

c' Stopping [jealousy] when one's enemies do well [6.76 – 6.86]

1" Abandoning [jealousy] with the praise and renown of one's enemies [6.76 – 6.79]

a" As patience is the cause of one's own happiness, [it is inappropriate to be jealous when one's enemies are praised] [6.76 – 6.77]

6.76 a. *Should others find joyous happiness*
 b. *By praising someone having excellent qualities,*
 c. *Why, mind, do you not praise him too*
 d. *And be joyful?*

6.77 a. *That joyous happiness of yours*
 b. *Is a source of joy without misdeed,*
 c. *Permitted by those having excellent qualities*
 d. *And is also a supreme means for gathering others.*

When someone praises one's enemy, this person who does the praising also feels happy doing so. Since he is happy when he praises one's enemy, likewise, should one also not praise one's enemy?
This is because, the person doing the praising is happy. If one sees that someone gets happiness from praising one's enemy, then the argument for one is that, why is it that one does not do likewise in praising one's enemy?
The point is, when one sees someone praising one's enemy, one should not be disturbed.
It is said that, if one praises the person one does not like, one's enemy, one will experience the happiness in one's heart.
This happiness is said to be the highest kind of happiness and joy, the kind that pleases all Buddhas and bodhisattvas.
It is the best kind of speech that makes others happy. In so doing, that is how one brings other into one's fold, gathers others.
Instead of jealousy, by praising one's enemy, then it is said to be the best way to make one's enemy have a liking for oneself and come into one's fold.

b" As it is the cause of others' happiness, it is inappropriate to not wish for [one's enemies to be praised] [6.78 – 6.79]

(1) If one does not want others to be happy, one's own happiness will decline [6.78]

- 6.78 a. Furthermore, it is said that others will be happy in this way.
 b. If you do not want this happiness,
 c. Then you should stop giving wages and the like.
 d. Thus you would be adversely affected both in this and future lives.*

This verse is saying that, if one does not wish for others to be happy, then one's own happiness will also deteriorate.
One's normal reaction will be that, one does not like to praise one's enemy due to one's jealousy. One cannot tolerate the fact that one's enemy will be happy when one praises him.
Earlier, it has been established that, if one can really praise one's enemy without jealousy, then oneself will also be happy.
But now, one is preventing oneself from being happy by not praising one's enemy.
Essentially, one is stopping one's own happiness [with the flawed] reason that: "He will be happy if I were to praise him!"
One stops one's own happiness simply because one does not want one's enemy to be happy.
If that is the case, then it is the same as not paying one's staffs their wages. When one pays them, one will make them happy.
Since paying one's staffs will make them happy, if one does not wish to be unhappy, then one should stop [not] paying them. If one does not pay one's staffs, then one will really be unhappy as they will make problems for one in this life.
This is the visible effect. By depriving them their due pay, one will also not have possessions and so forth in the future lives, it is like 'stealing' from their salaries.

(2) Thus, it is appropriate to wish for others to be happy [6.79]

- 6.79 a. When people describe my own good qualities
 b. I want others to be happy too,
 c. But when they describe the good qualities of others
 d. I do not even wish them to be happy.*

One will be happy, elated and even blissed-out if, one's enemy were to praise one. One wishes for this to happen. But when one sees another person praising one's enemy, one does not like it. This is a very distorted way of seeing things.
Just as one feels happy when others, including one's enemy, praise one, just as one wants that kind of praise, likewise, it is entirely appropriate and correct to feel happy when others, including one's enemy, are praised. This is because, they also want to be praised. They also want to be happy and will also experience happiness when they are praised.
When one's enemy or someone one does not like praises one, one feels good and happy. One likes it and wants it.
One has to remember that experience: just as one wishes to be treated in such a way, when others, including one's enemy, are praised, then one should also wish them well.

2" Abandoning [jealousy when] one's enemies [derive] pleasure [6.80]

- 6.80 a. Having generated the mind of enlightenment
 b. Through wishing all sentient beings to be happy,
 c. Why do you become angry
 d. If sentient beings find happiness themselves?*

Most of the people here have taken great empowerments, as a result, they have taken bodhisattva vow and even tantric vow.

When one takes on such vows, one is making a pledge to achieve the highest unsurpassed state of full enlightenment to place all sentient beings in that state as well. That was a pledge and oath that most people here have promised during the initiation.

In the context of one's enemy, even when one does not have to make any effort and do anything, when he is experiencing happiness, gets more powerful, well known, more possessions and so forth, he is actually achieving what one has promised to do, without one having to lift even a finger. Then why should one be upset when this is happening to him?

Therefore, if one is seriously and sincerely working to actualize that oath/ pledge to help all sentient beings, one would not get upset if one sees others achieving different kinds of happiness, especially when they do it on their own without one having to do anything. Rather, when one sees this, one would feel even more happy.

3" Abandoning [jealousy when one's enemies achieve] material gains [6.81 – 6.86]

a" Reflecting on how it accomplishes one's own desires [6.81 – 6.83]

(1) It is appropriate for oneself to rejoice sentient beings' accomplishment of material gains [6.81]

*6.81 a. If I wish for all sentient beings to become
b. Buddhas worshiped by the three worlds,
c. Then why am I tormented
d. Due to seeing them receiving just vile gain and honor?*

People who have taken the bodhisattva vow and pledged to place all sentient beings in a state of full enlightenment, are those who pledge to make all sentient beings become Buddhas who are worshiped and honored throughout the three realms by all kinds of praises, offerings and so forth. If one is such a person, then this is what one is working for.

If that is the case, then why is one upset when one sees one's enemy and people one does not like, gain material possessions?

When they receive some offerings or material gains, why does one dislike that and become jealous?

In fact, it is inappropriate to be jealous. Most people are like that, when there are people one does not like who become happy, one does not like it. One does not like it when something good happens to them, be it being happy, getting richer and so forth. All such [unhappiness] has to do with one's jealousy.

The teachings are asking one: What is the point/ purpose [of being jealous?] What does one get out of it?

(2) Analogy [to illustrate that] [6.82]

*6.82 a. If relatives for whom you are caring
b. And to whom you practice giving
c. Are able to find their own livelihood,
d. Would you not be happy, rather than angry?*

(3) If one does not want [to rejoice in others' happiness], mind generation will deteriorate [6.83]

*6.83 a. What [kind of person] wishes enlightenment for migrating beings
b. If he does not wish for them to have even this?
c. And where is there a mind of enlightenment
d. In him who becomes angry at the wealth of others?*

How is it possible for someone to generate bodhicitta, the thought to achieve omniscience to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings, if he cannot even like others receiving some meager gain?

The teachings are saying that, for someone who is very attached to material wealth and so forth, at the same time being very jealous, negatively competitive and unable to tolerate it when others have wealth, how is it possible for such a person to develop bodhicitta? Even if he were to adopt it, it will degenerate. His merit will also decline.

So far, this section is saying that, there is no way to develop bodhicitta if one cannot wish for one's enemy to even have some small happiness. If one cannot even tolerate them having some small benefit, then there is no way to develop bodhicitta.

Therefore, the essential point is, do not be upset and jealous with one's enemy when they are doing well, gaining respect or material gains. One should not allow one's mind to be disturbed.

When one cannot tolerate others doing well, especially one's enemy, this is primarily due to one's jealousy.

One is jealous in the first place due to attachment, for respect, material gains and so forth.

Therefore with [attachment] as a condition, when one sees others in possession of these, one just cannot accept it.

When one sees others, especially one's enemy being respected, honored and given gifts by others, one just cannot bear it. One's mind is really disturbed from the depths [of the heart.] This is what **jealousy** is.

Essentially, this section of the teaching is telling one that, do not become jealous.

Recap:

It was mentioned in previous lessons how one should be happy when those one does not like, one's enemies, are happy, praised and receive material gains and so forth.

In this section on *Stopping jealousy when one's enemies do well* [6.76 – 6.86], it explains how one should not be intolerant nor feel any sense of unhappiness.

Particularly, if one has taken the pledge to achieve full enlightenment to accomplish sentient beings' welfare, yet if one cannot even be happy when one's enemy achieves a mere small happiness, then there is a big internal contradiction.

For, if one cannot even be happy with the small happiness one's enemy is experiencing, then it is said that one would have no chance of developing bodhicitta.

b" Reflecting on how there is nothing to not want [in that] [6.84 – 6.86]

(1) It is inappropriate to be jealous of others' material gains [6.84]

Imagine one is in a situation where one is with someone one does not like, an enemy. Then another person comes along and makes a gift to him while one does not get anything.

One would get upset with one's enemy for getting something while one does not. One also gets upset at the giver as well.

When one finds oneself in such a situation, how would one think and react? The advice is in 6.84:

*6.84 a. Whether he obtains it from him
b. Or whether it remains in the benefactor's house,
c. In either case you shall get nothing.
d. What is the use whether he is given something or not?*

It does not matter what the giver gives to one's enemy, be it money, gold or any other objects. Whether the giver gives it to one's enemy or he keeps it at home, one would not be getting anything anyway.

But one gets angry when the giver gives it to one's enemy, whereas one does not get angry if the giver does not.

Actually it makes no difference [to oneself,] whether one's enemy receives something from the giver or not, one is not getting anything anyway. So logically, there is no reason to be upset at the enemy for receiving the gift and at the giver for giving it.

The point is, it does not matter whether the giver gives it to one's enemy or not, one is not getting anything anyway. So, there is no purpose in getting upset at both parties. Rather, it would be better to stay calm, relaxed and not be disturbed.

(2) It is inappropriate to abandon one's own qualities [6.85]

*6.85 a. So why do I throw away my good qualities,
b. Merit and faith?
c. Tell me, why am I not angry
d. For not holding what will be gain?*

When one gets upset with one's enemy for receiving something from the giver, as well as the giver himself, what would be one's source of unhappiness? If one checks [within oneself], it is only because one wants the gift in the first place.

It is because "I didn't get it!" that, one becomes upset. One gets upset when one's enemy, those whom one does not like, receives gifts. This is all due to one's *desire* for gaining material possessions. Due to having that desire, when one does not get what one wants, one would naturally get upset.

If what one wants is material gain, then getting upset and angry, with both the enemy for receiving gifts and the giver for giving it, is not the way to achieve one's desire of getting something.

This is because, if one gets angry at both parties and in the process destroys one's merits, this in fact becomes the obstacle for getting what one wants, in this case, material gains.

When one is upset due to this, one also behaves in a way that causes others to dislike one as well, which again is an obstacle to getting what one wants.

Rather, if one wants material gains, then one has to work at the causes for receiving them such as, increasing one's stock of merit, engaging in an acceptable behavior that would lead one into receiving gifts from others, living a life with ethical discipline and so forth. These are the causes for one to receive material gains, if that is what one wants.

This is not an encouragement/ advice that, one should therefore behave well, live life ethically, increase one's merit [merely] to get material gains.

The point is, one gets upset mainly because of someone getting the gift instead of oneself. The verses are telling one that, this is not the way to get [gifts], but pinpointing who is ultimately responsible for not getting what one wants.

It is in fact oneself [being the obstacle]. Because when others, especially one's enemies, do well and get something which one does not get, one's usual response is to be upset and angry at both parties.
In so doing, one destroys one's merit, one's external behavior also becomes unacceptable to others. All such responses from oneself is the cause of oneself not getting anything in the end.
Therefore, rather than getting angry at both parties, if one really wants to get upset, then one should be upset with oneself, as one is [actually] at fault. This is the point.
Therefore it is <i>not</i> that, [to get material gains], one is being advised to “[display] an ethical way of life” [for this purpose].

(3) While it is right to feel sorrow for one's own negativities, it is not right to be jealous of others' virtues [6.86]

<p>6.86 a. <i>Not only do you not have any sorrow</i> b. <i>For having committed negativities,</i> c. <i>Do you wish to compete with others</i> d. <i>Who have created merit?</i></p>
In such a situation where one gets upset when one's enemy receives something while one does not, one may even think: “Just as I don't get anything, if he also didn't get anything, then I am [satisfied with that].”
One gets upset when one does not get anything while one's enemy gets something.
One would not be upset so long as one's enemy does not get anything, even if one also does not get anything. One feels that this is fair. If one does not get anything, then one feels one's enemy should also not be getting anything.
If one thinks like that, then one has to understand that, oneself not getting anything is the result of one's own doing.
Due to not knowing what to adopt and discard, and not having accumulated the causes to receive material gains, one engages in all sorts of negativities. This is actually quite a sad situation.
One should be sad at one's own situation for having not created the causes but instead having created negativities.
One should be sad with one's own limited situation and examine oneself, but instead, one wishes to compete with others who have created the causes due to having practiced ethical discipline and so forth, to be receiving gifts now.
One's enemy therefore has the causes for receiving them. The text is telling one to ask oneself, rather than being sad, why is one negatively competing with those who have merit?
If one really wishes to compete with those who have the merit, one should be competing in terms of being wise and skilled in knowing what to adopt and discard, in guarding one's ethical discipline and accumulating merit.
This ends the section on <i>Stopping anger towards that which brings the 12 undesirable objects</i> [6.12 – 6.86]

3' Stopping anger towards that which hinders one's desires [6.87 – 6.126]

If there is anything that <i>hinders</i> oneself or loved ones from getting <i>the 12 desired objects</i> , then one gets upset. This section teaches on how to practice patience in such situations.
When [being hindered from the] 12 desired objects is explained in relation to one's enemy, one wishes him to experience suffering, bad reputation, blame and lack of material gains. So, if there is anything that hinders [one's desired outcome of] the enemy from such experiences, one gets upset.

a' It is inappropriate to be impatient with that which hinders the harm [meant] for one's enemies [6.87 – 6.89]

1" Disliking [one's] enemies is of no benefit to oneself [6.87(ab)]

<p>6.87 a. <i>Even if your enemy is not joyful,</i> b. <i>What is there for you to be joyful about?</i></p>
If one's enemy is happy, has a good reputation, is being praised, receives material gains, one does not like it. One likes it when he lacks all such things. If there is anything that hinders him from lacking all these, one does not like it.
Even if one's enemy suffers and dies, the verse is asking, what is there for one to be happy about?
This does happen: When one sees someone one does not like, getting into problems big or small, dying, facing unfortunate situations or suffer, one feels that he actually deserves it, something that is good, should and must happen. One feels happy.
This is what is called a completely distorted rejoicing. When one feels like that, then the teachings are asking one, what real benefit would one get from such ways of rejoicing? It is said that, not only is there no benefit, in fact, one only receives harm.

2" Enemies are not harmed by oneself developing ill will [6.87(cd)]

<p>6.87 c. <i>Your mind merely wishing</i> d. <i>Did not cause him to be harmed.</i></p>

At times when one does not like someone, one may wish for something bad to befall on him, to die, to be hurt, to suffer, and sometimes one may even verbalize such thoughts.

The teachings are saying that, merely thinking and speaking in such ways do not do any damage whatsoever to one's enemy.

Even though one does not harm one's enemy, but one actually harms oneself:

3" [Such an attitude] harms oneself [6.88 – 6.89]
a" It is inappropriate to enjoy the harm that befalls one's enemies [6.88(ab)]

6.88 a. *Even if his suffering is established due to your wish,*
b. *What is there for you to be joyful about?*

Such thoughts that one may have are merely perverted wishes. One's perverted thoughts and speeches merely harm oneself and does not really harm him. Even if one's [perverted] thoughts and words do have some effects, harms one's enemy and one achieves one's wishes, the text is saying that, what is there for one to be joyful about?

If one actually holds onto such [perverted forms] of happiness, feeling happy when one's enemy suffers, this will actually become a cause for oneself to suffer greatly in the future.

b" If one holds onto that joy, it will become a cause of great suffering for oneself [88(cd) – 89]

<p>88 c. <i>OPINION: I shall be satisfied.</i> d. <i>RESPONSE: How could there be anything more ravaging than that? .</i></p>	<p>6.89 a. <i>Having been held by this unbearable and sharp hook</i> b. <i>Cast by the fisherman of the afflictions,</i> c. <i>It is certain that I shall be cooked</i> d. <i>In the pots of sentient beings' hell by the hell guardians.</i></p>
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One may object to the argument that there is no benefit for one if one is happy when one's enemy suffers: "Before I die, he must suffer, when he suffers, I feel good. This is the benefit I get."

If one happens to think like this, one has to understand that, such ways of thinking will only cause one to suffer. One is the only loser ultimately, not only in the future lives but even in this life.

Feeling satisfied due to one's enemy's suffering is the cause of one's suffering in this and future lives. This is the greatest loss.

As seen in the previous verse, wishing for one's enemy to suffer would not cause him to suffer. In fact, one is causing oneself to suffer, to lose in this and future lives. If one is someone who practices bodhicitta and has taken the bodhisattva vow, thinking in such ways will lead one to commit the bodhisattva root downfall.

When one dies, one will go to the hell realms. When one ends up there, one will have to experience great sufferings.

When one harbors such negative thoughts, one is just like a fish caught by the fisherman: When a fish is caught, it suffers unbearable pain as the hook goes into its mouth.

Likewise, when one is caught by the fisherman of anger, which induces malice, which in turn causes one to accumulate powerful negative karma, this will throw one into the hells, to be cooked in the boiling cauldrons of hell.

Motivated by anger, one entertains malicious thoughts of ill will, the wish to harm one's enemy. If one applies the previous explanations about covetousness here, there are also the three phases of motivation, performance and culmination.

In the development of ill will, firstly, there arises the thought: "I wish that person harm." This is the motivational phase. When this thought becomes stronger, then comes the performance phase. One can perhaps posit culmination as the mental satisfaction wanting the person to suffer: "How wonderful it is, may this person suffer!"

When one has all three [phases], karma is then accumulated. Karma that is accumulated is a karma whose results one would definitely experience. The fruitional effect of this would be a rebirth in the lower realms such as the hells.

From here, one can see that, if one has ill will towards one's enemy, even feeling good about [having such thoughts], but in reality, one's goal is not achieved. One's enemy does not get harmed merely by one's ill will. But oneself will be harmed in a terrible way, having to suffer in the hells. Therefore, one actually suffers the greatest loss.

Therefore, just like what the outline says: *If one holds onto that joy, it will become a cause of great suffering for oneself.*

One has to understand and think about this until one develops a conviction and ascertainment. Based on that, one then has to restrain oneself from such ways of thinking.

b' It is inappropriate to be impatient with that which hinders the benefit directed towards oneself and one's interests [6.90 – 6.126]

One wishes for and embraces the eight worldly dharmas for oneself and loved ones. When there are obstacles to experiencing them, then one would get upset with the person or the situation that interferes with these.

One wants to be praised and have a good reputation, when any situation or person interferes with these, one gets upset.

Hence, [the following section teaches on] how to deal with such situations:

1" It is inappropriate to be angry with that which hinders [one's worldly] interests [6.90 – 6.101]

a" It is inappropriate to be angry with that which hinders one's own praise and renown [6.90 – 6.97]

(1) There is no need [to merely seek one's] praise and renown [6.90 – 6.91(ab)]

<p>6.90 a. <i>The honor of praise and fame</i> b. <i>Will turn into neither merit nor life;</i> c. <i>It will turn into neither strength nor freedom from sickness for me,</i> d. <i>And also will not transform into physical happiness.</i></p>	<p>6.91 a. <i>If I were to understand my welfare,</i> b. <i>What is there in them that is my welfare?</i></p>
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One likes praises and to have a good reputation, but these can never become the merits that will be a cause for one's happiness in future lives. Even in this life, words of praise and being well-known can never: Act as a cause for one's longevity, confer physical strength on one, protect one from sicknesses nor confer bodily pleasures on one.

When one eats and drinks, even though this may not be much, but at least one gets some small pleasure in sustaining one's body. Even such small pleasures cannot be obtained from words of praise nor good reputation.

Those who are really wise and experts in accomplishing their own goals and happiness, know that praise and good reputation are of no significance whatsoever. These do not do anything good, they have no benefit at all.

Even though one may accept that there are no benefits in this nor future lives as stated, but one may still feel that there is benefit. This is because, one feels good when one is praised and has a good reputation. This is all that matters to one.

Therefore, if anyone were to obstruct one from being praised and not have a good reputation, then of course one has reasons to be upset, as the person stops one from feeling good.

In *Gyaltsab Je's* commentary, the answer to such a way of thinking is outlined as:

(2) It is inappropriate to seek mere [temporal] mental joy [6.91(cd)]

<p>6.91 c. <i>If I desire just mental happiness,</i> d. <i>Then I should devote myself to gambling and so forth, and also drinking.</i></p>

One's reason to counter the arguments stated, is by saying that one feels good and one wants that kind of feeling.

Then the text says that, if feeling good is all that [one cares about] to justify for anything, then why should one not also gamble and drink? Since one wants to feel good for being praised, if someone were to obstruct this, then one has the "justification" to be angry as one wants to be happy.

Since that is the case, then by one's own extension of [such a reasoning], one should also feel happy when one drinks and gambles, as these do give some happiness, even though such things are what people normally find not beneficial,

The point is, one's only reason for wanting praise and reputation is because it feels good. Then one is essentially saying that, feeling good can then justify for one doing anything, including doing those things that are usually not good/ permissible.

(3) Grasping for mere praise and renown is erroneous [6.92 – 6.93]

(a) There is no need for [mere] praise and renown [6.92]

<p>6.92 a. <i>If for the sake of fame</i> b. <i>I lose my wealth or get myself killed,</i> c. <i>What can mere words do then?</i> d. <i>Once I am dead, to whom will they give pleasure?</i></p>
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There are some people who give [away material wealth] motivated by seeking a good reputation for themselves, wishing to be known as being very generous, they then give [away a lot of their wealth].

There are also others who wish to be known as courageous. They then wage wars, risking themselves and getting killed.

When [one loses one's wealth or life], how would all such praises and good reputation benefit one then? These do not bring any benefits to one's body nor mind.

(b) To dislike the loss of praise and renown is childish [6.93]

<p>6.93 a. <i>When their sandcastles collapse,</i> b. <i>Children howl in despair;</i> c. <i>Likewise when my praise and reputation decline</i> d. <i>My mind becomes like a child.</i></p>

If one really contemplates this well, one will see that one is really like a child: When children build sandcastles, they put in a lot of effort to form the rough structure of the castle. They will then feel very happy. If it collapses, they will cry non-stop.

The teachings are saying that, one is very much like that. When there is a decline in the praise, affirmation, recognition or reputation one receives from others, one very much becomes like a child and feels very disturbed.

One is like a child, as it does not take much praising [from others] to get one feeling elated. But when there is a slight decline in the affirmation, recognition and [the sense of good] reputation from others, one feels terrible and loses one's self-worth.

One is like a child who cries when his sandcastle collapses. **Khenrinpoche:** So don't cry when [your] sandcastle collapses!

(4) The reasons it is erroneous [6.94 – 6.97]

(a) It is inappropriate to be attached to the joy one feels for praise of oneself [6.94 – 6.95]

<p>6.94 a. <i>Since short-lived sounds are without mind,</i> b. <i>They cannot possibly think of praising me.</i> c. <i>It makes others happy,</i> d. <i>That fame is counted as a cause of joy.</i></p>	<p>6.95 a. <i>Whether this praise is directed at myself or someone else</i> b. <i>How shall I be benefited by others' joy?</i> c. <i>Since that joy is theirs alone</i> d. <i>I shall not obtain even a part of it.</i></p>
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One likes those who praise one. Whoever does anything to make one happy through praising one, not only does one like that, one also becomes attached to it. One is then asked to check one's mind: What is it that one is attached to?

Is one attached to the words themselves? Or is one attached to his happy mind when he praises one?

If one examines the words of praise, it is essentially mere sound. Therefore, it is non-sentient as it does not possess mind. Therefore, it does not have any intentions/ thoughts to make one happy. Even though one may not be attached to the sounds, but one may become attached to the person's *mind being happy* in praising one.

The response will be this: Even though he is happy in praising one, but what has his happiness got to do with oneself? His happiness has actually nothing to do with one as his happiness would not make one happy.

His happiness in praising one is his business. There is no way one can partake of his happiness as there is no way that he can even share a mere portion of it in the sense of giving his happiness to one.

Here there are two lines of arguments to substantiate that there are no reasons to be attached to praise and reputation:

Due to being attached to fame and reputation, wanting to hear nice words, then one should inquire whether one is attached to the sound or the person's mind experiencing happiness [when he praises one]?

If it is the latter, it cannot be the case. The person's [feelings of happiness when praising one] has nothing to do with one. Even though he can feel happy in praising one, but his happiness cannot be transferred over to oneself.

Here, one is trying to prove that, there is no reason whatsoever for one to be attached to praise and good reputation. But one nevertheless is, as one feels happy [about it]. The question then to ask oneself is: What exactly is one attached to?

One obviously knows one is attached, but perhaps one is not very sure about what exactly one is attached to.

Therefore, [the text] is listing out the possibilities:

1) Is one attached to the words/ sounds? If it is not, then 2) Is one attached to the *happy mind* of the person praising one?

1) It is inappropriate to be attached to the sound, 2) Neither is it appropriate to be attached to the *happy mind* of the person praising one. This is because, even if he is happy praising one, one cannot partake that happiness as he cannot share his happiness with one. Therefore, there is no benefit to be attached to praise and good reputation.

Student: Could one be attached to the person's approval and affirmation of oneself? Could this be the happy mind?

Ven Gyurme: We are then more attached to this rather than to his happy mind, isn't it? We don't care whether he is happy.

Student: Since we care about his approval, then that [itself] is a happy mind. **Ven Gyurme:** If we care about his happy mind, it follows that whenever you are praised you will be happy. **Khenrinpoche:** Somebody praises you, the person doesn't feel happy? **Ven Gyurme:** Whether he feels happy or not, I don't care. I care if you praised me!

Khenrinpoche: He likes you, that's why you like him! When he praises you, you think he is good, his heart is good.

Ven Gyurme: But when the enemy praises me, I don't feel he is good, but I like it.

Khenrinpoche: In the first place, the enemy wouldn't praise you! He only criticizes you.

Ven Gyurme: Sometimes they do it out of bad motivation, wanting something from you.

Khenrinpoche: When you know that, then it doesn't become a praise, [you would feel] unpraised. When you know that, you wouldn't like it. When the enemy praises you, it is not really praising. You know that and you are already unhappy. You know he is just criticizing you indirectly, you wouldn't think he is praising you.

Ven Gyurme: We still like it because, when the enemy praises me in front of others, I would look good! Even though I know he is doing that but I look good since others don't know that!

Khenrinpoche: I don't think so. If you don't know whether he is really praising you or not, then maybe you would feel happy. But if you mind is already thinking: "He is not really praising from his heart but only from his mouth", then I don't think you would feel happy [but think]: "This is not true, why do you do that?"

Lama Tsongkhapa's "Dependent Arising, a praise of the Buddha":

*Due to the kindness of my lamas, I have met the teachings of the greatest of teachers.
I dedicate this virtue, therefore, for every living being to be nourished by true spiritual friends.*

Khenrinpoche: Whether one achieves any realizations on the path or not depends on how one devotes to the virtuous friend.

This is an extremely important point. In my case, I have studied for about seventeen/ eighteen years. Whatever little appreciation, interest and understanding of Buddhist philosophy that I have, is really dependent on my teacher, Gen Losang. My main philosophical teacher, Gen Lobsang, was very well known for being very expert in using reasoning to show students the profundity and deep meaning of those different philosophical subjects. He was famous for that. He was someone His Holiness the Dalai Lama Himself appreciated and praised.

When Gen Lobsang taught in Sera Je, which he did for a very long time, he had had to teach classes of various levels everyday. He would start [teaching] his many classes [in the beginning of] a day, from eight in the morning and finish at about five in the evening. In between, he hardly had any time to eat, perhaps maybe half an hour. The rest of the time was [spent] teaching the various classes, which would go on for one or two hours. At times, it could even go on for three or four hours, if he felt the class was really enjoyable and was going well, when there was good discussion going on. He spent many years of his life doing that. He is definitely someone who has offered great service to the Buddha's teachings.

Not only did Gen Lobsang study, he was able to impart knowledge to many others. In so doing, he was also able to help bring about many students who themselves became very skilled, knowledgeable and expert in Buddhist philosophy. So, you could say his Dharma activities in this life has now culminated and brought to completion. He passed away at the age of ninety-two.

When Gen la was alive, he would always tell us that he doesn't want to live beyond eighty-five. He would always say this to people. When he was around eighty-five, he had an audience with His Holiness. His Holiness told him to project the intention/ will to live to ninety. His Holiness said to him: "I myself am projecting the intention to live to a hundred and eight, so you [should] project the will/ intention to live to ninety." So this is what His Holiness told Gen Losang. Of course now, Gen Losang has passed away at the age of ninety-two.

I don't know much about the Buddhadharma. Whatever little I know, I always think and remember that it is **only** due to the kindness of Gen Losang. There were many times when there were difficult points in the teachings that I couldn't really come to a decisive understanding/ conclusion, [upon] which I would go to him. He would then help me gain a very decisive understanding and remove [my] doubts. So, this happened many times. Those were the occasions that really made me very happy, inspired and caused me to [develop] real faith in him.

*I pray that the teachings of he who is solely benevolent remain unscattered by the winds of false views until the end of time,
And with faith in the Buddha gained from understanding their essential nature, may they pervade forever.*

What Lama Tsongkhapa is praying for in this particular dedication [verse], is essentially for the entire world to be pervaded and filled with people who have found real faith in the Buddha's teachings, the faith which comes from having analyzed and arrived at, from a decisive understanding. This is essential.

If there are people in the world who know the Buddha's teachings correctly as it is, purely, **then there is a danger that the teachings of Buddha may become distorted, where distortions and degeneration would set in, with people inventing their own explanations, giving their own mistaken interpretations. This is said to be a great source of harm. This harms the teachings of the Buddha and harms the welfare of sentient beings.** Therefore, it becomes very important for there to be people in the world who have the correct understanding of the Buddha's teachings, without any distortion/ degeneration. So, we should also pray likewise, like what Lama Tsongkhapa did, that we ourselves become someone who has faith in the teachings of the Buddha that comes from knowing and understanding the teachings. We should pray that we ourselves become a person like that.

*In all my births, even at the cost of my life, may I never falter nor shrink from
Working for the wonderful doctrine of the mighty Buddha, who showed clearly the nature of dependent arising.*

This is a prayer to be able to uphold the pure and correct teachings of the Buddha in all the future lifetimes without any considerations for one's body and life. One has the attitude of willingness to sacrifice [one's life], not to give in to laziness but to work hard at preserving and spreading the teachings of Buddha. Particularly here, the very essence and heart of the entire Buddhadharma is the view of reality, the interdependent nature of reality of dependent-arising. This is the very heart and crux of the entire Buddhadharma. One [prays] to be able to preserve, uphold and to spread this to sentient beings.

The prayer is telling one to remember this all the time, how one should not be lazy in upholding the Buddhadharma.

*I pray that I pass my days and nights in thinking how I might spread this Dharma,
Born from the heroic perseverance in the face of countless hardships of this supreme guide.*

The earlier verse is talking about preserving and upholding the Dharma. This verse is talking about spreading and causing the Dharma to flourish. This verse helps one to generate the aspiration/ prayer/ wish to be able to spread these teachings, particularly, those wonderful teachings on dependent-arising, especially the subtle details and presentations of dependent-arising. One should think day and night how one can, in whatever ways, spread these teachings into the hearts of sentient beings.

*When I pursue these endeavors wholeheartedly and sincerely, may I be supported constantly by
Brahma, Indra, Mahakala, the four guardians of the world, and all other protectors.*

In upholding and spreading the Buddha's teachings, one will meet with a host of challenges and obstacles. Here, [Lama Tsongkhapa] is making a plea to the Dharma protectors, all the powerful ones, to eliminate all the obstacles and adversities to such endeavors.

Many of you don't know Gen Losang personally. There are some of you who have met him and have established a connection with him, but many of you don't know him. In his case, his job is done, his Dharma activities have come to a culmination. From our sides, what we need to do is to ***aspire and create the merit and dedicate them for ourselves to be able to become a spiritual master, a virtuous friend to others, having qualities like Gen Losang and other virtuous friends. Also, aspire and pray that, we ourselves be able to preserve and spread the teachings of the Buddha like that.***

We will recite the seven branches of worship from *Shantideva's* text, essentially chapters 2 and 3. First, bring to mind objects of refuge/ field of merit/ the Three Jewels, abiding in the space in front. One then performs the seven branch worships starting with the branch of offerings at the beginning of chapter 2 up to the end of the seven branch worship, in 3.7:

Thus by the virtue accumulated through all that I have done, may all the suffering of all sentient beings be dispelled.

The seven branch worship up to this verse, [together with the dedication verses 3.8 to 3.22,] just before the actual adoption of bodhicitta, are the preliminary [practices] for generating/ adopting bodhicitta through a ritual. If one has time, one can recite these verses mindfully and slowly, thinking about them.

Next, we will recite *Dependent-Arising, a Praise of the Buddha*. [Reciting] this text makes a difference to accumulating merit and purifying one's mind of obscurations because, this text is an exposition on subtle dependent-arising. I mentioned this before, it is mentioned in the sutras that:

*Whoever sees dependent-arising, sees the Dharma.
Whoever sees the Dharma, sees the Tathagata.*

Whoever sees dependent-arising, sees the Dharma:

Dependent-arising in this context is coarse dependent-arising at the level of causality. Causes produce effects, which are dependent on their causes. By understanding dependent-arising at this level, one comes to understand the happiness one is looking for and the suffering one wants to avoid, are not a creation of someone else as there is no creator. Rather, oneself is responsible for all of one's own experiences, be it happiness or suffering. Therefore, on the basis of [understanding] dependent-arising at the level of causality, [one understands] and comes to appreciate the workings of karma and its results. When one comes to developing a faith of conviction in karma, one comes to understand and sees the Dharma. This is [the meaning of the] first line.

Whoever sees the Dharma, sees the Tathagata:

On the basis of having faith of conviction in karma, one discards/ abandons nonvirtues and adopts/ cultivates virtue. One will be able to easily accumulate a mass of merit. Through that, one comes to see the Buddha.

A) One way of explaining how one comes to see the Buddha is this: the Tathagata, the One Thus Gone, is embodied in the *Two Kayas*, the Truth Body and Form Body. Through having a mass of merit, one is able to see the Form Bodies that are manifested in all kinds of aspects to work for the benefits of sentient beings. With [the mass of collection of] merit, one is able to see such Form Bodies. This is one way of explaining [the second line].

B) One can also interpret dependent-arising here to not refer to coarse dependent-arising but to subtle dependent-arising. This is in terms of [knowing how,] each and every phenomena exist as merely dependently designated, as mere name. Through seeing that, one sees the Dharma of subtle emptiness. Through understanding that, one gradually comes to see the Buddha, the Tathagata. In this case, it is seeing the Truth Body.

This text (*rtan'bre' bston pa*) *In Praise of Dependent-Arising*, is composed by Lama Tsongkhapa. This is a praise of Buddha by way of [praising his] teachings on dependent-origination. The Buddhas are not some people who come and tell one how to overcome mere temporary problems of [this] life. The Buddha is someone who shows and helps one discover exactly the very root and foundation of all the problems and difficulties. [In that way,] he helps one uproots it. He did so through his explanations expounding the nature of reality via dependent-arising. Lama Tsongkhapa saw this as the quality that is unique only to Buddha. He is the only founder who expounded the nature of reality using dependent-arising.

Lama Tsongkhapa himself studied hard and examined thoroughly the Buddha's teachings, critically analyzed them and thought about them. After having reflected and ascertained them [well], he put it into practice and saw the truth of what Buddha said, for himself. Such [an ascertainment] helped him develop an unshakable faith in Buddha, as he experienced the truth himself in what the Buddha has been saying all along. It was with this unshakable faith in the Buddha, that Lama Tsongkhapa then composed this text, *In Praise of Dependent-Arising*.

Lama Tsongkhapa [also] saw how important it is to have people who [themselves] found genuine conviction in the Buddha's teachings through such a process of deep analysis and thinking. He saw that it was very important to produce many people like that, to fill the world [of them] as he mentioned in one of the dedication verses.

As you recite the text, you will come to the dedication verses towards the end. As you read [these verses,] you should also aspire like what Lama Tsongkhapa did, pray for that to happen to yourself as well:

*This very path of dependent-arising, the reason for seeing your words as unparalleled,
Generates conviction in the validity of other teachings.*

The Buddha was the unparalleled teacher. His words were unparalleled as there are no comparison and without any other equal. This is because of his explanation on the nature of reality through dependent-arising. Such an explanation does not require blind-faith at all, but something that is just an explanation of the obvious reality. If one thinks about it, it can be substantiated with reasoning and experience. Based on gaining an ascertainment of the crux of his teachings of dependent-arising, one can slowly come to gain faith and conviction in the validity of his other more obscure teachings, like all the various unimaginable qualities of the paths and grounds.

*Having seen the truth, you taught it.
Those following you will leave all troubles behind, for they will cut to the root of every fault.*

One firstly examines [Buddha's] explanation of dependent-arising. Through gaining an ascertainment in that and then following the teachings [exactly] as how he had taught it, one will be able to free oneself from all the problems and sufferings. This is because, it is only through such an understanding of dependent-arising that anyone, [including oneself,] can get down to the root of all their problems.

*Those, however, outside your teachings, though they practice long and hard,
Are those who beckon back faults, for they are welded to views of self.*

Those who do not understand dependent-arising and thus stray away from outside the Buddhadharmā, even though they may try hard day and night to practice sincerely, what they get in return are merely more and more recurring faults that come back. This is because, ultimately, whatever doctrines or practices that they do, are essentially based on adhering and grasping tightly to a self. This is saying that, no matter what practices, doctrines or philosophies one may be doing, if these are not based on an understanding of reality according to what it is, how things are dependently-originated, then such practices will only contribute to an increase in, strengthening and hardening of the afflictions, especially self-grasping, rather than decreasing it.

Ah! When the wise see the difference, how could they not revere you from the depths of their hearts!

Lama Tsongkhapa is saying here that, those who are wise due to seeing what Buddha has taught, the truth behind dependent-arising, that the nature of reality is [exactly as what he has intended], they would see a huge difference between one's founder the Buddha, and everyone else, that there is no comparison whatsoever. One would see that he is the only one [who stands out above the rest]. Therefore, those who are able to see that, will naturally have faith in the Buddha from the depths of their hearts.

*What need to talk of many teachings! The simplest conviction in just a single part brings on the greatest of joy!
Alas! My mind is ruined by ignorance! For so long have I gone for refuge to this great store of meritorious qualities,
Yet not a single one do I possess. As yet, however, my life has not slipped between the jaws of the Lord of Death and,
Having a modicum of faith in you, I do consider myself fortunate.*

All the words of this text is essentially wonderful, special and precious. It will be good if you can read this text every now and then.

In short, Lama Tsongkhapa is expressing [in these few verses,] how fortunate he feels to be able to even have a chance to hear, study, learn and think about dependent-arising,

Lam Rim meditation and BP study advice:

For those in the Lam Rim analytical meditation program, although we are now at the topic of Human Life of Freedoms and Endowments, as well as Death and Impermanence, you must not forget what you have meditated on earlier. We started with the topic of Correctly Devoting to the Virtuous Friend. On a daily basis, you should remind yourself, at least in a brief way, either through reflecting on it or reading on the topic on Guru Devotion. It is a rule from the beginning that, if you signed up for this, you have to meditate on the relevant topic everyday without fail. You have to make sure that you do it. Of course, there are some people who have broken that commitment. But this shouldn't be a reason to then discontinue. Although you may have stopped or missed one or two days, you should pick up that determination to continue. Other than to continue, what else is there to do? If you discontinue and let it carry on, then a day or two of this will become weeks and months.

This is the same thing with continuing your education here, coming to classes. After you have stopped for a while, it is very easy to stop coming [altogether]. Therefore from your side, [you should] try to ensure that you continue with your learning.

The text here, Engaging in the bodhisattva deeds, is not difficult in a way and quite easy to understand as it is not intellectually challenging but straight forward and simple. There so many pieces of useful advice in it. Even if you cannot manage all of it, but if you do find something that is applicable, useful and helpful for you, then [you can just] focus on those sections. On the basis of what is written there, you can reflect, using the verses you find applicable to you. You then integrate them into your life.

From my side, I also find it quite difficult to teach this text. If I were to merely give some short explanation, then we would be able to finish it quite quickly. For example, in the next chapter on joyous perseverance, if we just read through the verses in class and merely highlight some points here and there, we could finish that chapter in two or three lessons. But I do not see much benefit in that, we would probably would not understand much. On the other hand, if I were to explain them in detail with each verse, then we would never finish. I also see that some of you are probably getting tired of listening to and studying this text, it appears that way. It is like having to practice patience in studying the patience chapter as the chapter never seems to be finishing!

If you think about it, in reality, this is an indispensable text for real practice. Ideally, it is meant for practice and integration into life. Every single line and the verse that form from it is an advice and something we can practice. Therefore ideally, we need to have that kind of enthusiasm to be able to read and analyze each verse, reflect and then utilize the advice in those verses.

From your side, when you listen to the explanations, you have to focus and pay attention. From my side, I am not making up [the teachings] as we go along. I am merely trying to explain the text according to what Shantideva intended on the basis of some commentaries to this text. So along the way, if you do find some of my explanations perhaps incorrect, then you should raise it up in class and we could always have a discussion.

Recap:

In terms of the things that one likes and dislikes, there are the twelve things or situations that one desires and does not desire. With respect to the things and situations that one wants to happen, if there is anything that interferes with that, one gets upset.
Among these many things that one desires, here it is about how one is [wishing to be] praised. The section that was last taught explains why: (a) It is inappropriate to be attached to the joy one feels for praise of oneself [6.94 – 6.95].
Having said that, perhaps one may justify being praised by the following qualm: “If I am praised, it causes happiness in others.” Reply:

(b) If praise and renown were something to strive for, then all sentient beings would enjoy them, [but this is not the case] [6.96 – 6.97]

(i) The actual [6.96]

<i>6.96 a. If I am happy due to his happiness, b. Then I must act similarly towards all. c. And if this were so then why am I unhappy d. When others are happy due to joy?</i>
One may think that, when someone praises one, that person is happy, due to that, one is also happy. One may justify one's attachment to being praised by saying: “When the person praises me, he is happy doing so, so I am happy for him.”
If that is what one thinks, then such a reason should also apply when one's enemy is praised as well.
This is because, the person praising one's enemy is also happy doing that. But when one's enemy is praised, not only does one not like it, one also does not like the person who is praising one's enemy as well.
Going by such a line of reason, if one really feels happy for the person praising one due to him being happy doing that, then likewise, one should also extend that [feeling] to the person who is praising one's enemy or someone one does not like.

(ii) Refuting the “happiness of being praised” as it is childish [6.97]

This verse describes how childish one actually is, when one becomes so excited and happy when one is praised:
<i>6.97 a. Therefore the happiness that arises b. From thinking, “I am being praised,” c. Is thus incorrect; d. It is only the behavior of the childish.</i>
If one analyzes the nature/ entity of the praise one is so attached to, there is actually not much meaning nor essence in it.
Due to it having not the slightest meaning/ essence, to be attached to being praised is thus the behavior of a childish person.
What one likes and is attached to, is being praised and having a good reputation. As a result, if there were anyone that interferes with these, one gets very upset with them. The next section explains that in fact, being praised and having a good reputation is not something to be desired, not something beneficial. Rather, it is something quite harmful:

b" Reflecting on the benefits [6.98 – 6.101]

(1) As that which acts to hinder praise and renown [also] stops the lower realms, it is inappropriate to be angry with it [6.98 – 6.99]

(a) Grasping after praise and renown leads to the development of negativities [6.98]

<i>6.98 a. Praise and the like distract me b. And also destroy my disillusionment. c. I start to envy those who have excellent qualities d. And success is destroyed.</i>
This verse explains the faults of being attached to being praised and having a good reputation.
Being praised and having a good reputation are not necessarily helpful for a real practitioner. In his perspective, it is perhaps better not to like and be attached to being praised and having a good reputation. This is because, when one is attached to being praised and having a good reputation, one gets distracted. This leads to arrogance and pride developing.
One is also very attached to material gains. How one is distracted by all these in one's life is commensurate with how much attachment one has for all these things. The more attached one is to praise, fame, material gains and so forth, the more distracted one becomes, as one focuses more time and effort to gain/ run after such things.
Basically, one then comes under the control and influence of the eight worldly dharmas. As these fill up one's life, then there would be no room, space and time left for real Dharma practices.
The more one is attached to one's object of desire/ enjoyments, the less disillusionment and disenchantment one will be able to generate with regards to cyclic existence.
Even if one manages to develop some disenchantment with cyclic existence, seeing its truth, but because of being attached to one's objects of desire, even such a small disillusionment to cyclic existence one may have generated will dissipate away.
The weaker one's disillusionment and disenchantment with cyclic existence is, the more difficult one would be able to subdue one's mind through meditation. One would have difficulties experiencing the meditation. One cannot even meditate.
In the end, even engaging in some virtue with one's body and speech also becomes difficult.
The verse here is also saying that, being praised and having a good reputation are conditions that can cause one to entertain negative thoughts of competitiveness with those with [higher] qualities. This is when jealousy would creep in.
Attachment to being praised and having a good reputation could lead one into being jealous of others, who may have some good qualities. When jealousy creeps in, one would be unable to bear others having good qualities as one wishes to compete with them. One would be unable to bear others who are better. When jealousy comes, anger comes as well.
When anger arises, one destroys one's happiness in this and future lives.
This verse tells one the faults of the attachment to being praised and having a good reputation.
The next explains how, those who obstructs one from being praised and having a good reputation are in fact the ones stopping one from going to the lower realms:

(b) That which acts to stop [this grasping also] stops the lower realms [6.99]

<i>6.99 a. Therefore, are not those who are closely involved b. In destroying my praise and the like c. Also engaged in protecting me d. From falling into the unfortunate realms?</i>
In the previous verse, it explains about the many faults of attachment to being praised and having a good reputation. Hence, is the person who is obstructing one from these things not the one who guards one from falling into the hells?

Is it not very kind of such a person that comes purposefully and works very hard to stop one from going to the lower realms?
Attachment to being praised and having a good reputation brings about many problems that will lead one into the lower realms. Therefore, is not the person who stops one from experiencing the effects of being praised and having a good reputation, which are only sufferings in the lower realms, the one who stops one from going to the lower realms?
If one really analyzes and reflects well, this is actually the case, the conclusion. Such a person is in fact not a harmdoer, rather, he is someone who is very beneficial and kind. It is thus completely inappropriate to be angry and upset with such a person. Rather, one should in fact repay his kindness.
Therefore, it is inappropriate to be upset and angry with such a person because, such a person who obstructs one is in fact the one who liberates one from samsara:

(2) As it is something that acts to liberate one from conditioned existence, it is inappropriate to be angry with it [6.100 – 6.101]
(a) As that which hinders praise and so forth acts to liberate one from conditioned existence, it is inappropriate to be angry with it [6.100]

<p><i>6.100 a. I who seek freedom</i> <i>b. Do not need to be bound by material gain and honor.</i> <i>c. So why should I be angry</i> <i>d. With those who free me from this bondage?</i></p>
If one genuinely aspires and intends from the heart to be freed from all suffering and be liberated from samsara, then for one, praise and reputation are only bondages that bind one to cyclic existence and suffering.
One does not need additional chains that will bind one further to cyclic existence. Therefore, in that sense, one does not need anymore praises and good reputation, for these will further bind one to it.
Therefore, someone who interferes with and interrupts one's achievement of fame, reputation and praise, is in fact one's liberator, as he frees one from the chains that binds one to samsara. Hence, there is no justification to be upset with him.
In fact, it is appropriate to like such a person. In essence, one has to change one's view of one's harmdoer. Instead of seeing him as such, one has to realize that he is not a harmdoer but rather, someone who is very helpful.
Such a person who disrupts one from achieving fame, reputation and being praised is someone who closes the door of suffering on one:

(b) As it is something that cuts the avenue of suffering, it is inappropriate to be angry with it [6.101]

<p><i>6.101 a. Why should I be angry</i> <i>b. At the very doors that do not let me in,</i> <i>c. Which are like buddhas bestowing blessings</i> <i>d. To those who wish to enter the chamber of suffering?</i></p>
The cultivation and development of patience can only occur in situations that involves “harmdoers”. It is only due to their existence that the cultivation of patience is possible. This statement is meant for a later section coming soon.
Being emotionally involved and attached to being praised and having a good reputation is like opening the doors for one to enter into the lower realms. This is the same as being attached to going to the lower realms to suffer.
Therefore, the person who harms one's attachment to these things is in someways like the Buddha, who personally comes right in front of one, stops one from entering into the door leading to the lower realms and closes that door.
Such a person, whom one usually views as a harmdoer or an obstacle, is in fact someone who is kind and helpful. Hence, it is inappropriate to be angry with him.
The section up to here explains how one can work with the eight worldly dharmas, particularly, the attachment to the twelve desirable objects. Due to one's attachment to them, one gets upset when these are hindered: 1" It is inappropriate to be angry with that which hinders [one's worldly] interests [6.90 – 6.101].
However, one may still think that there are situations which justify one getting upset. One of which is feeling that one is justified in being upset with those who interferes with one's accumulation of merit:

2" It is inappropriate to be angry with that which hinders merit [6.102 – 6.126]

a" It is inappropriate to be angry because merit has been hindered [6.102 – 6.103]

(1) One should abide by the supreme austerity [of patience] [6.102]

<p><i>6.102 a. Saying, “This hinders my merit,”</i> <i>b. With him too it is incorrect to be angry.</i> <i>c. If there is no fortitude similar to patience</i> <i>d. Should I not abide in that?</i></p>

One may think that, if one's livelihood, sources of material gain or standard of living is harmed/ obstructed, then one would not be able to practice as much generosity as one likes. Accordingly, one may feel that with less material gains due to being obstructed, one has less resources to be generous, to make offerings, to prepare for retreats in the future and so forth.
Therefore, the obstructor to such endeavors is hindering one from doing one's practices. Hence, there are justifications to be upset and one is not unreasonable here. If this is what one think, then the response is this verse.
The many faults of anger and the many benefits of patience have already been explained. It is patience that can overcome anger. It is also said in one of the earlier verses that, there is no fortitude and virtue that is like or similar to patience.
The practice of patience brings so many benefits. The virtue associated with patience will also be very strong.
Patience is the antidote that can overcome anger. If one is really aspiring to virtue/ merit, then since there is no better practice of virtue than patience, then would it not be better to abide in patience when someone interferes with one's practice of virtue?
The point is, there are people who justify being upset when their practice of virtue is being interrupted. Since one likes to have virtue/ merit, then one should abide in patience as this would "confer" the highest merit.

(2) If that act [of patience is hindered], oneself becomes an obstacle to merit [6.103]

*6.103 a. If by my own fault
b. I am not patient with this,
c. Then it is only I myself hindering
d. Involvement in the cause of merit.*

While the object for one's practice of patience is there, but if one is greatly upset and does not practice patience, then it is one who is obstructing oneself from achieving the strong virtue and merit that comes from practicing patience. The person whom one usually thinks of as an enemy who obstructs one in the practice of virtue, is in fact not an obstruction to virtue:

b" It is not a hindrance to merit [6.104 – 6.105]

(1) A general presentation [6.104]

*6.104 a. If without it something does not occur
b. And if with it, it does come to be,
c. Then since this would be the cause of it,
d. How can I call it "a hindrance"?*

The existence of an enemy, one's harmdoer, is an indispensable cause or condition for one's practice of patience. Without him, one would not be able to do so. Therefore, one would not be able to reap the benefits that come from this practice.

This verse is saying that, the harmdoer, one's enemy, is not an obstruction to virtue. Rather, he is very helpful for one in the practice of virtue. Without him, there would be no cause for the practice of patience.

(2) Establishing that by an analogy [6.105]

*6.105 a. A beggar who came at the time
b. Was not a hindrance to generosity,
c. And I cannot say that those who give ordination
d. Are hindrances to becoming ordained.*

If from one's own side, one really wants to practice generosity, one has the enthusiasm to give, then if a beggar were to ask one for something, one would not consider this beggar to be an obstacle/ hindrance to one's practice of generosity.

For someone who wishes to be ordained, the abbot who presides over the ordination and the acharya are the people who need to be present for the ordination to occur and be valid. These people are therefore not obstacles for such a person.

Therefore, for someone who wishes to gather virtue/ merit through the practice of patience, the enemy/ harmdoer is also not an obstruction/ obstacle.

The essence of this section is, the harmdoer/ enemy who "obstructs" one from accumulating merit, is in fact not an obstruction. The teachings is saying that, put aside viewing them as obstructions to one's accumulation of merit, one should in fact look upon them with respect as they are special objects and indeed rare:

c" Reflecting on [the enemy] as an object of respect [6.106 – 6.126]

(1) As [the enemy] is someone that [helps one] to develop qualities, one should respect [him] [6.106 – 6.118]

(a) The benefits for oneself are great [6.106 – 6.108]

(i) The rarity of the special field [for practicing patience] [6.106]

*6.106 There are indeed beggars in this world,
But rare are those who inflict harm;
If I have not harmed others
Few beings will cause me harm.*

<i>Khenrinpoche:</i> What do you think, are there more beggars or more enemies for yourself? Are they equal or you don't have both? Student: There are more beggars than enemies as I seldom harm people! <i>Khenrinpoche:</i> That's good!
For those who are real practitioners of bodhicitta, the real bodhisattvas, I guess they find it rare to encounter enemies.
As they do not harm others, then generally it is unlikely for them to have enemies [to harm them]. Therefore, enemies become very rare objects for them and are [precious] objects for them to further practice their patience.
Since enemies are rare for them, then it is very difficult for them to find such objects to enhance their practices of patience. Generally in the world, anything that is hard to come by is usually considered more precious.
Since [the enemy] is rare [for them], then it is appropriate to like them:

(ii) It is appropriate to take joy in that [6.107]

<p>6.107 a. <i>Therefore, just like a treasure appearing in my house</i> b. <i>Idly without me accomplishing it,</i> c. <i>I should be happy at the enemy</i> d. <i>For he assists me in my deeds of enlightenment.</i></p>
For the bodhisattvas, generally they find it difficult to come across people to practice patience. If what they have been looking for in such a rare treasure [of the enemy] suddenly appears without any effort, then the bodhisattvas would only feel happy as the enemy has appeared on his own accord without having to make any effort.
Since the enemy appears for the bodhisattva, he is able to really practice the perfections and bring that practice of the perfection of patience to completion. Therefore for him, the enemy is like a rare treasure.

(iii) It is appropriate to adopt the attitude to benefit the enemy [6.108]

<p>6.108 a. <i>Because I am able to practice this,</i> b. <i>He is worthy of being the very first to be given</i> c. <i>The fruit of my patience,</i> d. <i>For in this way he is the cause of it.</i></p>
Perhaps this verse is a dedication of merit [of practicing patience]. Due to the existence of the enemy, one has an indispensable condition for the practice of patience. When one practices patience, one is able to accumulate the virtue of having practiced patience. One would then be able to experience the benefits of practicing it.
Due to that, whatever one wishes to achieve, including enlightenment, one dedicates that fruit of the practice of patience to the harmdoer, who was the condition that enabled one to practice patience in the first place.
This is a story: There were two persons, one called <i>Lama Serkangba</i> , the other called <i>Lama Nya Thubten</i> . The latter is the guru of the former. Lama Nya Thubten was a bandit chief, who took all the material possessions of Lama Serkangba. As a result, Lama Serkangba lost all his powers, prestige and wealth.
Perhaps this Lama Serkangba, prior to being robbed of all his possessions, was probably powerful, prestigious and had status in society. Due to being robbed of all possessions, deprived of all status, power and wealth, he decided to live an ascetic life in isolation. It was due to having gone into isolated retreat, that he was able to really engage in pure Dharma practice.
As a result, he was able to develop experiences of the path. Therefore, Lama Serkangba was very appreciative of his guru. He regarded this Lama Nya Thubten as being very kind to him.
The point is, one's usual view of one's enemy and harmdoer is bad and unhelpful. If one thinks about it, it is not correct.
Rather than viewing one's enemy/ harmdoer as an obstruction/ obstacle to one's practice of virtue, if one really knows how to think, then in reality, the enemy is actually very helpful and an essential condition for one's practice of virtue.
Particularly, if one really wishes to practice patience, then one's harmdoer is really helpful. Hence, for people who have accomplished their practices of patience, they dedicate all the benefits and merits they have received to their enemy.
One may still object: "Why should I respect my enemy? He is not suitable and worthy for me to respect, pay homage and make offerings. I do not consider him as a condition to practice patience as he does not have the intention to benefit me."

(b) It is not [dependent] upon having reflected on the qualities [6.109 – 6.111]

(i) [The enemy] does not cease to be an object worthy of offerings just because [he] does not have the intention to benefit oneself [6.109]

<p>6.109 a. <i>OBJECTION: Why should this enemy be venerated,</i> b. <i>Since he has no intention for me to practice patience?</i> c. <i>RESPONSE: Then why venerate the sacred Dharma</i> d. <i>That is a fit cause for practice?</i></p>

One may think that one needs the enemy to practice patience, but nevertheless one does not need to venerate, respect and make offerings to him. Because, from his side, he did not have any intentions to help one practice patience nor benefit one.

Since he has no intention to benefit, then there is no reason for one to venerate, make offerings and so forth to him.

If that is what one thinks, then one should answer this question: “Should one respect and make offerings to the Dharma?” One would probably say yes. But then, the Dharma also does not have any intentions to benefit one as well.

The Dharma Jewel refers to true paths and true cessations. These do benefit one when one has them. But from its own sides, these do not have any motivations to benefit one. If that is the case, then why does one still venerate the Dharma?

One may still argue: “There is a big difference. The Dharma may not have the intention to benefit me, but at least it does not intend to harm me. Not only does my enemy not have any intentions to benefit me, he has all the intentions to harm me.”

(ii) [The enemy] does not cease to be an object worthy of offerings just because one intends that it is harmful to oneself [6.110]

6.110 a. *OBJECTION: Since he intends to cause me harm,
b. He is not to be venerated.*
c. *RESPONSE: If, like a doctor, someone strives to benefit me
d. Then how can I practice patience?*

Khenrinpoche: So, did you get it?

The enemy is an object suitable to be venerated because he is an object of observation for the cultivation of patience:

(iii) Thus, as [the enemy] acts as a focal condition [/observed object] for patience, it is worthy of offerings [6.111]

6.111 a. *Thus since patience is produced
b. In dependence upon a very hateful mind,
c. He is a cause of patience,
d. Whereby he is worthy of veneration just like the sacred Dharma.*

One cannot practice patience and bring that practice to completion in dependence upon someone who has loving concern for one. One can only practice patience and bring that to completion in dependence upon someone who is harming one.

Although one's enemy does not have any intentions to benefit one, without the enemy as a cause or condition, there is no way one can practice patience nor bring such a practice to completion. Hence, he is worthy of veneration.

Khenrinpoche's advice on this chapter:

One likes to be in various desirable situations, having material gains, fame, reputation and being praised. In short, one is really attached to such things and very much involved with the eight worldly dharmas.

When one gets what one does not want and does not get what one wants, one gets very upset. One's mind is usually disturbed on a daily basis due to attachment to the things one wants as well as being attached to not getting those one does not want.

Due to these, one has a lot of mental disturbances and upheavals everyday. This causes one to be very unhappy, which then leads to anger and so forth.

The many verses in this chapter tells one with reasons how, it is actually inappropriate and incorrect to be upset due to these.

What one needs to do is to look through these verses slowly, think about and reflect on them on one's own time to derive any benefits [from them].

As said before, intellectually, the materials covered so far are not challenging at all as it is so straight forward. There is nothing one cannot understand nor are there any new terms that one is not familiar with. It is easy to understand.

Therefore, the only difficult thing is to put them into practice. One just have to look at them on a regular basis, going through the verses slowly, thinking about and reflecting on them to become familiar with the ideas mentioned in the text.

One then needs to familiarize oneself with such logical and correct ways of thinking.

There may be some who are [merely] seeking intellectual challenges: “This is an easy text as there is nothing intellectually challenging.” If so, they have got it wrong.

[Due to such thinking,] their interest in this text and the determination to study it will become weaker.

The challenge here is not in [merely] understanding the meaning, not merely about studying them, but about practicing. Therefore, the challenge is to internalize what one has learnt through reflection. That is the challenge.

This section makes one consistent point:

One's harmdoer/ enemy is not an obstacle but is one's benefactor, someone very kind and useful for one.

This is the **thesis** one needs to prove to one's own mind.

It is through constant reflection and thinking over time that one could move one's mind slowly in that direction, coming to see for oneself that:
One has to change one's view of the people one does not like, who cause one problems. This is what one needs to do for oneself. <i>Khenrinpoche</i> : This is your challenge!
There are many reasonings one has seen so far that are put forth to challenge one's very familiar idea of seeing one's enemy as completely bad, as an obstacle and obstruction.
One just has to follow after such reasonings and familiarize oneself with them, so as to move one's mind away from old ways of looking at one's enemy as an obstruction, towards seeing him as someone very kind, beneficial, helpful and useful.
The great bodhisattva <i>Shantideva</i> has put up many reasonings to prove his point that, the enemy is not an obstruction but rather, is someone very kind. Therefore, one has to analyze his arguments put forth.
If one does object to any of his logic brought forth, one can always bring it up [in class]. This is what one needs to do.
<i>Khenrinpoche</i> : Then <i>Shantideva</i> will answer you!

Recap:

In the previous lesson, it was mentioned that, patience cannot be developed in relation to a person who has thoughts to benefit one. Such a person cannot be the object for the development of patience.

Rather, the object for the development of patience has to be someone who has a hateful mind, is upset, wishes to harm and/ or is harming one. Such a person has to exist before any patience can be cultivated.

Therefore, the harmdoer/ enemy is an indispensable cause and condition for the development of patience. Hence, just as one would respect and venerate the Dharma, likewise, the teachings explains that one should also venerate one's enemy.

This is because, one's enemy, like the Dharma, is an indispensable cause for one to accumulate virtue.

Since one's enemy is an indispensable cause for the development of patience, therefore, it does not really matter if one's enemy/ harmdoer has the intention to benefit one or not, he is still worthy of veneration just like the Dharma.

Even though the Dharma does benefit one, [but just like the enemy], it also does not have the *intention* to benefit one as well.

(c) Seeing [the enemy] to be like the Teacher [6.112 – 6.118]

In essence, the following section explains how sentient beings are precious and why one should respect them.

Of the various reasons that are explained, one of which is, sentient beings are the field of merit for one. Another is that, when one respects sentient beings, one pleases all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

The third reason is that, from one's side, any help or benefit extended to sentient beings will bring about great positive results in the future; any harm that one inflicts on sentient beings will bring about great suffering results in the future as well.

By analyzing and distinguishing well the consequences of benefiting and harming others, this is another way to cultivate respect for sentient beings.

(i) An extensive explanation [6.112 – 6.117]

(1') The scriptures teach that sentient beings and Buddhas are comparable fields of merit [6.112(ab)]

*6.112 a. Therefore the Muni taught
b. The field of sentient beings and the so-called "field of Victors."*

Essentially, Buddha is saying that, both the merit fields of sentient beings and the Buddhas are equal in being objects to whom one collects merit. In a sutra, Buddha said that:

*The field of sentient beings is the field of the Buddhas.
From the field of the Buddhas, the Buddhadharma is obtained.
Therefore, it would be unsuitable to mistreat them.*

Perhaps the point here is that, sentient beings are equal in being objects in relation to whom one can accumulate merit, just as one would accumulate merit in relation to the Buddhas.

(2') Establishing that by reason [6.112(cd) – 6.113]

(a') One attains the final object of desire by having faith in Buddhas and sentient beings [6.112(cd)]

*6.112 c. Many who have pleased them
d. Have thereby reached perfection.*

Many have become Buddhas and achieved the fulfillment of the two purposes through cultivating and generating love and compassion for sentient beings. Therefore, this is the reason for one to also do likewise and respect sentient beings.

(b') As having faith in both is comparable in terms of attaining Buddhahood, it is inappropriate to discard [sentient beings] and embrace [the Buddhas] [6.113]

*6.113 a. A buddha's qualities are accomplished
b. From sentient beings and the Victors alike,
c. So what kind of system is it that
d. I do not respect sentient beings in the same way I respect the Victors?*

The achievement of the various qualities of enlightenment such as the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses and so forth, come about in dependence on both the Buddhas and sentient beings.

Since both are equal in being objects one must depend on to achieve the qualities of enlightenment, the teachings then ask one why is it that, on one hand, one venerates, prostrates, cherishes and makes offerings to the Buddhas and so forth, but on the other, one does not respect and [behave likewise] towards sentient beings?

Therefore, such behaviors of neglecting, not respecting sentient beings and so forth, but at the same time respecting the Buddhas and so forth, are [contradictory and] discordant behaviors.

Qualm: Granted that they may be equal in being fields of merit, but they are vastly different in that, Buddhas have all the qualities and not a single fault, whereas sentient beings are full of faults [and have very few qualities]. Therefore, it is only suitable to venerate and make offerings to the Buddhas but not to sentient beings. **Reply:**

(3') Abandoning objections [6.114 – 6.117]

(a') Rejecting [the position] that it is invalid to cultivate equal faith in objects that are not equal in qualities [6.114]

*6.114 a. They are not similar in the excellent qualities of their intentions
b. But in the results.
c. Sentient beings also have excellent qualities
d. And they are therefore equal.*

Whatever has been explained thus far is not a claim that, Buddhas and sentient beings are equal in terms of qualities.

Although they are not equal in terms of qualities, but in terms of being the causes for achieving the final fruit of enlightenment, they are equal. Since one needs to depend on both of them to achieve one's desired result of full enlightenment, then one also has to respect sentient beings:

(b') The greatness of [having] faith in both: It is appropriate to cultivate equal faith [because] they are comparable [in terms of their abilities to act as] causes for Buddhahood [6.115 – 6.116(ab)]

*6.115 a. Whatever veneration of one with a loving mind
b. Is the greatness of sentient beings.
c. Whatever merit of faith in the buddhas
d. Is the greatness of buddhas.*

*6.116 a. Therefore, they are asserted to be equal
b. In the share they have in establishing a buddha's qualities.*

For someone who is cultivating love and who has entered into meditative equipoise of concentration on love, when he arises from such a concentration, it is said that, if one venerates and makes offerings to him, the merit one collects here is so powerful that it can bear [positive] fruit even in the present life.

This is because, the object of observation of such a person's concentration on love is *all sentient beings*.

From one's side, when one makes offerings to Buddhas out of faith, be it putting one's palms together in veneration, offering merely a single flower or even a drop of water, it is said that, the merit accumulated is so great that, it would continue all the way up till one's achievement of full enlightenment. The reason this merit is so great is also due to one's faith.

If due to faith, one venerates the Buddhas through prostrations, making offerings and so forth, one would accumulate vast amount of merit that would last till enlightenment.

Even though one makes such mere offerings but with faith, the results one gets is very powerful. This is all due to one's object of offerings and veneration, here being the Buddhas.

Here, the Buddhas are the objects which enables one to accumulate that much merit. In the earlier example, one also accumulates vast merit as well when one makes offerings to someone concentrating on love focusing on sentient beings.

In the first example, sentient beings constitute the object in dependence upon which one accumulates that amount of merit.

In the second example, one accumulates that much merit in dependence upon the Buddhas.

To point is, to achieve the state of full enlightenment, one's ultimate goal, one of the causes for such an achievement are sentient beings. Therefore, besides the Buddha, one also needs to depend on sentient beings.

In that sense, since sentient beings are equal to the Buddhas in being necessary causes and conditions for one to achieve full enlightenment, therefore, it is [a correct reason] to be equally respectful to sentient beings.

(c') It is appropriate to have faith because there is unlimited merit in making offerings to sentient beings who possess only a fraction of the qualities of a Buddha [6.116(cd) – 6.117]

*6.116 c. They are not equal with the buddhas
d. Who are boundless oceans of excellence.*

*6.117 a. Even if the three realms were offered
b. For the sake of venerating
c. Some person in whom a mere share of the good qualities
d. Of the unique Assembly of Supreme Excellent Qualities appears, it would be little.*

In terms of qualities, Buddhas have boundless oceans of them. Although Buddhas and sentient beings are not equal in terms of their qualities, but sentient beings do have some portion of qualities that the Buddhas possess.

Hence, even if one were to venerate and offer the entire three realms to one sentient being who has a mere portion of qualities that the Buddhas have, it is said that even the three realms are not sufficient enough offerings one can use to offer to him.

(ii) Summary [6.118]

*6.118 a. Thus since sentient beings have a share
b. In giving rise to the supreme qualities of the buddhas,
c. It is correct to venerate sentient beings
d. Due to similarity through just these.*

(2) Due to faith in the Teacher, one should respect sentient beings [6.119 – 6.126]

(a) One should respect [the Teacher] because he acted as if all sentient beings were his only child [6.119 – 6.125]

(i) Accomplishing the principal method required of Buddhas [6.119 – 6.123]

(1') [Having respect and cherishing sentient beings are] identified as the principal method for repaying the kindness of Buddhas in light of what they have done [6.119]

Perhaps the main way to repay the kindness of the Buddhas is to respect and cherish sentient beings:

*6.119 a. Furthermore, what way is there to repay
b. Those without dissimulation who are a friend
c. And grant immeasurable benefit,
d. Other than by pleasing sentient beings?*

The Buddhas look upon all sentient beings as their loved ones without any discrimination, pretense, deceit and guile. It is said that, there is no better and higher way to honor, please, offer and repay the kindnesses of the Buddhas than to cherish, respect, help and work for the welfare and benefit all sentient beings.

Therefore, there is no way to please the Buddhas when, on one hand, one venerates and makes offerings to the Buddhas but on the other, one gets upset with, harms, despises and bullies sentient beings.

If there is the need to respect sentient beings, then what are the ways to do that? One of the ways is to be patient when one is harmed by them:

(2') Establishing that [6.120 – 6.123]

(a') One should be patient with harm done by sentient beings [6.120]

*6.120 a. Because benefiting them will repay
b. Those who give up their holy bodies and enter Relentless Torment,
c. Therefore even if they cause me great harm
d. I shall behave impeccably in all.*

The Buddhas have worked very hard [in the past] to become Buddhas. Even if they could give up their exalted bodies, go to the lowest of the unrelenting hot hell to benefit and fulfill the welfare of sentient beings, they would do so.

If one really has faith in them, then one should benefit sentient beings. This would be the best way to repay the kindnesses of the Buddhas in whom one has faith in.

Therefore, if one's possessions or body is harmed in any way by sentient beings, then the practice [for one here] is to train one's mind to look at such sentient beings in a positive way, just as how one would view one's gurus.

When one looks at one's guru, one sees them as only wanting to benefit and help one. Likewise, the practice here is to have the same view of one's harmdoer/ enemy.

The person who is able to devote correctly to the virtuous friend is someone who is able to see good in his guru's every action due to his training in looking [only at qualities]. Likewise, the practice here is to train one's mind to look at sentient beings, especially one's harmdoer/ enemy, in a positive aspect, regardless of what he has done to one. This is one of the way to train.

This verse is an advice, from one's own side, to look at everything that one's harmdoer does as something good and positive. Next is an advice to abandon arrogance in relation to sentient beings. This is because, if one has arrogance, then it would be difficult to accomplish what one has set out to do: Reflecting on the enemy as an object of respect [6.106 – 6.126].

(b') Abandoning conceit one feels in relation to sentient beings [6.121]

*6.121 a. Because those who are my Lords, for the time being
b. Disregard even their own bodies,
c. Then why does the confused I
d. Act proud and not behave with the attributes of a servant towards them?*

Lords refer to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas whom one holds in high regard, cherishes and respects very much. However from their sides, if they could, they would even give their bodies and lives if there were the need to benefit others.

If the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, in whom one loves, respects and holds in high regards, would even disregard their own lives to benefit sentient beings, then as the verse says, why does one in confusion, act proud and arrogant towards sentient beings? Rather, the training is to strive to regard all sentient beings just as the Buddhas would, with respect.

A servant would usually does his best to please and serve his master by acting in accordance with his master's wishes. Likewise, one should work for sentient beings just as a servant would work and serve his master.

One main reason why one is unable to respect others is due to arrogance. Therefore from one's own side, if one is able to regard sentient beings as one's master while seeing oneself as the servant, then it will be easier to work for others.

(c') Abandoning harm [6.122 – 6.123]

(1") The reasons it is inappropriate to cause harm [6.122]

- 6.122 a. Because of their happiness the Munis will be pleased.
b. But if they are harmed they will be displeased.
c. By making them happy I shall delight the Munis,
d. And by harming them I shall harm the Munis.*

This is straightforward and not difficult to understand. If one can keep these words in one's mind, recall and recite them, particularly at times when one has thoughts wanting to harm others, then it will be very beneficial.

(2") There is no way to please the Buddhas while one is harming others [6.123]

- 6.123 a. Just as anything desirable would give my mind no pleasure
b. If my body was ablaze with fire,
c. Likewise when sentient beings are harmed
d. There is no way for the Great Compassionate Ones to be pleased.*

If one's body is set ablaze with fire, even if someone were to offer one a plate of delicious food or some desirable object, there is no way one would enjoy nor find them desirable/ pleasurable.

Likewise, there is no way the Buddhas are pleased if, on one hand one is harming sentient beings while at the same time, one is venerating and making offerings to the Buddhas. Whatever actions of harming sentient beings one has done in the past, now one should confess them:

(ii) Confessing previous displeasing actions [6.124]

- 6.124 a. Due to having harmed migrating beings,
b. I have displeased the Great Compassionate Ones.
c. Therefore today I confess individually all my negativities.
d. I request your forgiveness, Munis, for this displeasure I have caused.*

If one has accumulated such negativities in the past, such actions would have displeased the Buddhas. Hence, in the presence of the Buddhas, one should confess without any concealment and [pledge] to restrain from similar actions again in the future.

This verse is confessing any disrespectful actions [towards sentient beings] one has engaged in the past. The next verse is cultivating restraint from such similar actions in the future:

(iii) Refraining from [allowing negativities] to arise in the future [6.125]

- 6.125 a. From now on, in order to delight the Tathagatas, [252]
b. I shall be subdued and be a servant to the world.
c. Although many beings may kick and smash my head or kill me,
d. I shall not retaliate and may I delight the Protectors of the World.*

One confesses whatever mistakes one has committed in the past. Now, one should refrain from such actions again in the future with the thought of pleasing the Buddhas.

One should therefore refrain from arrogance and pride. This is what *subdued* here means. One should subdue one's own pride and arrogance, view oneself as servant to sentient beings with the attitude to benefit them.

The highest part of the body is the head while the lowest are the feet. It is said that, even if someone were to kick one's head or take one's life, but from one's own side, one should not view such an action with anger nor retaliate with anger.

Here, one is applying the [antidote] of restraint. One is cultivating the thought that even if such things happen, from one's own side, one should not retaliate with anger. Rather, one should voluntarily accept the situation and offer such thoughts of refrain to the Buddhas with the wish to please them.

(b) Thus, this shows in brief that one should respect sentient beings as well [6.126]

- 6.126 a. There is no doubt that those with the nature of compassion
b. Regard all these migrating beings as themselves.
c. These very ones seen in the entities of sentient beings are the Protectors themselves;
d. Why then do I not respect them?*

Through their practices of having exchanged themselves with others, there is no doubt that the Buddhas consider all sentient beings similar to themselves. In fact, they cherish sentient beings more than themselves.
Therefore, from one's own side, one should regard every sentient being in similar ways as being like the Buddhas themselves.
Khenrinpoche: what do you think of the meaning of this line: <i>c. These very ones seen in the entities of sentient beings are the Protectors themselves;</i>
Essentially, this is saying that sentient beings are in the entities of Buddhas. Khenrinpoche: How do you explain this?
In the teachings on <i>Equalizing Self and Others</i> , there is a way of doing so from the ultimate point of view: If one looks at the ultimate natures of both the Buddhas' minds and sentient beings' minds, both are equal in being never polluted by defilements since time without beginning. Hence, the defilements are not oneness with the mind.
But if one looks at the words here literally, it seems to suggest that the sentient beings one sees <i>is</i> Buddha.
It is not that sentient beings are Buddhas, as they are obviously not. But by seeing them as being in the nature of Buddhas, this is what is termed: Giving the name of the result to the cause in that, although they are not Buddhas, but right from the very beginning and all the while, sentient beings possess the potential/ fundamental cause/ nature of enlightenment.
<i>They are therefore future Buddhas, they will be Buddhas.</i>
Essentially, through respecting sentient beings, from one's own side, one will swiftly achieve the state of full enlightenment.
The remaining verses of this chapter explains about the benefits of meditating on patience:

b) The benefits of cultivating patience [6.127 – 6.134]

i) A brief presentation [6.127]

<p>6.127 a. <i>It delights the tathagatas</i> b. <i>And perfectly accomplishes my own purpose as well.</i> c. <i>It dispels the suffering of the world.</i> d. <i>Therefore I should always practice it.</i></p>
This verse says that, even though one is harmed by sentient beings, one does not retaliate but cultivates patience as well as being respectful towards them, this [act] alone will be the supreme way to please the Buddhas.
Meditating on patience is also the supreme method to fulfill one's own purposes in this life as well as one's ultimate goal of full enlightenment. One's own practice/ meditation on patience alone can also dispel the sufferings of the world.
In <i>Gyalsab Je's</i> commentary, this is stated to be the list of the benefits of meditating on patience. Other commentaries state this as the list of the benefits that ensues from respecting others.
Whatever these may be, the point is, through ascertaining on the benefits, acknowledging and accepting them as benefits, then the practice of patience is something that oneself should always be doing.

ii) Explaining the benefits by means of an analogy [6.128 – 6.132]

1' The meaning of the analogy in terms of the benefit [6.128 – 6.130(ab)]

a' Analogy [6.128 – 6.129(ab)]

<p>6.128 a. <i>For example, should even some of the king's men</i> b. <i>Cause harm to many people,</i> c. <i>Farsighted men would not retaliate</i> d. <i>Even if they were able to.</i></p>	<p>6.129 a. <i>For they are not alone;</i> b. <i>The might of the king is their might.</i></p>
If a powerful person were to send his henchman to inflict harm on one, even though one may have the capacity to retaliate, but if one is farsighted and knows how to think for the long term, then one would restrain oneself and think carefully before one does anything. This is because, one knows that this henchman has the support of his powerful master.	
Due to that fear, one does not retaliate but rather puts up with the harm.	

b' Meaning [6.129(cd) – 6.130(ab)]

<p>6.129 c. <i>Likewise I should not underestimate</i> d. <i>Weak harmers.</i> 6.130 a. <i>For the guardians of hell and the Compassionate Ones</i> b. <i>Are their army.</i></p>
Likewise, when pitiful sentient beings cause one harm, even though one can retaliate by putting them down, despising them or even kill them and so forth, one should not do so.
Therefore, one should not underestimate weak harmdoers, those one considers as insignificant or even pitiful.

One can take mosquitoes as an example: They are rather insignificant to one as one has all the capacities to kill them if one wishes. But the point is not to do so. This is because, behind them are the armies of the guardians of hell and all Buddhas.

The armies of the guardians of hell fit into the explanation this way: If one harms sentient beings, one accumulates the **nonvirtuous karmas that will produce** the **appearance** of the hell guardians in the future when one is born there.

The armies of the Conquerors supporting such insignificant weak harmdoers can be explained this way:

As mentioned earlier, any actions one does to cause harms to sentient beings are actions that will displease the Buddhas. Not only will they not be pleased, one becomes even further away from them. One would also not have the fortunate basis to meet and receive the blessings of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

These are the explanations of the examples. But the meaning on the reality itself is even greater than what is explained in the examples:

2' Explaining [that the reality of the meaning] surpasses the analogy [6.130(cd) – 6.132]

<p>6.130 c. Just as subjects behave towards a fierce king, d. I should please sentient beings.</p>	<p>6.131 a. Even if such a king were to become angry, b. Could he cause the harm of hell, c. Which is what I would have to experience d. By displeasing sentient beings?</p>	<p>6.132 a. And even if such a king were to be pleased, b. He could not possibly grant me buddhahood, c. Which is what I would obtain d. By pleasing sentient beings.</p>
<p>One should please sentient beings in the way a subject behave towards a fierce king. In this example, even if the king one is trying to please becomes upset with one, from his side, he can never be able to throw one into the hells. But if one displeases and harms sentient beings, one will be thrown into the lower realms.</p>		
<p>Even if the king is pleased [by one], no matter how pleased he is [with one], he can never grant one enlightenment. But if one pleases sentient beings, one can achieve enlightenment.</p>		

iii) A condensed presentation of the types of benefit [of patience] [6.133 – 6.134]

1' The principal effects [of patience] [6.133(ab)]

2' The visible effects [of patience] [6.133(cd)]

<p>6.133 a. Let alone my future attainment of buddhahood, b. Which comes from pleasing sentient beings, c. Why do I not see that there will be great glory, d. Fame, and happiness in this very life?</p>
<p>By respecting sentient beings and practicing patience in relation to them, in the future, the state of full enlightenment will be one's. Therefore, there are justifiable reasons to be respectful of others and to cultivate patience.</p>
<p>It is quite obvious that, through respecting others and cultivating patience, one will have a good reputation as well as peace and happiness even in this life.</p>
<p>By seeing the visible results from respecting others and practicing patience as stated, one should then practice patience and have respect for others. By understanding the fruitional effects, one also cultivates respect and patience:</p>

3' Explaining the fully ripened effect [of patience] [6.134]

<p>6.134 a. While in cyclic existence patience causes b. Beauty, freedom from sickness, and fame. c. Because of these I shall live for a very long time d. And win the prosperous pleasures of the wheel-turning kings.</p>
<p>The results of practicing patience is that, even while one is still in cyclic existence, one will achieve a pleasant body that is pleasing to others, have good helpers, a very long life free of sicknesses as well as being famous.</p>
<p>One will also be able to obtain the enjoyments of the wheel-turning monarchs.</p>

Khenrinpoche's summary advice on this chapter on patience:

<p>J) In the face of experiencing harms or disturbances from others, if one becomes overly upset with much anger and unhappiness, then one's life becomes really complicated.</p>
<p>In the case of someone who is trying to practice Dharma, then being overly upset and agitated would really harm one's practice as it becomes very difficult to do so.</p>
<p>Particularly for one who is aiming and trying to cultivate bodhicitta, then becoming overly upset is a huge obstacle. The antidote to this is A) cultivating the patience of disregarding harms done to oneself.</p>

If one analyzes the teachings pertaining to this patience, there are so many reasons put forth to help one change one's perspective of the harmdoer as someone who is totally bad into someone who is very beneficial and good.
These are methods to help one not develop any anger towards harmdoers.
2) Another source of disturbances and obstacles to one's Dharma practice is meeting with problems, challenges and difficult situations such as sicknesses, disturbances from [humans and non-humans].
People often give up their practices in the face of such problems. Hence, such problems become obstacles as it interferes with one's practice.
To counteract such dangers, there is the practice of B) cultivating the patience of [voluntarily] accepting sufferings such that [the obstacles] do not detract one from one's practice. Rather, one would be able to continue with it.
At the beginning of the section that explains this patience of [voluntarily] accepting suffering, there was an advice to see if anything could be done about the problem, whether it could be solved. If it could not, then what is the point of being upset?
There was also a discussion on [reflecting on] the benefits of suffering, that it is actually very useful and good to have suffering. With familiarity, one could actually deal with, tolerate and even like suffering. Once one becomes accustomed to changing one's idea about suffering, then one can put up with it.
3) Yet another source of problem why one does not succeed in one's practice is a lack of desire.
For some perhaps, the Dharma is not something that is really desirable. One may want to practice but not really so. One of the reason this happens is that one does not really see the point/ benefit and essentially one lacks faith/ trust in the Dharma.
To counteract that, there is an antidote in the form of C) cultivating the patience of certitude about the teachings .
This is an antidote to the lack of faith/ trust in the teachings. The way to cultivate this patience is to develop an ascertainment/ certainty of the Buddha's teachings, particularly on the C1) Law of cause and effect . One reflects on this until one gains the faith of conviction/ stability, for this is the foundation for practice.
One also particularly need to develop the certitude/ ascertainment about C2) dependent-arising on the subtlest level . It is through [these two meditations] that one gains stability in one's faith and trust in the Dharma. This then becomes the basis for one to actually [enter into] practice and continuing with it.
On the basis of thinking/ reflecting on the presentation of the principle of cause and effect, then one thinks/ reflects about dependent-arising at the most subtle level, which is the main contemplation.
Through this, if one is really able to ascertain that the "I", the "victim" who is receiving the harm and the harmdoer, although they exist, but do not exist by way of their own natures, from their own sides, in and of themselves, such an understanding serves as the supreme and highest antidote to counteract anger.
In the earlier section of this chapter, there was an explanation of how to regard oneself as well as one's harmdoer as emanations/ illusions in that, oneself and the harmdoer both do not exist in and of themselves/ from each own sides.

How one should regard the teachings:

In summarizing his commentary on the chapter on patience, <i>Gyaltsab Je</i> says:
<i>Although one meditates on the virtue of generosity and the like for many eons, They are destroyed by the tongue of fire of anger. Therefore, one needs to cultivate the force of patience over and over again, And not to give anger any chance.</i>
This is a very essential advice. Even if the Buddha were to appear directly in front of oneself, there is nothing better that he could say in the context of patience, than this summarizing verse.
One just has to pay attention and really take such teachings to heart. Because when one has the opportunity to hear the teachings, many a times, one's mind becomes hardened to the Dharma in that, one disregards them, thinking: "This is one of those things again." It is therefore essential that one does not end up like that.
In fact, from one's own side, one must seek out the Dharma with great interest. The Dharma should be the utmost priority for one. This should ideally be the case. It should be so important that, one would even give up everything, including one's life, just to receive the Dharma teachings/ education, to learn and to practice. In the ideal situation, it has to be like that.
But of course, we are not like that. It seems this is what happens to people at times. Having listened to too much teachings on the Dharma to the point that, instead of [deriving value from the] benefits of Dharma, one does not value it.
Therefore, one should not disregard this text and look down on it. In fact, this is a very precious and holy instructional text in that, even if the Buddha were to come right in front of one, there is nothing more he can say besides what one has seen here on the advice on cultivating bodhicitta and so forth. One has to keep that in mind.
It is therefore important to know, familiarize and mix one's mind with what is said in this text.

The essence of the chapter on patience:

The essence of the chapter on patience is about the <i>Three Types of Patience</i> :
1) Developing the patience of disregarding harm done to you 2) Developing the patience of voluntarily accepting suffering 3) Developing the patience of certitude about the teachings
These are the three types of patience that one has to meditate on. One has to be familiar with even the names, divisions and terminologies and be able to express them.
With respect to the explanation on <i>Developing the patience of disregarding harm done to you</i> , essentially, one's usual reaction to whom one considers as one's enemy/ harmdoer is to view them as totally bad and undesirable.
With such a perspective, one's mind becomes very disturbed, not calm and unhappy. In the context of training one's mind in the Dharma, such a disturbed state of mind is a big obstacle. With such anger, one's roots of virtue are destroyed.
Therefore, such states of mind are very harmful to one. However, it is said in the teachings that, sentient beings whom one considers as enemy/ harmdoer are actually one's kind mothers.
They have been so numberless times, have sustained and helped one with their kindnesses in the past for a very long time.
Therefore, if one brings such thoughts to mind, then there will be no room to be upset with such persons.
With respect to the explanation on <i>Developing the patience of voluntarily accepting suffering</i> , in the process of accomplishing virtue, there will be times where one experiences physical sufferings, hardships, tiredness or pain when accomplishing something that is beneficial.
To some, this could be an obstacle [to cultivating virtue] such that they become discouraged and eventually give up.
The point to remember is that, as soon as one takes on a body, all the causes and conditions for physical pain, tiredness and sufferings come into being as well. This is the very nature of one's existence/ one's body.
There is actually nothing much one can do about it. Even if one prays: "May this not happen" nothing can be done.
Rather than focusing on the pain, one should think of the benefits, change the way one looks at suffering by looking at the advantages of suffering as explained before.
By using the situation of the pain, suffering and thinking big, one should see how such a situation [one is in] is actually really helpful for one to achieve the long time goals of everlasting happiness.
So, it is important to view suffering in a positive way when it arises in the course of one's practice in accomplishing virtue.
If [there is refusal to accept that], then there is a possibility/ tendency for some people to get discouraged, disheartened and then lose hope. This then becomes an impediment and obstacle for one to continue one's practice.
Not having enough stable faith and trust in the Dharma is the biggest obstacle to Dharma practice. Particularly, without the [faith of] conviction in the Three Jewels as well as karma and its effects, then it is really quite difficult to do real practices.
Therefore, it is absolutely important to continually think about the presentation of causality of dependent-arising in terms of karma and its effects repeatedly until one gains some conviction and ascertainment.
Specifically, one has to think deeply about subtle dependent-arising, how everything is dependently-designated till one gains conviction. Without such an understanding, there is no way to cut all the root of one's frustrations, problems and sufferings.
Of course, when one gains some stable faith of conviction in subtle dependent-arising, then perhaps the <i>patience of certitude about the teachings</i> would arise.
If one were to distill the essence of the chapter on patience, it is essentially these three types of patience. The teachings tell one that, one should extract the essence out of one's human life of freedoms and endowments by meditating on these three.
This ends the chapter of Relying on Patience .

Chapter Seven: Teachings on Joyous Effort

How the chapters are related to the generation, preservation and enhancement of the mind of enlightenment:

In chapter one, the benefits of the mind of enlightenment were taught. In chapter two, confessing negativities were explained. In chapter three, with the preliminary practices of accumulating merit and purifying negativities, one adopts bodhicitta through a ritual. These three chapters explained how to generate the mind of enlightenment that has yet to be generated.

The next three chapters are the chapters explaining about conscientiousness, introspection and patience. After having generated bodhicitta that has not been generated earlier, one needs to prevent such a bodhicitta from degenerating. Therefore, to prevent it from degeneration, one has to rely on these three [states of mind].

It is not sufficient to merely prevent one's mind of enlightenment that has been generated from degenerating, it is also important to increase one's mind of enlightenment that was generated. Hence, the chapters on joyous effort, meditative stabilization and wisdom will be explained.

B. The way to train in joyous effort

a. Explaining the chapter's material [7.1 – 7.76]

1) Imploring one in the need to [cultivate] joyous effort [7.1 – 7.2(a)]

a) The actual [7.1]

*7.1 a. With patience I should undertake joyous effort;
b. Enlightenment will dwell in those who strive.
c. Just as there is no movement without wind,
d. So merit does not occur without joyous effort.*

From the *Stages to the Path to Enlightenment's* section on the *Six Perfections*, it is stated clearly that the practices of the earlier perfections form the basis for the practices of the latter.

Therefore, the practices of the latter perfections are very much dependent on the former perfections.

One needs to see the reasons: For example, the practice of the perfection of generosity is about giving without attachment/ grasping/ adherence/ holding onto [what one is giving]. The point is, the practice of generosity is the antidote to attachment.

Hence, the practice of giving has to be done without grasping/ adherence/ holding onto [whatever one is giving away].

Generally, the practice of generosity is about giving away one's body, possessions and roots of virtue without holding anything back/ adherence/ grasping.

This means that, when one is practicing giving correctly, the element of grasping/ attachment should not be present.

Without such adherence/ grasping/ attachment to one's possession, roots of virtue and body, then it will be much easier to practice ethical discipline. It will be easier to guard one's ethical discipline when one lacks attachment to these.

If one is able to guard one's ethical discipline well, then one would be able to meditate on and easily practice patience.

The person who can really strive in joyous effort is someone who has a stable and good practice of generosity, ethical discipline and patience. It is on the basis of these three practices that one would be able to strive in joyous effort.

The reason why one needs to strive in cultivating joyous effort is to achieve the highest goal of enlightenment. This can [only] be achieved if one has joyous effort.

Just as there cannot be any movement without wind, likewise, one would not be able to accumulate the collections of merit and wisdom without joyous effort.

To achieve highest enlightenment, one needs to complete the accumulation of the collections of merit and wisdom.

To accumulate the collections of merit and wisdom, one needs joyous effort.

Essentially, verse 7.1 is an exhortation to persuade one to practice/ engage in joyous effort. This is because, without joyous effort, highest enlightenment cannot be achieved. Therefore, if one wants highest enlightenment, one needs joyous effort.

b) Identifying joyous effort [7.2(a)]

7.2 a. What is enthusiasm? It is enthusiasm about virtue.

2) How to [cultivate] joyous effort [7.2(b) – 7.76]

a) Abandoning that which is [discordant] with joyous effort [7.2(b) – 7.30]

i) Identifying the class of things that are [discordant] with joyous effort [7.2(bcd)]

*7.2 b. Its discordant classes should be explained.
c. They are laziness, adherence to what is negative,
d. And despising oneself out of despondency.*

The discordant class of joyous effort is laziness, which has three types:

1) The laziness that relishes the taste of idleness, 2) The laziness that clings to ignoble activities and 3) The laziness that is disheartened about engaging in virtue.

ii) How to abandon [them] [7.3 – 7.30]

1' Abandoning the laziness that relishes the taste of idleness [7.3 – 7.14]

a' Examining the causes of laziness and abandoning them [7.3]

7.3 a. *Because of relishing the pleasurable taste of indolence*
b. *And craving based on sleep,*
c. *From not being disillusioned with the suffering of cyclic existence,*
d. *Laziness grows very strong.*

When one has this **1)** laziness that relishes the taste of idleness, one does not start on anything virtuous. **1A) One derives pleasure from idling around and being attached to that state [of mind]. Within that state, one fails to do anything virtuous.**

Such laziness usually arises due to being distracted to all kinds of things. Whatever activity or object one is attracted to, one is then distracted to and engages in that. One then derives pleasure from that. One then becomes attached to that pleasure.

This then causes laziness in that, **within that state of mind that is distracted and attached to the pleasure that comes from the distraction, one's mind would then block one from thinking or engaging in virtue.**

Another cause of this laziness is **1B) Being attached to the pleasures of sleep.** If one is very much attached to the pleasures of sleep, then this will lead to this laziness. One also becomes attached to the bed and pillow. One is essentially 'sucked' into the bed and pillow. **Khenrinpoche:** One cannot be separated from them [and still wishes to lie in bed] even at 10 a.m.

Another cause of this first type of laziness is **1C) An absence of any disenchantment with samsara.** Even though it is in the nature of suffering, but one does not see that. Instead of seeing it as such, one sees it as pleasurable real happiness.

Hence, one develops an emotional involvement/ attachment to samsaric happiness. This leads to this kind of laziness which then blocks any virtue. These are the three causes of the first type of laziness.

When this type of laziness arises, one becomes involved with and attached to it. Based on that, one then tends to procrastinate from doing what is virtuous with regards to the practice, thinking: "I'll do it later."

This laziness affects all of us here without exception. This is because, one is attracted to indolent activities with all sorts of distraction. One is also attached to the pleasures of sleep, as well as not being despondent with cyclic existence.

As a result, one procrastinates and postpones one's virtuous practice. All of us are at fault in having that. This is an important point as all of us are affected by it. The antidotes will be taught:

Developing the Four Antidotes, the favorable conditions for joyous effort:

While it is important to eradicate laziness and its causes, but thinking that merely having joyous effort arising is insufficient to achieve that. One needs and wants **the mind that is intent on the Dharma so much [1) aspiration/ yearning].**

If one does not want Dharma practice, then it is also very difficult for joyous effort to arise. If one wants joyous effort, one must really want the Dharma so much. To want the Dharma so much, one must firstly be convinced about the benefits.

Using the learning of this text as an example: If one really wants to listen, study and learn this text well, then one has to see for oneself the benefits one stands to gain.

As in many things one does in life, before one really sets out to seek something, one must first really want it. It is only when one sees the profit versus the loss, understands the benefits of having something, would one then do something to get it.

It is the same with Dharma practice. Here it is about how to **develop the strong thirst and desire for the Dharma [2) Joy].** It is only when one has the strong thirst/ wanting for the Dharma from one's heart, would one have the strong aspiration for it.

Aspiration here means that, it is something that one really wants to practice. Hence, not only is one seeking the Dharma, one's strong desire and thirst for the Dharma would also propel one to actually carry it out [in actually seeking it].

As the strong thirst, interest and desire for the Dharma propel one to seek out the Dharma and not merely having an intention for it, this would also be a cause for one to **continually seek it until one brings it to completion [3) steadfastness].**

It is a heartfelt attitude. One needs such a strong mind that will propel one to have joyous effort to actually seek it out, work hard until one completes it. But this does not mean that one has to proceed forcefully without stopping until one achieves it.

This is where the power of **4) relinquishment** is applied. One must know how to rest and recuperate in between.

This means **taking an appropriate rest at the appropriate time.** This is a method **to further enhance and increase one's joyous effort.** If one does not know how to apply this power and does it incorrectly, then instead of this becoming the enhancement of one's joyous effort, it can become the cause for one's joyous effort to degenerate.

All of us are like that. Take reading a book as an example, at the beginning, one is excited over it and has some interest for it. As one gets tired after a while from reading it, one then decides to take a rest and close the book. This book is then closed for good. One never looks at it again.

Likewise, such way of learning or practice will never get one anywhere. In fact, it does not contribute at all to joyous effort.

Therefore, [to have a correct power of relinquishment], one must have the strong desire to carry out the chosen task to completion. If one has such an attitude, this will also be there when one is resting, never forgetting what one has set out to do.

With such an attitude, the rest will never become an obstacle to the enhancement of one's joyous effort.

In the process of applying joyous effort, another crucial factor for one's practice is to have a long-term view. One must be farsighted. One needs to have a rough idea what one is doing and how to do it.

This means one needs to know the process, what should be done first before the others as one is the foundation for the next step and so forth. Therefore, one needs to have an overview as well as a long-term view. One has to proceed step-by-step.

One cannot be doing everything at once as one will never succeed.

Therefore firstly, one needs to be farsighted. Secondly, one needs to have a very extensive view of things in that, one must want to acquire every quality and not some small result. One must have the courage and mental space aspiring to complete all the good qualities. Hence, one needs a wide-angled view and a big mind.

Thirdly, one needs to keep a steady pace. This means to carry out one's practice in a sustained but composed manner, without having a nervous disposition nor easily being flustered. Deep down, the mind that is engaged in practice is very calm and relaxed, merely proceeding in a continuous flow of joyous effort.

The remedies taught here are the meditation on death and impermanence, which are explained in the next few verses.

I would think that one could condensed all of these into the roots that constitutes that meditation on death and impermanence: 1) Death is certain, 2) Time of death is uncertain and 3) At the time of death, nothing can benefit one except the Dharma.

b' How to abandon them [7.4 – 7.14]

1" Abandoning laziness by reflecting on its disadvantages in this life [7.4 – 7.10]

a" Explaining by means of an analogy that death will soon cause [one's] body to perish [7.4 – 7.5]

(1) It is clear that death causes [one's body and life] to perish [7.4]

(2) Explaining that by means of an analogy [7.5]

<p><i>7.4 a. Enmeshed in the snare of disturbing conceptions, b. You have entered the snare of birth. c. Why are you still not aware d. That you have gone into the mouth of the Lord of Death?</i></p>	<p><i>7.5 a. Do you not see b. That he is systematically slaughtering your species? c. Any craving based on sleep d. Is like a buffalo with a butcher.</i></p>
<p>These two verses explain about the certainty of oneself dying.</p>	

b" As even [oneself] is under the dominion of death, it is inappropriate to carry on as if one has time [7.6 – 7.8]

(1) As oneself is under the dominion of the lord of death, one should not be lazy [7.6]

<p><i>7.6 a. While the Lord of Death is looking, b. Having blocked off every route, c. How can you enjoy eating? d. And thus how can you enjoy sleep?</i></p>

This is using an example to show how one is certain to die. One should apply such an example to one's own life, to know that oneself is going to die. Through reflecting on the certainty of one's death, one uses this meditation to stop the laziness that relishes the taste of idleness.

That which causes one to procrastinate in one's practice is the thought believing that one is not going to die soon.

If one really believes deep inside that one still has sometime [left], that one is not going to die that soon, then one will obviously postpone one's practice. To counteract this, one should reflect on how the time of one's death is uncertain:

(2) As death will come swiftly, make effort in virtue [7.7(ab)]

<p><i>7.7 a. For as long as death is quickly approaching, b. Then I shall accumulate the collections.</i></p>

The reason one needs to accumulate the collections quickly right now is because, one's death is going to come soon in that, one has no idea when that will happen. So, there is no certainty. Hence, one should start to accumulate the collections now.

Even though one may understand that one will die one day, but due to not really thinking about how one's time of death is uncertain, one may then think of doing some practices only towards the end of one's life, even only on the day of dying.

The verse is saying that, the time of one's death is the wrong time to give up laziness:

(3) [It is not appropriate] to abandon laziness [only] at the time of death [7.7(cd)]

*7.7 c. Even if I were to abandon laziness then,
d. At that improper time what will be the use?*

The advice here is that, one's practice is to be done when one is alive, healthy and when all the conditions are present.

Dharma practice cannot be left just to the day of death. If one has not done any practices before and wishes only to do so then, even if one wishes at that time, one would not be able to do it.

(4) As death will come suddenly without having [accomplished] all [of one's wishes], one should not be lazy [7.8]

*7.8 a. When this has not been done, when this is initiated,
b. And when this is only half done,
c. Suddenly the Lord of Death will come.
d. And the thought will occur, "Oh no, I'm doomed!"*

Perhaps this is related to the uncertainty of the time of one's death. This verse is saying that, the Lord of death will strike at any time. One could die before one gets down to doing anything or any practices. Death could also happen to one just after one has started one's practice or doing something. It could also come when one is half-way through one's practice/ task.

It is not as if death will only come at a fixed time. It could strike at any time.

By reflecting on and remembering about the certainty of one's death and how one's impending death is going to happen soon, one can then reverse the first laziness that relishes the taste of idleness.

c" One will be tormented by suffering if one does not make effort in virtue [7.9 – 7.10]

(1) At the time of death, one will be tormented with sorrow [7.9]

*7.9 a. Their faces flowing with tears
b. And their eyes red and swollen with sorrow,
c. My relatives will finally lose hope
d. And I shall behold the faces of the messengers of Yama.*

*7.10 a. Tormented by the memory of my negativities
b. And hearing the sounds of hell,
c. In terror I shall clothe my body in excrement.
d. What is the use of such a delirious state?*

Perhaps the essence of these verses here is that, at the time of one's death, nothing is of any benefit to one except the Dharma.

At that time, one's loved ones, one's body and possessions are of no use at all. Nothing is of any benefit except the Dharma.

If one is unable to practice while one is still healthy and mentally cognizant of things, then at the time of death, [how] would one be able to practice? One will be overwhelmed and tormented only by worries, fears and sufferings.

The point is, by seeing what [will definitely] going to happen to one, this should motivate one to abandon laziness.

How to make use of this chapter in one's life:

Like what I have mentioned recently before, this is not a difficult text in terms of its language as there is nothing one cannot understand. The only thing left is for one to sit down, reflect and apply [these teachings] to one's own life.

Laziness is something that affects everybody without exception. This blocks one from engaging in what is beneficial virtue.

This is an essential point. Hence, one has to work on one's laziness, really start engaging in virtue by getting down to it and stopping one's laziness. There is no other way to do so other than to analyze these points.

One has to reflect on whatever one has studied and then apply them to one's life.

When things are going well in one's life, when one feels good, then Dharma practice does not get done. In fact for one, [such a situation] is the biggest obstacle. This is because, one is satisfied and thinks it is good. One is attached to such a situation.

The time for practice is when one is still healthy and in a reasonably good mental state. If practice is done when one is in such a good state, such a practice will become good.

What is the laziness that relishes the taste of idleness and its best antidote, meditating on death and impermanence:

For those of you who are part of the Lam Rim analytical meditation program, you started with the topic of correctly relying on/ devoting to the virtuous friend.
Now, you are meditating on the topic of the human life of freedoms and endowments, death and impermanence. In the meditation on death and impermanence, the outlines starts with reflecting on the six disadvantages of not remembering death.
You can relate these few verses on death and impermanence we have covered so far here in chapter seven, to that section on the disadvantages of not remembering death.
In was mentioned before that, laziness is one of the obstacles which prevents one from practicing the Dharma and accomplishing virtue. One knows one has to engage in virtue, but one does not get down to doing it.
Laziness plays an important part in stopping one in engaging virtue. Of the different kinds of laziness, this is the laziness of relishing the taste of idleness. One derives pleasure from not doing anything, sleeping, chatting and so forth.
One feels pleasure from such activities. One's mind is then attached to the pleasures that comes from such activities.
This <i>mind that is attached to such pleasures is</i> the laziness that relishes the taste of idleness.
One of the best remedy/ antidote to reverse such a laziness is the meditation on death and impermanence.
The first disadvantage of not remembering one's own death and impermanence mentioned in the <i>Stages of the Path</i> literature is that, when one does not remember one's own death and impermanence, one does not remember the Dharma.
Even if one remembers the Dharma, but one does not practice it. This is attributed to not remembering death and impermanence. Even if one does remember and practice the Dharma, but the practice itself does not become pure. This is also a fault of not remembering one's own death and impermanence.
Even when one does remember the Dharma, practice it and it does become pure, but one cannot [strongly and continually] sustain it. This is again due to not remembering and meditating on death and impermanence.
Hence, one lives one's life like that: Not remembering the Dharma. Even though remembering it but not practicing it. Even though practicing it but it does not become pure. Even though it may become pure, but one fails to [strongly] sustain it.
The teachings say that, this is how one's life is wasted. At the end of one's wasted life, one would have to die with sorrow and regret, which is said to be another fault and disadvantage of not remembering one's own death and impermanence.
What has just been mentioned here is nothing that one does not know. So it is not about listening, as this does not do the job.
From one's own side, what one needs to do is to think about it continually all the time. This is an extremely important point.
For all of us here without exception: you, me and everybody else out there, this is the story of our lives. This would happen to one the moment one [fails] to think of one's own death and impermanence. This is how one's whole life gets wasted.
This is like what <i>Gungthang Tenpe Drönme (Gungthang Rinpoche)</i> said in his poem-song:
In the first twenty-plus years of one's life, one does not even think of practicing the Dharma. In the next twenty-plus years, one is thinking of practicing the Dharma, but one does not do it. In the last twenty-plus years, one laments: "Oh-no, I didn't get to practice Dharma." Finally, one has to die with much regret. This is the story of one's wasted empty life.
These pieces of advice are really helpful and good. Similarly, the first few verses in this chapter are also very effective if one thinks about it. When one reflects on death and impermanence, one should be thinking of one's <i>own</i> impending death.
Therefore, it is important and essential for oneself to think of one's own impending death and one's own impermanence.
Without reflecting and meditating on one's own death and impermanence, there will be no mental space whatsoever for one to do any practice. Dharma practice does not become practice at all.
One is like the fish that is caught in the net thrown by the fisherman in the sea. If one is a fish, once one gets stuck in the net cast by the fisherman, there is no way to escape and it is a matter of time that one will definitely die.
One is like that fish. The fisherman is analogy to one's afflictions, primarily one's anger and attachment. Propelled by one's anger and attachment, one is cast into the net of the ocean of samsaric suffering, the net being the analogy for samsara.
As long as one is born in samsara, death is a given. It will happen to one. If one uses this analogy to reflect on one's own situation, this could be helpful.
Another useful reflection is to think about fellow human beings, literally people who are the same type. In one's own life, there will be many people one knew personally that have already passed away, be it loved ones, friends or acquaintances.
One could perhaps mentally recount who these people are. From there, one can notice there is no certainty that, those who are older will necessarily die first. People die at all sorts of age, some when they are young, others when they are old.

In one's life, one has witnessed one's relatives, loved ones, friends whom one knows that have already died. One also sees people dying. Yet, while one has seen and is still seeing this, somehow one does not seem to be moved by it enough to practice Dharma.
The teachings gave an example of oneself being likened to farm animals that are led to the slaughter house. As the butcher slaughters the animals one by one, the rest in line to be slaughtered are so ignorant and not aware of their own fate that, they can happily continue to graze, eat, lye around and sleep.
One is likened to these animals lazing around while others are being killed. While one is going to die, one merely lazes around and gets attached to all sorts of things which then distracts one from doing one's practice.
One is also likened to someone traveling on a road to somewhere. One has no choice but to travel on such a road because all other paths are completely blocked. One also knows that there is an assassin who is out to kill one somewhere along this road. In such a situation, there will be no room to feel at ease as one will be worried all the time.
Therefore, the teachings use this example to ask one, how is it possible for one to feel relaxed, waste time and be attached to all kinds of things which are meaningless, knowing very well the Lord of death is waiting and can strike anytime?
This example shows how death is certain in that, there is no way one can stop death. One has no choice but to travel on the road to death. Somewhere along it, the Lord of death is just waiting and ready to pounce on one.
One is just like such a person in that, one is moving towards the Lord of death without any solutions whatsoever.
The teachings are saying that, if one is aware of this fact after having thought about one's own impending death, then there is no way one would live one's life as it is, happily passing time and wasting the day, sleep during the night and carrying on the next day [without doing anything meaningful]. One would never live a life like that.
These are the different examples one could reflect on to gain some certainty of one's own death. Above this, not only is one definitely going to die, one's own death will also occur very soon.
The teachings mentioned that, the Lord of death does not wait for one to retire from one's job, to finish whatever plans one wants to complete before coming to take one. He just comes and claims one anytime.
For one, there are also so many unfavorable conditions for sustaining life and so many favorable conditions for dying quickly. These are all the different kinds of diseases, sicknesses and so forth.
In the previous lesson, it was mentioned how, when one thinks of practicing only at the time of death without having done so while one was well and alive, then Shantideva is saying that, this is a wrong time to do so as it will be too late.
The time to think of practicing the Dharma is not on the day of one's death. The time to practice is right now.
If one failed to practice Dharma while one was alive, wishing and thinking that one could do that at the time of death, then one has to understand and realize that this would probably be very difficult.
As is mentioned in verse 7.10, if one did not do any practice or not much of it before death, then at the time of death, because one suddenly remembers all the negativities one has created, one's mind would then be quite upset and disturbed.
As there will be so much regret at that time, it would be rather difficult to practice any Dharma then.
If one is going to the lower realms, then at the time of death, due to one's karma ripening, one has all sorts of karmic appearances of wailing sounds, unpleasant sounds that are indicative of one's impending rebirth in the lower realms.
When one hears all such frightening sounds, one's mind will be so worried and frightened that, it would be almost impossible to think of virtue and practice any Dharma then.
Those who did not get to practice anything meaningful and beneficial when alive, then at the time of death, many a times, a lot of them become like a crazy person. From what can be seen from their physical demeanor and what they say, one can also know what they are thinking inside. In such a state of mind, what practices can one do and what virtue can one remember?
This is what is described in the teachings. People who do not practice, at the time of death, they would be overwhelmed by fear. A lot of times, they would not even remember nor recognize people around them. Since they cannot even remember the people around them, then how could they even remember the Dharma?
Therefore, while one is still alive and has some control/ freedom/ conditions to practice, one has start immediately.
By thinking of one's own impending death, one then persuades oneself to practice.

Student A: Is there a contradiction between the verses in 6.76, 6.77 and 6.95?

Student B reply: For verses 6.76 and 6.77, the outlines state that it is inappropriate to be *jealous* when one's enemy is praised. This means that when someone is praising one's enemy, one should not be jealous. Whereas for 6.95, this refers to oneself not being *attached* to the mind of someone who is happily praising oneself.

Khenrinpoche: In 6.76 and 6.77, these verses explain about how one should react when one hears one's enemies/ those one does not like, being praised by others. The usual reaction is that one does not like it and gets upset. Therefore, one needs to be patient. An upset mind is a mind that is disturbed. One counteracts that by checking whether such a praise [by another person towards one's enemy] is in accordance with facts/ reality or not. Even if one's enemy is being praised for something good that he deserves, that accords with reality, the teachings say that one should acknowledge the fact that the praise was a deserved one. One would then become less disturbed. The point is about dealing with one's own mind, one's own practice.

In verse 6.95, this is in relation to oneself being the object of praise. The problem [is not about the praise itself, but] the usual reaction when one is being praised. One's reaction is usually being extremely elated. One then gets very attached to it. This also causes one to be arrogant and proud. So these are the problems which need to be addressed as these are obstacles for oneself. The point is not to become attached to the praise. This verse is about dealing with whatever attachment that may arise when one is praised. Because getting attached to the praise one receives from others is something one needs to deal with. In that section, there is a list of antidotes. The point is to think about how, even if one does receive some praise, this does not: make one live longer, make one become physically stronger, eliminate one's sicknesses and so forth. These are some points for one to counteract whatever attachment that may arise when one is praised.

2" Abandoning laziness by reflecting on its disadvantages in future lives [7.11 – 7.14]

a" Suffering is certain to arise [7.11]

The current section explains about the *Laziness that relishes the taste of idleness*. Such a laziness harms and causes problems to one in this and future lives:

- 7.11 a. *If even in this life you shall be gripped with fear*
 b. *Like that of a live fish being rolled,*
 c. *What need even to mention the unbearable sufferings of hell*
 d. *[Due to] the negativities you have committed?*

If a fish were out of its water environment, it would be tossing frantically about, struggling and suffering greatly.

Likewise, due to being lazy in not having engaged in virtue, there is no need to mention how one would have to endure even more unbearable suffering of being burnt in the hells, which is much more than what the fish has to go through.

If one did not practice when one was alive, then at the time of one's death, one would find the entire process of dying completely unbearable and difficult. This is just like how a fish would be struggling on shore out of water.

Because of the immeasurable amount of negativities one has accumulated, then it goes without saying that, one would have to experience and endure much more suffering next life in the lower realms.

The question to ask oneself is: How is it possible for one to endure that kind of pain then?

b" It will be difficult to bear [7.12]

- 7.12 a. *Why do you remain at ease like this*
 b. *Having committed the actions of hell*
 c. *Where your delicate flesh will burn*
 d. *When touched by streams?*

It is said that, hell fire is so many times hotter than whatever fire that humans know of in this world. Above that, it is said that the skin of those born in hell is extremely delicate, just like the delicate skin of a new born baby.

When one has such delicate skin being burnt by the unbearable fires of hell, which is so much hotter than all the fires of the human world, then how is it possible for one to endure something like that?

The point being made here is that, one should practice Dharma and not be lazy, seeing all the verses explained so far as someone persuading and imploring one to practice.

c" It is contradictory to want happiness yet not pursue virtue [7.13]

- 7.13 a. *Much harm befalls those who want results without striving,*
 b. *As well as those sensitive ones.*
 c. *While clasped by death, I shall wail like the gods,*
 d. *"Oh no, I shall be destroyed by suffering!"*

If those who are aware of their own impermanence and impending death and yet failed to practice Dharma and engaged in virtue, then they will have to die a horrible, fearful death and experience unbearable sufferings in the future lives.

It is said that, those who are aware of this should be the ones who are able to joyously persevere day and night, even giving up their sleep, engaging only in virtue.

The teachings say that, one is not exactly interested in accomplishing virtue, like in such ways as going into isolated retreats. Be it for years or months, one does not put such kind of effort nor does one possess such determination.

This is the same when it comes to studying and learning about the Buddhadharma. One does a little but does not really want to do more as one lacks the heartfelt wish. This means one does not really strive [in one's study].
Since one cannot put in effort and strive for even a month, then there is no need to mention being virtuous day and night. In contrast, one's desire, goals and what one is aiming for, are huge and lofty.
For example, one wishes to be an expert in some practices and so forth. The goals are big, lofty and yet, the effort and determination do not commensurate with them.
One wants all the big experiences of the path/ realizations and so forth, but one does not work for it. One's efforts are not corresponding to that. One may even think to get a good rebirth just to do that.
Some may even think: "I wish to be born in the pure lands" but at the same time, one is not doing anything to achieve it. Wishing to achieve all kinds of results but yet, not putting in the comparable effort to achieve those goals is a contradiction.
If one cannot tolerate and endure even small inconveniences and hardships, then life would just be a big problem.
As seen earlier, anyone who is born in cyclic existence is destined to die. Death is an inevitable part of samsaric life. Yet, one sees that there are many who behave as if they were gods of the desire realms.
These gods have very long lives and great enjoyments. Due to that, they merely spend time enjoying their lives.
Many others in cyclic existence are not born in this realm and yet, behave as such, being [complacently] contented to spend day and night enjoying themselves, living their lives as if they are not going to die.
The teachings say that, such people with these mindsets and behaviors are objects of compassion.

d" Imploring one to pursue the methods by which one may be liberated from suffering [7.14]

<p>7.14 a. <i>Relying upon the human boat,</i> b. <i>Free yourself from the great river of suffering!</i> c. <i>As it is hard to find this boat later,</i> d. <i>Do not sleep at this time, fool!</i></p>
This verse is saying that, now having obtained this boat of a human life, one should use it to free oneself from the three realms of samsara. This is essentially the meditation on how, this human life of freedoms and endowments which one has obtained, is really meaningful and difficult to find again.
Through reflecting on these two points, one encourages one's own mind to practice the Dharma.
This completes the explanation of the antidotes to the first type of laziness, the laziness that relishes the taste of idleness. This is essentially the laziness of procrastination.

2' Abandoning the laziness that clings to [ignoble] activities [7.15]

<p>7.15 a. <i>Having rejected the supreme joy of the sacred Dharma</i> b. <i>That is an infinite cause of joy,</i> c. <i>Why do you enjoy being distracted by the causes for suffering,</i> d. <i>Frivolous amusements and the like?</i></p>
This verse is saying that, the sublime Dharma is the source of endless highest joy. Now having found it, why is one wasting time by not practicing it? It is therefore inappropriate to not practice it but merely living and engaging in a busy life.
It is wrong to live a life of hustle and bustle, being attached to and involved in that. This will lead to all kinds of problems in this and future lives.
The lives of most people in this world revolve around the enemy and loved ones. When an enemy arises, most people always think of how to defeat, get around and overcome him. Most people would also think of how to take care of and support one's loved ones. Arising from these two ways of relating to people, this is where anger/ hatred and attachment/ desire come.
One then lives one's life essentially revolving around anger and attachment.
Many people also spend their whole lives revolving around making and accumulating money day and night. This is how they get distracted their entire lives.
Many people also revolve their lives around idle chatters, which will invariably be linked to either anger or attachment. This is another way how most of us live our lives.
Many people have very strong concepts of the past and future, thinking: "This happened in the past; this is the situation now, because of this, that will happen in the future, therefore I must plan and do this or that." One is thus involved in a lot of mental agitation caused by such discursive thoughts. This is another way in which a lot of people fritter away their lives.
The teachings are describing how most people live and waste their lives like that, due to attachment to all sorts of things. Hence, there is a need to deal with this attachment.

3' Abandoning the laziness that is disheartened about [engaging in] virtue [7.16 – 7.30]

a' Instructions on making effort in the antidotes to being disheartened [7.16]

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| <p>7.16 a. <i>Without despondency, I should gather the masses of army</i>
 b. <i>And diligently take control of myself.</i>
 c. <i>Through equalizing self with others and</i>
 d. <i>Exchanging self for others.</i></p> |
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b' How the scriptures teach the way to put the antidote into practice [7.17 – 7.18]

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|---|---|
| <p>7.17 a. <i>I should not be despondent by thinking,</i>
 b. <i>“How can I ever attain enlightenment?”</i>
 c. <i>Thus the tathagatas who speak what is true</i>
 d. <i>Have uttered this truth:</i></p> | <p>7.18 a. <i>“If they develop the strength of exertion,</i>
 b. <i>Even those who are flies, mosquitoes, bees, and likewise worms</i>
 c. <i>Will win the unsurpassable enlightenment</i>
 d. <i>Which is hard to attain.”</i></p> |
|---|---|

c' If one makes effort, laziness will be [stopped] and one will be capable of accomplishing enlightenment [7.19 – 7.30]

1" Reflecting on the way in which one will be capable of attaining enlightenment if one develops the strength of effort [7.19]

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| <p>7.19 a. <i>Since I have been born human by race</i>
 b. <i>And recognize what is beneficial and what is harmful,</i>
 c. <i>If I do not forsake the deeds of enlightenment,</i>
 d. <i>Why will I not attain enlightenment?</i></p> |
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These verses are saying that, if one works for it, one will be enlightened.

According to *Gyaltsab Je's* commentary, he puts verse 7.16 under the section of *Abandoning the laziness that is disheartened about engaging in virtue*, whereas other commentaries place this under the section of *Abandoning the laziness that clings to ignoble activities*.

What is the laziness that is an attachment to ignoble activities and its antidote, an enthusiasm for virtue:

With respect to the laziness which is an attachment to ignoble activities, this is a laziness that is involved with and attached to doing things that are rather bad and not beneficial.
This teaches that, if one live one's whole life being distracted by all kinds of things under the control of one's ignorance, anger and attachment, then this will be entirely inappropriate. Rather than this way, one should practice the Dharma.
The advice to abandon this laziness is essentially an advice to practice the Dharma. This is because, the Dharma is the real cause of happiness. The antidote to such a laziness that is attached to ignoble activities is to develop an enthusiasm for virtue. It is through such an enthusiasm that one abandons/ counteracts such a laziness.
One has to practice the Buddhadharma, for this is the cause for infinitely everlasting happiness. The content/ subject matter of the entire Buddhadharma is essentially contained in the <i>Three Scriptural Collections</i> . The heart meaning of these three are essentially the <i>Three Higher Trainings</i> .
That which stops one from actualizing the <i>Three Higher Trainings</i> , the essential meaning of the <i>Three Scriptural Collections</i> , is distraction solely to the affairs of this life, towards all kinds of ignoble activities.
If one live one's life working only for the affairs and happiness of this life, then one will not be able to actualize the Dharma.
One of the ways to counteract such a laziness is to develop a real and heartfelt enthusiasm for the Buddhadharma, which comes from seeing the Buddhadharma as being the cause of infinitely everlasting happiness.
That being said, even if one has such an enthusiasm for virtue to actualize it, but if one feels the discouragement of being unable to do that, the laziness of discouragement, then again this will also be a big obstacle. Hence, the following section deals with such kind of laziness:

What the Four Types of Joyous Effort are:

Right from the very beginning, it is very important to develop the confidence that oneself can definitely engage in the practice and eventually actualize it. Therefore, from the onset, one must know how to uplift one's mind/ mood/ spirit.
Of the many different ways to classify joyous effort, there is a type of joyous effort that is called: 1) Armor-like joyous effort.
Before warriors go into battle, they would put on armors which will protect them from all kinds of weapons. Likewise, at the very beginning of one's practice, one must put on this armor-like joyous effort.
This is an attitude which thinks: "I can definitely do this." This is a heartfelt enthusiasm for virtue/ Dharma.
Therefore, before one engages in practice, one must uplift the mood of one's mind by putting on the armor-like joyous effort. This is like the preparation for the practice.
Once one actually starts engaging in the practice, one needs the 2) Joyous effort of application. This is an enthusiasm for one's practice while one is engaging in it. At this time, it is important that one takes up the practice sincerely with enthusiasm, carrying it out with mindfulness and vigilance.
Similarly, during the actual body of one's practice, it is also extremely important to carry out whatever practice one has decided on without any sense of discouragement that thinks: "I can't do this."
Therefore, one also needs this kind of joyous effort called the 3) Joyous effort of non-discouragement/ non-inferiority.
There is also the 4) Joyous effort of non-contentment/ non-complacency. Having accomplished a little bit of virtue after one has started one's practice, one should not generate the idea that: "I have done enough!"
One should develop the idea to continue with one's practice as well as increase on it and not feel satisfied/ become complacent with whatever one has done. Rather, one should strive to be able to do more. These are the <i>Four Types of joyous effort</i> . Perhaps the verse in 7.16 explained earlier refers to these four:
1) Before one starts on any virtuous endeavors of Dharma practice, one must have a sense of enthusiasm. One's moods/ spirits must be high. One must uplift one's mind with armor-like joyous effort.
2) Secondly, as one starts to engage in one's practice, such an endeavor must be engaged in happily, enthusiastically, with mindfulness and vigilance, this is the joyous effort of application.
3) While one is in the process of doing the practice, one must also do the above 2) without discouragement, using the joyous effort of non-discouragement/ non-inferiority.
4) When one generates meditative stabilization/ calm abiding, one achieves the pliancy of body and mind, this is when one gains control/ mastery over one's body and mind, employing them in any virtues according to one's wishes.
Perhaps this is when the joyous effort of non-contentment/ non-complacency comes. From then onwards, one can really strive continuously. Perhaps this is the meaning of 7.16(ab).

Some proof that bodhicitta can only be actualized after calm abiding:

After having gained some mastery over body and mind through meditative stabilization/ calm abiding, one then meditates on bodhicitta using methods such as <i>Exchanging Self and Other</i> . This will be explained in details in the next chapter.
If one thinks about the progression of the presentation of these different practices, it is clear that the real cultivation of bodhicitta can only come after one has gained mastery over one's body and mind. This is an effect of having actualized calm abiding. According to the view of the textbooks of Sera Je, this is perhaps why one needs calm abiding before bodhicitta.
From how Shantideva has presented here, one could perhaps argue that there are some truths behind the assertion that, one can actualize bodhicitta only after one has calm abiding.

The laziness that is disheartened about engaging in virtue and its antidote, uplifting the mind about achieving the goal:

Verses 7.17 to 7.19 are essentially antidotes to discouragements and despondencies. Essence is, if one puts in the right effort to cultivate bodhicitta, not giving up the bodhisattva training, then there is no reason why one cannot achieve enlightenment.
It is said that, even lowly insects like flies, mosquitoes, bees and so forth can achieve enlightenment if the conditions are right. Therefore, what reason does one have to not achieve enlightenment?
In 7.18, the main point is that, all sentient beings, including the insects mentioned there, can achieve enlightenment because, all sentient beings possess the Buddha lineage/ Buddha nature.
This is because, the nature of all sentient beings' minds is clear light, while their obscurations and defilements are adventitious. Therefore, it is not in the nature of the mind to be defiled and obscured in the sense that, even though these are there, but fortunately, these are temporary as they can be removed through the force of antidotes.
This is the main reason to show why all sentient beings indeed have the potential to achieve full enlightenment. More details will be shown when the next module on <i>Chapter One of the Sublime Continuum [Uttaratantra]</i> is taught next year.
When one understands how oneself and all sentient beings possess Buddha lineage/ nature, the potential to achieve omniscience/ full enlightenment if one works at it, then one can counteract the laziness of discouragement.
Perhaps it would be beneficial if one could memorize 7.19. Whenever one feels discouraged and lose hope, then one can think about this verse:
<i>7.19 a. Since I have been born human by race b. And recognize what is beneficial and what is harmful, c. If I do not forsake the deeds of enlightenment, d. Why will I not attain enlightenment?</i>

If one thinks about this, in general, it is really very difficult to be discouraged/ despondent about practicing Dharma.
Khenrinpoche: If that is not true, that means you are actually working very hard day and night practicing Dharma! Did you get what I am saying?
From one's side, one never really get discouraged by one's practice. One thinks that one somewhat wants enlightenment. One then thinks one has such a motivation. With that, one recites some mantras, do some daily practices and some study. One then feels contented: "I am doing well and great!" Therefore, for one, there is actually no room to be discouraged.
For one, one is not at the level where one ever gets discouraged about Dharma. For whom does discouragement sets in?
Such a person is someone who understands what enlightenment is [entails], what Buddha really is. He understands that:
1) Buddha is someone who has eliminated every single fault and accomplished every single quality.
2) Such a state does not occur without any causes and conditions, rather,
3) For any person who wants to actualize such a state, he needs to accomplish limitless varieties of paths, the full details.
4) How the practices are to be done in each stage without errors and mixing them up.
5) Any person must traverse all such limitless paths over countless of eons.
When such a person has a complete understanding, conviction and is about to start, he would definitely think: "This is not easy." This is what is called <i>discouragement</i> .
Khenrinpoche: So, we have the first two types of laziness, but it does not look like we the last type. So we also don't need the antidote [yet]!
There are some people who understand what such an endeavor entails. A cause of getting discouraged is their understanding that, to achieve omniscience, they have to engage in such extensive bodhisattva deeds as the practice of the perfection of generosity. This is also said to involve giving up one's life/ body when appropriate.
So faced by such a prospect, there are some who think: "Even though I understand I need to do this, but I don't think I can." This is how discouragement sets in:

2" It is appropriate to bear the hardships that accompany [the path] to attain enlightenment, for they are not even a fraction of the suffering [experienced] in the lower realms [7.20 – 7.23]

a" It is inappropriate to fear the hardships of giving up one's arms, legs and so forth [7.20 – 7.21]

<p style="text-align: center;">7.20 a. <i>OPINION: Having to give away my legs, arms,</i> <i>b. And so forth frightens me.</i> c. <i>RESPONSE: Without analyzing what is heavy and what is light,</i> <i>d. I am reduced to fear through confusion.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">7.21 a. <i>Over countless billions of eons</i> <i>b. I [have been] be cut, stabbed, burned,</i> <i>c. And chopped up many times</i> <i>d. But I [still have] not attained enlightenment.</i></p>
<p>An essential response to this fear is that, such kind of fear is unfounded. This is because, <i>One does not fear what one really needs to fear; whereas one fears what one actually does not need to be fearful about.</i></p>	
<p>The response continues that, it is a different matter if one were to lose one's head, arms and so forth, after having generated bodhicitta. But, does it mean that one would not lose one's head, arms and so forth when one still has not generated it?</p>	
<p>If without bodhicitta, one will never lose one's head, arms and so forth, then perhaps it is alright.</p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: Are you getting the point? Do you understand what the fear is about?</p>	
<p>The fear that some people have is essentially being frightened about the bodhisattva deeds. They are afraid of engaging in the deeds of sacrificing and giving away their bodies or body parts.</p>	
<p>If one does not have bodhicitta and does not practice the bodhisattva deeds, at the same time one does not lose one's body or body parts, then perhaps there is [an appropriate] reason to be afraid of the bodhisattva deeds of giving one's body.</p>	
<p>Obviously this is never the case, as one does not have any bodhicitta nor any bodhisattva deeds.</p>	
<p>But since time without beginning up to now, one has been cut, beaten, chopped up countless times, and none of these experiences have benefited one, nor have these experiences made one come [anywhere] closer to enlightenment.</p>	

b" One does not need to experience even a fraction of the lower realms' suffering [7.22]

<p style="text-align: center;">7.22 a. <i>Yet this suffering</i> <i>b. For my accomplishing enlightenment will have a limit;</i> <i>c. It is like the suffering of having an incision made</i> <i>d. In order to eliminate the harm of pain destroying it inside.</i></p>
<p>For the sake of [genuinely] accomplishing enlightenment, if one were to endure and bear all the austerities and hardships that are necessary, there is only a limit to such hardships that one has to bear for this goal.</p>
<p>Even if one has to put up with whatever sufferings and bear hardships while engaging in austerities in the process of achieving omniscience, these are still relatively small and there is an end to it.</p>
<p>[Even though] in terms of time spent [in achieving it], it is three countless great eons, but one can still place a number to it.</p>
<p>It is like putting up with a small problem to overcome a big problem. Khenrinpoche: Do you think 7.22cd is an analogy for bearing hardships to achieve the greater purpose of full enlightenment? If so, how does the analogy work?</p>

c" An analogy illustrating the appropriateness of bearing minor suffering in order to destroy the great disease [7.23]

<p style="text-align: center;">7.23 a. <i>Even all doctors eliminate illness</i> <i>b. With unpleasant medical treatments,</i> <i>c. So in order to overcome manifold sufferings</i> <i>d. I should put up with little discomfort.</i></p>
<p>Khenrinpoche: I am not sure whether the analogies of 7.22cd – 7.23 refer to the same thing or not.</p>

3" As the king of doctors prescribed gentle rites for healing the great disease, it is appropriate to bear [the hardships involved] [7.24 – 7.26]

a" The Teacher taught a method by which one may be cured of the great disease without even [having] to experience the mere suffering associated with the curative treatments [7.24]

<p style="text-align: center;">7.24 a. <i>But the Supreme Physician does not employ</i> <i>b. Such ordinary remedies;</i> <i>c. With a very gentle procedure</i> <i>d. He remedies the boundless great ailments.</i></p>
<p>When the Buddha shows the path to freedom and enlightenment, such a path is not an ordinary solution like what doctors prescribe, where one has to take bad tasting medicine or undergo medical procedure involving being cut up and so forth.</p>
<p>Rather, Buddha helps one overcome one's problems by showing one a path that leads from bliss and happiness to bliss and happiness. It is a path that brings about joy.</p>

The Buddha prescribes a happy, blissful and joyful path that leads to happy, blissful and joyful result.

When one receives the instructions to carrying out the practice or meditation of changing one's mind, this almost always involves an advice to find a suitable and comfortable seat. Buddha does not recommend unnecessary discomfort or austerity.

While seated in such a comfortable posture, one looks inside, as the practice is done inside with one's mind.

This does not involve much on the outside. This is about dealing with [one's afflictions] inside.

The method that Buddha has described is essentially a medicine to eradicate karma and afflictions, which are the root and source of all of one's problems, which includes one's sicknesses and so forth.

The path Buddha has prescribed is therefore a very soft and gentle one that does not involve harming or hurting oneself.

That being said, how does one reconcile with having to give up one's head, legs and arms? There seems to be a contradiction.

Khenrinpoche: To become enlightened, do you need to give your head, hands and legs? If not, then how would you be able to complete the perfection of generosity if you cannot sacrifice your life? The answer is in the next verse:

b" Giving away one's body when one still finds it difficult to do so is prohibited [7.25]

- 7.25 a. At the beginning, the Guide applies*
- b. The giving of such things as vegetables.*
- c. Later, having become accustomed to that,*
- d. One may progressively give away even one's flesh.*

Khenrinpoche: What does 7.25d says? *One may progressively give away even one's flesh.* This verse is an answer to the qualm to reconcile the fact that, on one hand, Buddha teaches the path that is gentle and does not involve any harms to oneself, but on the other, there are such instructions to give up one's life and body to achieve enlightenment.

At the beginning of one's practice of generosity, one gives away what is easy for one to give away/ part with, like a plate of vegetables and so forth.

There are also instructions to accustom oneself to the practice of increasing one's attitude/ thought of generosity/ giving.

In the *Lam Rim*, it is explained how one practices giving something from one's right hand to one's left hand and vice versa. One could also verbalize the intent: "I wish to give this or that." This is [familiarizing] oneself to the attitudes of giving.

Through habituating/ familiarizing oneself to the idea of giving, one's willingness and ability to give will gradually increase.

It is said that, due to a bodhisattva's thorough habituation/ familiarity to the practice of perfection of giving, eventually he will be able to give away his body without any sense of loss. To bodhisattvas, giving away their bodies is like anyone else giving away a plate vegetables in that, they will not feel any sense of loss nor attachment holding them back at all.

c" It is taught that one gives away one's body [only] when one is familiar with the idea and therefore there is no difficulty in giving [one's body then] [7.26]

- 7.26 a. At such a time when I have generated a mind*
- b. That regards my body as being like vegetables,*
- c. Then what hardship will there be*
- d. When it comes to giving away my flesh?*

It is said that, those who are not expert or skilful in the correct order of practice in training their minds on the path will not know how to progress in stages. These are the people who will experience physical and mental difficulties.

Whereas, those who know how to proceed with their practices in the correct order and so forth will not experience hardships.

4" There is no suffering in [making effort] and happiness increases, therefore, it is appropriate to take joy in that [7.27 – 7.30]

a" Although there is physical and mental discomfort for a person unknowledgeable in the stages of accomplishing that path, there is no suffering from such hardships for someone who is knowledgeable [7.27]

- 7.27 a. Due to having abandoned negativities there is no suffering*
- b. And due to skill there is no unhappiness.*
- c. Thus mind and body are harmed*
- d. By wrong conceptions and negativities.*

In the presentation of the division of mind generation into four [in terms of its boundary], there is the mind generation associated with the Mahayana path of seeing which is the *Mind generation of pure noble intention.*

It is said that, the bodhisattvas who have such pure thoughts of compassion, having abandoned their nonvirtues of body, speech and mind, which are the main causes of having to experience physical pain, even when they give away their bodies by cutting it up, they will not experience any physical pain, due to having abandoned the causes for experiencing them.

Bodhisattvas on the first ground perceive the meaning of selflessness directly. They are expert and skilled in seeing the truth of ultimate reality directly. Hence, even when they give away their bodies, they do not experience any mental sufferings.
For those who are not superior bodhisattvas like oneself, if one gives away any parts of one's body, one will feel both physical pain and mental suffering.
One experiences physical suffering because one has yet to abandon negativities. If one were to cut and give away one's body, due to not having abandoned negativities such as killing, stealing and so forth, one will experience physical pain.
Since one has not yet abandoned the intellectually acquired afflictions, one will also experience mental sufferings. This is because, one holds and grasps very strongly onto an "I and mine," therefore, one has the basis to experience mental suffering.
<i>Chandrakirti's Supplement to the Middle Way</i> states that, for a superior bodhisattva, merely by hearing someone requesting him to give away his body, he would feel unimaginable joy. Such a joy that he experiences is said to greatly exceed the joys experienced by Hearer and Solitary Realizer foe destroyers in meditative equipoise focusing on the ultimate nature of reality.
Even though such arhats are in very blissful states of nirvana, but the joy the bodhisattvas experience from even a mere request for their bodies to be given away is said to exceed even such bliss of the arhats.
If such bodhisattvas <i>actually</i> get to offer their bodies, they experience even more joy/ happiness than the joy of merely hearing the request for their bodies to be given.
It is stated in the <i>Stages of the path to enlightenment</i> that, when it comes to the practice of giving, there are appropriate and inappropriate times to give. Thus, one has to be skilled and know what is an appropriate and inappropriate time to give.
It is an inappropriate time to give when one is not at the level [of capability]. Even though it is true that the body is by nature dirty and filthy, but one should not despise it just because of this and fail to care for it.
In fact, as a practitioner, one has to guard one's body as one needs it as a basis to practice Dharma. Nevertheless, one has to do so without any attachment.
When the time is appropriate, where one is at the [capable] level, then it is alright to give away one's body. Hence, giving away one's body at an inappropriate time will not bring about any great meaning/ purpose to oneself nor others.
Khenrinpoche: So, if someone were to ask you [for you body], please don't give! If somebody ask you: "Please give me your hand!" You can shake his, but don't [give.]

b" Therefore, for a great being, there is no cause for despair in the prospect of remaining in cyclic existence [7.28]

c" Due to such reasons, in terms of progressing along the path, they are explained to be more knowledgeable than a Hinayanist [7.29]

<p>7.28 a. <i>If their bodies are happy due to their merits</i> b. <i>And their minds are happy due to their skill,</i> c. <i>Then, even if they remain in cyclic existence for the sake of others,</i> d. <i>Why would the Compassionate Ones be disheartened?</i></p>	<p>7.29 a. <i>Due to the strength of the mind of enlightenment,</i> b. <i>He exhausts his previous negativities</i> c. <i>And gathers oceans of merit.</i> d. <i>Hence he is said to excel the hearers.</i></p>
<p><i>The practice of the bodhisattva path excels that of the Hinayana:</i> In chapter one, which explained the benefits of the mind of enlightenment, one of the benefits is that, once such a mind is generated, even the most powerful negativities can be purified.</p>	
<p>Another benefit is that, once this mind is generated, even when one is distracted like lying down or going about things, the merit in one's mind is always increasing continuously.</p>	
<p>This is also a verse that says: Whatever happiness one seeks, be it the happiness of cyclic existence or enlightenment, all of these come from meditating on bodhicitta:</p>	
<p>1.8 a. <i>Those who wish to destroy the multitudes of sufferings of existence,</i> b. <i>Those who wish to dispel the unhappiness of sentient beings,</i> c. <i>And those who wish to enjoy multitudes of happiness,</i> d. <i>Should never forsake the mind of enlightenment</i></p>	
<p>a: Whatever samsaric problems and sufferings there are, these can be vanquished with bodhicitta.</p>	
<p>b: Whatever problems and sufferings that sentient beings have, if one wishes to dispel their problems, then again, the method is to generate the mind of enlightenment.</p>	
<p>c: Whatever happiness one wishes for oneself and others to enjoy, the method again is to generate bodhicitta. The <i>multitudes of happiness</i> here mainly refers to the happiness of omniscience. This is to be achieved through the meditation on bodhicitta.</p>	
<p>d: One should therefore always meditate on bodhicitta.</p>	
<p>Through the generation of the mind of enlightenment, one will easily exhaust the host of negativities and complete the collection of the accumulation of merit. Hence, one's practice/ path greatly excels the Hinayana's paths.</p>	

d" Therefore, it is inappropriate to be disheartened in the bodhisattvas' conduct [7.30]

- 7.30 a. So, having mounted the horse of the mind of enlightenment
- b. That dispels all disheartenment and weariness,
- c. And proceeds from happiness to happiness,
- d. Which ones who know of this mind would lapse into despondency?

It is said that, those who really understand the extensive benefit of having generated bodhicitta will never be discouraged from meditating on bodhicitta nor cultivating the bodhisattva deeds. Hence, how is it possible for them to feel discouraged?

The verses up to here are advice on dealing with the laziness of discouragement [7.16 – 7.30].

Hence, the three types of laziness and their antidotes have been explained [7.3 – 7.30]:

- 1' Abandoning the laziness that relishes the taste of idleness [7.3 – 7.14]
- 2' Abandoning the laziness that clings to ignoble activities [7.15]
- 3' Abandoning the laziness that is disheartened about engaging in virtue [7.16 – 7.30]

What is left now is for everyone to think about these antidotes and try to apply them. One should see whether it works or not.

Student: For a bodhisattva on the path of seeing who is cutting his flesh to give away to someone who requests it, how does one link having abandoned negativities of killing, for example, to not experiencing physical pain, and having abandoned the intellectually acquired afflictions to not experience mental suffering? What are the exact reasons to explain these?

Khenrinpoche: Bodhisattvas accumulate the two collections: the collection of merit and the collection of wisdom. The collection of merit results in the *Form Body*, whereas the collection of wisdom results in the *Truth Body*. The perfections of generosity, ethical discipline and patience come under the collection of merit.

It is said that, by depending primarily on the perfection of wisdom, one accumulates the collection of wisdom, which is the cause of the *Truth Body (Dharmakaya)*. [By depending primarily on] a good accumulation of merit on the perfections of generosity, ethical discipline and patience, it is said that one enjoys physical/ bodily bliss. As it is mentioned in 7.28 a: *If their bodies are happy due to their merits. b. And their minds are happy due to their skill*, [this means that, the reason] superior bodhisattvas experience mental bliss is primarily due to their direct perception of the truth of selflessness.

If one compares between *nonvirtue* and *an apprehension of self*, the former is coarser. Through nonvirtue, one experiences bodily suffering. Nonvirtue is essentially a nonvirtuous mind.

7.28 a: *If their bodies are happy due to their merits*, hence [experiencing] bodily bliss is a result of their collection of merit. Thus, the opposite [of this reason] must be that, the accumulation of nonvirtue results in bodily pain.

If one compares between physical and mental suffering, the latter is more acute than the former as mental suffering is more difficult to remove. Also, it is due to an apprehension of a self, that nonvirtues arise.

Therefore, the root of all the problems, especially one's mental unhappiness, are essentially due to the apprehension of a self. This means that, until one can overcome such an apprehension of a self, then there is no way to [completely] overcome mental suffering. Hence, there is the need to generate antidotes to self-grasping.

Khenrinpoche: Am I answering the question?

The essence of the answer is that, in dependence upon the collection of merit, one achieves the *Form Body (Rupakaya)*, in dependence on the collection of wisdom, one achieves the *Truth Body (Dharmakaya)*.

Khenrinpoche: From [these two essences], you can further elaborate on how to relate the two: from [the collection of merit one experience physical bliss], from wisdom directly realizing emptiness [the collection of wisdom, one experiences mental bliss]. If you think more, perhaps you may find something there from what I am saying.

Joyous effort, its discordant class, the three types of laziness and their respective antidotes have already been explained.

- b) Increasing the strength of joyous effort – the antidote [7.31 – 7.76]
 - i) Increasing the strength of the conditions conducive to joyous effort [7.31 – 7.67]
- 1' A brief presentation by means of identifying the four powers [7.31 – 7.32]

<p>7.31 a. <i>The army for the sake of accomplishing the welfare of sentient beings</i> b. <i>Are [aspiration], steadfastness, joy, and relinquishment.</i> c. <i>Aspiration is developed through fear of suffering</i> d. <i>And contemplating its benefits.</i></p>	<p>7.32 a. <i>Thus I shall abandon its discordant classes</i> b. <i>And make effort in order to increase joyous effort</i> c. <i>Through the powers of aspiration, pride, joy, and relinquishment,</i> d. <i>Diligence and mastery.</i></p>
<p>The favorable conditions for generating joyous effort is said to be the Four Powers, the powers of: 1) <i>Aspiration</i>, 2) <i>Steadfastness</i>, 3) <i>Joy</i> and 4) <i>Relinquishment</i>.</p>	
<p>The <i>first power</i>, <i>aspiration</i>, is literally the power of belief. However, here it refers to yearning for practice/ Dharma. Such a yearning for the Dharma is produced through developing the faith of conviction in karma and its effects.</p>	
<p>In the <i>second power</i>, <i>steadfastness</i>, the teachings advice that, prior to undertaking any practices, one should thoroughly investigate why one is doing it and whether one can do it and actually bring one's practice to completion.</p>	
<p>The point is to develop a stable aspiration for one's practice, literally, one needs to be steadfast.</p>	
<p>The <i>third power</i>, <i>joy</i>, refers to taking a liking to whatever practice one has decided to engage in. When one is engaging in it, one does so with a very strong yearning and without any wish to stop.</p>	
<p>The usual example given is that of children playing games. When they are engaged in it, they never want to stop but to continue on and on. Likewise, when it comes to applying joyous effort in whatever one is doing, one should do so with a sense of joy and without any wish to stop one's practice.</p>	
<p>The <i>forth power</i>, <i>relinquishment</i>, as has been mentioned before, in the process of applying joyous effort in engaging in virtue, one does get tired and exhausted at times. It is therefore important to take a rest with the wish to carry on when one is rested.</p>	
<p>Once one has rested [well], then one has to continue with whatever one has set out to do.</p>	
<p>7.32 a. <i>Thus I shall abandon its discordant classes</i>: The discordant class of joyous effort is laziness, which has three types.</p>	
<p>In essence, there are people who know that they can actually engage in virtue, but they failed to do so. This is the procrastination [of the the laziness that relishes the taste of idleness].</p>	
<p>There are some people who want to engage in virtue, but feel that they are unable to do so as they feel a sense of hopelessness due to being discouraged for various reasons. This is the laziness of discouragement [that is disheartened about engaging in virtue]. The last type of laziness is the laziness that clings to ignoble activities.</p>	
<p>These are the discordant classes of joyous effort. Therefore, to develop joyous effort, one has to abandon them and cultivate the favorable conditions, which are the <i>Four Powers</i>. These are favorable for the generation and increase of joyous effort.</p>	
<p>In the process of engaging in the practice/ virtue, this must be done with [5] <i>mindfulness and vigilance</i> [/ <i>diligence</i>.]</p>	
<p>When one achieves a concentration which makes one's body and mind serviceable, a [6] <i>physical and mental pliancy</i> [/ <i>mastery</i>] which is a result of having attained meditative serenity/ calm abiding, thenceforth, one will be able to engage effortlessly in the practice of virtue/ Dharma day and night as one's body and mind have been made serviceable.</p>	
<p>From the onset of the cultivation of any practice of virtue, one needs to be thoroughly convinced of the benefits of the practice one is going to engage in.</p>	
<p>This is the faith [of conviction], an ascertainment that understands that what one is doing is so important and beneficial.</p>	
<p>For example, if one wishes to actualize concentration, from the onset before one engages in the practice that will enable one to achieve such a concentration, one must firstly understand thoroughly what concentration is all about.</p>	
<p>One must have a thorough confidence and believe in the benefits of concentration in that, if one achieves it, there are all the benefits one will get, and this is something one really wants. Therefore, one needs such a trust/ conviction/ confidence right from the very beginning.</p>	
<p>With regards to whatever virtue/ practice one wants to cultivate, from the onset, if one has such a faith of conviction, seeing the benefits one gets when one practices it, such a faith in the benefits of the practice would form the basis for one's yearning.</p>	
<p>This would be the very 'fuel' that will drive one's aspiration/ yearning for the goal of the practice.</p>	
<p>It is only when one has a strong and heartfelt yearning to achieve the goal one is aiming for, would one start one's practice, strive and apply one's effort. It is only then would one joyously persevere in the practice that will lead one to one's goal.</p>	

It is with the faith of conviction that leads to strong yearning, which then leads to the start of any engagement in joyous effort. Once this begins, through a continued application of joyous effort, particularly, if this is applied to achieving a single-pointedness of mind, one aims to achieve a concentration making one's body and mind serviceable.
With the steady application of joyous effort over time, when one is able to achieve such a single-point concentration, from thenceforth, due to one's body and mind being made serviceable, one will never be tired of engaging in virtue/ practice.
Within such a single-pointed concentration, one then goes on to cultivate wisdom. Particularly, one cultivates the wisdom that perceives the ultimate nature of reality, the wisdom realizing selflessness, the antidote that enables anyone to sever the root of all the problems of cyclic existence. This is the essential point [of engaging in virtue].
If <i>aspiration</i> is explained in the context of mind and awareness, within the study of mental factors, there are fifty-one.
These are divided into many sub-groups. There is a group called the <i>Five object ascertaining mental factors</i> .
The first of these five is the mental factor of <i>aspiration</i> . This is essentially a mind that is yearning for a chosen object .
If one differentiates aspiration and belief to be separate mental factors, then in the context of the study of mental factors, the group mentioned, after aspiration, there is the mental factor of belief.
There, <i>belief</i> is essentially an ascertainment of whatever object [being held], a valid cognition that is a thorough conviction establishing certainty with regards to the object that thinks: "It is exactly like this and nothing else."
What comes after aspiration and belief is the mental factor of <i>mindfulness</i> . It is not forgetting what one has believed in , which is what one has thoroughly ascertained through one's valid cognition of whatever object one has correctly understood.
Such meaning one has ascertained through belief must not be forgotten but kept in mind. This is the purpose of mindfulness, which functions to not forget that.
Based on not forgetting what one has ascertained through a valid mind, one's mindfulness becomes strong. One is then able to focus one's mind single-pointedly on that object . Hence, after mindfulness, there is the mental factor of <i>concentration</i> .
Of the five object-ascertaining mental factors, four have been explained. The fifth is <i>wisdom</i> , which is a mind that is able to distinguish/ differentiate phenomena . Of the many different types of wisdom, the really important one is the wisdom that directly perceives the ultimate nature of reality/ selflessness.
These are the five object-ascertaining mental factors. It is not sufficient to list them, but to understand them as the workings of one's own mind, how one leads to the other, starting with aspiration, belief, mindfulness, concentration and then wisdom.
7.31 – 7.32 are a brief presentation of the <i>Four powers</i> .

2' An extensive explanation [7.33 – 7.67]

a' [First power:] The power of aspiration [7.33 – 7.46(ab)]

1" The object of aspiration [7.33 – 7.38]

a" Discarding negativities [7.33 – 7.34]

These two verses essentially explain why it is incorrect for one to not have any aspirations to overcome one's own faults:	
<p>7.33 a. I shall destroy b. The boundless misdeeds of others and myself. c. At that time each of these misdeeds d. Will be exhausted in an ocean of eons.</p>	<p>7.34 a. But if within myself I do not perceive b. Even a fraction of the endeavor for exhausting these misdeeds, c. Then I have become an abode for boundless suffering; d. Why does my heart not burst?</p>
This is in the context of one who has taken the pledge to achieve the state of omniscience/ full enlightenment to accomplish all sentient beings' welfare. One has taken the bodhisattva vow and pledged to eliminate the faults and misdeeds of all sentient beings, which also include eliminating one's own faults and misdeeds as well.	
The task of eliminating the afflictions of oneself and others, starting with one's own , is a long term endeavor. This is because, there are many afflictive emotions involved. It is said that there are eighty-four thousands of these.	
It is also said that, to eliminate even one of these would require many eons of effort. Putting aside the reality of having to eliminate the afflictions over such a long period, one does not possess even a fraction of the joyous effort that is needed.	
Due to not being able to overcome one's own afflictive emotions, it is certain that one will face boundless problems and sufferings in the future. This is the reality of one's situation. If one thinks about this, then the verse is asking one how would one's heart not [burst into pieces.]	
If one really thinks about this and understands the reality, then one would probably find it difficult even to breath.	
One has to understand that these two verses are meant for one's own consumption in that, one should use it to look at one's own mind as a way of evaluating oneself, disciplining and [admonishing] oneself in an appropriate manner.	
The essential point is to persuade oneself to move one's heart enough such that one starts to do something about it.	

Not only does one not have any aspirations to overcome one's faults, one does not even have any aspirations to acquire any good qualities. The next two verses explain this. Again, this is a way to evaluate oneself to persuade one's mind to develop an interest/ aspiration to acquire good qualities:

b" Adopting qualities [7.35 – 7.36]

<p>7.35 a. <i>I shall accomplish many</i> b. <i>Excellent qualities for others and myself.</i> c. <i>And I will acquaint myself</i> d. <i>With each of these qualities through an ocean of eons,</i></p>	<p>7.36 a. <i>But I have never developed acquaintance</i> b. <i>With even a fraction of these excellences,</i> c. <i>How strange it is to make without purpose</i> d. <i>This birth I have somehow found.</i></p>
<p>The context here is again someone who has taken on the pledge to achieve the state of full enlightenment to accomplish all sentient beings' welfare.</p>	
<p>This means that, such a person has taken on an pledge to achieve every single quality of enlightenment, which is a state of existence that possesses limitless qualities.</p>	
<p>To achieve even just one of them would require the accumulation of merit over many eons. This is not even mentioning about the rest of the limitless qualities.</p>	
<p>Putting aside having to achieve the accumulation of merit required to actualize all the numberless qualities, one has not even cultivated a fraction of the joyous effort needed to accumulate the merit to achieve just one good quality of enlightenment.</p>	
<p>One has not even accomplished a fraction of the cause of even one good quality of enlightenment.</p>	
<p>As it says in 7.36(cd), it is rather appalling to have wasted so far one's human life of freedoms and endowments one has obtained. Instead of having used it, one has merely procrastinated in accumulating the causes for enlightenment.</p>	
<p>In <i>Nagarjuna's Precious Garland</i>, there is a description of the merit that is needed to achieve enlightenment. For example:</p>	
<p>1) To accumulate the merit needed to achieve merely a single hair pore of Buddha's exalted holy body, one requires all the immeasurable merit of <i>all sentient beings up to the level of Hearer and Solitary Realizer arhats multiplied by ten.</i></p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: So you can see how precious even one [hair] pore of the Buddha is!</p>	
<p>2) The Buddha's exalted body has numberless immeasurable pores. The <i>merit required to actualize all of these multiplied by one hundred</i>, is the merit needed to actualize one out of the eighty exemplifications of the Buddha's exalted body.</p>	
<p>Some illustrations of the eighty exemplifications (minor signs) of the exalted body of Buddha are, copper-colored nails, red lips, black hair and so forth. Therefore, to actualize each one of these, the merit needed is as stated in 2).</p>	
<p>3) There are also the thirty-two major signs of Buddha's exalted body such as images of Dharmachakra on Buddha's palms and soles of His feet. The merit required to actualize even one major sign of Buddha is <i>all the merit required to actualize all the exemplifications multiplied by one hundred.</i></p>	
<p>4) On the Buddha's exalted body, there is a particular feature called the treasure hair situated slightly above the bridge of the nose. The merit required for this is the <i>merit required to actualize the thirty-two major signs multiplied by one thousand.</i></p>	
<p>5) There is also the Buddha's crown protrusion. The merit required to actualize this is the <i>merit required to actualize the treasure hair multiplied by one hundred-thousand.</i></p>	
<p>6) The <i>merit required to actualize the crown protrusion of the Buddha multiplied by one hundred</i> is the merit needed to actualize the Buddha's exalted speech.</p>	
<p>7) The explanation stops here and does not mention the merit needed to actualize the exalted mind of Buddha. One cannot be sure, but perhaps the merit to actualize that is the <i>merit needed to actualize the Buddha's speech multiplied by one hundred.</i></p>	
<p>Khenrinpoche: What do you think? Are you discouraged? If so, then you [have achieved] the level of laziness [that is disheartened about engaging in virtue]!</p>	
<p>The next two verses are [admonishing] one by asking why does one not have the aspiration to practice the Dharma correctly.</p>	
<p>Through that, this persuades oneself to apply joyous effort in doing so:</p>	

c" Examining the list of things to do and not to do [7.37 – 7.38]

<p>7.37 a. <i>I have not made offerings to the Bhagavan,</i> b. <i>I have not given the pleasure of great festivals,</i> c. <i>I have not performed actions for the teachings,</i> d. <i>I have not fulfilled the wishes of the poor,</i></p>	<p>7.38 a. <i>I have not granted fearlessness to the frightened</i> b. <i>And I have not given happiness to the wretched.</i> c. <i>All I have given rise to are</i> d. <i>The agonies in the mother's womb and suffering.</i></p>
<p>Sometimes, it is possible that people may feel that they have done a fair bit of [Dharma practice]: "I am not what is mentioned here as I have done quite a fair bit of practice." While this may be true, such thinking can sometimes stop one from increasing one's joyous effort. As such a time, one has to remember these two verses.</p>	

These two verses are meant for personal reflections: <i>I have not made offerings to the Bhagavan...</i>
Has one actually sat down and made proper mental offerings through mental visualizations to the Buddhas even once?
Has one really ever procure and set out good offerings?
Has one made generous offerings and honor the Sangha community with extensive offerings?
Has one listened well to the teachings on the three scriptural collections, the scriptural Dharma?
Even if one thinks one [has heard] a fair bit of the Buddha's teachings, does one actually know it very well?
Has one ever actually properly learnt the scriptural Dharma?
Even when one has learnt them, does one actually know [what one has learnt] well?
When it comes to putting these teachings into practice, does one even have a good practice or experience of the three higher trainings? These are all for personal reflections. [When one thinks carefully,] probably the answer is no.
One has not done any of these well or even done any at all.
Has one fulfilled the wishes of the poor? There are so many people in need of help, has one done anything for them? Putting aside having helped all of them, one has not even offered anything to them.
Has one ever granted help of fearlessness to those who are frightened, whose lives are in danger? Has one saved the lives of others? For example, when one walks along a road and sees some pitiful creatures like insects facing danger, one often merely ignores them, it is almost like as if one has not seen them. Even though one sees them, one just carries on.
This is meant for personal reflections: at times, it may appear that one is doing some practice: "Oh I am doing [the practice] quite well." If one actually sits down and honestly examines oneself, there is almost no practice that one can point to and say that one has done well. Therefore, one's life has been wasted.
Hence, it would seem then that, one's coming into existence is nothing more than for the purpose of causing pain and suffering to one's mother.
One must understand that, all such advice are meant for one to use them to generate enthusiasm/ strong aspiration to do better. One should not misunderstand and take these advice as meaning to put oneself down and hence feel discouraged.
Khenrinpoche: Is the advice benefiting or harming [you]?

2" The ripening effect of aspiration [7.39 – 7.40(ab)]

a" It is inappropriate to abandon aspiration for the dharma [7.39]

<p>7.39 a. <i>If in the past and even now</i> b. <i>Such deprivation are arising</i> c. <i>Because of my lack of [aspiration] in the Dharma,</i> d. <i>Who would reject this [aspiration] in the Dharma?</i></p>
This verse says that it is wrong to give up one's aspiration. In all of one's past lives, due to the lack of real yearning for the Dharma, one did not actualize it. Likewise, in this life, due to the lack of yearning for the Dharma, one has also not practiced it. Hence, in one's past lives until now, one has only experienced the problems and sufferings of samsara.
It is mentioned in the teachings that, one is like a dog looking at grass. Just as it is not interested in grass, likewise, even though one has met the Dharma, one has no interest and yearning for it. One does not really want it.
Khenrinpoche: [Is that true? Do you yearn for it?]
One has to be honest with oneself and examine how one feels. Is one really like the dog who is looking at grass? How much of the Dharma does one really want? Does one actually want and yearn for it? This is the question one has to ask oneself.
The essential point this verse is that: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>For someone who is very intelligent, really discriminating and Concurrently looking for real long-term everlasting happiness, Such a person would never give up the Dharma.</i></p>

The reason for [giving up one's aspiration for the Dharma] [7.40(ab)]

<p>7.40 a. <i>The Muni himself has said</i> b. <i>That [aspiration] is the root of every class of virtue;</i></p>
As mentioned earlier, before one actually wants to engage in anything, in this context, the virtuous Dharma, the cause of one's happiness, one firstly has to have the faith of a <i>heartfelt thorough conviction</i> of the benefits of the goal one is seeking.
Based on such a faith of conviction, one would then yearn for the object one has faith in. It is only when one has such a yearning would one's practice [actually] start. Therefore, <i>aspiration is the root of every class of virtue.</i>

If one has a very strong aspiration/ yearning for the Dharma, then one will become a strong/ good practitioner.
If one has a middling aspiration/ yearning for the Dharma, then one will become an average practitioner.
If one has a mediocre/ poor aspiration/ yearning for the Dharma, then one will become a mediocre/ [poor] practitioner.
Therefore, whether one calls it yearning or aspiration, one must want the Dharma from the heart. But such kind of yearning for the Dharma is not something that [comes from nowhere]. Most people are not born with the [yearning] from their own side. This is not the case for most people. If there is no yearning, one would not have any joyous effort/ [cultivate] virtue.
Therefore, how does one produce such a yearning and make oneself want the Dharma?
<i>This begins with learning, being educated about the teachings and then critically analyzing them.</i>

3" The cause for aspiration [7.40(cd) – 7.45]

a" Brief presentation [7.40(cd)]

7.40 c. <i>Its root is constant [meditation] d. [On karma's fruitional] results.</i>
The way to produce yearning for the Dharma is to reflect and understand well the presentation of cause and effect, particularly, karma and its effects.
This is about understanding and finding the conviction that, certain action will definitely produce its results, while other actions will produce other results. It is the faith of conviction in this, that is the root of yearning for the Dharma.
Therefore, acquiring such a faith of conviction in karma and its effects is indispensable. [All of one's ability to practice pure Dharma] is summed up in that. Whether one is able to practice well or not depends entirely in how much conviction one has in karma and its effects. Therefore, one has to understand about karma and its effects.
For example, the general characteristics of karma is that, karma is certain, it increases, one would not meet with the results of the action one did not do, and the results of the actions one has done will not perish on its own accord.
<i>Gyaltsab Je</i> also says that: <i>If one has not ascertained and developed the conviction in karma and its consequences, Then one has not found the realization of the Dharma that will please the Buddhas.</i>
One has heard such teachings many times and is still hearing about them. But this hardly does anything [for one's mind] as this is not enough. One has to sit down, meditate and critically analyze it until one gains conviction.
One should ask oneself: "How much faith in karma do I really have? If I do have it, how strong is it?"
[One should reflect on this from <i>Gyaltsab Je's</i> commentary as quoted above.]
There are people who go about claiming to have understood and realized emptiness, the ultimate nature of reality, yet at the same time, they behave, act and talk as if karma did not exist. This is one of the signs [to show] that they have a completely wrong understanding and lack of whatsoever realization of emptiness.
If one really has a good understanding of the ultimate nature of reality, the emptiness of inherent existence, then the stronger one's understanding, the stronger will be one's appreciation of cause and effect.
The meaning of emptiness is the meaning of dependent-arising, particularly subtle dependent-arising [dependent designation]
But before one can hope to understand subtle dependent-arising, one must first understand the coarser level of dependent-arising [karma and its effects], without which, there is no way one will understand subtle dependent-arising.
Thus, those who claim to have some understanding/ realization of emptiness but do not give any considerations at all to karma and its effects, then one should understand that, such people have a completely wrong understanding of emptiness.

Student: With respect to verses 7.33 to 7.35, how does one derive a proper balance between not being despondent and giving up virtue, yet not putting oneself down?

Khenrinpoche: When you read these three verses, do you really feel that much emotions?

It happens to some people that, when they think about death and impermanence, they become discouraged. But that has **never** been the purpose behind the meditation of death and impermanence.

In fact, when one does so, it [actually] gives one strength and determination to decide: "I can and must do something right now!" This should be the message people get when they meditate on death and impermanence.

When you look at these verses, do you get the message of depression, or the message of hope? The end result of reflecting on one's own death and impermanence should be that, one derives strength and determination from it.

It is a completely different matter if you don't know how to think about it, thinking about it wrongly. But if you think about it correctly, then strength and determination should be the result that [the reflection] gives one.

The topic of meditating on death and impermanence is not directed at everyone else, its advice is meant for people who are sincerely interested about their long-term future much beyond this life into what is going to happen to their future lives. It is also directed at people who are looking for a higher order happiness.

As in all Buddhist practices, whatever one undertakes, it is never a stand-alone practice, but a unit of an overall practice as everything is linked together. Hence, you must be able to situate it within the entire practice.

Therefore, there is an advice that, one has to balance such a reflection on death and impermanence with a reflection on human life of freedoms and endowments. For people who get depressed or discouraged wrongly due to thinking too much about death and impermanence, then they would have to balance this reflection with the reflection on one's human life of freedoms and endowments. This is mentioned in the Lam Rim.

As with regards to these three verses here, one has to apply the same understanding as well. You cannot take them out of context but should situate them within the whole [teaching].

Therefore, I don't think that, just by looking at these three verses superficially, anyone will get discouraged or depressed. But if you really think about it, prior to this section, there is the explanation on how fortunate one is, when one has this human life of freedoms and endowments. If one [uses such a life] and work at it, there is no reason why one cannot become enlightened and so forth.

Therefore, you have to [combine all the topics] together and not merely look at [these three verses] as an independent piece of advice.

It is the same with the advice to work at joyous perseverance continuously like the flow of a river. But if people take that advice out of context, then this is why they would become discouraged. This is the result of taking the teachings out of context. If they know the whole picture, they would know that there is the power of relinquishment, you can rest at the appropriate time.

So, if you understand [the portion of the teaching within] the entire context, then there should not be any problems and worries at all.

Recap:

The current main heading of the outline is <i>Increasing the strength of the conditions conducive to joyous effort [7.31 – 7.67]</i> .
In this section, the <i>Four powers</i> are being explained: The powers of aspiration, steadfastness, joy and relinquishment.
Of these four, the first power of aspiration is being explained. Joyous effort is an enthusiasm for virtue. The <i>Four powers</i> are for developing such a joyous effort. In this context, the power of aspiration refers to a yearning for virtue.
To be able to cultivate any practice of virtue, one must have yearning, one must want this practice. One develops such a yearning as mentioned in the text: <i>7.40 cd. Its root is constant meditation on karma's fruitional results.</i>
This means that, if one wants to develop a yearning for the teaching or practice, one has to reflect and derive an understanding of the presentation of karma and its effects in particular, the effects of one's actions in terms of:
1) Fruitional effects, 2) Causally concordant effects, and the 3) Environmental effects.
The essence is that, to practice Dharma, one needs to have a very strong yearning for it. One must want to do it oneself.
One's yearning for the practice in turn is commensurate with one's faith of conviction in karma [and its effects]. Therefore the <i>Stages of the path</i> literature mentions that, the root of all the happiness is this faith of conviction in karma and its effects.
To expand on the explanation of karma and its effects, the next verses explain the reflections on the effects of virtue, nonvirtue and mixed karma:

b" Extensive explanation [7.41 – 7.45]

(1) Reflecting on the mixed [accumulation of different] karma and its effects [7.41 – 7.43]

<p><i>7.41 a. Suffering, mental unhappiness, b. The various kinds of fear, c. As well as separation from what is desired d. Will arise from negative deeds.</i></p>	<p><i>7.42 a. By performing virtues intended in the mind, b. Wherever I go, due to those merits, c. There I shall be honored with d. The excellences that are their results.</i></p>	<p><i>7.43 a. Although one who commits misdeeds wishes for happiness, b. Wherever he goes, c. There those misdeeds d. Will completely destroy him with the weapons of suffering.</i></p>
One experiences many kinds of problems and sufferings. At the physical level, one experiences sicknesses or discomfort of heat and cold. Mentally, one also suffers in being unhappy, from various fears and being separated from what is desired.		
One is separated from what one desires and one encounters with the undesirable. This is how cyclic existence is.		
Verse 7.41 is essentially a presentation of karma, that all the various undesirable experiences and results do not come into being causelessly. Rather, [such experiences] are said to be the fruitional effects of the nonvirtues one has accumulated.		
With the faith of conviction in karma and its effects, one then develops an aspiration/ yearning for virtue. On the basis of such a yearning for Dharma, one then accumulates virtue which becomes the causes of happiness. Then wherever one is, due to the power of the merit/ virtue one has accumulated, one will experience the fruitional effects of those virtue: happiness.		
If one accumulates only nonvirtue, but at the same time, one wants the success of happiness, would one then achieve that? No. Even if what one wants is only success and happiness, but if one accumulates nonvirtue, then wherever one goes, these misdeeds will accompany one. When they ripen, they will only bring about suffering.		
The mixed karmic actions mentioned in the outline here, do not refer to white karma/ virtue and black karma/ nonvirtue.		
In the presentation of karma, there is the classification of karma into projecting karma, which impels/ throws a future rebirth and completing karma, which literally 'completes' that life.		
1) For instance, being born in a good rebirth is the result of <i>virtuous projecting karma</i> . In such a life, one has a long life, good health, wealth, prosperity and all sorts of happiness. Hence, this life is 'completed' or filled with <i>virtuous completing karma</i> .		
2) Taking a rebirth in the lower realms as an example, this is the result of <i>nonvirtuous projecting karma</i> . If that life is filled with suffering, then such a life is completed by <i>nonvirtuous completing karma</i> .		
3) If one gets a good rebirth, this is a result of <i>virtuous projecting karma</i> . But in such a life, there are people who can experience a short life, having many sicknesses, being poor and destitute. Although such a rebirth is the result of virtuous projecting karma, but its life is completed with <i>nonvirtuous completing karma</i> .		
4) Take an example of a dog that is kept by a rich family: rebirth as a dog is the result of <i>nonvirtuous projecting karma</i> . But generally, a dog that is kept by a wealthy family would be living in a big house and may even have people looking after it.		
It gets all kinds of [enjoyments like] food and so forth. Although a rebirth as such a dog is the result of nonvirtuous projecting karma, but its life is filled with enjoyments. This is an example of a life that is completed by <i>virtuous completing karma</i> .		

<p>5) Of the different classifications of hells, there are some that are called occasional hells. To be born there is a result of <i>nonvirtuous projecting karma</i>. But in some of these hells, it is said that for example, at different times of the day, perhaps during the entire night, beings born there may experience unimaginable pleasures and enjoyments.</p>
<p>This is the result of <i>virtuous completing karma</i>. But during the day, whatever happiness and pleasures they were experiencing during the night cease and are replaced by unimaginable pains and sufferings. This is the result of <i>nonvirtuous completing karma</i>. Hence, the lives of the beings in such hells are completed by <i>both virtuous and nonvirtuous completing karma</i>.</p>
<p>There is a past account of a butcher who slaughtered animals in the day. Due to that livelihood, he was not able to abandon killing during the day. But he was able to abandon killing during the night. So he took on the vow to not kill at night.</p>
<p>Due to being a butcher, he was reborn in an occasional hell. As a result of slaughtering animals during the day, he experienced unimaginable suffering and pain in the day. But whenever it is night time, his experiences completely changed to unimaginable pleasures, comforts and enjoyments. This is a result of taking the vow of not killing at night.</p>
<p>There is another account of a woman who was only able to keep the vow/ training of abstaining from sexual misconduct in the day but not so at night. As a result, her experiences were opposite from the butcher in that, in another rebirth, she experienced happiness and comforts in the day, while at night she experienced sufferings and problems.</p>
<p>The point of these accounts show that, one should try as much as possible to abandon nonvirtue and keep to whatever vows and trainings. Even if one cannot do so for a long time, for whatever period one is able, one should not underestimate the results of keeping vows for even a short period.</p>
<p>By reflecting on this, one should thus not disregard any vows by thinking: “What is the point? I can’t keep them anyways.”</p>
<p>There are some who are born humans. This is a result of virtuous projecting karma. In the earlier part of their lives, their situations were good with success and enjoyments. This is the result of virtuous completing karma. But in the later parts of their lives, they may encounter sudden life changes of failures, problems and sufferings, ending their lives that way.</p>
<p>This is the result of nonvirtuous completing karma. This is an example of a life that is completed by both virtuous and nonvirtuous completing karma.</p>
<p>One has to understand from these accounts that, even while being born in a good rebirth as a human, whatever happiness one experiences is the result of virtuous completing karma. Whatever problems one experiences is a result of nonvirtuous completing karma.</p>
<p>Likewise, when one sees how beings in the lower realms like the animals experience life, whatever sufferings they experience is the result of their nonvirtuous completing karma. Whatever happiness they experience is the result of their virtuous completing karma.</p>
<p>One therefore has to understand, develop certainty and conviction about these [actions and results].</p>
<p>In the <i>Stages of the path</i> literature section on karma, one of the general characteristics of karma is that: <i>Karma is certain/ definite</i>. [The explanations above show] what [this statement] means.</p>
<p>When it says <i>Karma is certain/ definite</i>, this means that, if one accumulates virtue, this virtue is certain/ will definitely bring about happiness. The result of virtue can <i>only</i> be happiness.</p>
<p>The result of nonvirtue can only be/ is certain to be suffering. This is what is meant in this statement.</p>

(2) Reflecting on solely white karma and its effects [7.44]

<p>7.44 a. <i>As a result of virtue, I will become a spiritual child of the Sugatas dwelling in the hearts of vast, fragrant, and cool lotuses,</i> b. <i>The food of the Victors’ pleasant speech will cause my splendor to grow,</i> c. <i>My supreme body will emerge from a lotus that will unfold due to the light of the Munis and</i> d. <i>I will abide in the presence of the Victors.</i></p>
<p>If one is able to accumulate virtue well, one can be reborn in the pure lands of the Buddhas such as the pure land of Amitabha Buddha called <i>Sukhavati</i>. It is said that one is reborn in a lotus there. The pure land is very vast, expansive and beautiful.</p>
<p>As one is born in a lotus there, one grows up [inside it] while listening to the speech of the Buddhas, which is like the sustenance for one's growth in the pure land. Hearing the Buddha's speech causes the splendor of one's body to grow.</p>
<p>Perhaps this is what the verse is saying. Just as how a human baby is conceived, develops within the womb and is sustained by its nutrients, likewise when one is born in Sukhavati in a lotus, one develops physically in it and is sustained by Buddha's speech, which is like the nutrients that the fetus gets from the mother's womb.</p>
<p>Eventually, the light [emanated] from the exalted body of the Buddha will cause the lotus to fully bloom and open. One's body will emerge from the lotus. It seems that, one's body is also adorned with the various characteristics [of the Buddha] like the different marks and signs.</p>

After one emerges from the lotus, here in the case of Sukhavati, the pure land of Amitabha Buddha, one then comes into His presence, one lives one's [entire] life hearing the voice/ teachings from Amitabha Buddha [Himself].

All of such [wonderful] experiences are the results of white/ wholesome karma.

(3) Reflecting on solely black karma and its effects [7.45]

7.45 a. As a result of many non-virtues, I will be very wretched due to all my skin without exception being ripped off by the henchmen of Yama,
b. Molten copper melted by tremendous heat will be poured into my body,
c. Pierced by flaming swords and daggers, my flesh will be cut into hundreds of pieces,
d. And I shall plummet upon the fiercely blazing iron ground.

These are said to be the experiences of those who accumulate nonvirtues.

4" Conclusion [7.46(ab)]

*7.46 Therefore I should [cultivate belief] in virtue
And with great respect acquaint myself with it.*

This is the concluding summary to the explanation on karma, as prior to this, there is the explanation on the need to have yearning for Dharma. The root of such a yearning is having faith of conviction in karma.

Hence, some explanations on the results of virtues and nonvirtues were given. As a result of such reflections, the concluding decision is that, one should *develop the yearning* to abandon nonvirtue and engage/ strive in virtue.

This completes the explanation on the first power: The power of aspiration. Next is the power of steadfastness:

b' [Second power:] The power of steadfastness [7.46(cd) – 7.62]

1" [Relying on steadfast] effort [7.46(cd) – 7.48]

a" Examining it well and undertake it [7.46(cd) – 7.47]

Whatever practices of virtue one is engaging in, one should investigate right from the very beginning whether one has the ability to do it or not. Upon this, from the time one engages in one's chosen activity, one should ensure that one completes the task/ practice. This is what is meant by the power of steadfastness:

<i>7.46 c. Having undertaken through the procedure of Vajradhvaja, d. I should cultivate pride.</i>	<i>7.47 a. At the beginning having examined the endowments, b. I should either undertake it or not undertake it. c. It is best not to undertake it, d. But once I have undertaken it I should not withdraw.</i>
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When the sun rises, from its own side, it can illuminate everything on the planet. But in some locations, due to its terrain or being a cave and so forth, the sunlight cannot reach these places. This is not the fault of the sun. If the factors like uneven terrain and so forth did not exist, then the light of the sun can reach everywhere.

It is said that, real bodhisattvas who have the ability to work day and night for sentient beings, from their own sides, they have no biases in that, they would work only for some and not others. They want to work for all sentient beings.

If there are sentient beings who have wrong views or are partisan, they would not be able to be benefited by a bodhisattva.

But this is not the fault of the bodhisattva, who has the wish and may even have the capacity [to benefit], but if the sentient beings are not ripened, then that is not the fault of the bodhisattva. The problem lies with the sentient beings.

So long as the minds of the sentient beings in question are matured and suitable to be ripened, then the bodhisattva will be able to help these sentient beings.

This is an advice on cultivating positive pride about being confident of success: "I can do it myself." It is for the purpose of generating courage.

In the example of the bodhisattva who is able to work for others from his own side regardless of how they are, this is an example one can emulate in that, while at times, even when one wishes to do something positive to help others, but one feels that one is unable to do so in relation to some people: "How is it possible [to benefit such a person]? I just can't do it!"

One may then become disheartened. In such a situation, perhaps one can remember these verses, how the bodhisattvas act.

The point here is about generating courage, the confidence of being successful: "From my own side, I can engage in that practice/ virtue. I should therefore cultivate such a pride."

Generally, before deciding to undertake any particular task, one is advised to think carefully. Here, this is in the context of starting/ engaging in a particular virtue. Whatever virtue/ practice may be, in the beginning, before starting, one should think and analyze carefully whether one can cope with it or not.

After careful considerations, if one thinks one can and should do it, then one should then make a pledge to oneself to do it.

The teachings say that, upon careful considerations, if one finds that one is unable to do it for whatever reasons like not being able to cope and so forth, then for the time being, it is better to decide not to do it: 7.47 c. <i>It is best not to undertake it</i>
If upon careful considerations, one feels that it is something one should and is able to do, then one should set up a determination to engage in it. Once one has formed such a determination and the pledge, then one must make sure to follow through by completing one's task without turning back: 7.47 d. <i>But once I have undertaken it I should not withdraw.</i>
Khenrinpoche: So don't withdraw...don't withdraw from the Basic program...! What is the problem if one decides to take up something and then gives up midway through?

b" The disadvantages of discarding it after one has undertaken it [7.48]

7.48 a. <i>I will familiarize with that in other rebirths</i> b. <i>And negativities and suffering will increase.</i> c. <i>Also others and the time of the result</i> d. <i>Will be inferior and will not be accomplished.</i>
It does not matter what one does, it could be studying, practice or retreat. Whatever it is, after one has embarked on it, if one does not see it through and complete it but merely give up, then this sets a very bad habit of not finishing one's task.
This does not just end in the present life. Due to such a bad habit, one will experience the casually concordant behavioral effects in future lives. This means that, in one's future lives, one will also not complete whatever practices one has set out due to one's bad habit formed in the present life.
If one does things this way, starts and repeatedly abandons it midway, then whatever one does will have no power/ strength.

2" Having undertaken [joyous effort], being steadfast on its engagement [7.49 – 7.62]

a" A brief presentation [7.49(ab)]

This is an explanation of the three types of pride: 1) Pride about action, 2) Pride about ability and 3) Pride about afflictions:
7.49 a. <i>Apply pride to the three:</i> b. <i>Actions, afflictions, and ability.</i>

b" Explaining each individually [7.49(cd) – 7.62]

(1) Pride about action [7.49(cd) – 7.51]

(a) Identifying the pride about action [7.49(cd)]

7.49 c. <i>Thinking, "I alone shall do it,"</i> d. <i>Is the pride [about] action.</i>
This pride about action is the courage which thinks: "I can do it by myself alone." This is similar to the <i>Wholehearted resolve</i> , which is [the sixth part] of the <i>Seven fold cause and effect instructions</i> .
This starts with: 1) Recognizing all sentient beings as one's mothers, 2) Remembering their kindnesses, 3) The wish to repay their kindnesses, 4) Love, 5) Compassion, and then 6) Wholehearted resolve, which is the thought thinking: "I will achieve omniscience to liberate all sentient beings by myself [alone]." On that basis, comes 7) Bodhicitta.
Here, the pride about action is the same attitude as this resolve.

(b) The reasons one acts in that way [7.50]

7.50 a. <i>Afflicted, powerless beings in this world</i> b. <i>Are unable to accomplish their own welfare.</i> c. <i>Migrating beings are not able like me,</i> d. <i>Therefore I shall do this [for them].</i>
When one encounters unruly sentient beings, one usually thinks: "How is it possible for me to liberate such sentient beings?"
But in the context here of a practitioner of the mind of enlightenment that strives to achieve omniscience for sentient beings, then such a person takes on a personal responsibility to do so for them. When he looks at them, he understands that sentient beings cannot even achieve their own happiness. Then how would they be able to even work for others' sake?
Hence, such a practitioner of the mind of enlightenment generates the determination and confidence of positive pride that thinks: "If they cannot do it, then I can and will do it for them."

(c) [Having pride about action] of assuming the burden of others of inferior karma [7.51]

7.51 a. <i>If others are doing inferior work,</i> b. <i>Why do I sit around?</i> c. <i>I do not perform it out of pride;</i> d. <i>It would be best for me to have no pride.</i>

One can take ' <i>inferior work</i> ' here to mean <i>anything that does not become Dharma</i> . This starts from being completely preoccupied with and attached to the happiness and affairs of this life.
As a result, one then works very hard to overcome enemies and sustain one's circle of friends, relatives and loved ones.
One then spends one's entire life merely doing these. These are examples of inferior work. Therefore, from one's side, one should not follow such examples and lead one's life like that.
One also does not keep company with those who engage in these as well. One should [lead one's life] emphasizing the training of one's own mind. Here, such a training is on the basis of bodhicitta and engaging in the perfections.
<i>Inferior work</i> could also mean doing menial tasks like moving things, carrying goods and so forth. When one sees people who are burdened with such work, who are suffering and needs help, rather than merely looking at them, one should [lend a hand]. This is provided that, through helping them, this does not become a cause for negativities.
Whatever one has set out to do, one may be doing it or one may have done it. But if one also feels negatively proud, arrogant, conceited and then start to advertise about what one has done: "I did this, I did that big job for him..." then the teaching is saying that, this is wrong. The advice here is that: <i>c. I do not perform it out of pride.</i>
One should engage in one's bodhisattva practices of benefiting others without any conceit: <i>d. It would be best for me to have no pride.</i>

Student: In the process of striving in virtue, from the beginning to the end, one finds that the various types of joyous effort, like the armor-like joyous effort, as well as the various powers like the power of aspiration, are needed. How does one integrate these two sets of practices in one's endeavor?

Khenrinpoche: In *Maitreya's Ornament of Mahayana Sutras*, there are four types of joyous effort:

1) Armor-like joyous effort, 2) Joyous effort of application, 3) Joyous effort of non-discouragement/ non-inferiority and 4) Joyous effort of non-contentment/ non-complacency.

We will look at it next time, but from your side, you have to know what are the four types of joyous effort and the four powers. This is essentially a question about the relationship between these two sets. I am not exactly sure if there is any co-relation, this is something to analyze.

The relationships between the *Four Powers* and the *Four Types of Joyous Effort*:

<p>The favorable conditions for the generation of joyous effort are the <i>Four powers</i>: The powers of aspiration, steadfastness, joy and relinquishment. The power of aspiration has been explained.</p>
<p>In short, whatever practices one undertakes, its success can only come on the basis of having a strong aspiration/ yearning for the goal of such a practice. It is only on the basis of the power of aspiration would the power of steadfastness come.</p>
<p>There are different types of joyous effort. Then is there a link between the <i>Four powers</i> and these different joyous efforts?</p>
<p>This is something to analyze, but I would think that there is a relation between:</p>
<p>1) The <i>Armor-like joyous effort</i> and <i>Power of aspiration</i> –</p>
<p>The armor-like joyous effort is a form of joyous effort that generated <i>prior to</i> engaging in the actual practice.</p>
<p>Prior to whatever practice, one puts on the armor of joyous effort in that, when one has a strong belief and aspiration for the goal, this produces a very strong enthusiasm and joy/ delight in one's heart <i>prior to</i> actually engaging in practice.</p>
<p>This is something to analyze: If there is any connection between armor-like joyous effort and the power of aspiration.</p>
<p>2) The <i>Joyous effort of application</i> and <i>Power of steadfastness</i> –</p>
<p>The power of steadfastness is applied when one is <i>actually engaging</i> in the virtue. There is a relationship between it and the joyous effort of application, which is a mind of enthusiasm and delight <i>while</i> one is actually engaging in the virtue.</p>
<p>In the explanation on the power of steadfastness, one is advised to consider carefully before one undertakes any practices of virtuous endeavor. One should first think and analyze carefully whether one can cope with and complete one's task or not.</p>
<p>Once the decision has been made and one has started on the practice, then the power of steadfastness is used to apply oneself to such a virtue until it is brought to completion.</p>
<p>I would think that there is a relationship between this [power] and the joyous effort of application.</p>
<p>3) The <i>Joyous effort of non-discouragement/ non-disturbance</i> and <i>Power of steadfastness</i> –</p>
<p>The joyous effort of non-discouragement is sometimes called the joyous effort of non-disturbance in that, one's mind is not disturbed. My own view is that, there is a relationship between such a joyous effort and the power of steadfastness.</p>
<p>In the process while engaging in a particular virtue/ practice, it is possible that one gets discouraged or disturbed for whatever reasons. Therefore, it is especially important to generate an extraordinary courage.</p>
<p>This means that one must generate a very special and heightened sense of enthusiasm for the task one has already started such that, one can continue with it and see it to completion. This is what I think, so you have to analyze and think about it.</p>
<p>4) The <i>Joyous effort of non-contentment</i> and <i>Power of Joy</i> –</p>
<p>The joyous effort of non-contentment is a mind that is enthusiastic and takes delight in the virtue without being easily contented with it. It is a mind that does not allow the thought: "I have done this already."</p>
<p>Even though one may have done a small practice, but one may feel satisfied. Rather, it is a mind of enthusiasm and delight that does not take satisfaction in whatever one has achieved but wants to do more.</p>
<p>I would think that, there may be such a relationship between the joyous effort of non-contentment and the power of joy.</p>
<p>5) The <i>Joyous effort of non-discouragement</i> and <i>Power of relinquishment</i> –</p>
<p>This is not certain and is something to analyze. But when one thinks about this, one can come up with an explanation and reasonably make a connection between the power of relinquishment to the joyous effort of non-discouragement.</p>
<p>To make a connection between them, one must firstly know what the four powers are individually. One also needs to know the four types of joyous effort. On the basis of knowing these two sets, one can analyze to see if there are any connections.</p>

(2) Pride about ability [7.52 – 7.59]

(a) The [faults] of taking no pride about one's ability [7.52 – 7.53(ab)]

<p>In developing the power of steadfastness, one has to cultivate the <i>Three types of pride</i>: The pride about action, the pride about ability and the pride about afflictions.</p>
<p>The pride about action essentially means that, whatever virtuous actions/ karma one is accumulating, one has a very strong courage that thinks: "I don't need any companions to accompany nor help me. Rather, I will do this by myself alone."</p>
<p>One must understand that the context of this explanation is the bodhisattva practices/ trainings. They already have the wholehearted resolve that take on the personal responsibility to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings that thinks: "I will do this by myself alone."</p>

One needs the pride about ability, without it there will be problems/ faults:	
7.52 a. When encountering a dead snake, b. Even crows will act as though they are garudas. c. If I am weak d. I shall be harmed by even a small downfall.	7.53 a. How do the faint-hearted who have given up exerting themselves b. Find liberation from destitution?
Khenrinpoche: How does the example [relate to the meaning]? What does a crow acting like a garuda mean?	
Student 1: Does it mean that, since I am weak and not like a garuda, I will be defeated by a small downfall?	
Student 2: Could the dead snake refer to the practice one applies to, that is not as difficult as one thinks it is? If one's self-confidence is weak, thinking one could not cope with the practice, one would be injured by the slightest downfall.	
[Before student 3 speaks...] Khenrinpoche: Now, it looks like everybody is acting like the crow...!	
Student 3: The dead snake is likened to one's self-confidence, whereas the crow is likened to one's downfall. When one's self-confidence is becoming like the dead snake, it has weakened. One's downfall can then attack one.	
Khenrinpoche: Even with one example, different people have different understanding and commentaries. [Student 3's] idea is totally different and opposite to [the first two students']	
The meaning is that, to vanquish the afflictions, one must have very strong courage with the pride about ability that thinks: "I can definitely vanquish the afflictions." One needs to have such courage. If it is small and weak, then one would be affected even by a small downfall.	
If one's courage is weak and lacks the pride about ability, then even the small fault/ mistake can throw one into the lower realms. Whether it is accomplishing virtue or abandoning nonvirtue, if one's determination is weak and lacks courage, then one will not be able abandon nonvirtue nor accomplish virtue. Hence, one will be harmed in this and future lives.	
Therefore, it will be difficult to break free from cyclic existence and achieve liberation. This is the meaning of this verse.	
Based on the meaning, then how should one interpret the analogy? The analogy has to fit the meaning.	
If that is the case, perhaps what [student 3] has said maybe applicable in that, the dead snake could refer to one's lack of determination and courage. If one lacks these, even a small little bird like a crow [one's afflictions] can harm [one].	
Student 4: I think it is the other way round: the slightest downfall is like the dead snake. When one meets with a small downfall, one can easily overcome it. If one lacks determination and meets with big difficulties, then one would give up.	
Khenrinpoche: I didn't really get your point exactly...	
Essentially, the pride about ability is the strong confidence in one's ability to vanquish one's afflictions. If one has this, one would not be harmed by even the great downfalls. But if one's confidence and courage is weak, then not to mention about big downfalls, one can be harmed even by a small downfall.	
In <i>Gyaltsab Je's</i> commentary, verses 7.52 – 7.53(ab) come from the outline: The faults of taking no pride about one's ability.	
When one [connects] how this outline is phrased to the given example, crows usually have difficulties dealing with, bully and take advantage of snakes. But if the snake is dead or weak, then they can do whatever they want with it.	
Likewise, perhaps if one's determination, confidence, courage and one's pride about ability are non-existent or very weak, then one can be defeated or harmed even by an insignificant [fault].	

(b) The benefits of taking pride about one's ability [7.53(cd) – 7.54]

7.53 c. By generating pride and exertion, d. Even the great will find it hard to overcome me.	7.54 a. Therefore with a steady mind b. I shall overcome the downfalls. c. If I am defeated by a downfall, d. My wish to be victorious over the three realms will become a joke.
By generating one's pride about ability, one applies and exerts oneself in confessing negativities, downfalls and restrains oneself from all downfalls. One can then overcome the root downfalls. Hence, one will not be harmed even by any great downfalls. One will then not be thrown into the lower realms.	
Without this pride about one's ability, then one will be harmed even by a small downfall. At the same time, if one were to say: "I wish to achieve the state of full omniscience and conquer the three realms and so forth..." This then becomes a joke.	

(c) Abiding in pride about ability as an antidote [7.55]

7.55 a. I will conquer everything b. And nothing at all shall conquer me! c. I, a son of the Lion-like Victor, d. Shall dwell in this pride.

I will conquer everything [that needs to be conquered] here, means that one will abandon all the afflictions/ all objects of abandonment. One will abide in this pride about one's own ability [emulating the] Victorious One, the Buddha, who has overcome and vanquished the *four maras*.

This section on the pride about ability is essentially the courage and confidence in one's ability to vanquish one's afflictions that thinks: "I can, I am able to and I am going to vanquish the afflictions!" The next section explains why it is wrong to follow after the pride that is an affliction:

(d) It is inappropriate to have afflictive pride [7.56 – 7.58]

(i) Decrying afflictive pride [7.56]

- 7.56 a. *Any migrating being is destroyed by pride.*
 b. *Afflicted, he has no pride.*
 c. *Those with pride do not succumb to the power of the enemy.*
 d. *They have come under the power of the enemy of pride.*

The *Three types of pride* explained here are not the pride that is one of the six root afflictions, although the word 'pride' is the same. The pride that is a root affliction is an object of abandonment, whereas the three types of pride are not.

The foe destroyer who is the fully completed Buddha, is one who has vanquished the enemy of the afflictions, which include the affliction of pride.

Of the three types of pride, there is the pride about afflictions which the bodhisattvas cultivate. This is not the pride of the root affliction. Bodhisattvas cultivate the pride about ability knowing they can vanquish the afflictions. This is also not an afflicted pride as it is not to be abandoned. In fact they need this pride, which can vanquish even the ordinary afflicted pride.

Therefore, one needs to know that there is a difference between an ordinary afflicted pride and the pride about ability. Although it is called the pride about ability, it is not the actual afflicted pride. One must not be confused between these two.

There is a difference between the pride about ability and ordinary pride in terms of what these do to one's mind:

When one has pride about ability, one has the confidence that one will vanquish the afflictions. With such a pride, one's mind does not come under the control of the afflictions. When ordinary afflicted pride manifests, one's mind only comes under the influence of the afflictions, which will lead to many problems. Hence, it is wrong to follow after ordinary afflicted pride.

(ii) The disadvantages of afflictive pride [7.57 – 7.58(a)]

- 7.57 a. *Inflated by afflicted pride,*
 b. *I shall be led by pride to the bad migrations.*
 c. *It destroys the joyous festival of being human.*
 d. *I shall become a slave, eating the food of others,*

7.58 a. *Stupid, ugly, feeble, and despised everywhere.*

These are the problems of following after pride.

(iii) The appropriateness of abandoning it [7.58(bcd)]

- 7.58 b. *Tough people inflated by pride*
 c. *Are also included among those having pride.*
 d. *Tell me, what is the inferior like!*

It is said that, if one's mind is puffed-up with arrogance or pride, then one can never taste the Dharma. One will become a lowly person despised by others.

The ordinary afflicted pride is not included in nor is it a derivative of the pride about ability that is cultivated by the bodhisattvas. If one asserts that it is, then one would not be able to find anyone who would say that it is difficult to cultivate the pride about ability. Perhaps this is what 7.58 d. means: *Tell me, what is the inferior like!*

(e) The benefits of pride about ability as an antidote [7.59]

- 7.59 a. *Whoever seizes pride in order to conquer the enemy of pride,*
 b. *He is the one having pride, the victorious hero.*
 c. *Whoever definitely destroys the rampage of this enemy of pride,*
 d. *Completes the results of a Victor in accordance with the wishes of migrating beings.*

This is an advice to generate the pride about ability to vanquish one's afflictions. *b. He is the one having pride, the victorious hero*, refers to the person who has very strong pride about ability.

Those who develop their pride about ability to conquer/ vanquish their afflictions are heroes. They are called heroes because they are out to vanquish or conquer their own afflictions

Those who act in such ways to vanquish their own afflictions achieve the provisional goals of high status and definite goals of certain goodness. This completes the explanation of the pride about ability.

In short, there is a big difference between the pride about ability and ordinary afflicted pride. One should not confuse the two.
The pride about ability is an object of cultivation whereas the ordinary afflicted pride is an object of abandonment.
Through cultivating the pride about ability, there are many benefits whereas if one follows the ordinary afflicted pride, then there are the hosts of disadvantages and faults. Hence, the bodhisattvas cultivate the pride about ability.
Khenrinpoche: What is the difference between the pride about action and the pride about ability?
Student: I think the pride about action refers to determination while the pride about ability refers to confidence.
Khenrinpoche: Good. Pride about ability is a mind of strong determination and confidence in being able to vanquish the afflictions that thinks: "I will vanquish the afflictions."
On the basis of such a pride, when one engages in vanquishing one's afflictions, at that time, there is also a very strong determination which thinks: "I will not allow these afflictions take hold in my mind at all. Rather, I will destroy you completely." This is a very stable determination and courage.

Student: How does one integrate the **four** types of joyous effort: armor-like, application, non-discouragement and non-complacency, within the **three** types of joyous effort: armor-like, gathering virtue and acting for the welfare of living beings?

Khenrinpoche: Whether it is armor-like joyous effort in the three-fold division of joyous effort, or the armor-like joyous effort in the four-fold division of joyous effort, both refer to the same entity, which is related to the power of aspiration.

The armor-like joyous effort is a mind, which occurs prior to engaging in any virtue. Based on it, one starts to engage in virtue. Next is the joyous effort of application. When one joyously perseveres in the endeavor, one could be gathering virtue, or one could also be acting for the welfare of sentient beings.

After one has started in any practice/ virtue, whether one is gathering virtue or acting for the welfare of sentient beings, the power of steadfastness becomes very important. Whether it is gathering virtue or acting for the welfare of sentient beings, one needs the three types of pride: pride about action, pride about ability and pride about afflictions. One needs these three types of pride of the power of steadfastness to complete one's practice/ virtue.

To complete one's practice/ virtue, the powers of joy and relinquishment are also needed.

When one says one is joyously persevering in virtue, it means one is either gathering virtue or one is doing something to benefit sentient beings. To be successful, one needs the four powers.

Of the four types of joyous effort: the three, joyous efforts of application, non-discouragement and non-contentment, are to be cultivated when one is **applying** oneself in virtue, as one has already started on the process.

If one thinks about it, one can make connections between the three-fold and four-fold divisions of joyous effort, between the types of joyous effort and the different types of power. Hence, the more information one has, the more one can analyze. The more one has analyzed, one sees the connections between different things and one's perspective becomes deeper and wider.

Put simply: **1)** Prior to engaging in any virtue, one must have a very strong yearning and wants it so much. This is what is called armor-like joyous effort or the power of aspiration. This is why one is thinking about doing something to achieve it as one must want it. This has to occur prior to the actual engagement in virtue. **2)** When one has started one's engagement, it is either **2a)** engaging in gathering virtue or **2b)** engaging in working to benefit others. When one is engaging in either of these two virtues **2a)** or **2b)**, to complete such a task, one needs all the other three powers: **2)** power of steadfastness, **3)** Power of joy and **4)** Power of relinquishment. With respect to the four-fold division of joyous effort, whether it is gathering virtue or accomplishing sentient beings' welfare, one needs the joyous effort of application as one needs to apply oneself to the task. One needs the joyous effort of non-discouragement to avoid being discouraged. One also needs to enjoy doing it more, so one needs the joyous effort of non-contentment. With these types of joyous effort, one is then able to complete one's chosen task, whether it is gathering virtue or working for others.

Student: In the presentation of the Twelve links, projecting karma and actualizing karma were presented, what is the role of completing karma there? In the presentation of the effects of karma, projecting karma and completing karma were presented, what is the role of actualizing karma there?

Khenrinpoche: After one has accumulated projecting karma, for it to bring forth its effect, it must be nourished by craving and grasping. When the projecting karma is nourished by craving and grasping to the point that is certain to give rise to effect, then it becomes...?

Student: The projecting karma is no more during the time of causal-period consciousness, so what karma is being nourished by craving and grasping?

Khenrinpoche: Of course, once projecting karma is accumulated, it ceases and does not exist. But the [latent karmic propensities] of such a projecting karma that was accumulated was [infused] into the continuum. This [dormant karmic tendency] is that which is then nourished by craving and grasping.

With respect to completing karma, this is complicated. For example, in *Vasubandhu's Treasury of Knowledge (Abhidharmakosa)*, it states that it takes one to accumulate many virtuous karma to be born as a human. But the text also states that, one karma projects and the rest completes. It also states that, one rebirth is not propelled by many karmas.

Asanga's higher abhidharma of the Compendium of Knowledge (Abhidharma-samuccaya) asserts very differently: One karma can project one rebirth, one karma can project many rebirths and one rebirth can also be propelled by many karmas.

These statements are the basis [for one] to analyze. In the future, we could discuss further. This is what is mentioned in the text, we can think about it and perhaps in the future we can analyze or discuss.

Extensive discussion on the boundaries of true suffering and samsara:

Student 1: Is true suffering the same as all-pervasive suffering?

Khenrinpoche: Yes, they *can* be the same.

Student 1: Where is the boundary of true suffering? When does one overcome all-pervasive suffering?

Student 2: Perhaps once a bodhisattva reaches a stage where he no longer returns back to samsara, like a non-returner, I think that is the end of his all-pervasive suffering.

Khenrinpoche: Why do you think that a non-returner does not have any more true suffering?

Student 2: Having to return means that one still needs to acquire the aggregates of suffering. So if one is a non-returner, that is the boundary where, after that, one does not have all-pervasive suffering.

Khenrinpoche: You said that, as a non-returner, there is no true suffering, while there is true suffering before that. [Your reason being that,] you need to take rebirth. Then, what is the definition of true suffering?

[Student 2 says,] *As a non-returner, you do not have true suffering.* Does everyone agree with [student 2]?

Student 3: I disagree, because his aggregates are still true suffering. This is because, he inherited his body from his human parents. **Khenrinpoche:** Do you mean a human body is necessarily true suffering? **Student 3:** Yes.

Khenrinpoche: Then is Buddha Shakyamuni's body true suffering? **Student 3:** No. **Khenrinpoche:** But is his body a human body? **Student 3:** Yes.

Student 4: I don't agree with [student 2]. A non-returner's body is true suffering because it is the result of karma and afflictions. **Khenrinpoche:** Is the arhat's body true suffering? **Student 4:** Yes. **Khenrinpoche:** So arhats have not abandoned true suffering? Is he not free from suffering? **Student:** No. He is free of his afflictions but not sure whether he needs to take rebirth. **Khenrinpoche:** I am surprised...

Student 5: The non-returner's body has true suffering. This is due to his contaminated appropriated physical aggregates. When his foot steps on a nail, he experiences pain. **Khenrinpoche:** The arhat would also have true suffering? **Student 5:** Yes. His contaminated physical body has true suffering. Once he abandons that at the end of his life and enters into nirvana, then there would not be any. **Khenrinpoche:** When you achieved arhatship, you reach the peace of nirvana. [Doesn't] nirvana mean that one is free from suffering and the causes of suffering? In the Four Noble Truths, true origin, true suffering, true path and true cessation, when you achieve nirvana, that means you have abandoned true suffering and the cause of true suffering, isn't it? That means arhats have abandoned true suffering and the cause of true suffering, isn't it? So arhats don't have those, isn't it? That means, arhats don't have true suffering, isn't it? So, has an arhat abandoned true suffering or he has not abandoned true suffering? **Student 5:** Yes, he has. **Khenrinpoche:** That means arhats don't have true suffering? **Student:** What about the imprints? He has abandoned true suffering but not the imprints. **Khenrinpoche:** Once you have abandoned true suffering, you don't have true suffering, isn't it? So has the arhat abandoned true suffering? **Student 5:** One has to say yes. **Khenrinpoche:** You have to say yes, isn't it? Then the next question is, that means arhats don't have true suffering? **Student 5:** No, he still has true suffering. **Khenrinpoche:** That means he has not abandoned true suffering! **Student 5:** He has abandoned true suffering but he still has the experience of true suffering. **Khenrinpoche:** If he has [experience of true suffering] then how could he have abandoned true suffering? What does it mean to have 'abandoned'? **Student 5:** True suffering is defined as [having] contaminated physical and mental aggregates. It is very difficult [for me] to reconcile the physical aspect, this I am not sure. But for bodhisattvas on the first ground, we have been taught that they do not experience both physical and mental suffering. Not experiencing physical suffering due to having abandoned all negativities.

Student 6: I disagree [with student 2], because he still has ignorance. **Khenrinpoche:** So long as you still have ignorance, that means you necessarily have true suffering? **Student 6:** Yes. **Khenrinpoche:** That means arya bodhisattvas also have true suffering? **Student 6:** Yes. **Khenrinpoche:** We have just completed the lesson earlier [about this]. Even if [the arya bodhisattva] cuts his body, there is *no* mental and physical suffering. After he achieves the [Mahayana] path of seeing, his body totally changed to a mental body. Also, in one of Maitreya's text, he mentioned that, when you achieved the [Mahayana] path of seeing, you don't have true suffering, no aging, no sickness, no dying...all these do not exist, when you achieved the arya bodhisattva path. So, it is clear that, arya bodhisattvas don't have true suffering. But according to you, his body is still true suffering because he has ignorance. **Student 6:** He has true suffering because he has ignorance. Since ignorance is contaminated phenomena, and contaminated phenomena is misery, therefore, since he still has ignorance, then he still has misery, true suffering. **Khenrinpoche:** What kind of suffering does he have? **Student 6:** He still has contaminated phenomena, so he still has true suffering. **Khenrinpoche:** His body has totally changed after reaching the path of seeing. **Student 6:** But his mind still has ignorance. Out of the five aggregates, one of them is ignorance. Therefore, he is not totally free from contaminated phenomena. **Khenrinpoche:** Yes, but he does not experience any [suffering]! **Student 6:** That is the experience of feeling. But in terms of it being a contaminated phenomena, it is still true suffering. **Khenrinpoche:** Then what Maitreya said is incorrect? **Student 6:** I am just presenting another view, that's all. **Ven Gyurme:** But this is the view of reality. Arya bodhisattvas don't have true suffering as they have abandoned aging, sickness and death.

Student 6: How then do you explain that he still has ignorance, which is contaminated phenomena, hence, it is a cause of suffering? **Khenrinpoche:** Firstly, positing the boundary of contaminated and non-contaminated [phenomena] is complicated because, it depends on which tenet.

Student 6: How do you explain that he still has contaminated phenomena and yet has no suffering? **Ven Gyurme:** Is true suffering and samsara synonymous? **Khenrinpoche:** I think I did mention [about the boundaries of contaminated and non-contaminated phenomena] in the previous basic program. I think I did mention that, but this time I am not sure.

Explanations on the boundaries of true suffering and samsara:

The contaminated appropriated aggregates that arise from karma and afflictions are posited as true suffering.
As to what constitutes and defines contaminated phenomena, different tenets have their own assertions.
In general, any phenomenon that arises from karma and afflictions is contaminated.
The physical bodies in the continua of Hinayana superiors, particularly stream-enterers, once-returners and non-returners are necessarily true suffering.
<i>As for the physical aggregates of foe destroyers, there are instances where such physical aggregates are true suffering, but there are also instances where it is not true suffering.</i>
For example, if a person becomes an arhat without discarding the previous physical aggregates which he has had when he was a non-returner, on that physical basis, if he then becomes an arhat, then his physical aggregate would be an instance of true suffering. This is true suffering as he has not discarded [such a physical aggregate] yet.
According to the Hinayana tenets, such a person has achieved a nirvana with remainder. Once he achieves a nirvana without remainder, then the physical aggregate in his continuum would not be true suffering.
Here, the difference between a nirvana with and without remainder is made on the basis of whether such an arhat possesses the contaminated physical aggregates or not. This is the assertions of the Autonomy Middle Way School.
The Consequence Middle Way School has a different assertion on this.
Khenrinpoche: According to the Consequence Middle Way School, how do they posit a nirvana with and without remainder?
Student 3: An arhat's [nirvana] with remainder means he is out of meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness. He [has nirvana] without remainder when he is in direct meditative equipoise realizing emptiness.
Khenrinpoche: When he is in meditative equipoise focusing on emptiness, what is it that is not remaining? When he is in post meditative equipoise, what is remaining? The meaning has to accompany the phrase.
Student 3: An arhat out of meditative equipoise has the remainder of appearance of true existence.
Khenrinpoche: In essence, this is how the Consequentialist posit it. When [an arhat] is in meditative equipoise directly perceiving emptiness, there is no appearance of true existence. But when they are out of their meditative equipoise, then there is the appearance of true existence. This is what remains.
It is clear that, <i>the body in the continuum of he who has achieved a nirvana with remainder is true suffering, whereas the body in the continuum of he who has achieved a nirvana without remainder is not true suffering.</i>
It is also clearly mentioned in the text that, <i>for ordinary beings who are reborn in the pure lands such as Amitabha pure land, although their bodies are in the continua of ordinary beings, but their bodies are not true suffering.</i>
Likewise, there are arhats abiding in the pure lands. Their physical aggregates in their continua are also not true suffering. For example, it is said that in Sukhavati, which is Amitabha Pure Land, there is no suffering.
It was mentioned earlier in the chapter: <p style="text-align: center;">7.27 a. <i>Due to having abandoned negativities there is no suffering</i> b. <i>And due to skill there is no unhappiness.</i></p>
These two lines are taught in the context of bodhisattva superiors.
For those who have the nirvana with remainder, due to having true suffering, one cannot say that they have abandoned [true suffering]. That is why there are accounts of arhats who experienced headaches, pains and so forth. Khenrinpoche: It is mentioned that arhats also have headaches.
Arhats have achieved liberation, freedom from samsara/ cyclic existence. Hence, one has to say that they have abandoned samsara/ cyclic existence.
Then that begets the question: Is true suffering synonymous with samsara/ cyclic existence or not. Obviously one cannot say they are. The pervasion is that:
<i>If it is cyclic existence, it is true suffering; But if it is true suffering, it is not necessarily cyclic existence.</i>

Of course, this may be quite difficult to understand. Therefore, one has to use some illustrations:
For example, the physical aggregate in the continuum of an arhat who has achieved the nirvana with remainder, is an illustration of true suffering.
This again may beget another question: What then, is samsara? What is the definition and boundary? Have arhats/ foe destroyers completely abandoned all the twelve links of dependent-arising?
If one says that, arhats have already freed/ liberated themselves from samsara/ cyclic existence, hence they [should be] completely separated from the twelve links. If that is the case, then in their continua, they would not have the projected effects nor actualized effects. If that is the case, do arhats have six sources?
Student 2: He is experiencing the results of the last cycle. Khenrinpoche: That means he still has twelve links, the last results are not yet completed! This means that, as an arhat, he is not free from the twelve links.
Student 2: That's why he still has nirvana with remainder! Khenrinpoche: Are you saying an arhat has remainder of samsara? Student 2: Like what you say, arhats have true suffering, but they are out of samsara. They still have their old bodies which goes through aging and suffering but are not subject to new cycles of rebirth, so they are out of the twelve links.
Khenrinpoche: Then [from what you say,] arhats are not really free from the twelve links! Student 2: What about Shakyamuni Buddha and our own gurus, whom we see as Buddhas, when we see them suffer, do they have true suffering but not in samsara?
Khenrinpoche: I think we did examine this quite a bit during tenets. Depending on which tenets' perspective you take, according to the Hinayana tenets, the physical body of Buddha is true suffering. This is because, it is in the same continuum of the body that he had when he was on the path of preparation.
They assert that, one progresses from the path of preparation up to the path of no more learning in one seating. That was how Buddha became enlightened. Since the body is in the same continuum of that old body, it is posited as true suffering.
From their perspectives, enlightenment/ Buddhahood is posited mainly from the perspective of Buddha's mind.
But the Mahayana tenets' explanation on Buddha is much more profound. In essence, Buddha does not have true suffering. Buddha's physical body is not true suffering, Buddha's body is Buddha. They present the Four Bodies [of Buddha]:
The Nature Truth Body, Wisdom Truth Body, Complete Enjoyment Body and Supreme Emanation Body. Therefore, the assertions of the Four Bodies are not found in the Hinayana tenets.
As to whether one's virtuous friend has true suffering or not. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, even if superior bodhisattvas were to cut their bodies into pieces and give them away, it is said that they do not experience physical nor mental suffering. In fact, they only experience so much joy. This is merely referring to bodhisattva superiors.
If it happens in reality that your virtuous friend is Buddha, then if you perceive suffering, then that is just an appearance. In reality, there is no suffering.
According to Mahayana tenets, Buddhas do not die. But they show the appearance of passing away into parinirvana, just like what Shakyamuni Buddha did. He was merely showing an aspect of passing away.
In His life story, one sees Shakyamuni Buddha going through many hardships and practices, finally achieving enlightenment under the bodhi tree. According to the Mahayana tenets, all such activities are merely displaying the deeds, as He has already achieved enlightenment long time ago.
In the fortunate eon of this world, of the thousand Buddhas that will descend, He is the fourth. This means he has already achieved enlightenment long before. All these are merely a display/ show. He did not newly achieve enlightenment.
Likewise, the next Buddha, the fifth out of the thousand, is Maitreya Buddha. He has already achieved enlightenment. But when He descends on this world, He will show the aspect of being born, growing up, practicing austerities, achieving enlightenment and finally passing away. All these will also be mere displays, showing the aspects only.
If your virtuous friends are in reality Buddhas, if you see that he is suffering, then that is just an appearance and not real suffering. But if he is in reality an ordinary being and not Buddha, then when you see suffering, he is suffering.
As it is said, whatever appears to you is not definite. Whatever appears to you is not necessarily the truth.
As the <i>Seventh Dalai Lama Gyalwa Gyatso</i> said: <i>All the phenomena of samsara and nirvana are fabrications of one's conceptual thoughts, they are not truly existent. Hence do not cling on to this appearance of everything as truly existent, rather, look at everything as empty.</i>
As to whether one's guru or whoever the person is, is suffering or not, it all depends. One way is to look at it from the perspective of different tenets. One also has to understand that, there are cases where even bodhisattva superiors, due to having abandoned negativities, do not experience physical suffering. The point is, whatever appears is not certain.
Just because one sees someone suffering, this does not mean that this person is [actually] suffering.

Analyzing the substantial cause of Buddha's Form Body:

It is said in *Maitreya's Uttaratantra, the Sublime Continuum* that, bodhisattva superiors do not undergo aging, sickness and death. Hence, they do not have true suffering, no physical nor mental sufferings. They acquire a body in the nature of mind.

Qualm: The bodhisattva was on the path of preparation prior to [entering the superiors' path of seeing]. Hence he has an ordinary body. How then, does he makes the transition? When he crosses over into the path of seeing, does he need to discard his old body/ die from that? Or [this old body] transforms/ changes in nature [into the mental body]?

Therefore, what is the substantial cause of such a mental body in the nature of mind?

Such a mental body goes all the way right up till the end of the continuum, to the last moment as a sentient being/ non-buddha. Such a mental body is said to arise from the *levels of predisposition of ignorance* and *uncontaminated karma*.

However, when such a bodhisattva becomes a Buddha, his form body is something else [from the mental body and its causes]

From the perspective of Mahayana tantra, the questions is: What is the substantial cause of the Form Body of Buddha?

According to tantra, the body in the continuum of the sentient being prior to achieving enlightenment cannot be the substantial cause of the Buddha's Form Body.

This is because, such a mental body of the bodhisattva arose from the levels of predisposition of ignorance. Hence, such a body cannot be posited as the substantial cause of the Form Body of Buddha.

Therefore, from the perspective of tantra, the sutra's explanation of achieving the Form Body of Buddha is inadequate.

When one analyzes in detail [the assertions of] tantra, particularly Highest Yoga Tantra, the conclusion is that, the substantial cause of Buddhahood, including Buddha's Form Body, has to be the extremely subtle wind/ mind.

Such an explanation is only found in Highest Yoga Tantra.

When one investigates deeply about the exact substantial cause of enlightenment, there must be something within each individual, a Buddha lineage/ Buddha nature, that each individual already possesses, which continues up to enlightenment.

Since this cannot be fabricated, combining such a deep analysis with the question of the substantial cause of enlightenment, Buddha's body and mind, when one examines the explanation of tantra, this would really bring out the extraordinary characteristics and features of tantra.

When one thinks about this, one definitely can gain a trust and conviction in the validity of Mahayana tantra.

When one examines how the Hinayana tenets explain about enlightenment, they are able to assert that from the perspective of Buddha's mind. They are [still] unable to explain why Buddha [does not suffer.] So they assert that Buddha has true suffering, hence Buddha's body is not Buddha.

When one examines Mahayana sutra, there is the explanation of the Four Bodies. Of course, they do assert that certain causes will transform/ result in the Buddha's body.

But when one analyzes deeply their explanations about the exact cause of Buddha's Form Body as being adequate or not, one finds that it is also inadequate in explaining that. This is where the Mahayana tantric explanation fits in very nicely.

Even if one merely examines reincarnation, that which moves from life-to-life, of course there are explanations found in Hinayana and Mahayana sutra. But the tantric explanation is extremely different qualitatively.

Even though all Buddhists assert that something moves from life-to-life, but what [exactly] is it that does so?

Since the body does not [do that], only the mind, but when one examines in detail, what exact consciousness does so?

Is it all types of consciousnesses? Sense or mental? Within the category of mental consciousness, there are also so many different kinds. There are also consciousnesses that are contaminated, uncontaminated, gross, subtle and so forth.

Although there are explanations in sutra, but when one looks at the tantric explanation of the extremely subtle wind/ mind, how [it is this] that moves from life-to-life, then one can see the profundity of tantra.

The point is that, tantra is something extremely precious and very profound. This is contrary to what most people think, that vajrayana/ tantra is about rituals and reciting mantras/ sadhanas. It is not at all, that is not the essence.

When one looks at the tantric explanations, starting from the explanation of reality of the different levels of body and mind, what exactly moves from life-to-life, what moves on to enlightenment, the substantial causes and so forth, such fine points are all [only] found in tantra. Hence, it is very important to study and understand what tantra really is.

In the first place, one needs to have a very strong yearning to understand tantra. This is very important. If one makes a connection to study it in the future, learn and come to understand a little about it, this places a very positive imprint in one's mind.

Student 5: Is the substantial cause for a superior bodhisattva necessarily the levels of predispositions of ignorance? If so, how does one posit a mental body of the first ground, which is gained from the body of an ordinary being entering into the path of seeing? If one cannot posit a substantial cause for such a mental body, does it mean that, there are no existence of such bodies in the pure lands?

Khenrinpoche: It is an existent and not a mere assertion. There are mental bodies [in the pure lands]. Bodhisattva superiors have mental bodies. From the perspective of sutra, the mental bodies arise from the levels of predisposition of ignorance/ the subtle obstructions to omniscience. Then the next question to ask is: “What exactly is that?”

Student 5: If there are levels of predisposition, it will be under the category of non-associated compositional factor. If so, then how can that be the substantial cause for mind and body?

Khenrinpoche: Form cannot act as a substantial cause for consciousness, consciousness cannot act as a substantial cause for form. But one would have to say that non-associated composition factor can act as a substantial cause for both form and consciousness. For example, someone taking a rebirth from the formless realm into the form realm. How does one posit the substantial cause? This is mentioned in the commentary on valid cognition, *Dharmakirti's Pramanavarttika*.

One can see from here that, there are so many qualms and unanswered questions. Merely using 'samsara' as an example, we always think samsara is easy [to understand]. If one were asked: “What is the definition of samsara and its boundary?” perhaps one would be stumped [for an answer.]

Student 3: What is the boundary of all-pervasive compounded suffering?

Khenrinpoche: I have already mentioned that, samsara is necessarily true suffering, but true suffering is not necessarily samsara. [As for] the boundary of true suffering, it is from ordinary beings up to arhat.

Student 3: Up to arhat without remainder or with remainder?

Khenrinpoche: I have already explained earlier that, if you don't have the contaminated aggregates, you don't have anything remaining. So if you have the remainder, what is remaining?

Student 3: The projected effect of the twelve link.

Khenrinpoche: Twelve link is [with regards to] a different question. Anyways, arhats who have achieved nirvana with remainder have true suffering.

Student 3: If the bodhisattva superior has a mental body that does not die, then what is it that takes rebirth?

Khenrinpoche: Even though Hearer and Solitary Realizer superiors do take rebirths in samsara, but they do not accumulate fresh projecting karma. Rather, they take rebirth in samsara due to previously accumulated karma.

Bodhisattva superiors do not take rebirth due to karma and afflictions. They do not die due to karma and afflictions. Hence they do not experience death arising from karma and afflictions. But they undergo the inconceivable transference of death.

Khenrinpoche: If it is any of the twelve links of dependent-origination, it is necessarily cyclic existence/ samsara? The twelve links of dependent-origination is an explanation of how one circles in cyclic existence. Hence, if it is any of the twelve links of dependent-origination, it is necessarily included within samsara. Anything that is not samsara/ not included in samsara will not be part of the twelve links of dependent-origination. This is because, this is an explanation of how one circles in samsara.

Having said this, can we be absolutely sure about this and say with decisive confidence that this is the case? If someone were to ask one:

“In the continuum of a superior, how many of the twelve links of dependent-origination are there?”

Khenrinpoche: Think about this, when you say that they have [these links], what is the reason. When you say they don't have [the other links], what is the reason as well.

The arhats/ foe destroyers do not have any of the twelve links of dependent-arising because, they are liberated from samsara. Since any of the twelve links must necessarily be included within samsara or is necessarily samsara, hence, in the continuum of a foe destroyer, there are not any of the twelve links of dependent-origination. This is because, he is already liberated from cyclic existence. [Again,] if one were asked:

In the continuum of [an arhat], how many of the twelve links of dependent-origination are there?”

In the first place, are there still any [left]? If not, what would be the reasons for saying so? If there are, how many are there and what would also be the reasons for saying that?

The difference between the Three Types of Pride:

In the explanation of steadfastness, there is the cultivation of the three types of pride: Pride about action, pride about ability and pride about affliction.
When it comes to accomplishing a practice/ virtue, <i>Pride about action</i> is essentially: <i>A mind that does not look for, expect any help, involvement from others nor reliance on others.</i> It is thus a mind that thinks: <i>“I will do this alone.”</i>
<i>Pride about ability</i> is a <i>confidence</i> that thinks: <i>“I can do this.”</i> <i>“this”</i> refers to either <i>vanquishing the afflictions or accomplishing the welfare of others.</i>
<i>Pride about affliction</i> is a <i>very strong determination and courage which is determined to not let the afflictions take hold in one's mind and never give in to the afflictions.</i> It is a mind that thinks: <i>“I will vanquish and destroy you.”</i>
This is how one should understand these three types of pride.

(3) Pride about afflictions [7.60 – 7.62]

(a) One should develop the strength of the antidote to the afflictions [7.60]

<p>7.60 a. <i>When amidst a class of afflictions,</i> b. <i>I shall be persistent with them in a thousand ways;</i> c. <i>Like a lion among foxes and the like,</i> d. <i>I will not be injured by the host of afflictions.</i></p>
In situations where one is in the midst of many objects of desire, generally, if one is a man, in the midst of meeting with women, if one is a woman, in the midst of meeting with men, or when one is meeting with objects of anger such as harmdoers and so forth, it is said that one must really focus and discipline one's mind.
One must particularly generate the force of the antidotes and not allow one's afflictions to take hold in one's mind.
For example, the lion, being a very strong animal, can never be harmed nor disturbed by other animals such as foxes and so forth around it. Likewise, whatever situation/ circumstance one may be in, one should not allow one's afflictions to take hold.
There are so many methods/ antidotes that are prescribed to deal with one's afflictions pertaining to how one should react when one meets with objects of desire and hatred/ anger. There are even techniques for transforming adverse external circumstances into favorable conditions for [enhancing] the path in one's mind.
At the very least, especially for beginners, it is said that, one should perhaps physically distance oneself from those situations.
This is why there is such a thing as going into isolation. Particularly for those who really want to develop some level of concentration/ meditative stabilization.
When one is in physical isolation, one is at least physically isolating oneself from many of the external conditions/ circumstances that may provoke the arising of afflictions in one's mind.

When one extracts oneself from such situations, the chances and opportunities for getting involved with the afflictions become much lesser. Of course, it is not that, if one goes into isolation, one would be totally free from all the afflictions. It is just that, the chances and opportunities for following after the afflictions are very much reduced.
In reality, this is what should be done. One really has to go into isolation. This allows one to [isolate] oneself away from all such external situations and circumstances that provokes the arising of the afflictions.
But going into isolation is not just for that alone. Within that [isolation from external] situations, when there are much lesser opportunities to get upset, attached and so forth, one is able to apply the antidotes, gain stability and subdue one's mind.
It is only when one's mind is somewhat subdued that, if one were to work for and accomplish the welfare of others, would [such tasks] be done properly and correctly. Otherwise, [it would not be].
If one is really able to go into the isolation of a retreat to subdue one's mind and gain stability, then when one does work for others, it is only then that others and oneself [receive] benefits.
Otherwise, in the name of benefiting others, one may say one is doing this or that to benefit others, but [in reality], nothing much good comes out of it. Both oneself and others do not get much benefits.
This is what happens, in the name of helping others, when one does not have the experience/ realization, one will disturb others, one's own mind will also get disturbed as well.
Khenrinpoche: I think I have mentioned this before. There was a Geshe who went to [teach in a center] in New Zealand.
He [told me] how he was having a difficult time there. People were complaining how unhappy they were. Whatever you say, [they would retort] back. He gave so many advice but they kept on complaining [about everything].
He would then tell me: "These people are driving me crazy!" Then I told him: "You are there to help these crazy people!"
He replied: "That's the idea, that's my job there to help these people, but somehow they would make me crazy!"
That is why it is always emphasized [in the teachings], how important it is to cultivate the antidote to the afflictions to deal with them. If not, if one is under the control and influence of the afflictions, then [trying] to benefit others will be difficult.

(b) One should act so as not to fall under their power even in the slightest 7.61]

- 7.61 a. *Just as men will guard their eyes*
 b. *In the occurrence of great danger,*
 c. *Likewise I shall not come under the power of the afflictions,*
 d. *Even when danger occurs.*

It is said that, when humans meet with dangers of being harmed physically, somehow one would instinctively protect oneself, especially cherishing very much one's sight of being able to see. Hence, one takes great care to not let harm come to one's eyes. Likewise, one should also take care not to let oneself fall under the control of the afflictions.
In some commentaries, an alternate analogy is given [to 7.61(ab)]: <i>Just like how the eyes cannot see/ experience taste.</i>
The point is, regardless of whatever external situation there is, whatever kind of unpleasant experience, discomfort, pain or suffering one may be going through, one should not allow one's mind come under the control of the afflictions.
Rather, one should always focus one's mind on virtue/ any antidote to the afflictions and have it fixed on that.
The eye sense powers are needed to produce the eye sense consciousness. By depending on the eye sense powers, the eye sense consciousness can only perceive visual forms. In dependence on the eye sense powers, the eye sense consciousness cannot perceive other things like smell, taste, sound and so forth.
Just like how the eye consciousness perceive only visual forms and not anything else such as taste, likewise, perhaps if one applies [this analogy] to the meaning, then whatever circumstances one may be in, be it experiences of pain, discomfort and so forth, one should only focus one's mind on virtue, the class of antidotes and not the afflictions.
It is said in some of the Indian [commentaries], " <i>Just like how the eyes cannot see/ experience taste</i> " is mentioned in place of 7.61(ab): <i>Just as men will guard their eyes in the occurrence of great danger.</i>

(c) One should develop a special intention to stabilize the antidotes [7.62]

- 7.62 a. *It would be better for me to be burned,*
 b. *To be killed, or to have my head cut off,*
 c. *Rather than bowing down*
 d. *To the enemy of afflictions.*
 e. *Likewise in all situations I should do nothing other than what is fit.*

The outline says: developing an extraordinary thought/ intention. The verse says that it is inconsequential and is alright to lose one's life, but letting one come under the control of one's afflictions is not, as there are consequences.

This is an advice to project the will/ intention, from the very onset, to never succumb to one's afflictions.
Buddha mentioned in the Vinaya, the sutra's advice to the fully ordained monks that: <i>To die and lose one's life is inconsequential and unimportant, But to die with corrupted ethical discipline is not.</i>
To lose one's life is inconsequential, but to die with degenerated ethical discipline is not inconsequential. This is because, losing one's life simply means one's life has come to an end. But to die with corrupted ethical discipline means that, one would have to experience the suffering fruitional effects for many hundreds of thousands of eons.
The significance of Buddha's message here in the Vinaya sutra is the same as verse 7.62: To lose one's life is not that important, but to succumb to one's afflictions is much more serious.
7.62e: <i>[Hence] in all situations I should do nothing other than what is fit.</i> One should therefore cultivate only virtuous intentions/ virtuous karma and never at all [engage in] nonvirtues.
This completes the explanation on: b' [Second power:] The power of steadfastness [7.46(cd) – 7.62]

c' [Third power:] The power of joy [7.63 – 7.66]

1" Making effort in virtue without [expectations for] the fully ripened [positive] effects [7.63]

<p>7.63 a. <i>Just like those who desire the pleasurable result of play,</i> b. <i>This [bodhisattva] adheres</i> c. <i>To whatever task he may do.</i> d. <i>He is not satiated by it; it makes him happy.</i></p>
People play games just for the joy/ fun/ sake of it. They are not necessarily seeking rewards or expectations for some returns.
Likewise, when the bodhisattva engages in the bodhisattva deeds of the six perfections in working for sentient beings, they do it happily/ with thorough enjoyment. They never think that it is enough but wanting to do more, just like when people are playing games and do not want to stop.
The lesson one can perhaps draw from this is that, whatever virtue one is engaging in, or whatever help one is providing to others, one should [not have expectations for the] results or how others would react. One should merely enjoy the very act [intention] that one is doing the virtue or benefiting others, regardless of whether they are benefited or not.
[The opposite] does happen to one: When one does something to benefit others, one may actually be benefiting them, yet behind the mind, one is looking for some acknowledgment: whether they acknowledge one's presence, says “thank you”, or whether they smile at one or not. When these things do not occur, one gets disturbed.
Perhaps if one gives something to a blind person, one would not be expecting anything in return from him, be it having him [acknowledging] one or saying “thank you”. One merely gives without any expectations and is happy with that.
This is very obvious from one's own experience that, when one engages in virtue or benefiting others, there is a big difference emotionally, when one is doing it without any hopes/ expectations, and doing so with great hopes and expectations.
This verse comes under the outline: Making effort in virtue without expectations for the fully ripened positive effects.

2" Accomplishing virtue by mentally [considering the fully ripened] effect [7.64 – 7.65]

<p>7.64 a. <i>Although people work in order to be happy,</i> b. <i>It is uncertain whether or not they will be happy;</i> c. <i>But how can those whose work itself is happiness</i> d. <i>Find happiness without doing the work?</i></p>	<p>7.65 a. <i>If I am not satiated by desirable objects,</i> b. <i>Which are like honey smeared upon a razor's edge,</i> c. <i>Then why am I satiated by merit</i> d. <i>Which is ripening and pacification in happiness?</i></p>
In this world, everyone works so hard for the sake of something like money and so forth. The reason one works so hard in one's job or one's business is that, ultimately, one is seeking a goal like money and so forth.	
Everybody is looking for happiness. This is what drives people in their work to strike out a career or business. They think that, when they succeed in that, that will enable them to achieve happiness.	
But one can see that, very often, despite the best of intentions, no matter how hard one tries, one fails to achieve one's aims.	
The point is, everybody works so hard in all sorts of ways with the hope that they will get the goal of happiness/ bliss/ pleasure in return. Despite what one does, there is no absolute guarantee that one would achieve one's goals.	
When the bodhisattvas work for sentient beings, they are doing so happily. They also work hard in their practice of the deeds of generosity, guarding their ethical discipline and so forth. But whatever they do, these are all guaranteed to bring about happiness. Hence, what is the point of following after nonvirtue then?	
The point is, everybody is looking for happiness, but <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Why are we trying so hard at things that are not guaranteed to bring happiness? Why are we not doing those things that are guaranteed to bring happiness?</i></p>	

Putting one's efforts into activities that are not guaranteed to bring happiness and success is like tasting honey smeared on a very sharp knife. One will get some pleasure from tasting the honey, but the danger and harm caused [by getting one's tongue cut by the knife is not worth] the pleasure one may experience.
When one meets with, comes into contact and experiences attractive sense objects like beautiful forms, pleasant sounds, nice smells, taste and touch, for a short moment, there is pleasure. Immediately, one clings onto to such experiences of pleasures, not wanting to let go as one is dissatisfied and wants more of it.
This is how one instinctively and emotionally reacts whenever one meets with such desirable objects. One experiences bliss and then emotionally gets attached to such experiences. One [finds it difficult] to let go.
Not only that, one wishes to experience it over and over again. One cannot stop oneself as this cannot satisfy one.
When one examines the experiences of samsaric/ worldly/ contaminated happiness after one comes into contact with objects of desire, such pleasures arise. This is what such happiness means. It is in the nature of such pleasures to not last.
Not to mention not lasting, such experiences do not even increase indefinitely. In fact, it becomes less and less satisfying.
When such feelings [are experienced], one then gets bored with it. One's mind then turns its attention to some other objects [wishing to] obtain those pleasures. One then [goes through] the same experiences again, which lasts only for a while and does not increase forever. One again gets bored and looks to other objects [seeking after such pleasures].
This is what is called samsaric/ worldly/ contaminated happiness.
The nature of all such pleasures one experiences are: 1) contaminated, 2) does not last, 3) does not increase indefinitely, 4) one gets bored rather quickly with it, 5) one easily gets dissatisfied with it and seeks something else, and 6) such experiences in fact transform into dissatisfaction and suffering.
Despite all these [faults and problems], one still wants and works for it continuously, aiming for [such pleasures] only.
If one is striving continuously merely to get such pleasures, then how is it that one is not likewise striving in virtue, the causes and practices that will definitely bring about happiness in the long run: good rebirth, liberation and enlightenment?
Why is one not likewise continuously striving in the bodhisattva practices accumulating the collection of merit and wisdom?

3" The way to apply oneself to the power of joy [7.66]

<p>7.66 a. Thus in order to complete this task, b. I shall engage in it c. Just as an elephant tormented at midday d. Enters into a lake.</p>
The context here is the practices of the bodhisattvas, how they act when they engage in virtue or benefit sentient beings.
They are just the elephants who, after having gladly and enthusiastically entered into a pond/ lake on a very hot day, feel so much bliss. Likewise, this is the kind of attitude the bodhisattvas have when they engage in virtue and benefit sentient beings.
The point is that, whatever virtue or practices one is going to engage in, if one is convinced of the benefits, knowing why one is engaging in it, then one will be very happy doing it. One will also be able to complete one's task.
This applies to everything one does in life. Whatever task there may be one have set out to do, one will probably complete it if one is happy doing it. Therefore, it is very important to do things with a happy mind.

Considering the seeming contradiction of the outlines between 7.63 and 7.64 – 7.65:

Verse 7.63 comes under the outline: <i>Making effort in virtue without expectations for the fully ripened positive effects.</i> The next two verses 7.64 – 7.65 come under the outline: <i>Accomplishing virtue by mentally considering the fully ripened effect.</i>
Is there an internal contradiction [between these two outlines]?

d' [Fourth power:] The power of relinquishment [7.67]

1" Temporary relinquishment [7.67(ab)]

2" Total relinquishment [7.67(cd)]

- 7.67 a. When my strength is related to degeneration,*
- b. I should leave whatever I am doing in order to return to it.*
- c. If something is finished well, I should put it aside*
- d. With the wish for more and more later.*

In the process of engaging in a particular virtue, sometimes one can get physically or mentally exhausted. One's physical health or strength may also deteriorate. At such times one should take a break to restore one's energy, vitality and health.

This period of rest to restore one's physical and mental energy is called temporary relinquishment.

The purpose is to prepare oneself to reengage one's particular virtue again after one has rested.

When it comes to engaging in virtue, there are so many types that one could engage in. Whatever these may be, if one has completed that well, then one would be stopping that practice. One's mind should then be focused on the next practice.

Hence, complete relinquishment means that one has already completed well an earlier task/ virtue, putting that aside, one is moving on to another. Since one has already completed a particular virtue, for the purpose of engaging in a more exalted virtue than the previously completed one, perhaps this is why it is called a complete relinquishment of a completed virtue.

ii) Devoting oneself to the practice of the conduct by means of mindfulness and introspection -

[Fifth power: The power of earnest application] [7.68 – 7.74]

1' Devoting oneself to conscientiousness [7.68]

- 7.68 a. Just as a seasoned soldier engages*
- b. In a fencing battle with the enemy,*
- c. So shall I avoid the weapons of the afflictions*
- d. And attack the enemies that are the afflictions.*

Due to their trainings and habituation, whenever a seasoned soldier is in battle, he is always prepared to defend himself against attacks from his enemies. He has all the various means and ways at his disposal to prevent from being hit, while simultaneously, he also has at his disposal, all the means to strike at his enemies. This is the feature of a seasoned fighter.

Likewise, one should be conscientious about avoiding being harmed by the weapons of one's afflictions. At the same time, one should also be on the look out to attack one's afflictions, one's enemy.

2' Devoting oneself to mindfulness and introspection [7.69]

- 7.69 a. If someone dropped his sword during a battle,*
- b. He would quickly pick it up out of fear.*
- c. Likewise if I lose the weapon of mindfulness,*
- d. Afraid of hell, I should quickly retrieve it.*

When people go to war during the age of sword fighting, if they were to drop their swords onto the ground, out of fear of being killed in the next moment, they would immediately retrieve it.

Likewise, if one's mind becomes distracted and one loses one's mindfulness of a virtuous object, one should remember how one would be thrown into the lower realms such as the hells due to accumulating nonvirtues motivated by one's afflictions.

Motivated/ driven by such fears of having to experience the consequences of following after the afflictions, one should then immediately hook one's mental attention with mindfulness and vigilance back to a virtuous object and firmly place one's mind on that.

3' Not [allowing even a slightest time for negativities when engaging in] mindfulness and introspection [7.70 – 7.71]

- 7.70 a. Just as poison spreads throughout the body*
- b. In dependence upon the blood,*
- c. Likewise if it finds an opportunity*
- d. Misdeeds will permeate my mind.*

- 7.71 a. Just as a man carrying a jar full of mustard oil*
- b. In the presence of someone wielding a sword*
- c. Who is being threatened that he will be killed if he spills it will be frightened,*
- d. Likewise, those who have the modes of conduct should be attentive.*

The example here is poison entering someone's bloodstream, which would soon permeate the entire body. Such a person may die as a result. Likewise, if one allows one's sense and mental consciousnesses be distracted by the various kinds of objects and relate to them, then one's afflictions will start to take hold.

Gradually these will become stronger and stronger to the point that it will take away the chances of one's higher rebirth.

When poison enters into the blood, it initially affects only a small area of the body. But over time as it starts to permeate the entire body, one would then be in great danger as one may lose one's life. In this way, some poisons act slowly [but deadly].
One's afflictions are also like that. When they arise in one's mind, they may seem small at that time, but if one does not do anything about it, it will gradually take hold in one's mind and becomes very strong.
That is when very strong nonvirtue is accumulated, which would result in one going to the lower realms.
Hence, the verses here teach about the faults/ problems that come with letting one's mindfulness and vigilance degenerate.
Perhaps then, verse 7.71 explains about tightening one's mindfulness:
Imagine if one is forced to carry an open-jar filled with oil and made to walk along a very slippery road with someone [holding a sword] and watching one's every move. If one were to spill even a single drop of oil, one would be killed.
In such a situation, one would be extremely alert. Driven by such fears, one would really be so mindful when one carries and walks with that jar of oil. Whoever is in such a situation would definitely walk with the greatest care.
If one claims to be a practitioner of Dharma, has adopted various vows, precepts, taken on the promise to train in the bodhisattva deeds of the bodhisattva vow, motivated by the fears of having to go to the lower realms such as the hells and also continually having to circle in the three realms of cyclic existence, then one has to be mindful and conscientious about the behavior of one's body, speech and mind literally in every moment. In reality, this is how it should be.
Through remembering one's fear of suffering in the lower realms such as the hells, as well as the fears of cyclic existence, such fears should drive one to be conscientious and mindful so as to not let one's afflictions take hold.

4' One should overcome negativities as soon as it arises [7.72 – 7.73]

<p>7.72 a. Therefore, just as I would hastily stand up b. If a snake came into my lap, c. Likewise if any sleep or indolence occur d. I shall quickly turn them back.</p>
If one's head catches fire, one would not wait but will do whatever one can to put it out immediately. If one is afraid of snakes, if it lands in one's lap, without any hesitation, one would stand up immediately with fear.
Khenrinpoche: When I was young and staying in the monastery, we cannot close our doors totally. Our [room] walls are also full of holes. Sometimes the real snake would get into the room and slip under the blanket. When you go to bed and lift up your blanket, [you would find] the snake there. You would become very frightened.
When I was studying in [Sera Je] in South India, there was a monk who was so scared of snakes and everybody knew that.
Before class started, we would be gathered outside. Somehow another monk classmate had found a shed skin of a snake in a nearby farm. He brought it along and hid behind his back. He would then [pounce upon this monk and] put the snake skin around his neck. This monk became so frightened, then got upset and went to beat this other monk!
For me, I am scared of frogs. I am not afraid that it will bite but somehow, it has this unpleasant look. In the monastery, when you debate in the courtyard, there were so many frogs. Sometimes they would jump onto your lap. When they do, I would [immediately] stand up!
This example [in 7.72(cd)] is not saying that, when one is about to fall asleep, one should suddenly jump out of one's bed and then stop sleeping. There is a right time for sleeping.
For a person practicing virtue, the entire day is divided into the meditative and post-meditative sessions of morning, afternoon and night. Sleep is necessary to restore the elements in one's body, so there is a time for it. Other than that, the rest of the time should be used productively in beneficial activities of virtue.
Hence, besides the proper sleeping time, the rest of the time is meant for practice. During the times for practice, there may be times when one would feel lazy, while it is not the time to sleep, one feels like sleeping.
While it is the time to engage in virtue, one does not feel like doing it. At such times, one should immediately snap oneself out from such a situation of having the desire to sleep. One should remind oneself to literally wake up.
Of course, being able to do this is not easy. This is because, one has to be someone who can feel the sense of loss of not having used one's [precious] time productively engaging in virtue/ meaningful activities.
One has to be someone who is consistently aware of the potential and fear of being reborn in the lower realms in the next life. Until one is able to have a feel for such thoughts, then being able to react in such a way is probably not possible.
Whenever one feels lazy or sleepy during the times when one is not supposed to sleep, or one does not feel like engaging in any practice/ virtue, at such times, one has to remember one's own suffering in the lower realms one will experience in the future, as well as bringing to mind the faults of being in samsara. With such thoughts, one can then turn one's mind in virtue.
With that, one would then be able to make a strong resolution to not be lazy or fall asleep unnecessarily.

There is an account of the great translator of the past, <i>Lotsawa Rinchen Sangpo</i> , how he practiced during a long retreat.
He did that for seven years. During the retreat, he established the [meditation] markers to delineate his boundaries from which he would not transgress/ cross over [such boundaries]. He made three concentric circles/ three layers of boundaries.
For the outermost boundary, he generated that into Dakas, Dakinis and Dharma protectors. He then made offerings to them, requesting their help to pacify obstacles. Above doing that, he entreated them: “May you punish me whenever any <i>afflictions</i> were to arise during the course of my retreat.”
For the intermediate boundary marker, he also generated Dharma protectors. He then entreated them: “May you annihilate me if I were to allow even a single moment of <i>selfish thought</i> to arise in the course of my retreat.”
For the innermost boundary marker, he also generated Dakas, Dakinis and Dharma protectors. He then made tormas offerings and so forth, and entreated them: “May you destroy me if any <i>thoughts apprehending signs</i> were to arise.”
On the basis of making such oaths and promises, he then lived in retreat for seven years.
The point is, one has to make a resolution from the depths of one's heart to rely on mindfulness and vigilance to engage in virtue, not allowing one's mind to come under the control of one's afflictions.
It is helpful to make the resolution to last for a certain period of time, say for a day: “I am not going to let my mind come under the control of the afflictions and place it firmly in virtue.”
<i>Khenrinpoche</i> : You can make a promise like: “If [I break it], may I not eat for three days!” “If I fall asleep during class...” You decide what that punishment would be...just giving ideas here...
<p>7.73 a. <i>Each time a misdeed occurs</i> b. <i>I should deride myself,</i> c. <i>And then contemplate for a long time</i> d. <i>“No matter what, I shall not let this happen in the future.”</i></p>
Although one may make resolutions, but at times one may fall short of that. One makes mistakes by letting misdeeds arise.
One should have a critical self-evaluation, deriding oneself by remembering how one will have to endure so much sufferings and problems [in the future, simply] because of not controlling one's mind and coming under the control of the afflictions.
“If I were to continue like that, then the story will not be any different as I will again face the same problems and suffering.”
<i>b. I should deride myself</i> : This is a critical self-evaluation where one tells oneself: “That was really not good. I should not have done that. I must not do that again.”
One has to think and consider for a very long time to get used to thinking and making such resolutions.
One also needs to strive in purifying the negativities that were accumulated through committing such misdeeds.
It is said that, whenever a misdeed occurs, one should confess it immediately and purify it through applying the Four Opponent Powers.

5' One should make effort in appropriate activities [7.74]

<p>7.74 a. <i>“Likewise in all situations</i> b. <i>I shall acquaint myself with mindfulness.”</i> c. <i>With this cause I shall wish for</i> d. <i>Encounters or appropriate actions.</i></p>
This is an advice to rely on mindfulness to not let any misdeeds arise in the first place and to eliminate those that have already arisen.
Through relying on conscientiousness, mindfulness and vigilance, carrying the motivating thoughts of this verse at the back of one's mind, one then engages in whatever practices, be it retreats, recitations, prostrations, circumambulations and so forth.
With the intentions/ motivations at the back of one's mind and the goal of strengthening one's mindfulness and vigilance, one then goes about doing whatever is suitable or appropriate. In <i>Gyaltsab Je's</i> commentary, he gave a few examples of this.
The point is, through relying on mindfulness and vigilance with the intention to not let faults arise or to eliminate those that have already arisen, one engages in such activities as receiving instructions of the teachings, relying on a Mahayana virtuous friend and so forth.
Therefore, conscientiousness, mindfulness and vigilance are emphasized in this section as these are very important. Hence, one should actively and sincerely adopt them. With these, one then engages in whatever actions that are appropriate and suitable.

iii) Accomplishing the conduct is within one's power [Sixth power: The power of mastery] [7.75 – 7.76]

1' Through pliancy of body and mind, one should even arise in virtue [7.75]

2' Applying the analogy to the meaning [7.76]

<p>7.75 a. In order to have strength for all b. I should recall before undertaking any action c. The advice on conscientiousness thus, d. And then rise with lightness.</p>	<p>7.76 a. Just as the wind blowing back and forth b. Controls a piece of cotton, c. So shall I be mastered by enthusiasm, d. And in this way I will accomplish all.</p>
<p>Prior to whatever virtue one may engage in, one should prepare oneself mentally to have the ability and capacity for it.</p>	
<p>To engage in that virtue with strength and vigor, one has to remember and be mindful of those instructions on cultivating conscientiousness. There are so many advice/ instructions pertaining to how one should be conscientious in:</p>	
<p>a) Abandoning nonvirtues, b) Engaging in virtue, c) Dealing with the afflictions. One has to be mindful of such instructions.</p>	
<p>It is said that those who are able to be conscientious in these appropriate practices, they will be able to engage in them easily.</p>	
<p><i>d. And then rise with lightness:</i> One is then able to do it with ease as one is doing so happily/ enthusiastically.</p>	
<p>Just like the wind is able to go anywhere unimpeded, likewise, if one has strong enthusiasm and joy for virtue, then one can even bring one's body and speech under that positive influence.</p>	
<p>If one is mentally really enthusiastic and happy about doing something, here about virtue, then it would not be difficult to employ one's body and speech in such endeavors as well.</p>	
<p>With such enthusiasm and joy, one would also be able to see such a task to completion.</p>	
<p>In <i>Gyaltsab Je's</i> commentary of the closing statements to this chapter, he said:</p>	
<p><i>We should strive in generating that joyous effort that can overcome laziness. To do that, we have to eliminate all the opposing forces that hinders joyous effort. We also have to cultivate the favorable conditions of the Four Powers, The conducive condition for the development of joyous effort.</i></p>	
<p>He said that, to cultivate joyous effort, one has to eliminate its opposing factors. The opposing factors are two:</p>	

Summary of the opposing factors to joyous effort and their antidotes:

The opposing factors to joyous effort		Antidotes:
<p>1) Not engaging in virtue although one is clearly aware one is capable. This occurs mainly because of:</p>	<p>a) Laziness due to procrastination which thinks “I still have time.”</p>	<p>i) Contemplate that one will die soon. ii) After death, one will fall into the lower realms. iii) Obtaining the rebirth with favorable conditions for practice are very difficult to achieve again.</p>
	<p>b) Laziness to being completely overwhelmed by attachment to ignoble activities, essentially the attachment to the affairs to this life.</p>	<p>i) Contemplating that the Dharma is the cause of infinite happiness in this and all future lives. ii) Contemplating how all meaningless activities of this life are mere distractions which harm one in this and future lives.</p>
<p>2) Laziness of despondency that thinks: “How can I ever do this, because:”</p>	<p>a) “I cannot attain all the infinite qualities of Buddha.”</p>	<p>a) Contemplate that those who are already Buddhas were not Buddhas as they did not have all the qualities nor have abandoned all the faults from the onset. Over time, through bearing hardships and practice, they became enlightened. If one is willing to do likewise bearing hardships, one would also become a Buddha.</p>
	<p>b) “I cannot do all the difficult bodhisattva practices like giving my body and so forth.”</p>	<p>b) There is no worries at all as such practices are not meant for beginners like oneself. When one becomes a bodhisattva superior, giving one's body will be as easy as giving a plate of vegetables.</p>
	<p>c) “I cannot tolerate all the difficulties of staying in samsara.”</p>	<p>c) It is not difficult at all. When one knows how to do that, one will be filled with physical and mental joy while doing such practices in samsara. One will not be disturbed.</p>